



Australian Government



First Nations Economic Partnership

Communiqué

Fourth Meeting – 20 May 2026 (Ngunnawal Country, Canberra)

The First Nations Economic Partnership met for its fourth meeting on Ngunnawal and Ngambri country in Canberra on 20 May 2026. Partners¹ welcomed progress and momentum across key priority areas, including work on jobs and economic inclusion zones, access to capital, and development of a First Nations Economic Framework.

Partners reaffirmed the importance of strong collaboration, transparency and focussing on delivering tangible outcomes for First Nations communities. Partners noted that there are increasing community expectations for the Partnership and agreed that practical outcomes must be delivered as a matter of priority.

Economic Framework

The Partners noted that work on the First Nations Economic Framework will be developed through a phased engagement process to inform a draft Framework by the end of 2026. The process will be supported by Indigenous-led expertise and broad stakeholder input including from the private and civil sectors. More information about opportunities to provide input will be published shortly.

Access to capital and institutional arrangements

The Access to Capital and Institutional Arrangements Working Group provided an update on policy options to strengthen the role of Specialist Investment Vehicles (SIVs) in supporting First Nations economic empowerment.

The Partners agreed that the Working Group will develop advice on the role of SIVs for Government consideration, including options to:

- implement the Closing the Gap priority reforms
- make finance more accessible
- embed First Nations consideration in SIVs' planning and operations
- improve data, reporting and accountability.

Partners agreed that the Working Group will co-design a fit-for-purpose First Nations Investment and Finance Council model for Government consideration, aimed at increasing investment pipelines and building the capacity of both investors and First Nations organisations. The co-design process will also consider the role of existing organisations, including governments, institutional investors and philanthropy.

¹ The First Nations Economic Empowerment Alliance, the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations and the Commonwealth Government.

Employment and career pathways

The Employment and Career Pathways Working Group reported on the successful first meeting of the Working Group which considered two immediate priorities: expanding employment and strengthening career pathways in the community-controlled sector, and developing a model for economic inclusion zones. Design work will include clarifying the intent and scope and ensuring alignment with broader Government investment and place-based initiatives.

The Partnership agreed alignment across workstreams will be critical to delivering sustainable and scalable employment outcomes.

Budget update

Government partners gave an overview of the 2026–27 Federal Budget, outlining measures focused on economic resilience, productivity and cost-of-living pressures.

First Nations Partners emphasised the importance of reflecting First Nations priorities and ambition in broader Government policy.

Partnership approach

Partners reaffirmed their commitment to genuine shared decision making through co-design, consensus-based development of proposals and shared accountability for implementation.

The Economic Partnership remains focused on advancing practical reforms that support job creation, improve access to capital, strengthen wealth creation and deliver long-term, sustainable outcomes for First Nations peoples.

With strong foundations now in place, the Partnership is entering a critical phase of delivery, with a focus on implementation and measurable outcomes.

The next meeting of the Economic Partnership is scheduled for 22 July 2026.