Australian Government

Coalition of Peaks

FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ALLIANCE

First Nations Economic Partnership

First Nations Economic Partnership communiqué

The First Nations Economic Partnership (Economic Partnership) met for its fifth meeting on Ngunnawal and Ngambri country in Canberra on 22 July 2026.

Partners reflected on the good progress made in establishing the Economic Partnership's governance arrangements and reaffirmed the importance of shifting focus to delivering practical reforms and measurable outcomes. Recent engagements with the Treasurer, Minister for Indigenous Australians and the Partnership Priorities Committee reinforced the support of the Australian Government for advancing First Nations economic empowerment priorities through the Partnership.

Annual Update

Partners gave in principle endorsement to the Annual Update to Accountable Ministers. Partners agreed that the report should communicate the Partnership's ambition, progress and priorities to both governments and First Nations communities.

The report will be provided to Accountable Ministers by 31 July 2026 and subsequently published on the Treasury website.

First Nations Economic Framework

Partners noted progress in the development of the First Nations Economic Framework (Economic Framework), which is an immediate priority under the Partnership Agreement and will provide a long-term roadmap for First Nations economic empowerment. Development of the Economic Framework is being led by the Alliance, with engagements to occur across First Nations communities, the community-controlled sector, governments and the private sector. A discussion paper is expected to be released in August 2026.

Employment and Career Pathways

Partners noted progress of the Employment and Career Pathways Working Group on their two priority workstreams: generating more jobs in the community-controlled sector and designing a model for Economic Inclusion Zones.

On the first priority, Government partners reaffirmed their commitment to work in partnership with the Coalition of Peaks to develop robust and evidence-based policy proposals.

On the Economic Inclusion Zones priority, Partners agreed initial design principles, supported further design work, and discussed that the final report for Economic Inclusion Zones should have regard to the development of the Economic Framework (which is being drafted in parallel). Partners also discussed that the final design report would include implementation and funding considerations, noting that any model would need to be properly resourced and actively supported by relevant departments and agencies.

Access to Capital and Institutional Arrangements

The Access to Capital and Institutional Arrangements Working Group noted progress on:

- Considering reform proposals to Commonwealth Specialist Investment Vehicles
- Developing improved data collection arrangements and planning for future work relating to capital products
- Exploring a proposed First Nations Investment and Finance Council.

Partners will write to the Minister for Finance regarding proposals to strengthen the role of Specialist Investment Vehicles in enhancing their contribution to First Nations economic development.

The Working Group's next priorities are to identify the capital products needed to support the growth of First Nations businesses and organisations, and to engage the private sector – including banks, superannuation funds, investors and philanthropy – to better understand barriers, opportunities and potential sources of finance.

Policy Priorities and Announcements

Partners discussed ways to progress policy priorities through upcoming government decision making and announcement processes. Partners also agreed the need to maintain a strong connection between each of the working groups to ensure alignment of policy proposals.

Annual Work Plan

Partners agreed on the Annual Workplan for 1 July to 31 December 2026 which will be published on the Treasury website.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework

Partners agreed to progress development of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework to support ongoing assessment of the Partnership's effectiveness and outcomes. The framework will be developed through a procurement process.

The next meeting of the Economic Partnership is scheduled for 23 September 2026.