

# ALGA FEDERAL BUDGET 2023-24 PRIORITY

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

### Commitment sought

**\$7 million over four years** to employ a network of Indigenous Affairs Policy Officers including at the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) as well as all state and territory Local Government Associations.

### What is the issue?

ALGA and its member associations require additional support to work closely with governments, councils and peak bodies to progress Closing the Gap. This support could also enable councils to collect data that can be used to help inform, and improve, councils' cultural competency and First Nations representation.

### Why does it matter?

As the closest government to communities, councils can play a vital role in reducing Indigenous disadvantage, achieving better outcomes for First Nations people, and supporting reconciliation.

### Additional information

*ALGA and its member associations are committed to progressing work on Closing the Gap and working with councils across the nation to advance the interests of its First Nations people.*

However, the capacity to advance this work is limited by a lack of available resources, with no association resourced to fund a dedicated member of staff to work in this important policy area.

ALGA is a proud signatory to the Closing the Gap agreement, and reports annually on achievements against key action areas. ALGA's latest report shows progress has been made against eight of the 14 areas highlighted in its Closing the Gap implementation plan and highlights six areas for improvement.

Providing ALGA and its seven state and territory member associations with support to each employ one Indigenous Affairs Policy Officer would help:

- Facilitate significant progress against Closing the Gap priorities across the local government sector;
- Access de-identified data at a local council level to help identify ways to improve representation of First Nations people in local government;
- Promote, advocate and advance partnerships between councils and their First Nations peoples to identify local priorities, to promote co-design and shared decision-making;
- Build the cultural competency of councils and their capacity to work appropriately with local First Nations peoples;
- Facilitate partnerships and capacity building between councils and relevant First Nations peoples/organisations;
- Act as a link between levels of government and relevant peak organisations representing First Nations peoples.
- Coordinate local government promotion of awareness of the Government's planned Voice referendum.

