

## **POSITION STATEMENT**

# **FIRST NATIONS VOICE TO PARLIAMENT**

Volunteering Australia supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in pursuing their right to self-determination and we strive to create space for truth telling and justice through our policy and practice.

As the national peak body for volunteering, we emphasize relationship-building with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities – their researchers, community workers and organisations. We recognise that it is through the strength of our relationships with the Traditional Custodians of the land that we can represent the ‘national’ spirit of our work.

We are committed to celebrating the invaluable practices of ‘community giving’ among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We also strive to mitigate systemic barriers to volunteering in non-Indigenous organisations and to uphold the rights, needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

We acknowledge that our advocacy requires broader structural changes at local, regional, and national levels. Respecting the diversity of perspectives within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we affirm our support for all three pillars in the path to self-determination: Voice, Treaty and Truth in any order. The Indigenous Voice to Parliament will provide permanent institutional presence to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples in the nation’s Constitution, even as the struggle to rectify historical wrongs and present injustices remains a long and arduous one – a commitment to be renewed at every stage. This includes working for economic justice, but also acknowledging urgent issues identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in legal, ecological, and environmental justice.

To this end, Volunteering Australia supports a ‘Yes’ vote in the Referendum. We consider the Voice as a necessary step among others to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples can guide public policy on issues that affect their social, spiritual, and economic wellbeing.



We commit to sharing information and accessible resources to help our staff and volunteers, our stakeholders, and the wider volunteering community understand what the Indigenous Voice means for the future of our country. We invite all our stakeholders and our allies to engage in an informed and respectful debate by consulting the following resources as a starting point:

- ▶ [Referendum FAQs – Yes23](#)
- ▶ [Responding to Common Concerns – Australian National University](#)
- ▶ [Voice to Parliament Training Course – The Uluru Dialogue and From the Heart](#)
- ▶ [Voice to Parliament Overview – Reconciliation Australia](#)
- ▶ [Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Through a Voice](#)
- ▶ [Uluru Statement: Fact Sheet](#)