

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# First Nations Director Scholarships Awarded

The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), in partnership with the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI), congratulates the recipients of the inaugural First Nations Scholarship Program 2024-2026.

The Program aims to equip First Nations leaders with world class, impactful governance education and mentoring, enabling them to be appointed to First Nations and non-First Nations boards throughout Australia.

The First Nations Scholarship Program 2024-2026 is aligned to AICD's commitment in its [Innovate RAP](#) to developing a pipeline of First Nations directors.

The Program supports the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and the Government's commitment to building a strong and sustainable First Nations community-controlled sector that delivers high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities across the country.

The 2024 cohort of highly skilled and experienced First Nations scholars is drawn from a diverse range of senior leaders working in the First Nations community-controlled sector.

Scholarship recipients hail from seven states and territories, including from regional and metropolitan localities.

AICD Managing Director and CEO Mark Rigotti extended his congratulations to the successful scholarship recipients who have commenced the program.

"This is a groundbreaking initiative and the AICD is pleased to be working with AIGI and the inaugural intake of First Nations leaders as they embark on their boardroom journey.

"It's part of AICD's vision for more First Nations peoples to be represented in Australia's boardrooms. This Program represents an important step for us as we build our capacity to deliver culturally sensitive governance training to First Nations directors and increase the relevance and reach of our governance education and services for First Nations members and directors."

AIGI CEO Jessica Bulger said AIGI is excited to work with a group of scholars who are already making a meaningful contribution to their communities.

"This program empowers scholars to refine their skills and experience further by engaging in both classroom and experiential learning, alongside a cohort of peers. Leadership that is enriched by cultural knowledge and perspectives is crucial to strong community and industry governance and we value the opportunity to have initiated a program that sets the scholars up for success."

*The Australian Institute of Company Directors is committed to strengthening society through world-class governance. We aim to be the independent and trusted voice of governance, building the capability of a community of leaders for the benefit of society. Our membership of over 52,000 includes directors and senior leaders from business, government and the not-for-profit sectors.*

All scholars benefit from an AIGI-led mentorship program that pairs scholars with First Nations directors possessing a wealth of Indigenous Governance knowledge, as well as:

- AICD's highly regarded Foundations of Directorship – Indigenous Organisations course that provides foundational knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of boards and directors; and
- One-year membership to the AICD.

The First Nations Director Scholarship Program 2024-2026 is made possible by the \$1 million grant funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

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The Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI) is an Indigenous-led organisation that supports First Nations organisations and communities to strengthen sustainable systems of self-governance. Visit [www.aigi.org.au](http://www.aigi.org.au)