



first
nations
MEDIA
AUSTRALIA

CALLS FOR ACTION PLAN

CALLS FOR ACTION

JOURNEY THUS FAR

Initially established in 2018, the 9 Calls for Action called on the Australian Government to support and partner with First Nations Media Australia (FNMA) to realise the potential of the First Nations media sector through the programs and actions set out in the Call for Action documents.

In early 2024, a tenth Call for Action 'Digital Inclusion' was introduced due to the vital role FNMA's plays in addressing the Closing the Gap (CTG) initiative, especially in relation to Target 17.

1. Broadcasting Act Reform for First Nations Broadcasting.
2. Increase in Operational and Employment Funding Live and Local Radio Expansion Program.
3. Live and Local Radio Expansion Program.
4. Strengthening of First Nations News Services.
5. Expanding Training and Career Pathway Programs.
6. Upgrading Infrastructure and Digital Networks.
7. Recognising First Nations Broadcasters as the Preferred Channel for Government Messaging.
8. Preserving First Nations Media Archives.
9. Establishing an Annual Content Production Fund.
10. Digital Inclusion.

During FNMA's Converge 2024 Conference, our members workshopped and developed key deliverables, actions and functions they collectively see as the way forward to implementing the 10 Calls for Action.

These discussions formed the basis and anticipated outputs within the Action Plan and will now be the leading document of FNMA to inform projects, advocacy and strategic intent for our First Nations Media sector moving forward.

The Action Plan will guide our efforts and reflect a collaborative approach between FNMA, the government, and our members, who each play a key role in delivering a sustainable, accountable and beneficial First Nations Media sector that contributes to local communities and key government initiatives.

The Action Plan also has validity for other government jurisdictions and corporate partners to participate and contribute to.



| CALL FOR ACTION | ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|---|-------------------|
| <p>1</p> <h2>Reform Broadcast Act</h2> <p>Recognise First Nations broadcasting as a separate licence category under the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (BSA) to increase professionalism & income generation potential.</p> | <p>Reform the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 to provide for a separate broadcaster licence for First Nations Broadcasting. This will need further consultation with each member to gauge impact and what is sought, particularly around red tape reduction and efficiencies.</p> | <p>Government</p> |
| | <p>Make the necessary regulatory changes for spectrum allocation and codes of practice. If required discuss legislative changes to solidify First Nations spectrum allocation and licenses. If required Establish a separate Broadcasting Authority under the Act that is responsible for its own (First Nations) licensing regime.</p> | <p>Government</p> |
| | <p>Ensure First Nations media has a long term strategy and within this have the First Nations media policy and funding management embedded within the key agencies of Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA) and NIAA who currently implement funds.</p> | <p>Government</p> |
| | <p>Advocate for better legislative protection and priority footprint for First Nations media within the broader community Broadcasting reform (ACMA) for the sector along with other peak bodies.</p> | <p>FNMA</p> |
| | <p>Form strategic partnerships with organisations such as the ABC, SBS, DRA and NITV to assist with strategic sector legislative amendments and wholistic supports for our sector-Corporate Partnerships.</p> | <p>FNMA</p> |
| | <p>Continue to inform journalists and politicians that the FNMA membership is the most culturally appropriate mechanism to provide positive representation of First Nations issues and success.</p> | <p>FNMA</p> |
| | <p>Find a political champion in Federal Parliament and Corporate Australia who will be passionate about representing the growth of First Nations broadcasting and achieving lasting change.</p> | <p>FNMA</p> |
| | <p>Continue talking with the politicians from centrist, independent or minor parties who represent the political middle ground to support First Nations Media.</p> | <p>FNMA</p> |
| | <p>Seek individual feedback and review on a regular basis to create a living and evolving ten Calls for Action strategy that is fit for purpose.</p> | <p>FNMA</p> |
| | <p>Grow services to deliver future capability that is attractive to the various levels of government.</p> | <p>Members</p> |
| <p>Garner grass roots support, which is strong and needs to be utilised to help achieve this call for action. (Much can be done in local communities to advertise this strategy through campaigns to increase public awareness.)</p> | <p>Members</p> | |
| <p>Advocate to federal, state and territory politicians at the local community level.</p> | <p>Members</p> | |

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| <p>2</p> <p>Operations and Employment</p> <hr/> <p>Provide adequate operational and employment funding for First Nations broadcasting and media services to build capacity and sustain employment.</p> | Provide sufficient funds that considers cost-of-living increases and reflects the true cost of service operations within funding models. An immediate injection of \$20M into the sector to bring parity. | Government |
| | Adapt grant guidelines to meet diverse community needs (e.g., equipment maintenance, housing). | Government |
| | Use and fund First Nations media for government communication. Better facilitate whole of government connectivity and responsibility to support our sector (e.g., VET for training investment, infrastructure to support digital and capital grants). | Government |
| | Increase grants for language revitalisation, cultural preservation, and operational sustainability. | Government |
| | Support governance and operational training for media hubs. | Government |
| | Facilitate partnerships between First Nations organisations with key stakeholders like corporates, universities, businesses for cadetships and career pathways. | Government |
| | Represent First Nations media to government, emphasising its critical role. | FNMA |
| | Lobby for broader funding opportunities, including housing and cost-of-living adjustments. | FNMA |
| | Provide training resources or links to improve and strengthen governance, operations, and technical skills. | FNMA |
| | Develop board induction packages and engage with the sector to articulate the required accredited training programs. | FNMA |
| | Partner with organisations to share resources. (e.g., technicians, desks, equipment) | FNMA |
| | Create opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing within the sector. | FNMA |

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| | Collaborate with larger businesses and organisations to co-fund initiatives like training programs and housing. | Members |
| | Foster youth participation through tailored programs and mentorships. | Members |
| | Explore shared funding models for specialised roles (e.g., IT support). | Members |
| | Map out quarterly funding opportunities to improve grant application success. | Members |
| | Engage grassroots communities to ensure initiatives reflect local needs. | Members |
| | Invest in succession planning to secure the next generation of media leaders. | Members |



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| <p>3</p> <p>Local Program Broadcasting</p> <hr/> <p>Create an innovative program (Live and Local) to enable unserved areas with significant numbers of First Nations people to be reached.</p> | Provide sufficient funding to allow for the engagement of local production staff and broadcasters. Invest in production through a production fund. | Government |
| | Recognise the different requirements of the regional and metropolitan content broadcasters. | Government |
| | Fund the provision of digital infrastructure, which would be of great assistance to remote communities and our broader sector members. | Government |
| | Represent First Nations media to government, emphasising its critical role in communicating with and informing local communities. | FNMA |
| | Support the sector to gather, train and maintain a team of technicians to maintain the ageing network of transmitters and broadcast equipment, with a strong focus on first nations employment and skills development. | FNMA |
| | Produce a comprehensive set of easy-to-follow information sheets (cheat sheets) covering all aspects of broadcasting and content creation to allow on-site training and skill-sharing, through various FNMA platforms. | FNMA |
| | Create and maintain a register of the equipment used across the network with a view to be standardising the equipment as it's replaced or upgraded. (This would reduce the range of skills required by technicians to repair and maintain.) | FNMA |
| | Create and maintain a skills register, available through a searchable database or portal. | FNMA |
| | Encourage more women to tell their stories and get involved in media production and broadcasting. | Members |
| Give the youth a voice and an avenue for the empowerment of their ideas and views. | Members | |

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| <p>4</p> <p>News Services</p> <hr/> <p>Increase the news and current affairs capacity of First Nations broadcasters across the country and build jobs and new employment opportunities.</p> | Provide sufficient funds through the NIAA to sustain news and current affairs capacity of First Nations media services, including the permanent employment of journalists. | Government |
| | Enable licenses for First Nations radio stations in Adelaide, Hobart and Canberra. | Government |
| | Advocate for First Nation radio stations to be located in Adelaide, Canberra and Hobart, which would enable a national coverage of First Nations news and current affairs. | FNMA |
| | Work with key members to Devise a budget proposal to request sufficient funding per annum to achieve the strengthening of First Nations News Services. (Put the argument that the representation of First Nations peoples in mainstream media negatively impacts on their development and implementation of government Indigenous policies.) | FNMA |
| | Work with existing news services to create a hub for sharing national, state and local stories, this news desk will be a multi-content sharing platform. | FNMA |
| | Work with the sector to provide regional networks with timely and relevant news for their communities. Support major news gathering organisations (NIRS, NTIV, Koorie Mail, etc) to engage journalists on home country who would be paid for their time and expertise. | FNMA |
| | Implement a program to provide training and mentoring in journalism to First Nations media workers. | FNMA |
| | Support media organisations that currently don't have any news services to employ journalists to produce local news. | FNMA |
| | Actively promote though news programs awareness and understanding among non-Indigenous Australians to correct historical inaccuracies and promote reconciliation. | Members |
| | Acknowledge that Culture is extremely important and should not be separated from the News, because Culture is what we want to share with other First Nations people. | Members |
| Employment programs should be targeted at youth - future investment in growing leaders in the community to ensure continuity in the First Nations media industry. | Members | |




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| <p>5</p> <p>Employment and Training</p> <hr/> <p>Expand training and employment programs for the First Nations broadcasting and media sector to build professionalism and career pathways.</p> | Establish a national fund to address state-based employment income disparities and stabilise national training programs. | Government |
| | Develop national traineeships across States for consistent access to training. | Government |
| | Enhance targeted national training initiatives for practical IT support, project management and financial management. | FNMA |
| | Explore dedicated on-the-job training supported by nationally accredited organisations (e.g., universities, RTOs). | FNMA |
| | Focus on "train-the-trainer" models for cultural preservation and community development. | FNMA |
| | Collaborate with broader training sector to develop and rectify scope to cover the range of competency units necessary in the media sector. | FNMA |
| | Partner with corporate organisations for structured programs and explore mentorship opportunities. | FNMA |
| | Work with members to customise training for local community needs to ensure cultural relevance. | FNMA |
| | Explore a shared centralised database to track trainers, mentors, training opportunities and resources. | FNMA |
| | Develop models of community-based training with skilled trainers embedded in local contexts, such as online training programs (e.g., weekly 1-hour classes). | FNMA |
| Facilitate training in administrative and financial skills to undertake audits and read financial reports. | FNMA | |

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| | Allocate resources to reduce multitasking burden on staff (e.g., 5-6 roles per person). | Members |
| | Share skills, knowledge, and experiences across networks as First Nations mentors. | Members |
| | Explore secondment programs for role-swapping, skill-sharing, and hands-on learning (e.g., 12-week exchanges). | Members |
| | Advocate for career pathways by making roles appealing and visible (e.g., social media campaigns to "make radio cool again"). | Members |
| | Support accredited pathways to ensure workforce readiness. | Members |
| | Leverage tools like RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) to encourage skill validation. | Members |
| | Empower the next generation with training in podcasting, storytelling, and language preservation. | Members |



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| <p>6</p> <p>Infrastructure and Digital Networks</p> <hr/> <p>Upgrade broadcasting infrastructure to meet current industry standards and workplace health & safety requirements.</p> | Provide significant funding for digital infrastructure taking into account the different technology requirements depending on service location. | Government |
| | Recognise the difficulties in securing technicians in some areas and the costs of ongoing maintenance. | Government |
| | Review funding every three years as technology changes quickly and becomes obsolete in that time. | Government |
| | Facilitate / fund the ownership of buildings that First Nations media organisation broadcast out of. | Government |
| | Advocate for funds to meet the demand for digital infrastructure and maintenance. | FNMA |
| | Assist in streamlining the equipment used nationally so that technical cost of purchase, repair and maintenance can be lowered. | FNMA |
| | Continue to inform journalists and politicians that the FNMA is the most culturally appropriate mechanism to provide positive representation of First Nations issues and success. | FNMA |
| | Advocate or provide a dedicated grant writer for training or other support to assist organisations in securing funds for infrastructure and maintenance. | FNMA |
| Help each other and communicate well in seeking common ground and share skills and resources. | Members | |



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| <p>7</p> <h2>Government Messaging</h2> <p>Recognise the sector as the preferred channel for government First Nations information campaigns, given the effectiveness of its strong audience engagement and capacity for appropriate local customisation, including language delivery.</p>  | Recognise that First Nations media has the capacity to produce or customise campaigns that will align with local cultural protocols. | Government |
| | Through the FNMA, include First Nations media in the Department of Finance's procurements policy (media is not mentioned in the procurement list). | Government |
| | Allow for and encourage at least a 3% mandated target for Indigenous media participation in all Government campaigns as this reflects the community's that government operate within. | Government |
| | Devise a strategy that represents the First Nations Media Industry as a whole as there is a strong basis against dealing with multiple organisations in government. | FNMA |
| | Present a unified front to government through a business case that is seen as relevant to many government stakeholders. (They are not unsympathetic but need selling on viability and cost effectiveness.) | FNMA |
| | Facilitate a member Working Group that can become a vocal advocate for government messaging procurement. | FNMA |
| | Explore the use of a champion to bring First Nations barriers and challenges into the wider public area. | FNMA |
| | Urgently contact the Department of Finance for an extension to put in a submission or a discussion paper on indigenous media procurement. www.niaa.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-procurement-policy-ipp-reform-discussion-paper . | FNMA |
| | Apply with NIAA as a procurement supplier on behalf of First Nations media. | FNMA |
| Establish a Working Group of member organisations facilitated by the FNMA to become a prominent public champion and to negotiate with the top levels of government to be heard. | Members | |

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| <p>8</p> <h2>Preserve Archives</h2> <p>Preserve First Nations media archives to sustain culture and language and create meaningful employment.</p> | Streamline regulations and processes to make archives more accessible to First Nations communities. | Government |
| | Allocate sufficient resources for archiving efforts, including storage, equipment, and training programs. | Government |
| | Support the storage of materials on country where feasible and respecting community-led decisions about access and preservation. | Government |
| | Establish culturally appropriate, climate-controlled facilities for archiving materials. | Government |
| | Ensure digital copies of materials are returned to communities and stored under community control. | Government |
| | Recognise that preserving First Nations media archives is not just about safeguarding materials—it is about honouring the voices of ancestors, reconnecting individuals with their heritage, and ensuring that cultural knowledge continues to thrive. | Government |
| | Facilitate training communities in archiving techniques, from cataloguing to digitisation, so they can manage their own archives. | FNMA |
| | Conduct audits of member archives to identify and prioritise preservation efforts. | FNMA |
| | Host Huddles and workshops to share best practices for preserving and accessing archives. | FNMA |
| | Collaborate with communities to ensure culturally respectful practices, such as handling restricted materials. | FNMA |
| | Represent First Nations interests in national discussions about archiving and working with international bodies on the return of cultural heritage. | FNMA |
| | Work with community elders, government bodies, and FNMA to co-design archiving processes that respect cultural protocols. | FNMA |
| | Advocate for increased funding and seek partnerships with organisations willing to contribute to the cause. | Members |
| | Focus on high-risk materials, such as magnetic tapes nearing degradation, and ensure they are digitised first. | Members |
| | Equip local communities with the skills and tools to manage their archives, ensuring sustainability. | Members |
| Use communication channels to highlight the importance of preserving First Nations media archives and the risks of losing cultural heritage. | Members | |
| Implement best practices in your organisation and encourage others to do the same. | Members | |

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| <p>9</p> <p>Annual Content Production Fund</p> <hr/> <p>Establish an annual and competitive content development fund for First Nations broadcasters and media producers to support cultural maintenance and meaningful jobs.</p> | Provide funding for an annual content production fund. | Government |
| | Enable the fund to be administered and controlled by First Nations people through an independent organisation under the umbrella of the FNMA. | Government |
| | Devise a practical organisational schematic that could administer an independent content fund. | FNMA |
| | Develop funds distribution criteria that is more ‘emergency funding,’ for example, cyclones, funerals etc to be able to cover events and news that is not currently covered by traditional grant applications and processes. Take into account funds provided for content production by the CBF and other State Government agencies. | FNMA |
| | Make the fund platform neutral, to allow for content that may be distributed online and in social media, not just radio and television. | FNMA |
| | Devise a panel system that would not be onerous on its members and would avoid conflicts of interest. | FNMA |
| | Work with government to devise a funds application system that is responsive, flexible and transparent. | FNMA |
| | Acknowledge in the funds rationale that storytelling is important, but the real aim of the fund is economic; jobs, skills and self-determination of direction and content for First Nations people. | FNMA |
| | Support FNMA in its efforts to secure and administer any established annual content production fund. | Members |
| Serve on funds distribution panels when required. | Members | |

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| <p>10</p> <p>Closing The Gap-Digital Inclusion</p> <hr/> <p>Improve access to digital services so First Nations communities can more equally access news, health, education and employment information.</p> | Upgrade towers to address ‘fortuitous coverage,’ especially in remote and very remote areas. | Government |
| | Arrange partnerships with key stakeholders to improve digital inclusion outcomes. | Government |
| | Achieve scale through centralised funding between local, state and federal Governments. | Government |
| | Evaluate the impact on communities of the shift to 5G. | Government |
| | Learn from and apply the findings / lessons (recommendations) of the inDigiMOB Project (See Evaluations 3 and 4 below). | FNMA/Members |
| | Work with First Nations broadcasters to discuss impacts, timing and actions around digital inclusion. | FNMA/Members |
| | Provide digital skills at the community level, taking into account their specific needs. | FNMA/Members |
| | Train digital champions in communities who can mentor others (e.g., Deadly Digital Communities) cementing long term trust arrangements. | FNMA/Members |
| | Evaluate the Digital Literacy Skills Framework for relevance. (See https://www.dewr.gov.au/foundation-skills-your-future-program/resources/digital-literacy-skills-framework) | FNMA/Members |
| | Provide up-to-date information to members about the progress of status and developments of digital inclusion projects, eg NBN Integrated Roadmap (https://www.nbnco.com.au/content/dam/nbn/documents/sell/products/roadmap/nbn-integrated-roadmap-Sept-2024.pdf.coredownload.pdf) | FNMA/Members |
| Utilise already existing resources for cyber security and e-safety, such as Australian Cyber Security Centre and e-Safety Commission (https://www.cyber.gov.au/). | FNMA/Members | |
| Provide communities with information resulting from the Better Connectivity Projects (https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications-arts/better-connectivity-plan-regional-and-rural-australia) | FNMA/Members | |



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First Nations Media Australia
P.O Box 348, Sellicks Beach, SA 5174

General Enquiries: enquiries@firstnationsmedia.org.au
Account Enquiries: accounts@firstnationsmedia.org.au