

OCT 2024



FIRST PEOPLES' ASSEMBLY OF VICTORIA

Statewide Treaty

COMMUNITY EXPLAINER



People thrive when they can set their own course in life. When they can make choices about what works best for them and their families based on their own needs, experiences, talents and aspirations.

When it comes to Aboriginal communities, cultures and lands, **the experts are of course Aboriginal people.**

That's why we want Treaty to ensure Aboriginal communities always have the ability to come up with and deliver practical solutions at a local level.



FIRST PEOPLES'
ASSEMBLY OF
VICTORIA





WHAT IS THE ASSEMBLY?

The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria is the democratically elected body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the journey to Treaty in Victoria.

It's mob making decisions for mob to get Treaty done.

If you're mob and 16 years old or over, you can enrol with the Assembly to help choose the path forward.



WHAT'S HAPPENED ON THE JOURNEY SO FAR?




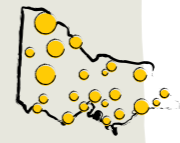
The Assembly held elections in 2019 and 2023 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Victoria have chosen 33 Traditional Owners to represent their communities.



The elected Assembly Members and the engagement team are constantly holding events and forums in every corner of the state to listen to ideas and aspirations for Treaty.

With Community's guidance, the Assembly has established a number of building blocks to make sure Treaty can happen fairly and in a way that's grounded in our culture, Lore and law.

For example, the Assembly has:

- ✓ Created a Self-Determination Fund to help Traditional Owners prepare for their Treaty negotiations at a local level. 
- ✓ Established the Treaty Authority to serve as the independent umpire to oversee the negotiation process and help navigate any related disputes. 
- ✓ Called for the creation of the Yoorrook Truth-telling process to examine the impact of colonisation and help craft practical solutions to improve the lives of our people. 
- ✓ Reached agreement that there will be both Statewide Treaties negotiated by the Assembly to drive 'big picture' reform and Traditional Owner Treaties that will reflect the priorities and aspirations of the relevant local areas. 

WHAT'S NEXT?

Treaty negotiations between the First Peoples' Assembly and the Victorian Government are getting underway!

These negotiations are about the first Statewide Treaty.

The first Statewide Treaty will make sure our communities are properly represented and can use local knowledge to come up with practical solutions to improve the lives of our people across the state.

There are some things we already know that we are going to push for in the Treaty negotiations – based on the many discussions to date and all the feedback we've received from mob and the experts in our community organisations.

There are also many topics we are still working on.

This flier is to help explain the ideas and concepts we're exploring and to encourage you to have your say.

We want your feedback, because it's your Treaty!

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

In addition to the Statewide Treaty, the various Traditional Owners across Victoria will be able to build on this work and negotiate Treaties that reflect the priorities in their areas. These will empower local decision-making at a community level! Those negotiations will unfold over the coming years at different paces – it's not a case of one-size-fits-all.



Treaty

A living document for the generations

We want the first Treaty agreement – the Statewide Treaty – to both facilitate an ongoing process, and also deliver tangible improvements to the lives of Aboriginal people now.

To make sure it's First Peoples who are making the decision about First Peoples issues, we think an important first step is to expand the roles and responsibilities of the First Peoples' Assembly so it can help deliver better outcomes for our communities.

We'll be pushing for a future version of the First Peoples' Assembly that has meaningful decision-making powers, independence from Government, and various functions that will contribute to Victoria's democratic landscape and good governance.



DECISION-MAKING POWERS ABOUT FIRST PEOPLES' MATTERS

When it comes to Aboriginal communities, cultures and Country, the experts are Aboriginal people. So we want our own democratically elected representatives making the decisions about such things.



DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

We'll continue to grow our independent electoral roll and represent our communities with a range of advocacy across the board!



CEREMONIAL ROLES

Victoria is home to some of the oldest living cultures in the world – this is something that should be acknowledged and respected so everyone can celebrate it!

We think the Assembly should play a role in putting culture into the heart of Victoria's democracy and official events.



GUIDANCE AND ADVICE ACROSS GOVERNMENT

We'll make sure enduring and holistic mechanisms are in place to ensure governments get advice directly from First Peoples. This will lead to better decision making and better outcomes.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We want the power to hold the Government to its promises and make sure they are up to scratch and delivering for mob.



A FIRST PEOPLES' ASSEMBLY

WITH EXPANDED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



TRUTH-TELLING AND HEALING

If we want to move on together, we need people to understand and accept the truth about the past.

We want First Peoples to be able to keep telling our truths and share our stories with all Victorians and so we'll push for ongoing truth and story-telling, focused on healing and fostering a shared understanding of our histories.

The Assembly will also make sure that key recommendations from the Yoorrook Justice Commission are implemented.

BETTER RESOURCING AND EVALUATION

Funding for First Peoples needs to reach our communities and the organisations that serve them well. We want a say in how funding is budgeted and allocated and making sure it has thorough oversight.

We also want a bigger investment into our independently managed Self-Determination Fund, so we can help create wealth and prosperity in our communities for generations to come.



Practical outcomes: Ideas we've heard!

We're still gathering ideas and feedback for what else the Statewide Treaty should deliver.

The future version of the Assembly will set the stage for generations of progress, but we also want to use this opportunity to secure tangible improvements right now.

We've heard heaps of deadly ideas and now need to focus on setting the priorities.

EDUCATION



We want to make sure the next generation have the foundations they need to thrive.

We've heard that our communities would love to see more things like Aboriginal centres of excellence, skills and job packages, free education from childhood to university, and efforts to embed First Peoples knowledge and history into school curriculums.

HOUSING



Everyone should have a place they can call home. Ideas have been raised about community-owned and managed public housing and initiatives to help more Aboriginal families get their own home.

ELDERS



We want our Elders to be able to age with dignity, so we need to recognise the unfair gap in life expectancy.

Early access to senior cards and the creation of a Community-controlled Retirement Fund for Elders are ideas we've heard.

HEALTH

Healthy people, healthy communities! Let's boost Aboriginal community-controlled health services, because no-one knows community better than community! Communities are interested in securing funding so our community health centres can deliver a full range of free services.



JUSTICE

We need better ways to keep our communities safe – ways that are not focused on tinkering with the broken systems, but creating Aboriginal led approaches to justice that focus on prevention, early intervention and healing. They need to be informed by the cultural rights of First Peoples at every point. There are also urgent priorities such as increased oversight of justice and police and focusing investment on communities rather than prisons.



CULTURE

Let's make sure our cultures are recognised and respected and can be celebrated by everyone who calls Victoria home. We'd like to see place markers, dual naming, language in schools, and a public holiday focused on First Peoples history and cultures.



LAND

Land is key to who we are as First Peoples. Our communities need the ability to care for Country. We're also keen to explore all the options for creating prosperity now and for future generations through sustainable use of our lands, skies and waters.



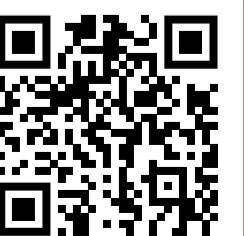
YOUTH

We want our kids to grow up strong in culture, proud of their communities, connected to Country and have the tools they need to thrive. We've heard deadly ideas about language and cultural hubs, sports scholarships, and learning institutes for young mob, and we know much reform is needed of youth justice and out-of-home care laws.



HEY MOB! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

SCAN THE QR CODE TO HAVE YOUR SAY!



ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE,

ABORIGINAL LAND.

Our sovereignty will never be ceded.

We want decisions about First Peoples to be made by First Peoples, for First Peoples. That's why self-determination is at the heart of all we do, our guiding principle – it's not just the destination, it's how we get there.

We will exercise our inherent rights as First Peoples, maintain our continuing connection to Country and uphold our cultures, Lore and law.

And, you have our commitment to making sure we earn and maintain the continual backing of Community – the Statewide Treaty will be a “living” document. The signing of this Treaty will be the first step in a bigger journey.

If you're mob from or in Victoria, and are 16 years old or over, enrol today to have your say and help get Treaty done!

firstpeoplesvic.org/enrol

