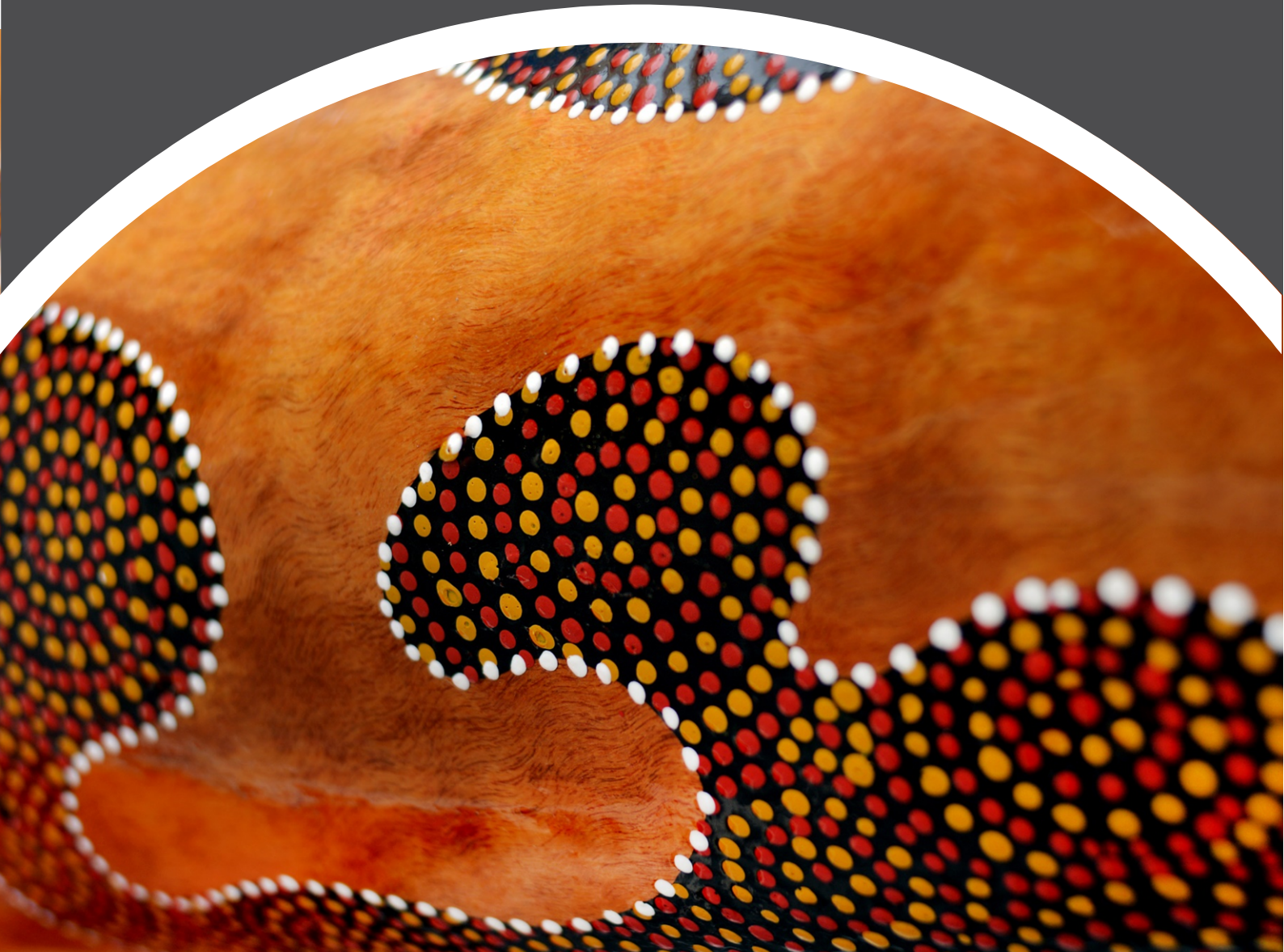


Dubbo Regional Council Aboriginal Electoral Engagement Strategy 2021

Adopted 24 May 2021



Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS	3
INTRODUCTION.....	3
GOALS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS	4
Goal One – Increase Aboriginal Enrolment Rate in the Dubbo Region	4
Goal Two – Increase Aboriginal Voter Participation in the Dubbo Region	4
Goal Three – Reduce Obstacles to Aboriginal Representation on Dubbo Regional Council	5
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	6
KEY REFERENCES	6
ACTION PLAN	7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Dubbo Regional Council respectfully acknowledges traditional owners of the Dubbo Region, the Wiradjuri people and acknowledges their Ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging.

INTRODUCTION

Dubbo Regional Council covers an area of 7,534.5 square kilometres. It represents the former Dubbo City Council and Wellington Shire Council, which amalgamated in May 2016 to form Dubbo Regional Council.

The 2019 estimated residential population for the Dubbo Region was 53,719. Households with Aboriginal person(s) was reported as being 3,499 (Dubbo Regional Council Community Profile REMPLAN). The Aboriginal population of the Dubbo Local Government Area (LGA) continues to increase, with the percentage of the population who identifies as Indigenous growing from the 2006 Census to the 2016 Census from 11.22% to 15.45%.

Aboriginal enrolment estimates provided by the Australian Electoral Commission as at 30 June 2020 show that in NSW the estimated Aboriginal voting age population is 173,203 with the NSW Indigenous enrolment rate sitting at 86.5%. This compares to an overall enrolment rate of 97.5% in NSW, and 96.6% nationally.

In the Dubbo region, 15.45% of the population identifies as Indigenous (2016 Census). Using the NSW average Indigenous enrolment rate, this equates to 7,179 enrolled, and 1,120 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were not enrolled to vote through the Australian Electoral Commission. Additionally, a number of the general population of NSW who are enrolled to vote do not participate on Election Day.

Nationally, NSW has the highest Aboriginal enrolment rate. However, Dubbo Regional Council currently does not have any Councillors who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Electoral enrolment and voting is key to achieving accurate representation of and advocacy for all members of the Dubbo Region. To achieve this, voter registration, voter participation, and Councillor representation should strive to reflect the general population, inclusive of Aboriginal community members.

GOALS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal One – Increase Aboriginal Enrolment Rate in the Dubbo Region

Initiative	Action
1.1 Improve knowledge of how to enrol amongst all members of the Dubbo Region	1.1.1 Hold virtual information sessions explaining how to enrol and how to check whether a community member is enrolled.
	1.1.2 Record sessions and make available on dedicated DRC election website.
1.2 Facilitate access to educational programs available to Aboriginal community members related to enrolment and voting in the upcoming Local Government Election	1.2.1 Chief Executive Officer to seek support from the Local Government NSW President to make representations to the Minister for Local Government regarding the creation and availability of educational programs specifically targeting Aboriginal communities
1.3 Develop a dedicated communications plan to target local voter registration, particularly amongst Aboriginal residents	1.3.1 Work with DRC's Corporate Image and Communications team to develop a communications plan surrounding voter registration, specifically targeting Aboriginal members of the Region
	1.3.2 Utilise NSW Electoral Commission resources and assets to promote in our own LGA, such as social media tiles and posters

Goal Two – Increase Aboriginal Voter Participation in the Dubbo Region

Initiative	Action
2.1 Encourage Aboriginal people to work for the Electoral Commission, encouraging deeper understanding of and involvement with the electoral process	2.1.1 Share message of becoming an advocate for community via the communications plan
2.2 Develop a dedicated Communications Program to target local voter participation, particularly amongst Aboriginal residents	2.2.1 Work with DRC's Corporate Image and Communications team to develop a communications plan surrounding voter participation, focusing on advocacy and having a say
	2.2.2 Distribute information organically via stakeholder groups
	2.2.3 Utilise NSW Electoral Commission resources and assets to promote in our own LGA, such as social media tiles and posters

Goal Three – Reduce Obstacles to Aboriginal Representation on Dubbo Regional Council

Initiative	Action
3.1 Improve access to educational programs available to Aboriginal community members in respect of nominating for Local Government	3.1.1 Chief Executive Officer to seek support from the Local Government NSW President to make representations to the Minister for Local Government regarding the creation and availability of educational programs specifically targeting Aboriginal communities.
	3.1.2 List relevant resources on a dedicated DRC webpage, including free resources, ensuring ease of accessibility
3.2 Facilitate specific information and training sessions for target audiences including Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse people and women	3.2.1 Engage Women for Election to run a workshop in Dubbo which is accessible to Aboriginal women
	3.2.2 Engage Politics in Colour to run a Local Government Candidate Training Session in Dubbo.
3.3 Promote candidate diversity	3.3.1 Highlight advocacy on behalf of community as the key message when targeting potential candidates
	3.3.2 Include optional question on onboarding form of new Councillors for identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with the aim of producing more accurate data about elected member composition in the future
3.4 Provide resources for all Candidates through Candidate briefing sessions	3.4.1 Run Region specific briefing sessions which make relevant links between OLG webinars and the Dubbo Region
	3.4.2 Consider suitability of offering Aboriginal oriented briefing sessions
	3.4.3 Approach past and present local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Councillors to present at briefing sessions and provide first-hand knowledge of the Candidate process and Councillor expectations
3.5 Work towards demystifying the nomination and registration process for prospective candidates	3.5.1 Provide access to available resources through a dedicated webpage
	3.5.2 Ensure all employees of Council, particularly Customer Experience, are informed of the process and can provide accurate information to prospective candidates

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The document was informed by Council's Community Services and Aboriginal Liaison representatives.

Feedback was sought from the Dubbo Aboriginal Community Working Party.

KEY REFERENCES

Australian Electoral Commission

[Indigenous enrolment rate - Australian Electoral Commission \(aec.gov.au\)](https://www.aec.gov.au/indigenous-enrolment-rate)

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census

[2016 Census \(abs.gov.au\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/2016-census)

Dubbo Regional Council Community Profile REMPLAN

www.app.remplan.com.au/dubboregionalcouncil

ACTION PLAN

Goal	Initiative	Action	Timeframe for Completion	Goal Objective/Success Measure
1. Increase Aboriginal enrolment rate in the Dubbo Region	1.1 Improve knowledge of how to enrol amongst all members of the Dubbo Region	1.1.1 Hold virtual information sessions explaining how to enrol and how to check whether a community member is enrolled	Monthly in June, July and August 2021	Sessions scheduled with positive interest shown
		1.1.2 Record sessions and make available on dedicated DRC election website	As completed	Sessions available to view online via DRC webpage
	1.2 Facilitate access to educational programs available to Aboriginal community members related to enrolment and voting in the upcoming Local Government Election	1.2.1 Chief Executive Officer to seek support from the Local Government NSW President to make representations to the Minister for Local Government regarding the creation and availability of educational programs specifically targeting Aboriginal communities	May 2021	Positive response from Minister for Local Government
		1.3 Develop a dedicated communications program to target local voter registration, particularly amongst Aboriginal residents	1.3.1 Work with DRC's Corporate Image and Communications team to develop a communications plan surrounding voter registration, specifically targeting Aboriginal members of the Region	Plan developed May 2021, implemented through to September 2021
	1.3.2 Utilise NSW Electoral Commission resources and assets to promote in our own LGA, such as social media tiles and posters		In conjunction with Plan development	Successful adaptation of one or more resources to be utilised within the communications plan
2. Increase Aboriginal voter participation in the Dubbo Region	2.1 Encourage Aboriginal people to work for the Electoral Commission, encouraging deeper understanding of and involvement with the electoral process	2.1.1 Share message of becoming an advocate for community through communications plan	From May – September 2021	Increased numbers of Indigenous people working for Electoral Commission from the Dubbo Region
		2.2 Develop a dedicated communications Program to target local Voter Participation, particularly amongst Indigenous residents	2.2.1 Work with DRC's Corporate Image and Communications team to develop a communications plan surrounding voter participation, focusing on advocacy and having a say	Plan developed May 2021, implemented through to September 2021
	2.2.2 Distribute information organically via stakeholder groups		Once plan developed through to September	Uptake by one or more stakeholder groups of key messaging
	2.2.3 Utilise NSW Electoral Commission resources and assets to promote in our own LGA, such as social media tiles and posters		In conjunction with Plan development	Successful adaptation of one or more resources to be utilised within the communications plan
3. Reduce obstacles to Aboriginal	3.1 Improve access to educational programs available	3.1.1 Chief Executive Officer to seek support from the Local Government NSW President to make	May 2021	Positive response from Minister for Local Government

representation on Dubbo Regional Council	to Aboriginal community members in respect of nomination for Local Government	representations to the Minister for Local Government regarding the creation and availability of educational programs specifically targeting indigenous communities		
		3.1.2 List relevant resources on a dedicated DRC website, including free resources, ensuring ease of accessibility	June 2021	Dedicated Election website is live and has positive interaction
	3.2 Facilitate specific information and training sessions for target audiences, including Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse people and women	3.2.1 Engage Women for Election to run a workshop in Dubbo which is accessible to Aboriginal women	May 2021	Workshop scheduled and receives positive response
		3.2.2 Engage Politics in Colour to run a Local Government Candidate Training Session in Dubbo	June 2021	Training session scheduled and receives positive response
	3.3 Promote candidate diversity	3.3.1 Highlight advocacy on behalf of community as the key message when targeting potential candidates	May - September	Identification within the community of advocacy as a key component of Local Government
		3.3.2 Include optional question on onboarding forms for new Councillors for identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with the aim of producing more accurate data about elected member composition in the future	September 2021, once new Council is sworn in	New onboarding form is implemented
	3.4 Provide resources for all Candidates through Candidate briefing sessions	3.4.1 Run Region specific briefing sessions which make relevant links between OLG Webinars and the Dubbo Region	Monthly in June, July and August 2021	Positive response at briefing sessions
		3.4.2 Consider the suitability of offering Aboriginal oriented briefing sessions	Decision made July 2021	Informed decision made based on evidence at initial sessions
		3.4.3 Approach past and present local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Councillors to present at briefing sessions and provide first-hand knowledge of the Candidate process and Councillor expectations	June 2021	Approach one or more current/past local Councillors
	3.5 Work towards demystifying the nomination and registration process for prospective candidates	3.5.1 Provide access to available resources through a dedicated website webpage	June 2021	Dedicated Election website webpage is Live and has positive interaction Local Government Elections - Dubbo Regional Council (nsw.gov.au)
		3.5.2 Ensure key employees of Council, particularly Customer Experience, are informed of the process and can provide accurate information to prospective candidates	June 2021	Positive Customer Experience feedback



CONTACT

Dubbo Regional Council
Cnr Church and Darling St
Dubbo NSW 2830

Phone

02 6801 4000

Online

Dubbo.nsw.gov.au