



NIAA's Policy and Investment Framework

The NIAA's Policy and Investment Framework identifies our policy and program investment priorities that contribute to the improved outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Framework also embeds within the Agency a strategic, evidence-based, outcomes focused approach, recognising that the best outcomes occur when government and Indigenous Australians work together in partnership.

Our Purpose

The NIAA's purpose is to assist the Australian Government achieve its objectives in improving the lives of Indigenous Australians by leading the development of the Commonwealth's approach, focusing on place, working in partnership, and effectively delivering programs through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Our Vision

The NIAA's vision is to be a reliable and trusted partner contributing to improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Context

We are facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities as we plan for Australia's social and economic recovery and response to COVID-19; and as we work together and strengthen our partnerships between all Australian governments and Indigenous Australians to achieve shared outcomes, including under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and support for the co-design of an Indigenous voice and local and regional decision making.

Our Priorities

In line with shared outcomes under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and the Government's priorities of jobs and wealth creation and commitment to working in partnership, NIAA's policy and program investment priorities will be:



Jobs, Business and Skills



Early Years and Education



Health and Wellbeing



Culture and Agency



Community Safety



**Land, Waters and
Infrastructure**



Our Capabilities

The NIAA has unique capabilities to contribute. At the Commonwealth level, we have networks and expertise to guide policy development and program delivery to ensure they are delivered where they are needed and in a way that meets the aspirations and needs of Indigenous Australians. At a regional and sectoral level, we leverage resources and partnerships, supplemented by our targeted funding, working with community leadership and service providers to deliver outcomes. We have a permanent presence of regional offices around Australia to strengthen local partnerships and co-design our programs and our delivery approaches.

Our funding contribution represents only a relatively small portion of the total national investment in Indigenous Australia. For this reason, the NIAA works closely with our stakeholders and partners to maximise this investment, including by shaping and leveraging other resources for the benefit of Indigenous Australians.

The NIAA can make the most difference for Indigenous Australians when we bring together our regional presence with our policy, leadership and coordination.

Positioning our effort

The NIAA will position our effort, drawing on our leadership, partnerships, and funding in a strategic and targeted way. This involves embedding a strategic, evidence-based, outcomes focused approach within the NIAA to guide our leadership and coordination efforts across government, and the design and delivery of programs and services through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy in partnership with the communities we serve.

The NIAA will focus our efforts to contribute to targets under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap across the shared outcome areas of education, employment, health and wellbeing, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, languages, and the four Priority Reforms. The NIAA will invest in economic outcomes, supporting economic growth in remote communities and improving jobs and wealth creation for Indigenous Australians.

The NIAA will also implement the Government's commitment to working in partnership both in the way the organisation works and through supporting the co-design of an Indigenous voice.

Working in partnership and in place

Working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is central to the NIAA's work and will be key to the success of developing and implementing our policy and investment approach. These partnerships enrich our advice to government, inform decision making, and contribute to the improved outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The NIAA is dedicated to ensuring our broader stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to the policy making process through consultation and engagement processes and other relationship building initiatives.

This includes through the governance and joint decision-making structures that we establish, or participate in, at the local, regional and national levels. Building and maintaining these cooperative relationships is key to enabling the NIAA to deliver effective investment and robust and considered advice.

The NIAA's success is also dependent on the leadership we demonstrate when working with organisations across the Australian Government, as well as the contribution made by these agencies. We will work with government agencies at the Commonwealth, state and territory, and local government levels to help shape policies and programs so that they reflect community aspirations and needs and are developed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The NIAA recognises that each community is unique. The NIAA's investments will focus on people and community, and we will continue to work closely with communities to help make sure policies, programs and services are effective in their context and address their aspirations and needs.



How we invest

The NIAA will invest through:

- leadership and coordination of Indigenous policy development and program design and delivery; and the
- delivery of programs through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

The Policy and Investment Framework establishes an overarching architecture to position NIAA's policy and program investments and focus our efforts on the issues, programs and services that make a difference to improving the lives of Indigenous Australians.

This will be achieved through the development of national and regional level investment strategies to identify priorities for NIAA's leadership and coordination of Indigenous policy development, program design and delivery.

These investment strategies will also help target NIAA's funding through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy to enable, catalyse and amplify government programs to ensure Indigenous Australians have access to the same benefits and opportunities as all Australians. The strategies will provide a roadmap for implementation with short, medium and long term deliverables.

Four guiding principles to prioritise our investment

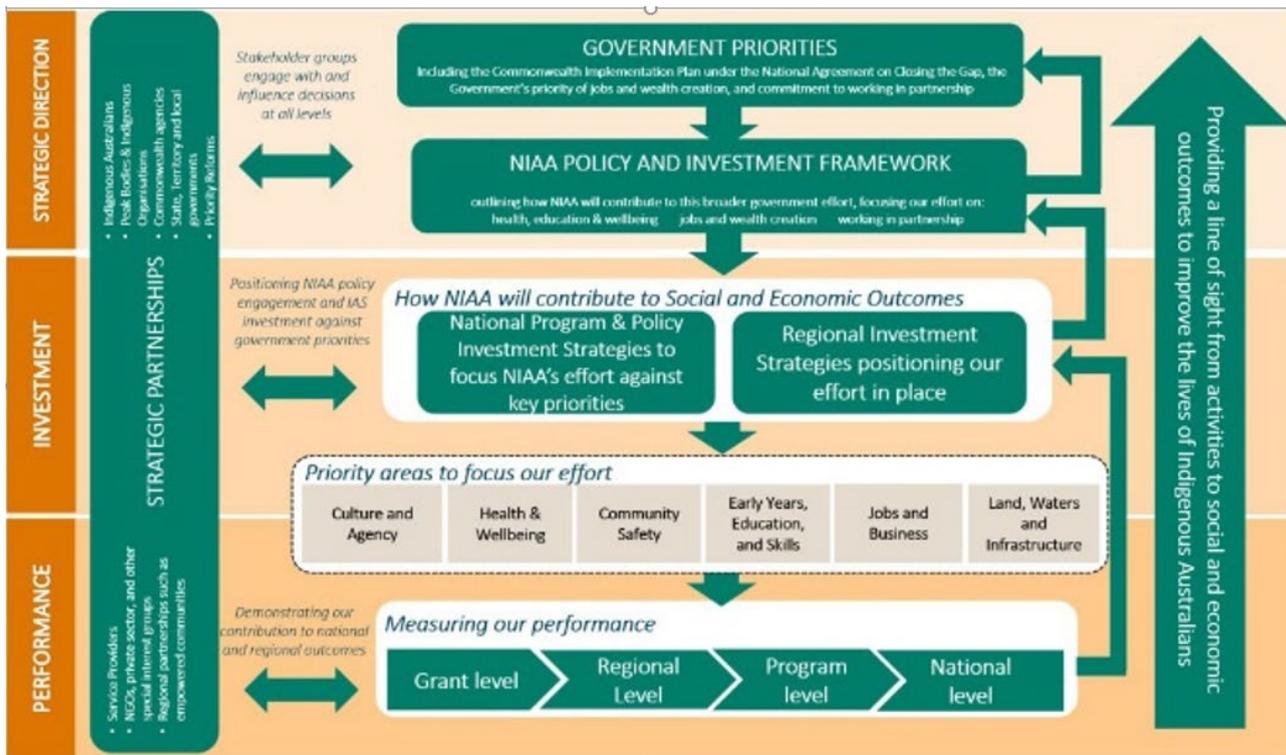
Investment strategies will elaborate key outcomes and specific actions, prioritising our resources in consultation and partnership with our Commonwealth, regional and local partners and communities to:

- identify where NIAA can make a difference to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians (**our capacity**),
- help to shape, reinforce, and leverage the whole of government effort (**our influence**),
- target investment where it is needed most (**our focus**), and
- complement and not duplicate the roles and responsibilities of others (**our value add**).

National level Policy and Program Investment Strategies will be developed to position NIAA's effort against social and economic outcomes, targeting investment where it is needed most without duplicating the responsibilities of others and leveraging other government effort. These strategies will be framed against six areas of focus: culture and agency, health and wellbeing; community safety; early years and education; skills, jobs and business; and land, waters, and infrastructure; and will consider the unique needs of Indigenous Australians in remote communities within these areas.

Regional Investment Strategies will position NIAA's effort in place and in partnership with communities. This will ensure communities across Australia drive practical policy and program actions and that the NIAA's local investment decisions, whilst being guided by NIAA's policy and program investment priorities, are shaped by the local context, community-identified aspirations and needs, and local solutions.

Figure 1: A framework for our investment



Measuring our Performance

The NIAA is building our capability in performance, monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) to measure our policy and investment impact. This will enable us to better capture and apply evidence to target our efforts and investment and demonstrate the contribution we are making to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians.

PM&E will apply to all levels of our work – at the national level, program level, and in place. The approach will be guided by the principles of the Indigenous Evaluation Strategy and build on the existing Indigenous Advancement Strategy performance and evaluation frameworks.

At the national level, it will be used to demonstrate how we are contributing to shared targets and outcomes, including under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and a commitment to jobs and wealth creation outcomes.

The NIAA will work with communities to improve and share access to data and information to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to make informed decisions – this is a key way we can deliver on Priority Reform Four under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

There will be dedicated PM&E strategies under each national policy and program and regional investment strategy, providing a clear line of sight between our effort (policy, partnerships and funds) and how we are contributing to outcomes. Performance will also be measured at the program and activity level, assessing quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of our funded activities and how well they respond to community needs.

Our PM&E approach will involve working with our service providers and partner communities to share evidence of what works in place. It will focus on continuous improvement, strengthening our systems and processes for building the evidence base of what works to achieve improved outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We will build an annual performance process to draw on lessons from research, data, evaluations, and on-the-ground experience (including from communities and providers) to inform and adapt our investment approach. Results of these efforts will be shared with our partners and reflected in NIAA's Annual Report.

Attachment A: Our priorities (to be refined)

<p>Jobs, Business and Skills</p> <p>NIAA will contribute to improving jobs and wealth creation for Indigenous Australians, building on our investment in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving employment opportunities through activities such as CDP and Indigenous rangers, new Jobs and skills plan • Fostering Indigenous business and Indigenous procurement • Indigenous tourism • Contribution to Closing the Gap targets and outcomes for employment and economic participation and Priority Reforms 	<p>Early Years and Education</p> <p>NIAA will support improvements in early childhood and education outcomes, building on our investment in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood care, services and development • Schooling • Post-schooling pathways • Contribution to Closing the Gap targets and outcomes for early childhood and education and Priority Reforms 	<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>NIAA will support Indigenous Australians to live long and healthy lives and enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing, building on our investment in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health and suicide prevention • Social and emotional wellbeing (including additional support for the Stolen Generations) • Food security • Contribution to Closing the Gap targets and outcomes for health and wellbeing and Priority Reforms
<p>Culture and Agency</p> <p>NIAA will support Indigenous empowerment and culture through our leadership, partnerships and programs, building on the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Voice and Local and Regional Decision-Making • Constitutional Recognition • Truth telling • National Resting Place • Indigenous cultural expression and conservation of languages • International engagement and opportunities • Community and organisational capability • Contribution to Closing the Gap targets and outcomes including culture, language and Priority Reforms 	<p>Community Safety</p> <p>NIAA will help ensure communities and their families are safe and supported, building on our investment in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced substance misuse and harm • Crime prevention, diversion and rehabilitation • Violence reduction and victim support • Safe and functional environments <p>Contribution to Closing the Gap targets and outcomes for safety and justice and Priority Reforms</p>	<p>Land, Waters and Infrastructure</p> <p>NIAA will assist Indigenous people to generate economic and social benefits from effective use of their land and waters, particularly in remote areas, building on our investment in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginals Benefit Account • Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous rangers • Leveraging infrastructure development and the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility • Contribution to Closing the Gap targets and outcomes for economic, land and water and Priority Reforms