

PROMOTING THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN BUSINESSES OVERSEAS: A CHARTER

The Australian Government is committed to supporting the growth and expansion of the Indigenous Australian business sector within both the domestic and global economies. Australia's prosperity is more connected than ever to developments abroad. Our trade with the world amounts to 41 per cent of our gross domestic product (GDP)—a number that has not dropped below 25 per cent since 1900. Foreign investment in Australia is at a record high—\$3 trillion, and Australia's investments around the world total \$2.1 trillion. Australia is ranked 10th in the world for GDP per capita and has the 13th largest economy. Strong international engagement will enable this prosperity to continue.

ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

The Australian Government leverages Australia's international diplomatic assets to advance national prosperity. The Australian Government's economic diplomacy agenda has four pillars:

- promote trade,
- encourage growth,
- attract investment, and
- support Australian **business**.

In 2015, the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio released a Charter to outline the range of services that it delivers to all Australian businesses, including Indigenous Australian businesses, through its economic diplomacy agenda.

This Charter, *Promoting the Economic Interests of Indigenous Australian Businesses Overseas: A Charter*, is specifically designed for Indigenous Australians. It provides additional information that may be of value to Indigenous Australian businesses interested in pursuing opportunities overseas.

WHAT THE PORTFOLIO OFFERS

The Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio delivers a range of services to Australian businesses. The portfolio includes Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Austrade, Tourism Australia, Efic and ACIAR.

DFAT manages Australia's overall international engagement through Australia's bilateral, regional and multilateral relationships, including trade and investment negotiations and aid programs. The Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) assists Australian business, by matching Australian capability with overseas demand, and identifying new commercial opportunities. Austrade also leads on investment promotion, attraction and facilitation. Tourism Australia leads on promotion of Australia as a tourist destination. The Export Finance and

Insurance Corporation (Efic) supports Australian businesses who are active internationally through specialist finance solutions. The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) builds Australia's international agricultural research collaboration. All agencies are committed to enhancing Australia's economic diplomacy, and through it, Australian prosperity and global engagement.

The Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio works with the Indigenous Affairs Group of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, including Indigenous Business Australia, the Indigenous Land Corporation and the Torres Strait Regional Authority to advance and promote the economic interests of Indigenous Australians.

DFAT has in place a five-year Indigenous Peoples Strategy to guide its work on issues affecting Indigenous Peoples across the foreign policy, aid, trade and corporate objectives for the department. Through its Indigenous Peoples Strategy and this Charter, DFAT will work with the Indigenous Affairs Group and its broader partners to advance and promote the economic interests of indigenous peoples around the world, in line with Australia's national interest.

BUILDING COOPERATION WITH INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Effective economic diplomacy requires a 'Team Australia' approach to international engagement. Access to international opportunities for Indigenous businesses are enhanced through inclusive, coordinated and outcomes-focused initiatives.

Initiatives from the portfolio aim to:

Support Indigenous Australian businesses

- Assist Indigenous Australian businesses to identify and access new markets where the opportunities are greatest, building productive commercial networks and relationships;
- Advance the interests of Indigenous Australian businesses in trade and investment negotiations and international economic forums
 - For example, DFAT advances specific interests that Indigenous businesses may have in trade negotiations, including intellectual property interests associated with genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions;
- Advocate on behalf of Indigenous Australian businesses through international visits by Australian ministers and senior officials;
- Support Indigenous Australian businesses in their engagement with foreign governments;
- Direct Indigenous Australian businesses to the most suitable government services using a 'no wrong door' approach;
- Inform Indigenous Australian businesses of international and domestic legal obligations, including sanctions and anti-bribery, and voluntary international business principles and corporate social responsibility norms;
- Support the establishment of Australian business groups in key global centres so businesses, including Indigenous Australian businesses, can share their experiences.

Target outreach and awareness raising amongst Indigenous Australian businesses

- Issue invitations to Indigenous Australian businesses to attend regular trade briefings to industry;
- Encourage Indigenous Australian businesses to access information about Australia's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) through Austrade's and DFAT's websites, and by attending the Free Trade Agreements Seminar Series in metropolitan, rural and regional locations around Australia;
- Promote opportunities to export-ready Indigenous Australian businesses to help build awareness about upcoming overseas business delegations and other industry-specific Austrade programs designed to support Australian businesses expand overseas.

Build Capability amongst Indigenous Australia businesses

- Build awareness amongst Indigenous Australian undergraduates about opportunities to study and undertake work placements, including in commerce or business-related fields in the Indo-Pacific region through the New Colombo Plan;
- Build awareness of the needs of Indigenous Australian businesses amongst our own staff, including the importance of including, and not inadvertently excluding, Indigenous Australian businesses from our work.

Case Study: The Herro's Journey

Jasmin Herro is breaking new ground for Indigenous businesses. Ms Herro is founder and Chief Executive Officer of Outback Global, an Indigenous-owned company which supplies uniforms, workwear, safety boots, luggage and promotional goods. Outback Global supplies many of the giants of the global economy, including Boeing Australia, Qantas, Leighton Contracting, News Corp, Johnson & Johnson and Westpac.

Following Ms Herro's attendance at a National Minority Supplier Development Council conference in the U.S. in 2012, Outback Global became the first fully Indigenous-owned company from outside the U.S. to attain minority business certification, creating a new company: Outback Global USA. This certification gives Outback Global access to corporate and U.S. government contracts set aside for minority businesses. The company is also expanding into other markets, including opening offices in the Chinese cities of Shanghai and Guangzhou and targeting multimillion-dollar contracts with governments around the world.

Ms Herro is also working to promote the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses with Australia's mining sector. In March 2015, Ms Herro was a member of an Austrade-organised delegation to Canada. The delegation, led by the Minister for Trade and Investment, brought together Australian and Canadian Indigenous communities in the resources sector.

Attract investment for Indigenous Australian businesses

- Promote Australia's reputation as an outstanding place to visit, invest and do business, including engaging media, hosting events and working with Indigenous Australian tourism businesses, exporters and industry associations;
- Facilitate opportunities for Indigenous Australians to meet with international investors;
- Work with selected Indigenous landholders to help develop investment opportunities in Northern Australia through Austrade's appointment of an Assistant General Manager for Northern Australia Delivery.

- Consult with Indigenous Australian businesses to inform relevant policy development;
- Partner with Indigenous Australian businesses to deliver activities under the Australian aid program;
- Assist Indigenous Australian businesses in showcasing their traditions, culture and knowledge to achieve trade and education outcomes, for example in tourism and natural medicine.

Procure goods and services from Indigenous Australian businesses

- Achieve set targets under the <u>Commonwealth Indigenous Procurement Policy</u> (IPP) for the number of procurements undertaken in Australia awarded to Indigenous Australian businesses;
- Exceed set targets under the IPP that ensure that Indigenous Australian suppliers are considered first when procuring certain goods or services in Australia;
- Include minimum Indigenous participation requirements under the IPP within certain high value contracts procured in Australia;
- Seek to apply the IPP targets to a broader range of procurements than is mandated under the IPP (including encouraging Australian aid program contractors to partner with and subcontract Indigenous Australian suppliers);
- Ensure that any Commonwealth, State and Territory procurement policies designed to support the interests of Indigenous Australians are exempted from government procurement commitments in Australia's trade agreements
 - For example, a specific exemption negotiated as part of all our FTAs allows the Commonwealth Indigenous Procurement Policy to mandate Indigenous-owned business participation in certain tenders or set participation targets without contravening Australia's general obligation not to discriminate against foreign suppliers.

Case Study: i2i Development

DFAT recognises that indigenous peoples across the world share similar experiences, values and aspirations in seeking to advance the interests of their communities and future generations.

DFAT contracted a 100% Indigenous Australian-owned business, i2i Development ("indigenous-toindigenous"), to support Indigenous communities in East New Britain, Papua New Guinea to commercialise co-operative cocoa farming.

With i2i Development's support the farmers were able to take advantage of opportunities in the sector and evolve their "cash when required" hobby farms into thriving ventures that benefit the entire community.

i2i Development's work with these farmers demonstrates the opportunity and demand for Indigenous Australian businesses to channel their expertise and experience into indigenous communities in other countries. i2i Development is also forming international partnerships with indigenous businesses in other countries to foster global connectivity between indigenous communities throughout the world.

Indigenous Investment Principles

The Indigenous Investment Principles (IIP) – an initiative led and owned by Indigenous Australians – were released in 2015 to provide guidance to Indigenous Australians, organisations and communities to effectively facilitate greater economic resilience and to be strong, active participants in the Australian economy. The Principles provide a voluntary framework for Indigenous Australians to establish strong, independent and enduring economic foundations which can contribute towards their efforts to maintain cultural, linguistic and environmental resilience for future generations.

Guiding objectives of the Indigenous Investment Principles:

Cultural heritage: Protect and preserve the cultural heritage of Indigenous Australians through successful investment of Indigenous communities' assets.

Economic independence: Ensure the economic independence and social development of Indigenous communities by successfully achieving their investment objectives.

Capacity building: Develop financial and commercial skills in Indigenous communities to contribute to sustainable and successful investment practices, and commercial activity generally.

Build respect in markets: Build confidence and respect with commercial counterparts in financial and other markets, promoting and encouraging confidence and investment in Indigenous communities.

Risk management: Demonstrate a transparent and sound governance structure that provides for adequate implementation, resourcing, communication strategy, operational controls, risk management and accountability.

"Indigenous communities and their leaders are acutely aware that they are negotiating, sometimes reluctantly, over their precious heritage in a manner never envisaged by their ancestors, and in circumstances where this may be the only opportunity to gain an economic foothold for today and the future. In addition, they must establish and manage the competing and often urgent short-, medium- and long-term needs and aspirations of each community to maximise the financial opportunity and create social, cultural and economic benefit, including developing mechanisms that grow intergenerational wealth creation" – Indigenous Investment Principles

"Indigenous Australians are committed to increasing their engagement in the economy on all fronts, including investment opportunities. Effective market and economic participation has enormous potential to foster culturally, linguistically and environmentally resilient communities, honouring the land, water and cultural heritage from which the financial opportunity originates, and strengthening prospects for present and future generations." – Indigenous Investment Principles

"The framework's core intent is to allow Communities with varying levels of financial knowledge, different levels of social and financial infrastructure, and specific decision-making methods to assess their particular circumstances and decide how best to move forward for the benefit of their members. It encourages decision-making that is based on accurate, independent information and free from any undue influence" – Indigenous Investment Principles

More information about the Indigenous Investment Principles can be found on the Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) website: www.iba.gov.au/iip

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are Free Trade Agreements?

A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is an international treaty that removes barriers to trade and investment, facilitating stronger trade and commercial ties, and contributes to increased economic integration between participating countries. Australia's FTAs with both individual countries and groups of countries, provide all Australian businesses, including Indigenous Australian businesses, with:

- better access to important overseas markets;
- an improved competitive position for exports;
- more prospects for increased two-way investment, and
- reduced import costs for businesses and consumers alike.

For example, a law firm may be able to establish an office in a foreign market without needing a local partner, or a financial services company may be able to provide financial advice to consumers in another country.

Some FTAs also include provisions of specific interest to indigenous peoples on intellectual property-related aspects of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. These provisions recognise the importance of these issues for indigenous peoples. Many of our FTAs include commitments relating to government procurement policies. In making these commitments, however, we ensure that policies for the economic and social advancement, and health and welfare of indigenous peoples are considered in trade agreements.

Australia has ten FTAs currently in force with New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, the U.S., Chile, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) (with New Zealand), Malaysia, Korea, Japan and China. The countries covered by these FTAs account for two-thirds percent of Australia's total trade. More information can be found at the FTA Portal: <u>https://ftaportal.dfat.gov.au/</u>

What are the benefits from exporting goods and service overseas?

Exporting can be a profitable way of expanding a business, mitigating its risks and reducing its dependence on the local market. Research shows that, on average, exporting companies are more profitable than their non-exporting counterparts. Exporting exposes businesses to new ideas, management practices, marketing techniques, and ways of competing, which can enable efficiency and productivity, in both global and domestic markets.

Austrade's website provides information about exporting: www.austrade.gov.au

To have a successful international business, a product or service which is in demand in overseas markets is required, as well as the necessary commitment, resources, skills and information to support sustained long-term exporting activities.

In most cases, solid domestic sales form the basis of a good exporting business.

A successful domestic business:

- gives overseas buyers confidence in that business as a supplier, and ensures that processes are in place and well tested;
- provides cash flow and the working capital needed to invest in developing export markets.

A sound **export strategy** will help dealing with bankers, financial advisers and government agencies. It will ensure the business grows without stretching its capability or resources. A business owner should understand the areas where the business has a strong competitive advantage, and identify any weaknesses by conducting market research to be familiar with import duties, regulations, distribution channels, market size and growth, competition, demographics and local production. Other information about the Australian Government's support for domestic businesses is available at <u>www.business.gov.au</u>.

How can Indigenous landowners help in attracting foreign investment?

The Australian Government's "Our North, Our Future – White Paper on Developing Northern Australia" contains a commitment to create simpler land arrangements to support investment. Part of this commitment is to provide more business-friendly information about the various forms of land tenure and native title across northern Australia, and to work with selected Indigenous landholders to explore investment opportunities.

Austrade's Assistant General Manager for Northern Australia Delivery will work with state and territory governments, native title representative bodies, service providers, and Indigenous business representative bodies to develop a list of potential projects.

For more information, please contact Austrade on 13 28 78.

How can I access funding for exporting to an international market?

Efic, as Australia's Export Credit Agency, supports the growth of viable Australian businesses in their international operations by providing tailored financial solutions. Efic understands that businesses, particularly Small-to-Medium Enterprises (SMEs), may find it difficult to access the finance they need to export if they lack tangible security (such as property). In these circumstances, Efic can provide a range of financial solutions, including a new Small Business Export Loan and the Export Contract Loan.

More information can be found at: http://www.efic.gov.au/business-solutions/

The Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) scheme assists export-ready Australian small-to medium sized businesses to create, develop and expand their markets overseas. Eligible businesses are reimbursed up to 50 per cent of eligible marketing and promotion expenditure. Subject to available funds, applicants may receive up to \$150,000, and the scheme provides up to eight grants to each eligible applicant. Past EMDG recipients include many of Australia's best-known exporters and the vast majority of recipients report the scheme is invaluable in helping them access new markets, and develop better international business and cultural understanding.

Further information on how to access the EMDG scheme can be found at: www.austrade.gov.au/exportgrants

How can Indigenous Australian businesses engage with Australia's overseas aid program?

The Australian Government recognises that the private sector plays an essential role in meeting the social and economic development challenges in our Indo-Pacific region. Creating commercially sustainable solutions to poverty is an essential component of a country's successful transition from relationships based on aid to ones based on economic partnerships, and to the creation of lasting prosperity.

We know that the Indigenous Australian business sector has a wealth of knowledge, ideas, capabilities and resources that can help improve the effectiveness of Australia's aid program. Indigenous Australian enterprises have a unique ability to provide culturally-appropriate, commercially focused assistance to other indigenous communities in the Indo-Pacific region. Working together will enable us to leverage each other's assets, connections, creativity and expertise to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes that satisfy Australia's development objectives as well as business objectives. We encourage Indigenous Australian enterprises to apply to DFAT's Business Partnerships Platform, which matches funding from business for projects that support commercial objectives whilst advancing Australia's aid investment priorities.

More information can be found at: <u>http://dfat.gov.au/aid/who-we-work-with/private-sector-partnerships/Pages/private-sector-partnerships.aspx</u>

How can Indigenous Australians gain new business-related skills, experience or contacts in Asia?

The New Colombo Plan (NCP) is a signature initiative of the Australian Government, which aims to lift knowledge of the Indo-Pacific in Australia by supporting Australian undergraduates to study and undertake internships in the region. The NCP includes scholarships for study of up to one year plus internships, and a flexible mobility grants program for short and longer-term study, internships, clinical placements, practicums and research. The program is open to Australian undergraduates aged 18 to 28 years old studying at Australian universities. Indigenous Australians are already active participants in the NCP across a wide range of academic fields. To be as inclusive as possible, DFAT has removed the age limit of 28 years for Indigenous Australians participating in NCP mobility programs, and will appoint an Indigenous Fellow each year under the NCP scholarship program.

The portfolio will raise awareness among Indigenous Australian undergraduates of the exciting opportunities the New Colombo Plan offers to study overseas and gain work-related experiences through internships or mentorships with the private sector in 40 locations across the Indo-Pacific. NCP scholarships are highly competitive, and high performing Indigenous undergraduates are welcome to seek more information from their universities about nomination for NCP scholarships. Indigenous undergraduates should also investigate if their university participates in NCP mobility programs.

How can we support Indigenous Australian businesses to operate in the international tourism industry?

Tourism Australia aims to increase awareness and participation in Indigenous tourism by promoting Indigenous experiences in our consumer and trade marketing.

Via trade marketing, Tourism Australia promotes a group of over 50 export ready businesses offering over 170 tourism experiences delivered by Indigenous Australians. This collection offers a diverse range of experiences ranging from quad biking, kayaking, hiking, fishing, mud crabbing, sightseeing, art and food. Tourism Australia extensively promotes this group in the global marketplace under our *Signature Experiences of Australia*, a program which packages and promotes Australia's outstanding tourism experiences from a variety of niche areas and special interest categories. *Signature Experiences of Australia* currently comprises Indigenous experiences, wineries, luxury lodges, golf courses, walks, fishing adventures and wildlife. To be included in this program, businesses must apply and meet the program guidelines. This process ensures that all businesses are able to deliver a quality experience that meets the needs and expectations of trade and international visitors. Tourism Australia specifically promotes Indigenous experiences through tourism trade education and training, representation at international trade events, marketing initiatives and ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Case study: Sand Dune Adventures

Our participation in the Indigenous collective sky-rocketed our small business activities to a whole new level of awareness, understanding and engagement in Tourism Australia's trade and marketing activities. The benefits obtained are immeasurable and we continue to build on our newly acquired knowledge by successfully participating in marketing activities locally, nationally and internationally such as roadshows, trade events, publicity and trade industry events, all of which have significantly increased our profitability and operational capacity and performance. Key successes include (but not limited to) escalating from a small based local/domestic operator to an international product with contracts secured across the globe; increased training, development and employment opportunities for our Community (employment up by 60%); an increase in our Quad-Fleet which accommodated a massive increase in our income (180%).

Andrew Smith, CEO, Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council (Sand Dune Adventures)

World Indigenous Business Forum

The World Indigenous Business Forum (WIBF) engages indigenous people in global economic discussions. The Forum offers ongoing opportunities for capacity building and global economic development, with thousands of indigenous leaders from around the world coming together to explore and share success stories for the future growth of indigenous nations. The WIBF follows 'Seven Generation Thinking', which aims to provide sustainable prosperity for communities now and for seven generations to come.

"While it is tempting to focus on studying the seemingly endless business and economic opportunities in global, national and regional markets, it is important to first look at the needs, capabilities and resources of our peoples and communities. We must consider community first and from this build an understanding of growth and to use this new local community-based growth as a 'spring board' to build and develop business in markets outside of the community." Mr. Ivan Makil, a Native American business leader and founder of "Generation Seven Strategic Partners", addressing the 2013 WIBF

"The future of every community lies in capturing the passion, energy and imagination of its own people. All development is indigenous. We need to listen to the grassroots indigenous peoples from all nations. Development is about discovering what is already there: to open up and discover. It should be coming from indigenous peoples." Dr Ernesto Sirolli, founder of "Enterprise Facilitation" (a personcentred approach to economic development), addressing the 2016 WIBF

The WIBF was founded by the Indigenous Leadership Institute in Winnipeg, Canada, and has met annually since 2010, including meetings in the US, Canada, Australia, Namibia and Guatemala. The WIBF will meet in Chile in 2017 and in New Zealand in 2018.

More information about the WIBF can be found at http://wibf.ca/

World Indigenous Business Network

International Indigenous leaders at the World Indigenous Business Forum have recognised that they are in a position to share their knowledge and resources with other entrepreneurial indigenous people who are striving to find ways towards economic prosperity. Leaders at the 2014 World Indigenous Business Forum signed a protocol to support the development of a World Indigenous Business Network (WIBN). The network will be an online community to connect, inspire and mobilise organisations and entrepreneurs to pursue the sustainable development of indigenous businesses globally.

The network will be an active and engaging platform where indigenous business people can benefit directly from shared resources, mentorships and collaboration efforts. The WIBN aims to provide opportunities to widen markets, skip intermediaries, and enhance indigenous prosperity through economic growth.

More information about the WIBN can be found at http://wibf.ca/

WHO WE ARE

DFAT

DFAT has 100 posts across the world and offices in each State and Territory capital. DFAT builds strong networks in host countries with ministers, government officials, business people, media representatives, think tanks, universities and community groups. Drawing on these networks, DFAT can advise business on the latest political, economic, commercial, regulatory and strategic developments that matter for Australia's prosperity. DFAT leads Australia's international trade and investment negotiations, including FTAs, and regularly consults State and Territory Governments, the business community and civil society stakeholders on current negotiations. DFAT works closely with Austrade on investment opportunities. DFAT manages Australia's \$5 billion aid program which focuses on economic development across our region. The contact point for business in DFAT is the Business Engagement and Trade Finance Section: <u>business@dfat.gov.au</u>.

More information can be found at: <u>http://dfat.gov.au/trade/Pages/trade-and-investment.aspx</u>

Austrade

Austrade, with a network of 83 offices in 49 international markets, is a key player in Australia's economic diplomacy. Austrade supports Australian exporters by identifying commercial opportunities, including those created through free trade agreements, and promotes Australian industry capability to overseas buyers. Austrade promotes Australia as a place to do business, as a high-quality education destination, and as a place to invest, working in partnership with industry associations and State and Territory Governments.

More information can be found at: <u>www.austrade.gov.au</u>

Efic

The Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (Efic) is Australia's export credit agency. It helps Australian businesses realise opportunities in international markets and export supply chains by facilitating access to finance.

More information about Efic can be found at: www.efic.gov.au

ACIAR

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) leads Australia's international collaboration in research and related activities towards more productive and sustainable agriculture.

More information can be found at: <u>www.aciar.gov.au</u>

Tourism Australia

Tourism is Australia's number one services export industry. Tourism Australia leads the promotion of Australian tourism internationally, with activities in 18 markets around the world. Tourism Australia works closely with Australian tourism businesses to identify target markets and develop tourism products.

More information on Tourism Australia's services can be found at: <u>www.tourism.australia.com</u>

Whole-of-Government

Portfolio agencies work across federal government to ensure Australia's economic diplomacy is well coordinated. The portfolio coordinates closely with the international economic activities of the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Industry, Treasury and others.

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The document should be attributed as: Commonwealth of Australia, "A Charter: Promoting the Economic Interests of Indigenous Australian Businesses Overseas", May 2017 ISBN 978-1-74322-392-5 (printed), ISBN 978-1-74322-393-2 (PDF)

Use of the Coat of Arms

The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used are detailed on the 'It's an Honour' website http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/ coat-arms/index.cfm.

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The artist

Natalie Bateman belongs to the largest Yuin family on the Far South Coast of NSW. Her great great grandmother is Emily Jane Gagoo Walker, her husband is Ted Stewart and their totem is "ambaara", the black duck. Natalie loves raising her three children in her tribal homeland Narooma where she connects with her land and nourishes the energy that the land gives.

The meaning of the artwork

Curled in the hand is the earth, which is surrounded by water and sun dot work. Eight limbs branch out from the palm of the hand, representing the Millennium Development Goals, giving it light on the journey and symbolising growth, set back barriers, and achievements. Deep earth reds that fade to orange represent the depth to assist globally. Yellow ochre and browns are the colours of our ancient culture. White dots represent work done by the people, goodness, assistance, aid, universal.