

Consultation Strategy

Project: First Nations
Recommendations for Culturally
Safe Training and Assessment

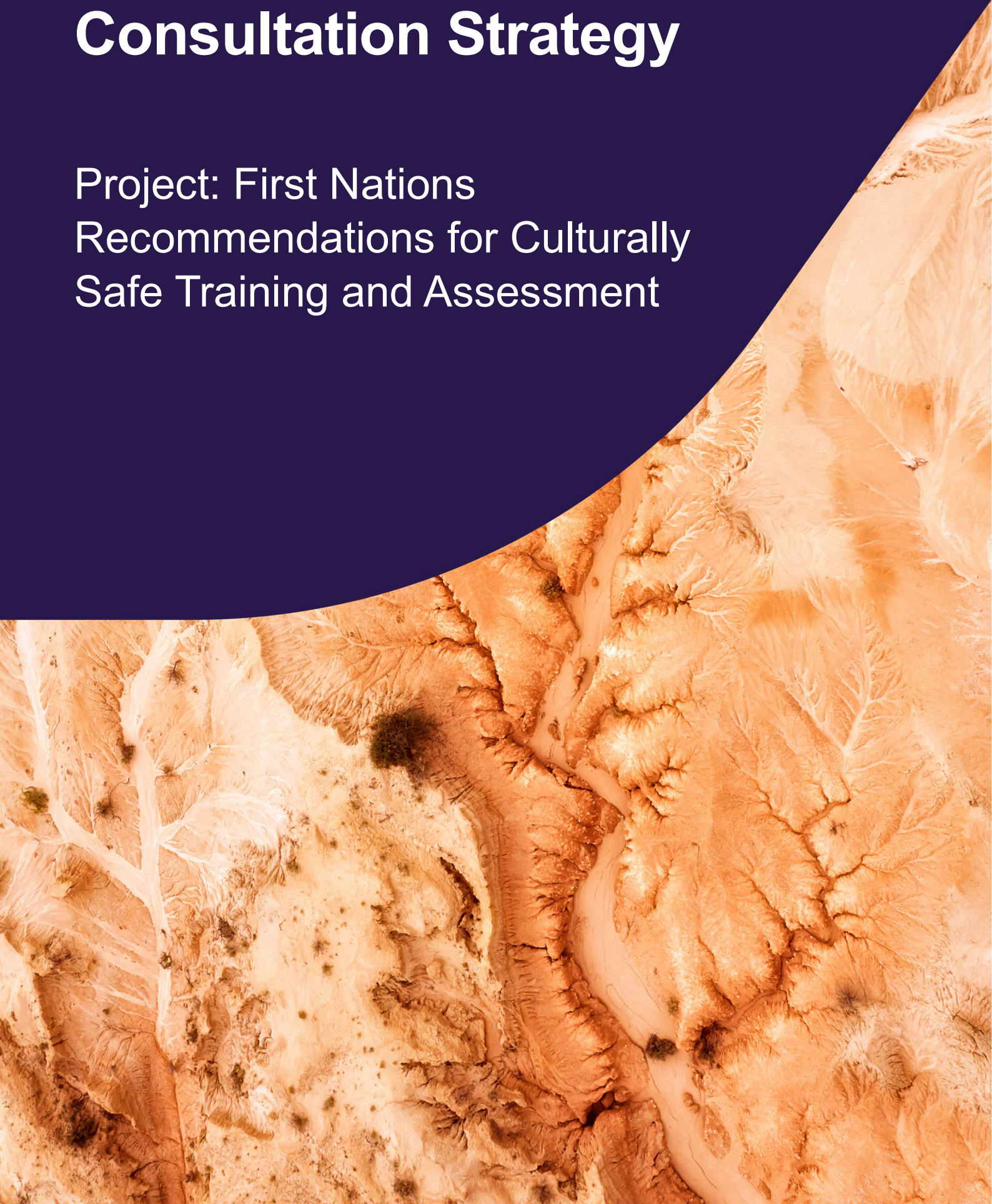


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Consultation Strategy: First Nations Recommendations for Culturally Safe Training and Assessment

This document describes the stakeholder consultation that AUSMASA will undertake during the First Nations Recommendations for Culturally Safe Training and Assessment project.

Project overview

This project will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative research to synthesise existing evidence, review Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that offer relevant units of competency within the [AUR, AUM and RII Training Packages](#), and develop evidence-based guidelines and recommendations to support culturally safe training and assessment for First Nations learners in the mining and automotive sectors. The project does not seek to replicate existing work but to consolidate, translate and build it into practical tools that trainers, assessors and RTOs can use in the field.

This project seeks to engage First Nations learners, communities, training providers and industry stakeholders across the mining and automotive sectors to ensure a full and comprehensive understanding of the barriers, needs and opportunities relating to:

- the cultural safety of training and assessment practices for First Nations learners; and
- the cultural capability of Trainers and Assessors delivering to First Nations cohorts

This focus reflects current workforce data: Mining has the highest proportion of First Nations employment of any industry (4.6%), and Automotive-related occupations, including Truck Driver, Motor Mechanic (General), Electrician (General) and Fitter (General), rank among the top 20 occupations for First Nations employment nationally.

The findings of this consultation will inform the development of evidence-based guidelines, tools and resources to support culturally safe training and assessment and will identify unintended bias within relevant units of competency relating to culturally safe training and assessment for First Nations learners. Stage 2 of the project (co-design and development) will produce the following recommended approaches, tools, guidelines and resources:

- a consolidated best-practice framework, recommended approaches, tools, guidelines and resources for culturally safe training and assessment, and case studies and recommendations to strengthen Trainer and Assessor cultural capability.

Activity timeline

This project will begin in June 2026 and is scheduled to be completed by September 2027 following the co-design, finalisation and promotion of the recommended tools, guidelines and resources.

Activity	Timeframe
Project Commencement	July 2026
Step 1: Quantitative Analysis Synthesis of existing literature and findings	July 2026
Step 2: Quantitative Analysis Identify best practices and case studies	September 2026
Step 3: Co-design framework Tools, guidelines, resources	December 2026

Activity	Timeframe
Step 4: Recommendations for the capability building and skilling of trainers and assessors	December 2026
Step 5: Draft Report and initial findings	March 2027
Step 6: Co-designed tools, guidelines and trainer and assessor capability recommendations	July 2027
Step 7: Implementation, Promotion and Monitoring	September 2027

Stakeholder consultation

Key stakeholder groups have been identified for this project, and we will meet with each stakeholder to seek their participation and insights. Through broad public consultation, interested parties will be invited to contribute their insights, the results of which will inform further targeted consultations and guide the strategic development of the training materials. When Stage 2 commences, we will co-design and continue to gather feedback on the draft tools, guidelines and resources.

Interested stakeholders can visit the AUSMASA website project page as the primary source of information regarding the project status and activities. They can subscribe to updates to the project and view the draft tools, guidelines and resources when they are available for consultation. Feedback is welcome at any time and encouraged via the project page links.

To keep up to date with project developments and be notified of consultation opportunities, stakeholders are encouraged to:

- visit the website - [First Nations culturally safe training](#)
- [subscribe](#) to project updates
- [subscribe](#) to The Journey newsletter
- [follow](#) AUSMASA on LinkedIn

Key stakeholder groups

A wide range of First Nations stakeholders will inform this project, including Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations, Traditional Owners, and other First Nations representative bodies. It should be noted that consultation is not limited to the organisations listed below. All interested community members and organisations are encouraged to engage in this project's consultation opportunities and provide feedback when draft tools, guidelines and resources are available, in line with principles of free, prior and informed consent and culturally appropriate engagement.

Automotive SWAP members

Our Strategic Workforce Advisory Panels (SWAPs) are a vital source of industry knowledge, ensuring vocational education and training (VET) programs remain aligned with employer needs.

The Automotive SWAP brings together leaders from across the sector to provide insights on workforce challenges and opportunities. Their expertise directly informs AUSMASA's Workforce Plan and guides improvements to automotive training products within the VET system.

Through consultation with a broad range of industry representatives, the panel helps us understand and respond to the workforce demands of this rapidly evolving sector.

SWAP membership details can be found on the AUSMASA [webpage](#).

Mining SWAP members

The Mining SWAP brings together leaders from across the sector to provide insights on workforce challenges and opportunities. Their expertise directly informs AUSMASA's Workforce Plan and guides improvements to mining training products within the VET system.

Through consultation with a broad range of industry representatives, the panel helps us understand and respond to the workforce demands of this rapidly evolving sector.

SWAP membership details can be found on the AUSMASA [webpage](#).

Industry Stakeholders and RTOs

The following stakeholders represent a diverse cross-section of the industry. Consultation with these stakeholders will form a key part of the project process. This section also includes consultation with RTOs with demonstrated experience in successfully engaging with and training First Nations cohorts, including contextualising foundation skills for First Nations learners.

Within each RTO, consultation will also be (where possible) directed to First Nations-specific VET support roles such as Indigenous Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Education Workers, Cultural Support Officers and Group Training Organisation (GTO) roles, given their direct involvement in supporting First Nations learners.

Industry Stakeholders and RTOs

**Industry Stakeholders and RTOs include but are not limited the following organisations:*

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Why	Outcome
Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)	National	VET regulator	National regulator responsible for RTO standards and the compliance requirements attached to AUR/AUM/RII qualifications.	Regulatory perspective on how bias findings and recommended changes to units of competency could be progressed, and how guidelines align with existing standards.
Clontarf Foundation	National	First Nations Youth education and welfare NGO	National program supporting First Nations young men through education into employment, including trades and resources-sector pathways.	Insight into the cultural safety expectations First Nations youth bring into formal training, informing guidance for RTOs receiving these cohorts.
Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence (ICOVE)	National	First Nations VET peak body	National peak body representing First Nations VET interests and providers. Learn what they are doing well in the health sector and how this could apply in mining and automotive?	Sector wide validation of findings and guidelines, and a channel to First Nations RTOs and learners nationally for consultation and dissemination.

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Why	Outcome
NACCHO Community of Practice (57 Aboriginal Community Controlled/First Nations-owned RTOs)	National	First Nations RTO network	Large national network of Aboriginal Community Controlled/First Nations-owned RTOs, offering broad reach across community-controlled training delivery.	Wide consultation input from community-controlled RTOs on cultural safety practice, and a network to test draft guidelines and tools at scale.
National Indigenous Australians Agency (Indigenous Skills and Employment Program)	National	Government agency/program	Commonwealth agency funding Indigenous skills and employment initiatives aligned with the project's objectives.	Alignment with current government priorities and funding, and a pathway to scale or embed recommendations into future program design.
NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)	NSW	First Nations education body	NSW's peak Aboriginal education advisory body, providing community-endorsed protocols and advice on Aboriginal education and training across the state.	State-level community input on cultural safety in training practice, and alignment with NSW Aboriginal education protocols.
Arnhem Land Progressive Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA)	NT	First Nations RTO / ACCO	First Nations-owned and governed RTO/ACCO delivering training in remote NT communities, with direct community authority over what culturally safe delivery means.	Community-led design input on culturally safe training and assessment models for remote and very remote First Nations learners. Transferrable assessment approach.

Charles Darwin University (CDU)	NT	RTO	Major NT RTO with a substantial First Nations student cohort and an existing research base on Indigenous VET outcomes in mining. CDU's First Nations Leadership portfolio has now been identified as a confirmed contact point for consultation, and CDU is confirmed to deliver AUR, AUM and RIL.	Access to existing evidence and research capability to strengthen the evidence synthesis, plus trainer/assessor input from NT delivery contexts.
ECB Training Services	NT & VIC	RTO	Private RTO delivering training, including Closing the Gap-aligned programs to First Nations cohorts across both the Territory and Victoria.	Trainer/assessor perspective from an RTO with existing First Nations-focused delivery experience in two different regional and industry contexts.
Industry Skills Advisory Council NT (ISACNT)	NT	Industry association / peak body	NT's peak industry training advisory body, providing workforce planning and skills advice across Territory industries including resources and automotive.	Territory-level industry and workforce intelligence to ground the project's NT recommendations in current skills and employment priorities.
NT Aboriginal Education Steering Committee	NT	Government agency/program	NT Department of Education's advisory mechanism for Aboriginal education priorities.	Territory government perspective on current assessment approaches.
Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA)	QLD	RTO	National peak body with an established cultural responsiveness/capability framework built for the health sector, directly relevant to defining trainer/assessor capability.	A transferable model and evidence base for defining and assessing cultural capability to inform the project's trainer/assessor guidelines.

South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Committee (SAAETCC)	SA	First Nations education body	SA's peak Aboriginal education and training advisory body, providing community-endorsed advice to government and education/training providers.	State-level community input on cultural safety in education and training, and alignment with SA Aboriginal education protocols.
GOTAFE (formerly Northern Victoria Institute of TAFE)	VIC	RTO	Regional Victorian RTO delivering AUR training to First Nations learners in its catchment.	Trainer/assessor feedback on AUR unit delivery and cultural safety practice in a regional Victorian setting.
Minerals Council of Australia - Victorian Division (MCA Vic)	VIC	Industry association/ peak body	State branch of the national minerals industry peak body, with an active Indigenous partnerships and economic participation focus across the minerals sector.	Industry perspective on Tos and Indigenous employment partnerships in the Victorian minerals sector.
SouthWest TAFE	Portland, VIC	RTO	Regional RTO delivering training in a region with First Nations learners.	Trainer/assessor perspective on delivering these training packages to First Nations cohorts.
University of Melbourne - Murrup Barak (Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development)	VIC	RTO	University-based Indigenous student support and engagement institute, with established expertise in Indigenous education pathways and student success.	Academic and student-support perspective on Indigenous education pathways to inform trainer/assessor capability guidance.
Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI)	VIC	First Nations education body	VIC peak Aboriginal education advisory body with a formal partnership role with the Victorian Government. They offer wrap around services – not just educational.	State-endorsed input on cultural safety in education and training, and alignment with Victorian education policy.
On Country Academy	WA	RTO	WA RTO delivering on-country and culturally embedded training models.	A working exemplar of on country/culturally

				embedded delivery to draw on when developing recommended approaches and case studies.
South Regional TAFE	Albany, WA	RTO	WA RTO delivering RII aligned qualifications to First Nations cohorts through Ranger and On Country Management traineeships co-developed with Native Title organisations and government land agencies. A confirmed Aboriginal Programs unit has been identified as the contact point for consultation, and South Regional TAFE is confirmed to deliver both AUR and RII.	Trainer/assessor insight into how compliance requirements interact with culturally safe, on-Country delivery, and a working co-design model to inform our guidelines and case studies.
Terra Rosa Consulting	WA	Independent firm offering an integrated suite of professional services for TO groups, industry and representative bodies.	Works directly with Traditional Owner groups and mining industry proponents on engagement and cultural protocols in WA.	Practical insight into industry: Traditional Owner engagement models and cultural protocols, to inform culturally safe practice guidance for mining-sector RTOs and trainers.
Wongutha Christian Aboriginal School (Wongutha CAPS)	Esperance, WA	First Nations training organisation	WA First Nations training provider close to Goldfields mining operations, working with First Nations learners transitioning into training and employment.	Community grounded insight into the cultural safety barriers and enablers First Nations learners face entering work force.

Major employers with dedicated First Nations training and employment programs

In addition to RTOs, several major resources sector employers run their own First Nations training and employment pathways, typically in partnership with an RTO rather than as a registered training provider.

Major employers with dedicated First Nations training and employment programs

**Major employers include but are not limited to the following organisations:*

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Why	Outcome
BHP	WA (Pilbara/WAIO), QLD (BMA), SA (Copper)	Major employer/industry Indigenous training and employment program	Runs Indigenous Opportunities Apprenticeship pathways across its major operations, plus targeted programs such as the 2024 Work Readiness Program developed with the Kariyarra mob.	Employer-side perspective on how apprentices are prepared for and supported through RII-aligned training, and what work-readiness and cultural safety look like from inside a major resources' employer. Identify any gaps in their current trainer and assessor approach (if any).
Rio Tinto	WA (Pilbara)	Major employer/industry Indigenous training and employment program	Runs the long-standing Aboriginal Training and Liaison (ATAL) program, recently expanded under its broader Rio Tinto Future Skills initiative.	A mature, employer-led training and liaison model to benchmark guidelines against, with reported strong job outcomes. Identify any gaps in their current trainer and assessor approach (if any).
Fortescue Metals Group (FMG)	WA (Pilbara)	Major employer/Industry Indigenous training and employment program	Pioneered the Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC) model. Training paired with a guaranteed job on completion and has placed 900+ Aboriginal people into roles over 15+ years.	The most established employer/RTO training partnership model in the sector, and a benchmark case study for guaranteed-employment, culturally safe training design. Identify any gaps in their current trainer and assessor approach (if any).

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Why	Outcome
Glencore (Coal)	QLD/NSW	Major employer/industry Indigenous training and employment program	Runs an Indigenous Employment Pathways Program and a First Nations Pathways Program across its coal operations.	Employer perspective from the coal sub-sector, complementing the Pilbara/iron-ore focus of BHP, Rio Tinto and FMG. Identify any gaps in their current trainer and assessor approach (if any).

RTOs confirmed to deliver either AUR, AUM and RII, with an identified First Nations support unit

The following RTOs deliver either AUR, AUM or RII Training Packages and have a First Nations student support unit. For each of these RTOs, consultation will seek to understand what is currently working well in their delivery to First Nations learners, alongside any gaps or limitations in their existing trainer and assessor approach.

This includes exploring how cultural safety is understood and applied across training and assessment, and how compliance requirements are being adapted for First Nations cohorts. Findings will build the project's evidence base, capturing promising practice as case studies and surfacing the gaps the project's guidelines and recommendations will need to address.

RTOs confirmed to deliver AUR, AUM or RII with an identified First Nations support unit

**RTOs confirmed to deliver AUR, AUM or RII include but are not limited the following organisations:*

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Confirmed First Nations support unit	Source
South Metropolitan TAFE	WA	RTO	Aboriginal Student Support Services (Koora Marr/Kadadjiny Mia centres)	https://www.southmetrotafe.wa.edu.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-support
North Metropolitan TAFE	WA	RTO	Koolark Centre for Aboriginal Students/Yellagonga (Joondalup)	https://www.northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au/current-students/koolark-centre-aboriginal-students
Central Regional TAFE	WA	RTO	Aboriginal Student Support team/Aboriginal Learning Centre	https://www.centrairegionaltafe.wa.edu.au/aboriginal-student-support

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Confirmed First Nations support unit	Source
North Regional TAFE	WA	RTO	Aboriginal Training Services (ATS)	https://www.northregionaltafe.wa.edu.au/we-are-here-you/aboriginal-training-services
TAFE Queensland	QLD	RTO	Indigenous Student Support Officers (ISSOs)	https://tafeqld.edu.au/information-for/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people
TAFE SA	SA	RTO	Aboriginal Access Centre (AAC)	https://www.tafesa.edu.au/services/aboriginal-support
TAFE NSW	NSW	RTO	Aboriginal Engagement and Student Support (AESS)	https://www.tafensw.edu.au/study/support-services/aboriginal-students
TasTAFE	TAS	RTO	Aboriginal Support Programs (ASOs)	https://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au/students/support/atsi-support
Box Hill Institute	VIC	RTO	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit (ATSIU)	N/A

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Confirmed First Nations support unit	Source
Canberra Institute of Technology	ACT	RTO	CIT Yurauna (First Nations Educational Centre of Excellence)	https://cit.edu.au/study/cit-yurauna
Bendigo Kangan Institute	VIC	RTO	Djimbayang Indigenous Engagement Centre	https://www.bendigotafe.edu.au/study-with-us/indigenous-education
Chisholm Institute	VIC	RTO	Indigenous Engagement Unit / Koorie Student Support	https://www.chisholm.edu.au/students/current-students/student-support/indigenous-support
Gordon Institute of	VIC	RTO	Kitjarra wurrun-geen (First Peoples Education Support)	https://www.thegordon.edu.au/students/

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type	Confirmed First Nations support unit	Source
TAFE (The Gordon)				first-peoples-education-support
TAFE Gippsland	VIC	RTO	Koorie Unit	https://www.tafegippsland.edu.au/study-with-us/studentsupport
Holmesglen Institute	VIC	RTO	Koorie Liaison Unit/First Nations Student Support	https://www.holmesglen.edu.au/current-students/student-support/indigenous-student-support
Central Queensland University	QLD	RTO	Indigenous Engagement Division (still known as Nulloo Yumbah)	https://www.cqu.edu.au/about-us/indigenous-engagement
Federation University Australia	VIC	RTO	Aboriginal Education Centre	https://www.federation.edu.au/about/indigenous-matters/aboriginal-education-centre

Jobs and Skills Councils

Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) each hold responsibility for a portfolio of industries and lead the review and development of training products. Their engagement with First Nations workforce priorities varies by industry and consultation with each JSC will focus on how proposed guidelines and recommended changes to units of competency can be progressed through the training product development cycle.

Organisation	Location	Stakeholder type
BuildSkills Australia	National	JSC
Future Skills Organisation	National	JSC
Human Ability	National	JSC
Industry Skills Australia	National	JSC
Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance	National	JSC
Powering Skills Organisation Ltd	National	JSC
Public Skills Australia	National	JSC
Service and Creative Skills Australia (SaCSA)	National	JSC
Skills Insight	National	JSC

Jurisdictional distribution of stakeholders

The table below maps stakeholder types against the jurisdictions in which engagement has currently been identified. Coverage is presently concentrated in the Northern Territory and Western Australia, reflecting the highest-density mining operations and remote First Nations communities, with additional automotive-sector reach throughout Victoria. Categories marked with an asterisk (*) are stakeholder types the project team has identified as relevant but has not yet confirmed specific organisations or jurisdictions for; these will be populated as consultation progresses.

Stakeholder type	National	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
RTOs (including First Nations delivery organisations)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) including Peak Body First Nations Organisations	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓
Learners and community members (direct)*									
Group Training Organisation (GTO)*									
Employer*									
Union*									
Industry association	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Jobs and Skills Council	✓								

* Stakeholder type identified as relevant to the project; specific organisations and jurisdictional coverage to be confirmed.

Key stakeholder consultation mechanisms/approaches

The consultation approaches have been designed to be accessible for all stakeholders and provide a variety of ways to interact with and provide input into the development stages.

Purpose

- Outlining project details, including scope, objectives and timeline.
- Building a shared understanding of how First Nations perspectives and evidence will shape the research and co-design process.
- Inviting broad consultation and surfacing early themes, priorities and concerns from across the stakeholder base.

Format and participants

- Offered online and, where practicable, face to face or in a hybrid format to maximise access for regional and remote stakeholders.
- Open to SWAP members, RTOs, Jobs and Skills Councils, industry bodies, First Nations organisations, and ACCOs.
- Structured around open discussion and Q&A rather than a one-way presentation, so stakeholders can raise issues and priorities directly.

Cultural safety and inclusion

- Workshops involving First Nations stakeholders will open with an Acknowledgement of Country and be co facilitated by a First Nations staff member (where available).
- Where appropriate, yarning-based and other culturally responsive discussion formats will be used alongside, or in place of, standard workshop formats.

Outputs

- A summary of key themes and issues raised, used to inform the design of the targeted interview program and to help identify potential Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for follow-up engagement.

Consultation type: Interviews with targeted stakeholder groups, specifically First Nations

Purpose

- In Stage 1, to gather in-depth, first-hand insight into the barriers, enablers and cultural safety considerations that broad consultation alone cannot surface.
- In Stage 2, to inform and validate the co-designed tools, guidelines and resources with the people who will use them and be affected by them.

Format and participants

- 1:1 interviews with SMEs, either online or face to face, as identified in initial workshops and consultations.
- Within RTOs and training organisations, participation will be sought (where possible) from First Nations-specific VET support roles such as Indigenous Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Education Workers, Cultural Support Officers and Group Training Organisation (GTO) roles.
- Interviews may also include First Nations learners, community members and representatives of First Nations-owned RTOs and ACCOs, with participation always voluntary.

Cultural safety and inclusion

- Where interviews or workshops involve First Nations stakeholders, where possible, a first nations staff member will be present, particularly for learners and communities in regional or remote areas.
- Flexible scheduling and formats (phone, video, or in person) will be offered to support participation from regional and remote communities.
- Informed consent will be sought and explained in plain language, with participants able to nominate a support person and to withdraw at any time.
- Interview data and stories will be handled in line with First Nations data sovereignty principles, with participants retaining control over how their information and stories are used, attributed and, where relevant, published.

Outputs

- Interview findings will be thematically analysed to directly inform and validate the co-designed tools, guidelines and resources.
- Any case studies developed from interviews will be reviewed and approved by the contributing First Nations stakeholders before publication.

Consultation type: Public Consultation

Purpose

- To broaden the opportunity to review and comment on draft co-designed tools, guidelines and resources beyond the targeted stakeholder groups.
- To sense-check findings and draft recommendations against a wider range of experience and expertise before they are finalised.

Format and participants

- Draft co-designed tools, guidelines and resources will be published on the AUSMASA website for a defined consultation period, with plain-English summaries provided alongside full documents to support accessibility.
- Feedback can be submitted via online form, written submission or direct contact with the project team.
- Open to all interested parties, and explicitly welcomes feedback from First Nations learners, communities and organisations not already engaged through the targeted workshop and interview process.

Outputs

- All feedback will be logged and documented in the consultation log and reviewed by the project team.
- Where feedback results in changes to the draft tools, guidelines or resources, this will be reflected in the final, approved versions.

Contact

For further details regarding this project:

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