

# Quick Read

## PR1.3 Report of Preliminary Findings

In the spirit of the National Agreement and the NSW Implementation Plan, Priority Reform One is about empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to enact self-determination in partnership with all levels of government, and that doing so will result in better outcomes, without which the Closing the Gap targets and outcomes will not be met.

Priority Reform 1.3, or element three of Priority Reform One, seeks to address this by undertaking research and community consultation regarding the funding issues that prevent and inhibit effective partnerships i.e., shared decision-making partnerships between ACCOs and government. The project's deliverables are to:

1. Produce a comprehensive research paper on the current and required funding for partnerships between ACCOs and government (the Report of Preliminary Findings).
2. Use these findings to inform the design of a budget proposal and disbursement model for addressing these funding deficiencies to support ACCO's participation in partnerships with government going into the future.

### So far...

The PR1.3 Report of Preliminary Findings summarises the key findings arising from research, consultation and engagement activities undertaken in the first stage of the project. However, in summary, the following has been undertaken to date:

- Consultation and engagement with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), including a recent survey (the 'PR1.3 Survey') conducted by NSW CAPO to comprehend the challenges and obstacles that ACCOs encounter when engaging and participating in partnerships with government.
- A desktop (literature) review of quantitative and qualitative data, publicly available reports, and scholarly and grey literature to identify good or better practice in funding and disbursement models for effective partnerships between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations, from Australian and international examples; and comparison of existing practice in NSW against the characteristics of better practice models identified.
- Consultation with NSW Government agencies to understand government's perspectives on the experiences and barriers to engaging in strong partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties.

### What do we know?

The PR1.3 Report of Preliminary Findings highlights that there is a significant gap between the situation in NSW now and the National Agreement and NSW Implementation Plan commitments.

Instead, the ACCO sector in NSW appears severely overstretched, lacking the capacity to genuinely engage as partners with governments in both existing and new formal partnerships. ACCOs are grappling with unfunded costs associated with participating in and developing partnerships. Key findings include:

- Funding needs to be secure and aligned with the length of the partnership: Longer term funding of five years or more for participation in partnerships focused on long term, complex issues is seen as necessary to address power inequalities among parties in and aspiring to enter partnerships with governments.

- Funding is sufficiently flexible to cover a range of costs and participants: Funding needs to be flexible to cover a range of different types of costs such as travel, sitting fees, administration, engagement of subject matter experts, community consultation and engagement. Further, it needs to be sufficient and flexible to all different participants in a partnership, below peak organisations to independent representatives and smaller organisations, and the community level itself.
- Partnership participants are jointly responsible for funding distribution decisions: A joint, shared responsibility for the disbursement or distribution of funding within a partnership is preferable to reduce power imbalances. Where co-funding and/or administration of funding by an independent body is possible this can further enhance sharing of power and decision making.
- There is a low administrative burden for funding applicants and recipients: The administrative requirements, including monitoring and reporting, associated with partnership funding should be as low and streamlined as possible, and funding levels should sufficiently account for the actual time it takes to meet such requirements.

### What's Next

Over the next several months, the PR1.3 Report of Preliminary Findings will be used as a foundation for developing a budget and disbursement model for recommendation to NSW Government.

By 30 June 2024, we will:

- Develop partnership principles based best practice partnership characteristics
- Determine the average cost of participating in a variety of partnerships, including for a range of participants
- Develop a fund and disbursement model options paper for stakeholder consultation
- Refine the options paper based on stakeholder engagement and consultation
- Develop the PR1.3 Final Report and Recommendations

We look forward to connecting with you over the next few months and sharing the options paper with you for consideration and feedback.



**Get your copy of  
the PR1.3 Report  
of Preliminary  
Findings here**



## CONTACT THE TEAM

You can contact the Priority Reform 1.3 team at:

**Trista Hickey**

Project Manager

02 9689 4405

trista.hickey@alc.org.au

**Karla Scully**

Senior Project Officer

02 9689 4506

karla.scully@alc.org.au

**Billie Delboux**

Project Officer

02 9689 4466

billie.delboux@alc.org.au