



New South Wales
Aboriginal Land Council

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council **SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT**

2022 - 2023





Acknowledgement of Country & Community

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council
acknowledges and pays respect to the
Traditional Owners of the lands on which
we work, and the lands we travel through.
We also acknowledge our Elders – past
and present and extend that respect to all
Aboriginal people.



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About NSWALC

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council (**NSWALC**) is the largest member-based Aboriginal organisation in Australia, with a network of 121 Local Aboriginal Land Councils (**LALCs**) and over 30,000 members. We are the peak elected Aboriginal community-controlled representative body for the 280,000 Aboriginal people in NSW, Australia's largest Aboriginal population.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Network is a key vehicle to deliver social, cultural and economic outcomes to Aboriginal communities, and is the framework for achieving Aboriginal self-determination in NSW. Our vision for Aboriginal Land Rights continues to build on the vision of NSWALC when it was established in 1977 – the return and activation of lands and waters, harnessing the strength of our communities, protecting and promoting our culture and heritage, and securing our future.

Following the introduction of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (the ALRA)*, NSWALC received 7.5% of the land tax paid in NSW for 15 years. This money was deposited into a statutory fund, and through prudent investment has grown to enable NSWALC to continue to support the Aboriginal Land Rights Network for more than 40 years.

As an organisation, NSWALC has a wide range of functions as outlined in Division 2, Section 106 of the ALRA. These include:

- land acquisition and management,
- administration of the statutory fund,
- assisting and supporting LALCs with their functions,

- advising the Minister (and government) on Aboriginal rights and interests; including legislative and policy amendments to better meet the needs of Aboriginal people in NSW,
- and the promotion and protection of Aboriginal culture and heritage.

NSWALC provides programs, grants, and loans for land activation, land management, culture and heritage protection and community development initiatives.

In addition to supporting LALC businesses and ongoing community development, NSWALC has also established Yarpa, an Aboriginal business and employment hub, with support from the Commonwealth Government. Yarpa provides business support and connects Aboriginal businesses with procurement opportunities. NSWALC has also established two subsidiaries: Yilabara - which provides training and employment support for Aboriginal job seekers; and Birribee - which provides LALCs with social and affordable housing, and tenancy and housing maintenance support. These subsidiaries operate as social enterprises, with profits reinvested back into the enterprise to ensure long-term sustainability and benefit to future generations.

The Community Development Levy is applied to certain land dealings by LALCs with more valuable land holdings, matched by contributions from NSWALC, and is utilised to support LALCs that have fewer opportunities from their land holdings due to their location. The Community Fund is used to assist LALCs in building and strengthening their communities through improved facilities and income-generating activities.



Message from the Chair

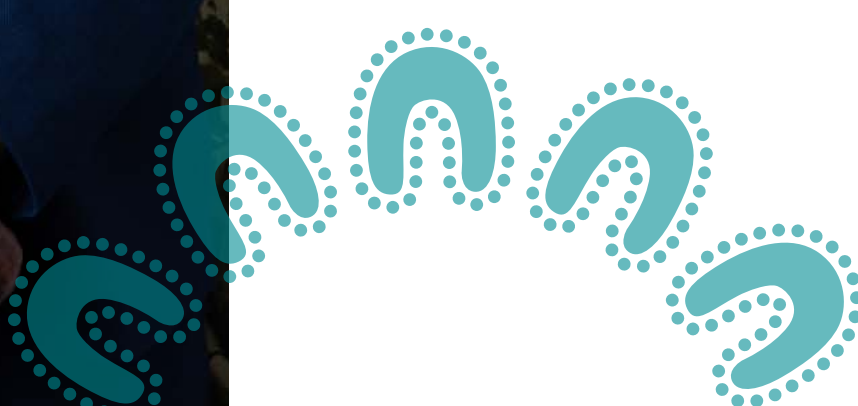
I would like to pay my respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands where we work, live and travel through. I also acknowledge with respect our Elders past and present, we respect and value the wisdom of our Old People, passed down from generation to generation through respectful listening and teaching.

It is my great pleasure to present our Social Impact Report, for the first time, it represents a full year of the implementation of our Social Impact Evaluation Framework (**the Framework**), providing a valuable snapshot of how we are meeting the needs of Aboriginal communities and our 121 Local Aboriginal Land Councils across NSW.

Here at NSWALC, we have a strong focus on delivery, outcomes and solutions. Everything we do is to improve the lives of Aboriginal peoples and their communities. We strive for this every single day as we build on the success of the Land Rights Network. Through our Strategic Plan we have established five important goals, and we will continue to strengthen and secure our three greatest assets: our culture and heritage; the land we've acquired; and our people.

The report reveals many pleasing outcomes as well as areas where we have work to do. Intensifying our services to the community and highlighting the influence of NSWALC activities – whether this is through successfully arguing for significant policy reform; lodging and managing land claims; or through business support to LALCs and our financial grants program. Our collaborative focus is on improving community resilience, sustainability and economic stability.

Localised decision making along with opportunities for collaboration, are identified throughout the report, which is so important. Community engagement is crucial, particularly in rural and remote areas where our LALCs are the lifeblood of the community. As the report suggests: getting a growing number of visitors and people accessing services provided by our LALCs would help towards economic self-sufficiency for Aboriginal communities, and it would also result in an amazing win-win outcome for NSW for improved social cohesion and wellbeing across the State.





CEO's Foreword

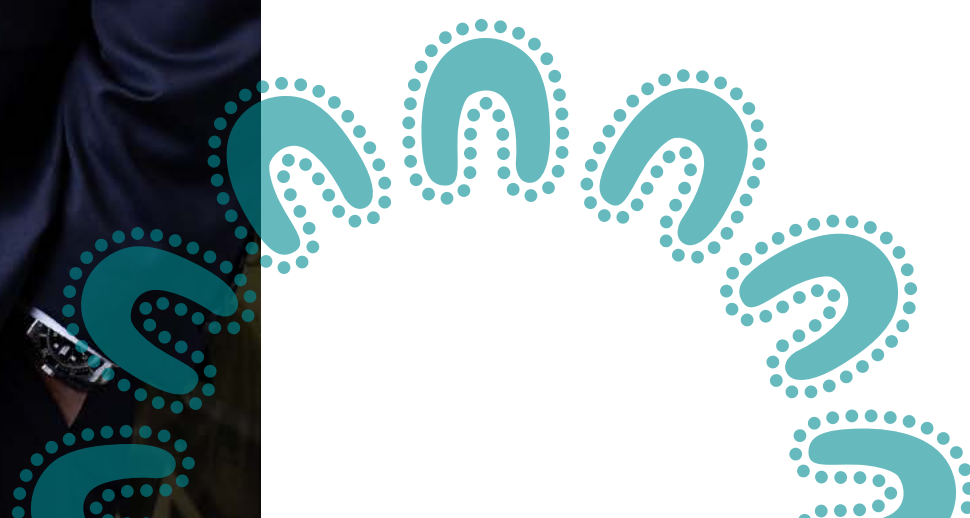
The NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Network is a powerful vehicle for delivering social, cultural, and economic outcomes to our communities. It is testament to our commitment to achieving Aboriginal self-determination in NSW. Our vision is the return and activation of lands and waters, building on the strengths of our communities, protecting and promoting our rich culture and heritage, and securing a prosperous future for our peoples.

The findings of this report highlight the significant impact of the work NSWALC undertakes to support the Aboriginal Land Rights Network, and Aboriginal peoples in NSW, and underline the potential that could be unlocked with further financial redress.

Our efforts include advocating for legislative and policy changes to better meet the needs of Aboriginal people in NSW, and providing programs, grants, and loans for land activation, land management, culture and heritage protection, and community development initiatives. The benefits of these activities are far-reaching: from business development and social housing to improved community infrastructure, enhanced education, employment, and health outcomes, as well as a strengthened connection to Culture and better access to Country.

The development of our Social Impact Evaluation Framework is a pivotal part of NSWALC's strategic planning and reporting processes. The Framework allows us to measure the impact and performance of our programs and services to ensure they meet the needs of Aboriginal communities and the 121 LALCs across NSW.

The first full year of implementing this Framework has yielded valuable insights, and findings will be published annually in our Social Impact Report. These findings will play a crucial role in enhancing our services to the community and showcasing the impact of NSWALC activities.



Executive Summary

The development of a Social Impact Evaluation Framework is an integral part of the NSWALC's strategic planning and reporting processes. This Framework aims to enhance NSWALC's approach to evaluating programs by systematically collecting and reporting data. It aligns with the strategies outlined in the NSWALC Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the Strategic Plan Supplement for 2022-2023, facilitating the measurement of impact and performance of programs delivered to Aboriginal communities and the 121 LALCs in NSW.

Development and Purpose

The Framework was developed through collaboration with NSWALC teams to identify key activities, outputs, outcomes, indicators, and data sources for each strategy under the five strategic goals. This collaborative effort included creating 'Story of Change' diagrams (**Appendix B**), which visually represent the theory of change for areas such as land/water rights, culture, economy, community support, and future security.

The purpose of the Framework is to provide an evidence base to inform decision-making and to assess the extent to which programs meet the needs of Aboriginal communities and LALCs.

Implementation and Consultation

The initial Framework was approved in December 2020, with updates in December 2022 to align with the new Strategic Plan. Due to COVID-19, planned consultations with LALCs were delayed but resumed in 2023 through 11 Regional Forums. These forums gathered feedback from over 200 attendees, which informed the data collection methodology, including the design of the survey and interviews with LALC members.

Key successes include:

- » Returning 9,275 hectares of land to 67 LALCs, and land negotiations which returned a total compensation value of \$140 million to LALCs.
- » Providing funding and support for numerous cultural activities within communities, including NAIDOC celebrations, culture and heritage education programs, Indigenous Ranger programs and cultural tourism businesses.
- » Supporting over 50 LALC businesses, 37 procurement opportunities for Yarpa Indigenous Business Members and dispersing \$1.7 million in funding to support Aboriginal fishing businesses.
- » Funding to develop a business development grant which led to \$1.4 million in funding from the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation to support Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance - an arts social enterprise owned by a consortium of Mid North Coast LALCs. For every \$1 NSWALC invested, \$27 of external funding was provided.
- » Delivering \$10.5 million worth of repairs, maintenance and improvements to housing for 17 LALCs.
- » Providing over \$3.3 million in grant funding to support LALCs and Aboriginal people across NSW including over \$770,000 in funeral support funding.
- » Securing \$159.6 million in government funding to deliver 27 initiatives over four years under the Closing the Gap partnership, seven of which are being delivered by NSWALC.
- » Helping to deliver the Aboriginal Community Connector program – supporting over 200 Aboriginal students to stay at school and complete their HSC and maintain their connection to Culture.

Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes

Goal 1: Secure Our Land and Water Rights

- » Significant achievements included lodging and managing land claims, resulting in substantial land returns and economic benefits to LALCs.

Goal 2: Protect and Promote Our Culture and Heritage

- » Efforts included advocating for legislative reform, developing strategic relationships, and supporting cultural preservation activities.

Goal 3: Pursue Economic Independence and Prosperity for Our Peoples

- » Business support, job opportunities, and housing assistance were provided to enhance economic self-sufficiency and prosperity for Aboriginal communities.

Goal 4: Support Our People and Local Aboriginal Land Councils

- » Advocacy, legal support, and financial grants improved community facilities, governance, and wellbeing.

Goal 5: Secure Our Future

- » Engagement strategies, training, and financial stewardship ensured increased participation, improved governance, and youth engagement in the Land Rights Network.

Survey and Interview Findings

The survey was open from 30 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. A total of 50 responses were received, and 10 interviews with LALCs were conducted.

NSWALC Grants and Programs Feedback

- » Awareness and satisfaction with grants and loans were generally high, with suggestions for process improvements, including better communication about funding opportunities and more capacity-building support for grant applications. The majority of LALCs who responded to the survey said NSWALC support had increased their opportunities to take part in culture and heritage activities/initiatives.

Training Effectiveness

- » NSWALC training was deemed effective, enhancing participants' understanding of land rights and governance and providing an opportunity for networking. Suggestions for improvement included more face-to-face training to help community understand the importance of the ALRA and training in LALC operations (business management and administration) perhaps in conjunction with Yarpa.

Interview Insights

- » LALCs benefited from legal and technical support, governance and leadership development, financial assistance, and culture and heritage activities facilitated by NSWALC funding. However, while some participants felt supported by their Zone Office Staff and Councillors, some LALCs noted the difficulty in servicing large regions and said that they would like more support from Zone Office Staff. These comments support NSWALC's new Community Outcomes model which is intended to focus more on supporting LALCs.





Conclusion

The first year of implementing the Framework (2022-2023) demonstrated that NSWALC is having an impact, particularly in relation to improved access, management and ownership/control of land, and in supporting LALCs to take part in culture and heritage activities.

Introduction

The development of a Social Impact Evaluation Framework is a key part of NSWALC's strategic planning and reporting processes. The Framework is part of an improved organisation-wide approach to evaluation at NSWALC, including a more systematic approach to collecting and reporting on program data.

The activities, outputs, outcomes and measures identified in the Framework align with the strategies identified under the five goals in NSWALC's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the activities and measures in NSWALC's Strategic Plan Supplement 2022-2023 (see **Appendix A** for a copy of the Framework).

The purpose of the Framework is to measure the impact and performance of the programs and services delivered by NSWALC; to provide an evidence base to inform decision-making; and to assess to what extent the programs and services are meeting the needs of Aboriginal communities and the 121 LALCs in NSW.

The development of the Framework involved collaborating with each of the different teams at NSWALC and identifying the key activities, outputs, outcomes, indicators and potential data sources (program logic) for each of the strategies under the five goals in the Strategic Plan.

'Story of Change' diagrams were developed to provide a simplified visual representation of the theory of change for each area of work i.e. land/water rights, culture, economy, community support, and securing our future (**Appendix B**). A Story of Change illustrates the steps that need to occur in order for outcomes to be achieved.

This report summarises the key findings from the first full year of the implementation of NSWALC's quarterly reporting (2022-2023) and the outcomes from interviews with LALCs and a LALC feedback survey. The findings of this report will be used as a baseline for future reports, which will be published annually.

NSWALC commenced the development of a Social Impact Evaluation Framework in 2020, with the Council of NSWALC approving a draft Framework in December 2020. Unfortunately, planned consultation with LALCs in 2021 were delayed due to COVID-19. The Framework was updated in December 2022 to align with NSWALC's new Strategic Plan introduced in 2022. Consultation with LALCs on NSWALC's Social Impact Evaluation Framework occurred at 11 Regional Forums throughout 2023 (attended by over 200 people in total). The findings from the Regional Forum consultations were used to inform the methodology for data collection, including the LALC members' feedback survey and interviews.

Key findings from NSWALC's consultations with LALCs at Regional Forums on social impact and the best way to engage with LALCs.

Key themes identified from consultation with LALCs included the following:

Community Engagement



- ▶ Suggestion for community members to participate in data collection.
- ▶ Need for community surveys, with options for interviews and promotion of surveys at community events to encourage survey participation.
- ▶ Round tables and regional forums for collective feedback from LALCs to NSWALC.

Feedback Loops



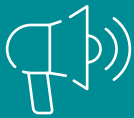
- ▶ The need for better feedback loops between LALCs and NSWALC.
- ▶ Feedback from LALCs should be incorporated into the NSW Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

Transparency and Trust



- ▶ Clear communication about the consultation process to rebuild trust.
- ▶ Need to clarify benefits of the consultation to LALCs.

Promote Good News



- ▶ LALCs emphasised the importance of sharing good news stories from within the community and promoting these good news stories to the government.
- ▶ Celebrate successes while addressing limitations and issues within LALCs.

Wellbeing and Evaluation



- ▶ LALCs were interested in measuring personal wellbeing using a wellbeing index.
- ▶ Some LALCs thought NSWALC Regional Plans could feed into the Social Impact Evaluation Framework.

Overall, there was support for all of the five goals in NSWALC Strategic Plan by the LALCs at the Regional Forums, though there were differences of opinion on which goals were a priority for each LALC.

Goal 1



- ▶ Some LALC members mentioned the first strategic goal relating to land is most important: *"Land is very important, what are we doing to activate the land for economic, cultural and social purpose."*

Goal 2



- ▶ LALCs noted the importance of protecting their culture and heritage sites.

Goal 3



- ▶ Economic independence was seen as the most important goal by some LALCs. *"As CEO – I care most about Goal 3 – economic independence, however, members & community probably care more about securing our land and water rights."*

Goal 4



- ▶ Some LALCs felt there was the need for more support from NSWALC for LALCs, members and community. *"We need more people coming out to support us."* Some LALCs also felt government, including local government, might listen more to people who come from head office.

Goal 5



- ▶ Several LALCs felt it was important for LALCs to engage more with young people as they are the future of the Land Rights Network: *"Need to secure our future – young people, they're the legacy that's going to take over and support us in our jobs."*
- ▶ *"Having programs that bring young people into LALCs like the Community Connector initiative is really important."*

How do LALCs measure change in their community?

Increased Employment and Economic Stability:



- ▶ Increase in employment numbers at the LALC and in the community more broadly.
- ▶ LALC staff receiving commensurate payment with other similar organisations/government.
- ▶ Reduction in youth unemployment: *"We don't have youth sitting under the tree anymore because they're working."*

Improved Community Resilience and Wellbeing:



- ▶ Development of a resilient community.
- ▶ Improvements in social and emotional wellbeing.
- ▶ Enhanced social cohesion.

Improvements to Housing and Infrastructure:



- ▶ Improvements in housing quality.
- ▶ Adaptation of housing stock to meet the needs of an aging population.
- ▶ Installation of solar panels to reduce electricity costs.

Increased Engagement/Attendance at Events:



- ▶ Increased school and community engagement.
- ▶ High attendance at NAIDOC events and cultural camps.
- ▶ Growing number of visitors and people accessing services provided by LALCs.

There were 50 responses to the online survey and 10 interviews with LALCs.

NSWALC's Strategic Goals



Goal 1

Secure Our Land and Water Rights to Country



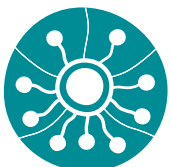
Goal 2

Protect and Promote Our Culture and Heritage



Goal 3

Pursue Economic Independence and Prosperity for Our Peoples



Goal 4

Support Our People and Local Aboriginal Land Councils



Goal 5

Secure Our Future



The following section outlines the different activities undertaken in relation to each of the five goals and the outputs and initial outcomes of these activities. In some cases, it is possible to identify the impact of these outcomes, but in most cases this information is not currently available as it generally takes time for more long-term change to occur. There is usually a hierarchy of outcomes, from outputs (numbers of people who participated) to outcomes (immediate – intermediate result of participation) to impact (long-term result of participation).



Goal 1

Secure Our Land and Water Rights to Country

This goal is about securing our land and water rights to Country so that Aboriginal peoples can realise the full social, cultural and economic outcomes of the Land Rights system by unlocking and activating the benefits of our lands and waters.

Issues

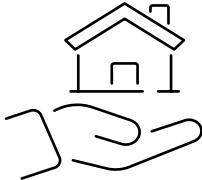
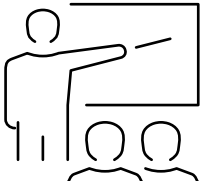
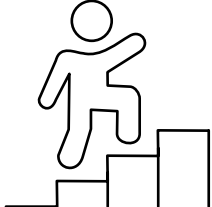
Backlog of land claims and limited social, cultural and economic outcomes and opportunities from the return of land. Aboriginal water rights are not recognised or protected.

Assumptions

LALCs want to lodge land claims/negotiate for land and own land and water.

External Factors

Level of funding provided by NSW Government for land claims processes and support for increased Aboriginal ownership of land and water.

Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Investigate, lodge and actively manage Aboriginal land claims and support LALCs to lodge land claims, negotiate for land/manage and activate land.	782 Land Claims lodged. 776 of Land Claims determined. 545 of Land Claims favourably determined. 926 of Land parcels transferred to LALCs.	9,275 hectares of land returned to 67 LALCs, and land negotiations returned a total compensation value of \$140 million payable to LALCs.	LALCS have improved access, management and ownership/control of land. 
Deliver training to LALCs in land claims, land acquisition land management and land negotiations, including Native Title claims.	5 LALCs participated in land claims training. 	Improved decision making and skill in the lodging of land claims.	
Support LALCs in appealing land claim refusals and negotiating Aboriginal Land Agreements and Native Title claims.	59 land claim refusals reviewed (cumulative). 3 appeals lodged. 10 successful appeals from previous lodgements.	\$1.5 million secured benefit to the claimant - cash or equivalent.	LALCs have increased economic independence and prosperity. 
Work with relevant agencies to advocate for land and water rights and influence policy and legislation.	55 advocacy actions undertaken. 22 political engagement activities undertaken.	Increased recognition of Aboriginal peoples' land and water rights by government.	Policy/legislative changes supporting Aboriginal land and water rights – examples include amendments to the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</i> , and the <i>Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Bill 2023</i> (see below for more detail).

Land Rights

In the last financial year NSWALC has helped LALCs to improve the size of their land holdings, which in turn will lead to greater prosperity and improve Aboriginal peoples' ability to use, manage and control land for cultural, social and economic wellbeing.

Policy and Legislative Reform

In the last financial year NSWALC contributed to the Statutory Review of the ALRA which culminated in the *Aboriginal Land Rights Amendment Bill 2022* (Bill). The Bill passed NSW Parliament on 16 November 2022 and came into force on 25 November 2022. As part of the review, NSWALC undertook engagements with LALCs on possible reform proposals.

The Bill was the first stage of reforms outlined in the 2021 Statutory Review of the ALRA intended to improve the operation of the ALRA. NSWALC is currently working on broader reforms in accordance with the next stages outlined in the ALRA review report:

- » Stage 2 – improving options to allow Aboriginal Land Councils to utilise land holdings for social, cultural and economic purposes, subject to native title, and
- » Stage 3 – consideration and consultation on ideas for broader aspirational reforms including Aboriginal culture and heritage, strategic land use improvements, compensatory mechanisms, compliance and regulatory roles, and housing.

NSWALC also provided 20 submissions to government inquiries into land and water management. Particularly successful examples include NSWALC's submission to the Statutory Five-year Review of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and the *Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Bill 2023*. Several important recommendations made by NSWALC were adopted including:

- » Acknowledgement that the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* and the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* do not align, and that government should "consider what arrangements would better support application of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme on land subject to a successful land claim under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*..." The independent review also proposed six key Pillars to support a nature positive strategy for NSW, with all pillars underpinned and informed by Aboriginal culture and traditional ecological knowledge.
- » Amendments to the *Water Act 2007* to strengthen and embed reporting and accountability in relation to Indigenous matters (by both the Authority and the Secretary), including how the Plan recognises and protects the rights of Indigenous people and supports Aboriginal perspectives and involvement in the management of the Basin.
- » Amendments to ensure future reviews of the *Water Act 2007* must "also identify opportunities under this Act to promote the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, being the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 September 2007."



Goal 2

Protect and Promote Our Culture and Heritage

This goal is about protecting and promoting our culture and heritage by advocating for legislative and policy reforms that recognise and respect Aboriginal culture and heritage and prevent the destruction and desecration of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and loss of Aboriginal culture.

Issues

Aboriginal people do not have adequate legal protection of their culture and heritage. They also have limited decision-making power in relation to managing their culture and heritage and there is the risk that cultural knowledge will be lost as older generations pass away.



Assumptions

That the NSW Government will implement a Culture and Heritage Bill that meets the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal peoples in NSW and provides the necessary legal protections.

That LALCs have the internal capabilities to pursue and manage their own culture and heritage initiatives.

External Factors

NSW Government and political parties support legislative and policy reform.

Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Analyse and provide advice on legislation and advocate for policy and legislative reform.	NSWALC provided advice on the NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (Culture is Identity) Bill 2022. 28 Advocacy actions undertaken.	Private members Bill lapsed on Prorogation (discontinuation of session of parliament) on Monday 27 February 2023. 	
Develop strategic relationships to advocate for reform.	30 professional networks/relationships established.		
Develop and provide information on Aboriginal culture and heritage rights.	2 culture and heritage resources developed and distributed.		
Support preservation of culture and heritage	1 new protected site/heritage listing. 81 artefacts repatriated.	Aboriginal culture and heritage is protected.	
Provide grants to LALCs for culture and heritage purposes.	NSWALC grants have supported 4 culture and heritage initiatives.	40% of LALCs who participated in the survey said NSWALC support had increased their opportunities to take part in cultural and heritage activities/initiatives.	 Aboriginal peoples & communities have strengthened connection to Culture.

Aboriginal Culture and Heritage

In the last financial year in NSW, the change in government stalled culture and heritage legislative reform. The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty has committed to consulting on new Aboriginal culture and heritage laws in 2024.

Interviews conducted revealed the importance of NSWALC's support in facilitating cultural activities within communities. This assistance allows LALCs to organise and execute various initiatives, such as NAIDOC celebrations, culture and heritage education programs, Indigenous Ranger programs, cultural tourism walks, and the exploration of traditional bush tucker sources and cooking.



Goal 3

Pursue Economic Independence and Prosperity for Our People

This goal is about pursuing economic independence and prosperity for our people. Currently Aboriginal peoples in NSW do not have access to their fair share of the economy - our aim is to restore economic independence and prosperity to Aboriginal communities to ensure their survival as a distinct and self-determining people.

Issues

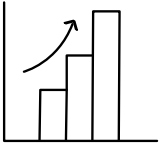

Past government policies excluded Aboriginal people from the economy. Aboriginal people were denied the right to own their own homes and businesses which would have enabled inter-generational wealth creation. Aboriginal peoples still experience high rates of disadvantage as a result of these discriminatory policies.

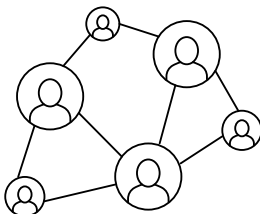
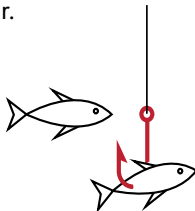
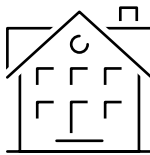
Assumptions

That NSWALC enterprises will contribute to improved economic outcomes and that LALCs have the capability, resources and opportunities to undertake economic development activities.

External Factors

The NSW Government through planning/land use and land development regimes and reforms support Aboriginal peoples' economic self-determination. The NSW Government and the Federal Government continue to support Aboriginal businesses and job seekers through their procurement and employment policies. That there is a stable economic environment conducive to economic initiatives.

Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Provide tailored business support to LALCs and Aboriginal people, including reviewing applications and project managing grants and loans.	11 Applications for business development grants. \$410,136.18 in business grants dispersed. 53 Aboriginal businesses provided with business support. 11 Aboriginal businesses participating in Yarpa Grow. 5 Yarpa Grow pop-ups held in regional areas.	LALCs and Aboriginal business owners have increased confidence.  Increase in LALCs self-sufficiency. Increase in the number of successful and sustainable Aboriginal businesses.	
Help to identify business opportunities for LALCs.	10 LALC business opportunities identified.	Increase in the number of Aboriginal businesses.	
Provide mentoring and other support to Aboriginal people looking for a job or a better job.	50 Aboriginal Job Seekers placed in jobs.	 Aboriginal people have improved access to employment opportunities.	

Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Support employers/ businesses to hire Aboriginal people and partner with Aboriginal businesses.	72 Indigenous Businesses showcasing at Meet the Buyer events. 27 Buyers attending Meet the Buyer events. 13 Indigenous Business networking events held. 37 Procurement opportunities for Yarpa Indigenous Business Members.	Strategic partnerships provide economic opportunities. 	
Promote and administer the NSWALC Fishing Fund.	8 EOIs and applications received. 5 successful applications. 4 grants/loans dispersed. \$1.7 million dispersed for new fishing businesses. 14 Aboriginal people employed in fishing businesses.	Increase in the number of Aboriginal fishing/ aquaculture businesses and Aboriginal people employed in the fishing sector. 	
Provide housing assistance to Aboriginal people, including improving their housing service experience and referral pathways.	114 LALCs supported in engaging with managing providers. Delivered \$10.5 million worth of repairs, maintenance and improvements to housing for 17 LALCs. 444 social housing dwellings managed by Birribee. 1017 social housing tenants in dwellings managed by Birribee.	Aboriginal people have greater housing independence. Increase in culturally appropriate housing services. 	
Land development – investigate and identify a pipeline of feasible projects.	9,536 potential new lots identified. 3 DAs lodged (one approved and two pending approval).	Land development that meets LALCs/Aboriginal peoples' needs.	

NSWALC business support programs – Yarpa and the LALC Business Enterprise Program - have provided invaluable support to LALCs and Aboriginal peoples in NSW. Key findings are outlined below.

Yarpa Hub

Below are quotes from people who have been supported by Yarpa.

Comments from businesses who have been connected to opportunities.

“I have met several other Aboriginal business owners, who are now part of my much valued network.”

“Connection provided through Yarpa resulted in healthy communication with potential clients.”

“First contact resulted in contract award.”

Comments on communication and engagement.

“Fantastic communication.”

“I always get a response when I connect with my coach, my coach has contacted me when appropriate.”

“Very effective and professional communication and great follow up.”

“Communication and engagement are always amazing.”

“The staff at Yarpa are so polite and excellent with their communication and response time. They are also extremely helpful and are always there to provide assistance.”

What has Yarpa done well to support First Nations Businesses?

“Providing opportunities to meet and greet with other potential customers/businesses not available prior to Yarpa’s inception.”

“Opened up communication on a number of platforms.”

“I think keeping a presence and continuing to offer support to people and business through mentorship and training.”

“Facilitated workshops, training and introductions to build professional networks. Provided passionate and capable business advisors to assist in navigating the path.”

“Deliver business advice and training in a very professional and inclusive manner. Great follow up and authentic communication.”

“Support. Encouragement and good advice.”

Local Aboriginal Land Council businesses

NSWALC has supported a number of LALC businesses in the last financial year.

Leeton & District LALC – Town Centre Motel, Business Development Grant \$20,000

Since 2019 NSWALC has worked with Leeton & District LALC to reopen and re-establish the Town Centre Motel as a profitable investment utilising a LALC Business Development Grant. NSWALC worked closely with the CEO and Board to achieve this with various stakeholders. In December 2022, due to this dedicated work, the Leeton & District LALC now has a long-term lease on the property, with higher than current market value in the agreement. This work provided capacity building of the leadership of LALC through investment development and negotiation of agreements via expert support. Without this support the Town Centre Motel would have remained closed, and the asset would have deteriorated.

Menindee LALC – Appin Station Feasibility, Business Development Grant \$17,000

Menindee LALC obtained a Business Development Grant to assist in the business planning for goat farming on Appin Station. The business feasibility was positive and through the NSWALC Community Fund, the LALC was further supported with staged business start-up land management activities. Activities included incorporation of the station, hiring staff and acquiring equipment to take goats to market. Appin Station is currently operating and increasing the operations of the Station, and this has been a stepping stone for other business opportunities for the LALC including the purchase of the Menindee grocery store that employs locals. In addition, the LALC is now exploring renewable energy development projects.

Saltwater Freshwater, Business Development Grant \$50,000

Saltwater Freshwater (SWFW) Arts Alliance is an arts social enterprise business owned by a consortium of Mid North Coast LALCs. The SWFW Business Development Grant allowed a comprehensive business plan to be delivered to enable the business to grow through the purchase of a suitable property in Coffs Harbour. The SWFW new premises has provided Aboriginal artists a space to grow their businesses. The business plan supported by the Business Development Grant unlocked an Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation grant of \$1.4 million. This means for every \$1 NSWALC invested, \$27 of external funding was provided.

Mudgee LALC Cultural Tourism Feasibility Business Development Grant \$50,000

Mudgee LALC Cultural Tourism Feasibility study produced business options for the LALC to capitalise on the area's growing tourism sector. This growth has been acknowledged through the area winning Tourism Awards in recent consecutive years. Within the approval amount the LALC was able to engage the same consultant to develop business strategies and participate in mentoring for management of the tourism offerings.

There are three key factors that contribute to positive outcomes with Aboriginal businesses and LALC businesses. These are:

- » The building of confidence – NSWALC staff are assisting Aboriginal business owners and LALCs to feel more confident about exploring different business ideas and helping them to put these into action.
- » Changing mindsets – as part of the process of identifying and exploring different business opportunities, staff are helping LALCs to have a more business minded approach and to recognise potential business opportunities.
- » Networking and interagency collaboration – NSWALC staff are working with a number of different agencies to assist LALCs with their business enterprises and have been successful in leveraging funding to help LALCs realise their business aspirations. Yarpa staff have facilitated connections between Aboriginal business owners and non-Indigenous businesses, providing a number of different business opportunities for Aboriginal businesses.

Satisfaction with the NSWALC Fishing Fund

100% of respondents were satisfied with the application process for the NSWALC Fishing Fund.

“The program staff were fantastic and went beyond all expectations to make this project happen in a complex environment and couldn't speak more highly of them, they are great.”

“Staff were very helpful and supportive of our application process.”

“Very helpful staff and weren't pushy at all. Very satisfied with the whole process.”

“The staff were committed, skilled and understanding in a difficult macro environment. Without them I fear the process may still be going, they were the difference and reason for success.”

“Staff were very responsive, courteous, friendly and very professional. I would recommend others to follow the process we had.”

“Correspondence was regular and progress updates provided.”





Goal 4

Support Our people and Local Aboriginal Land Councils

This goal is about supporting Aboriginal people and LALCs. Currently, Aboriginal peoples in NSW do not have all the support they need to achieve their community aspirations and improve community wellbeing and cohesion.

Issues

The rights of Aboriginal peoples in NSW have not been realised and Aboriginal people continue to experience disproportionate socio-economic outcomes in comparison to non-Indigenous people.

Assumptions


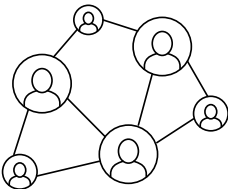

That Aboriginal people will know about the support provided by NSWALC and how to approach NSWALC for support.

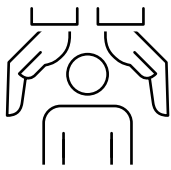
External Factors

The prevailing economic climate and the amount of funding available to disperse.

That the NSW Government continues to fund the water and sewerage program for discrete communities. That Australian governments continue to support Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Organisations (**NSW CAPO**) and Socio-Economic Targets.



Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Advocate for Aboriginal peoples' rights and interests.	<p>29 Advocacy actions (Human Rights).</p> <p>15 Advocacy actions (CAPO).</p> <p>19 LALC water & sewerage matters advocated by NSWALC.</p> <p>14 LALC asbestos matters advocated by NSWALC.</p>	<p>1 policy and legislative change supporting Human Rights.</p> 	
Provide funding to support LALCs and Aboriginal people, including legal support for LALCs.	<p>2 Education scholarships.</p> <p>14 applications for the Community Fund.</p> <p>\$1.75 million in funding committed to 14 LALC community projects.</p> <p>32 Regional Grants awarded and \$168,500 in Regional Grant funding dispersed.</p> <p>\$85,000 for the NSW Rugby League Knockout Carnival and Ball and \$89,920 in Small Grant funding dispersed.</p> <p>497 Funeral Fund grants dispersed worth \$779,494.85.</p>	<p>Strengthened relationship between LALCs and NSWALC.</p> <p>Improved community facilities and community pride.</p> <p>Increase in the value of LALC land and property assets.</p> 	Increased community wellbeing and cohesion.
Support government programs for discrete communities and LALCs/Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.	<p>39 LALC water & sewerage initiatives funded and \$1.05 million in funding dispersed, including \$262,500 in funding from NSWALC.</p> <p>\$782,902 in funding for the Aboriginal Land Clean Up and Prevention Program (ALCUP).</p> <p>\$600,000 in grants dispersed for the NSWALC Cumberland Plains Grant Program.</p> <p>\$1.028 million in funding for the Aboriginal Community Connector program dispersed to LALCs and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations with 489 students referred and 333 students actively engaged in Community Connector program.</p>	<p>Strengthened relationship between NSWALC and other Aboriginal Peak Bodies and Community Controlled Organisations.</p> <p>Improved community facilities and community pride.</p> <p>Increase in the value of LALC land and property assets.</p> <p>Increased educational outcomes.</p> <p>Improvements in health and wellbeing.</p> 	

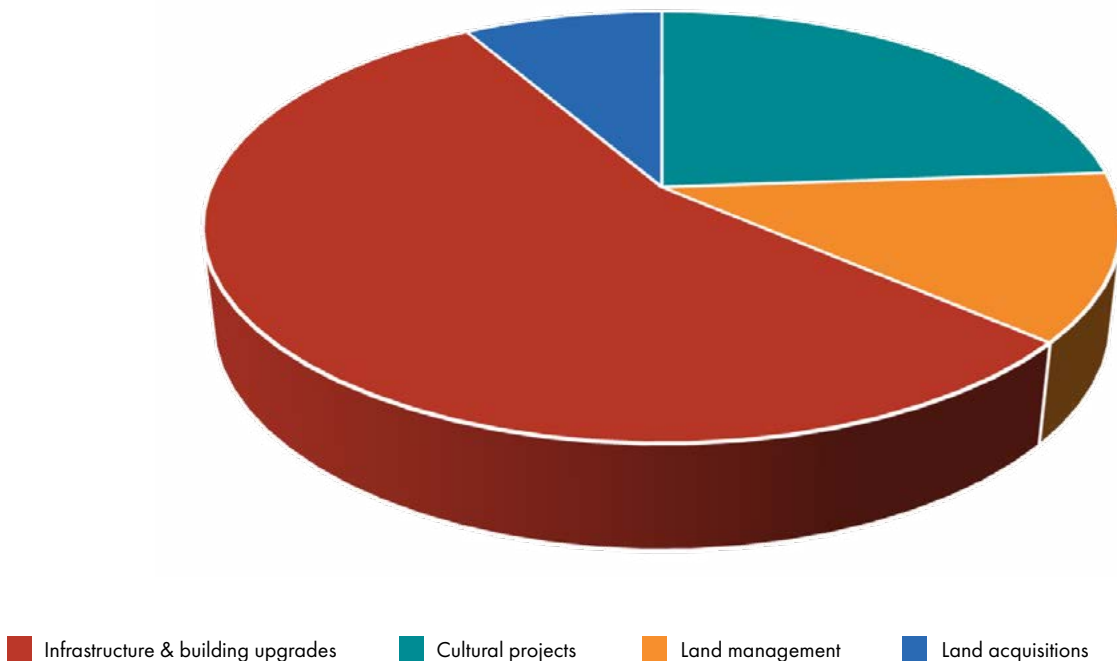
Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Engagement with human rights organisations.	4 Human Rights campaigns supported. 22 Human Rights engagement opportunities identified. 4 Research Initiatives undertaken. 11 professional networks and relationships established.	Increased awareness of NSWALC's role in promoting Aboriginal rights. 	
Sharing knowledge on human rights through the development and distribution of fact sheets.	9 fact sheets developed.	Increased awareness of Aboriginal rights and Human Rights instruments.	

NSWALC Community Fund

The NSWALC Community Fund (NCF) and the Community Development Levy (CDL) that funds it were devised as a wealth redistribution mechanism to redistribute wealth from LALCs with more valuable land holdings to those with less valuable land and development opportunities.

In the last financial year, 14 applications were received and approved, with a total of over **\$1.75 million in funding committed to 14 LALC community projects**.

AMOUNT OF NSWALC COMMUNITY FUNDING BY PROJECT TYPE

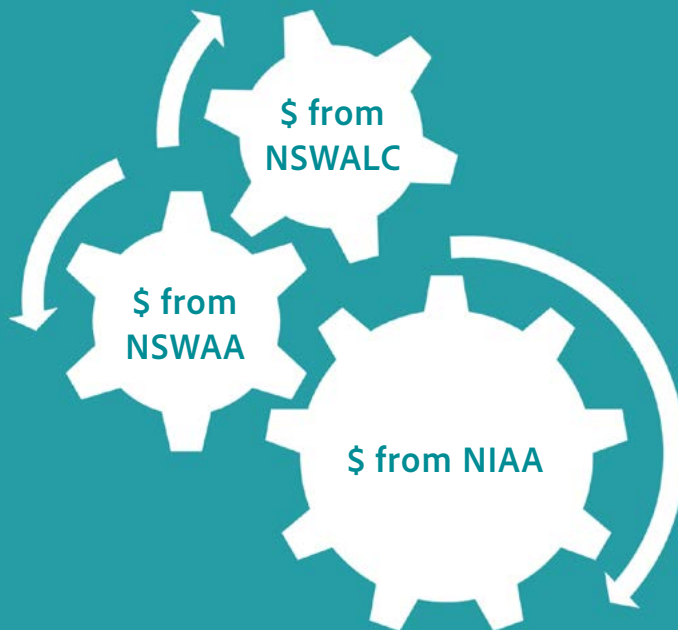


The Multiplier Effect of NSWALC Grant Funding

Case study of recipient of NSWALC Community Fund

The following case study illustrates the multiplier effects of NSWALC funding.

Nungaroo LALC received an initial NSWALC Community Fund Grant to do up their community hall, including removing asbestos. However, the initial funding was not sufficient to complete all the renovations, but the grant attracted a similar sized grant from Aboriginal Affairs NSW, which enabled the LALC to install two more toilets, increasing the number of toilets to three, and making the hall much more useable for community events. As a result of this funding the Nungaroo LALC was successful in securing a grant from the National Indigenous Affairs Agency (NIAA). Aboriginal Affairs NSW are also interested in funding cultural activities in the hall.



“...you really need to be spending the time and effort putting on stuff for community that everybody can access. This is where the NSWALC dollars have helped us. We were able to get an initial grant to do up part of the community hall. Now the community are really keen to start using the hall again. The hall was unusable until we acquired it and once we got the asbestos removed and the hall refurbished now other people want to use it...It's definitely had a positive effect across the community.”

Discrete Aboriginal Communities Programs

The Roads to Home (**R2H**) program is a NSW Government planning and infrastructure upgrade program administered by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (**DPHI**). It is intended to address the legacy of infrastructure and servicing inequality experienced in Discrete Aboriginal Communities across NSW. A total of **34 communities** are currently taking part in the program with total program funding allocated for the program being over **\$173 million**. NSWALC plays a key role in supporting the program.

The program delivers upgrades to infrastructure in discrete communities, including:

- » stormwater and other drainage
- » kerb
- » guttering and footpaths
- » public lighting
- » road surfacing and repairs
- » telecommunications and power

This program also provides the option for these communities to subdivide their land and for roads and infrastructure services to be dedicated to the local government, providing a long-term solution to the maintenance of community infrastructure. The subdivision of these large single-title lots assists in providing security of tenure and potential homeownership opportunities to residents as well.

A key focus for all LALCs in the program is local training and employment opportunities for their Aboriginal communities. In partnership with TAFE NSW and local Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), training courses are being delivered to the local community so that community members can be employed in the upgrade of their community infrastructure assets.



To date, approximately **264 Aboriginal people** have accessed training with approximately **196 gaining employment** through the program in their local area.



Approximately **49 Aboriginal businesses**, including surveyors, contractors and Program Managers have now been **contracted in the Roads to Home Program**.

Current Status of Projects

To date, five Projects have been completed, 18 of the Projects are participating in the Planning and Assessment Phase and 11 of the Projects have entered the construction phases of the Projects. Of the 11 Projects currently in construction, four are looking at completion in 2024.

NSW CAPO Closing the Gap

NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (NSW CAPO) is a representative coalition of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in NSW including the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Link-Up (NSW), Aboriginal Legal Services (NSW/ACT), Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council, AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation, First Peoples Disability Network, BlaQ and Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association (Affiliate Member).

In February 2021 the NSW Government and NSW CAPO entered into a grant funding agreement totaling \$3.6 million under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. NSW Government and NSW CAPO are signatories to the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap. The funding is to provide CAPO member organisations with resourcing to advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement, engagement and autonomy through equitable participation. NSWALC is the auspice body for this funding and has funding sub-agreements in place with each CAPO organisation to disburse agreed funding to CAPO member organisations in instalments that reflect the head funding agreement.

The 2022–23 NSW budget funded **\$159.6 million for 27 initiatives** over four years under the Closing the Gap partnership. NSWALC is hosting seven of these projects and auspices funding for two others.

Aboriginal Community Connector Program

The Aboriginal Community Connector Program is a NSW CAPO-led initiative connecting Aboriginal students with supports in their community. NSWALC auspices the funding from the Department of Education to support students to reach their learning potential. Aboriginal Community Connectors work in LALCs and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to help students connect to their culture and Country and access supports in their communities.

Feedback on the Aboriginal Community Connector Program

The Aboriginal Community Connector Program initiative student voice survey was open from 17 July 2023 to 7 August 2023, 57 responses were received from students covering 6 geographic regions from a possible 7 regions.

The Impact of the Aboriginal Community Connector program

Students taking part in the Aboriginal Community Connector program reported that Community Connectors are having a positive impact on their health and wellbeing and education outcomes.

Health and wellbeing outcomes

All students reported that their health and wellbeing has improved since working with Community Connectors. Students reported that Community Connectors have supported their mental and physical health and provided them with opportunities to connect with their culture and community.

Education outcomes

The majority of students reported feeling better about school since working with Community Connectors. The main reasons for this positive change were that the Community Connectors support students inside and outside of school, motivate them to stay in school, and strengthen their cultural identity.

Positive feedback about Community Connectors

The majority of students indicated they would recommend the Connector to friends and that they feel confident about knowing where to seek help since working with the Connector.

On the whole most students said the Community Connectors are trusted, supportive, and engaging and that there was nothing they thought the Community Connector could do differently or better.

Student Quotes:

“Yes as [I] have now had more opportunities to connect with my culture (in school and out of school). I have also been able to decide who and what serv[i]ces are best for me and not just made to stay with som[e]one I didn't like or feel comfortable with. I have also gained greater confidence in myself since working with [Community Connector's name]. I'm not afraid to ask for help as I know that [they do] not judge me.”

“[Community Connector] does everything they can to help me with school. Even talks to the teachers to help them understand what is going on with my life. I love how we can see and talk to [CC] whenever they are on the school grounds, they are never too busy to talk to me. The teachers though still need a lot of work when it comes to cultural things and what and where us students come from.”

“The best thing about working with [them] is that [I] feel like [I] have someone [I] can trust, someone that will support me and someone that genuinely cares about my future.”

“Helps me feel in touch with the community and those of my culture, and genuinely great person to ask for help and keeping me mentally and physically fit by engaging in programs.”

NSWALC Grants and Programs Feedback Survey Findings

A survey about NSWALC grants, loans and programs for LALCs and LALC members was open from 30 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. A total of 50 responses were received.

The first questions assessed the level of awareness of NSWALC’s grants, loans and programs. Overall, there was more awareness of the Community Fund than other grants and programs.

Feedback from those who had applied for NSWALC grants and/or loans suggested a range of views on the application process, with eight respondents finding it very difficult and eight also finding it easy. Overall, the average rating was 3.9 out of 7, suggesting that some aspects of the application process could be improved.

Suggestions to improve the processes for applying for grants included:

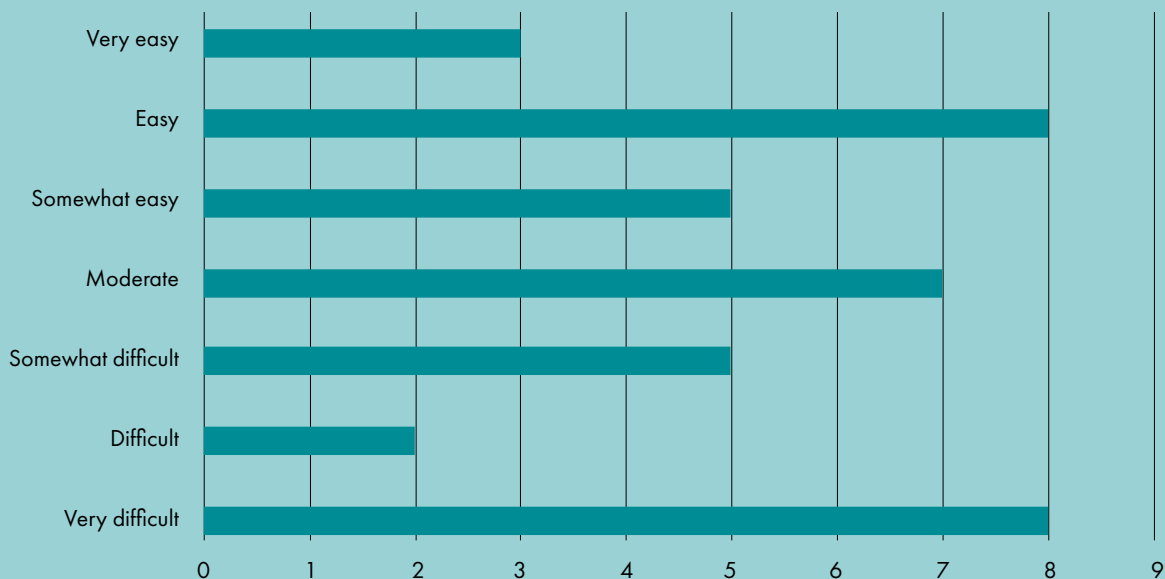
“Delivering in-person and online sessions about the grants process outlining what’s required and tips and tricks on how best to answer grant questions.”

“Increased media to make community aware of grant opportunities through NSWALC.”

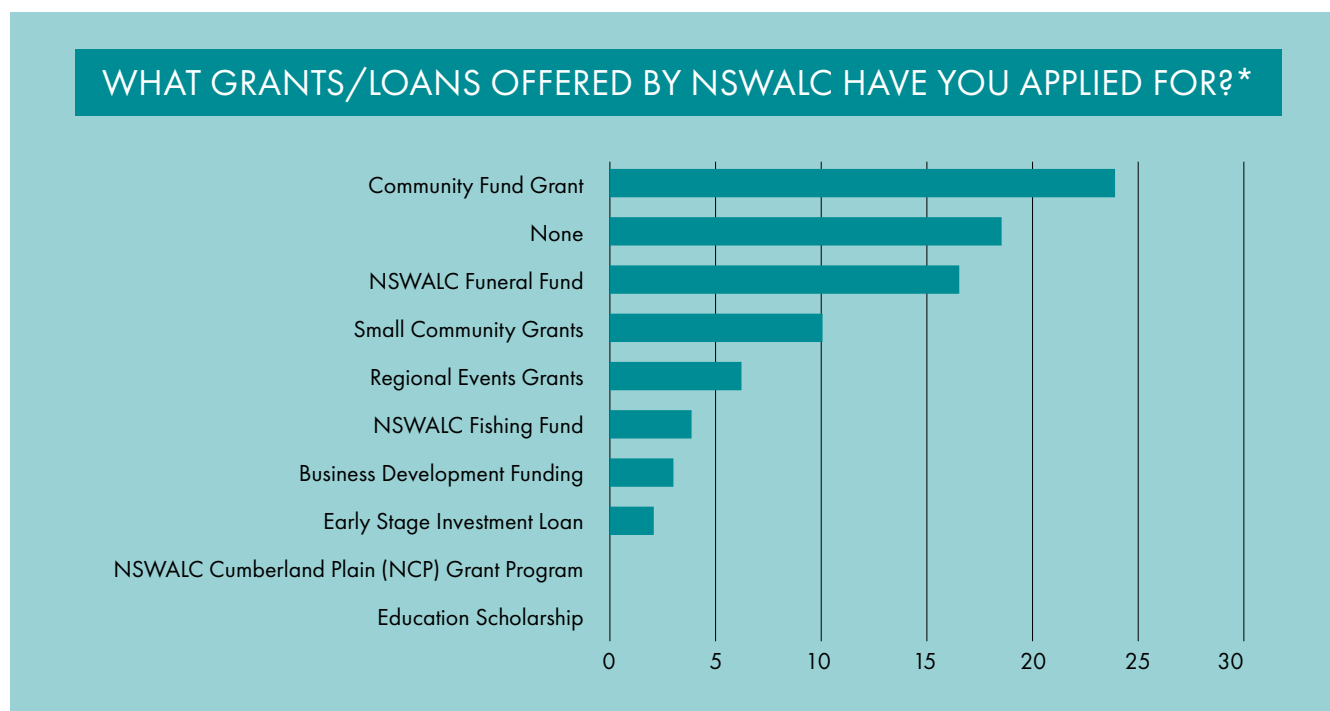
“Assistance for LALCs lacking capacity to effectively apply for grants.”

“Breaking down the process so people do not have to get a third party in to help them with the grant process, which comes at an extra cost.”

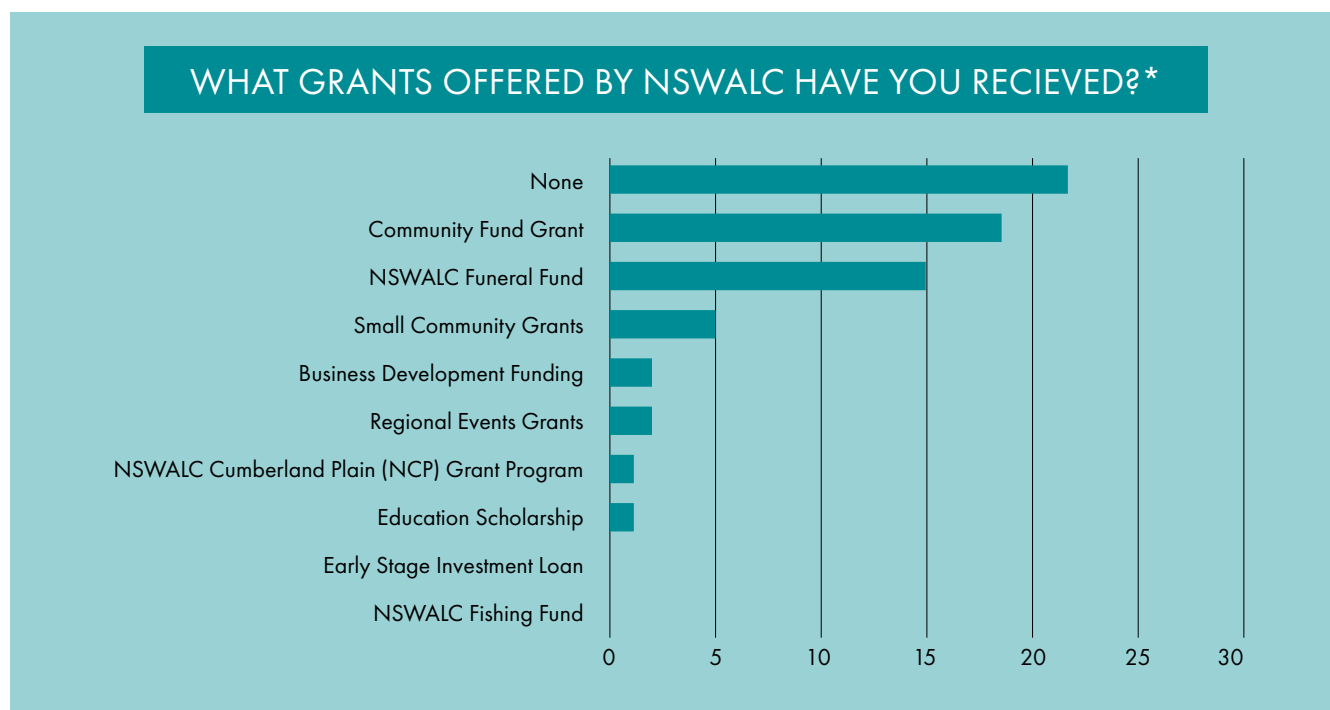
HOW DID YOU FIND THE PROCESS OF APPLYING FOR GRANTS?



The following graph shows the number of people who have applied for grants. The grants most likely to be applied for were the Community Fund Grant (n=24) and NSWALC Funeral Fund (n=17), with 19 respondents to the survey saying that they had not applied for any grants from NSWALC.



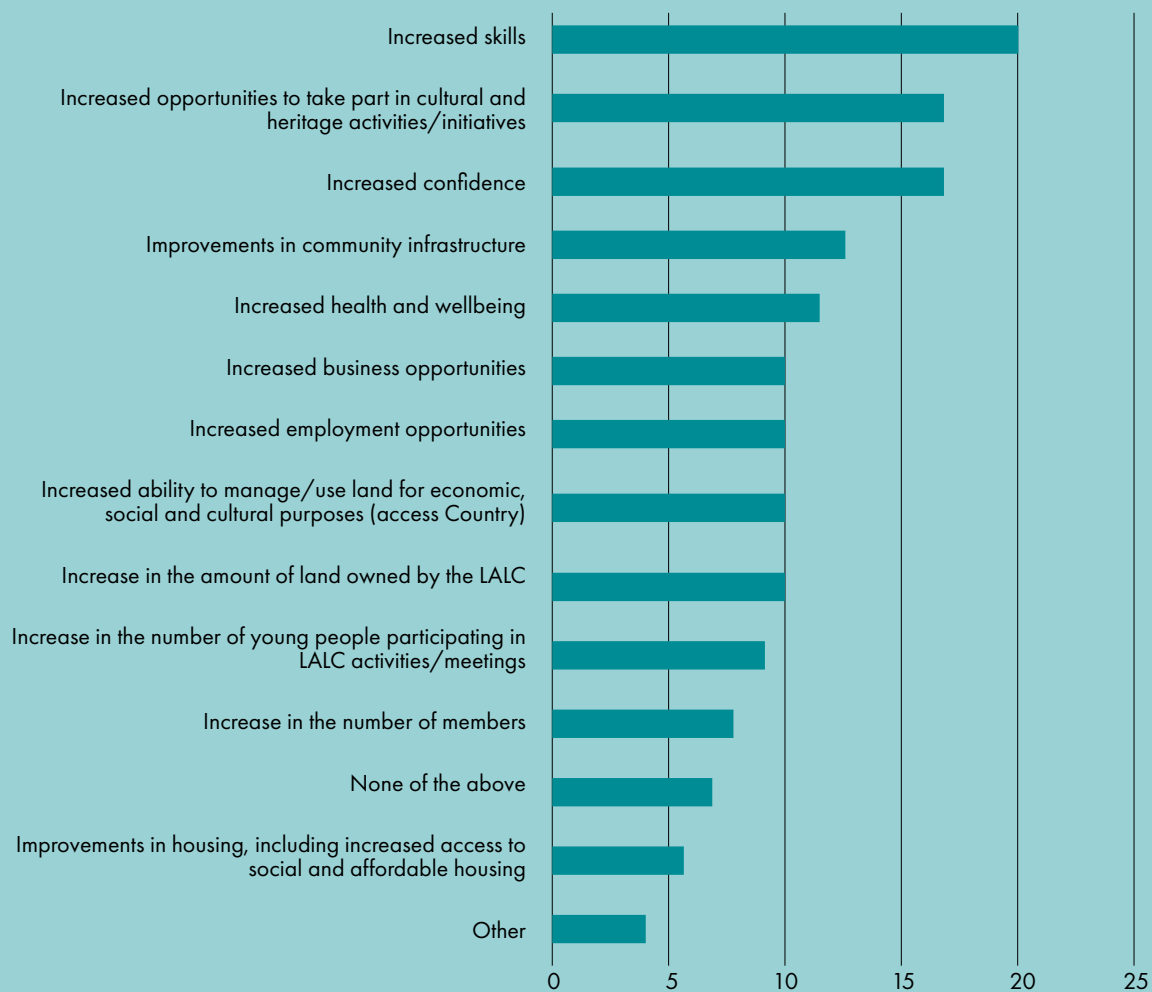
Similarly, the grant most respondents said they had received was the Community Fund Grant.



*Please note - The graphs simply report the responses to the survey, there may be inconsistencies.

The chart below highlights the benefit of NSWALC support to LALCs and their members. Overall, the highest areas of impact were in broadening their skills, increasing people's opportunities to take part in culture and heritage activities and in increasing their confidence. Other benefits included an increase in family bank accounts, increased training for youth members and increased social media reach for events with NSWALC sponsorship.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS HAVE YOU OR YOUR LALC EXPERIENCED AS A RESULT OF THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY NSWALC?



Interview Findings

Ten people agreed to take part in an interview. The interview participants represented a diverse range of community and LALC positions, including Chief Executive Officers, Board members, and LALC members.

Interviews revealed that several LALCs benefited from support provided by NSWALC. Key areas of assistance included:

- » **Legal, land and technical support:** NSWALC provided assistance with land management and governance matters. The interviews found that LALCs engaged with the Land and Property services within NSWALC and were generally pleased with the support provided for land claims and other technical matters. NSWALC's support was seen as crucial when providing guidance on business operations, fostering understanding of their rights and referring them to appropriate types of support, including Justice Connect for legal support. The support provided was specifically around updating the LALCs on amendments made to the ALRA and training and requirements of land management.
- » **Governance and leadership development:** Support encompassed CEO training and engagement with Councillors and Zone Office Staff. Interviews conducted with LALC CEOs revealed that a portion felt supported by NSWALC in their leadership roles.

“And if it wasn't for the support that I received from NSWALC with the staff and all the support they gave me, I wouldn't still be here in this role. I came into a very, very difficult environment.”

“...if you don't know the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, it can be quite daunting... so the fact that everyone was so supportive with everything, the day-to-day functions because I had no handover, so my support was NSWALC, so that was everything from you know, land claims to basically how to be a CEO and the different things that needed to be done. No question was not answered, and I just don't think people realise that just how much support is given to CEOs to be able to do their role because it's not an easy role.”

While some participants felt supported by their Zone Office Staff and Councillors, several interviews highlighted the difficulty in servicing large regions and that they would like more support from Zone Office Staff. These comments support NSWALC's new Community Outcomes model which is intended to focus more on supporting LALCs. The interviews found that Board members felt cultural safety and code of conduct training was important to ensure they felt supported in their role.

- » **Financial Support:** Grants facilitated LALC activities. The interviews found that NSWALC's financial grants were critical in providing opportunities for greater impact in communities. However, a number of LALCs did not seem to be aware of the funding available from NSWALC to support them with their community development activities. The financial support that LALCs received directly facilitated a range of activities important to LALCs.

“We've had grants from NSW Aboriginal Land Council that has helped our Cultural Tour Walk that we've created in the community, so that was very good support, got advice from our Councillor.”

LALCs also experienced support from NSWALC when applying for Government grants and alternative funding avenues.

- » **Culture and Heritage:** NSWALC plays a critical role in enabling LALCs to preserve and celebrate their culture and heritage. Interviews conducted revealed the importance of NSWALC's support in facilitating cultural activities within communities. This assistance allows LALCs to organise and execute various initiatives, such as NAIDOC celebrations, cultural heritage education programs, Indigenous Ranger programs, cultural tourism walks, and the exploration of traditional bush tucker sources and cooking.



Goal 5

Secure Our Future

This goal is about securing our future and engaging with the Aboriginal community to help them realise the importance of the work we do to ensure that a stronger Aboriginal Land Rights system is handed to the next generation.

Issues

Some Aboriginal people, particularly young Aboriginal people, are engaging with the Land Rights Network and becoming LALC members. LALCs need governance and management support.

Assumptions

That Aboriginal young people will want to become engaged with the Land Rights Network.

That Aboriginal peoples will want to actively participate in the Land Rights Network and be employees of NSWALC and LALCs.

That NSWALC's engagement and promotion activities will help to attract new members to the Land Rights Network.

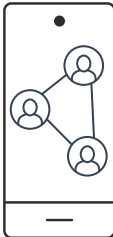
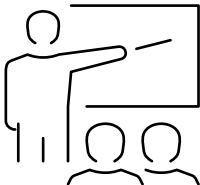
External Factors

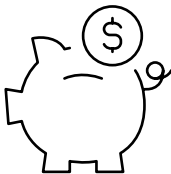
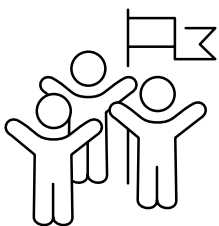
Other influences on young people that will compete for their time.

LALC Board members are all volunteers and have many other competing demands on their time.

The prevailing economic climate and the impact on the Statutory Fund and the level of resources that NSWALC can provide to LALCs.



Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Outreach and social media engagement strategies.	<p>53% open rate of Council Communiques, Network Messages and Media Releases (an increase of 10% from the first quarter).</p> <p>44,113 social media followers, representing a 2% growth since the beginning of the financial year.</p> <p>2% increase in time spent on website.</p> <p>28,996 LALC members, an increase of 1,736 members.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of Aboriginal people engaging with NSWALC.</p> 	
Providing funding and training to assist with the operational cost and governance of LALCs, including supporting the performance of LALCs in meeting their regulatory obligations.	<p>\$158,243 to each funded LALC for assistance with administrative costs, totalling \$18.5 million for 117 LALCs.</p> <p>631 LALC Board members completed Mandatory Governance Training.</p> <p>34 LALC CEOs enrolled in the CEO Skillset Course.</p> <p>18 LALC CEOs who have completed CEO Skillset Course.</p> <p>12 LALCs who have enrolled and completed the Housing Management Skillset Course.</p> <p>40 LALCs who have enrolled in Capacity Development Courses LMS.</p>	<p>80% of respondents to the survey said they had increased understanding and knowledge as a result of training.</p> <p>Increased confidence.</p> <p>Increased skills.</p> <p>Increased self-management and governance of LALCs.</p> 	

Activitie/s	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Responsible stewardship of the Statutory Account.	Equity balance at the end of the financial year of \$605.6 million compared with \$598.7 million at 30 June 2022. This represents an increase of \$6.9 million in the value of the Account for the 2022–23 financial year.	Increase in Statutory Account. 	
Supporting the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) and engagement with youth, including leadership, public speaking and employment opportunities for youth.	3 YAC meetings and events with youth. 2 professional development opportunities for youth. YAC members engaged attended 7 public events representing NSWALC and Regional Forums with the Land Rights Network.	Increased opportunities for young people to be engaged in the Land Rights Network. 	

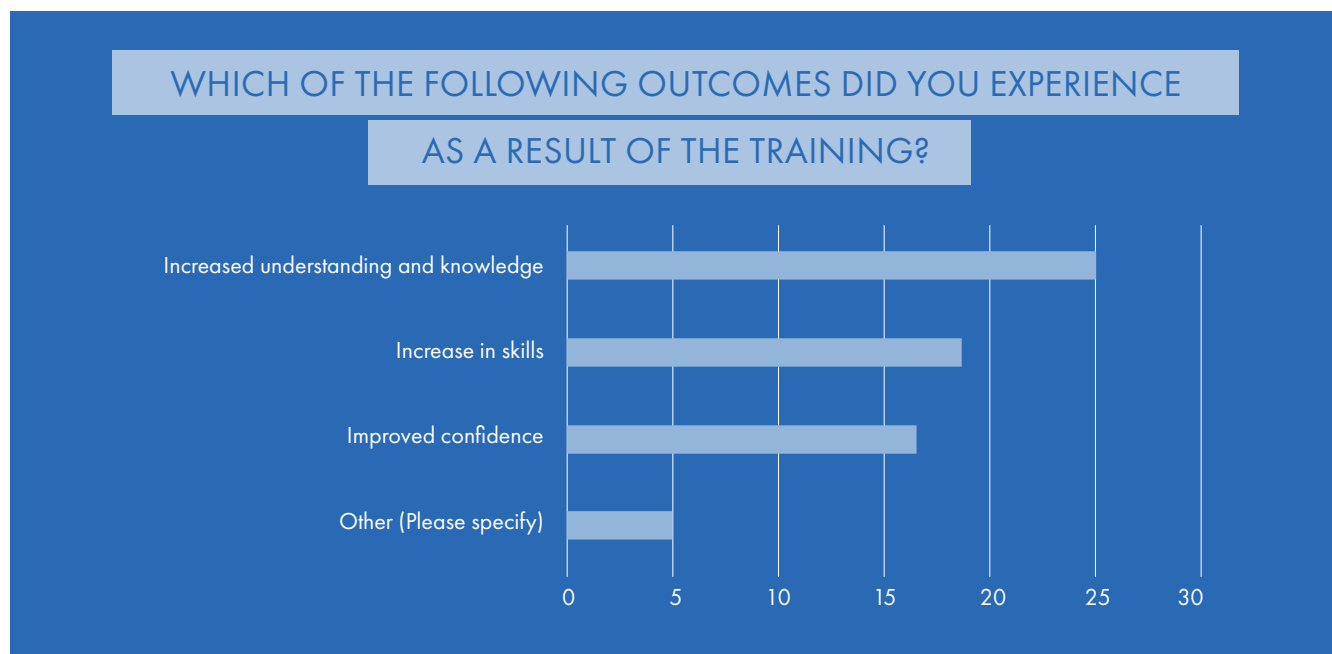
Feedback on training provided to LALCs

As part of the LALC feedback survey discussed above, several questions about LALCs' experiences with NSWALC training were asked. The results are outlined below.



The majority of people who took part in NSWALC training found it effective. Overall, the effectiveness rating was 3.6 out of 5. Suggestions for improvement included: more face-to-face training, training to help community understand the importance of the ALRA and training in LALC operations (business management and administration) perhaps in conjunction with Yarpa.

LALCs experienced a range of outcomes from the training with 25 people saying that it increased their understanding and knowledge.



The other outcomes from the training experience were increased understanding of the history of land rights and Aboriginal culture, and the opportunity to network with other CEOs, which LALCs said they found valuable.



Appendix A - Social Impact Evaluation Framework

Introduction

NSWALC's Strategic Plan supplement includes the development of a Social Impact Evaluation Framework to measure the community impact from all of NSWALC strategies and initiatives.

A Social Impact Evaluation Framework has been developed, which identifies the key activities, outputs, outcomes, indicators and potential data sources (program logic) for each of the strategies under the five goals in the Strategic Plan.

'Story of Change' diagrams have also been drafted that provide a simplified visual representation of the theory of change for each area of work i.e. land/water rights, culture, economy, community support and future.

The Social Impact Evaluation Framework aims to improve the coordination of an organisational wide approach to evaluation at NSWALC, including a more systematic approach to collecting and reporting on program data.






The purpose of developing a Social Impact Evaluation Framework is to not only meet organisational objectives but to also enhance the effectiveness of the programs and services being delivered by NSWALC to ensure they are meeting the needs of Aboriginal communities and the 121 Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) in NSW.





Goal 1






Secure Our Land and Water Rights to Country, so that Aboriginal peoples can realise the full social, cultural and economic outcomes of the Land Rights system, and unlock and activate the benefits of our land.

INPUTS What is needed? 	ACTIVITIES What is done? 	OUTPUTS What is delivered? 	OUTCOMES Short-med term change 	IMPACT Long term change 
Funding and resources for staffing, training packages and community engagement.	<p>Lodgement of land claims.</p> <p>Support LALCs to lodge land claims, negotiate for land/ manage and activate land.</p> <p>Deliver training to Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) in land claims, land acquisition, land management and land negotiations including Native Title claims.</p> <p>Support to LALCs in appealing land claim refusals and negotiating Aboriginal Land Agreements (ALAs) and Native Title claims.</p> <p>Work with relevant agencies to advocate for land and water rights and influence policy and legislation.</p>	<p># land claims lodged</p> <p># of land claim refusals reviewed</p> <p># of land claim appeals lodged</p> <p># of parcels of land returned value of land parcels returned</p> <p># and % of LALCs participating in Aboriginal Land Agreements</p> <p># and % of LALCs participating in training</p> <p># of policy/ legislative changes supporting Aboriginal land and water rights</p>	<p>Improved decision making and skill in the lodgement, negotiation, acquisition and management of land.</p> <p>Increase in number of LALCs able to participate in ALA negotiations.</p> <p>Reduction in the backlog of land claims.</p> <p>LALCs have improved trust in NSWALC.</p> <p>Increased recognition of Aboriginal peoples land and water rights by government agencies.</p> <p>Aboriginal people have improved access, management and control of land and water for social, cultural and economic activities.</p>	<p>Aboriginal people are able to use and manage land, water and resources for cultural, social and economic wellbeing.</p> <p>Aboriginal people and LALCs have increased economic independence and prosperity.</p> <p>Aboriginal culture is strengthened through active connection to land, water and resources.</p> <p>Improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing.</p>



Goal 2






Protect and promote our culture and heritage by advocating for legislative and policy reforms that recognise and respect Aboriginal culture and heritage, to stop the destruction and desecration of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and loss of Aboriginal culture, so that Aboriginal peoples, communities and organisations are culturally strong.

INPUTS What is needed?	ACTIVITIES What is done?	OUTPUTS What is delivered?	OUTCOMES Short-med term change	IMPACT Long term change
				
Funding and resources for staffing, training and grants.	<p>Analyse and provide advice on legislation/advocate for legislative reform.</p> <p>Develop strategic relationships to advocate for reform.</p> <p>Develop fact sheets and other information material on Aboriginal culture and heritage rights.</p> <p>Support preservation of culture and heritage e.g. recordings of language, repatriation/ protection of cultural artefacts.</p> <p>Provide grants to LALCs for culture and heritage purposes.</p> <p>Cultural and heritage management and training for LALCs.</p> <p>Support LALCs in their decision-making regarding culture and heritage in their CLBPs.</p>	<p># of policy/ legislative changes supporting Aboriginal culture and heritage</p> <p># of protected sites/ heritage listings</p> <p># of artefacts repatriated</p> <p># of LALCs applying and receiving grants for cultural purposes</p> <p># of culture and heritage preservation activities</p> <p># of LALCs participating in culture and heritage training</p> <p># of LALC culture and heritage management plans</p> <p># of co-management/joint agreements</p>	<p>Policy and legislative reform to protect Aboriginal culture and heritage.</p> <p>Aboriginal peoples have a greater say in the protection and management of their culture and land.</p> <p>LALCs are empowered to pursue their own culture and heritage initiatives.</p> <p>Aboriginal peoples and communities have strengthened cultural identity and knowledge and expertise in language and culture.</p>	<p>Aboriginal culture and heritage is protected, promoted and celebrated.</p> <p>LALCs create successful Aboriginal culture and heritage programs for their communities.</p> <p>Aboriginal cultural continuity through strengthened identity, knowledge and expertise in language and culture.</p> <p>Culturally empowered and resilient communities.</p>



Goal 3






Pursue economic independence and prosperity for our peoples, currently Aboriginal peoples in NSW do not have access to their fair share of the economy, our aim is to restore economic independence and prosperity to Aboriginal communities to ensure their survival as a distinct and self-determining people.

INPUTS What is needed?	ACTIVITIES What is done?	OUTPUTS What is delivered?	OUTCOMES Short-med term change	IMPACT Long term change
				
Funding and resourcing for staff, government grants and referrals.	<p>Provide tailored business support to Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal people for business enterprises and land development opportunities.</p> <p>Review applications and project manage grants/loans/ services.</p> <p>Help to identify business opportunities for LALCs /Aboriginal businesses and broker deals with stakeholders.</p> <p>Provide mentoring and other support to Aboriginal people looking for a job or a better job.</p> <p>Support employers/ businesses to hire Aboriginal people and partner with Aboriginal businesses.</p> <p>Provide housing assistance to Aboriginal people, including improving their housing service experience and referral pathways.</p>	<p># of people provided with assistance</p> <p># of \$ disbursed and # of loans and grants to LALCs and Aboriginal people</p> <p># of Aboriginal people placed in jobs and # of new employees for LALCs and businesses supported by NSWALC</p> <p># of co-investors</p> <p># of new businesses</p> <p># of contracts awarded to Aboriginal businesses</p> <p># of land developments</p> <p># of LALC properties rezoned</p> <p># of social housing dwellings managed by Birribee</p> <p># of Aboriginal people assisted by Birribee into tenancies</p>	<p>Aboriginal people access support from NSWALC.</p> <p>Aboriginal people are satisfied with the support that NSWALC (and its subsidiaries) provides.</p> <p>Aboriginal people have increased confidence.</p> <p>Aboriginal people have improved access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>Increase in the number of Aboriginal businesses.</p> <p>Increase in culturally appropriate housing services.</p> <p>Aboriginal people have greater housing independence.</p> <p>Strategic partnerships provide economic opportunities.</p> <p>Land development that meets LALCs/ Aboriginal peoples needs.</p>	<p>Increase in profits from Aboriginal land.</p> <p>Aboriginal people and LALCs experience less financial stress.</p> <p>Aboriginal peoples and LALCs achieve greater economic independence and increased prosperity.</p> <p>LALCs and Aboriginal peoples create successful and sustainable businesses, providing employment, cultural, environmental and social benefits to their communities.</p> <p>Aboriginal peoples feel more hopeful about their future.</p> <p>Improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing.</p>



Goal 4






Support our people and Local Aboriginal Land Councils, currently Aboriginal peoples in NSW do not have all the support they need, to achieve their community aspirations and improve community wellbeing and cohesion

INPUTS What is needed? 	ACTIVITIES What is done? 	OUTPUTS What is delivered? 	OUTCOMES Short-med term change 	IMPACT Long term change 
Funding for staffing and resourcing including co-contribution to Community Levy and Justice Connect. Government funding for Closing the Gap projects and other programs.	<p>Advocacy and awareness raising.</p> <p>Review applications, decide on recipients, disburse funds and manage grants.</p> <p>Provide funding for legal support for LALCs.</p> <p>Provide support to Aboriginal peoples.</p> <p>Manage interns.</p> <p>Engagement with human rights organisations and promotion of NSWALC.</p> <p>Knowledge sharing through the development of fact sheets and other information material.</p>	<p># engagement activities and consultations (including Closing the Gap)</p> <p># of interns</p> <p># of submissions and or interventions written</p> <p># of applications for funding</p> <p># of \$ dispersed</p> <p># of community projects/events funded</p> <p># of parcels of land acquired</p> <p># of referrals to Justice Connect</p> <p># of LALCs legally represented by external lawyers</p> <p># of LALCs undertaking legal training</p>	<p>Increased awareness of NSWALC.</p> <p>Strengthened relationship between NSWALC and other Aboriginal Peak bodies.</p> <p>Strengthened relationship between LALCs and NSWALC.</p> <p>Increase in LALCs self-sufficiency and ability to self-manage/make decisions.</p> <p>Improved policies and legislation in relation to human rights in Australia, including achievement of Closing the Gap Priority Reform targets.</p> <p>Improved community facilities and community pride.</p> <p>Increase in the value of LALC land and property assets.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of Aboriginal leaders involved in human rights.</p> <p>Increasing recognition of Aboriginal peoples' sovereign rights.</p> <p>Ability for LALCs/ Aboriginal peoples to leverage funding for greater and more continuous impact.</p> <p>Strengthened Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of under resourced LALCs.</p> <p>Reduction in discrimination/ racism towards Aboriginal people and organisations.</p> <p>Increased community wellbeing and cohesion.</p> <p>Increased connection to Country and ability to live on Country.</p>



Goal 5

Secure our Future - engage with the Aboriginal community, to help them realise the importance of the work we do to, ensure that a stronger Aboriginal Land Rights system is handed to the next generation.

INPUTS What is needed? 	ACTIVITIES What is done? 	OUTPUTS What is delivered? 	OUTCOMES Short-med term change 	IMPACT Long term change 
Funding and resourcing for staffing and YAC.	<p>Outreach and social media engagement strategies.</p> <p>Supporting the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC).</p> <p>Developing and coordinating youth events and networking opportunities.</p> <p>Providing professional development opportunities to youth.</p> <p>Providing funding support to assist with operational costs of LALCs.</p> <p>Supporting performance of LALCs in meeting their regulatory obligations.</p> <p>Responsible stewardship of Statutory Account.</p>	<p># of youth and Aboriginal peoples engaging with NSWALC online and at events</p> <p># of new members to Local Aboriginal Land Councils</p> <p># of meetings/events with youth</p> <p># of young Aboriginal people reporting an increased understanding of the Land Rights Network</p> <p># of new networks/connections developed</p> <p># of new policy initiatives for youth</p> <p># of professional development opportunities for youth</p> <p># of LALCs provided support with their CLBPs</p> <p># of Regional forums and other NSWALC sponsored events for LALCs</p>	<p>Increase in the number of Aboriginal people engaging with NSWALC.</p> <p>Increase in the number of LALC members.</p> <p>Increased confidence and self-esteem of YAC members.</p> <p>Increased understanding of the history and significance of the Land Rights Network among Aboriginal peoples, particularly youth.</p> <p>Increase in involvement of young Aboriginal people on LALC Boards.</p> <p>Improved employment opportunities for YAC members and young Aboriginal people in Land Rights Network.</p> <p>Increased self-management and governance of LALCs.</p> <p>Increase in Statutory Account.</p>	<p>Aboriginal young people are actively engaged in the Land Rights movement.</p> <p>A stronger Aboriginal Land Rights Network.</p> <p>Young Aboriginal people have strengthened identity and knowledge and expertise in language and culture.</p> <p>Aboriginal cultural continuity.</p>

Appendix B - Story of Change Diagrams

Goal 1 : Land Rights - Story of Change

1. Advocacy

Work with relevant government agencies to reduce backlog of land claims, improve ALA negotiation process and agencies respect for NSWALC, LALCs and Aboriginal peoples



2. Training

Deliver training to Local Aboriginal Land Councils in land claims, land acquisition, land management and land negotiations including Native Title claims



3. Support

Support Local Aboriginal Land Councils with land claims and land activation strategies, including acquisition of land



4. Self-determination

Increase Local Aboriginal Land Councils decision-making ability and skill in the lodgement, negotiation, acquisition and management of land



5. Land ownership

Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal people have improved access, management, ownership and control of land



6. Land Use

Aboriginal peoples are able to activate and manage land and resources for cultural, social and economic wellbeing



8. Economic development

Aboriginal people and Local Aboriginal Land Councils achieve greater economic independence and prosperity



7. Culture

Aboriginal culture is strengthened through active connection to land and resources



9. Wellbeing

Improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing



Goal 1 : Water Rights - Story of Change

1. Water Advocacy

Development of a water strategy to support Aboriginal water rights



2. Legislative Change

Policy and legislative changes supporting Aboriginal water rights



3. Improved Access

Improved access to water and water systems, including sufficient and safe drinking water



4. Management and Use

Aboriginal people are able to use and manage water and resources for cultural, social and economic wellbeing



5. Culture

Aboriginal culture is strengthened through active connection to water and resources



6. Healthy Water

Healthy water systems including flora and fauna



7. Wellbeing

Improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing



Goal 2 : Culture and Heritage - Story of Change

1. Advocacy

Engage with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Governments to support and advocate for culture and heritage protection



2. Legislative Reform

Analyse and provide advice on legislation/advocate for legislative and policy reform



3. Protection

Aboriginal culture, heritage and Country is protected and celebrated. Aboriginal peoples have a greater say in the protection and management of their culture and land



4. Culture and Heritage

Support preservation of culture and heritage, including providing grants to undertake culture and heritage initiatives, and recordings of language, repatriation/protection of cultural artifacts



5. Knowledge Sharing

Development of fact sheets and other information material on Aboriginal culture and heritage rights



6. Training

Cultural and heritage management and training for Local Aboriginal Land Councils



8. Cultural Continuity

Aboriginal cultural continuity through strengthened identity, knowledge and expertise in language and culture



7. Confidence

Local Aboriginal Land Councils feel confident to pursue their own culture and heritage initiatives and create successful and sustainable Aboriginal culture and heritage programs for their communities



9. Empowerment

Culturally empowered and resilient communities



Goal 3: Economic Independence and Prosperity - Story of Change

Business and Employment



1. Support

Tailored business, land development and employment support to Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal peoples



2. Fund

Review applications and project manage grants/loans/services



3. Broker

Help to identify business opportunities for Aboriginal people and Local Aboriginal Land Councils and broker deals with stakeholders



4. Economic Growth

Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal people create successful and sustainable businesses, providing employment, cultural, environmental and social benefits to their communities



5. Prosperity

Aboriginal people and Local Aboriginal Land Councils increase their economic independence and prosperity, including maximizing profits from land



6. Security

Aboriginal people and Local Aboriginal Land Councils are more financially secure



7. Hope

Aboriginal people feel more hopeful about their future

Housing



1. Housing Support

Provide housing assistance to Aboriginal peoples, including improving their housing service experience and referral pathways



2. Housing Independence

Aboriginal peoples have greater housing independence



Goal 4: Support our People - Story of Change

1. Advocacy

Advocacy and awareness raising in relation to human rights, including connections and partnerships with other community controlled Aboriginal organisations (NSW CAPO and Coalition of Peaks) and Indigenous people around the world



2. Knowledge

Improve Aboriginal people's human rights literacy and knowledge through the development of fact sheets and other information



3. Policy and Legislative Reform

Improved policies and legislation in relation to human rights in Australia, including Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, socio-economic targets and the Premier's Priorities



4. Support

Funding for Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal communities including regional grants, state-wide grants, funeral grants, educational scholarships, community benefit funding and legal support from Justice Connect



5. Self-sufficiency

Local Aboriginal Land Councils become more self-sustaining and have the tools and resources to make informed decisions, achieve their community goals and address the needs in their communities



6. Community Improvements

Physical and cultural improvements in communities as a result of funding for community initiatives and increased community pride



8. Community Wellbeing

Increased ability to live on Country, and improved community wellbeing and cohesion



7. Employment

Increase in the number of Aboriginal people employed at the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and in Local Aboriginal Land Councils



9. Rights

Aboriginal peoples' sovereign rights are recognised and realised through Australian governments implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



Goal 5: Secure our Future - Story of Change

1. Support

Providing funding support to assist with operational costs and regulatory compliance of LALCs, and supporting the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)



2. Engagement

Outreach and social media engagement strategies with youth, LALC members and Aboriginal peoples in NSW



3. Knowledge

Increased understanding of the history and significance of the Land Rights Network among Aboriginal peoples, particularly youth. Professional development opportunities for youth, including involvement of young Aboriginal people on LALC Boards



4. Events

Developing and coordinating events and network opportunities such as the Youth Summit and State Wide Conference



5. Confidence

Increased confidence and self-esteem of YAC members. Increased self-management and governance of LALCs



6. Employment

Improved employment opportunities for YAC members and LALC members



8. Cultural Continuity

Young Aboriginal people have strengthened identity and knowledge and expertise in language and culture



7. Participation

Aboriginal peoples, including youth are actively engaged in the Land Rights movement



9. Strong Future

Stronger Aboriginal communities and an Aboriginal Land Rights Network



Appendix C - Data Collection Tools

NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) Survey - Local Aboriginal Land Councils Feedback - survey was open from 30 October 2023 to 31st March 2024

NSWALC Grants and Programs

This survey is an opportunity for you to provide feedback on your experiences with NSWALC's grants and programs. Your feedback and insights are important for us to know so we can improve what we do to better meet your needs.

Your responses are anonymous (unless you choose to identify yourself) and any information you provide will be kept confidential and only reported on collectively (with all the other people who have taken part in the survey).

The survey should only take about 5 minutes to complete.

Thank you very much for your time.

1. Which of the following grants, loans and programs provided or supported by NSWALC are you aware of?

- ☐ Community Fund Grant
- ☐ Small Community Grants
- ☐ Regional Events Grants
- ☐ NSWALC Funeral Fund
- ☐ NSWALC Fishing Fund
- ☐ Business Development Funding
- ☐ Early Stage Investment Loan
- ☐ Education Scholarship
- ☐ Aboriginal Community Connector Program
- ☐ NSWALC Cumberland Plain (NCP) Grant Program
- ☐ Roads to Home Program
- ☐ Justice Connect
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None of the above

2. What grants/loans offered by NSWALC have you applied for?

- ☐ Community Fund Grant
- ☐ Small Community Grant
- ☐ Regional Event Grant
- ☐ NSWALC Funeral Fund
- ☐ NSWALC Fishing Fund
- ☐ Business Development Funding
- ☐ Early Stage Investment Loan
- ☐ Education Scholarship
- ☐ NCP Grant Program
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None of the above

3. How did you find the process of applying for grants?

- Very Easy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- Easy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- Somewhat easy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- Moderate ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- Somewhat Difficult ☐ ☐ ☐
- Difficult ☐ ☐
- Very difficult ☐

4. Do you have any suggestions to improve the processes for applying for grants?

5. What grants offered by NSWALC have you received?

- ☐ Community Fund Grant
 - ☐ Small Community
 - ☐ Regional Event Grant
 - ☐ NSWALC Funeral Fund
 - ☐ NSWALC Fishing Fund
 - ☐ Business Development Grant
 - ☐ Early Stage Investment Loan
 - ☐ Education Scholarship
 - ☐ NCP Grant
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
 - ☐ None of the above
-

NSWALC Training


6. Have you taken part in training offered by NSWALC?


- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No


7. What type of training delivered by NSWALC have you participated in?

8. How effective did you find the training provided by NSWALC?

Extremely effective 

Very effective 

Effective 

Somewhat effective 

Not effective 

9. Do you have any suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the training provided by NSWALC?

10. Which of the following outcomes did you experience as a result of the training?

☐ Increased understanding and knowledge

☐ Improved confidence

☐ Increase in skills

☐ Other (please specify)

Impact of NSWALC's support

11. Which of the following benefits have you or your Local Aboriginal Land Council experienced as a result of the support (grants/loans/programs/services) provided by NSWALC?

- ☐ Increased confidence
- ☐ Increased skills
- ☐ Increase in the amount of land owned by the LALC
- ☐ Increased ability to manage/use land for economic, social and cultural purposes (access Country)
- ☐ Increased opportunities to take part in cultural and heritage activities/initiatives
- ☐ Increased business opportunities
- ☐ Increased employment opportunities
- ☐ Increased health and wellbeing
- ☐ Improvements in housing, including increased access to social and affordable housing
- ☐ Improvements in community infrastructure
- ☐ Increase in the number of members
- ☐ Increase in the number of young people participating in LALC activities/meetings
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None of the above

NSWALC Training

12. Are you a member of a Local Aboriginal Land Council?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13. Roughly how many people do you think have benefited from the support provided by NSWALC to your LALC?

14. What region is your Local Aboriginal Land Council in?

- ☐ Central
- ☐ Mid-North Coast
- ☐ North Coast
- ☐ North Western
- ☐ Northern
- ☐ South Coast
- ☐ Sydney/Newcastle
- ☐ Western
- ☐ Wiradjuri

15. Would you be interested in taking part in a telephone interview?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. Please provide your first name and contact number

Interview guide

Impact from Engagement with NSWALC Programs and Services

Before starting the Interview check if they are happy for you to record the interview – record on Teams or your phone and save the recording in the folder.

Everything you say will be kept confidential and your name and personal details will be kept confidential unless you would like to be identified in our report in a case study.

- » What impact has NSWALC's support (programs/services) had on your LALC? (Prompts – increased access to land & ability to use and manage land, increased income, increased opportunities to take part in cultural and heritage activities, improved wellbeing. If no support or impact, what support would you like to receive from NSWALC?).
- » Does your LALC undertake any cultural and heritage activities? If yes, has your LALC received any support from NSWALC? How effective has this support been? (Prompt – has your confidence/ability to pursue your own culture and heritage initiatives improved as a result of the support provided by NSWALC).
- » How long has your LALC been undertaking culture and heritage activities?
- » Does your LALC operate any business activities? Has NSWALC supported you with your business? If yes, what was the impact of that support (increased confidence, increased business capability etc). How long has your business/businesses been operating?
- » What benefits has the business/businesses had on your LALC members/community? (e.g. cultural, environmental and social benefits).
- » How many people does your LALC employ - have you had an increase in the number of people employed as a result of NSWALC's support? (e.g. help establishing a business, community development grant).
- » How would you measure changes in your community?
- » What changes would you value the most?
- » Thinking about the last year, have circumstances for your LALC gotten better or worse? What are the factors that have contributed to that change?
- » Is there anything else you would like to say that I haven't asked you?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

