

**30 March, 2021**

**Interim Report to the Australian Government: Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process 2021**

Ethical Partners Funds Management welcomes the opportunity to make a submission in response to the report and acknowledges the significant work undertaken by the three co-design committees, led by co-chairs Professor Marcia Langton AM and Professor Tom Calma AO.

As Ethical Investors, managing approximately \$2.5 Billion AUD on behalf of large superannuation funds, charities, schools and high net wealth investors, we are concerned with the recognition of the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's history.

We understand that it is time for real, practical and structural reform that follows through with what First Nations called for in the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

We believe that as the first stewards of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture should hold a special and celebrated place in the institutions and fabric of modern Australian society. In addition, and consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should have a say on the laws, policies and services that impact their lives. We support efforts, like the Voice Co-Design process, that promote greater self-determination for Indigenous Australians. We believe an Indigenous Voice, enshrined in the constitution could provide the necessary mechanism in a fair and practical way.

We support the change to our Commonwealth political institutions to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the Constitution. We call for:

- The government to call a referendum once a model for the First Nations Voice has been agreed;
- Enabling legislation for the First Nations Voice to be passed in the next term of Parliament after a referendum has been held; and
- The membership model for the First Nations Voice to ensure First Nations people who are not established leadership figures to be heard as well as those established leaders.

In all conscience, it is imperative that our First Nation people be recognized in the Australian constitution without further delay. We are pleased to have this opportunity to present a submission in response to this Interim Voice Co-Design Report.

Yours sincerely,



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