

# BHP

## FY24 Australian Indigenous Social Investment Report

Supporting local to national  
outcomes in partnership with  
Indigenous communities



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## Terminology

The Indigenous Social Investment Report may use the terms Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interchangeably.

Traditional Owners and Cultural Knowledge Holders means the persons with connection to country, acknowledged rights and interest in the land and sea granted under traditional law and customs, who carry an ongoing obligation to look after Country.

BHP recognises that all Indigenous peoples have an inherent connection to Country, so the term Traditional Owners is used in this Report to differentiate those Indigenous people who have a specific connection and granted custodianship rights to the country where BHP operates.

BHP acknowledges and respects that different terms preferred in different jurisdictions may vary.

## Acknowledgment of Country

BHP acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Cultural Knowledge Holders of the lands across this country and pays respect to them, and their Elders past and present.

As a business that works across many locations in Australia, we have a responsibility to listen, learn and walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to enable our activities to support ongoing connection to their lands, waters, cultures, languages, and traditions.

Indigenous peoples are critical partners and stakeholders to BHP, and the long-term nature of our operations enables us to establish and foster long-lasting relationships with Indigenous communities through meaningful engagement, the development of trust, and mutual benefit.



With BHP's support over more than two decades, we have been able to expand our footprint, develop new educational programs, and, most importantly, empower thousands of Indigenous students and alumni to achieve their potential at school and beyond.

Mark Wirtz | Chief Executive of the Polly Farmer Foundation  
Cover image | Polly Farmer Foundation students.



# A message from Caroline and Geraldine

On behalf of BHP, we're proud to share our first Australian Indigenous Social Investment Report.

Guided by our company purpose to bring people and resources together to build a better world, we believe we are successful when we work in partnership with communities to achieve long-term social, environmental and economic outcomes. This comes to life in our approach to social investment and the six pillars in our social value framework; Decarbonisation, Healthy Environment; Safe, inclusive and future ready workforce, Thriving empowered communities, Responsible supply chains and Indigenous Partnerships.

When it comes to Indigenous partnerships, contributing to the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities within Australia is essential to the relationships we share with communities, and in turn helps to support the sustainability of our operations. This is reflected in our Social Value Framework, which sets out our aspirational goals for building relationships based on trust, respect and mutual benefit with Indigenous peoples. Our commitment to advancing the rights and interests of Indigenous peoples across the world, nations and territories is published within the BHP **Indigenous Peoples Policy Statement**, and across Australia through our Reconciliation Action Plan.

We're guided by our vision to actively contribute and participate, supporting social investment partnerships with and for Indigenous peoples, communities and organisations in Australia that align to aspirations for positive intergenerational social, cultural, and economic wellbeing. Purposeful and meaningful voluntary social investment to support positive outcomes for Indigenous peoples and communities is key to these ambitions and brought to life through our **Australian Indigenous Social Investment Strategy**.

Social Investment Plans are informed by the voices and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, and we work in collaboration with Partners to ensure key priorities are co-created and agreed; governance mechanisms are strong internally and externally; our business and employees are active in developing cultural capability; we share trusted relationships with partners across Australia; and evaluation is undertaken by a culturally appropriate third-party agency verified by partners.

We extend our appreciation to all our partner organisations and everyone who has contributed to our investment throughout FY24, together we can continue to make a difference.

**Caroline Cox**  
Chief Legal Governance  
and EA Officer

**Geraldine Slattery**  
President Australia

## A vision for partnering

Through active contribution and participation, BHP supports social investment partnerships with and for Indigenous peoples, communities and organisations in Australia that align to aspirations for positive intergenerational social, cultural, and economic wellbeing.

Linked to BHP's Global Social Investment Strategy, our Australian Indigenous Social Investment Strategy drives our approach to purposeful and meaningful voluntary social investment in Australia to support positive outcomes for Indigenous peoples and communities.

Through the Strategy we aspire to guide appropriate and sustained decision making in our Australian operated assets (Assets); align our investment decisions with the needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities; strengthen our Social Value and Indigenous partnerships through best practice behaviours; and demonstrate the cumulative positive impact of BHP's Indigenous social investment through evaluation and aggregation.

Our Social Investment Plans are informed by the voices and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, and we work in collaboration with Assets and Partners so that key priorities are co-created and agreed; governance mechanisms are strong internally and externally; practitioners are active in developing cultural capability; we share trusted relationships with partners across Australia; and evaluation is undertaken by a third party, culturally appropriate agency and verified by partners.

## Our commitment to change

BHP's 2023—2027 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) outlines the company's approach to respectful engagement and agreement-making, cultural understanding, economic and community development, and advocacy to advance national reconciliation and the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

BHP's sixth RAP, was developed in partnership with many representatives from Traditional Owner groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees businesses, organisations, communities and peak bodies across Australia. The process invited advice from these partners on social investment programs and practices, and resulted in a series of commitments specific to social investment:

### Indigenous Social Investment RAP Commitment

### Target

Across Australia we will invest in social investment projects that help to realise the social, environmental, and cultural aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Develop a Minerals Australia Indigenous Social Investment Strategy that establishes the principles for social investment in community initiatives that align with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community priorities locally, regionally, and nationally.

100% of Australian Assets will support projects that align to these principles and objectives locally and regionally.

We will preference Indigenous social investment initiatives that are community-controlled or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governed and led.

Global Indigenous Engagement and Community (GIEC) and 100% of Australian Assets will fund Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social investment initiatives that are delivered by community, for community.

We will bring Indigenous social investment partners together to learn, share and identify potential collective projects to collaborate on.

Form a national Indigenous Social Investment Partner Network that convenes at least annually, initiating in the first year of the RAP.

We will report on the Indigenous social investment partnerships we share and the outcomes from their work.

Publish an annual report on Indigenous social investment partners and initiatives.

## Recognising and prioritising Indigenous governance

To us, Indigenous governance refers to the way Indigenous communities manage community affairs to exercise self-determination and maintain cultural identity, and therefore are active contributors to social investment programs. Our social investment approach recognises and prioritises partner organisations who demonstrate strong community-led Indigenous governance.

Indigenous governance in community programs involves decision making structures that engage and elevate Indigenous community perspectives. These systems prioritise cultural values, consensus-building, and community participation to ensure the wellbeing of Indigenous communities and that project outcomes and impact align to overall community aspirations and expectations.

## Enabling culturally appropriate social investment

In FY24, BHP launched an **Australian Indigenous Social Investment Strategy**, which is focussed on six key areas.

These focus areas are informed by extensive consultation with key Indigenous partners, organisations, and communities across Australia and supported by engagement with BHP’s community practitioners and supporting functions. They offer culturally appropriate guidance for the business to assess local and national programs in a way that seeks to align with community expectations and maximises impact.



### Arts and culture

Empowering Indigenous partner organisations to protect, strengthen and share their deep-rooted traditional arts and culture knowledge and practice.



### Education and training

Empowering young Indigenous people and students to thrive through engagement in education, training, and employment opportunities.



### Community health and wellbeing

Supporting self-determination of health and wellbeing programs to help drive meaningful outcomes for Indigenous people.



### Knowledges, languages and technologies

Empowering Indigenous communities and organisations to protect, strengthen and share traditional knowledge, protocols, and language.



### Country, nature and environment

Understanding the importance of connection to Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities and supporting Indigenous people to protect, strengthen and share intergenerational knowledges and practices of healthy Country.



### Indigenous governance, economic development, and advocacy

Driving access to economic opportunities, supporting self-determined institutions, and Indigenous-led decision making on policies and systems that impact Indigenous people.

## Supporting community-led change

Effective engagement underpins a commitment to strong and trusting relationships with BHP’s Indigenous social investment partners, and involves building the cultural awareness, connections, and capability of our business and employees.

Engagement can involve any process that requires input from Indigenous peoples in problem solving or decision making and uses their contributions to make better decisions.

To help ensure Indigenous perspectives are an integral component of project development and social investment, BHP has developed five core principles that inform good practice by BHP practitioners as they engage with Indigenous representatives, communities and organisations through Indigenous social investment. These principles reinforce the learning and recommendations through the external consultation process and independent reviews of BHP’s partnering practice.



# Our contribution

BHP's Total Global Social Investment in FY24	BHP's Total Australian Social Investment in FY24
US\$137m	A\$110m

At BHP we believe we are successful when we work in partnership with communities to achieve long-term social, environmental and economic outcomes. BHP's overall Australian social investment programming in FY24 saw AUD \$110 million contributed to community organisations around the country. Within this we invested \$39 million in Indigenous social investment, aligned to the Indigenous Partnerships pillar of our Social Value framework. This is further supported by an additional AUD \$8.8 million in projects supporting Indigenous communities in Australia under the pillars Thriving empowered communities, Healthy environment and Safe, inclusive & future ready workforce. Finally, the work of the **BHP Foundation** in Australia supports Indigenous self-determination and the wellbeing of children and young people.

## Indigenous Social Investment



- A\$17.6m  
Indigenous governance, economic development and advocacy
- A\$11.3m  
Community, health and wellbeing
- A\$4.2m  
Education and training
- A\$2.4m  
Arts and culture
- A\$2.4m  
Country, nature and Environment
- A\$1.7m  
Knowledges, languages and technologies

## The numbers that really matter

A snapshot of the impact of partners across Australia:

13,183

Hours of tuition were accessed by **Polly Farmer Foundation** students across BHP Follow the Dream programs.

156

Indigenous organisations were engaged by **Winyama** in FY24.

1 billion+

Impressions achieved by the UNSW Indigenous Law Centre's advocacy for the Voice referendum.

20

The First Nations Heritage Protection Alliance launched guidelines illustrating cultural heritage expectations of First Nations people for the private sector.

85

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities reached by the 24 ACCHOs participating in the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) Rheumatic Heart Disease program.

1

Community Truth-telling Pathways **website** was launched by Reconciliation Australia.

17

Advocacy conversations were conducted with a variety of stakeholders, including Government agencies, as part of the Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa Martu Leadership Program.

4,151

Women engaged with **Ember Connect** platform.

34

Ranger teams across the desert footprint were engaged with by **Indigenous Desert Alliance** Regional Support Officers.

# Connecting networks and community partners

BHP hosted an inaugural Australian Indigenous Social Investment Partner Symposium in May 2024.

The Symposium brought Indigenous social investment partners together with members of BHP’s Indigenous Engagement, Corporate Affairs, Communities, Communications and Legal teams to learn, share and identify opportunities for deeper collaboration.

In seeking outcomes for Indigenous people, created by Indigenous people, the Symposium created space for collective reflection on partnering practice—working together to understand what is working well and where we can improve collaboration, goal setting, governance and evaluation, and advocacy.

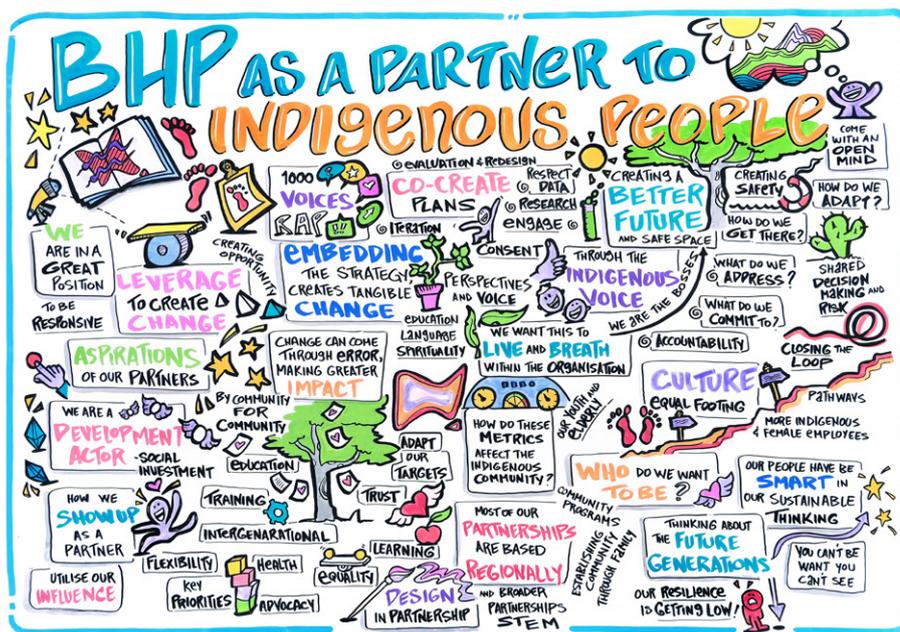
Allan James, Head of Indigenous Engagement reflected on the success of the event, “by coming together over two days, we unlock doors and lines of enquiry between organisations that we hope will build long lasting relationships that are strategic and of benefit across generations.”

“Contributing to the achievement of aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities within Australia is essential to the relationships we share with communities, and ultimately supports the sustainability of our operations”, he said.



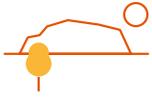
Contributing to the achievement of aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities within Australia is essential to the relationships we share with communities, and ultimately supports the sustainability of our operations.

Below | Inaugural Indigenous Social Investment Partner Symposium, Naarm (photo credit: Tommy Graham, BHP Digital Comms).



Above | Reflections from partners at the Indigenous Social Investment Partner Symposium. Illustrations by Tania Simcic, visual scribe.

## Bringing our investment to life



### Country, nature and environment

#### Keeping the Desert Connected: Indigenous Desert Alliance

The Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA) is an Indigenous controlled, member-based organisation that plays a vital role in 'Keeping the Desert Connected' and building resilience for desert ranger programs.

Indigenous land management is a significant and successful sector of the Australian economy, delivering major social, cultural and environmental impact. Ranger programs help keep Country healthy and culture strong. The sector is one of the main drivers of employment for Indigenous people in desert communities, employing hundreds of rangers and support staff.

As a foundational partner, BHP supports IDA in its work to secure the future of Indigenous land management in the desert. The partnership facilitates key sector development



### Education and training

#### Understanding through learning: University of Melbourne, Ngarrngga

Ngarrngga is a Taungurung word meaning to know, to hear, to understand and is a multifaceted, transdisciplinary program of works. Supported by the University of Melbourne and BHP, the Ngarrngga strives to support educators to be confident in showcasing Indigenous Knowledge within their teaching to provide all Australian students to learn about the contributions and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to Australian society through a practical and sustained approach.

An Indigenous-led national partnership, Ngarrngga is creating innovative, high-quality curriculum resources for educators and professional development tools to support the teaching of First Nations content, spanning all subjects from early childhood to year 12.

The University of Melbourne and BHP share the vision for an education system that reframes our national story as one which recognises and activates Indigenous histories, cultures and knowledges. The current generation of young learners will become the next generation of leaders. Their values and intellect will be enriched by gaining a deep understanding of, and respect for, the world's oldest continuous living culture. Educators are key to blazing the trail of this vital work.



Above | 2022 Ranger Exchange between Kiwirrkurra, Gooniyandi and Walungurru ranger teams focused on looking after bilby, and feral cat control.

projects such as the Regional Support Program to provide regionally relevant strategic support to Indigenous land management organisations, and the IDA Desert Internship, an innovative strategy to enable stronger employment pathways into the sector. Through these strategic efforts, the IDA and BHP partnership aspires to create a lasting and positive impact on the sector, ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of Indigenous land management practices.



As a foundational partner, BHP supports IDA in its work to secure the future of Indigenous land management in the desert.



Above | Ngarrngga team. Photographer: Jacinta Keefe Photography.



Ngarrngga is an invitation to come along with us and explore. Let's become a truly united country... One that celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the fact that we are home to the oldest continuous cultures in the world.

Professor Melitta Hogarth | Ngarrngga Director & Associate Dean (Indigenous), Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne.



## Arts and culture

### Sustaining strong outcomes: Martumili Artists

Martumili Artists is a Martu-driven Aboriginal art centre that facilitates the production and commercial sale of art created by Martu people living in Parnparjinya (Newman), Jigalong, Parngurr, Punmu, Kunawarritji (Well 33), Irrungadji (Nullagine) and Warralong communities. Martumili Artists is an activity of the Shire of East Pilbara, and operates from a base in the East Pilbara Arts Centre, Newman, Western Australia.

Since its inception in 2006, Martumili has grown substantially in service delivery and recognition, attaining a prominent national and international profile. These achievements are built on the delivery of high-quality services to Martu artists and communities, a dynamic national and international exhibitions program, providing a range of social, cultural, and creative projects and the presentation of Martu culture, history, and identity to audiences. Martumili has catalogued the work of approximately 700 artists.



Above | Sylvia Wilson—Gallery Officer Martumili, Newman WA. Photographer: Rift Photography.

BHP has proudly partnered with Martumili Artists since 2007, providing operational funding for over 15 years, supporting program and operational costs, including the construction of the East Pilbara Arts Centre in Newman. The partnership directly supports Martumili’s business and organisational capacity, long-term development, and the ongoing delivery of high-quality services to Martu people and communities.

The partnership also provides a learning opportunity for BHP to ensure best practice in protecting Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP), which includes artist engagement within projects such as reproduction licensing for merchandise and offering a fair fee to artists. This is a testament to the commitment between BHP and Martumili to contribute towards national reconciliation.



## Community health and wellbeing

### Supporting critical healthcare: National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

The vision of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) and Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) Program is that the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) sector is leading community-controlled, sustainable, holistic, and culturally safe approaches to reducing the inequitable burden of ARF and RHD experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. To achieve this, NACCHO works with ACCHOs in areas with high incidence of ARF and/or prevalence of RHD to develop co-designed, place-based programs that will meet community need.

Program funding, including the funding provided by BHP since 2022, enables services to increase their local workforce and their capacity to implement ARF and RHD strategies that are evidence-based and sustainable. Staff employed through the program include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners, Community-Based Workers and Environmental Health Workers, as well as health promotion, clinical and program coordination staff. Staff employed through the program are supported by a national Community of Practice, which provides networking and ongoing learning and

professional development for participants. The program is supported by a sector-led national governance structure designed to address the structural reform that is required to reduce the impact of ARF and RHD on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



BHP is proud to partner with NACCHO, building on partnerships established with the Aboriginal community-led health sector over many years. It is important that we back Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and put Aboriginal health in Aboriginal hands, as NACCHO’s vision sets out.

We are determined to play our part in the collective action required to address the underlying causes of these health issues, such as inequality, inadequate housing and longstanding health inequities.

Caroline Cox | Chief Legal, Governance and External Affairs Officer



## Indigenous governance, economic development, and advocacy

### Strengthening female voices: Wiyi Yani U Thangani

Wiyi Yani U Thangani ('womens' voices' in Bunuba language) is a multiyear systemic change project set out to capture and respond to the strengths, aspirations and challenges of First Nations women and girls.

In March 2024, as part of this partnership, the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Institute for First Nations Gender Justice was launched, based at the Australian National University (ANU), with support from BHP.

The Institute continues the work of former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO, in elevating the voices of thousands of First Nations women, girls and gender-diverse people, knowing that they hold the knowledge and lived experience capable of reconstructing the social fabric of Australia and creating enabling conditions for everyone to thrive.

The Institute – a first of its kind – is a dedicated space that makes visible the rights and lives of First Nations women, girls and gender-diverse mob, elevating their voices to influence policy and drive systemic change. The Institute will work alongside First Nations women, researchers, practitioners, and non-Indigenous collaborators to design systemic-change initiatives that respond to multiple and intersecting needs and target root causes of issues.



Wiyi Yani U Thangani shows that women are the backbone of our communities, with lived experiences and knowledges which are vital to resolving deeply entrenched socio-economic issues and structural discriminations for generations to come.

Our women are the custodians of vital wisdom in sustaining life, and are the cornerstone of our communities; nurturing children, families, kin, and Country.

**June Oscar AO** | Former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner

The Institute will be our place, where we will create the research agenda, design the models to support thriving societies for our women and families on the ground, and put forward our stories and lived experiences as evidence-based and innovative policy.

Wiyi Yani U Thangani National Summit Communique | May 2023

**Artwork** | Artwork of First Nations women by Grace Hallam (PWC Social Impact) for the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Implementation Framework (2021)





## Knowledge, languages and technologies

### Enabling informed decision making: Winyama

Winyama is an Indigenous-owned and majority-operated geospatial and cloud consultancy based in Western Australia, assisting those working across the Indigenous land estate, while also enabling organisations and government bodies to make informed decisions and understand claims, culture and Indigenous histories.

Since 2019, BHP has partnered with Winyama on the delivery of a National Indigenous Mapping Workshop (IMW), which showcases how Indigenous knowledge and modern science can work hand-in-hand to enable the development of sustainable solutions and environmental protection, inclusive of sacred sites and cultural land.

In 2023, more than 100 people attended the National IMW, where participants received Indigenous-led geo-spatial training, with a focus on earth observation and Indigenous data sovereignty.



Above | Attendees of the National IMW in Narrm 2023. Photographer: Josh Howlett.

The success of this workshop was an undeniable highlight for Winyama and BHP’s partnership, with over 80% of participants reporting improved computer and software skills and improved understanding of Indigenous data management.

Following this momentous event, Winyama was awarded two “Workforce Development and Inclusion” awards and a JK Barrie Award from the Geospatial Council of Australia for their overall contribution to Indigenous digital inclusion within the Geospatial industry.



Preserving and protecting cultural knowledge through modern technology is driving change from the ground up, not only through the work the business does but through the team’s commitment to educating the next generation of change-makers.

Andrew Dowding | Managing Director, Winyama Digital Solutions, and Ngarluma Traditional Owner

## Looking to the future together

Recognising that socio-economic outcomes are reliant on the strength of BHP’s partnerships with community organisations, BHP has developed a clear set of priority areas to drive institutional partnering capability including:

- Indigenous Partnering Guidance**—supporting BHP staff to build capability through cultural awareness obligations, leading engagement practice and methodologies, Indigenous governance principles and clear Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property considerations, including data sovereignty.
- Profiling partners** and supporting their advocacy efforts.
- Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)**—developing guiding principles that respect the rights of Indigenous peoples in relation to heritage, knowledge and cultural expressions, and how these can be impacted through socio-economic programs and practice.
- Continuing the **Indigenous Social Investment Partner Symposium** and network, exploring the opportunities available for collective impact and collaboration.
- Adapting social investment contract templates** to better drive community outcomes through social investment, building in considerations relating to ICIP and Indigenous governance practices and recognising adaptive and flexible partnering terms that respond to changing community contexts.
- Working with partners and communities to develop an **evaluation framework** centred on community perspectives and stories, not just numbers.
- Reflecting on the implementation of the Indigenous Social Investment Strategy through assessing investment, engagement and strategic direction in partnership with communities and community-led organisations.



Above | BHP’s Minerals Australia Indigenous Engagement team members who support Indigenous social investment in partnership with communities.

# BHP

Recognising many of the community organisations we worked together with in FY24.

