

STA Indigenous Partnerships Policy

Preamble

As the peak body for science and technology, Science & Technology Australia (STA) seeks a reconciled and united Australia.

A deep commitment to partnership and support for First Nations leadership guides STA's relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in STEM.

This policy outlines STA's principles and practices to forge true partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and people – especially in our sector.

By adopting this policy and through our practices, STA models shared responsibility across our community for nurturing strong partnerships built on trust, reciprocity, and respect.

Key Principles and Practices

True partnerships are forged through time, effort, commitment, and skill. This requires a sustained engagement in nurturing relationships. This task is shared by our organisation, leaders and staff.

The following principles guide STA to forge even deeper partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in the science, technology, engineering, and maths sector.

Profound respect

Strong partnerships are forged from respect. Respect for the deep scientific knowledge and intellectual property of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures underpins our partnerships.

Relationship before task

Strong partnerships are built from personal connection. This cannot be rushed. Listening closely, supporting leaders personally, and investing in these relationships is key.

Mutual benefit

Successful partnerships support both partners to thrive. In seeking deeper partnerships, STA asks first how a partnership can support the priorities and aspirations of our partners.

Backing Indigenous leadership

Supporting the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in STEM drives transformative change. Indigenous control is crucial in self-determination.

Co-creation: ‘nothing about us, without us’

Where STA advocates on policy issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in STEM, we partner with STA’s Indigenous member organisations to shape policy.

Representation matters

Extending the visibility of the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in STEM and nurturing the next generations of talent is key to addressing under-representation in STEM.

Cultural capability

Successful partnerships require skill and insight. Our ongoing work to build cultural capability across our membership, leadership, and staff is pivotal to our success.

Commitment to truth-telling

Acknowledging the truths of history, including the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is essential for building trust and fostering meaningful connections. Truth-telling strengthens the integrity of our relationships and helps create a more just future.

We invite all members of the STA community to draw on these principles to inform this shared responsibility to nurture partnerships, build skills, and forge powerful connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations.

Further resources on Indigenous partnerships

- [NESP principles for Indigenous partnerships](#) – National Environmental Science Program
- [Principles for a partnership centred approach for NGOs](#) – Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT), Congress and partners
- [Principles for a Partnerships Centred Approach](#) – Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS)
- [The AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#) - Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
- [STA’s First Reconciliation Action Plan](#) – launched 2021

Related Documents

- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Sponsorships and Partnerships Policy

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1.0	Jun 2022	STA Board	Jun 2026
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