The Alliance
CONFERENCE 2026
MEANJIN | BRISBANE

Pathways to Impact:

Driving Indigenous Employment Outcomes

Wednesday 11 November 2026

Sofitel Brisbane Central

Conference from 8.00am | Celebration Dinner from 6.00pm

Join leaders, practitioners, employers and changemakers from Australia-wide at The Alliance Conference 2026 (TAC) in Brisbane. The conference is a national gathering, dedicated to the advancement of employment and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

TAC 2026 is Australia's only conference led by an Indigenous peak body, which is dedicated to First Nations employment and training. Guided by the 2026 theme, Pathways to Impact: Driving First Nations Employment Outcomes, the conference will explore polices, programs and practices which shape the future of First Nations employment.

Through keynote presentations, panel-led discussions and case studies, guests will gain practical insights, knowledge and a diversity of First Nations perspectives.

Program

Learn more about what to expect at The Alliance Conference 2026 here.

Why attend TAC?

Gain new connections, confidence to drive change, and practical ideas for your sector. The one-day conference will offer you insights on:

- The future of First Nations employment and workforce participation
- How to create culturally safe workplaces
- Recruitment, mentoring and retention strategies
- Strengthening pathways from education and community to careers
- Indigenous leadership, workforce development and succession planning.

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS HERE

The Alliance Conference 2026 program

Opening

Master of Ceremonies | **Jahna Cedar**

Welcome to Country | **Traditional Owner**

Keynote: State of First Nations employment

Kylie Penehoe, *Chief Executive Officer*, The Alliance, will deliver a keynote exploring the national landscape and our shared responsibility for driving change.

Keynote: Closing the Gap - How First Nations employment and training outcomes are tracking

Drawing on national data and the Productivity Commission's work, **Selwyn Button**, *Commissioner*, will examine how First Nations employment and training outcomes are tracking, where progress is being made and where gaps remain.

Keynote: National priorities for First Nations employment

The address will outline the Australian Government's priorities for First Nations employment and economic participation. It will be delivered by **Josh Smith**, *Deputy Chief Executive Officer*, Policy and Programs, National Indigenous Australians Agency.

Facilitated Q&A panel

Speakers include **Kylie Penehoe**, **Selwyn Button** and **Josh Smith**

MORNING TEA

Yarning: Supporting the whole person

Paul Dodd, Co-Founder and Director, and **Bianca Cook**, Executive of Community Engagement, from the National Wellbeing Alliance, will discuss trauma-informed workforce practices that support the whole person.

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Panel: Why people stay

Mentoring, belonging and retention are built through connection, culture, and support.

- **Joel Thompson**, *Managing Director,* Yakka Mentoring and Yakka Training
- **Shannon Fraser**, *Indigenous Community Engagement Manager*, Shaping Australia Group

Q&A: The big conversation — What needs to change?

Turning workforce experience into practical system change.

LUNCH

Panel: Employment Services Reform — Designing the future employment system

A facilitated problem-solving forum focused on reform readiness and Indigenous-led system design.

- **Alicia Weiderman**, *General Manager, Engagement and Advocacy,* The Alliance
- **Mark Kucks,** *National Indigenous and Social Procurement Manager*, Hutchinson Builders
- **Judi McConville,** *CEO,* Yabur Yulgun Employment Services Indigenous Corporation

Beyond awareness — Embedding cultural safety at work

Moving beyond awareness training to create systemic workplace change and strengthen accountability.

- **Tiffanie Ireland**, *Founder and Director*, Messenger Bird Collective
- **Nathan Lee**, *Branch Manager, Best Practice Review*, Safe Work Australia

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AFTERNOON TEA

Opening doors — Overcoming barriers to First Nations careers

Chris Davies, *National Inclusion & Reconciliation Manager,* Wilson Group will discuss how workforce pressures can be turned into sustainable pathways for First Nations talent, including overcoming challenges and shifting community perceptions.

Leading forward — Indigenous leadership and succession planning

Fiona Jose, *Executive Co-Chair,* Cape York Partnership, will explore how we can build the next generation of Indigenous leaders.

The road ahead — From conversation to collective action

Kylie Penehoe, *Chief Executive Officer,* The Alliance, will discuss turning insight into action and accountability.

Program subject to change

Scan for The Alliance Conference Speakers

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