The Alliance
CONFERENCE 2026
MEANJIN | BRISBANE



Pathways to Impact:

Driving Indigenous Employment Outcomes

Wednesday 11 November 2026

Sofitel Brisbane Central

Registrations from 8.00am | Conference commences 8.45am
The Alliance Conference Dinner from 6.00pm

Key information for attending The Alliance Conference 2026

Address
249 Turbot Street, Meanjin/Brisbane City QLD 4000
The Alliance Conference 2026 will be held in: Ballroom Le Grand 1 & 2 with registration in the Ballroom Foyer.

Dress code
The Alliance Conference 2026: Business/smart casual
The Alliance Conference Dinner 2026: Business cocktail.

Getting there
- Sofitel Brisbane Central is built directly on top of Central Railway Station. It is also within close proximity to bus networks.
- Venue parking: Guests staying at Sofitel Brisbane Central have access to secure on-site parking (subject to availability) with direct hotel access for added convenience. Self-parking is available for $50/night, with valet parking $60/night.

Other information
- Remembrance Day: Minute's silence at 11:00am. Please be seated by 10:55am.
- Photography and video will take place throughout the conference. Please speak with the registration team if you do not wish to be photographed.

Accessibility
Sofitel Brisbane Central provides wheelchair-accessible rooms and public areas, along with specialised support features for guests with reduced mobility or sensory needs.

The Alliance Conference 2026 program

8:45am Official Welcome

Master of Ceremonies | **Jahna Cedar (MC)**

Welcome to Country | **Shannon Ruska, Tribal Experiences**

8:55am Keynote: State of First Nations employment

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

9:20am Keynote: Employment Service Reforms

The Hon Patrick Gorman MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, for the Public Service, and for Employment and Workplace Relations, will examine key lessons from employment services reform and what they mean for the future of First Nations organisations, including opportunities to strengthen employment outcomes.

9:45am 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, Productivity Commission, will examine how First Nations employment and training outcomes are tracking, where progress is being made and where gaps remain.

10:05am 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.

10:30am MORNING TEA
10:55am REMEMBRANCE DAY OBSERVANCE

11:05am Supporting the Whole Person: Trauma-Informed Workforce Practice

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.

The Alliance Conference 2026 program

11:30am Why People Stay: Mentoring, Belonging and Retention

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
- **Dylan Adams,** Indigenous Engagement Manager, Wilson Group.

11:50am Q&A: The Big Conversation: What needs to change?

Put your questions to the panel and help shape the practical changes needed to improve First Nations employment outcomes, with **Paul Dodd, Bianca Cook, Joel Thompson, Shannon Fraser** and **Dylan Adams**.

12:15pm LUNCH

1:15pm 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.

1:15pm Beyond awareness: Embedding cultural safety at work

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

- **Noel-Shaun Dingle,** General Manager of Research and Capability, The Alliance
- **Tiffanie Ireland**, Founder and Director, Messenger Bird Collective
- **Nathan Lee**, Branch Manager, Best Practice Review, Safe Work Australia
- **Emily Betts**, National Indigenous Employment Manager, Kmart Group.

The Alliance Conference 2026 program

2:30pm AFTERNOON TEA

2:50pm Opening doors: Overcoming barriers to First Nations careers

Chris Davies, National Inclusion and Reconciliation Manager, Wilson Group, will discuss how workforce pressures can be turned into sustainable pathways for First Nations talent.

3:20pm 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.

3:45pm The road ahead: From conversation to collective action

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

4:00pm THE ALLIANCE CONFERENCE 2026 CONCLUDES

6:00pm CONFERENCE DINNER: NETWORKING AND CANAPES, 6:45pm SEATING

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

CONTACT US

events@nieta.org.au
nieta.org.au

Supply Nation REGISTERED

REGISTERED CHARITY acnc.gov.au/charityregister

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

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