

HOSTING A FIRST NATIONS ROUND

Netball Queensland

Netball Queensland is proud of its reconciliation journey so far. We are fully committed to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander netball participants and volunteers are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in our sport.

After the introduction of our inaugural Reflect RAP, we achieved 84% of the deliverables in 2022 and continued to progress the remaining 16% in 2023. In May 2024, we launched our Innovate RAP, with a focus on pathways for First Nations peoples and a commitment to translate intent and commitment into tangible actions to build cultural capability.

First Nations Round is a great way to celebrate diversity on and off the netball court.

Sport is an impactful way to encourage First nations leadership particularly in remote communities. Learning and celebrating the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is of value to all participants. First Nations community leadership is well represented in the structure of sport and in particular netball. This is illustrated by the reliance of teamwork and the sense of community that is formed through netball.

Look at opportunities to link your First Nations Round with National Reconciliation Week or NAIDOC Week to help promote the game and build celebration amongst the broader community.

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Planning a First Nations Round

Assess your how welcoming and safe your association or club environment is

- Are you aware of the traditional language groups and any families connected to these?
- Do you know how many First Nations players/staff and volunteers are currently in your association?
- Do you have any visible displays of First Nations culture at your association/clubhouse (e.g. Flags)?

Engaging the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community

- Reach out to local schools to make connections with Traditional elders
- Connect with the local Police PLO's
- Contact other local sporting organisations for community connections they might have.
- Reach out to Deadly choices to ask for details of your local Aboriginal Clinic.

Netball Queensland have also developed a guide to engaging your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities which can be found [HERE](#) [link resource card]

Funding and grant opportunities

Keep an eye on any funding that may become available to support this initiative:

Queensland Government Grants Finder

<https://www.grants.services.qld.gov.au>

Queensland Sport and Recreation Funding

<https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding>

First Nations Sport and Recreation Program (QLD)

<https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/sport/funding-programs/first-nations-sport-and-recreation-program>

Gambling Community Benefit Fund (QLD)

<https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/community-grants>

Australian Sports Foundation Grants

<https://asf.org.au/grants>

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Visibility

Visibility is important. If your association has a flagpole, raising the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander flag is a great way to show respect. Alternatively having the flag hung up at your clubhouse or venue is another great option.

Find out more- <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/torres-strait-islander-flag>



Smoking Ceremony

A Smoking Ceremony is a traditional Aboriginal cultural practice used to cleanse a space, welcome people onto Country and show respect to the Traditional Owners of the land. The ceremony involves the burning of native plants to create smoke. For First Nations Round events, associations or clubs may choose to include a Smoking Ceremony at the beginning of the day to acknowledge culture and create a respectful and welcoming environment for all participants. Smoking Ceremonies should always be conducted by a recognised Aboriginal cultural practitioner or Elder from the local community and organised in consultation with local Traditional Owners.

Find out more here- <https://www.smokingceremony.com.au>

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Cultural Dancers

Clubs and associations should reach out to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations, Traditional Owner groups or cultural groups to enquire about traditional dance performances for their First Nations Round. A good starting point can also be local First Nations interagency meetings, community centres, schools or local council websites, which often have connections to cultural dance groups in the area. Engaging with local community ensures the performances are culturally appropriate and reflective of the local area.

Research the traditional owners of the land that your association is on and find a company that offers dancers

Artwork

Clubs and associations looking to incorporate Aboriginal artwork into their First Nations Round are encouraged to engage with a local Aboriginal artist where possible. Local Aboriginal community organisations, schools, councils or cultural groups can often assist in connecting clubs with artists in the area. If a local artist is not available, clubs may also work with a non-local Aboriginal artist, ensuring the artwork is used respectfully and the artist's story and cultural connection to the piece is acknowledged.

Reach out to the local schools to see if they have elders or know Indigenous Artists.

The artwork design could then be placed on match netballs, netball bibs and post pads for the round.

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Raffle

A raffle or fundraising activity can be held during First Nations Round, with proceeds donated to First Nations organisations that support community programs and initiatives.

This could include organisations such as Diamond Spirit Educate or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.

To identify organisations in your local area, consider checking local council websites, connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations, or looking into First Nations networks and services operating within your region across Queensland.

Below are some organisations that may be suitable to support or use as a starting point when considering where to direct fundraising efforts.

Diamond Spirit

<https://qld.netball.com.au/diamond-spirit>

Diamond Spirit is Netball Queensland's First Nations initiative, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people through programs focused on education, leadership, culture and community connection, while also delivering netball opportunities in remote communities across Queensland.

The Stars Foundation

Supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls to attend school, complete Year 12 and transition into further education or employment.

<https://starsfoundation.org.au/donate>

Indigenous Literacy Foundation

Provides culturally relevant books and literacy programs to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

<https://www.indigenousliteracyfoundation.org.au/donate.html>

Merchandise

Encouraging clubs and teams to wear indigenous designed merchandise. For example, wearing socks from [Clothings the Gaps](#)

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Welcome to Country vs Acknowledgement

We live, work and play on many different lands and an acknowledgement of country is an important part of Netball remaining an inclusive sport. We are already on our reconciliation journey but as a sport we must strive to learn more about the history, culture and practices of our First Nations Peoples.

Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country is delivered by Traditional Owners or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have been given permission from Traditional Owners to welcome visitors to their Country. Traditionally, Welcome to Countries give safe passage and protection to people who are visitors to someone's land.

Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to country. It can be given by both non- Indigenous people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

How can I do an Acknowledgement of Country?

The accepted structure is usually:

"I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting today and pay my respects to their elders past and present."

If you can, find out the names of the traditional owners. E.g. "I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting today, the **Turrbal and Yuggera people** and pay my respects to their elders past and present."

Netball Queensland Support

If you have any questions at all or would like any assistance, please contact NQ's First Nations Engagement and Programming Manager Taylah Airs on taylah.airs@netballq.org.au