# Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) logoNational First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership

## Terms of Reference

18 March 2025

## Role of the National First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership

1. The National First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership (the Partnership) will support greater First Nations participation and economic opportunities, and aim to respectfully embed First Nations culture within the visitor economy. Its objective is to strengthen national tourism policy by:
	1. Investigating, and establishing a permanent National First Nations Tourism Body;
	2. Providing input and advice on Australian government policies and programs;
	3. Representing the First Nations tourism sector at national activities and forums;
	4. Sharing information with First Nations tourism businesses and stakeholders (including via state/territory bodies where they exist);
	5. Engaging and collaborating with other national and international First Nations bodies including DFAT’s First Nations Trade and Investment Advisory Group; and
	6. Undertaking activities that are determined by the Partnership, within its budget, and where not duplicating work already being done by other entities.
2. The Partnership has no governing legislation while in its establishment phase (see clause 36).

## Appointment and composition

1. Members will be First Nations people with skills and experience relevant to the tourism industry.
2. The Partnership will be comprised of up to two industry members from each state or territory in Australia, including the Torres Strait[[1]](#footnote-2).
3. For states and territories that have existing First Nations tourism bodies, a representative of that body will be a default member of the Partnership (and therefore can have a proxy replacement if agreed by the Chair given they are appointed for their role).[[2]](#footnote-3)
4. States and territories with more than one member will count as one for any voting purposes and be required to settle their position ahead of any decision of the Partnership.
5. For states and territories without a First Nations Tourism body, members will be selected via a process, which will be determined by each state and territory.
	1. The Secretariat will provide support for these processes when requested.
6. Each member of the Partnership will be allowed to designate a Proxy Member if they are unable to attend a meeting. Members must notify the Secretariat and the Chair.
7. Austrade, NIAA and Tourism Australia will have ex-officio, non-voting positions in the Partnership.

## Duration of appointment

1. Members of the Partnership may be appointed for a period until a permanent National First Nations Tourism Body is established.
2. If a representative is a member of the Partnership because of their role in a First Nations tourism body and their role in the First Nations tourism body comes to an end, their role in the Partnership may also cease, subject to decisions in the relevant state or territory, and clause 5.

## Replacement or termination of appointment of members

1. A member of the Partnership can resign via a written statement to the Chair and copied to the Secretariat.
2. If any member is unable to continue their term, a replacement will be appointed in line with the process outlined in paragraphs 4-7.
3. A member’s appointment may also be terminated in writing by Chair in accordance with their appointment conditions, or where a member fails to comply with conflict of interest, disclosure requirements and other requirements.

## Leave of absence

1. Proxies cannot be provided for Individual members of the partnership, only members representing state or territory bodies.
2. Individual members of the Partnership are to have no more than two unexplained meeting absences per year. If a member has more than two unexplained absences, they will be notified in writing by the Secretariat that their position on the Partnership may terminate.
	1. A new member for the affected state or territory will be appointed in accordance with the process outlined above.

## Governance

1. The Chair and Deputy-Chair of the Partnership is to be chosen by and from members.
2. The terms of the Chair and Deputy-Chair will be for a maximum of two years.
3. The Partnership will be supported by a Secretariat in the Australian Government. The Secretariat’s role will include:
	1. Practical secretariat functions, including meeting logistics and papers, management of members’ appointments, [fees and travel arrangements];
	2. Liaison with and support for the Chair as it relates to their role in the Partnership;
	3. Engagement with Partnership members and across Australian Government to bring First Nations Tourism issues to the Partnership for discussion; and
	4. Engagement across Australian Government to take forward the Partnership’s priorities (where possible) and provide feedback to the Partnership on progress.
	5. Management of any funds provided for the Partnership’s operation
4. Members will be responsible for keeping their respective state and territory organisations and governments informed of meeting outcomes and progress, with support from the Secretariat.

## Meetings

1. The Partnership will meet up to four times per year, or as required.
2. More than half of total members (or their proxies) must be present to form a quorum.
3. The agenda for meetings are agreed by the Chair.
4. The Secretariat will advise members of the meeting format, composition, and location.
5. Members, with agreement from the Chair/Secretariat, may also invite external representatives to join meetings as required by the agenda for that meeting.
	1. This could include subject matter experts, including people with lived experience, for the purpose of presenting on topics, providing advice, or hearing directly from the Partnership. This could also include young and emerging leaders, women, and other opportunities to enhance diversity and personal development opportunities.
6. For each State and Territory with a single appointed member, they may also nominate one observer to observe meetings, for the purpose of supporting the Member’s participation in meetings and progressing Partnership work required out of session.
7. Matters requiring urgent attention may be brought to Members out of session, as required.

## Record of meetings

1. A record of the proceedings of every meeting will be prepared and circulated by the Secretariat in a timely manner.

## Remuneration and travel expenses

*Note: Any funding for the group is subject to Government approval, unless an alternate source of funding can be identified.*

1. It is proposed that members of the Partnership are to be remunerated for their participation (sitting fees and travel costs) in accordance with the Remuneration Tribunal (Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Office) Determination 2024.
2. Members will not be eligible to claim reimbursement if they are participating in the Partnership as a representative of an organisation and are already claiming a salary or travel costs for time spent on the Partnership.
3. Ex-Officio members’ travel costs will be met by their agency, and they will not be able to claim sitting fees for their participation.
4. Observers outlined in clause 26 will not be eligible for the reimbursement of travel costs and will not be able to claim sitting fees for their participation.

## Conduct and disclosure of interests

1. Members of the Partnership will be expected to uphold the Australian Public Service (APS) values, set out in section 10 of the Public Service Act 1999.
2. All members will be required to disclose their interests and complete conflict of interest declarations (if required). Members will be asked to declare any actual potential, or perceived conflicts of interest at each meeting.
3. Members are able to share any information provided as part of their membership, unless it is explicitly deemed confidential.

## Amendment, modification or variation of Terms of Reference

1. The Terms of Reference are designed for an interim period while the Partnership is in an establishment phase.
2. The Terms of Reference may be amended, modified or varied after consultation with members of the Partnership, and must be agreed to by a majority and supported by the Secretariat agency.

*Note: This document is a product of the National First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership. It is not an Australian Government document and has not been endorsed by the Australian Government or state and territory governments. Any references to Australian Government funding or resourcing requires consideration and approval by the Australian Government.*

1. Remaining references to ‘states and territories’ in this document includes the Torres Strait. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. A ‘First Nations tourism body’ is defined as a state/territory based First Nations Tourism organisation or committee, with broad responsibility across its state or territory. As at September 2024, this includes WAITOC, NT ATC, QFNTC, IITOQ, SAATOC, NATOC. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)