



The Fred Hollows
Foundation



MEDIA RELEASE

Social sector organisations launch Allies for Uluru Coalition in support of Voice

28 February 2023

National social sector organisations The Fred Hollows Foundation, Oxfam Australia, ACOSS and AN-TAR will launch the Allies for Uluru Coalition in Melbourne today to support a 'YES' vote in the upcoming referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution and establish a Voice to Parliament.

The Allies for Uluru Coalition, representing 144 organisations and thousands of individual supporters across the country, stand ready to walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards a better, brighter future, and extend the invitation to other organisations to join them in the alliance for this historic vote.

The launch of the Coalition follows the First-Nations-led 'Yes' campaign which formally launched in Adelaide last week. The Fred Hollows Foundation, Oxfam, ACOSS and AN-TAR have been involved in campaign planning and will use the Coalition as a means to drive meaningful action and build a groundswell of public support for the yes vote.

The Fred Hollows Foundation CEO Ian Wishart said:

"Sight, good health and the right for people to have a meaningful say on decisions that affect them are basic human rights and The Fred Hollows Foundation stands with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to call for these rights, which can only be achieved through a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament," Mr Wishart said.

"Fred once said that Aboriginal people would not be healthy until they were running their own health services, and this is the essence of self-determination. He knew over three decades ago that giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a genuine say on issues that affect them is not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do."

Oxfam Chief Executive Lyn Morgain said:

"Oxfam Australia has a strong, over 50-year history working as an ally with First Nations communities. We are committed to self-determination, recognition of sovereignty and a

democracy that is founded on Treaty and truth-telling. We walk proudly alongside our peers in the non-government sector and with First Nations communities on the journey toward reconciliation.

“We support voting Yes in the upcoming referendum because First Peoples’ voices must be heard on matters that affect them. It will also help us as a nation to take steps towards delivering a better future for the First Peoples of Australia.”

ACOSS CEO Cassandra Goldie said:

“At this most historic of times, ACOSS is proud to walk with First Peoples to shape a brighter, better Australia. Recognising First Peoples and the 65,000 years of their continuing connection to this land is a proud part of this country’s history.

“This inclusion in the Constitution, along with enshrining a Voice to Parliament, is long overdue and critical for Indigenous Australians to have self-determination and a greater say over their lives, alongside Treaty, and Truth.

“We will be proudly working to mobilise our members across Australia to vote ‘yes’ in the August referendum.”

ANTAR National Director Paul Wright said:

“This is a once in a generation opportunity to walk a better path for Australia. I want to be part of the generation that walked the talk and made Voice, Treaty and Truth a positive force for change across our country.”

“ANTAR stands with the many First Nations peoples and our fellow civil society partners in calling for the full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.”

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a gift to all Australians. The upcoming referendum on the Voice is an opportunity to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia’s constitution and also ensure their voices are heard on issues that impact their communities.

The Allies for Uluru Coalition supports the implementation of the Uluru Statement in full, a constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice as well as the establishment of a Makarrata Commission to oversee national treaty and truth-telling processes.

For media inquiries contact:

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