

SELF-DETERMINATION FUND

Strategic Plan

2023 - 2026

March 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The directors of the Trustee of the Self Determination Fund acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria, where the Self-Determination Fund is established and the Trustee delivers on its purposes and pay our respect to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

The directors of the Trustee - from diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander country - acknowledge the struggle and resilience of First Peoples to maintain the longest continuing culture in the world. We humbly continue our work to establish equal footing for First Peoples in negotiating a Treaty in Victoria and sustainably build wealth and prosperity for future generations in perpetuity.

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**SELF-DETERMINATION FUND LIMITED AS
TRUSTEE FOR THE SELF-DETERMINATION FUND**

Strategic Plan

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As the first Co-Chairs of the Trustee Board of the Self Determination Fund, we acknowledge the incredible privilege and responsibility the Trustee Board holds in shaping a transformational institution that will improve the lives of First Peoples in Victoria for generations to come.

The Self-Determination Fund is a financial resource to support and build economic self-determination, both through the Treaty process and into the future.

This Strategic Plan of the Self Determination Fund is the first for this organisation, and reflects the vision of the SDF - Victorian First Peoples on equal footing as determined by the aspirations of First People individuals, families and communities – while indicating that self-determination is really about First Peoples’ aspirations determining their own future.

The Trustee Board has focused on its responsibilities as interim directors, overseeing and completing the Establishment Period. With the transition out of the Establishment Period and into the SDF’s distribution and investment phase, we offer this Strategic Plan as a foundation for the future of the SDF and its service to the First Peoples’ community in Victoria today and for future generations in perpetuity.

Kind regards

Nadina Brockhurst and Rohan Henry
Co-Chairs
Self-Determination Fund Limited
Trustee of Self-Determination Fund

STRATEGIC PLAN ON A PAGE – 2023 TO 2026

Vision	Victorian First Peoples on equal footing as determined by the aspirations of First People individuals, families and communities				
Strategic Purpose	Establish a prosperous and enduring self-determination fund, that supports the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to achieve unincumbered participation of First Peoples in Treaty negotiations and facilitate their wealth and prosperity through empowerment and self-determination				
What does success look like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support First Peoples to have equal standing with the State in Treaty negotiations Provide the financial independence for First Peoples so that they are empowered and have capacity, wealth and prosperity Be Transparent and accountable to First Peoples' Communities and the broader Victorian public Support the Cultural diversity of this generation and future First Peoples of Victoria. Demonstrate the impact of the Self-Determination Fund (SDF) to this and future generations 				
Strategic Pillars (Clause 8.3 Trust Deed)	A. Develop longer-term plans to facilitate advancement of the SDF's purposes	B. Be responsive to aspirations and priorities of Victorian First Peoples communities as communicated by the Assembly	C. Propose mechanisms for reporting and transparency of the SDF to the Victorian First Peoples	D. Establish any SDF-related strategic direction on matters significantly affecting land, culture and inherent rights	
Key Focus	Carry out business relating to its sole charitable purpose		Operating ethical and responsible governance, including investments, reporting and oversight		Ensure the sustainability of the SDF so that First Peoples are supported in Equal Footing efforts and Wealth and Prosperity aspirations for this and future generations
Our Priorities (2023-26)	1. Establish Trustee and SDF	2. Receive and distribute* Government Donations	3. Invest and Manage Funds as Trustee	4. Future Growth and Impact	5. Relationships
	1.1 Organisational set-up complete (Trustee, and SDF) 1.2 Complete Establishment Period obligations 1.3 Receive Initial State contribution 1.4 Transition to ongoing Board & corporate operations 1.5 Establish strong risk and compliance and associated audits of those mechanisms	2.1 Safely and promptly receive additional State donations and contributions 2.2. Fair and equality First Peoples funding process 2.3 Streamlined and easily understood monitoring and evaluation of funding 2.4 Fundraising and donations guidelines	3.1 Ethical and Responsible investments that are responsible to First Peoples' aspirations 3.2 Develop and implement Investment Strategy safely 3.3 Sustainable management fee structure 3.4 Expert investment manager appointed	4.1 Attract and grow donations 4.2 Establish First People donations 4.3 Establish alternative NGO donations 4.4. Sustainable and balanced and innovative (where appropriate and agreed) SDF funds and grants	5.1 Inclusive partner for Victorian First Peoples 5.2 Trusted partner to Assembly and all Traditional Owner groups 5.3 Trusted facilitator between State Government, Non-Governmental Organisations and First Peoples stakeholders 5.4 Respected for safely delivering on the Trustee and SDF's obligations

*Interim Directors unable to distribute funds.

Strategic Plan: 2023 – 2026

Phases and timing

The directors of Self-Determination Fund Limited, the Trustee of the Self-Determination Fund have developed this Strategic Plan to provide a roadmap for 1) the establishment of the Self-Determination Fund, and 2) actions post the establishment phase over the next four years. This Strategic Plan has been prepared in consultation with the Chamber of First Peoples Assembly of Victoria (the Assembly) to satisfy one of the requirements of the Establishment Period¹ and clause 8.3 of the Trust Deed.

The Strategic Plan outlines the high-level goals that the Trustee is working to achieve for the Self-Determination Fund throughout its first four years. This Strategic Plan is underpinned by a detailed work plan for the establishment phase and supported by organisational policies currently in development.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and refreshed at least every four years.

There are two phases addressed in this Strategic Plan for the Trustee and the Self-Determination Fund:

1. Establishment Phase

2. Post Establishment Phase

¹ As defined in the Assembly's Directions to the Trustee.

1 Establishment Phase

November 2022 to ~ July 2023

The Establishment Phase refers to both the Establishment Period and additional activities for organisational set-up, Self-Determination Fund readiness or others desired by the Interim Directors.

A number of key tasks are required to establish the Trustee and Self-Determination Fund, including registering as a charity and receiving the transfer of the initial State Government contribution. In the interest of transparency and accountability, key activities have been outlined under Key Priorities below. In addition, the Trustee has developed a detailed work plan to support this work.

The Establishment Phase is anticipated to continue through the first half of 2023. Given the Assembly's election period between April and June 2023, the Assembly has requested that certain key documents for establishment of the SDF be provided to it in the first half of this year. Working toward a timeline of moving to the Post Establishment Phase of the SDF – including to distribute funds to the Community with the appropriate guidelines, monitoring and reporting - in the second half of 2023.

Key Priorities for the Establishment Phase:

Establishment of the Trustee and the SDF	Key Establishment Period documents approved	Receive transfer of initial State contribution safely	Draft key policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Organisational set up activities Complete Establishment Period requirements CEO recruitment and organisational deployment Finance and accounting support 	Funding Guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Equal Footing Purpose Strategic Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Strategic Plan prepared by the Trustee Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charity registration completed and approved (ACNC & ATO) Establish the Investment and Advisory Committee to advise on development of an investment strategy for the funds of the SDF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donations Policy Investment Strategy/policy Corporate and Trustee governance, risk, audit and compliance Budget and Expense Allocation Including cultural and Community engagement as needed

2 Post Establishment Phase

~August 2023 onwards

With the completion of the Establishment Phase of the Trustee and SDF, the Assembly will appoint directors for a 3 year term in the second half of 2023. The Trustee will then begin its post establishment work, including the first disbursements of the SDF's monies for its Equal Footing Purpose, also known as Priority Spending Area 1.

Guided by the priorities set in the Strategic Plan on a Page Priorities, the Trustee's further activities include:

- Transition to the ongoing Board and the Trustee's corporate operations.
- Safely receiving its second and third State Government contribution milestone (combined \$30 million).
- Convene its Annual General Meeting each year and publish related reports.
- Subject itself to audit processes and outcomes and other oversight activities, either self or externally- driven.
- Review its Strategic Plan review at least within 12 months to plan and execute on:
 - Its Wealth and Prosperity Purpose (also known as priority spending area 2). The Trustee acknowledges that this purpose is potentially broad and likely affects all First Peoples residing in Victoria. Greater Community collaboration, consultations and engagement will likely be required to clarify and sharpen the SDF's impact.
 - Future investment for the sustainability of the SDF (known as Priority Spending Area 3) including considering modelling and associated growth and/or investment strategy.
- Develop frameworks to demonstrate impact and evaluate the SDF's contribution to self-determination.
- Develop effective partnerships with commissioning agencies that are Victorian-based and Community controlled.
- Integrate recent learnings from Nation Building Funding and other instructive learnings as appropriate.

Attachment 1

What is the Self-Determination Fund and what is it for?

The establishment of the Self-Determination Fund is a significant milestone in the Treaty process for First Peoples in Victoria

The Assembly has agreed with the State on a First Peoples-controlled and managed Self-Determination Fund. The SDF is a new financial resource designed by and for First Peoples and will support First Peoples economic self-determination. Consistent with what we have heard from Community, the SDF will operate independently from government.

The Assembly will be responsible for administering the SDF. This means that First Peoples are making decisions about First Peoples' financial resources. The SDF will have strong cultural governance processes, high standards of good governance and financial responsibility, and it will be transparent and accountable to Community in its operations. The SDF will empower First Peoples to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development in exercise of First Peoples' inherent right to self-determination, a fundamental right that is affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

The Self-Determination Fund has two main purposes:

1. To support First Peoples to negotiate Treaties on a more level playing field with the State, recognising the imbalance of financial resources and power between First Peoples and government. This will help ensure that First Peoples have the resources needed to prepare for and engage in Treaty negotiations.
2. To empower First Peoples to build capacity, wealth, and prosperity for current and future generations. To benefit all First Peoples in Victoria throughout the Treaty negotiation process and beyond.

The SDF will not be able to provide resources that would duplicate existing service delivery and the important work of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. To achieve its purposes, the SDF may provide resources to engage collaboratively with other organisations or groups involved in Community service delivery. The direction of the SDF will be capable of changing over time so that it can remain responsive to First Peoples' priorities in delivering its purposes.

The Principles of the SDF:

- **SELF-DETERMINATION AND EMPOWERMENT** The SDF will give effect to self-determination and empowerment and support First Peoples to make decisions about First Peoples financial resources.
- **FAIRNESS AND EQUITY** The SDF will be administered in a way that fairly and equitably benefits First Peoples.
- **RESPONSIVENESS** The SDF will be a flexible and adaptive financial resource that First Peoples can access in line with our needs and priorities.

- **INNOVATION** The SDF will support innovative processes and programs and improve on existing approaches to resourcing First Peoples.
- **RESPECT** The SDF will reflect First Peoples' values and ways of doing business as well as respect and support First Peoples' governance structures.
- **SAFETY** The SDF will be administered with care, diligence, and prudence.
- **TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY** The SDF will be administered with transparency and be accountable to First Peoples.

Attachment 2

The role of Interim Directors

Assembly Directions to the Trustee

The first Directors of the Trustee of the Self-Determination Fund (the Interim Directors), have the important responsibility of setting up the SDF, its governance and processes during the initial establishment phase. Interim Directors will shape a transformational institution that will improve the lives of First Peoples in Victoria for generations to come by shifting decision making power into the hands of Community and enabling economic self-determination.

Post-establishment Phase – Appointment of Directors for 3 year term

At the time of writing, the Assembly is conducting a public recruitment process to appoint ongoing directors for a 3 year term. Expressions of interest close on 3 March 2023 with a view for appointments to be made after that and before the end of the establishment phase likely to be July 2023.

Attachment 3 - Interim Strategic Plan Pillars

Statement addressing strategic pillars set out in Clause 8.3(a) of Trust Deed

TRUSTEE'S LONGER TERM PLANS FOR SDF PURPOSES

The Trustee's longer-term plans to facilitate the advancement of the purposes of the Fund

Refer to the content of this Strategic Plan.

FIRST PEOPLES COMMUNITIES

The aspirations and priorities of First Peoples communities in different areas of Victoria relevant to the Fund as communicated to the Trustee by the Assembly

The Assembly has provided guidance to the Trustee to focus the Equal Footing purpose in its Establishment Phase.

The Trustee acknowledges that the First Peoples communities in Victoria, and their needs, interests and outcomes, are diverse. The Interim Directors are part of these communities and endeavour to include Community considerations into the establishment phase.

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Proposals and mechanisms for reporting and transparency to the First Peoples

The Trustee proposes to do the following:

- Produce a general statement on dedication to transparency and accountability
- Publish public reports, with Assembly's approval and/or input. The result of which will be transparency of who receives funding from the SDF. This includes:
 - a quarterly report relating to the activities of the SDF within 30 days of the end of each calendar quarter;
 - an annual report relating to the activities of the SDF and impact of those activities in advancing the purposes of the SDF, within 60 days of 30 June 2023
- Publication of the Trustee of the SDF's key documents including its Strategic Plan (this document) and the Funding Guidelines. This enables the Trustee to be transparent about its decisions on funding allocations and demonstrate impact.
- Participating in or convening forums with communities the SDF serves and potential recipients of the SDF via the Assembly's engagement teams and outreach.
- Safely manage funds through strong risk and compliance policies and practices and associated audits of those mechanisms.

STRATEGIC MATTERS RELEVANT TO THE FUND

Any strategic direction on matters significantly affecting land, culture and inherent rights that come from Aboriginal lore and law and culture as relevant to the Fund

In the establishment phase of the SDF, the Trustee has not received any strategic directions from the Assembly regarding these matters outside what was provided in the Directions to the Trustee. Noting that post-establishment phase for the SDF and after the Assembly's elections, that may change and any strategic direction in relation to these areas are welcomed by Trustee of the SDF.