



JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

July 4 2022

First Nations and the JCCV Walk Together

The Jewish Community Council of Victoria First Nation's Reconciliation Program recently embarked on a new project, Walk Together, with the objective of increasing the Jewish community's understanding of, and support for, Aboriginal self-determination and empowerment.

Given that Jewish and First Nations Peoples have shared experiences of dispossession, genocide and strong relationships with their respective lands; the new Federal Government's commitment to implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart; and the Victorian Government's establishment of the Yoo-rook Commission; the environment is ripe for mutual exchange, dialogue and development of further opportunities for the Jewish community to work together in collaboration with Australian First Nations peoples.

The project will begin with a survey of Jewish organisations affiliated with the JCCV. This survey will provide an overview of the current understanding of and engagement with Indigenous communities and peoples, including identifying those organisations that are developing or have adopted Reconciliation Action Plans. The findings will help to identify ways the Jewish community organisations can engage with First Nations organisations in a supportive and collaborative-relationship.

The project is to be undertaken with Karen Milward, a Yorta Yorta woman with 20 years' experience working with Aboriginal communities and organisations. Ms Milward will guide the building of connections with the appropriate people with authority to speak for others in the Aboriginal community as a basis for developing closer relationships between First Nations organisations and the Jewish community for future meaningful engagement.

The project is being supported by LDC Group, which is assisting with survey preparation and analysis.

In future stages of Walk Together, it is envisaged that a greater number of Jewish organisations will partner with Indigenous organisations to achieve identified and agreed upon objectives

On her involvement in this initiative, Ms Milward stated:

“I am excited to be working on this project as it is a very important step in understanding the progress the JCCV’s 52 affiliates have made in their Reconciliation journey, particularly

in understanding good practice in engagement and developing strong collaborative working relationships with Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This project will identify the lessons learnt from both the Jewish communal organisations and their partnerships with Aboriginal communities including organisations and networks which will inform a positive way forward for reconciliation between our two communities in the future in Victoria.”

JCCCV President, Daniel Aghion stated:

“The Jewish community has so much to thank the Indigenous community for as we are new arrivals on their ancient land. As two ancient civilisations, we have so much in common and so much to learn from each other. I hope that Walk Together will allow us to partner together in a meaningful way and to help both our communities.”

The survey of current initiatives underway in the Jewish community will be sent to all JCCV affiliate organisations in July. All affiliates are encouraged to participate in the survey.

For further information please contact the project team: Miriam Bass miriambass@icloud.com; Lee Ann Bassler lbasser@icloud.com or Joy Lobo joy.loba@iinet.net.au