

Artwork: 'Grounded' by Peta Link,
Gooreng Gooreng/Kabi Kabi woman



THE 2ND FIRST NATIONS WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

POST EVENT WRAP

7-8 MAY 2025 | BRISBANE | MEANJIN & ONLINE

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KEY THEMES & ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

KEY THEMES



Resilience and Leadership

First Nations women shared inspiring stories of their strength and leadership within their communities, families, and workplaces, encouraging others to embrace their own potential.



Cultural Knowledge & Wisdom

The summit emphasized the vital role of Indigenous cultural knowledge, wisdom, and long-term vision in addressing community challenges and driving meaningful change.



Diversity and Support Networks

The importance of diversity, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and strong support networks for First Nations women was highlighted, fostering a safe space for shared learning and empowerment.



Youth Empowerment & Future Vision

A focus on youth perspectives aligned with the NAIDOC theme "The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy," empowering young First Nations women to lead and shape their communities through intergenerational dialogue.



Owning Narratives & Cultural Responsibility

Attendees were encouraged to embrace their personal narratives, cultural responsibilities, and leadership potential, celebrating the essential roles of First Nations women as carers, teachers, healers, and leaders.

ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS



Lead with Cultural Authenticity and Connection

It is important to stay grounded in cultural identity, values, and ways of knowing, being, and doing. Individuals can draw strength from their connection to country, community, and cultural protocols. Allow cultural knowledge to guide your leadership style while navigating contemporary contexts.



Build Strong Support Networks and Mentoring Relationships

Cultivating relationships with other First Nation women leaders can foster guidance and support. This involves creating safe spaces for sharing knowledge and experiences, alongside actively mentoring and supporting emerging leaders. Furthermore, maintaining connections to family, culture, and country, recognizes them as vital sources of strength.



Practice Self-Care and Cultural Wellbeing

Acknowledging and working through intergenerational trauma is a vital step, which involves setting boundaries and prioritizing your physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. Equally important are staying connected to cultural practices and identity, and accessing cultural supervision and support whenever needed.



Take Strategic Action to Transform Systems

To influence and change colonial systems from within, be strategic about when and how to challenge the status quo, focusing on creating sustainable, long-term change. Simultaneously, leverage your position and influence to create pathways for others.



Focus on Legacy and Future Generations

Consider the long-term impact on those who will follow and actively work towards sustainable change that will benefit future generations. This involves documenting and sharing knowledge and experiences, along with creating opportunities and removing barriers for young leaders.

DAY ONE: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Drawing inspiration from the women who make up a powerful example of the matriarch

Naomi Moran

Nyangbal, Arakwal & Dunghutti woman, NSW Treaty Commissioner, NSW Government

- **Matriarchal Inspiration:** Naomi discussed the impact of strong First Nations women in her life, highlighting their resilience and influence on her leadership journey. She emphasised that leadership is inherent in First Nations women.
- **Owning Your Narrative:** Naomi encouraged attendees to embrace their identities and cultural responsibilities. She shared her personal journey, marked by both challenges and triumphs, to inspire attendees to own their narratives and step into their leadership potential.

Redesigning a future of our own

Donna Murray

Wiradyuri & Wonnarua woman, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Allied Health Australia

- **Long-Term Vision:** Donna discussed the importance of Indigenous nation-building, emphasizing long-term strategic thinking and community-led solutions. She highlighted the importance of generational thinking and planning for future generations.
- **Cultural Leadership:** Donna shared her experience at Harvard and the importance of cultural leadership in driving positive change. She stressed that cultural leadership, grounded in traditional values, is crucial for the success of Indigenous nations.

Celebrating the unique strengths of First Nations women's leadership

Tenneil Murray

*Torres Strait Islander Woman,
Director First Nations Strategy, State
Library of Queensland*

Renee Blackman

*Gubbi Gubbi woman, Chief
Executive Officer, Aboriginal &
Torres Strait Islander Community
Health Service Brisbane (ATSICHS)*

Kerry Staines

*descendant of the Mandananji &
Walka Wakka people, Chief
Executive Officer, First Nations
Advocates Against Family Violence
(FNAAFV)*

Wynetta Dewis

*proud Torres Strait Islander
woman, Chief Executive Officer,
Queensland Indigenous Family
Violence Legal Service (QIFVLS)*

- **Strength in Diversity:** The panellists explored the unique strengths that First Nations women bring to leadership, emphasizing the importance of diverse perspectives and experiences. They discussed how women-led solutions are essential for addressing community challenges.
- **Collective Empowerment:** The panel discussed the importance of mentorship, support networks, and intergenerational knowledge transfer. They highlighted how First Nations women empower each other and pave the way for future generations of leaders.

VIP Keynote: Iconic moments, personal bests & shining a light on First Nations excellence

Cathy Freeman OAM OLY

Kuku Yalanji & Birri Gubba woman, one of Australia's greatest ever Olympians & National Treasure

- **Embracing Identity:** Freeman shared her journey as an athlete and advocate, emphasizing the importance of embracing one's identity and cultural heritage. She highlighted how her connection to culture fueled her success and continues to inspire her work.
- **The Power of Belief:** Freeman discussed the pivotal role that belief and support played in her life, from teachers and family to mentors and communities. She encouraged attendees to believe in themselves and to support the dreams of young First Nations people.

“

Having attended the summit in person was an absolute honour. I'm deeply grateful for the insight, stories, collaboration and the most spectacular Welcome to country. I now have actions for myself to pursue. I feel more confident and capable having the backing of my ancestors before me, my Aunties encouraging me and my Tidda's beside me.”

Heidi Turner

Support Officer, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland

Advocating for & empowering the voices of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women in Australia

Wendy Anders

Arrente Woman, Chief Executive Officer, The National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA)

Sarah Corrigan

Darkinjung woman, Chairperson, National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA)

- **Advocacy for Change:** Sarah and Wendy discussed NATSIWA's role in advocating for the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls. They shared their insights on leadership and the importance of amplifying the voices of First Nations women.
- **Empowering Women's Voices:** The speakers highlighted the importance of empowering First Nations women to lead and participate in decision-making processes. They discussed the need for culturally safe spaces and the importance of listening to the lived experiences of women.

The journey as the first in my family: Thriving, not just surviving

Melina Connors

Gurindji woman, Inaugural First Nations Midwifery Director, Queensland Health

- **Pioneering leadership:** Melina shared her journey as the inaugural First Nations Midwifery Director, emphasizing the importance of thriving, not just surviving, in leadership roles. She discussed the challenges and triumphs of being the first in her family to achieve such a position.
- **Inspiring Future Generations:** Melina highlighted the importance of representation and mentorship for young First Nations women. She discussed her commitment to creating pathways for future generations and emphasized the power of "seeing" oneself in leadership roles.

DAY TWO: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Working Our Way: The Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Institute for First Nations Gender Justice

Terri Reid

Wuthathi, Meriam & Gamilaroi woman, Project Coordinator, Wiyi Yani UThangani Institute for First Nations Gender Justice

Chloe Wegener

Garrwa woman, Project Coordinator, Wiyi Yani U Thangani Institute for First Nations Gender Justice

- **Collective Action:** The Wiyi Yani U Thangani Institute team discussed their work in supporting and amplifying the voices of First Nations women. They emphasized the importance of collective action, systems change, and peacebuilding for achieving gender justice.
- **Reweaving the Social Fabric:** The speakers highlighted the Institute's role in reweaving the social fabric and creating spaces for collaboration and co-creation of solutions. Discussions were had about commitment to transforming systems and centering the lived experiences of First Nations women.

Indigenous women & gender diverse people traversing perimenopause & menopause

Professor Odette Best

Goreng Goreng (Wakun clan), Boonthamurra & Yugambah woman, Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Strategy), University of Southern Queensland

- **Breaking the Silence:** Odette discussed the importance of breaking the silence around menopause and perimenopause for Indigenous women. She shared her personal journey and advocacy for greater research, resources, and culturally safe healthcare in this area.
- **Centring Indigenous Knowledge:** Odette highlighted the lack of culturally relevant research on menopause and perimenopause for Indigenous women. She emphasized the need for Indigenous-led studies that incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and address the diverse cultural contexts of women's experiences.

DAY TWO: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Challenging systems with strong Indigenous leadership

Candice Butler

Aboriginal woman, Director Centre of Excellence, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children Protection Peak (QATSI CPP)

- **Challenging Systems:** Candice emphasized the crucial role of strong Indigenous leadership in reforming systems like child protection, advocating for self-determination and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.
- **Empowering Future Leaders:** Candice stressed developing leadership qualities across all levels to empower future Indigenous generations, highlighting the need for courageous conversations and genuine community engagement.

Preparing for the next 60,000 years

Angela Young

Kullallii/Koa woman, Executive Director Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Engagement, Children's Health Queensland

- **Connecting to Purpose:** Angela shared her leadership journey, emphasizing finding purpose and self amid change, and highlighted the unique cultural roles of First Nations women in preparing future generations.
- **Honoring Ancestral Knowledge:** Angela stressed celebrating and preserving the wisdom of First Nations women, honoring ancestral knowledge to prepare future generations for the next 60,000 years.

What Comes Next? How the next generation of women's voices are paving the path ahead

Taneesha Clarke

Aboriginal & Maori woman, Executive Coordinator of the Office of the Deputy Director General - First Nations Strategies & Partnerships, Department of Education Queensland

Corinna Theodossio

Wiradjuri woman, National Organisation Project Management Office Leader, Indigenous Business Australia

Sarah Corrigan

Darkinjung woman, Chairperson, National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA)

- **Youth Perspectives:** The panel highlighted young women's unique leadership strengths, emphasizing cultural connection, community, and mentorship, and the empowering role of culture and Country.
- **Vision for the Future:** The panel reflected on the NAIDOC theme, "The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy," and discussed their visions for themselves and their communities. They highlighted the importance of empowering young women to lead and shape the future.

Leading through influence & identity

Courtney Fewquandie

Butchulla & Gubbi Gubbi woman, General Manager First Nations Football, Football Federation Australia

- **Leading Through Identity:** Courtney shared her leadership journey, emphasizing the importance of leading through influence and identity. She discussed how her lived experiences and cultural heritage have shaped her leadership style and her commitment to creating inclusive spaces.
- **Nurturing and Empowering:** Courtney highlighted the importance of nurturing, influencing, and creating inclusive and equitable spaces. She discussed the opportunities that have empowered her to lead and make a positive impact on her community.



CAPTURING CONVERSATIONS

Live scribing highlights from **Chloe Wegener**,
Garrwa woman, Project Coordinator, Wiya Yani U Thangani Institute for First Nations Gender
Justice, Visual scribe & artist

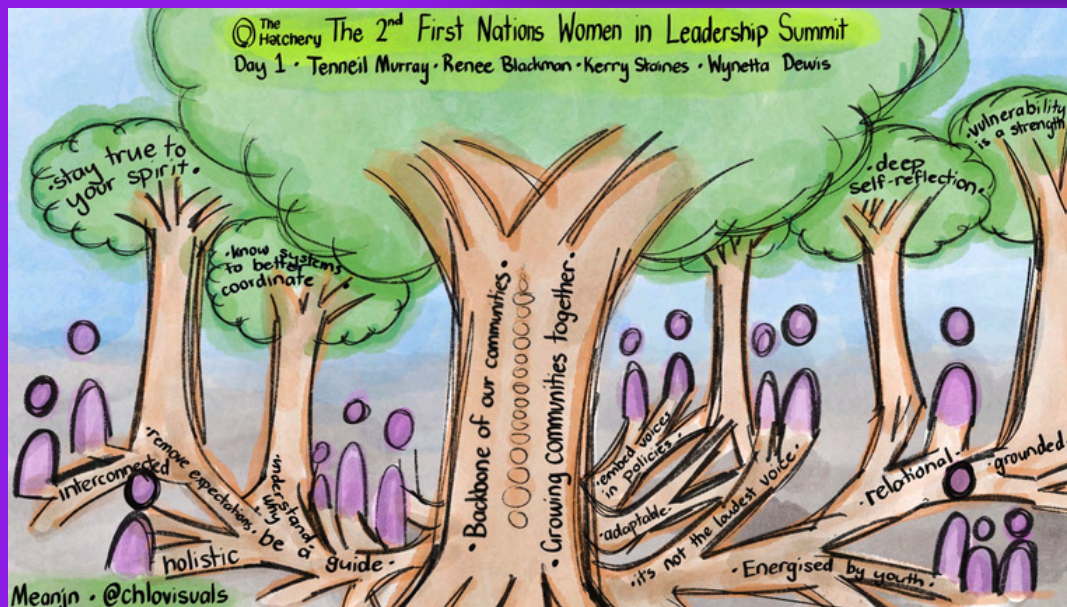
DAY ONE

Drawing inspiration from
the women who make up
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Naomi Moran

Redesigning a future
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Celebrating the unique
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Cathy Freeman OAM OLY





Acknowledgement of Country

The Hatchery acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work & live, & recognise their continuing connection to land, water & community. We pay respects to Elders past & present.



Connecting people with knowledge to inspire change.

The Hatchery is proud to curate and deliver a diverse array of over 100 in-person and virtual learning events annually, including Conferences, Masterclasses, Seminars, and Private Training Courses. Join us on this transformative journey towards a future of enriched professional development and the joy of coming together once more.

Let's keep in touch

