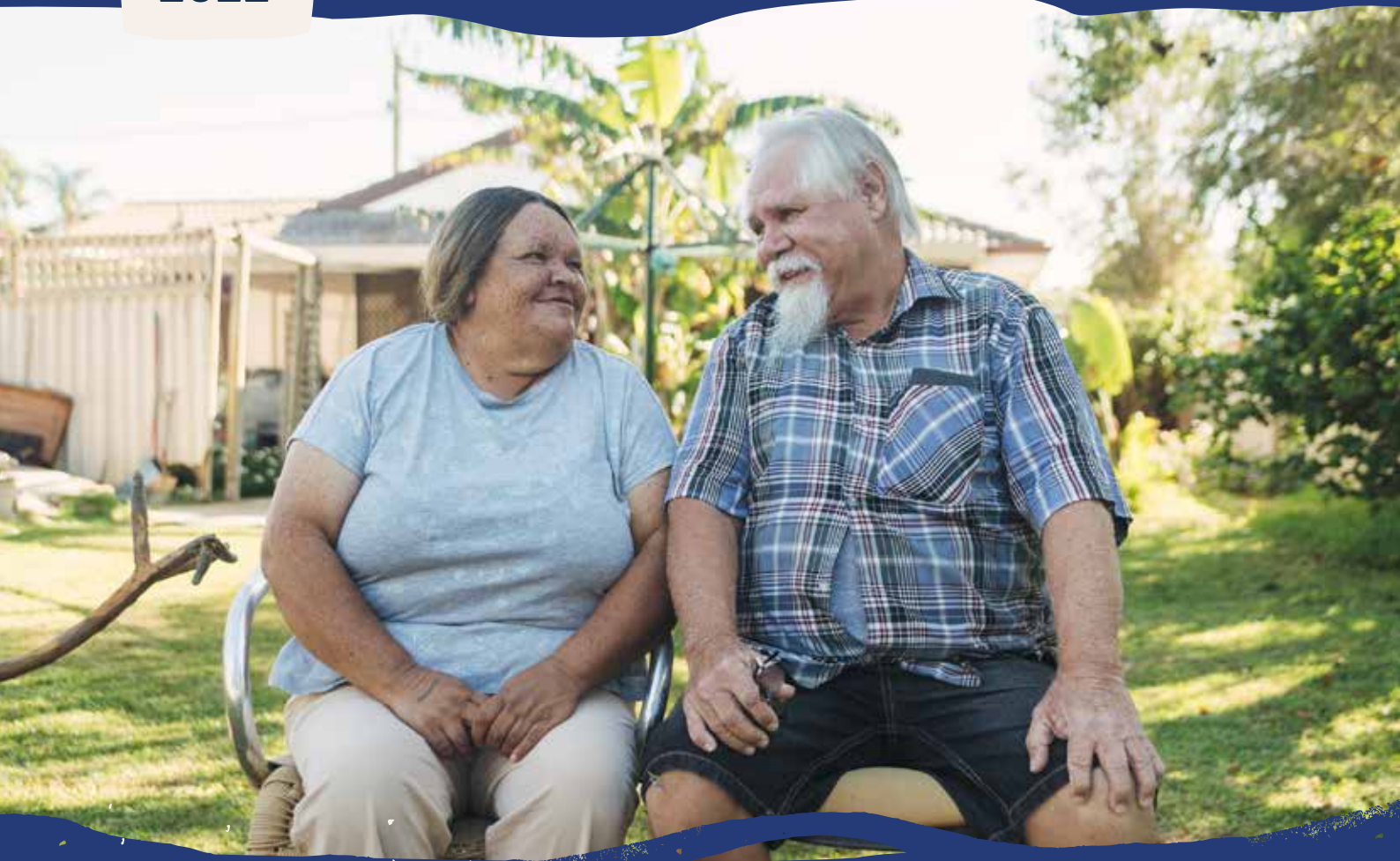


# Aboriginal Community Housing Organisation Partnership Prospectus

2022



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.



The pieces of artwork in this prospectus were created by Nerolie Bynder a proud Badimia-Noongar-Yamatji woman. Her style is contemporary Aboriginal Art. Nerolie can be found on Facebook or LinkedIn.

**Nerolie Bynder**  
*Where's My Mia Mia, 2020*

The leaves in the upside down V shape represent a mia mia.

The yellow spirits outside the mia mia are the homeless people or the disconnected spirits of the homeless, surrounding the mia mia, longing for one to call their own. They are reaching out for help to the services around them and above them, the services are supporting them, but sadly it takes a long time and the spirits are left to float around from place to place.

In the centre it represents home to our people. We have a connection to one place but also to many. We branch out from family or place to place.

The big waterhole. That's our country. Our home, our connection to our spirit. But we also can go wandering and go be in other areas and still be accepted as our home. We connect to many many people all over.

The three spirits represent the people on their own heart journey – spirits from the past, the present and the future – as they had to travel through the stages of this journey from homelessness to having a happy home of their own.

The yellow and blue dots represent Shelter WA and acknowledges the 40 years they have given.

Below is our peaceful land our Boodja which we all have to live on, our foundation.

Which we all hope everyone has a place to call home on.

The trees on country represents the land and the strong connection within us to country.

Our family roots, the symbol that shows our inter-connection to each other.

## Contents

4	<b>Executive Summary</b>
5	<b>Message From the Co-Chairperson</b>
6	<b>Prospectus Background</b>
8	<b>What is Aboriginal Community Housing?</b>
10	<b>Social and Community Housing</b>
12	<b>Why Focus on Housing for Aboriginal People?</b>
15	<b>The Power of Partnerships</b>
16	<b>WA ACHO Sector</b>
18	<b>Alignment with Government Policy</b>
20	<b>ACHO Profiles</b>
30	<b>Long-Lasting and Transformative Outcomes</b>
31	<b>Future Growth and Capacity</b>
32	<b>Partnership Opportunities</b>
33	<b>How You Can Partner With Us</b>

## Executive Summary

### **Australia has a long, rich, and ongoing First Nations culture and history.**

Access to safe and affordable homes and culturally appropriate housing services are fundamental to Aboriginal people thriving in and contributing to community.

This prospectus outlines the opportunities to partner with four of Western Australia's Aboriginal Community Housing Organisations (ACHOs): Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation, Murchison Region Aboriginal Corporation, Noongar Mia Mia, and Southern Aboriginal Corporation.

ACHOs offer a range of housing options and culturally sensitive housing services, working to empower Aboriginal people through supporting them meet their housing needs.

These organisations all focus on culturally-informed and culturally-led housing solutions. The cultural practices of their respective Aboriginal communities are deeply embedded in the way they work; addressing housing needs and providing property and tenancy management services in a way that honours culture and delivers better housing outcomes for Aboriginal people.

ACHOs work in and advocate for their local communities, working with Aboriginal people across Perth and in regional areas to facilitate safe, secure and stable housing.

Demand is increasing for housing options and culturally sensitive housing services for Aboriginal people. From preventing and permanently exiting homelessness to facilitating home ownership for Aboriginal people, responding effectively to meet the individual needs of their clients is paramount for ACHOs.

A strong, diverse ACHO sector is integral to closing the gap for Aboriginal people, putting WA's commitments to self-determination and self-management into practice, and propelling forward many key strategic government policy agendas. In turn this empowers Aboriginal people to have choice and control over their lives, and strides toward meaningful reconciliation.

Private sector businesses, industry, philanthropists, community services and government agencies partner with ACHOs to amplify their impact, transforming the lives of people, more significantly than ACHOs can do alone. This prospectus outlines opportunities for partnerships and details the transformative benefits these partnerships can have on the lives of Aboriginal people, families and communities.

## Message From the Co-Chairperson

### **The aim of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association (NATSIHA) is to improve housing outcomes for First Nations people of Australia and to end homelessness.**

Each First Nations community is unique; we hold our languages, knowledge systems and beliefs, and we have a special relationship to our traditional land, waters, and territories. Having worked in administration and community development, specialising in Aboriginal communities and related government services and programs, I know the opportunities that having a safe and secure place to call home provides for Aboriginal people. It has been recognised by Government (as enshrined with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap), that programs and services developed and implemented by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through community-controlled organisations delivers better and more sustainable and culturally appropriate outcomes.

This prospectus outlines how the WA ACHO sector co-delivers positive outcomes for their tenants. Having a strong, and well-resourced ACHO sector has been life changing. I have seen how a strong and capable WA Aboriginal community housing sector increases social and affordable housing and home ownership options for our people. The ACHO sector in WA is integral to closing the gap and providing appropriate housing choices and solutions.

I encourage you to consider the contents of what this prospectus presents: making housing accessible and culturally safe for First Nations people while ensuring the quality of housing promotes a healthy and safe life.

Building the capacity of the WA Aboriginal community housing sector is critical. Their work is aligned with several State Government priorities to create opportunity and reduce disadvantage including the Department of Communities *Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) Strategy* and *All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10 Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030* and the Department of Premier and Cabinet's *A Path Forward: Developing the Western Australian Government's Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy*.

If anything, I urge you to just read the stories from the tenants themselves. These pages lay witness to their changing lives, real change happening right now as you read my words.

Imagine with your support how much more can be done.

**Ivan Simon PSM**  
**Co-Chairperson**  
*National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association*





## Prospectus Background

**Shelter WA is the independent peak body in Western Australia that advocates for social and affordable housing and ending homelessness.**

Shelter WA's vision is a society where everybody has a safe, secure, healthy, and affordable place to call home, regardless of their life circumstances.

**Having a place to call home is a basic human right.**

Housing unlocks opportunity, enhances health and wellbeing and provides access to educational and employment options. It enables people to fully participate in community life.

Shelter WA was awarded a COVID-19 Grant by Lotterywest to build the capacity of the four WA-based ACHOs. The project focused on optimising the ACHOs current assets, building on their professionalism through a peer-to-peer learning approach and building collective capability supported by the technical expertise shared across the organisations.

Long-term sustainability was explored through quality audits with the providers to qualify for registration through the Community Housing Regulatory Framework and support was also provided for the ACHOs to explore alternative funding.

A key project deliverable also included developing this prospectus for the four providers, outlining opportunities for partnerships with private-sector businesses, industry, philanthropists, community services and government agencies to partner with ACHOs and details the transformative benefits these partnerships can have on the lives of Aboriginal people, families and communities.

## Boola Moort – Tenancy Support Program

Funded by the Sisters of St John of God, the Boola Moort (Many Families) Tenancy Support Program exists to put Noongar Culture at the centre of how our tenant support staff work. We walk alongside our tenants and their families to help them thrive in their tenancies. This program was developed to define and refine a framework of culturally secure tenancy support, and share our learnings with the wider community.

"After just six months, the program has already had huge success. Our Tenancy Support Program provides physical items such as white goods, skip bins and food vouchers, and advocates on our tenant's behalf for debt counselling, drug and alcohol services, mental health services, career and study pathway services and many other critical support needs.

"The Program currently has 22 families enrolled, with more joining every week. Our Boola Moort staff have a wealth of cultural knowledge, resources, and connections to help our tenants through any challenges they encounter, ensuring Noongar cultural values are prioritised at the forefront, always."

– Managing Director,  
Noongar Mia Mia

Geraldton  
Kalgoorlie  
Perth  
Albany





## What is Aboriginal Community Housing?

**Aboriginal community housing includes social and affordable rental homes, owned and/or managed by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations called Aboriginal Community Housing Organisations (ACHOs).**

ACHOs have changed the way housing for Aboriginal people is provided by offering culturally sensitive and culturally responsive housing services, grounded in shared understanding, values and experiences.

These four ACHOs offer a range of social and affordable housing products and services. They also facilitate home ownership options for their tenants, which is particularly critical as Aboriginal home ownership rates are half those of non-Aboriginal Australians.



## Cultural Safety

Cultural safety is about creating environments where Aboriginal culture is understood and honoured, and Aboriginal people can feel free to express an identity grounded in culture without that identity being threatened, challenged or invalidated.<sup>1</sup>

For many generations, harmful policies and practices meant that Aboriginal people were not free to practice culture, were treated like second-class citizens, and suffered extreme assimilationist pressure. While many discriminatory laws have changed, their emotional legacy remains in terms of trauma, exclusion and distrust. Furthermore, a system based on Anglo-Australian values is often unconsciously biased, and its underlying assumptions of how people should or should not behave mean that Aboriginal people may be discriminated against for their Aboriginal culture identities. Research from

Curtin University (Dockery, 2010) highlights that strong cultural attachment enhances Aboriginal wellbeing, yet there is often a tension between Aboriginal cultural maintenance and the achievement of 'equity' (essentially, 'self-determination' versus 'assimilation'). Cultural safety involves fostering environments that removes this tension, creating shared 'third spaces' in which Aboriginal people can thrive as themselves – and this requires combating unconscious bias; understanding and respecting Aboriginal people and culture; and placing Aboriginal communities at the centre of service design and delivery.





## Social and Community Housing

**Social housing is low-cost rental housing for people who are on very low to low incomes with identified housing needs. Affordable housing is rental housing for people who are on low to moderate incomes and is offered at less than 75 per cent of market rent.**

Social housing can be owned by the State Government, called public housing, or community housing, which is owned by Community Housing Organisations. The State Government does not offer affordable rental housing.

Community Housing Organisations are not-for-profit, community-based organisations. They are generally registered charities, who own or have legal control of their housing stock.

Skilled in property and tenancy management, they match people to properties, assigning housing according to individual requirements and location, design, cultural and support needs.

Types of accommodation provided by these organisations include crisis, transitional and long-term rental housing. They may also facilitate pathways to homeownership through home purchase arrangements.

“

For Aboriginal people, our culture is central to our wellbeing. But as a collectivist society, there's often conflict between Aboriginal cultural values and Anglo-Australian cultural values, putting us in positions where we need to make untenable cultural compromises to become “deserving” of a home, or to stay in a home.

“The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples highlights that culture is our right, but self-advocating for that right can be exhausting and distressing, and so is explaining our cultural needs to workers and organisations. Programs are often designed by others for us, without actively listening – or even asking – what it is we need; and even though the Australian Government has recognised for decades that self-determination is key to Closing the Gap, more needs to be done to resource Aboriginal organisations to make it happen.

“Aboriginal people have suffered from 'Chief Protectors'; what we need now is allies to walk alongside us in our journey. Real reconciliation is often put in the too-hard basket, but our communities have the solutions. We just need to be listened to, and given the support to drive change.”

– *Managing Director,  
Noongar Mia Mia*





## Why Focus on Housing for Aboriginal People?

“We can’t wait another 50 years. We need to see this shift and change. We can’t just keep looking forward to it otherwise we will miss the boat. Housing is a human rights and a social justice issue – how are we going to grow and nurture young people without having a home?”

– Carol Innes AM (then Co-Chair, Reconciliation WA).  
Metropolitan Aboriginal Housing Forum 2018.



**“Without self-determination, it is not possible for Indigenous Australians to fully overcome the legacy of colonialism and dispossession.”**

– *Social justice and human rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australian Human Rights Commission, 2003.*

Research shows Aboriginal people are disadvantaged in housing markets. Aboriginal people generally have lower than average incomes compared to the wider community and are significantly over-represented in the population of people who experience homelessness.

Colonialism’s long-term effects have had a profound influence on Aboriginal housing and homelessness. Displacement from traditional lands and ways of life; children separated from families; and centuries of harmful, assimilationist policies and practices have resulted in a loss of cultural knowledge and detachment from home, family, culture, land, language, tradition, customs, and spiritual beliefs.

Aboriginal people face barriers in accessing homes in the private rental market, both directly from rental discrimination and indirectly from labour market discrimination, making housing increasingly unaffordable.

At the same time, the power of safe, affordable, stable and culturally appropriate housing is known, and there is growing demand for social and affordable housing options that are managed by and for Aboriginal people.

Improvements in health, housing and personal and collective wealth can be powerful agents of positive change as part of an ecological approach for realising the aspirations of Aboriginal people.<sup>2</sup> Homelessness and housing insecurity are extremely stressful and even traumatic experiences, and where the right foundations are set in a stable home, Aboriginal people are better positioned to access education and employment opportunities.

Staffed by and designed by and for Aboriginal people, ACHOs are uniquely qualified to identify and address risk factors that may otherwise go undetected, operating with cultural competency to respect and empower the cultural needs of their Aboriginal customers. ACHOs have a deep understanding of and respect for Aboriginal culture as a great strength, an inalienable right, and a key contributor to social and emotional wellbeing.

“Stronger attachment to traditional culture is found to be associated with enhanced outcomes across a range of socio-economic indicators.”<sup>3</sup>

**“Non-Aboriginal people[’s] ways are not culturally effective and do not offer long-term solutions for addressing homelessness in Aboriginal communities. Self-determination and self-management are still relevant today as when it was first proposed in the 1970s to empower and take control to overcome homelessness.”**

– *All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia’s 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030.*



## A snapshot of the current situation

**75%**

of non-Indigenous Australians harbour negative bias toward Indigenous Australians<sup>4</sup>

**Over 40%**

of people on the By-Name List (rough sleeping and chronic homelessness) in the Perth Metropolitan Area identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander<sup>6</sup>

**46%** of Indigenous households in remote areas live in dwellings with structural problems compared to **31%** for those in non-remote areas<sup>7</sup>

**20%**

of Aboriginal households were living in dwellings that did not meet an acceptable standard<sup>7</sup>

**9.1%** of Aboriginal households had no access to working facilities for food preparation, and **4.5%** had no access to working facilities to wash clothes and bedding<sup>8</sup>

**33%**

of Aboriginal households were living in dwellings with at least one major structural problem<sup>7</sup>

Although Aboriginal people comprised **4.1%** of the West Australian population in December 2020, they represented **64%** of people who accessed accommodation services and **50.5%** of Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) clients during 2020–21<sup>5</sup>

## The Power of Partnerships

WA's ACHO sector continues to grow and innovate to meet the increasing housing needs of Aboriginal people in their communities.

Through working in partnership with the private sector, philanthropists, government and not-for-profit organisations, ACHOs can deliver more housing and related services and create positive, meaningful, and lasting change for Aboriginal people, families, and communities.

### BHP and the Summer

#### Response Strategy

Funded by BHP, the Summer Response Strategy (SRS) is a collaborative initiative of non-government organisations and government agencies delivering services and support to improve the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal visitors and community members in the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

Developed in response to the high number of Aboriginal visitors predominantly from the Ngaanyatjarra Lands and Tjuntjuntjara arriving in Kalgoorlie-Boulder over the summer period, the program addresses issues around increases in antisocial and risky behaviours from people being stranded in town and away from their traditional lands. This contributes to overcrowding in homes and street present homelessness.

The Summer Support Hub, which forms part of the Summer Response Strategy, is run by Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation (GIHO) staff who could speak traditional languages. The Hub is designed to be culturally appropriate and approachable for visitors, providing a space for connection where Aboriginal visitors and locals could meet.

Between the end of November 2020 and the end of February 2022 the Hub received 2,347 visitors, fluctuating between 15 and 88 visitors per day. The Hub is a place for people to get information and connect with services. In collaboration with service providers, the Hub has been pivotal in arranging the return travel of nearly 200 passengers back to their communities, and back to their homes, reducing street present homelessness in the town and reducing overcrowding, which can indirectly reduce evictions.



## WA ACHO Sector

### Keys to Success

Evidence shows ACHOs deliver better housing outcomes for Aboriginal people, from developing housing opportunities from social and affordable housing to facilitating home ownership and promoting wealth creation, education, and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in communities.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to which Australia is a signatory, notes: "Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions."

ACHOs support these rights of Aboriginal people by offering a culturally appropriate management style, including self-management, through an Aboriginal controlled housing organisation. They also work to improve the cultural awareness of non-Aboriginal staff.



Key to the success of each ACHO are foundational principles of:

1

### Cultural Competency

ACHOs understand the unique nature of Aboriginal people's heritage and culture and how it influences all aspects of people's lives, including housing, guided by principles passed down by their Elders. They consider family and cultural dynamics, as well as cultural and spiritual connection to land and place. They know that connection to culture is an important predictor of well-being for Aboriginal people, and they regard culture as both their birthright and their greatest strength.

2

### Human Centric

ACHOs provide housing focusing on the needs of the individual tenants, and help them to be housed, happy and well. They walk alongside them, and they empower them. They recognise the best way to understand and respond to their needs is to listen to their views and questions so responses consider their personal cultural values, concerns, and dreams.

3

### Promoting Self-Determination and Agency

ACHOs are run by Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people, and are ultimately accountable to their community. They support the rights of tenants to choose the location and type of housing in which they want to live according to their needs and family make-up.

4

### Close to the People

ACHOs have their ear to the ground, as a trusted part of the communities they serve. They understand which issues are most pertinent, and how they can connect best with their communities to address them collaboratively. They strengthen and protect their communities through their services, combining the know-how of housing and the cultural understanding of Aboriginal people's heritage.

5

### Championing Aboriginal Employment

ACHOs focus on building an Aboriginal workforce, promoting wealth creation and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in communities both directly and indirectly. Where possible, ACHOs support Aboriginal businesses throughout their supply chains.

## Alignment with Government Policy

### Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy 2021-2029

The pillars underpinning ACHOs align with the Western Australian State Government's *Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy 2021-2029*. The Strategy directs the government's efforts toward a future in which all Aboriginal people, families and communities are empowered to live good lives and choose their own futures from a secure foundation.

The Strategy also guides the State's approach to meeting its commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

### Closing the Gap

Through the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the State and Federal Governments identified the need for a robust Aboriginal community housing sector.

The agreement's Priority Reform Two has an outcome focus on building a strong and sustainable community-controlled sector, delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country. Of the 17 socio-economic targets in the agreement the below outcomes have particular relevance to our ACHO sector:

**Outcome 1:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives

**Outcome 8:** Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

**Outcome 9:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need

**Outcome 13:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe

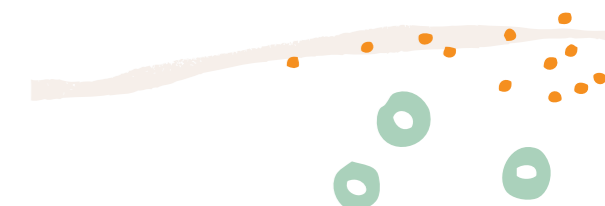
### All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030

*All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030* is a whole-of-community plan, setting the direction for all levels of government, community sector and the wider community in responding to and preventing homelessness in Western Australia.

Providing an overarching strategic framework, it guides investment, identifies new ways of working, introduces innovation and seeks to improve service systems to better respond to individual needs.

The Strategy's priority actions are to focus on:

- improving Aboriginal wellbeing
- providing safe, secure, and stable homes
- preventing homelessness
- strengthening and coordinating our responses and impact.





## ACHO Profiles

### Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation

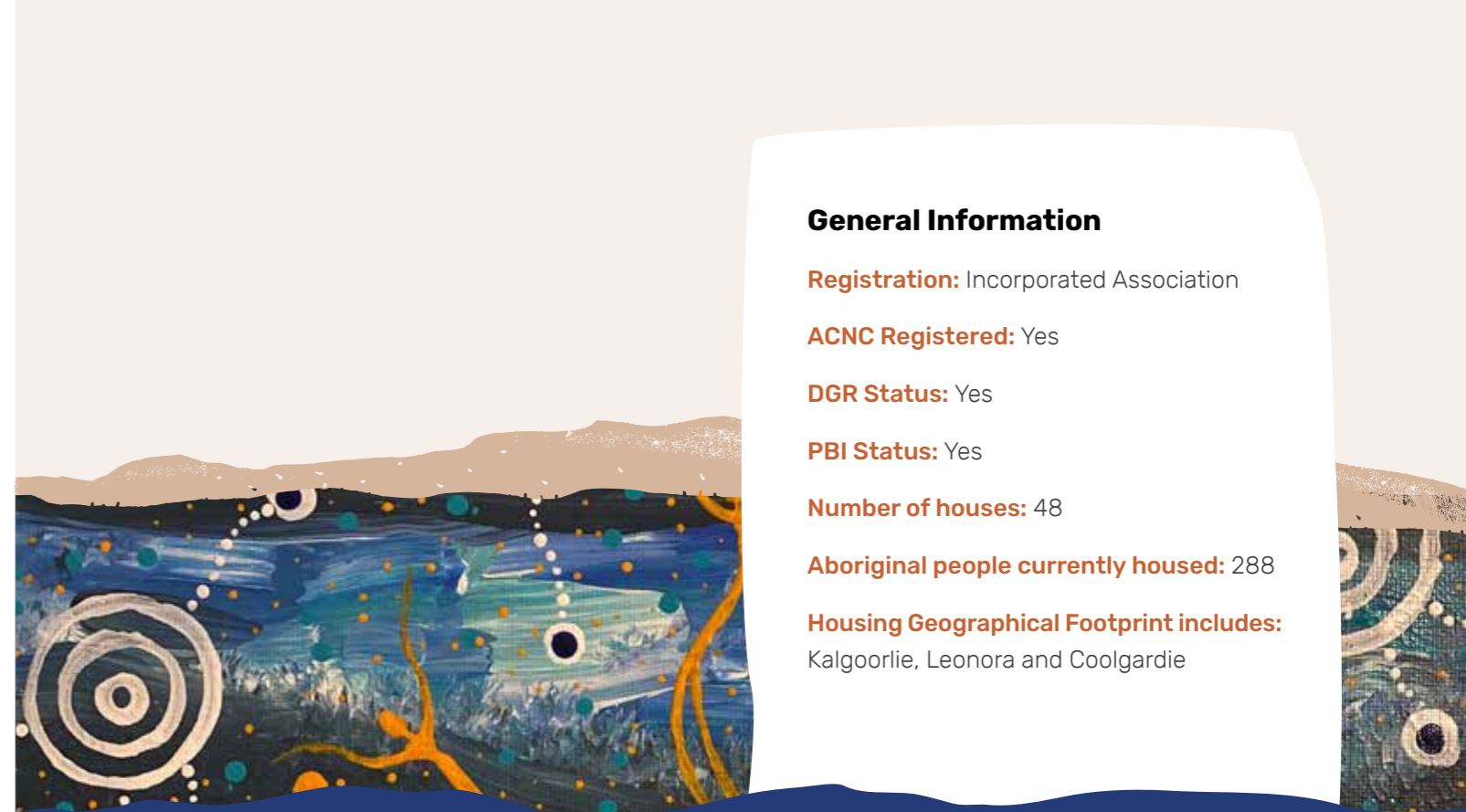
[www.giho.org.au](http://www.giho.org.au)

The Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation (GIHO) provides housing and tenancy support services to Aboriginal people in urban centres and remote communities throughout the Goldfields region. Established in 2002, GIHO formed from a collective of 17 housing organisations providing housing services to Aboriginal communities. GIHO has developed into a locally known advocate and supporter to generations of families, underpinned by cultural knowledge and direction from their Aboriginal Board.

GIHO manages 48 properties in Kalgoorlie, Leonora and Coolgardie with rent received from each tenancy providing ongoing tenancy management and support services for over 280 tenants and

household members. GIHO is a specialist Indigenous service, ensuring accommodation and dealings with their tenants are all culturally appropriate.

GIHO CEO said GIHO encourages strong relationships between staff and tenants. "We've created so many sustainable tenancies by supporting clients to meet their obligations under the WA Residential Tenancies Act."



#### General Information

**Registration:** Incorporated Association

**ACNC Registered:** Yes

**DGR Status:** Yes

**PBI Status:** Yes

**Number of houses:** 48

**Aboriginal people currently housed:** 288

**Housing Geographical Footprint includes:** Kalgoorlie, Leonora and Coolgardie

#### Tenant Testimonies

John, a 31-year-old Kalgoorlie man, was supported by GIHO since 2017 in a Goldfields property. Working together with his growing family he purchased his own home in 2021. He is now establishing a local business to support other community members and be a role model and mentor for up-and-coming Aboriginal people in the mining sector.

Becky, living in Leonora, found out about the WA No Interest Loans (WA NILS) Scheme thanks to GIHO. "I had a lot of debt," she said. "They've put me onto WA NILS so I was able to get my fridge and washer on a payment plan which meant I could put food on the table for my kids."

For Janelle, based in Kalgoorlie, she was not eligible for housing with the Department of Communities and private rentals were too expensive. "The properties in my price range were taken by the many other applicants," she said.

"I'm very fortunate and appreciate the support that GIHO has given me as it has enabled me to support my son, my mum and brothers."

## Murchison Region Aboriginal Corporation

[www.mrac.net.au](http://www.mrac.net.au)

Murchison Region Aboriginal Corporation (MRAC), based in Geraldton, puts its tenants first in everything it does. Beyond a slogan or a tagline, it is a genuinely held belief and commitment from within.

When Cyclone Seroja made landfall in the Mid West region in 2021 it was fortunate none of MRAC's tenants were injured. MRAC properties were damaged in Northampton, Geraldton, Mullewa, Mingenew, and Three Springs, with some tenants relying on generators for power supply for months. In an example of strong tenant representation MRAC agreed to pay all contractors directly to expediate repairs rather than waiting for insurance assessors to agree to repairs. While a time consuming and costly exercise, contractors prioritised work as much as possible, and tenants' homes were quickly reinstated.

The organisation is a member based, not-for-profit, community managed housing corporation. MRAC does not receive any government funding, and all rental income is spent on improving properties, buying new homes, and securing the Corporation's financial position and its future.

MRAC provides quality, affordable rental homes to Aboriginal people across the Mid West and Gascoyne regions of Western Australia. They are one of the only ACHOs in WA focusing solely on housing, providing social and affordable housing to Aboriginal people and their families.

Currently, MRAC manages 120 rental properties and is self-funded relying on the income generated from rent revenue to manage and grow its housing business.

MRAC CEO said the best and most satisfying part of her work is housing people. "A number of our newer tenants have not had secure housing for some time and it's heartening to be able to offer them quality, safe and affordable housing."

"And it's always a real pleasure to see those of our existing tenants who have challenges meeting their tenancy obligations, work towards managing their responsibilities and achieving real change in their lives as a result."

"We operate in a 'continuous quality improvement' context. This means we are always looking at ways to improve what we do. Over the last six years, MRAC has made significant improvements in how we house people, the quality of our housing, the service we deliver; particularly the maintenance service, and in a range of other areas that service users don't generally see; things like governance and financial management," she said.

### Donations Bring Comfort and Power Lasting Relief

MRAC received a donation of around \$20,000 to support the conversion of electric hot water systems to gas for seven properties, saving low-income tenants between \$500-600 annually. MRAC also funded the installation of split system air conditioning in 15 homes for seniors with chronic health conditions, with a further donation of \$2,200 allowing an additional home to be included in this initiative. In the state's Mid West and Gascoyne, areas which are prone to high and prolonged summer temperatures, this means a valuable and long-lasting contribution to the health and wellbeing of the tenants in these properties.





## General Information

**Registration:** Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)

**ACNC Registered:** Yes

**DGR Status:** Yes

**PBI Status:** Yes

**Number of houses:** 120

**Aboriginal people currently housed:** 520

**Housing Geographical Footprint includes:**

Geraldton, Northampton, Denham,  
Carnarvon, North Midlands, Mullewa,  
Yalgoo and Meekatharra

## Tenant Testimonies

'Joanne', a 35-year-old single mum, told us that if she hadn't been given a MRAC house she would have given up and probably be dead. This outstanding young woman managed to kick her methamphetamine habit herself and with her MRAC house, she got her kids back from Child Protection and established a home for herself and her children. Joanne is illiterate through lack of opportunity, but with her older daughter's assistance, and some MRAC support, manages to comply with all her tenancy obligations.

'Amber' moved to Geraldton with her four kids to be closer to her family. After applying for seven houses, she gave up. "I'm an Aboriginal single mum on Centrelink with four kids so it's really hard to get private rental," she said. "Having a MRAC house has taken so much stress off me and my kids. Living with other family meant we were living by their rules, not ours. The kids and I now have secure housing with far less stress in our lives."

'Kirsty' was living in a caravan at her parents' home outside Geraldton. "Having my own place is really cool, and the housing is a lot better than what I've ever had before," she said. "My son is just out of prison and is so happy having his own place with me. He is now doing work experience and he can walk there. This place is helping us get everything else in our lives in order."

'Viviane', her partner, and kids have had a MRAC house for over five years. Previously they lived on a property in Dongas with no plumbing or running water. Pregnant with their fourth child, Viviane and her family were desperate for housing. "Getting a MRAC house has been wonderful for us," she said. "It's meant our kids can go to school regularly, we have everything we need, including running water that doesn't rely on a windmill, air conditioning, heating, and all those things other people take for granted. We feel so lucky to have this home."



## Noongar Mia Mia

[www.noongarmiamia.com.au](http://www.noongarmiamia.com.au)

Noongar Mia Mia (NMM) is an Aboriginal-owned and operated Community Housing Organisation in the Perth metro area. The organisation makes a real difference by reducing Aboriginal homelessness through respectful and lasting relationships with Noongar people by providing custom housing and support services.

They secure appropriate, affordable housing for Aboriginal Western Australians, creating pathways from homelessness to home ownership by combining housing with culturally appropriate and whole-of-person property management and tenancy support services. They identify and address risk factors that may have been missed by other providers, who are often insensitive to cultural issues.

With over 20 years' experience supporting Aboriginal people and their families with secure, sustainable tenancies, they have developed a strong reputation as a highly respected Community Housing Organisation. As the only Aboriginal people community-controlled Community Housing Organisation servicing the Perth metro area, they provide culturally appropriate support, enhancing wellbeing and cultivating sustainable tenancies.

At any given time, NMM houses up to 368 people over more than 91 tenancies, while ensuring they have supports in place to understand their rights and responsibilities as tenants. With secure housing, tenants are best placed to identify and achieve their potential, to heal, and to thrive.

### General Information

**Registration:** Company Limited by guarantee

**ACNC Registered:** Yes

**DGR Status:** Yes

**PBI Status:** Yes

**Number of houses:** 92

**Aboriginal people currently housed:** 368

**Housing Geographical Footprint includes:**  
Perth Metro and Esperance

### Tenant Testimonies

Maria is a 71-year-old Noongar woman. She has been a tenant of NMM's for over two years.

"The staff have been very understanding with our tenancy," she said. "We as Elders can struggle to do the odd jobs we want to do to look after our place sometimes. The Tenancy Support Team will come and help us with this."

"They have helped me with my garden, and it was this team who suggested we needed an air conditioner," Maria said. "Without a home provided by NMM and the air conditioning, I would struggle in this heatwave. It would be tough on my health, and I could be homeless in this hot weather. My husband and I used to stay with the grandchildren on extremely hot days."

One of the other advantages of the support team is their cultural background. Aboriginal people often struggle to trust mainstream social service providers. In practice, most services in the past – no matter how well-meaning – have been tone-deaf or even harmful.

Managing Director of NMM said the success is the tenancy support and property management programs help each tenant meet their obligations and stay housed.

"It makes it easy for our tenants to speak with our Tenancy Support Team as they understand the culture and family obligations of the individual," they said. "There can be a lot of shame wrapped up in why a tenant may not be meeting certain obligations. Our staff know how to work through the issues and have had success many times in achieving a positive outcome."

For Maria the future looks bright. "I want to say thank you to all the staff at NMM. We really appreciate you all and we hope we can stay in our home forever."



## Southern Aboriginal Corporation

[www.sacorp.com.au](http://www.sacorp.com.au)

Southern Aboriginal Corporation (SAC) serves the Noongar community in the South West, Wheatbelt, Peel and Great Southern regions of Western Australia. SAC aims to provide effective representation and resource delivery while promoting Noongar social and cultural values.

As a not-for-profit organisation that is an Incorporated Aboriginal Association under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act)*, all profits made by SAC are retained within the organisation, for the benefit of all members. As a regional Aboriginal body, SAC aims to provide Noongar tenants with quality accommodation at affordable rents. SAC manages 75 properties supporting over 100 families.

SAC CEO said in the regions the Aboriginal population have limited alternative housing options. "There is a massive gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in terms of life expectancy," she said.

"Housing not only provides safety and dignity, but it's empowering and encourages home ownership and economic independence. We promote home ownership in the Aboriginal community by encouraging qualifying tenants to buy their homes and we provide quality and affordable housing to Aboriginal people by facilitating overhauls and refurbishments."



### General Information

**Registration:** Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)

**ACNC Registered:** Yes

**DGR Status:** Yes

**PBI Status:** Yes

**Number of houses:** 75

**Aboriginal people currently housed:** 475

**Housing Geographical Footprint includes:** Great Southern, South West, Wheatbelt and Peel region

### Tenant Testimony

For 58-year-old Roslyn, she secured a tenancy with SAC during a difficult time in her life.

"While on Centrelink I became a carer for both my brother with a mental health condition and my mother who fell ill after the passing of my father," Roslyn said.

"I'm very grateful to SAC over my 20 years of renting. They've offered extra support with emergency relief assistance for my bills, gas bottles and food vouchers. They offer frozen meals for Aboriginal people; this supports our Aboriginal community Elders like myself and my mother."

SAC tenant Gloria found the short supply of affordable housing in Albany was a serious problem. "It was difficult to find a rental home due to the number of families wanting to relocate to the district due to the COVID-19 pandemic," she said.

After applying "numerous times" Gloria secured a tenancy with SAC in Albany. "Our housing has supported her," Asha said. "We received Mental Health Commission funding and decided to employ Gloria to carry out suicide prevention activities for the Great Southern region, but we couldn't start the program in Albany until she found a rental property.

"Many businesses in Albany find it hard to attract staff and it is harder for Aboriginal skilled workers to come here with the housing shortage. We were delighted we could provide a house to Gloria given the critical work she is currently doing."



## Long-Lasting and Transformative Outcomes

**ACHOs do more than just provide housing. They create social change as well as promote tangible outcomes benefitting the wider community.**

Tenancy outcomes can also be improved through providing integrated and culturally sensitive housing services, which is individualised and connected with culturally tailored tenancy support. In turn, this improves housing-related outcomes in health, education and employment as well as providing early intervention to stop people becoming homeless. ACHOs positively impact whole-of-community and the mainstream housing system outcomes by:

- providing secure housing for Aboriginal people and continuing to strengthen cultural and community ties
- fostering environments where people do not need to choose between cultural obligations and a home
- empowering Aboriginal people to manage their own affairs, such as housing
- aligning the needs of the Aboriginal community in the long term.

## Future Growth and Capacity

### The Challenge

ACHOs face unique challenges and constraints to deliver the increasing housing needs for Aboriginal people.

The rising numbers of Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness and living in unstable housing situations highlights the need to increase supply of affordable and secure housing.

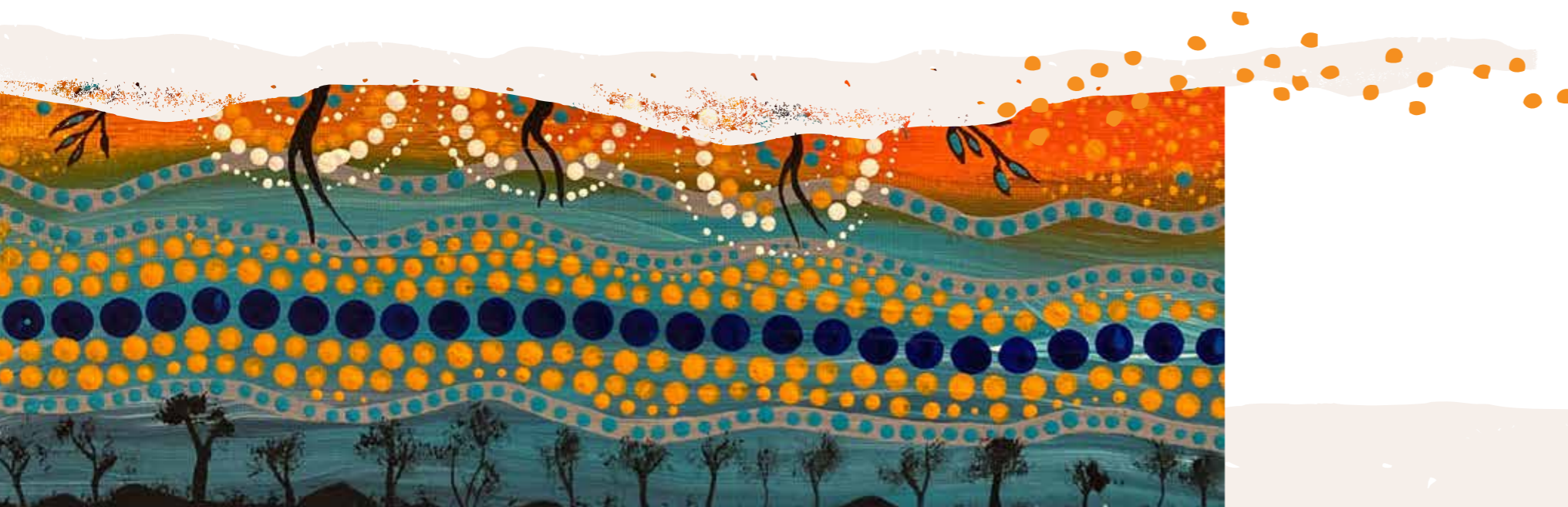
### Future Objectives

The vision is to facilitate a new approach to housing for Aboriginal people, striving toward more culturally appropriate housing and culturally sensitive housing services, while increasing participation of Aboriginal people in the process of housing management.

ACHOs and their partners share a vision of:

- establishing a more *human centric* approach to housing for Aboriginal people, instead of an asset-based process
- supporting the sustainability and growth of ACHOs to deliver best practice in Aboriginal housing through upskilling employees
- building capacity of tenancy services to facilitate long-term and successful tenancies, and growing investments to bolster organisational capacity to manage growing stock and tenancy numbers
- reducing Aboriginal homelessness, improving Aboriginal people's health and ensuring the wellbeing of all Aboriginal people now and in and their future.

ACHOs seek stronger engagement with service providers to increase better tenancy outcomes for their tenants and the community.







## Partnership Opportunities


**In partnering with the ACHO sector, you can contribute to their growth, sustainability and ability to provide individualised, placed-based, affordable and stable homes for Aboriginal people.**

Partnerships help ACHOs deliver new programs and increase the housing supply available to Aboriginal people, resulting in greater employment, education, health benefits and social and economic opportunities.

### ACHO Tenant Survey Results

 **100% thought staff were friendly and helpful**

 **100% felt the services provided were culturally appropriate**

 **93% felt they were provided with a clean and tidy home**

 **65% felt they were satisfied with the property maintenance they received**

## How You Can Partner With Us

**Partnerships build on the sector's strength to deliver better housing outcomes for Aboriginal people, transforming their wellbeing and providing opportunity.**

ACHOs are seeking financial and in-kind partners from individuals and organisations wanting to support projects which will affect meaningful and significant change in the lives of Aboriginal people.

Opportunities are available to tailor partnerships to align with corporate social responsibility goals and co-investment opportunities, while developing strong and enduring relationships with ACHOs across Perth and regional WA.

Partnerships will effect meaningful change:

- \$3,500 can update hot water services to instantaneous gas and install pipework to allow tenants to cook with gas when electric cookers fail. As well as ensuring continuity of amenities, this is also estimated to save tenants \$500-\$600 each year.
- \$3,500 allows ACHOs to install R3.5 batt insulation in homes that are not insulated. This is estimated to save upwards of 15 per cent on heating and cooling costs each year, valued at more than \$250 per year for an average household.

- \$2,200 pays for a second split system reverse cycle air conditioner in a bedroom for seniors or people with health or other disability problems. This provides critical care for vulnerable people in the Mid West, Gascoyne and other regions of WA during the high and prolonged summer temperatures.
- Up to \$220,000 can help purchase a three-bedroom home in regional Western Australia to house a family.
- Up to \$400,000 can help build a three-bedroom home in Perth to house a family.
- Up to \$420,000 can help purchase a three-bedroom home in the Perth metro area to house a family.
- Up to \$47,000 will provide a rental subsidy for a family of five for five years in the Perth metro area.

ACHOs would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to learn more about your business and your community investment priorities and develop a partnership to deliver excellent outcomes for Aboriginal Western Australians.

To learn more and discuss partnership opportunities, please contact:

**Noongar Mia Mia**

[www.noongarmiamia.com.au](http://www.noongarmiamia.com.au)  
[info@noongarmiamia.com.au](mailto:info@noongarmiamia.com.au)

**Southern Aboriginal Corporation**

[www.sacorp.com.au](http://www.sacorp.com.au)  
[reception@sacorp.com.au](mailto:reception@sacorp.com.au)

**Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation**

[www.giho.org.au](http://www.giho.org.au)  
[reception@giho.org.au](mailto:reception@giho.org.au)

**Murchison Region Aboriginal Corporation**

[www.mrac.net.au](http://www.mrac.net.au)  
[office@mrac.net.au](mailto:office@mrac.net.au)

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety, Department of Health Victoria, November 2021
- <sup>2</sup> Arabena, 2020 Reimagining Indigenous Housing, Health and Wealth – The Necessary Ecological Response to Unlock the Potential in the Indigenous Estate
- <sup>3</sup> Dockery, 2010 Culture and Wellbeing: The Case of Indigenous Australians
- <sup>4</sup> Shirodkar, 2019 Bias against Indigenous Australians: Implicit association test results for Australia, Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues
- <sup>5</sup> ROGS, 2022 Report on Government Services – Productivity Commission
- <sup>6</sup> The By-Name List, Zero Project, April 2022
- <sup>7</sup> AIHW & ABS, Analysis of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2018–19
- <sup>8</sup> AIHW & NIAA 2020, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework: 2.01 Housing
- <sup>8</sup> Milligan et al. 2011 Urban social housing for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders: respecting culture and adapting services Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited



**Nerolie Bynder**

*The spirits of life flows, 2020*

The two spirits are flowing like water like in life, they continue to flow and keep moving forward. They are people whose spirits have been down but they found their strength and now they have strong foundations.

One represents the spirits of the people who need help and the other is the spirits of the people who help others.

Each spirit is strong, maintaining balance through sharing of information, because they never give up, the long-term goal can now be achieved.

The spirits both continue to reach out and grow. The waterholes and fires connect them to all the places that they got help from throughout their journeys.

A symbol of starting over, moving forward and looking for growth and change.

Life. They all find their way and are all in balance with each other in the end.



**Noongar Mia Mia**

[www.noongarmiamia.com.au](http://www.noongarmiamia.com.au)

[www.facebook.com/noongarmiamia](https://www.facebook.com/noongarmiamia)

[info@noongarmiamia.com.au](mailto:info@noongarmiamia.com.au)

**Southern Aboriginal Corporation**

[www.sacorp.com.au](http://www.sacorp.com.au)

[www.facebook.com/SACORP17](https://www.facebook.com/SACORP17)

[reception@sacorp.com.au](mailto:reception@sacorp.com.au)

**Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation**

[www.giho.org.au](http://www.giho.org.au)

[www.facebook.com/GIHOInc](https://www.facebook.com/GIHOInc)

[reception@giho.org.au](mailto:reception@giho.org.au)

**Murchison Region Aboriginal Corporation**

[www.mrac.net.au](http://www.mrac.net.au)

[www.facebook.com/MRACWA](https://www.facebook.com/MRACWA)

[office@mrac.net.au](mailto:office@mrac.net.au)

