

Business Queensland Connect



October 2024

Get Ready Queensland, it's Indigenous Business Month!

October heralds a national focus on [Indigenous Business Month](#), where we champion Indigenous businesses, celebrating the achievements, successes and business innovations forged by Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. Partnering with Indigenous businesses unlocks economic opportunities to build stronger, more resilient enterprise and communities. Get involved in one of the fantastic [events](#), [find](#) an Indigenous supplier, and learn more about the [supports](#) available for Indigenous business.

This month also highlights that it is time to [Get Ready Queensland](#). Queensland is impacted by more natural disasters than anywhere else in Australia. Our sunshine state is subject to storms, cyclones, fires and floods - now is the time to prepare for the possibility, because weather doesn't plan, but you can.

GaWun Supplies: promoting Indigenous culture through workwear



Image: GaWun founder, Michael Grundon

Logan-based business GaWun Supplies, founded by Michael Grundon, a proud Aboriginal man of Kabi Kabi, Wakka Wakka, and Koa descent, has been raising awareness of Indigenous culture through locally sourced artwork on uniforms and PPE for three years. Their products are sold nationwide to industries ranging from mining to Queensland councils.

“We collaborate with businesses to create designs representing their local areas,” says Michael. “Beyond sales, we support young Indigenous artists and give back to grassroots community programs through our *Project Give Back* initiative.”

GaWun recently partnered with Blaq Diamonds Women Empowerment and Challenge DV to create a distinctive purple work shirt, symbolising strength and resilience among Indigenous women.

GaWun won the 2023 *Aboriginal Enterprises in Mining, Energy, and Exploration's New Indigenous Business of the Year* award and is [Supply Nation](#) certified. Michael also participated in the *Mentoring for Growth* (M4G) program, which helped refine GaWun's ethical business strategy.

Indigenous businesses are encouraged to register for a free [Mentoring for Growth](#) session for valuable business insights. [Read more](#).



It's time to Get Ready Queensland businesses!

[Get Ready Queensland](#) Ambassador Johnathan Thurston has officially kicked off Get Ready Week encouraging Queenslanders to be prepared for our unpredictable weather.

From floods to cyclones, preparation can make all the difference in protecting your business and minimising disruption.

Get ahead of disaster season and safeguard your business with the [Small Business Disaster Hub's](#) essential tools and resources:

- [create a disaster response and recovery plan](#)
- back up vital business data
- ensure your insurance covers natural disasters.

Connect with your local council for additional support: getready.qld.gov.au/find-your-local-council

Get involved by checking out the [state-wide events](#).



Resilience in extreme weather recovery

The [Small Business Exceptional Assistance Program](#) helps businesses recover from disruptions due to extreme weather events.

Lancaster Plumbing Pty Ltd in Mossman, an Indigenous business, faced a 20-day shutdown due to cyclone-related flooding, power outages, and road closures after the effects of Cyclone Jasper earlier this year. Director Katie Haslam acknowledged the community's resilience and the vital support the program provided.

"The grant was a lifeline, allowing us to keep our workers employed and meet payroll obligations," Katie said.

As part of [Indigenous Business Month](#), Lancaster Plumbing proudly celebrates its role in Indigenous entrepreneurship.

If you were affected by Cyclone Jasper, visit [Small Business Exceptional Assistance Program](#) for eligible assistance.



Empowering Blak business

The Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities, and the Arts (DTATSIPCA) is making their mark by empowering the Indigenous business sector and creating economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Find supports including workshops, events, mentoring and networking opportunities through the [Enterprise Development for Indigenous Businesses](#).

Our *Queensland Indigenous Procurement Policy* (QIPP) supports procurement officers across all government agencies to prioritise opportunities that maximise value for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

Learn more about QIPP on [Queensland Indigenous Procurement Policy](#).



Program helps local businesses to find and keep the right staff

Business Chamber Queensland's *Workforce Evolve* program supports businesses in attracting and retaining employees by providing resources, skills, and coaching specific to individual business needs.

Jeanne (*pictured left*), from Colomba and Cleaners for Seniors, signed up after struggling for 15 months to find the right staff.

Jeanne recommends the program, stating, "It provided me with practical recruitment advice and the coaching gave me practical recommendations on how to improve my job advertisements which led to positive results".

Colomba and Cleaners for Seniors operates on the Sunshine Coast, helping seniors downsize before transitioning to residential aged care.

To learn more, visit [Workforce Evolve](#).



National Safe Work month: prioritise workplace safety



Short courses to deepen cultural understanding of Indigenous employees

National Safe Work Month, observed every October, calls on individuals and organisations to prioritise work health and safety (WHS) and take proactive steps to reduce workplace injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.

In 2022 alone, 195 workers in Australia lost their lives due to workplace accidents, and 127,800 serious workers' compensation claims were lodged.

This year, National Safe Work Month focuses on a different WHS theme each week:

- **Week 1:** [Work health and safety fundamentals](#)
- **Week 2:** [Psychosocial hazards](#)
- **Week 3:** [Risk management fundamentals](#)
- **Week 4:** [Musculoskeletal injuries](#)

For more information on events and resources, visit [WorkSafe Queensland](#).

Back to Work, in collaboration with TAFE Queensland, have developed two tailored micro-credentials, designed to provide small businesses with the context and knowledge required to explore and respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and cultural needs in workplaces.

- [Cultural Inclusiveness: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the workplace](#)
- [Cultural Responsiveness: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the workplace](#)

The Back to Work program recognises that a cohesive and diverse environment not only enhances employee satisfaction, but also supports employers to retain staff.

To find out more, visit [Back to Work](#).

Building connections: Indigenous business success in major projects



Image: Kirsten Crook and EJ Garrett

Relationships are at the heart of successful business ventures, as demonstrated by EJ Garrett, a Darumbal man from Central Queensland. EJ, an experienced filmmaker and storyteller, owns the Indigenous media company EJ Garrett Pty Ltd, which supports community-based projects and Indigenous businesses.

In 2023, at an [Indigenous Business Connect](#) event, EJ captured the power of connection on film, including conversations with Kirsten Crook from construction contractor John Holland. During a casual chat, EJ unknowingly delivered a perfect business pitch. Months later, John Holland approached EJ with an opportunity to provide videography services for one of Queensland's largest projects.

This partnership not only expanded EJ's services into the construction industry but also created training opportunities for budding Indigenous storytellers. EJ's success showcases the value of Indigenous Business Connect events when building stronger networks. [Read more.](#)



Supporting seniors back into work

October is also [Queensland Seniors Month](#), a celebration of the collective wisdom and experience of our senior population.

As more mature aged workers re-join and remain in the workforce, it's important for business to support and benefit from their expertise.

The Back to Work team have created a free short course on how to support mature aged workers - [Supporting mature aged people in the workforce](#).

Developed in conjunction with TAFE Queensland, an additional 17 short courses have been produced to help your business thrive.

Check out the courses available at [Back to Work](#).



Supercharging the supply chain for Queensland manufacturers

Are you a manufacturer looking to expand your business?

Register for your free supplier profile with Supply Queensland. Supply Queensland is a cutting-edge supply chain and skills mapping portal developed by Manufacturing Skills Queensland (MSQ) with support from the Queensland Government.

Powered by BenchOn, the portal is designed to connect manufacturers with government projects, major contractors, buyers and other manufacturers, fostering local business growth and enhancing local supply chains.

[Learn more and register now](#).



Tourism Week 13-15 November

This is the must-attend industry event of the year, featuring two flagship conferences and a glittering key event:



Travel for work? Make a tax claim

If you travel for work and need to stay away from home overnight, there may be some expenses you can claim.

- Destination IQ
- DestinationQ Forums
- Queensland Tourism Awards Gala.

Get set for a week filled with valuable insights on tourism trends, growth strategies, networking opportunities, and celebrations of industry achievements.

Not based in Brisbane? Don't miss out on exclusive accommodation deals available now.

Learn more at [Tourism Week 2024](#).

You can claim a deduction for travel expenses (like accommodation, meals and incidental expenses) if you travel and stay away from your home overnight to perform your work duties, and:

- you spent the money yourself, and weren't reimbursed
- each expense directly relates to your work, and
- you're keeping good records.

Visit the ATO's guide to [travel expenses](#).



Interested in a rent-free commercial space?

Our regional Queensland towns are home to vital creative small businesses. To help these operators grow and thrive, the [Queensland Small Business Commissioner](#) has partnered with [Renew Australia](#) to provide a unique opportunity for creative businesses to revitalise commercial premises in main streets and town centres.

The [Regional Place Activation Program](#) aims to help local small businesses evolve and cultivate more vibrant and active precincts. Expressions of Interest to participate in the following Renew programs are now open to Queensland creative small businesses. The participating councils are:

- Renew Cassowary Coast (*Cassowary Coast Regional Council*)
- Renew Capricorn Coast (*Livingstone Shire Council*)
- Renew Copper City CBD (*Mount Isa City Council*)
- Renew Hinchinbrook (*Hinchinbrook Shire Council*)

These councils are currently negotiating to secure commercial spaces for selected Queensland creative small businesses to trial an existing or new business idea, rent-free on a rolling 30-day basis.

To secure this unique offering of low-risk commercial space with minimal costs, [apply now!](#)

Awards



Image: Sobah Beverages Co-Founder Lozen Schultz receiving the First Nations Export Award.

First Nations business wins Export Award

Sobah Beverages, a leading producer of non-alcoholic craft beer, won the prestigious First Nations category at the Premier of Queensland's Export Awards 2024.

Trade and Investment Queensland's flagship annual event celebrated Queensland's top exporters, with 46 finalists competing across 15 categories.

Sobah's recognition highlights its innovative approach to beverages and its strong cultural roots, making it a standout in the export industry.

The awards also saw Dr Tracey Seipel, CEO of Seipel Group, win the Women in International Business category, while NOJA Power claimed the title of Queensland Exporter of the Year.

Learn more about the [2024 Premier of Queensland's Export Awards](#) winners and their contributions to Queensland's growing export sector.

Events and programs



The vision for a Multicultural Australia

The [Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia](#) (FECCA) Conference 2024 will be held on 16-17 October 2024 at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The theme for this year is "Our Experiences. Our Future", highlighting the strengths and challenges faced by the culturally and linguistically diverse communities across Australia.



Cultural capability webinars

Free one-hour webinars are open to all business owners, employers and workers interested in deepening their cultural understanding of First Nations peoples. Join us for the last in the series:

Tuesday 15 October 2024, 11.00 am.

[Valuing cultural diversity, recruitment and engagement](#)

Hosted by Jenni Walke (*pictured*) from Elephant in the Room consulting, you'll gain practical insights and tools to create a culturally

The conference will feature keynote speakers, panel discussions, hands on experiences, and networking opportunities.

To register or learn more, go to [FECCA 2024](#).

safe and inclusive environment, improve workplace diversity, and overcome common challenges.

To view the first two recorded webinars, visit [Enhance your business | Cultural capability](#)



Neurodiversity works for business

Autism Queensland's Neurodiversity Works (NDW) program empowers businesses to address skills shortages by harnessing neurodivergent talent.

NDW offers free, specialised training and resources to help employers attract and retain neurodivergent employees, fostering inclusive, innovative workplaces.

Tailored to individual needs, the program provides assessments, education on autism and neurodivergence, and guidance on inclusive recruitment practices.

NDW champions diversity by building employer confidence, offering practical support, and identifying neurodiversity leaders within organisations to promote long-term workforce inclusion across Queensland.

Learn more at [Neurodiversity Works | Autism Queensland](#)

The Queensland Government respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and seas from across Queensland.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the state.



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