

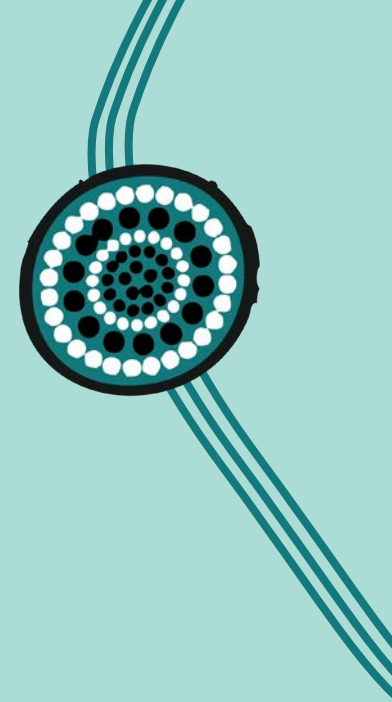
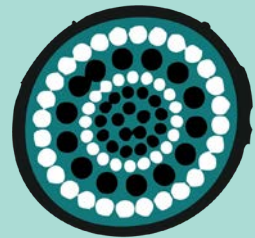
# Southern Aboriginal Corporation



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# Acknowledgement



Southern Aboriginal Corporation respectfully acknowledges the Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the land and waters on which we conduct our business. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all First Australians.

# Who we are

Founded in 1983, Southern Aboriginal Corporation (SAC) is a not-for-profit, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation that exists to support the unique and evolving needs of Aboriginal people across the Great Southern, Southwest and Wheatbelt regions of Western Australia.

Our offices are located in Albany, Katanning, Bunbury and Narrogin, from which services are delivered to 17 regional and remote locations. Our comprehensive suite of integrated services include affordable housing, tenancy support, health promotion, social and emotional wellbeing, skills and employment, family violence prevention legal service, family dispute resolution, Aboriginal Rangers and support to access a drivers license.



SAC is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of five key Aboriginal leaders and Elders of the Noongar community, with representation from the Albany, Narrogin and Bunbury Wards. Directors are elected to represent and make strategic decisions on behalf and in the best interests of their local people.

With an emphasis on culturally safe, trauma informed and integrated service delivery that is embedded in community and tailored to meet the complex needs of Aboriginal people, SAC's best practice service delivery model is conducive to improving the life outcomes of our cohort of clients and our community.

Our programs and services enable Aboriginal people to be at the forefront of positive change for themselves and their families, while having a positive impact on progress under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

# Our work

SAC promotes Noongar social and cultural values while addressing the disproportionate social, economic and health disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people. SAC delivers proactive, preventative projects as well as critical response support services that meet the diverse and evolving needs of our communities.

## We do this by:

- Improving justice outcomes for survivors of family violence and sexual assault through our **Family Violence Prevention Legal Service**.
- Coordinating access to quality and affordable housing through our **Housing program**.
- Enabling Aboriginal people to maintain housing tenancies through our **Tenancy Support program**.
- Supporting better physical health outcomes through our **Gnumaries Hurt Health Promotion program**.
- Enabling increased access to meaningful employment opportunities through our **Indigenous Skills and Employment program**.
- Supporting strong and safe families and children through our **Family Dispute Resolution program**.
- Building community resilience and safety through our **Social and Emotional Wellbeing program**.
- Developing skills and supporting connection to and preservation of Country and culture through our **Aboriginal Rangers program**.
- Promoting access to independence through our **Driver Access and Equity program**.
- Advocating to State and Federal Government Departments **for long-term, sustainable funding** to deliver tangible outcomes and impacts for our client cohort.
- Identifying opportunities to **diversify our funding profile and enter partnerships with corporate and philanthropic** bodies.
- Promoting the SAC policy position and delivering **strategic advocacy work** to ensure the best interests of our local communities are represented in decision making about issues affecting Aboriginal people.
- Collaborating with other Aboriginal organisations to **build sector capacity** to effectively support and meet the needs of our communities.

# Communities we support

SAC supports the unique and evolving needs of Aboriginal people across the Great Southern, Southwest and Wheatbelt regions of Western Australia.

Our offices are located in Albany, Katanning, Bunbury and Narrogin, from which services are delivered to 17 regional and remote locations.

 SAC Offices



# Our FY 23–24 impact



## 391

**Family Violence Prevention Legal Service (FVPLS)** clients who received both legal and non-legal support. Our FVPLS team also delivered 36 Community Legal Education Sessions throughout the regions we support.

## 11

Rangers employed as part of our **Aboriginal Rangers Program**, made up of five contracted and six casual Rangers. Last year, two of our Rangers successfully completed their Certificate III in Conservation and Ecosystem Management.

## 239

Aboriginal people attended our workshops and community activities as part of our **Health Promotion Program (Smoking - Gnumaries Hurt)**.

## 108

Clients supported through our **Tenancy Support Program**. Our approach puts the tenants at the center of the process, allowing them to drive their own support, leading to greater engagement and success.

## 360

Aboriginal youth aged 12–18 from the Great Southern region engaged in our **Aboriginal Youth Empowerment Project**. This included the case management of 78 youths to promote self-determination, life skills development, and healthy relationships.

## 100+

Community members and service provider representatives that attended SAC's yarning circles and focus groups to inform the design of our **First Nations Family Dispute Resolution (FDR)** program, which provides culturally safe and respectful spaces for families across the Great Southern region.

## 300+

Attendees to 15 community-based activities as part of our **Suicide Prevention Program**, including First Nations-specific Mental Health First Aid courses, Trauma-Informed Care workshops, Deadly Thinking Youth programs, yarning circles, and Connecting to Country camps.

## 79

Affordable housing properties managed by SAC as part of our **Community Housing Program**. This also includes two Domestic Violence transitional properties managed in partnership with Anglicare.

# Our story

SAC was established in 1983 as a regional body to represent the interests of Noongar people across the Great Southern, Southwest and Wheatbelt regions of Western Australia. Community leaders collectively identified the need for a central organisation such as SAC to enable them to have an influential, heard voice on social, economic and land rights issues affecting them and their families.

Since our inception, SAC's mission has been to provide effective representation of local Aboriginal people, as well as the delivery of a comprehensive suite of best practice support services designed to address issues of health, housing, recreation, employment, education and training, within a Noongar social and cultural framework.

Over the last 40 years, SAC has worked to address the evolving needs of our cohort of clients and is now recognised by the Noongar community, State and Federal Government Departments, stakeholders, and corporate and philanthropic partners as a leading Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation. Today, our diverse initiatives and services cover 17 regional and remote towns – an area of more than 120,000 kms, from Bunbury, to Albany and across to Kondinin in the heart of the Wheatbelt.

As a not-for-profit, Incorporated Aboriginal Association under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, all profits made by SAC are retained within the corporation, for the benefit of SAC clients and members. SAC is primarily funded through government and non-government grants, philanthropic partnerships, and through income from our Community Housing program.

With Noongar values at the heart of our organisation, SAC maintains a strong and enduring commitment to the training and education of Aboriginal people in the regions we support.





# Our vision and pathway

Our pathway to achieving our vision is strengthened by our values and our cultural way of working.

## We step up.

We empower our people through supporting self-determined and Aboriginal-led solutions which leads to building our people and our community.

We promote equity and seeking justice for all by implementing a culturally informed trauma integrated healing approach which allows us to provide a culturally safe place and dignified service provision. We embrace change and new perspectives which helps us grow and make informed decisions.

## We stand tall.

We acknowledge and take pride in sharing where our journey started and how this influences our journey ahead.

We embrace cultural integrity as a norm and inspire others to do the same. Our commitment to practicing good governance builds trust and faith in all that we do through operating with integrity, accountability and ethical business practices.

## We walk together.

We value relationships based on mutual respect and treat people with empathy and compassion.

Through a community led approach we build partnerships by embracing collaboration and co-design principles.



**We step  
up**

**We stand  
tall**

**We walk  
together**

# Our partners

## Federal Government

National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)

Department of Social Services

## WA State Government

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Mental Health Commission

WA Country Health Services

Lotterywest

Department of Justice

Department of Transport

## Corporate and Philanthropic

The Sisters of St. John of God

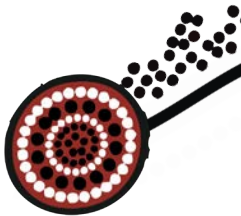
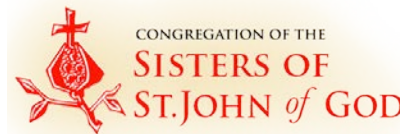
Local Government Professionals WA

## Project Partners

McGovern Foundation

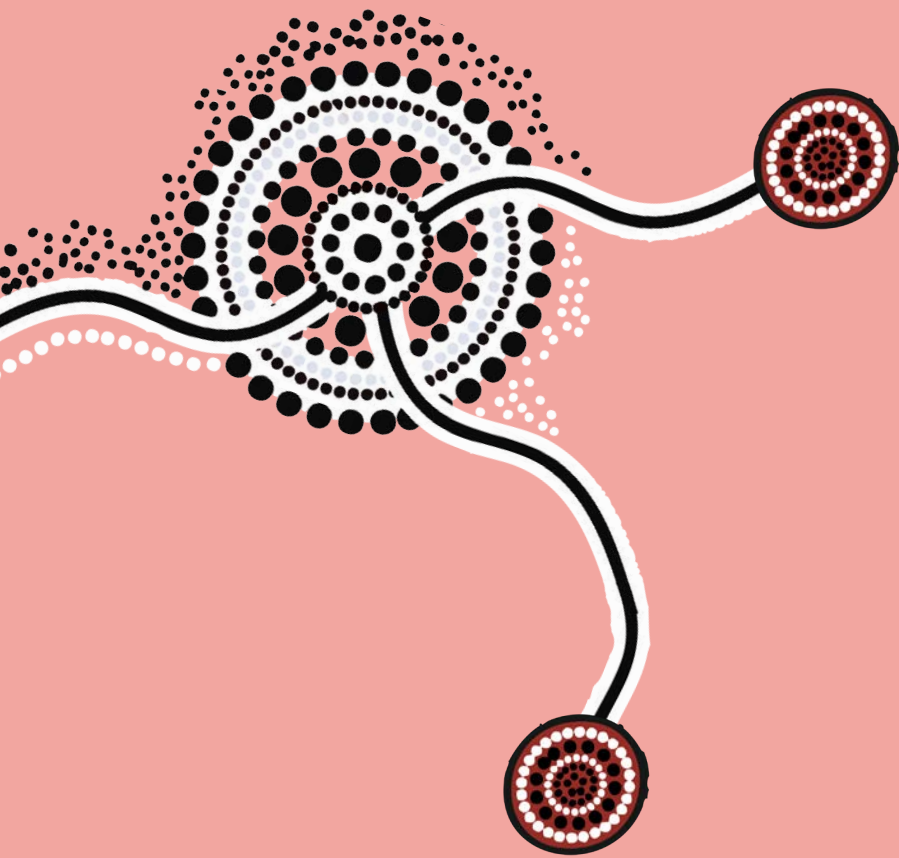
Anglicare WA

Southern Aboriginal Corporation



# Our projects and programs

Our integrated service delivery profile enables SAC to understand and address the complex and compounding issues facing Aboriginal people. We endeavour to listen to our communities and seek to develop innovative programs to improve social, emotional, economic and cultural outcomes for Aboriginal people across the regions we support.



- Family Violence Prevention Legal Service
- Community Housing
- Aboriginal Rangers Program
- Tenancy Support Program
- Crisis Accommodation
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing Program
- Health Promotion (Gnumaries Hurt)
- Driver Access and Equity Program
- First Nations Family Dispute Resolution (FDR)
- Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP)
- Kairli Cultural and Language Centre

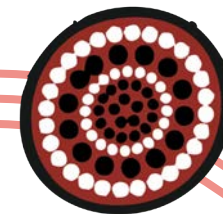
## Family Violence Prevention Legal Services

SAC is one of 16 Family Violence Prevention Legal Service (FVPLS) units across Australia. Established in 2007, our FVPLS unit provides free legal assistance and non-legal support to Aboriginal people experiencing, or at risk of, family and domestic violence across the Great Southern, South West and Wheatbelt regions.

Comprised of lawyers, counsellors and Community Support Officers, our FVPLS unit supports clients to navigate the legal system as they manage care and protection, family law, criminal injuries and family violence restraining order matters, while also walking alongside clients and providing intensive case management to ensure their holistic needs are met. The team provides early intervention and prevention support as well as healing services to ensure the emotional and physical safety and wellbeing of clients.

SAC has built a unique understanding of the complex context in which Aboriginal people experience family and domestic violence; we are acutely aware of the entrenched disadvantage experienced by our clients due to intergenerational trauma, displacement and discrimination – all of which continue to influence their experience of trauma and violence in contemporary society and further impact their ability to access and navigate the legal system.

For these reasons, we seek to apply our integrated service model and our culturally appropriate approach to ensure best practice service delivery for our highly vulnerable cohort of clients.



## Community Housing

Over the last 40 years, SAC has built its housing program into an extensive asset portfolio estimated at \$29 million. The majority of our residential properties are three- or four-bedroom dwellings, to accommodate the high demand for accommodation for one and two parent families, with multiple children.

We run our housing program as a business enterprise, bearing in mind always that every dwelling we own is an asset of our corporation and has been acquired for the ultimate economic benefit of all Aboriginal people across our service delivery regions. All funds generated by the program are all reinvested into the organisation, our initiatives, and overheads.

Of the 79 properties we manage, we own 69 and lease 10 from the Department of Communities (Housing Authority). Properties are located in several regional and remote centres, including Albany, Mount Barker, Katanning, Narrogin, Tambellup, Gnowangerup, Kojonup, Wagin, Pingelly, Kondinin, Brookton, Boddington, Collie, Bunbury, Australind, Brunswick Junction, Waroona, Manjimup, and Yalyalup.

As a housing body, we aim to provide Aboriginal tenants with quality accommodation at economic yet affordable rents. We promote home ownership in the Aboriginal community by encouraging qualifying tenants to buy their homes. We have created consistently high demand for accommodation, particularly in communities with access to employment, education, health and training services.

SAC also operates two transitional houses for women and children in partnership with Anglicare WA. Anglicare manages a women's refuge program in Albany and when they assess women as low or medium risk, they may refer them to the transitional housing program run by SAC based on the number of children they have. SAC's Property Manager and a Counsellor then work with families to enhance their ability to live safely and independently in the community.



## Aboriginal Rangers Program

SAC has successfully employed an Aboriginal Rangers team since 2019, under State Government funding from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. The program empowers young Aboriginal Rangers to care for and protect Country, undertake land and site management including revegetation, habitat restoration and threatened species protection, and engage in cultural knowledge transfer.

The program has a primary focus on capacity building for the community; Rangers are supported to attend South Regional TAFE to study and gain Certificates II, III and IV in Conservation and Ecosystem Management. The TAFE courses, combined with on-the-job work and training delivered as part of the program's partner projects, develops a range of knowledge and skills, including in Aboriginal Sites Works and cultural tourism.

SAC also engages local community Elders to work with our Rangers, strengthening traditional knowledge transfer through on-Country trips and promoting the exchange of cultural and environmental expertise – including in the management, recording and protection of cultural sites.

By creating increased capacity for Rangers to undertake land and sea management activities, our program empowers the local Aboriginal community to consolidate their connections to culture and Country, develop a sense of cultural pride and take advantage of long-term employment and income generation opportunities whilst promoting environmental and cultural awareness.



## Tenancy Support

Our housing portfolio is supported by our Tenancy Support Program, which aims to provide Aboriginal people in rental properties with tailored supports to maintain their tenancy and otherwise manage their welfare. This strategic approach to tenancy support, which is for tenants residing in both SAC owned and managed homes, and non-SAC owned and managed homes, is personalised to the respective needs of the individual tenant and their family.

The Tenancy Support team walks alongside clients to connect them with the comprehensive suite of services they may require to address their needs. This includes linking clients to financial counselling, legal assistance, medical services and other culturally appropriate supports. Caseworkers also act as an advocate for tenants, helping them with property standards, property maintenance, lawn care and maintenance.

SAC's provision of the Tenancy program has deepened our understanding of the barriers to sustainable, safe tenancies experienced by Aboriginal people, and is why our program is tailored to address the systemic issues that may contribute to an Aboriginal person's difficulties in maintaining their tenancy and increasing their risk of homelessness.

Our team is committed to empowering self-determined solutions and providing community with the knowledge and tools they need to succeed, in a practical, flexible and respectful way.

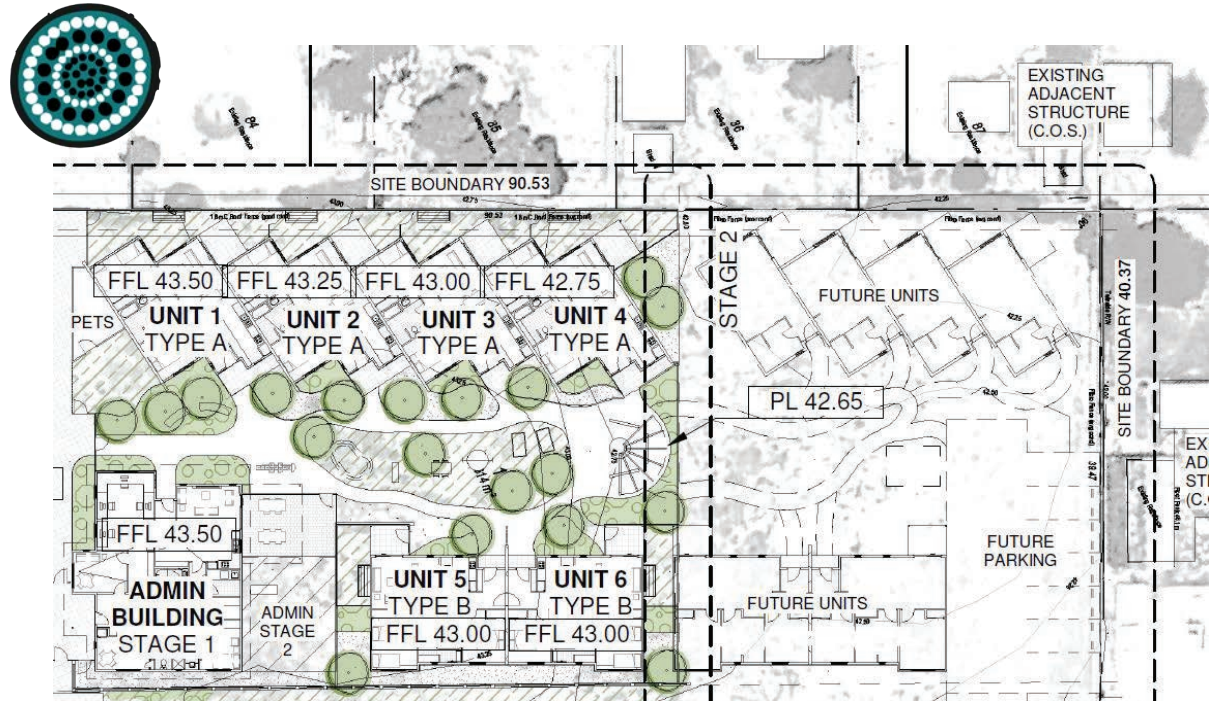


## Crisis Accomodation

In 2020, SAC received funding from the Department of Social Services to construct a new crisis accommodation service for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence in the Great Southern and surrounding regions.

The build, which includes six self-contained, two-bedroom units across three duplexes and one staff unit, is scheduled to break ground in 2025.

Once constructed, the operational model for the service will provide safe accommodation for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence. This will be achieved through strengths based, trauma informed and culturally appropriate practices.





## Social and Emotional Wellbeing Program

In 2021, SAC established its Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) program to implement the activities from the Great Southern Regional Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plan. The Plan sought to provide a roadmap to implement and evaluate evidence-informed suicide prevention and mental health promotion activities across the region, in an effort to support improved mental health and community wellbeing.

Since then, SAC's SEWB Officer has built relationships with community, created culturally safe environments for local Aboriginal people to gather and connect with each other, and given them the tools to identify risks and be involved in suicide prevention.

By implementing SAC's culturally safe, community led approach, the SEWB team has been critical to achieving progress against the key priority outcomes of the Great Southern Regional Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plan, including increased literacy surrounding mental health and wellbeing and suicide prevention; decreases stigma associated with mental health issues and suicide; increased ability to seek help for oneself or for someone else; increased coping skills and ability to manage difficult life experience; improved care and support for individuals in crisis; and improved care and support for those affected by suicide.



## Health Promotion Program (Gnumaries Hurt)

To combat the physical health, emotional and financial impacts of tobacco smoking amongst Aboriginal people across the Great Southern region, SAC delivers Gnumaries Hurt (smoking tobacco harms), a health promotion program designed to deliver education and information to Aboriginal people to raise awareness of the health risks associated with tobacco consumption.

The program, which is funded by the WA Country Health service, delivers community-based activities designed to:

- Provide brief intervention to clients on cessation support, treatment services and referral pathways;
- Deliver local health promotion and education awareness campaigns on harms of smoking and second-hand smoking;
- Distribute resources and material to the public that promote quitting smoking; and
- Collaborate with other services to increase knowledge throughout the Great Southern.

Community workshops are held in Gnowangerup, Katanning, Albany, Tambellup, and Mount Barker, presentations and workshops at South Regional TAFE's Albany and Katanning campuses, Albany and North Albany Senior High Schools programs, and Quit Skill Training Courses.

Through engagement with local schools, SAC seeks to improve students' knowledge and encourage them to practice healthy lifestyle behaviours.



## Driver Access and Equity Program

In 2024, SAC partnered with the McGovern Foundation to bring the Foundation's Wanderer Program to the Great Southern region. The program helps disadvantaged communities to reduce barriers to obtaining a driver's licence by supporting them to access a safe vehicle, professional driving instruction, supervision, road rules education and assistance with identity documents.

For many Aboriginal people, obstacles such as limited access to vehicles, instructors or financial resources make it difficult to obtain a licence, and subsequently create barriers to independence, employment opportunities and access to essential services.

SAC's partnership with the McGovern Foundation represents an opportunity for Aboriginal people across the broader Great Southern to receive culturally appropriate mentoring and support throughout the licensing journey, enabling them to gain the skills and confidence required to succeed.



## First Nations Family Dispute Resolution

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) is the legal term for services that help people affected by separation or divorce to sort out family disputes. SAC's FDR program is focused on facilitating culturally appropriate, safe and respectful conversations to assist family and kin to reduce conflicts and make decisions in the best interests of the child, where there is breakdown of relationship between carers of children and where there is conflict post-breakdown of the relationship between the carers of children.

The FDR team helps clients to agree on a range of issues including those relating to child safety, connection to and enjoyment of Country, and cultural traditions. By applying our Culturally Informed Trauma Integrated Healing Approach, we focus on early intervention to avoid ongoing conflict between parties, police and the justice system; rather, we create a culturally safe, non-judgemental space where people feel listened to, understood, and respected.

Where children are involved, we focus on making collaborative decisions that are in the best interest of the child. Our team walks alongside our clients from initial conversations through to proactive mediation and agreements, such as parenting plans.



## Indigenous Skills and Employment Program

Launched in 2025, SAC's Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP) fosters economic and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in the broader Great Southern region. Designed to support individuals transitioning from prison, our team connects participants with purpose, community, employment, targeted skills training, and small or micro business opportunities.

The program provides intensive, culturally responsive case management, incorporating on-Country skills, training development and healing activities. These initiatives empower participants to take control of their lives, attain work readiness, gain foundational and job-specific skills, and access meaningful employment opportunities. The program has a priority focus on re-connecting Aboriginal people with their culture and community as a strategy to enable participants to consolidate their existing sense of identity, cultural pride and purpose. These are critical to personal growth and professional development.

The ISEP team draws on generations of wisdom and knowledge from the communities we support, who have shown us that true strength comes from walking together. This program is not just about participants finding employment, it is about connecting to culture, restoring dignity and rebuilding futures. By walking alongside participants, connecting them to SAC programs and other services, we provide a uniquely individualised, wraparound support service model driven by participants themselves.

The ISEP team, which includes a Project Coordinator, Senior Case Manager, Case Workers and administrative support, combines professional expertise with deep community ties to help us achieve the best results for the program's participants.

By leveraging their network of relationships and partnerships with correctional services, training providers, business and industry contacts and other Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, the ISEP team ensures participants gain the knowledge and skills to confidently shape their own pathways to success.



## Kairli Cultural and Language Centre

The establishment of the Kairli Culture and Language Centre is a long-standing ambition led by SAC.

Located in Albany's foreshore and next to the city's Entertainment Centre, this innovative project aims to create a vibrant hub for cultural celebration and connection while providing significant economic opportunities for the community. The Centre will serve as a gathering place for cultural activities, exhibitions, and community events, enhancing the region's cultural landscape while driving tourism and local economic growth.

With its strategic location, the centre is poised to become a focal point for celebrating Noongar culture and heritage, bringing people together and fostering a deeper understanding of Aboriginal traditions and stories.

The first stage of the construction, partly funded by Federal Government via the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts, will deliver a state-of-the-art facility that includes:

- A Noongar Language and Healing Centre;
- An art gallery showcasing local talent; and
- Interpretive displays sharing rich cultural stories.

This Centre will serve as a safe space for cultural promotion and protection, empowering genuine connection, learning, and healing within the community.



# Get involved, partner with us

Together we can create real change.

SAC partners with businesses big and small, community organisations, government departments, and philanthropic foundations to make a positive difference across our regions.

Our organisation has a long term, relational approach to our partnerships, ensuring that we focus on building and maintaining relationships over time that are mutually beneficial. This means that we work closely with potential partners to explore and tailor support opportunities, ensuring any collaboration aligns with their strategic goals and aims.

Contact us to find out how you can partner with SAC.

## Philanthropic and Corporate Partnerships

Partnering with us can fund the development and resourcing of impactful community-led initiatives, increase critical support for at-risk clients, improve our housing and training support, fund salaries for our teams on the ground, or allows us to continue creating culturally-safe environments that improve physical and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal communities across the Great Southern, Southwest and Wheatbelt regions of WA.

## Community project & service delivery partnerships

Collaborate with us as a partner organisation and help achieve our goals on addressing the community needs through program delivery support, capacity building, knowledge sharing, and more. We are stronger together.

## Educational, fundraising and awareness partnerships

Become part of our community and receive information to promote our services, host workshops and presentations by our team, or help us raise funds for any or all of our critical services.

Step up

Stand tall

Walk together



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

**Southern Aboriginal Corporation**

**ABN 94 436 195 200**  
**P O Box 5277,**  
**Albany WA 6332**

**Phone: 08 9842 7777**

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

**Albany**

27 Chester Pass Road  
Orana WA 6330

3/90 Frederick St  
Albany WA 6330

22 Locke Street  
Orana WA 6330

**Bunbury**

16 Zoe Street  
Bunbury WA 6230

**Katanning**

42 Clive Street  
Katanning WA 6317

**Narrogin**

119 Federal Street  
Narrogin WA 6312