

... We cannot imagine failure.

We are Aboriginal women.

We have walked through the centuries and seasons out-of-time, sustained only by our culture.

We have been driven to the edge of history itself by interventions and violence.

Yet we remain focused and self-determined; nourished by our own abundant dignity. We are a force to be reckoned with.

We are ingenious, far-thinking Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Survival is in our spirit, our DNA.

And so we continue... to do our business, our way, and soon, in our own place.

We succeed because we cannot imagine failure.

Hear us. Invest in us. Succeed with us."

— Antoinette Braybrook AM,
Djirra CEO

We ask you to invest in the strength and genius of Aboriginal women.

Understand our identity, our sacred story, our epic journey. Understand our oneness with Country, and the power of our spirituality and its meaning. Meet us in trust to build an enduring and natural partnership. Collaborate to exchange knowledge and centuries-old expertise. Work with us in genuine reciprocity and respect, and share in the transformative power of our success.

We ask you to invest in us and make better history.

— Djirra Chairperson Marion Hansen
and Board

DJIRRA
ABORIGINAL
WOMEN'S
CENTRE

To learn more, contact the Office
of the Djirra CEO: ceo@djirra.org.au



Sharing stories, finding solutions

INVEST IN
CHANGE
THAT IS
GROUNDED
IN HISTORY,
POWERED
BY CULTURE,
AND SHAPING
THE FUTURE.

DJIRRA
ABORIGINAL
WOMEN'S
CENTRE
PROSPECTUS



Sharing stories, finding solutions

"Our people die young in this country. We die ten years younger than average Australians, and our women in particular have suffered extraordinary degradations. From the beginning, Djirra has reached deeply into women's culture and community to restore our women, and see them flourish into a future of hope and action.

If you know nothing about your country, if you know nothing about your history, you deprive yourself of the great and mutual abundance that awaits in our nation's future.

Djirra offers you this chance to play a role in making a better history by investing in a distinctive Women's Centre; a unique cultural landmark and engine of restoration ...

After more than 200 years of racism and violence, it's time to

MAKE BETTER HISTORY

Victorian Aboriginal women are **14%** of the female prison population but are only **1.2%** of the female population.

Aboriginal women will live **8 years** less than other women.

Aboriginal women are **7 times** more likely to be murdered than other women.

Victorian Aboriginal women are **14 times** more likely to be homeless.

Victorian Aboriginal women are **45 times** more likely to experience family violence than other women.

In Victoria, **10%** of Aboriginal children are taken from their mums.

No woman should need to travel more than **1 hour** from her home to access Djirra's services.

Since **2002** Djirra has proven that our impact is life-changing. We have reached our present position through sheer hard work and determination, and our success is a mark of the trust that Aboriginal women hold in Djirra. But the need remains enormous in the face of continuing violence, unpredictable funding promises, and an ongoing national lack of leadership and direction for change. All Aboriginal women must have access to Djirra's services for their safety. Djirra's new Centre will be the visible manifestation of our work, and the driver of that change.

WHY? Because Aboriginal women often fear the system and its blunt responses more than they fear their abusers. Family violence is a key driver of child removal, and Aboriginal mums are too scared to seek help. Yet Aboriginal women endure, holding on tight to their children and their culture, standing together in proud resistance. Our women simply need and deserve more support.

WHAT would you do? Could you withstand such oppression, marginalisation, and racism? Would you have the resilience to last through more than two centuries of violence and abuse? Could you endure such dismissive and brutal treatment and still continue your struggle and maintain your dignity?

HOW can you contribute? Choose to be a part of Djirra's story. Choose to change the narrative and give Victoria the promise and potential of this unique living cultural experience and resource. Choose to invest in Djirra's vision, and support our impressive history and success. Our unique model of culturally-informed programs is proven and trusted, and your contribution will support us to achieve so much more. We see Aboriginal women, we listen without judgement, and we contribute to real and workable self-determined solutions. We have the programs and the expertise and we ask you for your support.

Aboriginal women exist at the place where colonialism, misogyny and racism meet. It is a violent juncture. We are murdered at seven times the rate of other women. After more than 200 years of dispossession, racism, assault and separation, we still face punitive laws, and the blunt instrument of an unimaginative system. But Aboriginal women are strong and resilient, and we remain determined not just to survive but to thrive.

HEAR US

In our culture, we honour our women as givers of life; as carriers of culture. Our traditions and ways are fundamentally maternal. The challenges we face are inseparable from our experiences as women, and it is natural logic to place control of these challenges in our own hands for resolution within our matriarchal wisdom. This way we ensure the right solutions come from our own cultural knowledge.

We know that the only way to dismantle systems of violence is to centre Aboriginal women at the very core of our world, as leaders, advocates, nurturers, change-makers, and keepers of knowledge and culture. We are too-often overlooked; sidelined by history and society, but our journey is truly remarkable, and we are strengthened by our every step.

Djirra has built a powerful resource. Harnessing our culture and spirit, we work to empower our women out of violence and into a self-determined future. Each and every woman we work with has experienced or been affected by family violence, systemic racism, the threat of child removal, the shame and trauma of poverty, and a perilous proximity to criminalisation and homelessness.

Djirra sees the rejection, racism and sexism that confront Aboriginal women at every turn. Djirra understands women's experiences in navigating life under the floodlights of institutionalised privilege and prejudice. Djirra knows exactly how and why the system fails our women, and Djirra understands the power of self-determination in restoring dignity, pride and purpose.

Djirra works to build a sense of personal agency for our women, to advocate for fair treatment and access to justice, and to strengthen women's resilience. Djirra is unwavering and unapologetic in our commitment to amplify the voices of Aboriginal women. We are guided by our women, and we are encouraged as one by one they take their part in an emerging, dynamic and diverse contemporary Aboriginal culture in Victoria. We offer you the chance to see us; to support our work and to walk with us.

Djirra is the Woi Wurrung word for the reed used by Wurundjeri women for basket weaving.

The word symbolises the intricate threads of connection between Aboriginal women, kept strong in stories of our past, present and future. We remain whole despite the calamitous blows of colonisation which continue to this day. We remain so because we are powerfully linked through culture.

INVEST IN US

This is your chance to make better history by choosing to invest in powerful change. Djirra has a proven record of success, with decades of exemplary and award-winning work. We deliver meaningful specialist frontline legal and non-legal services and support. We have designed our own cultural and wellbeing programs. Djirra has the solutions, and absolute certainty in the meaning and value of our culture.

Early intervention is the heart and soul of Djirra's work. It lays the strong cultural foundation for everything we do. Our work requires us to be responsive, resourceful and available to our women no matter what they are going through or where they are. And so we have built a suite of remarkable and effective programs that wrap around Aboriginal women providing vital links to a range of opportunities and an ethos of self-determination.

Djirra's programs are grounded in history and powered by culture. They have been designed to connect with our women at all of life's stages, needs and capacities. SISTERS DAY OUT® is an event that effectively operates as a mobile Women's Centre, taking our programs to places outside any existing network. We support our women in prison with valuable outreach in a similar way with SISTERS DAY IN. Djirra's DILLY BAG is a program of profoundly restorative, deep cultural knowledge and healing, while YOUNG LUV® is a program specifically for young women seeking a unique set of resources and support around healthy relationships, tackling racism and building a future strong in culture. Djirra also provides legal and case management services that are client-led, relationship-driven and based on culture, trust, and individual self-determination across key matters of law including family law, child protection, family violence orders and victims of crime.

Djirra's signature programs cater for thousands of Aboriginal women, and find success because of our unique cultural relevance and insight. We stepped up to this work when no agencies existed and no governments could or would respond. We continue to face ongoing funding challenges, but our professionalism, dedication and performance remain unassailable.

"If Djirra asks for your partnership, consider yourself greatly complimented." — Marcia Langton AO

Djirra has passed the test of time and we have proven our worth. We know and see the need and the demand. And we now envision the power and potential of a dedicated centre of Aboriginal women's pride, cultural creativity, support and safety. We offer Victoria the chance to share in a new narrative. We ask you to invest in us and make this a reality.

"Djirra will create a magnificent cultural landmark; a unique legacy for all Victorians. This is a remarkable invitation to play your part in history."

—Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO

SUCCEED WITH US

The First Nations people of Victoria have led the nation in matters of historic and civic advancement as political leaders, agitators and activists throughout the twentieth century and today. Djirra is part of this impressive vanguard. We will build the Djirra Aboriginal Women's Centre and it will serve as a model for the nation. A unique cultural landmark and the first of its kind, the Centre will connect Aboriginal women and their experiences to every corner of Victoria; to every community and every woman who yearns to make her own choices about her future. Here we will bring Aboriginal women's unique experiences into practice by investing in Aboriginal women's solutions. We will expand our work to end violence against our women, and to celebrate our voice and our choice.

A sensitive and beautiful architectural design will embrace all visitors. When you step through our doors, it will be into an ambience of support and cultural affirmation, free of judgement or exclusivity. Here we will inspire pride and recognition, showcase the magnificent diversity of Victorian Aboriginal culture and knowledge, and share the essence of the human spirit, embodied over time immemorial through our Aboriginal Way. We will offer cultural exchange and wellbeing programs, develop women's talent, entrepreneurial acumen and creativity, and carry the strength of Aboriginal women forward and into the future.

Authentic and inspirational, the Djirra Aboriginal Women's Centre will be a wellspring for all. More than a place, the Centre will be the heart of a movement that offers not only solutions, but opportunities to give of yourself. The Centre will be a place of welcome to all for learning, reflecting and connecting with the Aboriginal world; a place to share knowledge, to find balance and meaning, while walking together on Aboriginal land, regardless of where you live on this ancient continent. The Djirra Aboriginal Women's Centre will be a rare gift and a valuable legacy for all the people of Victoria.

Djirra is inviting interest from philanthropists and investors to join us in this exciting new phase of our journey. We invite you to succeed with us. To learn more, and to be a part of our incredible story and journey into the future, please contact the Office of the Djirra CEO: ceo@djirra.org.au

"It is no small thing to finally understand that women are the glue in all communities, everywhere. In Australia, women are the key to the harmony we all seek. Djirra understands the long suppressed power of Aboriginal women. Djirra's new Aboriginal Women's Centre will amplify the voices, the strength, the wisdom and the joyous creativity of our women."

—Jackie Huggins AM