



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Strength of First Nations education on display at national forum on Arrernte Country

Next week more than 120 First Nations educators, Elders, cultural professors, leaders and young people from across Australia will gather at Inteye Arrkwe (Ross River) on Eastern Arrernte Country for the eighth Utyerre Apanpe National First Nations Educators Forum.

Bringing together educators from across the continent, Utyerre Apanpe provides a space to share First Nations ways of teaching, exchange knowledge and strengthen educational practice. It supports critical, ongoing work towards a shared vision for a First Nations education system recognised by governments.

Across four days, this year's forum will focus on:

- Strengthening knowledge and practice from across Australia and across different Nations
- Progressing the recommendations of the [M.K. Turner Report](#)
- Developing national governance to support an independent First Nations education system that protect the rights and self-determination at a community level

Since the 2025 Utyerre Apanpe Forum, members of the MK Turner Alliance have contributed to the *Roadmap to Reform* submission to the Australian Government, which outlines a pathway for implementing the report's recommendations through governance, legislation, sustainable funding and community authority. The M.K. Turner Alliance brings together a group of organisations committed to progressing the recommendations in the M.K. Turner Report. It includes representation from groups such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC), First Languages Australia, Stronger Smarter Institute, Jumbunna Institute, Batchelor Institute and RMIT University.

Earlier this year members of Utyerre Apanpe participated in consultations led by the NATSIEC and the Australian Government to inform the development of a new National First Nations Education Policy.

The work underway through Utyerre Apanpe comes as Australia continues to fall short of its own commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Key targets relating to children

thriving and educational outcomes remain off track, despite decades of policy reform and investment. For First Nations educators, this reinforces the need for education systems shaped by the people, cultures, languages and communities they are intended to serve.

Quote attributable to Stephanie Armstrong OAM, Gamilaraay and Bigambul woman, Children's Ground Systems Change and Education Reform:

"There is something really special about bringing educators from so many Nations together in one place. There's always something new to learn. Everyone comes with knowledge from their Country, community and with experiences shaped by their journey. We come together to share, listen and learn. As educators we take responsibility to support the growth of our work for the generations that follow.

"This year we are progressing work that has been shaped over many years through Utyerre Apanpe, the M.K. Turner Report and the leadership of First Nations educators. We are continuing to explore governance, curriculum, language and the foundations needed to drive educational reform for our children and communities.

"Across Australia, we continue to see too many of our children let down by education systems that are not designed with First Nations strengths, cultures and ways of learning at the centre. That's why this work remains so important. Our children deserve an education that reflects who they are and supports them to succeed on their own terms. We cannot continue asking generation after generation of First Nations children to succeed in systems that fail to recognise the full strength of who they are."

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The Utyerre Apanpe National First Nations Educators Forum 2026 runs from 29 June to 2 July at Inteye Arrkwe (Ross River) on Eastern Arrernte Country.

Utyerre Apanpe is convened by Children's Ground with support partners committed to strengthening First Nations languages, cultures and educational futures.
