

NSW Treasury supports the development of an Indigenous Evaluation Strategy and the emphasis on using evaluation to identify and improve the effectiveness of policies and programs to improve the welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The emphasis on achieving these outcomes by putting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the centre of the Strategy by recognising: their lived experience, their expertise, and the outcomes that they value is welcomed.

NSW Treasury recently established an Aboriginal Economic Wellbeing Branch. The Branch is responsible for developing and rolling out — across the NSW Government — an evidence-based and effective framework for including Aboriginal cultural values in cost-benefit analysis (CBA) and policy evaluation more broadly, with the objective of identifying policy initiatives that will most effectively close the Gap for Indigenous Australians and improve their lives.

The Aboriginal Economic Wellbeing Branch was established in response to multiple reviews that identified impediments to progressing the NSW Government's commitments to enhance the First Peoples economic prosperity and Closing the Gap. The identified impediments include:

- initiatives targeted at Closing the Gap failing to recognise Aboriginal Culture as an integral component for the economic and social development of Aboriginal Communities;
- gaps in methodologies for evaluating programs impacting Aboriginal peoples and the value of Aboriginal Culture;
- a lack of reliable instruments for effective policy making and funding decisions in policies and programs affecting Aboriginal peoples; and
- inadequate central government oversight and authorization to lift work in this area as a matter of priority.

The Aboriginal Economic Wellbeing Branch is working towards achieving these objectives by:

- leading the development of an *Aboriginal Economic Prosperity Outcomes Framework* (AEPOF) — with Aboriginal Affairs NSW's support;
- developing a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) framework that will integrate Aboriginal Cultural values to improve the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at achieving the outcomes and economic prosperity required for Aboriginal Communities;
- developing and publishing periodic 'State of the NSW Aboriginal Business Sector' profiles; and
- supporting Aboriginal Affairs NSW in developing a new *Aboriginal Economic Prosperity Framework* (AEPF).

NSW Treasury hopes that these workstreams will create an evidence base for appraising and evaluating initiatives as part of Treasury's Outcome Budgeting Framework, with the aim of improving outcomes for Aboriginal Communities.

NSW Treasury anticipates that its work in this area will likely assist the work of the Office of Indigenous Policy Evaluation (OIPE) and the Indigenous Evaluation Council proposed in the Draft Strategy — in particular the creation of a central clearinghouse of evidence on the effectiveness of policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.