



**PILBARA  
SOLAR**



**POWERING  
AUSTRALIA**

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & HERITAGE SERVICES**

**First Nations  
Business Resources**

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### Acknowledgement of Country

Powering Australia wishes to acknowledge the First Nations peoples of Australia and recognise their enduring connection to Country through culture, people, place and story. We honour the knowledge systems that have sustained these lands and waters for thousands of generations and recognise the vital role of First Nations leadership and self-determination in shaping a just and sustainable future. As Australia undergoes a significant clean energy and industrial transition, we acknowledge the importance of respectful partnership, cultural integrity, and shared purpose to realise the full opportunity of the clean energy transition.



## Business opportunities in community engagement and heritage services

### Starting your business journey

First Nations businesses are stepping into one of the biggest economic shifts Australia has seen and the opportunity is real, immediate, and growing rapidly.

As the clean energy transition accelerates, there's a clear window to move early and position your business for sustained success. With the right insight and forward planning, you can secure a leading business role in projects that will shape regions and communities for decades to come.

It starts by pinpointing where you fit across renewable energy projects and the supply chains that support them. From there, it's about understanding what work is coming, what's required and when it's happening. The businesses that achieve sustained success are the ones preparing early, investing in the right equipment, forming strong partnerships and aligning with projects before they hit the ground.

This resource is built to help you do exactly that. It cuts through the noise to highlight real opportunities, break down the work involved, and give you a clear direction in beginning a sustainable business on Country.

“The businesses that achieve sustained success are the ones preparing early, **investing in the right equipment, and aligning with projects before they hit the ground.**”

### Your practical guide

**This resource cuts through the noise.** Real opportunities. The work involved. A clear direction to build a sustainable business on Country.

### What are community engagement and heritage services?

Community engagement is an essential part of any renewable energy project, including engaging with and maintaining strong relationships with Traditional Owners and the general community during the whole project lifecycle. This includes the following:

- Community Consultation & Facilitation, including management plans
- Stakeholder identification & mapping
- Social Impact & Benefit Assessments
- Community capacity building

Many project developers outsource this work to consultants as they may not have specialists in their organisation.

### Why it matters

Community consultation and heritage protection are extremely important aspects of all renewable energy projects. If the community is not informed properly throughout the project lifecycle, issues can occur that slow down delivery or even prevent the project from progressing at all. On the opposite side, if the community is brought along from the start of the project, there is a higher likelihood that project sentiment will be positive, including the possibility for community co-design. Investors want to see that their funds are being put towards projects that support local communities and that there won't be negative publicity from mismanagement.

Heritage services are an extremely important part of renewable energy projects. Developers engaging with Traditional Owners and heritage service providers early on can ensure that projects are designed to avoid any impact on cultural heritage, while in best practice examples, protection of heritage can even be elevated and celebrated.

Heritage services refer to a range of professional services generally offered by Cultural Heritage Management businesses, providing a range of services including but not limited to:

- Heritage surveys and logistics
- Cultural mapping
- Cultural heritage management
- Compliance
- Reporting

Heritage protection and approvals are an essential, non-negotiable part of a renewable energy project.





## Renewable energy project life cycle

From idea to impact, business opportunities exist across all stages, both direct and indirect:

01



### Development

(Years 0-4)

Site selection, planning, approvals, and securing funding

02



### Construction

(Years 2-4)

Building and installing infrastructure

03



### Operations & maintenance

(Years 4-6 onward)

Generating electricity and ongoing maintenance

04



### Decommissioning

(Years 29-30)

Removing equipment and restoring the land

## Identifying the opportunity and what's coming next

It is important to build relationships with project developers and First Nations communities who require heritage and community engagement services. Both services are required from the start of a renewable project, so it is imperative to build those relationships as soon as possible.

A wave of renewable new projects across Australia are being developed and with it comes a surge of new business opportunities. In starting your own enterprise, it is essential to start by mapping future and current renewable generation projects across your region and engaging with the proponents (the project developer) to understand the need for your services. Quite often proponents will have information sessions for procurement opportunities or they may have a register on their website for business to lodge and expression of interest. You can find details of new projects with your local council or via web based public registers of renewable energy projects in each state and territory.






## Leading business opportunities on Country

This resource provides a high-level overview of the tasks involved in community engagement and heritage services. These services are essential roles in renewable energy projects and the demand is growing. Community engagement is needed across every phase of a project, creating ongoing opportunities for businesses that can build trust and deliver strong, culturally informed engagement. Heritage services are more targeted but are a critical role early in project development and again at decommissioning.

Your business may provide some of these services or you may seek to contract or partner with others to build capability.

Business segment	Description
<b>Heritage services - Cultural Heritage Management, including field surveys and report writing</b> 	<p>The service integrates regulatory compliance with culturally appropriate engagement processes, ensuring activities are aligned with applicable State and Commonwealth legislation, Native Title obligations and agreements with Traditional Owner groups. Deliverables include regulatory documentation, impact assessment reports, mitigation strategies, monitoring frameworks and advice on unexpected finds procedures. Provision of end to end cultural heritage management services to support: infrastructure, renewable energy, mining and land development projects.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desktop heritage assessments</li> <li>• Due diligence reviews</li> <li>• Statutory approvals advice</li> <li>• Archaeological and ethnographic field surveys</li> <li>• Test pitting supervision</li> <li>• Site recording</li> <li>• Artefact management protocols</li> <li>• Preparation of Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs), survey reports, and compliance documentation</li> </ul>

Business segment	Description
<b>Heritage services - cultural mapping</b> 	<p>Development of culturally informed spatial mapping and knowledge documentation processes that identify, record and protect areas of cultural, historical and environmental significance.</p> <p>Cultural mapping services integrate Traditional Owner knowledge, oral histories, landscape values, songlines, cultural sites and land-use practices into structured mapping outputs.</p> <p>Services may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participatory mapping workshops</li> <li>• GIS integration</li> <li>• Cultural values mapping overlays</li> <li>• Landscape narrative documentation</li> <li>• Production of culturally appropriate mapping tools to inform land-use planning, project design, and environmental approvals</li> </ul>
<b>Community engagement</b> 	<p>Design and delivery of structured, culturally informed engagement processes to support project development, policy initiatives and organisational programs. Services include stakeholder identification and mapping, engagement strategy development, facilitation of community meetings and workshops, negotiation support, sending out community information, feedback documentation and engagement reporting.</p> <p>Community engagement services prioritise inclusive, transparent and culturally respectful processes to ensuring that local communities and Traditional Owners are meaningfully involved in project planning and decision-making.</p> <p>Deliverables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement plans</li> <li>• Consultation logs</li> <li>• Issues registers</li> <li>• Community benefit alignment strategies</li> <li>• Reporting aligned to regulatory and funding requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b> 	<p>Developing clear, strategic communications that translate complex technical and cultural information into accessible messaging.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capability statements</li> <li>• Impact summaries</li> <li>• Regulatory documentation</li> <li>• ESG narratives</li> <li>• Media content</li> <li>• Investor materials</li> </ul> <p>Communications approaches should build credibility, strengthen stakeholder confidence and align messaging with long-term strategic objectives.</p>

Table 1: What's involved in Renewable Generation Recycling



## Training and skills for success

Building a successful business starts with knowing what is required to deliver on the ground. That means understanding the skills and training required to operate a successful business. Below are examples of some of the qualifications, training and experience needed for Community Engagement and Heritage Services.

### Heritage services - Cultural Heritage Management, including field surveys and report writing

#### Training/qualifications needed:

- University degree, generally honours level
- Driver's licence
- First Aid

#### Useful job experience/skills that fit this business:

- Field technician
- Logistics coordinator



### Heritage services - cultural mapping

#### Training/qualifications needed:

- Vehicle Licence
- Bachelor's degree or similar in GIS (mapping),
- Drone licence (not essential)
- Attend relevant courses, for example Indigenous Mapping Workshop held each year.

#### Useful job experience/skills that fit this business:

- General GIS (mapping) experience
- Drone flying experience



### Community engagement

#### Training/qualifications needed:

- Degree/TAFE qualifications in social sciences, community development, public relations
- IAP2 certification

#### Useful job experience/skills that fit this business:

- Public speaking
- Negotiation skills
- Project management



### Communications

#### Training/qualifications needed:

- Communications degree or TAFE certification

#### Useful job experience/skills that fit this business:

- Report writing
- Strategy development
- Networking



Key terms	Definitions
Community Engagement	The structured process of informing, consulting and involving local communities and Traditional Owners throughout a project's lifecycle - from planning and design through to construction and operations.
Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP)	A formal document that identifies cultural heritage values in a project area and sets out how they will be protected, managed and monitored throughout the life of the project. Required under state and territory legislation.
Cultural Mapping	The process of recording and documenting places, stories, songlines, landscapes and knowledge of cultural significance to Traditional Owners, often using mapping tools (GIS) to produce visual outputs for planning purposes.
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance - a framework used by investors and organisations to assess how a project or business manages its impact on the environment, its relationships with communities, and its governance practices.
Expression of Interest (EOI)	A preliminary submission made by a business to register its interest in providing services for an upcoming project or contract. Often the first step in a formal procurement process before a full tender is invited.
GIS (Geographic Information System)	Software and technology used to capture, store, analyse and display spatial and geographic data. Used in cultural mapping to overlay cultural values onto project maps and land-use planning documents.
IAP2 Certification	A professional qualification from the International Association for Public Participation - the recognised standard for community engagement practitioners covering principles, planning and practice.
Native Title	The legal recognition of First Nations peoples' rights and interests in land and waters, based on their traditional laws and customs. Native Title obligations must be considered and respected in the planning and delivery of renewable energy projects.
Procurement	The formal process of sourcing and contracting goods or services for a project. In large projects this typically involves a competitive process such as an Expression of Interest or tender.
Proponent	The organisation responsible for proposing, developing and delivering a renewable energy project. Also referred to as the project developer or project owner.
Social Impact Assessment	A study that evaluates the potential effects of a project on the wellbeing, livelihoods and culture of local communities. Used to identify risks and inform strategies that maximise community benefit.

Table 2: Key terms & definitions



## Discover trusted guidance and support to turn your ideas into opportunities on Country

You don't have to start from scratch. A strong network of support is ready to help you turn ideas into real business outcomes.

### WHERE TO START

- First Nations business Hubs and Chambers
- First Nations Business Directories
- Industry Networks
- Training Providers
- Government Business Support Programs
- International Association for Public Participation – includes resource library for businesses
- Australian Heritage Services Directory – register your business

### FINANCE AND BUSINESS PLANNING

- Indigenous Business Australia – finance and business planning support
- Australian Government Business Portal – online hub for business support and information
- Local Business Development Commission – provides business support (e.g. Small Business Development Corporation in WA)
- Local Investments Funding Grant – local grant investment
- Clean Energy Finance Corporation – clean-tech project investment

- Grant Connect – provides information about Australian grant opportunities
- Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) – supports First Nations communities with finance to build and take part in renewable energy and local infrastructure projects

### NETWORKS AND PROCUREMENT

- NIAA Indigenous Procurement Policy – government tender opportunities
- Supply Nation – national procurement networks and business opportunities
- Local Aboriginal Business Directory – connects and promotes Aboriginal-owned businesses across Australia

### PROJECT MAPPING

- Large-scale solar farm map: [reneweconomy.com.au/large-scale-solar-farm-map-of-australia](https://reneweconomy.com.au/large-scale-solar-farm-map-of-australia)
- Large-scale wind farm map: [reneweconomy.com.au/large-scale-wind-farm-map-of-australia](https://reneweconomy.com.au/large-scale-wind-farm-map-of-australia)





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