

Leah Armstrong

Supply Nation
Chairperson



Leah, a Torres Strait Islander, with over 20 year's senior professional, business and not for profit experience.

As the CEO of Reconciliation Australia from 2010-2014, Leah led Reconciliation Australia into becoming a professional, trusted and innovative organisation. Leah was a co-founder of Yarnteen Ltd (1992-2009) — a successful Indigenous enterprise operating several commercial ventures including bulk warehousing, a car wash, a building company and a property portfolio.

Leah holds several Board positions including a member of the Prime Ministers Indigenous Advisory Council, member of Career Trackers, a Fellow of the University of Sydney Senate and is Chair of The Smith Family Indigenous Advisory Group. She also held previous Board positions with Indigenous Business Australia and Chair of Indigenous Business Policy Advisory Group.

In 2009, The Australian Financial Review Boss Magazine recognised Leah as a “True Leader” and in 2012 she was recognised in the inaugural Australian Financial Review/Westpac 100 Influential Women Awards.

Brief Understanding of the Importance of Supplier Diversity to Building Wealth and Prosperity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

No longer a grassroots movement, supplier diversity in Australia is a concept that five years ago, the Indigenous population, could only dream of.

Before Supply Nation, Indigenous business faced barriers on how to engage with the corporate and government business world.

In the Australian supplier diversity context, marginalised or diverse suppliers relates to Indigenous owned businesses.

Supplier diversity has a long history. As a movement, it started in the 60's following the civil rights movement in the USA. Our focus on Indigenous business is all about overcoming Indigenous disadvantage, through economic development and Indigenous employment.

At Supply Nation our mission is to Integrate Indigenous small and medium enterprises into the supply chains of Australian corporate and Government agencies.

The social return on investing with indigenous business in Australia includes:

- Opportunities for economic growth
- Employment and training for Indigenous people
- The promotion of pride and belief in Indigenous communities
- Teaches non-Indigenous stakeholders Indigenous culture and awareness
- Investment in Indigenous communities