



# THE VICTORIAN BAR

## Financial Support for Indigenous Barristers



The Bar has a long and proud involvement in Indigenous legal issues. Many Bar members have undertaken pro-bono and legally aided work for Indigenous clients, involving some of the most important cases of recent years.

Financial support for Indigenous barristers is one of the many initiatives in the Victorian Bar's Reconciliation Action Plan to attract and retain Indigenous lawyers as barristers.

Many Indigenous law students and graduates now in Victoria come from rural and remote locations around Australia. Many are mature aged and have family commitments. They make considerable financial and personal sacrifices to undertake their law degrees and commence a career in law. Often they do not have contacts in the legal profession and do not have financial backing to assist in the setting up phase of their professional careers.

Recognising the sparsity of support structures for Indigenous lawyers, the Victorian Bar has for some years sought to assist Indigenous law students by initiatives such as:

- A mentoring program establishing close ties between Indigenous law students and graduates with barristers and judges;
- Paid summer clerkships for Indigenous law students;
- An Indigenous Equal Opportunity Briefing Policy with the Law Institute of Victoria;
- A professional development fund for training and education opportunities for Indigenous barristers;
- Fee waiver for Indigenous barristers accepted into the Bar Readers' course;
- Launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan for the Bar.

A positive consequence of these efforts is the growing recognition by Indigenous lawyers across Australia that the Bar is a genuine partner in fostering opportunities for Indigenous lawyers pursuing their professional careers.

There are currently a number of Indigenous lawyers commencing careers at the Bar, and the number is expected to increase in the coming years.

Access to financial support can make a significant difference in enabling Indigenous barristers to remain and progress at the Bar.



# THE INDIGENOUS BARRISTERS' FUND

The Victorian Bar Council established the Indigenous Barristers' Fund in 2007 to assist Indigenous barristers in needy financial circumstances remain in legal practice at the Bar.

The purpose of the Fund is "the relief of indigenous persons where necessitous circumstances constitute an obstacle to them being able to practise at the Victorian Bar".

The fund received support from the Victoria Law Foundation and the Tallis Foundation at start up and relies on continuing support from individual legal practitioners and judges. Support from the legal profession, as well as from foundations and corporations, is welcomed to meet increasing demands as we seek to encourage more Indigenous lawyers to become barristers in Victoria.

Donations to the Fund are tax deductible.

**ENQUIRIES** concerning the Fund can be directed to:

## THE TRUSTEES OF THE FUND

The Hon Justice Jane Dixon

Email: [janedixon@vicbar.com.au](mailto:janedixon@vicbar.com.au)

Colin Golvan SC

Email: [colingolvan@vicbar.com.au](mailto:colingolvan@vicbar.com.au)

Daniel Star

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## INDIGENOUS BARRISTERS' FUND

ABN 37 236 738 243

### DONATION FORM

#### Personal Details

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**I WISH TO DONATE**

\$

**PAYMENT OPTIONS** Please tick one

I enclose a cheque payable to the Indigenous Barristers' Fund for

A\$

Please charge my Visa/ Master Card account [\*The Vic Bar is unable to accept AMEX]

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Name on card

Amount

Signature:

Send your completed form (and cheque if applicable) to The Indigenous Barristers' Fund c/ Executive Assistant, Victorian Bar, 205 William Street, Melbourne VIC 3000. A receipt will be provided.

**DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.**

