



**SEC First Peoples
Self-Determination Strategy**



Acknowledgment of Country

SEC acknowledges and respects First Peoples as the original custodians of the lands and waters across Victoria. Their sovereignty has never been ceded. For more than 4,000 generations, First Peoples have maintained an unbroken custodianship of Country – caring for Country through deep relational obligation and cultural authority.

Across the many languages of First Peoples, the word for this connection varies, each carrying layers of meaning unique to place. In Australia, the term most deeply rooted is Country, a word that transcends geography to express the profound interconnectedness of land, people and spirit. While others may refer to it simply as land, for First Peoples, Country is a living relationship of custodianship, responsibility and knowledge.

We honour the Ancestors and Elders, past and present, whose knowledge and wisdom have ensured the continuation of culture, lore and traditional practices. We recognise that our energy systems draw from elements that First Peoples have long held sacred.

This acknowledgement is not symbolic, it is a commitment. A commitment to walk together, to listen deeply and to embed First Peoples' knowledge, leadership and aspirations into our work. Through this journey, we seek to tell a new story – one grounded in Country, where First Peoples' knowledge and wisdom are represented, respected and realised.

Language statement

SEC acknowledges and respects the diverse identities, cultures, and communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In this strategy, we use the term First Peoples to refer to the Traditional Owners of Country and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Victoria.

Traditional Owners are recognised as rights-holders with inherent authority to make decisions on matters that affect their Country. This principle underpins the governance structures and processes that ensure their voices, values, and aspirations are central to shaping their energy future.

Acknowledgment of guidance

SEC acknowledges the leadership, guidance and partnership of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and the First Nations Clean Energy Network in the development of this strategy. We are grateful for the time, knowledge and generosity provided by both organisations, and we remain committed to walking this journey together. One that is grounded in cultural authority, truth-telling and shared purpose for current and future generations.



Birrarung on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.

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Wa-dam-buk Murrup Biik

SEC commissioned highly acclaimed First Nations artist Simone Thomson to create an artwork that represents Country, the story and cultural significance of First Peoples, and how this intersects with SEC’s story.

Our energy systems – powered by wind, sun, water, and land – are inherently drawn from elements that First Peoples have long held sacred. This artwork represents First Peoples’ knowledge of energy systems, grounded in the layers of Country.

Simone’s wonderful artwork, *Wa-dam-buk Murrup Biik – Renews Spirit of Country*, beautifully embodies SEC’s commitment to self-determination and to work and walk alongside Traditional Owners and First Peoples.

About the artist – Simone Thomson



Grounded in her cultural connection to Wurundjeri, Yorta-Yorta and Wiradjuri Country, Simone’s work is deeply intertwined with storytelling, identity, and heritage, and is reflected through her diverse practice spanning public art, painting, design commissions, fashion, and textiles.

Throughout her practice, Simone’s works inspire broader conversations about the vitality and significance of First Peoples storytelling to us today. At the heart of Simone’s practice is a commitment to cultural storytelling and Country, weaving together past, present, and future through her work. Whether in public spaces, galleries, or community settings, Simone’s work honours her ancestors while embracing new opportunities for expression and innovation.

“Wa-dam-buk Murrup Biik – *Renews Spirit of Country*”

We – are people of earth. We are people of Country.

We are people of the saltwater coasts and the freshwater waterholes, and the forests and rust red deserts. Our stories and spirit are embedded in the soils and sands we walk upon, and in the waters that nurture our grandfather trees that line our winding riverbanks.

The rhythms of Country speak to us. Our songlines are engrained in the fabric of earth and delivered to descendants in song. They are the memories of the ancestors and are the ancient trade and travel routes created at the dawn of time. The ancestors sing to us in the whispering wind with the songlines of knowledge that imprint to the lands and waters. We are the custodians of these cultural protocols that have been handed down over thousands of years that ensure continued management of Country and our precious resources.

Softly shaded Clan territories mark the earth from the aerial view with the thirty-eight sovereign Countries within the state we know as Victoria. These homelands represent all First Nations Peoples and their sacred knowledge systems and acknowledges the profound and deep-rooted connection all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have with their traditional lands and waterways.

Three waterways overlay all Clan territories and represent the river and creek systems of these lands and their eventual path to Saltwater Country in Naarm, the place we know as Melbourne. They signify the interconnectedness of all waterways to their respective tributaries on shared Countries and represent SEC's commitment and respect to First Peoples across Victoria to acknowledge, understand and to contribute to care for our environment.

Merri Creek – merri merri; meaning very rocky in the Woi-wurrung language, originates from the north and flows into the significant junction of Birrarung, the majestic river of mist and shadows. Birrarung, known as the Yarra River, weaves gently from the east and from the southern slopes of the Great Dividing Range and signifies deep respects to the traditional lands in which SEC head office operates, Wurundjeri Country.

Maribyrnong River, meaning 'I can hear a ringtail possum' runs from the north-west and flows into Saltwater Country to the southern waters of the bay encompassing all waters from the north, east, south and west.

Each of these waterways, all resource rich environments and significant meeting places for Clans and ceremony – represents the past, the present and the future, and signify SEC's commitment to renewable energy and the sustainable practices of caring for Country.

Animal tracks lead to various parts of the waterways symbolising First Peoples' knowledge of animals, birds and wildlife and their instinctive close proximities to this vital life source. Ancient River Redgums flourish within the layers of Country and along the riverbanks and symbolise growth and regeneration. Their haunting silhouettes speak to the ongoing rich resource they, and other trees provide, and the fuel gifted for our campfires, tools and housing. The spirit of the trees represents intergenerational knowledge and speaks to ongoing sustainable energy practices. Arc shaped symbols intersperse throughout the trees signifying campsites of Clans from the past to the present day and future guardianship.

Markings along the riverbanks signify our ancient aquaculture knowledge and the traditional use of stone weirs and water soaks and speak to the preservation and uses of this precious resource. Wind patterns within the waters signify the relationship the land and waterways have with Sky Country and its system of interconnectedness where all elements are in constant relation with the landscape.

Culturally significant mountain ranges border these waterways, the aerial map of Naarm from the SEC head office. *Corhanwarbul*, the Dandenong Ranges to the east, *Geboor* – the Macedon Ranges to the north-west, and the You Yangs to the west. Mountains were used as fixed points to gauge the position of the Sun in Sky Country for seasonal calendars, which also assisted in the tracking of stars and predicting weather. Each layer of Country speaks to the relevance of seasonal knowledge systems in predicting wind patterns critical for firestick burning. Cross hatchings along

these mountains represents our scar trees which bear the fingerprints of yesterday's tools and items that were used in maintaining cultural protocols and living in harmony with the land.

Connected fire circles signify firestick burning practices that First Peoples have had for thousands of generations and speak to the sustainable land management skills and practices all Clans across Victoria have with caring for Country and renewable energy. The fire circles represent our gathering circles and symbolise the importance of kin and story, and the shared responsibility we all have to care for Country. These circles symbolise our respectful and ancient customs of conducting business around the talking circle, accompanied by people on the outer circle – the 'U' and 'n' symbols. From the bird's eye view, this is the shape a person makes whilst sitting on the ground with their knees crossed and represents community.

Sparse lightning bolts break from above the mountains signifying the layers of Sky Country and SEC's integral connection to energy and power. Elements of Sky Country including clouds, wind, rain, hail and snow work in unison with the Sun, the Giver of Life. Observing the Sun's pathway helped Clans establish understanding and knowledge of navigation and seasonal patterns which helped prepare for extreme weather. Depending on the season, shelters and huts were positioned in direct heat or within shaded areas to benefit from its solar advantages or to stay cool. Circular sunrises orbit around the Sun representing campsites of all Clans and Countries and symbolise the seasonal calendar and the year-round connection we have to the Giver of Life. The Sun indicates climate culture and the interconnectedness to all things on Earth and symbolises rebirth and SEC's commitment to renewable energy transition for all Victorians.

It *Wa-dam-buk Murrup Biik – Renews Spirit of Country*.

Simone Thomson

Wurundjeri, Yorta-Yorta, Wiradjuri





Introduction

SEC is a government-owned renewable energy company. We are accelerating Victoria's energy transition away from fossil fuels by working to deliver renewable, affordable, reliable energy for all Victorians.

Our vision

Accelerate Victoria's transition to an affordable, reliable, equitable and zero-emissions electricity system that enables decarbonisation across the economy, in partnership with Traditional Owners, the private sector and in coordination with government initiatives.

Our strategic pillars



Invest to
accelerate the
energy transition



Support the switch
to all-electric
households



Help government
and businesses
access renewable
electricity and reduce
emissions



Attract and build the renewable energy workforce

This strategy

Our First Peoples Self-Determination Strategy outlines SEC's ambitions, approach and activities to partner with First Peoples to achieve long-term outcomes together, as well as inviting a broader discussion across the sector.

The urgency of the renewable energy transition is clear. A changing climate continues to pose growing risks to Country, communities and economies and First Peoples are now being asked to play a central role in enabling the transition – often through increased access to land, waters and resources.

SEC is committed to walking alongside First Peoples through deep listening, truth-telling and respect for cultural authority. This strategy embeds our relationship principles across our business, promoting a renewable energy transition that delivers equitable benefits while ensuring accountability to First Peoples.

Our approach moves beyond words to practice: co-designing approaches where First Peoples lead, cultural safety is non-negotiable and relationships are built on trust and truth-telling.

First Peoples Relationship Principles

SEC is committed to First Peoples self-determination and has worked with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria (which is transitioning to Gellung Warl) and several Traditional Owner Corporations to co-develop a set of principles that guide our operations and relationship with Victoria's First Peoples. The five relationship principles are:

1. Recognising, prioritising and embedding the unique knowledge and wisdom of Traditional Owners, which includes caring for and speaking for Country.
2. Establishing a renewed relationship with First Peoples in Victoria to ensure that First Peoples can share in the benefits of Victoria's renewable energy transformation.
3. Empowering Traditional Owners and Victorian Aboriginal communities to identify their evolving aspirations and determine their relationship with the SEC.
4. Embedding governance principles, policies and processes to ensure the collective support and decision-making of First Peoples.
5. Ensuring Victoria's energy transition preserves, restores and strengthens the rights of Traditional Owners and does not diminish the rights that have been secured to date.

When SEC began the journey to determine how we walk alongside First Peoples, we jumped quickly to what actions and activities we could undertake to drive self-determination throughout the business.

While this was the right focus, in our first meeting with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria we were reminded of the importance of first building connections and relationships. We needed to take a step back and create space for First Peoples' perspectives – to define our values and how we will work together.

This is how SEC's First Peoples' Relationship Principles emerged. They were led by the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and several Traditional Owner Corporations who co-wrote the principles with SEC. The principles draw on collective lived experience, cultural authority and a clear expectation that First Peoples define relationships on their terms.

SEC's job was to listen, learn and commit to embedding these expectations into what we do and how we work.

These principles are our north star and hold us accountable. They remind us that walking alongside First Peoples is not a stakeholder exercise. It is relational, based in respect and reciprocity. They set the tone for how we show up with First Peoples and support their aspirations.



SEC Renewable Energy Park – Horsham on Wotjobaluk Country. The 100% publicly owned utility-scale renewable energy project comprises a solar farm and battery storage system.

Foreword

Message from our CEO

Victoria's historic Treaty with First Peoples marks a significant shift in how power, responsibility and decision-making are exercised in our State. Treaty is not symbolic – it reflects a truth long known by First Peoples that meaningful change requires honesty, responsibility and commitment to transform how organisations like the SEC operate.

Treaty is a commitment to change how power and decision-making are shared with First Peoples. It is a pathway to acknowledging the past. It requires us to make real, practical changes to achieve better outcomes for First Peoples in Victoria. It is an opportunity for all Victorians to step up and seize the moment.

Self-determination is a fundamental right. It requires that First Peoples shape the decisions that affect their country, community, cultures and futures. At SEC, this isn't an aspiration – it is a responsibility we have to First Peoples. Work must reflect the authority, knowledge and rights of Traditional Owners and First Peoples at every stage, not as add-on, but as a core part of who we are and how we operate.

This strategy sets out how we will support and embed principles of self-determination across our organisation. We have an opportunity to do things differently – to move beyond transactional engagement and towards genuine, enduring relationships with First Peoples, built on trust, respect and shared benefit.

The five relationship principles that guide our operations and relationship with First Peoples were co-developed with the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria and several Traditional Owner Corporations. They outline clear expectations for SEC, in respecting cultural authority, showing up consistently, and being accountable for what we commit to. These principles shape how we make decisions and define the impact we seek to make.

By working with Victoria's First Peoples towards self-determination, we make better decisions, form stronger partnerships, reduce risk, and achieve more sustainable business outcomes.

This strategy outlines how we are, and will continue, investing in relationships and benefit sharing, creating projects that deliver lasting value for First Peoples and their communities, and all Victorians.

I'm incredibly proud of the work and relationships we've formed with Traditional Owners and First Peoples. Our work to date has been built on truth-telling, trust and shared purpose. They represent the start of something enduring. This strategy marks another step in that journey – which is a long-term commitment to walking alongside First Peoples through the work we do on Country.

Chris Miller
CEO, SEC

Message from our Board Chair

For generations, Australia's First Peoples have been excluded from the benefits generated by the energy and resources sector. Decisions have been made on Country, without First Peoples at the table and without a fair share of the benefits created. Even today, there is no legal obligation to involve First Peoples in decision-making or to share the benefits that energy development brings.

As Victoria's government-owned renewable energy company, SEC is uniquely placed to change this. We are uniquely placed to do better. SEC was re-established to accelerate Victoria's renewable energy transition, delivering renewable, affordable, reliable energy for all Victorians. Our mandate brings both responsibility and opportunity: to lead with purpose, to challenge the status quo, and to demonstrate what better looks like.

SEC is owned by Victorians, which puts public purpose at the heart of everything we do. As a publicly owned company, we work to ensure all Victorians can benefit from the opportunities our energy transition brings. This brings benefits to our regions through local employment and supplier opportunities, and benefits-sharing.

SEC is committed to a renewable energy transition that is affordable and fair. A transition that delivers equitable outcomes and ensures accountability to First Peoples. We are embedding our commitment to self-determination at the highest levels of SEC decision-making, reserving a seat on the SEC Board for a Victorian First Nations director.

This strategy sets out our ambitions for our work with First Peoples. It outlines how we will build partnerships grounded in truth, trust and cultural safety, supported by transparent governance and long-term commitments. It sets out how we will ensure long-term stewardship, transparency and reciprocity in all partnerships and benefit-sharing commitments, in ways that respect rights, recognise responsibilities to Country, and endure beyond individual projects.

We are proud to be walking this path – a path shaped by First Peoples, where their voices, values and aspirations are central to shaping their energy future.

This strategy not only reflects our mandate; it invites ongoing discussion, learning and action across the energy sector. As an industry, we can and we must do better.

Simon Corbell
Board Chair, SEC

Message from First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria

The Treaty era is here. As Victoria has moved through truth telling and into the Treaty era, expectations on relationships are clear. Treaty is not symbolic; it is a commitment to enduring change in how power is shared and exercised. It demands governance arrangements that recognise First Peoples as rightsholders, decision making that is transparent and genuinely shared, and accountability that extends beyond individual projects or moments in time. SEC's approach signals an understanding that self-determination must be embedded into how organisations operate — both in aspiration and in practice — rather than added on after the fact.

Self-determination requires both truth and transformation. It calls on organisations to take a strength-based and respectful approach to relationships with First Peoples — one that recognises cultural authority, honours lived experience and listens honestly to the truths that shape this place. Our partnership with the SEC reflects an emerging understanding that working alongside the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria is not a procedural exercise, but a responsibility grounded in respect, accountability and shared purpose. When organisations are prepared to be guided by First Peoples' voices, knowledge and rights, new and more just ways of working can take shape.

The energy transition can either repeat old harms or mark a new standard grounded in justice, respect for Country and shared benefit. Building on our relationship, SEC has an opportunity to align its strategy and day-to-day decisions with First Peoples' leadership, ensuring self-determination sits at the centre of how it operates. The Assembly is already aware of numerous examples of strong local Traditional Owner partnerships with the SEC, snapshots of the current and future SEC landscape. Partnerships anchored in truth telling, deep listening and accountable action show how change moves beyond the page and is felt in communities — now and across generations.

Message from First Nations Clean Energy Network

Australia's clean energy transition is moving fast. For First Nations, it is a moment of both opportunity and risk — one that will either entrench old patterns of exclusion, or deliver genuine self-determination, shared benefit and lasting change.

The First Nations Clean Energy Network has been driven by a need from our communities to ensure that First Nations participate in and benefit from Australia's transition to cleaner energy — and that we are recognised not as stakeholders to be consulted, but as rights-holders with authority over what happens on our Country. First Nations are ready and willing to determine, participate in, and share in the benefits of the clean energy transition, and are already demonstrating leadership through partnerships, ownership and community-led solutions across the country.

Self-determination is not aspirational. It is a fundamental human right, affirmed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and it must shape how decisions are made. Central to this is Free, Prior and Informed Consent — not as a procedural step, but as a genuine, ongoing process that respects cultural governance and upholds the right to say yes, no, or not yet.

As renewable energy development accelerates, First Nations are increasingly asked to accommodate projects on their lands and waters under significant time and commercial pressure. Without strong commitments to consent, partnership and benefit sharing, the transition risks repeating past harms.

The SEC has demonstrated leadership for the sector in developing this strategy and it must be judged by its implementation — by whether First Nations are recognised as decision-makers and whether tangible, long-term benefits flow on our terms.

Nothing about us without us.



Welcome to Country smoking ceremony conducted by Malcolm Hoyer from the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation at the launch of the Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub - one of the world's biggest battery projects and SEC's first investment.

Why this matters

SEC's commitment to self-determination and the importance of listening

We have the opportunity to do things differently.

The renewable energy transition offers a unique opportunity to move beyond transactional engagement and build genuine, enduring partnerships with First Peoples.

For SEC, this is a moment to lead with purpose. We have a unique opportunity as a for-profit for-purpose state owned renewable energy company to do things differently.

Partnering with First Peoples is not only the right thing to do – it is the smart thing to do.

When proponents genuinely partner with First Peoples, projects are stronger. When Country is respected, risks are reduced. Cultural authority and commercial success are interconnected, and by investing in relationships and benefit sharing, SEC creates projects that deliver lasting value for Traditional Owners, their communities and all Victorians.

Self-determination is a fundamental human right.

Self-determination is a fundamental human right that affirms First Peoples' authority to shape their futures on their terms, consistent with their lore, laws and cultures. This right is enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

SEC acknowledges First Peoples' sovereignty and unbroken connection to Country and their right to make their own decisions affecting land, waters and communities. It is the foundation of a just and beneficial renewable energy future – one where First Peoples' rights, leadership and knowledge are central to decision-making, and where meaningful change is achieved through partnership.

We are embedding self-determination across our business.

For SEC, self-determination means embedding cultural authority and accountability into our decision making and recognising First Peoples as rights-holders. As an organisation, we must embed self-determination as a way of doing business. This means taking meaningful action to

strengthen governance, build partnerships, share benefits and build cultural capability. It means listening deeply and being guided by First Peoples' voices, lived experience and aspirations. It means acting with transparency and being accountable to the Traditional Owners whose Country we operate on.

SEC's Relationship Principles, written by First Peoples for First Peoples, are embedded at every level of governance. They uphold cultural authority, responsibilities for Country and the right of First Peoples to shape the renewable energy transition on their terms. Through transparency, accountability and co-design, SEC will live by its commitments.

Central to self-determination is Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Embedding FPIC through our asset investments is complex. Our current models are designed around commercial decision-making structures that do not easily translate to the principles that FPIC requires. This is particularly the case where SEC plays the role of an investor, entering into projects that have gone through the development cycle. This gap creates practical challenges in fully seeking consent in a way that keeps us accountable to FPIC. Despite this, we will commit to working towards best practice by adapting our approaches where necessary and working transparently with First Peoples.

Strategy overview

Vision

SEC's vision is to be recognised as a partner of choice for First Peoples – working with the renewable energy sector to ensure self-determination, partnership and benefit sharing are standard practice.

Through this journey, we will help advocate for systemic change. This is our responsibility and our opportunity – for a future where Country is respected, relationships are reciprocal and meaningful outcomes are realised through action.

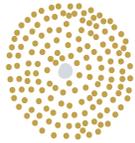
Strategic focus areas



Enabled by

Monitoring and evaluation | Accountability and transparency | Continuous learning

Strategic focus areas



Strengthening First Peoples' governance

Our approach

At SEC, we recognise that First Peoples' voices are central to decision-making. SEC's governance approach is grounded in cultural authority and relational accountability. This means sharing decision-making, resourcing participation and embedding self-determination principles across our governance processes.

Embedding First Peoples' governance is a structural commitment that requires humility, ongoing engagement and systems that respect cultural protocols while meeting procedural standards.

Progress to date

Embedded in our company constitution, SEC has reserved a Board position for a Victorian First Nations representative. This is an important step to ensure that First Peoples' perspectives are deeply embedded into our decision-making – while also bringing complementary skills and expertise to our Board.

SEC is currently working with and supporting the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria (which is transitioning into Gellung Warl) to nominate a Victorian First Nations person to the SEC Board.

Commitments into the future

- Support the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to finalise the nomination of a Victorian First Nations representative to the SEC Board.
- Resource participation in governance processes, including support for cultural expertise, engagement and decision-making, so Traditional Owners can engage on their own terms.
- Build feedback loops and review mechanisms into all partnerships with Traditional Owners to ensure transparency, responsiveness and trust.

First Peoples-led nomination for the SEC Board

SEC recognises that genuine self-determination cannot stop at the First Peoples Relationship Principles. If our aim is to transform the systems that have excluded First Peoples, First Peoples require a seat at the highest level of decision-making, a voice in the boardroom.

We approached the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to understand how best to achieve this. Following their advice, SEC has reserved a seat on the SEC Board for a First Nations representative and is developing a nomination process with the Assembly that is First Peoples led, skills-based and recognised cultural authority.

SEC is continuing to work with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to finalise this process and hopes that it can provide a useful case study for other Board appointments. This demonstrates our commitment to an ongoing partnership with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and signals that Victoria's energy transition will not be done for First Peoples, but with them, through governance structures designed and led by First Peoples.



Building genuine partnerships

Our approach

True partnerships are relational, not transactional.

SEC's approach to partnership is grounded in trust, respect and reciprocity. Guided by principles of self-determination and informed by best-practice frameworks, SEC tailors partnerships to reflect the unique governance structures, priorities and cultural protocols of each rightsholder.

We recognise that partnership is not a single agreement or event – it is an enduring relationship that evolves over time. Our approach supports shared decision-making, transparency and accountability, and ensures that First Peoples have the authority and resources to lead.

Progress to date

SEC has laid the foundations for building genuine partnerships with Traditional Owners. We have appointed a dedicated First Peoples Partnership Lead to coordinate and strengthen relationships with Traditional Owners and embed best-practice First Peoples engagement across SEC.

We have established strong relationships with several Traditional Owner Corporations and are progressing formal partnership agreements that reflect shared values and mutual accountability. These agreements acknowledge the rights of Traditional Owners and set clear expectations for how we work and make decisions together.

We hope that these agreements set the foundations for multigenerational partnerships. They demonstrate SEC's long-term commitment to respectful engagement, with partnerships that embed cultural protocols and create space for shared leadership.

Our engagement has also been informed by a best-practice engagement framework that we have developed to support our staff – shaped by the leadership of Traditional Owners, First Peoples, and informed by the work of the First Nations Clean Energy Network.

Commitments into the future

- Seek to enter into formal partnership agreements with Traditional Owners where we have assets on Country.
- Provide support to enable First Peoples to participate meaningfully in partnership processes, including resourcing for engagement and agreements.
- Operate in a culturally safe manner and tailor our approach to the governance structures, cultural protocols and aspirations of each Traditional Owner.
- These commitments are not one-off actions – they are part of an ongoing journey to embed partnership as a core principle of how SEC works, now and into the future.

Co-designing a partnership agreement with Traditional Owners

One of the partnerships we have built is with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC, Wurundjeri Corporation), Traditional Owners of the land where SEC's Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub has been built with Equis Australia.

When we first approached Wurundjeri Corporation, it re-affirmed to us that partnership would not be a contract or a line item in a project plan. Wurundjeri Elders were clear: if we wanted something genuine, we needed to invest in a relationship grounded in trust, cultural respect and shared decision-making. This meant listening deeply and consistently showing up.

Guided by Wurundjeri Elders, we are working together to co-design a partnership that reflects their governance, aspirations, commitment to caring for Country, renewable energy strategy and cultural protocols. The process has been less about drafting an agreement and more about building a partnership and recognising the obligations that will underpin it.

By being open and accountable, we are shaping a co-designed partnership agreement that sets clear expectations for collaboration, decision-making, benefit sharing and cultural protocols. Once finalised, it will lay the foundation for a multigenerational relationship grounded in shared purpose.



Sharing the benefits

Our approach

At SEC, we see the renewable energy transition as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do things differently. Our commitment to First Peoples is not just about how we engage – it is about the outcomes we achieve together, driven by the aspirations of First Peoples to strengthen communities for generations to come.

To achieve this, SEC is committing a proportion of our revenue from our large-scale investments and household offerings to Traditional Owners and First Peoples organisations – who self-determine how those funds are invested. This is designed to deliver meaningful and long-term outcomes across three key areas:

1. Financial benefits to enable economic development.
2. Jobs and training opportunities that create long-term pathways and capability.
3. Cultural, social and environmental outcomes that reflect the values and aspirations of Traditional Owners.

These commitments go beyond resourcing and meeting employment and procurement targets. While jobs and procurement remain important levers for creating opportunities, our approach ensures they are part of a broader strategy.

We recognise that First Peoples are best placed to decide what benefits matter most and how they should be delivered. Our role is to listen, co-design and

support. Where appropriate, we will also provide in-kind contributions to advance Traditional Owner-led priorities.

Delivering on this ambition will require flexibility, innovation and a willingness to adapt as we learn.

Progress to date

We are already putting our benefit sharing commitments into practice. SEC is working with Traditional Owners where we have assets on Country to co-design benefit sharing arrangements and agreements that reflect their priorities. Below are some examples of current and future opportunities.

Social procurement

First Peoples outcomes are embedded into our core procurement practices and form a key part of our social procurement strategy. We actively consider alternative procurement pathways and flexible payment terms for suppliers where there is a social benefit to their engagement – particularly First Peoples, women-led, and local businesses. Our procurement processes request commitments on social procurement from suppliers and we're building awareness through targeted social procurement training.

To date, with support from The Fair Co. (previously known as Jobbank) and through our Kinaway partnership, we have engaged more than 12 Victorian First Peoples businesses across recruitment, catering, legal, cleaning and compliance services.

Through our investment projects, we're expanding opportunities in traffic management, civil works, landscaping and more – delivering meaningful and lasting economic benefits to First Peoples communities across Victoria. In 2024-25, SEC spent \$2.74 million with six certified Victorian First Peoples businesses through its investment projects.

Workforce

The renewable energy transition presents a generational opportunity to build a workforce that reflects the diversity, strength and cultural knowledge of First Peoples. We are committed to creating meaningful employment pathways that go beyond meeting targets – we are focused on building careers, leadership and long-term capability within First Peoples communities, while ensuring workplaces are culturally safe.

We are still at the start of our journey, but we are proud that 3.4% of construction workforce hours for the Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub have been completed by First Peoples.

Our goal is to create a workforce that not only delivers energy outcomes, but also strengthens culture, community, and Country for generations to come.

Student engagement

Young people have a big stake in the energy transition. Today's students are tomorrow's renewable energy workers and decision makers. SEC has developed a student engagement program to inform, inspire and empower students about the renewable energy transition and the range of career opportunities available to them.

The program will support young First Peoples to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of future career opportunities in the renewables industry. Through consultation and partnerships SEC will identify which forms of engagement will be most meaningful to individual groups and tailor the engagement to them.

Child safety principles will be at the forefront, by creating a culturally safe environment in which the diverse experiences of First Nations children and young people are respected and valued.

Community and home electrification

Home electrification is a powerful lever to support First Peoples to save on their energy costs and realise the benefits of the energy transition.

SEC will continue to work closely with First Peoples and its commercial partners to co-design solutions, ensuring that First Peoples are not passive recipients but active architects of energy solutions that work for them.

SEC is currently working with a Traditional Owner Corporation to support community energy initiatives that will support long-term financial and sustainability outcomes for the community.

SEC is committed to reinvesting a proportion of revenue from its home electrification business to support First Peoples communities. Whether through tailored energy efficiency upgrades or community battery projects, our approach will be guided by self-determination.

Commitments into the future

- Reinvest a proportion of revenue from our assets and household offerings into First Peoples communities, who will determine how it is used.
- Enter into legally binding benefit sharing agreements for all on-Country assets, co-designed with Traditional Owners and aligned with their governance processes.
- Provide in-kind support where appropriate to help First Peoples realise their aspirations.
- Drive First Peoples employment and First Nations procurement opportunities, in close collaboration with Traditional Owners and First Peoples enterprises and organisations.
- Advocate for a greater focus on benefit sharing across the sector.



Birrarung on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.



Building cultural capability

Our approach

Building cultural capability is a continuous practice that underpins SEC's commitment to First Peoples.

It means embedding cultural safety, truth-telling and respect across every level of the organisation, from governance and leadership to project delivery and community engagement. It will inform our policies, shape our partnerships and guide our everyday interactions.

Cultural capability requires understanding that Country is a living entity and that cultural authority is central to decision-making. By creating culturally safe environments and investing in ongoing learning, SEC ensures every interaction reflects integrity, humility, and respect for First Peoples' ways of knowing, being, and doing.

Employer of choice for First Peoples

Becoming an employer of choice for First Peoples is a journey, and we are at the beginning of ours. We are building strong foundations to ensure the experience for both employees and the organisation is genuine, fulfilling and positive from start to finish. This means embedding cultural safety, trust and inclusion into every stage of the employment lifecycle, from recruitment to career development.

We know this is more than hiring. We will create pathways for leadership, investing in long-term careers and shaping a workplace where First Peoples feel respected, supported and connected. These foundations will enable us to grow a workforce that reflects our values and delivers on our commitment to self-determination.

Progress to date

- **Cultural awareness training mandatory** for all staff, establishing a shared baseline of knowledge and cultural safety.
- **Ongoing learning embedded**, with regular workshops, guest speakers and on-Country activities led by Traditional Owners.
- **Culturally safe operations strengthened**, ensuring SEC and partners work in ways that respect cultural heritage, protocols and governance.
- **Internal networks activated**, driving allyship, marking key cultural dates and empowering staff to champion self-determination from within.

Commitments into the future

- Work with partners and suppliers to build cultural capability across the energy sector, guided by dialogue with First Peoples.
- Continue investing in learning activities so cultural safety becomes part of how we work every day.

Cultural learning through Country and language

When SEC spoke with First Peoples about self-determination, two themes kept coming up: Country and language.

Motivated by a commitment to strengthen our cultural capability, SEC's Allyship Working Group worked with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung custodian, Dr Mandy Nicholson, to design workshops that would deepen our understanding of the intersection between Country and language.

Dr Mandy began this process with a Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Layers of Country workshop, introducing SEC staff to the cultural, spiritual and ecological dimensions of Wurundjeri Biik (Country) and how these layers connect and guide responsibilities for place.

Dr Mandy then took us on a Woi-wurrung language journey, showing the connections between language, identity and Country. We explored key Woi-wurrung words and terms to learn how language reflects relationships to land, seasons and Country.

It built our cultural competence, enabling staff to use language respectfully and to create an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country.

By creating space for First Peoples to lead this learning, SEC is embedding cultural capability as a core organisational practice and reinforcing our commitment to working with integrity, humility and respect.



On-Country immersion led by Wurundjeri man and educator, Thane Garvey-Gannaway, from the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. Reflecting on past and present histories at the confluence of the Merri and Birrarung waterways.

Our path forward

Relational accountability

Relational accountability is a commitment to honouring and nurturing our relationships with First Peoples. It means being answerable not just for outcomes, but for how those outcomes are achieved: through respectful engagement and alignment with self-determination principles. Success is not measured by numbers alone, but by the trust we build, the relationships we sustain, and the benefits those relationships create.

SEC is committed to transparent, culturally safe and accountable practices that will reflect First Peoples' values and priorities. To be meaningful, our approach must be shaped in partnership with First Peoples.

We acknowledge that First Peoples have the right to govern how data is collected, interpreted and used. This will be complex and incremental, but we are committed to taking proactive steps to move the dial. This will include:

- respecting cultural protocols around knowledge sharing, representation and consent
- avoiding extractive or deficit-based approaches to evaluation and reporting
- ensuring reporting processes are culturally safe, transparent and aligned with First Peoples' values
- working with and supporting partners to ensure accountability frameworks reflect First Peoples' governance structures and priorities.

Reporting and accountability

SEC will report annually on our progress toward self-determination, benefit sharing and partnership outcomes. This reporting will include:

- reflections on challenges, learnings and successes
- updates on partnership and benefit sharing agreements, governance arrangements and cultural capability initiatives
- feedback from Traditional Owner Corporations and First Peoples organisations
- actions taken to improve practice and respond to community priorities.

We will share this reporting with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria (as it transitions into Gellung Warl), ensuring that accountability is not just upward, but relational and reciprocal.

Next steps

We know this work will not always be easy, but it is important. The path ahead will require us to do things differently: to work in spaces of vulnerability, reflection and change. We will not always get it right. But we will show up, we will listen and we will learn from every experience.

We walk forward together with Traditional Owners, First Peoples and the Victorian Aboriginal community. It means recognising that trust is earned through action, not words. It means being accountable, open to challenge and prepared to adapt when we need to.

This is more than an energy transition. It is a transformation in how we work, how we collaborate and how we build the future together.



SEC Victoria Pty Ltd
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