INDIGENOUS BUSINESS, MAKING COMMITMENTS A REALITY
OUR INDIGENOUS BUSINESS JOURNEY

“We know that Indigenous business is a key investment into communities, now and into the future. Ensuring sustainable practices, working with Indigenous business lifts people and communities on the rising tide of economic independence.”

Mark Chalmers, Sodexo CFO and Country President

For more than 30 years, Sodexo has operated in Australia, working across city, regional and remote sites and providing a suite of services ranging from catering and accommodation to facility management and maintenance.

During that time, Sodexo has cultivated numerous relationships and opportunities with First Nations people, continually guided by the insight and guidance of Traditional Owner groups and its own Indigenous Leadership Team.

As a Supply Nation member and a corporate leader within the Reconciliation movement, Sodexo naturally recognises Indigenous engagement and employment as a key pillar of its mission to creating better quality of life for all Australians.

Sodexo is dedicated to help bridge the gap between Indigenous businesses and corporate Australia and has ingrained this mission across the business.

Sodexo has invested significantly in Indigenous business, most notably over the past two years. Sodexo’s spend with Indigenous business increased from $9 million in 2018 to $21.8 million in 2019 and is on track to hit a target of $30 million by the end of 2020.

This amount is triple Sodexo’s target as part of our Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

This spend is spread across more than 46 Indigenous businesses, from legacy suppliers to new vendors, with 50 percent of these businesses located in remote Australia.

Our Indigenous business strategy is led by Indigenous people, and starts with our National Indigenous Business Manager, who undertakes community and cultural due diligence of all prospective vendors during on-boarding and continues to be their advocate within Sodexo if issues occur.

Further, Sodexo’s Indigenous Leadership Team are spread across national locations and, working alongside the Country President and Supply Chain, provide deep understanding of the cultural nuances of Sodexo’s Indigenous vendors and how they operate.

Above all, Sodexo is committed to relationships with Indigenous businesses, not just transactions. The company enters all commercial agreements with a vision for the long-term to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are able to realise the benefits of economic success.

When Indigenous businesses succeed, Sodexo celebrates.

INVESTMENT

While some of these businesses were already well established, Sodexo’s support enabled others to get off the ground, supporting them from incubation through to expansion.

Beyond monetary support and investment, Sodexo is committed to investing time and experience into its Indigenous partners, suppliers and employees. Spearheaded by the Indigenous Leadership Team, our Indigenous business investment strategy works to expose these businesses to successful business practices, operational processes and opportunities.

FIVE STEPS TO ACHIEVE INDIGENOUS BUSINESS OUTCOMES

1. Ensure support and buy-in across all levels of management.
2. Build a strategy that is reflective of your organisation’s capabilities and limitations.
3. Resource your team effectively. This involves creating dedicated roles within your organisation to advocate for long-term investment in Indigenous business.
4. Partner with your partners, from clients to suppliers. Create a dialogue around what Indigenous businesses your clients are working with, where they are having success or challenges and how you can work together.
5. Provide sustained work. Providing this certainty allows Indigenous businesses to experience sustainable and long-term growth.
SUPPORT IN ACTION

Kuditj, which means Think and Reflect, operates as the only Aboriginal owned and operated catering facility in Perth. The business was established by levering.

Established in 2013 by Palyku men and brothers Ezekiel and Blaze Kwaymullina, AIC experienced instant scaling when Sodexo committed to provide the business’s coffee to sites throughout the Pilbara.

Since, the business has grown to become the largest Aboriginal-owned coffee supplier in Western Australia. Through sustainable partnership, the business has been able to expand nationally and ensure positive social returns into the community.

Sodexo’s corporate capacity and capability and the community influence of training and employment provider Peedac. Kuditj has continued to evolve and expand, all the while providing employment and training for the Indigenous community, and has established a number of alternate product lines such as beef jerky, now retailed at Sodexo sites and other commercial retailers.

Sodexo enabled the launch of a new Indigenous brand of bottled water, Yurrama Water, through a pre-launch commitment to supply the bottles at its 28 mine sites in Western Australian.

Yurrama Water was developed by Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation (AAC), an organisation which finds and creates culturally appropriate employment, education and training opportunities for Aboriginal people in the Pilbara.

Sodexo became involved with AAC in 2016 and has supported the organisation in the growth of its fresh oil sales and maintenance of its biodiesel production through the provision of raw materials.