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ANZ and The University of Queensland pilot new tool to strengthen connections with First Nations businesses

ANZ and The University of Queensland (UQ) are piloting a new tool designed to improve how businesses, investors and lenders understand and measure First Nations business participation across the Australian economy.

The initiative forms part of ANZ's broader collaboration with UQ to strengthen understanding of business participation, supply chains and economic opportunities across Queensland and Australia.

The pilot tool brings together publicly available information from corporate and business directories to identify and map connections between First Nations businesses and organisations reporting on ESG initiatives. The project is the first to consolidate these datasets and create meaningful linkages, providing deeper insights into First Nations business engagement across corporate supply chains.

Developed as an internal educational resource, the tool is intended to support conversations between ANZ bankers and customers by improving understanding of First Nations economic participation and highlighting opportunities to strengthen engagement with Indigenous-owned businesses.

By providing greater visibility of First Nations business participation across supply chains, the tool can help organisations identify opportunities for procurement, commercial partnerships and investment. It can also support more informed conversations between ANZ bankers and customers, helping build understanding of an important and growing segment of the Australian economy.

The tool complements initiatives such as [Fuelling the Fire](#), ANZ's program supporting First Nations entrepreneurs and business owners, by helping strengthen connections between First Nations businesses, customers and supply chains. Together, these initiatives support greater visibility of First Nations businesses and help create opportunities for growth, procurement partnerships and access to capital.

ANZ Director of First Nations Business Banking, Simone Kenmore, said strengthening relationships with First Nations businesses aligns with ANZ's purpose to help shape a world where people and communities thrive.

"First Nations businesses are a growing and important part of Australia's economy. Better information helps us identify opportunities, connect businesses with customers and supply chains, and support growth through more informed banking conversations.

"The insights generated by this tool will help our bankers better understand customer needs and identify opportunities to support growth through access to finance, business networks and procurement opportunities."

The project was developed in collaboration with ANZ's First Nations Business Banking team and a large interdisciplinary team of academics from the UQ Business School, led by Associate Professor Jacquelyn Humphrey, including Indigenous researchers Dr Samantha Cooms and Dr Gaala Watson, as well as Dr Joel Mackenzie from UQ's School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

The University of Queensland Associate Professor, Jacquelyn Humphrey, said: "Access to better data and insights is an important step in understanding how businesses contribute to First Nations economic participation. By bringing together information that has traditionally been fragmented, this project helps create a more evidence-based understanding of the role First Nations businesses play in Australia's economy and supply chains."

The tool is expected to be rolled out among ANZ bankers to support customers following a pilot period with the UQ.

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