



IFIP GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Australia 2027

Conference Theme

Indigenous Futures: Redistributing Resources for Innovation, Possibilities and Solutions

Background:

Indigenous Peoples are leading important responses to some of the defining challenges of our time- from climate change and biodiversity loss to cultural continuity, economic resilience, and community wellbeing. Yet recognition of Indigenous leadership has not been matched by a corresponding shift in resources, decision-making, and influence. The systems that determine where capital flows, whose priorities are funded, whose knowledge is valued, and who defines impact remain largely unchanged.

IFIP's research on the global funding landscape illustrates the scale of this gap. Indigenous Peoples received approximately 0.6% of philanthropic funding between 2016 and 2020, despite representing an estimated 6% of the global population. Funding for Indigenous women is similarly limited: only 1.4% of the \$28.5 billion in funding for women and girls between 2016 and 2020 was directed to organizations benefiting Indigenous women. Beyond the volume of funding, many Indigenous Peoples' organizations continue to operate with limited, short-term, or restricted resources, constraining their ability to build strong institutions, sustain leadership, and advance long-term priorities.

These figures point to a challenge that goes beyond increasing the amount of funding. They raise fundamental questions about the very same systems that are being tested today, who makes decisions on how resources are structured and allocated, what is considered valuable, and how philanthropy and impact investing can better support Indigenous thriving futures and long-term change.

The 2027 IFIP Global Conference will bring together IFIP members, donors and funders, Indigenous Led Funds, Indigenous Impact Investors, bilateral, Indigenous leaders, and allies to address this challenge. The Conference will focus on pathways to address global social political shifts and move more equitable resources, more effectively, toward Indigenous-led priorities, organizations, economies, and solutions.

Building on IFIP's commitment to the 5Rs- Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution- the Conference will explore how the IFIP Global Community will move beyond incremental improvements toward unity and meaningful changes in the face of polarization.

Darwin and Larrakia Country provide a powerful setting for this global conversation. The Northern Territory offers a place where relationships between Indigenous Peoples, Country, waters, culture, knowledge, livelihoods, and ecological systems remain deeply interconnected. Bringing a global philanthropy and impact investing conversation into this context creates an opportunity to learn

from Indigenous knowledge and practice while connecting place-based experience with broader global challenges and possibilities.

The Conference will therefore ask what is required from each of us in this moment to transform how resources are structured and deployed and how philanthropy and investment can better support Indigenous Peoples to exercise self-determination, strengthen their institutions and economies and advance their own visions for thriving futures.

Sessions will explore pathways:

- From recognition to redistribution
- From short-term projects to long-term Indigenous-led priorities and institutions
- From transactional funding to equitable, lasting relationships
- From Indigenous Peoples as recipients of resources to recognizing them as leaders, decisions-makers, knowledge holders, and architects of their own future
- From commitments to collective action, accountability, and measurable impact

The Conference seeks to contribute to a meaningful shift to meet the moment in lifting the 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy, and activating in a powerful way **“Redistribution”**, while investing in strengthening the broader ecosystem of Indigenous leadership, knowledge, economies, and solutions.

The Central Question:

What becomes possible when systems of capital, knowledge, power, and decision-making are shaped by Indigenous Peoples’ visions, leadership, expertise, and ways of knowing?

2. Conference Objectives:

- **Redirect Resources**
Identify concrete pathways to shift more philanthropic and investments toward Indigenous-led priorities, organizations, and solutions.
- **Change Systems**
Challenge conventional approaches to philanthropy, investment, and development and advance models that recognize Indigenous self-determination, knowledge, governance and leadership.
- **Build Collective Commitments**
Bring together Indigenous leaders, funders, investors, governments, and partners to forge strategic partnerships and make tangible commitments for action.
- **Drive Action Beyond the Conference**
Translate ideas and commitments into practical initiatives, investments, collaborations, and accountability mechanisms that can be advanced and measured beyond 2027.

3. Conference Tracks

Track 1: Indigenous Knowledge, Governance, and Connection

This track will explore the knowledge systems, governance practices, and relationships that connect Indigenous Peoples with resources and lands, waters, oceans, and marine territories. It will recognize Indigenous Peoples as knowledge holders, leaders, practitioners, and decision-makers who are already shaping responses to some of the most pressing challenges facing

communities and the planet. The track will explore how Indigenous knowledge systems, governance practices, cultural authority, and intergenerational learning contribute to thriving communities, healthy ecosystems, climate resilience, biodiversity, food sovereignty, and sustainable futures.

It will also examine what philanthropy, and other institutions can learn from Indigenous approaches and what needs to change to ensure that Indigenous knowledge and expertise are respected, protected, resourced, and governed by Indigenous Peoples themselves.

It will highlight community-led research, data, and knowledge practices that advance conservation, agroecology, climate action, food sovereignty, and sustainable development, while keeping knowledge grounded in community, culture, and territory. Particular attention will be given to Indigenous data and knowledge sovereignty, including approaches that guard against extraction, misuse, and commodification. Proposals engaging diverse ecosystems, including land, Sea Country, freshwater, coastal, and marine territories, are especially encouraged.

Key areas of exploration:

- *Indigenous Peoples role in local to global policies impacting their communities*
- *Indigenous-led conservation, stewardship, sovereignty, and guardianship*
- *Biodiversity, ecological restoration, and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas*
- *Agroecology, Indigenous food systems, and food sovereignty*
- *Sustainable livelihoods and community-based approaches to natural resource management*
- *Financing Indigenous-led climate, conservation, and ecological solutions*

Core question: *What can Indigenous knowledge, systems, and leadership teach the world about caring for Country and living systems, and what needs to change so Indigenous Peoples are resourced and recognized as leaders of these solutions?*

Track 2: Cultivating and Sustaining Indigenous Leadership for Shared Futures

This track will explore the diversity, strength, and evolving nature of Indigenous leadership and the conditions that enable Indigenous Peoples across generations, communities, and contexts to shape their own futures and influence wider systems for the benefit of all.

It will recognize leadership not simply as individual leadership, but as part of broader movements, institutions, relationships, ecosystems, and collective action that sustain Indigenous self-determination.

The track will explore how Indigenous governance, culture, language, movements, institutions, and leadership networks contribute to self-determination and collective wellbeing, and how philanthropy can better support these ecosystems.

The track will also consider how diverse Indigenous leaders, including Indigenous Women, Youth, Person with Disabilities, LGBTQ+ and other underrepresented voices are shaping movements and what is required to sustain and strengthen their leadership across generations.

Key areas of exploration:

- *Strengthening Indigenous ecosystems, networks, and institutions for collective action*
- *Resourcing skill building and Intergenerational leadership, mentorship, and knowledge transfer*

- *Indigenous women and youth leadership and movements*
- *Indigenous Peoples with disabilities and other underrepresented voices*
- *LGBTQ+ Indigenous leadership and intersectionality*
- *Indigenous governance, institutions, and self-determination*

Core question: *What conditions, resources, and relationships are needed for diverse Indigenous leadership to thrive and shape the decisions, systems, and futures that affect communities and generations to come?*

Track 3: Reclaiming and mobilizing Capital for Indigenous economies

This track will explore how philanthropy, impact investing, and capital can better enable Indigenous priorities, self-determined development, economies, and long-term wellbeing. It invites session proposals that consider how capital can be structured and deployed in ways that create greater opportunity, ownership, and lasting value for Indigenous Peoples.

The conversation will move beyond traditional funding models to explore new approaches to philanthropy, impact investing, finance, and partnership, including how we understand risk, return, impact, ownership, accountability, and time. It will create space for emerging models and practical examples that are changing how capital reaches and supports regenerative economies and Indigenous-led solutions.

The track will also consider how the 5Rs- Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity and Redistribution- can inform the way funders and investors engage with Indigenous Peoples, moving toward relationships that are longer-term and equitable partnerships grounded in shared accountability.

Key areas of exploration:

- *Investment models that are flexible, long-term, and innovative capital, including impact, blended, catalytic, and patient capital*
- *Leveraging current financing options*
- *Indigenous economies, enterprises, and economic sovereignty*
- *Rethinking risk, return, impact, ownership, and accountability*
- *Financing Indigenous-led priorities and solutions, including women, youth, diverse leadership, climate, culture, and territories*
- *Building equitable, long-term partnerships and applying the 5Rs values framework to impact investing and sustainable economies*

Core question: *What would it take to make philanthropy and impact investing more responsive to Indigenous priorities- and to unlock more capital for Indigenous healthy and thriving futures?*

4. Cross-Cutting Principles

Across all three tracks, the Conference will be grounded in:

- **The 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy:** Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution.
- **Indigenous self-determination:** Indigenous Peoples define their own priorities, solutions, and pathways.

- **Indigenous Leadership and Expertise:** Indigenous Peoples are not simply beneficiaries or recipients of resources. They are leaders, decision-makers, knowledge holders, practitioners, innovators, and architects of their own futures.
- **Indigenous Knowledge and Data sovereignty:** Indigenous knowledge is living, relational, and held within communities, cultures, and territories. Indigenous Peoples should determine how their knowledge and data are governed, shared, protected, and used.
- **Intersectional and intergenerational leadership:** Different and unique experiences, generations, identities, and perspectives are essential to meaningful system change.
- **Action and accountability:** Dialogue should lead to commitments, changes in practice, and measurable progress.

5. Expected Outcomes

The Conference aims to achieve:

- New direct financing and investment opportunities for Indigenous thriving futures, economies, and solutions.
- Stronger strategic partnerships between Indigenous Peoples, funders, investors, governments, and other partners.
- Concrete commitments and actions that continue beyond the Conference.
- Greater accountability and follow-through commitments, investments, and institutional change.

6. Conference Approach

The Conference will prioritize IFIP members and funders who work in partnership and allyship with Indigenous Peoples throughout the program. Indigenous Peoples will not only be participants but also speakers, facilitators, knowledge holders, co-designers, and decision-makers.

The program will combine global dialogue with place-based learning through:

- Plenary and keynote conversations
- Panels, dialogues and workshops
- Peer learning and knowledge exchange
- Intergenerational and intersectional dialogues
- Site visits and opportunities to learn from Indigenous communities and initiatives
- Spaces for relationship-building, networking and partnership development

The Conference will connect global conversations on philanthropy and impact investing with the lived realities, leadership, and priorities of Indigenous Peoples in Australia and around the world.