



11TH-17TH MAY, 2026

AFL BARWON INDIGENOUS ROUND TOOLKIT



INDIGENOUS ROUND



IS YOUR CLUB CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE?

Indigenous Round celebrates and highlights the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to the games of football and netball. The round celebrates the relationship between local sports and Indigenous Australia by connecting football and netball players and spectators to Indigenous culture.

Before you begin with implementing initiatives to increase Indigenous participation, it is important that you assess how culturally inclusive your club is.

- Do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel comfortable, connected and valued at your club?
- Is your club welcoming to the Indigenous community?
- Most importantly, does your club have a zero tolerance approach to racial discrimination?

It is important to engage the local community when planning your Indigenous initiatives:

- Identify and invite any local Aboriginal organisations or community groups to be involved in planning and running activities on the day.
- Request input and seek advice on cultural activities and ceremonies from relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people/organisations.
- Advise opponents and AFL Barwon of all game day plans or activities and invite league representatives to attend.
- Engage AFL Barwon's media team and local media to support your initiatives.



WHERE DO WE START?



START SIMPLE.

When considering what your club may like to do for Indigenous Round it is a good idea to consider what your club has the resources to deliver, what your club can afford and what will be sustainable.

FLAG RAISING:

Starting off your Indigenous round with raising the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander flag is a great way to show respect to Indigenous people. You may like to ask an Indigenous player/past player to raise the flag or even engage a local Aboriginal Elder or community member.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:

Anyone can do an Acknowledgement of Country. This is an opportunity for your club to acknowledge the traditional owners of the country which your football club is on.

WELCOME TO COUNTRY:

A Welcome to Country can only be performed by an Aboriginal person who is a traditional owner of the area where the Welcome to Country will be performed.

SMOKING CEREMONY:

A smoking ceremony is a cultural cleansing ceremony that involves burning of specific leaves to create smoke. Aboriginal people have been performing this ceremony for thousands of years. This is something that you may be able to plan when you organise a Welcome to Country.

MINUTE OF SILENCE:

Holding a minute of silence is a respectful way to pay homage to the history of Aboriginal people, especially those that have passed away. This is something that you could introduce and ask the playing group, officials and spectators all participate in.

HALFTIME EVENT:

Hosting a halftime event with past Indigenous players/coaches and inviting local Indigenous community members is a fantastic relationship building opportunity and a great way to acknowledge their contribution. You may ask a current or past player if they would like to speak at this event also.

CULTURAL MUSIC & DANCE:

Indigenous round is a great opportunity to showcase local Indigenous musicians and talent. You may be able to seek out expressions of interest for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers who would like to perform or reach out to your local Indigenous community for contacts.

ARMBANDS:

Wearing black tape or red, black, and yellow tape as armbands is a way of showing respect to those who have passed away. It is a sign of mourning to wear armband tape. This is a way to acknowledge the history of Aboriginal people.

ACTIVITIES:

Additional activities for Indigenous round may include having face painters painting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.

BANNERS:

You may like to create a club banner with red, black and yellow handprints on it. This may be something that your juniors and Auskickers can place their handprints on or even something that you can get some senior players involved in.

INDIGENOUS JUMPERS & DRESSES:

Having an Indigenous designed guernsey and netball dress (or bibs) is a great way to engage a local Indigenous artist, this may be someone within the local community or a current or past player/coach. Please advise AFL Barwon of any designs and seek approval before manufacturing. It is also a fantastic idea to share the story and process behind your Indigenous uniforms with AFL Barwon so that we can include your club in media and on the website.

CHILDREN'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT (CALL & RESPONSE):

Here is the land, here is the sky

Here are my friends and here am I.

We stand together, hand in hand.

To respect and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land.

INDIGENOUS UNIFORMS

