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Murdoch University leaders support a 'Yes' vote for the Indigenous Voice to Parliament

All 14 members of Murdoch University's senior leadership team have pledged support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are encouraging a 'Yes' vote on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, describing the forthcoming referendum as a turning point in Australian history and an opportunity to redefine the nation.

The clear and unanimous statement of support reflects Murdoch's commitment to becoming the university of first choice for First Nations peoples, and an exemplar in embracing, promoting and benefiting from Indigenous knowledges and cultural inclusivity.

Vice Chancellor Professor Andrew Deeks and Pro Vice Chancellor First Nations Chanelle van den Berg said in stating their support for the Voice, the senior leadership team also recognised the diversity of opinion in the wider community.

"While stating our personal support for a 'Yes' vote in the referendum, we understand there are many different points of view, and we remain committed to our foundational principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech," Professor Deeks said.

"As a leadership group, we also want to play a positive and active role in this important national conversation, and we are determined to facilitate an informed and respectful debate among our staff, students, alumni and wider community."

Relevant [information and resources](#) have been gathered for the University and wider community through the Murdoch website, and leaders will seek further opportunities in the lead-up to the referendum vote to encourage informed conversations conducted with respect and care.

Ms van den Berg, a proud Binjareb woman and the first person to hold the position of Pro Vice Chancellor First Nations at Murdoch, said the University's new Strategy [Ngala Kwop Bididi: Building a brighter future, together](#) placed support and recognition of First Nations peoples, cultures and knowledges at its heart and challenged the University to do more. The Strategy builds on many years of work by Murdoch to provide pathways into higher education for greater numbers of Indigenous people.

Through the work of the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre, Murdoch now has the highest proportion of Aboriginal students at any WA university, with a completion rate similar to the non-Aboriginal cohort. Last year, the University launched the Ngangk Yira Institute for Change, which is focused on research that benefits Aboriginal people and communities.

"Later this year, Australians will be invited to make a very important decision by voting in the referendum that will shape the future of our country to ensure Indigenous peoples have a voice on the decisions that will affect them," Ms van den Berg said.

“Given our long-time commitment to empowering Aboriginal communities and promoting Indigenous knowledges, I am proud that Murdoch is now pledging to be active within the conversation about the Voice.”

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Pic caption: Members of Murdoch’s senior leadership team have pledged to support a “Yes” vote at the referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament