

Indigenous Housing Policy



Australian
Institute of
Architects

CONTEXT

Despite commitments from various state, territory and federal governments, the standard of Indigenous housing and essential infrastructure remains well below that available to the non-Indigenous population. As well as building more housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and better maintaining existing stock, housing decisions must reside with local communities and job creation must be valued equally to timely and economic delivery. Architects can make a significant contribution to these priorities.

THE POLICY

The Australian Institute of Architects endorses the following:

- A strong Indigenous voice in the creation of housing policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to ensure community ownership of the decisions that affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Meaningful community decision making power in the procurement of housing, to ensure the best fit for purpose outcomes, and to obtain community benefit beyond the immediate goal of 'bricks and mortar'.
- Management of construction stages of housing delivery so that Indigenous employment and training are equal outcomes to economic and timely delivery.
- An acknowledgement of the social determinants of health and the role that housing plays in fostering educational attainment, employment opportunities and general well-being.
- Effective and timely maintenance of housing, using local resources, to minimise overcrowding by keeping more houses available for occupation.
- The use of architects in the housing design, documentation and construction, to ensure that the design intent and detailing is delivered.
- Development of a diversity of dwelling types and tenancy options to meet the needs of a diverse population and to provide economic options to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples that are available to the non-Indigenous population.
- Evaluations of the housing process, including post occupancy evaluations of the final product following occupation, to ensure that policies, designs and processes can be improved.
- Management of the construction stages of housing delivery so that quality construction is an equal outcome to economic and timely delivery, to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with housing of equal quality to the non-Indigenous population, and to create a robust housing stock that requires minimal maintenance.