

QMUSIC - FIRST NATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

Goolwal Goolwal is an important part of the annual BIGSOUND program, established by QMusic, a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation based in Magandjin (Brisbane's) Fortitude Valley.

Since its founding in 1994, QMusic has been a key driver of Queensland's music industry. QMusic is known internationally for producing BIGSOUND – the southern hemisphere's largest new music festival and conference. The First Nations-curated and led Goolwal Goolwal program launched as part of BIGSOUND in 2022, and through 2023, it grew substantially, with a continued focus on empowering and amplifying Indigenous voices.

QMusic is committed to a collaborative and inclusive approach, engaging directly with artists, industry professionals, and community leaders to understand their needs and advocate for a more diverse and equitable music ecosystem. Through collaboration with the community QMusic recognises its role in influencing trends, bringing about industry change, and connecting the Queensland and Australian music industry with global conversations. This engagement is underpinned by a framework of Advisory Groups, as a forum for community leaders to participate in proactive and productive conversations, share their experiences and expertise, and to drive positive change, highlight the importance of cultural representation, and support the ongoing growth of Indigenous and local music in Australia and beyond.

2. First Nations engagement at QMusic

The First Nations Advisory Group aims to drive positive change, highlight the importance of cultural representation, and support the ongoing growth of Indigenous and local music. The Advisory Group is designed to ensure that First Nations people are not only seen and heard but are actively shaping the future of the music industry in an inclusive, respectful, and empowering manner. It ensures that the voices of First Nations people are central in the decision-making processes that impact their representation at BIGSOUND.

These Terms of Reference (TOR) outline the governance requirements and roles and responsibilities of the First Nations Advisory Group and its members.

3. SCOPE & PURPOSE

The First Nations Advisory Group will provide expert guidance on cultural representation, advocacy, cultural safety, industry trends, and the programming and content of Goolwal Goolwal at BIGSOUND.

The purpose of the First Nations Advisory Group is to:

- Offer advice and insights on key issues and emerging trends within the scope of focus.
- Support QMusic in opening conversations with government, industry, and broader networks to consult with communities and advocate for safety and inclusion within the music industry.
- Recommend strategic initiatives for Goolwal Goolwal activities and events.
- Represent QMusic by engaging with our community, industry members, and broader networks to ensure their voices are heard.

The scope of focus for the First Nations Advisory Group includes:

- Guidance on cultural representation and advocacy at BIGSOUND.
- Programming and content for Goolwal Goolwal.
- Cultural Safety and Integrity of First Nations Community and Artists at BIGSOUND.
- Industry Trends and contributions to programming.

4. Advisory Group Goals and Desired Outcomes

Below are four key goals for the Advisory Group to achieve:

Increase Visibility and Opportunities for First Nations Artists

- **Goal:** Ensure that First Nations artists receive significant visibility and recognition within the Australian and international music industry at BIGSOUND.
- **Desired outcome:** More First Nations artists performing at BIGSOUND, increased media exposure, and greater access to industry networks and resources.

Strengthen Community-Led Initiatives and Partnerships

- **Goal:** Foster stronger collaborations between First Nations communities, music industry professionals, and arts organisations, ensuring that community-led initiatives are prioritised and supported.
- **Desired outcome:** Enhanced partnerships between First Nations communities and the broader music industry, leading to a sustainable and self-empowered ecosystem for Indigenous artists.

Develop a Diverse and Inclusive Program Spanning Multiple Disciplines of the Music Industry

- **Goal:** Curate a program that represents a wide range of First Nations voices and expertise across various aspects of the music industry, including performance, production, management, songwriting, and business.
- **Desired outcome:** A multifaceted and inclusive BIGSOUND program that highlights First Nations talent and perspectives not only in music performance but also in areas such as music production, industry leadership, and innovation, ensuring diverse opportunities for involvement across the sector.

Ensure Cultural Safety and Authentic Representation

- **Goal:** Establish a framework for ensuring that all First Nations artists and cultural expressions are represented with authenticity, respect, and cultural safety.
- **Desired outcome:** A culturally safe environment for First Nations artists at BIGSOUND, with cultural protocols in place and practices that prioritise Indigenous perspectives and values.

5. Membership

Member skills & attributes required

The First Nations Advisory Group members will require a combination of specific skills, attributes, and backgrounds to ensure they can effectively represent First Nations communities and contribute to the development of the program.

1. Cultural knowledge and sensitivity. Understanding First Nations cultures, histories, and contemporary issues, along with the ability to navigate cultural protocols and practices.
2. Commitment to cultural preservation and growth.
3. Industry expertise.
4. Practical experience in the Australian music, arts, or entertainment industries, particularly in roles that work closely with or represent Indigenous artists.
5. Leadership skills.
6. Strategic thinking capabilities.
7. Strong connections with other industry professionals, community leaders, and organisations, as well as the ability to build and maintain positive, respectful relationships.
8. A history of active participation in First Nations community work or advocacy, whether in the arts, social justice, or cultural preservation.
9. Understanding of Industry Trends and Challenges.
10. Passion for community empowerment.
11. Previous board or advisory group experience (Optional).

The Advisory Group role is an identified position, requiring members to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

A QMusic staff member will be appointed as the secretariat.

Non-members may be invited to attend as Observers as agreed by the group.

Minimum Member Deliverables

These deliverables ensure that members of the advisory group contribute actively and meaningfully to the success of Goolwal Goolwal and BIGSOUND while maintaining the focus on cultural integrity, advocacy, and community engagement.

- Attend and actively contribute to three consultancy group meetings prior to BIGSOUND 2025 on March 6th, June 12th & July 10th (2025); – whether in person at QMusic office in Fortitude Valley, or via TEAMS online meeting.
- Attend BIGSOUND and the Goolwal Goolwal Program 2025. As well as prioritising attendance to key Goolwal Goolwal events.
- Contribute to the development and curation of the Goolwal Goolwal program at BIGSOUND, ensuring it aligns with the needs and values of First Nations communities, BIGSOUND and Artists.
- Connecting with community and/or other Industry professionals outside of dedicated meetings to contribute to the outcomes of the Advisory Group and Goolwal Goolwal program.
- Stay informed on industry trends, developments, and challenges that impact First Nations artists, providing advice on how these can be addressed.
- Actively engage with QMusic to advocate for policies, programs, and initiatives that support the inclusion and representation of First Nations people at BIGSOUND and in the broader music industry / incorporated into programming.
- Facilitate open communication with First Nations communities, artists, and industry professionals to gather feedback and insights that will inform programming and advocacy efforts.
- Provide recommendations for strategic initiatives and actions that will enhance the impact of Goolwal Goolwal and BIGSOUND for First Nations artists and communities.
- Support QMusic in building and maintaining relationships with government bodies, industry stakeholders, and broader networks to promote safety, inclusion, and advocacy for First Nations people in the music industry.
- Participate in the planning and execution of events, workshops, or panels related to Goolwal Goolwal, ensuring that First Nations perspectives are represented and respected throughout the process.
- Participate in periodic reviews and evaluations of Goolwal Goolwal activities and initiatives, providing constructive feedback and suggestions for continuous improvement.
- Attend one consultancy group meeting after BIGSOUND 2025 - once in September – whether in person at QMusic office in Fortitude Valley, or via TEAMS online meeting. The post BIGSOUND meeting will be to discuss outcomes, recognise what was successfully delivered, and provide feedback on how and where the Goolwal Goolwal programme could be improved/streamlined for future BIGSOUND events.
- Proactively and positively promote the Goolwal Goolwal program to their Industry network & broader community. Including through social media channels, interviews and community groups.

6. Operations & Selection process

The First Nations Advisory Group Members will be elected annually by the QMusic First Nations Music Office, Goolwal Goolwal Producer and Elders in Residence. The selection process includes a period for expressions of interest, application review, and candidate interviews.

They will also elect a Chair and Secretariat from QMusic within the First Nations Advisory Group to coordinate the group.

The Secretariat will lead the implementation of advice and recommendations and will be responsible for monitoring and documenting the outcomes in consultation with the Chair to be reported back to the First Nations Advisory Group for discussion and evaluation.

Members of the First Nations Advisory Group will be funded by QMusic and report to the Goolwal Goolwa First Nations Advisory Group Chair, QMusic First Nations Team, Elders in Residence, and QMusic CEO.

7. Meetings

There will be a minimum of 3 official scheduled meetings, along with an opportunity to debrief, reflect, and celebrate at the end of the calendar year. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair or QMusic as required, pending agreement with the members.

Meetings will be scheduled for a 60-minute duration and may last for a maximum duration of 2 hours.

Members must attend all of the scheduled meetings in a calendar year and must not miss a meetings without notifying the Chair of a leave of absence.

Members may attend these meetings and/or workshops face to face or virtually, with a requirement to attend at least 1 per year face to face, unless otherwise agreed due to extenuating circumstances.

Secretarial services to the Group are provided by a QMusic staff member, and include the scheduling of meetings and the timely distribution of agendas, minutes and actions.

8. General Duties

To ensure we function in proper, effective and efficient ways, members will, read papers and materials circulated, respond and acknowledge communications requested and do so within a reasonably requested timeframe.

Members will be required provide regular communications, and may be requested to prepare materials prior to & in between meetings to achieve the advisory group goals.

9. Quorum

A number equal to 5 members shall constitute a quorum.

10. Code of Conduct

The First Nations Advisory Group will be authentic, respectful, and meaningful in their approach. The First Nations Advisory Group are required to abide by the QMusic Code of Conduct and Rules of the Association. Any breach of these policies may result in the immediate termination of the members appointment.

11. Tenure

Members will be for a one-year term, with possible extension. A member may resign from the First Nations Advisory Group at any time by giving notice in writing. The resignation may take effect immediately or at a later date as specified on the notice.

12. Remuneration

Members of the First Nations Advisory Group will be remunerated at \$2000 ex gst if they have successfully contributed and met all deliverables of member requirements, this includes attending BIGSOUND & Goolwal Goolwal 2025.

Payment will be split into two parts (50/50) and made upon receipt of a valid invoice as per the service agreement. Invoice 1 is to be received on 12th July 2025 & invoice 2 is to be received on 12th September 2025. They will be processed in the next available payment cycle from these dates.

Members will also receive x2 full access Delegate Pass, and invitations to attend exclusive events. One for use by themselves, and another to be allocated as desired.

Any Member who contributes their time in-kind can be provided contra support if applicable, through negotiation with the QMusic Management Committee, First Nations Team and QMusic CEO, relevant to the level of organisational engagement and work, to be agreed in writing.

13. Evaluation

Evaluation of impact, organisational alignment, outcomes and effectiveness of First Nations Advisory Group will be measured on a yearly basis.