

USU Board Statement in support of the Voice to Parliament

The University of Sydney Union ('USU') acknowledges that the Union sits on the unceded lands of the Gadigal people, and recognises the continuing connection to land, waters, and community that is embedded in the spaces that we use to serve our members.

The USU Board of Directors acknowledges our responsibility in representing and serving the best interests of our members. We recognise the importance of having a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament as a first step towards First Nations and Indigenous peoples having a direct say in the processes and laws that impact their lives. This is why the USU Board firmly supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart, with the Voice to Parliament being the first step to its implementation.

The USU is taking an educational approach to ensure that our members are well-informed about the Voice to Parliament and the referendum process. We believe that knowledge empowers effective participation, and we are committed to reflecting priorities of knowledge sharing and truth telling as emphasised throughout the Uluru Statement from the Heart. As an organisation committed to promoting inclusivity and meaningful action, we believe that supporting the Voice is an important step toward achieving a more equitable and just society.

Our stance on the Voice to Parliament is a continuation of our dedication to the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which guides us in fostering positive relationships and creating an environment that values Indigenous voices and experiences while recognising the intricate cultures, traditions, and language of First Nations peoples.

The USU reflects on its history of providing support for First Nations advocacy. When Dr Charles Perkins set out on the Freedom Rides and established Student Action For Aborigines (SAFA), the USU played a critical role in providing resources to begin his campaign. In 1967, the USU provided Dr Perkins and SAFA a platform to advocate for a "Yes" vote, and we hope to continue platforming First Nations voices.

Recognising the diversity of views within our membership, we respect that some members may hold differing opinions on the matter. We encourage open and respectful discourse and understand that individual perspectives are integral to enriching discussion. On the 12th of September, we will be hosting a [USU Speaker Series](#) session on the Voice with Professor Rick Macourt to inform and educate on functionality, advocacy, and the role we can all play.

Regardless of the Voice Referendum's outcome, the USU remains resolute in our commitment to reconciliation. Our dedication to fostering positive relationships, valuing Indigenous voices, and contributing to a more inclusive campus will continue to be at the forefront of our actions.

We believe that the Voice to Parliament is a significant step toward a fairer Australia, and we are proud to support the Yes Campaign.

To learn more about the Voice and how the referendum works, see the links below:

<https://www.yes23.com.au/resources>

<https://www.aec.gov.au/referendums/files/pamphlet/your-official-yes-no-referendum-pamphlet.pdf>

<https://www.dca.org.au/topics/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/yes-campaign-resource-hub>

<https://togetheryes.com.au/>