



# 3<sup>RD</sup> INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONFERENCE

14-16 JUNE 2023, CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA



MEDIA RELEASE – 17 June 2023

## Lowitja Institute's international Indigenous conference focus on Truth, Rights, Response

The 3rd Lowitja Institute [International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference](#) this week showcased Indigenous excellence in health research from across Australia, as well as from Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada, Hawaii and the United States.

The conference was held from 14-17 June 2023 in Cairns, on the lands of the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji and Yirrganydji peoples, under the theme: Truth, Rights, Response.

Lowitja Institute CEO Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed said there has been huge interest in the three-day event, with close to 1200 people attending the largest gathering of global and national Indigenous health experts in Australia since before the pandemic.

"We've been overwhelmed by the interest, with the event sold out a month before," Adjunct Professor Mohamed said. "It shows such an appetite for sharing innovative ideas and transformational community-led research that is grounded in our ways of knowing, being and doing, disrupting Western research narratives."

"And it was such an awesome opportunity for our mob and Indigenous health research leaders from across the globe to come together after the COVID-19 pandemic kept us apart," Adjunct Professor Mohamed said.

"We hope all our participants have left it with hope, confidence and a commitment to the reignition of activism".

The conference took place at a watershed moment in Australia's history, with the upcoming Referendum on a Voice shaping many of the discussions on the program.

Professor Tom Calma AO, former Co-Chair – Senior Advisory Group, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice, said it had been important and helpful to hear the perspectives of other nations, "to know we're on the right trajectory" towards Voice, Treaty and Truth.

"The clear message is we need to learn from our past, to know we can create a better future but it will only happen if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a meaningful input into the design of legislation and implementation of programs," he said.

Speakers at the conference included leading global and national Indigenous leaders on Voice, Treaty, Truth-telling, Indigenous data/research sovereignty, decolonisation, nation-building, climate and health, genomics and justice.

The program featured more than 250 presentations of the latest community-led health and wellbeing research in Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Canada, and the US, ranging from important work in cervical cancer screening, kidney care and diabetes, and across the social, cultural and political determinants of health. The evidence and discussions will inform the Lowitja Institute's future research agenda.

The event also featured the presentation of the Lowitja Institute Awards for excellence in research, as well as a rich cultural program, with special guests Thelma Plum, Dan Sultan, Barkaa, and Electric Fields and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

*For media queries and/or to arrange an interview with Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed, please contact Jo Cackett on 0474 727 506 [communications@lowitja.org.au](mailto:communications@lowitja.org.au)*

Please note: excellent photos available upon request