

Referendum: Voice to Parliament

Frequently Asked Questions

What is happening?

On 14 October 2023, Australians registered to vote, will vote in a referendum about whether to change our Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through establishing a 'Voice to Parliament'.

All voters are asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' on voting day.

What is a referendum?

A **federal referendum** is a national vote on a question about whether part of the Constitution should change.

What is the Constitution?

The **Australian Constitution** is a set of rules for the Australian Government.

Only the Australian people can decide if the Constitution should change.

The only way to change the Constitution is with the approval of the Australian people, and the only way to do this is by holding a referendum.

Can this be done without a referendum?

No.

Who can vote in the referendum?

All Australian citizens aged 18 and over must vote.

To be eligible to vote you must be enrolled with the Australian Electoral Committee (AEC). The federal electoral roll closed on 18 September 2023. You can check your enrolment status [here](#).

Have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people been consulted about the referendum?

Yes. Two groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders have been working with the Government on the referendum. These are:

- [First Nations Referendum Working Group](#)
- [First Nations Referendum Engagement Group](#)

The referendum is the result of over a decade of community consultation, parliamentary committee inquiries and expert reports. For more information, read the [timeline of the journey to constitutional recognition](#).

What would the Voice do?

The Voice would be an independent and permanent advisory body. It would give advice to the Australian Parliament and Government on matters that affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This includes issues such as education, health, housing, justice and other policies with a practical impact on First Nations people.

For more information, read the First Nations Referendum Working Group's [design principles for the Voice](#).

Would the Voice be able to create laws or make decisions affecting Australians?

No. Parliament and Government would continue to make decisions on all laws and policies.

However, the Voice could provide advice both proactively and in response to requests by Parliament and Government, and on the development of proposed laws and policies.

The Voice would not manage money, deliver services or be able to stop or policies and laws from being developed.

For more information, you can download this [fact sheet on how the Voice would work](#).

Would the Voice give special rights or special treatment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

No, the Voice would not grant rights on anyone and would not change or take away the rights of anyone who is not Indigenous.

How is the result decided?

For a referendum to pass, a majority of voters need to vote 'yes' nationally, plus a majority of voters in at least 4 out of 6 states. This is known as a double majority.

What is Endeavour Foundation doing?

Shannon Foley, Chief People Officer, is hosting several fact-based conversations aimed at fostering informed and respectful discussions about the 'Voice' referendum. These are called: *'Respectful conversations on the "Voice" referendum'*.

When can I book in for 'Respectful conversations on the "Voice" referendum'?

You can join Shannon at any of the below session times. Simply click on the time and date that suits you.

- [Wednesday 4 October at 12pm in QLD or 1pm in NSW and VIC](#)
- [Friday 6 October at 1pm in QLD or 2pm in NSW and VIC](#)
- [Monday 9 October at 12pm in QLD or 1pm in NSW and VIC](#)
- [Tuesday 10 October at 12pm in QLD or 1pm in NSW and VIC](#)
- [Thursday 12 October at 12pm in QLD or 1pm in NSW and VIC](#)

What will happen in the sessions?

These will be casual online conversations to.

- Engage in respectful conversations about the referendum.
- Provide insights into the referendum, including the reasons for taking place and the specific referendum question.
- Present both sides of the YES | NO campaign to ensure a balanced perspective.
- Ensure everyone has the information they need to make their voice heard.

Are the sessions compulsory?

No. Attending a session is 100% optional.

How long do the sessions go for?

Each session goes for one (1) hour and are not compulsory.

More information?

Please contact peopleexperience@endeavour.com.au if you have any further questions or queries.