

# ACADEMY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE VOICE REFERENDUM

5 April 2023

Australians will soon vote on 'A Proposed Law: To alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice'.

**The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia strongly supports this proposal.**

The Voice is needed and the time is right because of:

1. a long history of social science scholarship demonstrating the harms that have been and continue to be done to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities through political and economic disempowerment and marginalisation;
2. clear evidence of the benefit of inclusive political engagement in promoting wellbeing and reducing inequality and disadvantage, as well as legal and political theory and precedent that informs a clear pathway to enactment of the proposed Constitutional reform;
3. the clear and compelling request from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, including Academy Fellows, to 'walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future'.

Establishing the Voice will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are directly involved in policy decisions that affect them. A 'yes' result in the referendum will ensure that this involvement is enshrined in the Constitution.

The Voice is a critical step in reconciliation and moving forward as a nation.

The Academy will continue to encourage and support an informed national conversation on the Voice by sharing views and insights from Fellows and other leading social scientists to inform and educate people about the issues involved.

The Academy promotes reconciliation through its own activities and in its relations with others. The Academy joined with other Australian Learned Academies through the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) to respond to the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and is committed to respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and perspectives.

Resources and information from Academy Fellows and other experts on the Voice debate can be found [here](#), and more information about the Academy's commitments and actions towards reconciliation is available [here](#).

**The Academy encourages Academy Fellows and all other scholars, professionals, friends and supporters of the social sciences to learn about the issues in the referendum.**