



**Rhodanthe Lipsett Indigenous Midwifery Trust**  
**Strategic Plan 2024-2029**

**Vision**

*To improve lifelong health and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations women, babies and communities through increased access to First Nations midwives; valuing the strength in the cultural and holistic views of our People since time began.*

**Purpose**

*To provide scholarships*

*To advocate for First Nations Midwives and student midwives*

*To inspire and develop the next generation of leadership within the midwifery profession*

**Values**

*We value:*

- 1. The right of First Nations peoples and organisations to be self-determining.*
- 2. Our cultures, as the essence and foundation to the work of the board.*
- 3. Collaboration through responsible actions, honest relationships and mutual respect.*

## **Our story**

In 1996, the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) established a scholarship fund for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who wished to study to become midwives. In 2009, the Trust was named 'The Rhodanthe Lipsett Indigenous Midwifery Trust,' in honour of the midwife and longstanding ACM member, Professor Rhodanthe Lipsett OAM, whose idea it first was to create such a trust. In late 2011, the Trust was established as a separate entity, incorporated and subsequently registered as a Charitable Fund.

The Trust disperses scholarships from the Fund, derived from capital accrued funds as well as donations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women wanting to become midwives. The scholarships from this fund will go towards some of the costs incurred when undertaking studies, which may not be covered by other funding options.

Today, the Rhodanthe Lipsett Indigenous Midwifery Charitable Fund is governed by a board of First Nations Midwives.

More information on the Trust can be found here: <https://indigenousmidwives.org.au/>

## **Living Our Values**

The Rhodanthe Lipsett Indigenous Midwifery Charitable Trust operates and works under a belief that all First Nations people have the right to govern their lives through the values and beliefs, that are intricately created through a series of practices, learnings and principals. This is formed through exposure from collective groups, identities, language groups, familial alliances and communities, each of which inspire and shape a person's identity. We align our core values and beliefs alongside the similar attitudes, behaviours, intentions and thoughts, to best support the midwifery workforce to its strength and advantage. Our work is the embodiment and reflection of the people at the core of our work that which are the First Nations communities, in which midwives that receive our scholarships, service and support.

## Rights to Self-Determination

The Rhodanthe Lipsett Indigenous Midwifery Charitable Trust is an advocate for the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People and supports that this is an essential framework that embodies the fundamental freedoms of the women, birthing people and communities that midwives support.

We believe that First Nations people have the right to participate and determine in all aspects of organisation and decision-making that affect us. We believe every person has the right to self-determine their own health including the incorporation of their cultural values and beliefs, respect and protection of their cultural practices and rightful access to equal, fair and non-discriminatory care and support.

We believe in the recognition of different identities and support control and equal participation in the ongoing health, social, economic and cultural growth of First Nations peoples.

You can read more about the framework here: [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples | Australian Human Rights Commission](#).

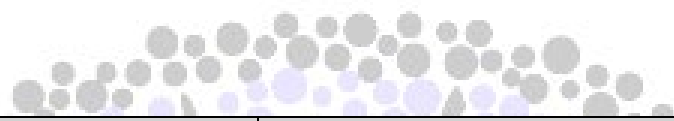
## Organisational Goals

GOALS	SHORT TERM (Annually)	MEDIUM TERM (3 Years)	LONG TERM (5 years)
<b>1. SCHOLARSHIP PROVISION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide ten \$5k Category A Scholarships for midwifery students each year.</li> <li>2. Provide five \$1k Category B Scholarships for practicing midwives undertaking professional development.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To establish a Category C for graduate midwives to undertake honours, endorsement, or other post graduate study, up to the value of \$30k.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have the ability to provide scholarships to students for the full length of their degree (three years).</li> </ol>
<b>MEASURABLE TARGET:</b>	<p>Secure annual funding of \$55,000 for category A and Category B scholarships.</p> <p>Regular review and improvement of scholarship processes.</p>	<p>Secure annual funding of \$30k for a category C scholarship.</p> <p>Securing long-term and/or recurring funding commitment from partnerships.</p>	<p>Secure a 3-year commitment of funding for supporting category A scholarship recipients for their full degree (\$15k each over 3 years).</p> <p>Ensuring we have allocated the number of scholarships available.</p>
<b>2. ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To ensure presence at local, national, and international midwifery conferences and events.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To establish presence as a leader and advocate for First Nations Midwifery in Australia.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced the profile for RL</li> <li>2. To form a peak body for First Nations Midwifery in Australia.</li> <li>3. To establish a mentoring program and support pathways to employment through the peak body role.</li> </ol>



GOALS	SHORT TERM (Annually)	MEDIUM TERM (3 Years)	LONG TERM (5 years)
<b>MEASURABLE TARGET:</b>	<p>Annual presence at one National midwifery conference/event and one state/territory midwifery conference/event each year, to raise awareness and fundraise.</p> <p>Support and engage student midwives and midwives through various methods including professional networks, social media, in-person engagements</p>	<p>Have a first Nations midwife representative on the Australian College of Midwives board.</p> <p>Inform best practice on First Nations midwifery through participation topics such as: workforce, recruitment &amp; retention, education, practice, policy, research.</p> <p>Provide leadership and development opportunities.</p>	<p>Record keeping on the number and types of involvement in professional networks, peak bodies, conference, public speaking, and external advisory and action committees and other promotional activities enhancing the profile for RL.</p> <p>Agreed MOU with universities and midwifery peak bodies to establish a mentoring program.</p>
<b>3. SUSTAINABILITY AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To actively build and maintain relationships with current funding partners.</li> <li>2. To identify and seek to build relationships with potential new funding partners</li> <li>3. To ensure financial sustainability for administrative processes including project officer role.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate best practice governance and administration.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To establish a long-term relationship with a funding partner with the means and desire to support the scholarships program over a sustained period of 3 to 5 years.</li> <li>2. To evaluate RL scholarship program through a comprehensive evaluation framework to assist future aspirations.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have the financial ability to fund student midwives for the full length of their degree (3 years) through long-term commitment.</li> <li>2. Rebranding and restructure of RL to better service and profile First Nations midwifery, ensuring a First Nations-led model.</li> </ol>





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<b>MEASURABLE TARGET:</b>	Regular contact with existing partnerships.  Increase funding base through enhancing current partnerships, increase donations & fundraising opportunities.	Establish an agreed partnership contract with 1 major sponsor, with a length of commitment more than 3 years.  Have completed a published evaluation of RL scholarship program.	Operating the Trust under “First Nations Midwifery Australia”.  A new website is established and promotes us as a leader and advocate for First Nations midwifery.  Established collaboration through local, national, and international networks.

