

# VALS submission guide for the inquiry into racism, hate and violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

## What is happening?

The Commonwealth Parliament has opened an inquiry into racism, hate and violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. VALS has created a [submission template](#) to give community more information about providing a submission to the inquiry.

This template is intended for use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who wish to make a submission. Non-Aboriginal allies can use [templates developed by Call it Out](#).

## Important things to know:

- The closing date for submissions is 1 May 2026, but the inquiry *may* accept submissions up until 1 June 2026.
- You can make a submission by:
  - Writing it down
  - Recording a video or audio recording
  - Making artwork
  - In photos
- Submissions will usually be made public unless you tell the inquiry that you want it to be confidential.
  - A good rule of thumb is to include information that you feel comfortable sharing. If you're not sure, you can call VALS and have a chat with us.
- When your submission is finalised, you can email your submission to [rhvinquiry@aph.gov.au](mailto:rhvinquiry@aph.gov.au)

## What should a submission say?

There is no right or wrong things to say in a submission. Mob know their experiences, and we know what needs to change to make a difference.

A submission can contain facts, experiences, opinions, and recommendations.

If you're unsure, or you want to yarn with VALS, call us on 1800 064 865. We can hear you out, give you information, help you write your submission, or we can include your story in VALS submission to the inquiry.



You might like to write about:

- Your experiences of racism, how racism impacts community, what racism looks like, or how it makes you feel
- Good practice – what have you seen that works so far?
- Recommendations for what you think the government could be doing differently

The inquiry has published Terms of Reference for what they would like people to speak about. **The Terms of Reference are:**

1. The nature, prevalence and impact of racism, hate and violence towards First Nations people, including trends over time.
2. The effect of online platforms on the reach, prominence and harm caused by racism and hate directed at First Nations people.
3. Initiatives that are effective in combating racism targeted at First Nations people and reduce individual and collective harm.
4. The threat posed by ideologically motivated extremism towards First Nations people and the role of intelligence and law enforcement agencies in protecting the community from that threat.
5. The effectiveness of avenues for reporting and responding to racism against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including the consistency, timeliness and appropriateness of outcomes across jurisdictions and institutions.
6. Other matters related to racism, hatred and violence directed at First Nations people.

