



Have your say for your community – Yamatji on Country returns for 2023

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Mr Peter Windie, YMAC Chairperson –Yamatji Regional Committee

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation’s annual Yamatji on Country returns to Geraldton on Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 September 2023. The significant two-day event is an important time for First Nations people across the Mid-West, Murchison and Gascoyne to come together and have a say on issues important to their communities, build relationships, and engage collectively with government.

The event is taking place at Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation and on Day 1 includes an evening program with a bushtucker meal and an entertainment lineup of First Nations’ performers from the Yamatji region.

Mr Peter Windie, YMAC Co-Chairperson –Yamatji Region, said the aim of Yamatji on Country, is for community to come together and become a strong regional voice for change for First Nations people across the region.

“This year’s meeting will focus on presentations and discussion on cultural heritage protection and the Voice referendum, and with a follow-up on the Call to Action from the 2022 Yamatji on Country meeting. We want to progress discussions on solutions to issues impacting Aboriginal people in our communities.

“The event format provides opportunity for everyone to have a say on solution-based responses that are then presented to State, Local and Federal Government guests when they attend on Day 2 of the event.”



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After an overwhelmingly positive response to their contribution to the 2022 event, an exciting component of the 2023 Yamatji on Country is the return involvement of students from the region.

"The youth in our communities -- our future – are also actively contributing to the conversation. This year we have five schools participating, including students travelling specifically for the event from Carnarvon Community College. I am really looking forward to hearing their concerns and possible solutions through the speeches and presentations they have worked on. I am also looking forward to the performances by senior and primary students," said Mr Windie.

YMAC has partnered with the Aboriginal Health Council of WA to work with the students in a series of workshops with their Young Leaders program in the lead up to Yamatji on Country, enabling them to become strong advocates and develop their leadership skills.

Mr Windie encouraged people to attend Yamatji on Country, stating. "It's a chance to have your say on things affecting us all with key policy decision-makers present to listen to what we want to see improve in our communities."

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs the Hon Tony Buti MLA, Australian Greens Senator for Western Australia Dorinda Cox, Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs the Hon Mia Davies MLA and Member for Geraldton Ms Lara Dalton MLA are amongst the government guests invited to attend and join the conversation.

Day 1 keynote speakers include the Federal Government Referendum Working Group member Mr Thomas Mayo presenting on The Voice to Parliament, and Western Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People, Ms Jacqueline McGowan-Jones. Ms McGowan-Jones is travelling to the event specifically to hear from young people and attend a luncheon with them to discuss youth issues.

Yamatji On Country will be held on Eastward Road, Geraldton at Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation.

Lunch is provided on both days. Attendees are also welcome to attend a Community Breakfast from 8am on Day 2.

Event updates and further details including program overview can be found at www.ymac.org.au

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All quotes to be attributed to Mr Peter Windie, Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region, Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation.

Images from 2022 event are also available.



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Day one is a closed event. Media attendance on Day 2 is by invitation only.

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Pronunciation Guide:

Yamatji – Yam-aht-gee; **Marlpa** – Marl-pah; **Bundiyarra** – Bun-dee-ya-rah

About Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is the Native Title Representative Body (NTRB), delivering native title and other services across the Pilbara, Mid West, Murchison and Gascoyne regions of Western Australia. YMAC is run by a First Nations board of directors, representing several native title groups, each of whom have their own language, culture, traditions and protocols. YMAC services include native title claim and future act representation; heritage services; executive office, community, and economic development assistance; land administration, and natural resource management support.
