Labor Will Establish NT as World’s Premier Destination For Indigenous Art and Culture

Opposition Leader Michael Gunner today announced that a Territory Labor Government will develop the Northern Territory into world’s premier destination to experience Indigenous arts and culture, beginning with a commitment to creating Australia’s iconic National Indigenous Art Gallery in Alice Springs.

"Labor will develop Alice Springs as Australia’s inland capital,” Mr Gunner said.

"An iconic National Indigenous Art gallery is part of that plan. When people arrive in Australia they will know that to experience indigenous art and to see firsthand the skills, knowledge and culture of Australia’s indigenous people they will need to come to Alice Springs and the Northern Territory.

"Labor will engage with the Alice Springs and Central Australian community, particularly indigenous people and their representatives in the design and development of this project.

"We will also engage with other national galleries, major national companies and the Australian government to ensure we are maximizing input from across the country.

"In addition to a National Indigenous Art Gallery in Alice Springs, we will develop a significant Indigenous Arts Trail right across the Territory. Labor will work with the people of Tennant Creek, Katherine and East Arnhem Land to ensure those communities are properly linked to this trail.

"We will work with established galleries in indigenous communities to ensure that visitors to the Territory know that some of the world’s best art is on the shelves of some of the Territories remote communities. These projects will be linked and form an Indigenous Art trail across the Territory.

"We will have a grants program that will allow art galleries in communities to upgrade their facilities, their back of house production areas, put in dining areas and café and improve their displays.

"Indigenous art centers are important centers of knowledge which intrinsically link language, law, land and culture through a rich and long history of art. These centers are integral to sharing and preserving that history while providing significant economic leverage."
“These undertakings will increase tourism, create and support hundreds jobs during the construction phase and brings added attention to smaller, private or community owned galleries and galleries based in communities as part of a Territory wide promotion.

“Territory Labor’s vision will strengthen our local economy as more visitors around the country and around the world decide to choose the NT as the premier place to visit to experience one of the world’s oldest cultures.”

Michael Gunner indicated strong support from a future Labor Government for the development of a National Indigenous Cultural Centre based in Alice Springs.

“I am aware of the enormous work already put into this project by an Indigenous led group of Centralians and I am happy to back that work,” Mr Gunner said.

"In Government Labor will assist with the consultations around this National Cultural Centre, we will provide legal and financial advice where required and we will ensure that the iconic National Indigenous Art Gallery and the National Indigenous Culture Centre are linked and developed cooperatively.”

Michael Gunner said Labor would spend the first three years of its first term getting the details around the National Indigenous Art Gallery right, including site, design, contributions from across Australia and connection to other facilities.

“I expect the construction to be getting underway by 2020,” Mr Gunner said.

“Labor will commit $100 million to getting the capital works in place to develop the stage one of this National Indigenous Arts Trail.

“Those capital funds will get the National Indigenous Art Gallery in Alice Springs built, make a financial contribution to the National Indigenous Cultural Centre and get work started in regional centers.”

Media Contact: Gino Luglietti 0401 119 794