

Position Description Form			
Position Title:	Principal Lawyer / Special Counsel	Location:	Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Canberra
Reports To:	CEO	Direct Reports	3-4

Role Purpose

The Principal Lawyer / Special Counsel is a key member of the Senior Executive team at the National Native Title Council (NNTC), providing strategic leadership and advice on legal matters. The role is responsible for shaping and delivering legal strategy, leading legislative and policy reform, and working directly with NNTC members and stakeholders to coordinate effective legal strategies.

The Principal Lawyer / Special Counsel has extensive legal experience in related field and can provide leadership and authoritative advice to and represent the NNTC at senior-level meetings, forums, conferences and other key engagements.

The role builds on strategic partnerships with sector stakeholders and will maintain trusted relationships with the NNTC's Board and members to ensure the NNTC's strategic objectives are implemented into organisational decision-making and projects.

Who We Are

The National Native Title Council (NNTC) is the peak body representing and advocating for Traditional Owners and the native title sector across Australia. We champion our members' rights through advocacy, leadership and skill-building. We have more than 135 members and convene the First Nations Heritage Protection Alliance, the Sea Country Alliance and contribute to the First Nations Economic Empowerment Alliance.

We support First Nations peoples' right to true self-determination – their right to speak for and manage their own Country through their own organisations, to govern their own communities, to participate fully in decision-making and to self-determine their own social and economic development.

www.nntc.com.au

The position could be based in any of the NNTC offices: Perth (main office), Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra.

Typical Duties & Responsibilities

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Duties and responsibilities	• Provide strategic leadership of NNTC's legal function, including team development, governance, policies and professional standards. • Deliver authoritative legal and policy advice on complex native title matters, leading submissions, briefings and position statements on legislative reform. • Act as trusted legal adviser to the Board, CEO and Senior Executive Leadership Team on legal risk, governance and strategic matters. • Provide strategic oversight of NNTC's litigation involvement and manage external legal service providers to ensure value and alignment with organisational objectives. • Working with the Executive Team to forward plan the NNTC's legal and policy programs, setting clear and project objectives, and developing a program of work. • Build and maintain influential relationships across the native title sector, including members, government agencies and professional bodies.



	• Represent NNTC at external forums and national policy discussions, advocating for members on native title law and reform. • As a member of the Senior Executive Leadership Team, contribute legal and policy perspective to organisational strategy, culture and performance. • Oversee legal function budgets and identify strategic funding opportunities to strengthen NNTC's legal, policy and advocacy capability.
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Qualifications and Experience

Qualifications/ Licenses	• Admission as a legal practitioner in Australia (current practising certificate), typically 10+ years post-admission experience
Experience	• Substantial experience in native title law, land rights, or a closely related area of First Nations legal practice. • Demonstrated experience providing strategic legal advice at a senior or executive level. • Track record advising on legal strategy in significant matters where outcomes affect a group or collective. • Experience coordinating legal work or legal policy matters across jurisdictions, membership groups or network. • Demonstrated high level partnerships with a range of stakeholders including Government
Skills/ Ability & Knowledge	• Extensive native title knowledge, including legislation, agreement-making, policy and procedures. • Strong knowledge of relevant Federal and State government laws and processes. • Excellent written communication and verbal communication across a range of audiences. • Demonstrated project and case management skills, including balancing priorities, time management and a proactive approach to project design and implementation. • Strong legal analytical skills, including sound judgement in fast-moving environments.

Core Expectations – Individuals

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Respectful engagement	• Respectfully engage, communicate with, and deeply listen to our members, the NNTC team and external partners and act with the highest standards of professionalism.
Cultural authority	• Value the knowledge, expertise and cultural authority of our members, and place the aspirations of our members at the forefront of our work.
Manages expectations	• Work actively to ground our work with the needs and expectations of members.
Integrity	• Respect the integrity of the work we do and the impact it has.
Diversity	• Value the diversity of skills and experiences within the NNTC team.

Cultural safety	• Create a safe, supportive and caring workplace that facilitates candid and challenging ideas.
Achievements	• Get stuff done! Achieve results by meeting goals and timelines.
Collaboration and transparency	• Share information across the NNTC team, fostering participation in decision-making
Technical skills	• Demonstrate technical skills and support others with these skills.