



## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

### **New Study Highlights Importance of Indigenous Football Netball Club**

A groundbreaking study has revealed the profound impact the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club (FNC) has on promoting social and emotional wellbeing for its Indigenous members and the wider community.

The research project, conducted in collaboration with Kaiela Institute, Rumbalara Football Netball Club, the University of Melbourne, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Orygen Centre for Youth Mental Health, and funded by VicHealth, aimed to determine how involvement in the club benefits members' wellbeing, connectedness, resilience and interactions with mainstream systems like employment and education.

"Nearly 98% of Indigenous respondents reported that Rumbalara FNC is vitally important for affirming cultural identity, supporting community connection and cultural expression, combating racism, and providing positive role models and leadership opportunities," said Paul Briggs AO, Executive Chairperson, Kaiela Institute. "Activities like the Algabonyah Employment Program, Homework Club, Parents Next program, leadership and mentoring were particularly valued."

Associate Professor Rachel Reilly added, "The results showcase how Indigenous-led initiatives can empower communities by nurturing cultural pride and creating support networks."

The study also explored attitudes of non-Indigenous people towards the club, highlighting their reflections of racism as well as respectful appreciation of Indigenous culture and history. It also revealed the levels of respect and value, non-Indigenous people feel towards the club.

"An overwhelming 83.4% of non-member respondents expressed support for Rumbalara FNC," Beck Dean, Executive Officer of the Rumbalara Football Netball Club stated. "This highlights the club's role in bringing people together, building cultural respect and integration, and promoting mutual understanding across cultures."

Based on the findings, researchers have provided key recommendations to help Rumbalara FNC continue supporting its members and support the governing bodies of Football and Netball tackle racism in the region.

"Clubs like ours play a vital role in building knowledge and nurturing resilient, connected Indigenous communities," Josh Atkinson, President of the Rumbalara Football Netball Club commented. "By embracing Indigenous culture while breaking down barriers, clubs like Rumbalara FNC are paving the way for a more inclusive future region for all Australians."

The full report is available on the Kaiela Institute website, shining further light on the transformative impact of Indigenous-led sporting organisations.

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L-R: Assoc. Professor Rachel Reilly, Christina Ponting, Paul Briggs AO, Josh Atkinson, Dr. Tui Crumpen, Dr. Sandro Demaio, Shani Crumpen.  
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