

Possum Skin Cloak

How the cloak was created:

This cloak was designed by Indigenous AFL & AFLW Players, AFL Staff & AFL Club representatives during the 2022 Indigenous and Multicultural players summit on Wadawurrung Country in Ocean Grove, Victoria. Aunty Lisa Couzens, a Gunditjmara Kerray Woorroong woman, led a possum skin cloak workshop. During this workshop, she collaborated with players and staff to create a design that symbolised both their club and their role in the football industry. All 18 clubs created a design that would be burnt onto a possum pelt, they were then able to take the designed pelt back with them to their respective clubs. These exact same designs were replicated onto another set of pelts and thus stitched together creating this collaboratively designed cloak.

The cloak is available for those who participated to access cultural and healing practices, such as but not limited to.

- Welcome Ceremonies
- Healing practices
- Cultural celebrations
- Grieving practices
- Community Ceremonies
- Milestone events

How the Cloak supports SECWB?

This cloak represents the coming together of all 18 clubs and cultures. It acts as a physical symbol that strengthens the connection between the clubs and the wider football community. For the players and staff that participated in its creation, the cloak bears their journeys, people, places, and stories. This practice follows in the footsteps of ancestors past and allows for the continuation of culture and story to future generations.

Historically, the cloak provides warmth and protection, essential for survival in harsh environments. Beyond its practical functions, the cloak carries profound spiritual and emotional significance as wearing the cloak instills a connection with the old people, land, and culture. It strengthens the feeling of belonging and identity of the wearer.

The process of making the cloak is one of reflection and therapy. It brings together community participation, strengthening individual bonds and interclub relationships. Through shared craft and storytelling, the cloak is formed.