



# inala wangarra

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## Submission to Finance and Public Administration References Committee regarding the Commonwealth Indigenous Advancement Strategy tendering process

Inala Wangarra provides this submission to express our concerns regarding the Commonwealth Indigenous Advancement Strategy tendering process and the detrimental impact this will have upon Indigenous peoples within our region. Inala Wangarra is an Indigenous community controlled organization situated on the land of the Yuggera peoples and services one of the largest urban Indigenous populations in Brisbane; encompassing the suburb of Inala and the broader south-west corridor between Logan and Ipswich.

Within this submission, there will be frequent use of the term 'Indigenous' to describe both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a broad category of identity. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise of two culturally distinctive groups and use of the term 'Indigenous' is to primarily to avoid repeating the more accurate but longer title.

### Background

Established in 2003, Inala Wangarra was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld, 1981) as an Indigenous community development association. The organization works collaboratively with our community and government and non-government partners to facilitate the transparent and accountable delivery of quality sport, recreation, employment, training, justice, community development, cultural and arts programs. Inala Wangarra is committed to strengthening Indigenous educational and business knowledge, skills and capacity to enhance competitiveness for employment, participation in social and cultural activities and economic and social enterprise development. As outlined in Inala Wangarra's Strategic Plan 2010-2015, our strengths based approach embraces people, regardless of their cultural, social and economic background, to discover their own strengths and resources within themselves to bring about real change in their lives, their families and their community.

The community of Inala serviced by Inala Wangarra includes residents of Inala and surrounding suburbs, however we acknowledge that "Inala mob" commonly include residents who live within the broader region who have retained strong ties to our community. The immediate geographical area in which Inala Wangarra is located is home for over 1500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which represent 7.5% of the total population. Both the size and proportion of the community is significantly higher when compared to the Greater Brisbane population (Qld Government, 2015). We note that when compared to the Indigenous population of greater Brisbane and the local non-Indigenous population, our community experiences significantly higher rates of unemployment, over-crowding, poverty, are more likely to comprise of single-parent households and jobless families, and are less likely to be engaged in study or training, or have completed year 12, have internet access, or attained home ownership. Over 50% of our population is under the age of 24 years and over 51% of housing available is owned by the government (Qld Government, 2015). Under the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) identifier, Inala is receives a rank of number 2 for the Greater Brisbane region (ABS, 2013).

Despite these challenges, Inala Wangarra has been the key driver and facilitator of Indigenous community programming in the region through our strength-based, collaborative approach to community service delivery. Through Inala Wangarra's strong governance principles, we have always met our contractual obligations with funding providers from all levels of government and mainstream non-government



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agencies. Inala Wangarra has always engaged, employed and upskilled local Indigenous people from across the region as program participants and as key staff. The staff and Board members are predominantly local Indigenous community members, some of which have gained national prominence in their respective fields, and have the capacity to respond innovatively to emerging trends in the community in a timely manner, as well as navigate the dynamics of service delivery in an urban Indigenous setting. The Board has instituted good governance practices both financially and culturally (Bond & Brady, 2013) and the organization enjoys a strong reputation in our region and beyond. Inala Wangarra is the leading Indigenous agency within our region and is a key employer of Indigenous peoples as well as the key agency for brokering employment opportunities for hundreds of our community members.

Inala Wangarra currently coordinates key services and programs within our region which include:

- Community Justice Group and Indigenous Sentencing Court
- West Inala Junior Rugby League
- Stylin Up program and other key cultural programs (Welcome babies to Country, Rites of Passage ball, Traditional Dance program)
- Indigenous men's and women's groups
- Inala Indigenous Interagency Network

Inala Wangarra's Indigenous Advancement Strategy application, The Driving Force, aimed to develop a culturally safe driving school that would respond specifically to the socioeconomic disadvantage experienced within our community drawing upon a social enterprise model of service delivery and embedding it within existing services within the community.

The Driving Force initiative aimed to:

1. Remove a practical barrier for Indigenous people accessing and obtaining employment;
2. Reduce Indigenous interactions with the justice system for unlicensed driving offences;
3. Market the service as a mainstream business to generate sustained financial investment;
4. Increase license ownership and road safety awareness amongst Indigenous people.

In our application, Inala Wangarra offered a suite of scaffolding services that would supplement the driving school with an investment of over \$800,000 from external sources, a decreasing budget over 3 years because of the projected sustainability of the service delivery model, and deliver on critical *Close the Gap* outcomes.

Inala Wangarra was not successful in receiving any funding from the Commonwealth under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. As of 1 July 2015, Inala Wangarra will not receive any funding from the Federal Government, which is the first time this has occurred since the organization's incorporation. Under this arrangement, Inala Wangarra will no longer be resourced to run its Indigenous Women's Program or Community Engagement Program, the effects of which are compounded by the fact that no new funding has been awarded. The withdrawal of all Federal investment to our region has led to the loss of 30% of the organization's income thus requiring the Board to review the organization's ability to continue to trade. The closure of Inala Wangarra will lead to the withdrawal of other critical services currently provided to the Indigenous communities within our region.



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## Tendering Process Issues

### PRE TENDERPROCESS

The Indigenous Advancement Strategy offered the rhetoric of working with Indigenous communities but failed, from the onset, to engage Indigenous communities and organizations operating at the coalface of service delivery. There wasn't a consultation process that offered Indigenous people the opportunity to participate in the development of the new reforms in Indigenous policy. The new reforms represented a 'top-down' approach which has proven to be ineffective in improving outcomes for Indigenous peoples. The merging of such vast and diverse Indigenous funding programs into five streams failed to account for regionally-specific needs and aspirations of Indigenous people across the country in urban, rural and remote locations. The merging of these funding programs into one tender process also positioned small, locally autonomous Indigenous community controlled organisations up against government departments, large mainstream not-for-profit associations and the university sector, who are better resourced to offer more competitive tenders. Evidence of this inequitable process is demonstrated in the funding outcomes of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy whereby less than 25% of organisations funded for Indigenous-specific initiatives were actually Indigenous led/run organisations.

The community information sessions delivered by representatives from the local Prime Minister and Cabinet office at Wandarrah Pre-school and Community Centre, Inala on Tuesday 2 September 2014 offered what can best be described as misleading information. Those in attendance were led to believe that the Indigenous Advancement Strategy favoured Indigenous community-driven initiatives. At the session, Inala Wangarra's Chief Executive Officer raised concerns about the competitive nature of the tender but was advised that the department expected larger organisations to be in contact with locally situated organisations to develop joint tender applications. To date, Inala Wangarra has not received any contact from other organisations regarding partnerships under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Further evidence that highlights policy and outcomes division can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions attached. The highlighted question was posed by Inala Wangarra during the information session and emphasizes the concerns of the smaller Indigenous community controlled sector in competition with larger organisations. As you can see from the response, community organisations were to fare better because of their position within an Indigenous community. As the largest employer of Indigenous people in the local community sector, Inala Wangarra's unsuccessful application suggests that this information was deceptive.

The information disseminated prior to the tendering process also positioned the Indigenous Advancement Strategy as an opportunity for organisations to develop programs that creatively and innovatively addressed Indigenous disadvantage. However, recent feedback from organisations that were successful suggests that funding has gone to existing programs. Likewise, when Inala Wangarra received advice that our application was unsuccessful, we were told that we should have applied for the currently funded Indigenous Advancement Strategy program. If this had been the intention all along, Inala Wangarra would not have invested so much time, resources and energy to develop an original and innovative concept while balancing the needs of the community against the parameters of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.



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## TENDERING PROCESS

As a small not for profit organisation, Inala Wangarra is always challenged by having to be the most resourceful, with the least resources. The Indigenous Advancement Strategy tender process was opened on 8 September 2014 and we had 4 weeks to complete our application but later advised that the due date had been delayed for another week. We were advised that the outcomes would be announced by November 2014, with a view that programs would commence 1 January 2015. The information distributed by department representatives and that of the Minister were not consistent (email PM&C Officer , 1 Sept 2014 and Australian Government, Sept 2014). Inala Wangarra did not receive advice until 23 November 2014 that the outcomes would be delayed until March 2015. The delay in the announcement of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy was confounding for two reasons.

Firstly, as an organisation that attracts around \$600,000 per year in total, Inala Wangarra is limited in supplementing services when delays occur. The impact of this delay on staff, Board members and Indigenous community members is huge and creates uncertainty, is demoralizing and affects productivity. This is not the kind of culture that inspires change and faith in funding providers. As a result of this delayed funding process, Inala Wangarra has effectively been operating in a zone of uncertainty from the first announcement of changes to the Indigenous Affairs portfolio on 14 January 2014 to 5 March 2015 more than 14 months later.

Secondly, the attached Media Release on Monday 24 November 2014 suggests that the delay was unavoidable given that applications from Indigenous organisations were non-compliant. This statement is concerning for us as an Indigenous organisation and trades of old imaginings of Indigenous capabilities and poor governance (Bond, 2015). Given non-Indigenous organisations and agencies tendered for the funding, we are at a loss to understand how delays in governmental processes could be attributed to the incompetence of Indigenous organisations. Inala Wangarra received a generic email to all applicants which suggested we ensure that the department had received our application in its entirety; however there was no suggestion that our application was incomplete.

The statements made by the Minister for Indigenous Affairs with regards to the delay and the outcome, highlights the inequality in the Indigenous Advancement Strategy process. While undoubtedly a competitive tender process, it seems that organisations that benefitted most were not organisations that are providing critical services and delivering outcomes to Indigenous communities most in need, but instead were awarded to organisations who had the existing financial and human capital to contribute to this confused tender process. This outcome undermines the value of Indigenous owned and community driven organisations, like Inala Wangarra, who cannot compete against government, university and the large not-for-profits. While these agencies may appear to be 'low-risk', they lack accountability to Indigenous communities they service purely because they are not embedded in the community landscape. Within the region Inala Wangarra services, we have seen the multitude of larger organisations struggle to engage Indigenous people. It is those larger organisations that then approach Inala Wangarra to broker our services and leverage off our programs to meet the Key Performance Indicators of their funding. It is this disproportion of policy versus reality that requires Indigenous community controlled organisations to run the risk of over-extending itself without the suitable resources required to manage the operational demands of the business. What is particularly startling for us as an Indigenous community controlled organisation is that we exist, primarily because mainstream services are not offering high quality, culturally appropriate and accessible service provision across a range of critical areas including health,



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education, employment and training, housing etc. We are thus, somewhat bemused that Indigenous-specific funding would largely be awarded to these same mainstream services which have clearly failed in addressing Indigenous advancement as part of their core business.

## POST TENDER PROCESS

On Thursday 5 March 2015, Inala Wangarra requested feedback following the official notification of our unsuccessful application. To date, Inala Wangarra has received three emails from the department to confirm that feedback would be provided but as yet, has not actually received any feedback. The responses from the department have indicated that there has been a high volume of enquiries and that our feedback remains a priority. This in itself demonstrates the chaotic nature of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy if unsuccessful applicants are required to wait over a month to receive feedback. It suggests that the department remains nonchalant to Indigenous community organisations and to good client service.

Having not received any feedback, Inala Wangarra is left to question the integrity of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. If viewed in collaboration with the funding guidelines and criteria, Inala Wangarra's application demonstrated:

- Strong governance through examples of Board stability and credentials, robust Constitutional guidelines and consistent nominations for Reconciliation Australia Governance Award;
- Indigenous community driven initiatives through the engagement of Indigenous people who make up 82.35% of staff and Board and represent 10 of the larger Indigenous family groups in this area or our service delivery model which requires a community steering committee to plan and deliver activities;
- Indigenous employment which was referenced by the 450 Indigenous people we hire each year to as community facilitators of our activities;
- Evidential need which was demonstrated through the Indigenous unemployment rate for this region being 28% or the 23 times per week Indigenous people are charged with a traffic related offence;
- Capacity to deliver above and beyond Key Performance Indicators through examples like our pilot employment program. The program achieved 88 Indigenous people into employment in 12 months, 60% of whom had been unemployed for 6 months or more, with a 92% retention rate past 13 weeks;
- Ability to maintain contractual funding obligations as referenced by the 41 Funding Agreements we serviced in 2014 and the 24 Partnership Agreements we auspice for other community groups;
- Solid partnerships with other service providers that was documented in the 15 support letters we provided;
- Value for money with the program equating to approximately \$55 per Indigenous person which is 190 times less than what the government spends on job search allowance participants.

The unsuccessful outcome of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy for Inala Wangarra means that the Board must re-evaluate the continued operation of the organisation. The loss of 30% of our annual budget is significant and the organisation cannot operate in a zone of financial distress. The closure of Inala Wangarra will impact the Indigenous community within this region for the following reasons:



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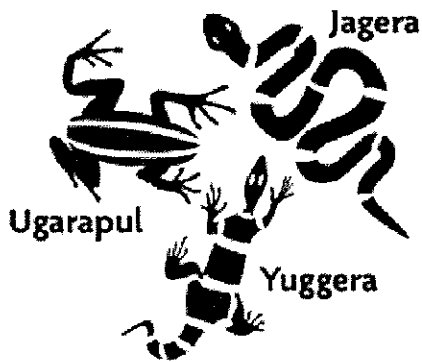
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- Loss of critical frontline services such as the Community Justice Group, Indigenous Sentencing Court and West Inala Junior Rugby League Football Club;
- Loss of jobs and Indigenous community engagement with the redundancy of seven program officers and three trainees (eight of whom are local Indigenous people);
- Irreparable gaps in the community as Inala Wangarra will no longer be the conduit for Indigenous people to access other services such as housing, health and Sorry Business or for services to engage Indigenous people;
- Loss of significant life changing outcomes like those described in the attached The Driving Force concept.

While Inala Wangarra is working hard to ensure our doors remain open, the reality is that without suitable resourcing the organisation remains on shaky ground. What is most confounding for us, is that the new reforms of Indigenous advancement for our community has resulting in \$0 financial investment which will have the flow on effect of causing the closure of our organisation and other critical services we provide. We are bemused that the lead Indigenous organisation with a proven track record in good governance and service delivery in a region which boasts one of the largest Indigenous communities, and who experience the most profound disadvantage (when compared with both Indigenous people across Brisbane and non-Indigenous people within our region) cannot be advanced under this strategy.

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# *Locating Indigenous Australia within Community Development Practice – clients, consumers or change makers?*

*Chelsea Bond and Klara Brady*

## **Bond, Chelsea**

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Board Member, Inala Wangarra Inc.*

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*We are asking those groups most marginal in society to be most resourceful. Participation and self-government make demands on people's available time and require a great deal of self-discipline. It is therefore necessary to identify those processes which may provide communities with the necessary tools and prerequisite learning to enable their participation in their own development. (Ramirez 1990:131)*

## **Introduction**

The philosophical promise of community development to “resource and empower people so that they can collectively control their own destinies” (Kenny 1996:104) is no doubt alluring to Indigenous Australia. Given the historical and contemporary experiences of colonial control and surveillance of Aboriginal bodies, alongside the continuing experiences of socio-economic disadvantage, community development reaffirms the aspirational goal of Indigenous Australians for self-determination. Self-determination as a national policy agenda for Indigenous Australians emerged in the 1970s and saw the establishment of a wide range of Aboriginal community-controlled services (Tsey et al 2012). Sullivan (2010:4) argues that the Aboriginal community controlled service sector during this time has, and continues to be, instrumental to advancing the plight of Indigenous Australians both materially and politically. Yet community development and self-

determination remain highly problematic and contested in how they manifest in Indigenous social policy agendas and in practice (Hollinsworth 1996; Martin 2003; McCausland 2005; Moreton-Robinson 2009). Moreton-Robinson (2009:68) argues that a central theme underpinning these tensions is a reading of Indigeneity in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, behaviours, cultures, and communities are pathologised as “dysfunctional” thus enabling assertions that Indigenous people are incapable of managing their own affairs. This discourse distracts us from the “strategies and tactics of patriarchal white sovereignty” that inhibit the “state’s earlier policy of self-determination” (Moreton-Robinson 2009:68). We acknowledge the irony of community development espoused by Ramirez above (1990), that the least resourced are expected to be most resourceful; however, we wish to interrogate the processes that inhibit Indigenous participation and control of our own affairs rather than further interrogate Aboriginal minds as uneducated, incapable and/or impaired.

This paper specifically examines these tensions in practice from the perspective of a small Indigenous community development organisation, Inala Wangarra, which is located in Inala, an outer-western suburb of Brisbane. Home of the Jagera people, Inala has also become home for a large number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from other areas and represents one of the largest Indigenous communities in south-east Queensland since its establishment in the 1950s. Inala is also among the most socio-economically disadvantaged communities according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013). Comprising of a higher proportion of public housing stock, high levels of unemployment, low income and educational levels and a high proportion of non-English speaking residents, we can easily provide a statistical portrait of despair and disadvantage. What these figures don’t reveal is the immense pride, resilience and strength of this community, which we experience both as members of this community and as service providers working in this space.

The community organisation in question here, Inala Wangarra is relatively new in the historical context of this community but sits within the paradoxical dilemma of working within a ‘disadvantaged’ community in a way that doesn’t reinforce hierarchical arrangements of power upon the ‘powerless’. A not-for-profit community development organisation, Inala Wangarra was incorporated in early-2005, with an original operating budget of \$12,000 with activities primarily run by board members and community volunteers. Today, the organisation has an annual budget of \$600,000, with a membership base of 93 people from a potential 100, a team of 7 staff and is run by a management committee comprising of local Indigenous community members, half of whom are founding members of the organisation. The organisation proudly identifies itself as a ‘community development’ organisation and facilitates a variety of sporting, recreational, cultural, arts, employment, education and training initiatives that seek to enhance and strengthen the skills and capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community within Inala and surrounding areas.

The reflections of this paper are written from our position as the Business Services Manager (Brady) and Board Member (Bond) of Inala Wangarra and provide important insights from the coalface of local community development. We argue that if community development is about empowering the powerless – then we must ensure that the powerless have a voice both in local community building agendas and in community development building agendas from theory to policy to practice. Here, we highlight the ways in which Indigenous community development rhetoric is visited upon us and how we remain resistant to and resilient against these agendas in a way that works within our community and our organisation. Specifically, we will identify and critique three key contradictions in Indigenous community development discourse and practice within an urban Indigenous context which include: our resistance against the mainstreaming of Indigenous services, the need to reconfigure the notion of capacity building in our community and the impetus for broadening the scope of good governance conversations within the Indigenous community-controlled service sector.

## **Mainstreaming or marginalising**



The Indigenous social policy shift under the Howard administration in the late-1990s moved away from self-determination to a policy of a 'new paternalism' under a sweep of changes that saw the abolition of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and the 'mainstreaming' of Indigenous-specific services in urban areas (McCausland 2005). This latter shift brought to life public imaginings of the 'real' Aboriginal people as existing in the most remote parts of the country and presented real challenges for urban Indigenous community organisations, including ours, to attract financial investment from both state and federal governments. The underlying false premises here were that 'real' Aboriginal people don't exist in urban centres; Aboriginal people in urban settings aren't culturally different; Aboriginal people in urban areas don't experience the same levels of disadvantage; and that mainstream services had the capacity to provide the same services to this population.

The evidence tells us that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (75%) reside in urban and major regional centres (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2011:9) and regardless of how quantifiably disadvantaged or advantaged those locations are, Indigenous people's SEIFA scores remain significantly lower when compared to the rest of the population (Kennedy & Firman 2004:4). In the Inala instance, our SEIFA score is among the lowest in the greater Brisbane region and within this location, Indigenous people in our community still remain more socio-economically disadvantaged than non-Indigenous residents within our community. The qualitative research by Hayman et al (2009), examining Indigenous people's poor access to the Inala Community Health Service revealed that while health services may be physically accessible to Indigenous people in urban and regional centres, they remain culturally inaccessible. In this study, Indigenous people didn't attend the local mainstream health service because they simply didn't feel welcome. Being treated poorly, feeling shamed and not cared for were experiences that Indigenous people experienced here, but it is an all too familiar experience for Indigenous people accessing mainstream services, regardless of whether they happen to live in an urban, rural or remote community. Notably, Aboriginal doctor, Hayman established an Indigenous-specific service within that same facility, employed Indigenous staff, engaged the local community and reconfigured how the service could operate in a more culturally safe way. Consequently, Indigenous access to primary health care rose from 12 clients in 1994 to 3006 clients in 2008. Clearly, Indigenous-led services have the capacity to deliver better outcomes to Indigenous people.

Despite the national policy agenda of mainstreaming Indigenous services in urban areas, our local community have still enlisted and expected the assistance of Inala Wangarra to provide particular services to its members even though we are not resourced to do so. An area of particularly high demand on Inala Wangarra staff and Board has been around assistance with employment, notably advertising jobs, resume and application writing support, as well as access to computers and information technology support to find, prepare and submit job applications. Many of our organisation's staff and Board have supported these goals both within their workplace as well as within their own homes. This has been intriguing, particularly given the proliferation of Job Services Australia funded agencies who are endowed with this responsibility and who are provided with specific incentives to improve Indigenous employment outcomes within our community. While our organisation is committed to being responsive to community needs and aspirations, using our resources to support Indigenous people to find employment when these resources have been provided to us for other purposes, places us in a compromising position in the eyes of the funding provider. It is our organisation that runs the risk of breaching funding agreements when resources are diverted elsewhere, while little scrutiny is cast over those who are failing to fulfil their funding commitments to servicing and advancing the interests of Indigenous people within our community.

Our response to this dilemma was supported through a strategic partnership with the Australian Red Cross, who recognised the role of Indigenous community organisations in supporting Indigenous people into employment in an often unfunded and unofficial capacity. Through this partnership, Inala Wangarra and three other Indigenous community-controlled organisations in the Brisbane region have together established the Indigenous Employment Portal. This Portal positions Indigenous employment coordinators within each organisation as a complementary service to Indigenous job-seekers already attached to a Job Services Australia agency. The employment coordinator is embedded within existing community networks, activities and energies and provides case management support in job-seeking and on-the-job support in partnership with the employer. The results speak for themselves. Over an 18 month period, over 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Brisbane were placed in employment and of these, 92% had remained in employment after 13 weeks. Within our site, over 80 Indigenous people were placed in employment, which means for every week we operated, we helped place another Indigenous person into employment. These results are particularly significant given that approximately half of our Indigenous job-seekers who came to us had been out of the workforce for 6 months or more. We helped our community members get jobs and stay in those jobs where other employment support agencies had been unable to do so.

Interestingly, in order for us to be resourced to provide employment support in an official capacity within our community, it required the harnessing of the ‘brand power’ and advocacy of a larger mainstream non-government organisation, the Australian Red Cross. Without doubt, the employment outcomes themselves were generated through local community agency, activism and the strength of Indigenous social capital within each of the partnering Indigenous organisations. The evidence tells us that when Indigenous services are mainstreamed, Indigenous people remain marginalised; however, when mainstream resources, power and advocacy are divulged to the Indigenous community-controlled sector, we see better results and often with less financial resourcing. The provision of ‘Indigenous-specific’ services is not about giving ‘preferential special treatment’ to Indigenous people; rather it is about providing high quality, culturally appropriate service delivery to those who need it most, by those most capable of delivering.

### **Building capacity to see capacities**

Capacity building remains one of the most widely used terms in Indigenous community discourses among politicians, policy officers, philanthropists and community development practitioners. The mantra of capacity building is espoused in community development philosophy, but resonates more strongly in the context of Indigenous community organisations and an inglorious history of mismanagement in Indigenous community controlled services. What confounds us most, however, is the tendency for ‘capacity building’ agendas to serve as ‘capacity-limiting’ realities for Indigenous people. The premise of capacity building is that the community lacks capacity. Capacity building is a commonly touted catch-cry that never sits within a specific context – it is implied, it is presumed, it becomes sedimented and secures the position and power of ‘helper’ and ‘helpless’ alike.

We are disturbed by the ways in which the capacity-limiting agenda is reinforced within our own community. Too often, the ‘impoverished’ community is understood in terms of the ‘impoverished’ nature of its members and the ‘impoverished’ infrastructure that surrounds them. Certainly, the lack of local industry for people to get employment and the educational levels within our community are part of this problem. However, there is a bustling local industry in Inala in which our local community has tremendous skills and abilities to contribute to. This industry we refer to are the health, community, education and welfare agencies that intrude upon our local landscape as much as they intrude upon our lives. A quick drive or walk around our neighbourhood and you can witness how these services encroach upon our landscape – they are the new buildings, the two-

storey buildings with carparks (for the staff who drive in to our community each day) and even represented as 'scenic' locations in neighbourhood signposting (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: 10,000 Steps Sign in Inala, "1000 steps to Centrelink", "600 steps to Police Station"

These buildings stand in stark contrast with the low-set stucco Housing Commission homes that line every street of our neighbourhood and are in a much better state than other public infrastructure such as the local shopping centres and the dilapidated skating rink, pool hall, swimming pool facility that now only house pigeons and weeds. One walk around our local shopping centre and you will find many shop fronts aren't selling 'goods' in the usual sense; instead you will find employment agents, parole offices, youth and health organisations. They don't offer jobs – they offer the opportunity for our community to be clients. And every day, hundreds of professional helpers drive into our community to work on us, to save us, and never once question the very conditions that locate us as 'disadvantaged'.

Inala Wangarra philosophically and practically positions itself as an organisation that works from a strength-based perspective; it doesn't have a discourse of clients or consumers – we instead talk about our community in a way that positions them as the change makers. Our Board and staff are members of our local Indigenous community. Our community members are all future Board and staff members. The notion of the helper and the helped is blurred. A young school leaver is a potential trainee or an MC for an event, a young single dad is a performer at a festival or future security guard, the recently released prisoner is a leader among his peers. Every person is a person with a skill, a family and a community. Every person has something to offer, both to us as an organisation and to themselves, their family and their community. Within the past 12 months, Inala Wangarra have employed 15 Indigenous people on staff, placed 4 Indigenous students on work experience and a further 58 individuals have been enlisted on a casual basis as community facilitators in the delivery of our programs and services. This figure does not factor in the hundreds of Indigenous people enlisted as volunteers or the thousands of people who have participated in our programs.

What we wish to emphasise here, however, is the importance of Indigenous people as service providers and the importance of recognising and remunerating them for their expertise. Participants in our programs are the drivers of our services, both philosophically and pragmatically. For instance, at least 6 of our youth group participants have become employees within our organisation as Project Officers and Inala Wangarra has directly assisted in scaffolding their careers within the community services sector. Our organisation engages in recruitment processes that privilege the capacity of individuals who live within and know the local community and we are cognisant of the need to invest in their capacity building in other areas. In fact, that is much of the joy that comes with our work: supporting local people to further develop their existing skills set to work within their own community. A real risk to our capacity building agenda for our Indigenous workforce are the short-term funding arrangements that often demand hard and fast quantitative outcomes which at times are unachievable for even the most skilled practitioner. Unfortunately, Indigenous-practitioner capacity building is often an unrecognised achievement within funding provider expectations, yet capacity building remains the mantra espoused within policy documents produced by these same funding providers.

It remains a logical step for Inala Wangarra to skill our people up to work in their own community, because we know that they have the capacity to be most effective, because it is THE local industry in our community for people to gain employment and because changing the economic base from which they operate is fundamental to addressing their individual and community disadvantage. Making the agenda of capacity building helpful for Indigenous people in effecting change requires reconfiguring how we think about Indigenous people and communities and demands greater specificity of what capacities are to be built and whose interests they are intended to serve.

### **For good governance sake**

Indigenous governance discourses often parallel capacity building discourses by focusing efforts on ensuring 'compliant' Indigenous minds. Here, attention is diverted to educational programs which teach Indigenous people how to be good managers within western frameworks, such as educating Indigenous people about their roles and responsibilities as management committee members and the financial management systems required by the state. We don't suggest that these aren't worthy investments and it has certainly been part of Inala Wangarra's agenda; however it remains just part of the good governance conversation within the Indigenous community controlled sector. We argue that cultural governance (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) is a space that requires further consideration and, in particular, how Indigenous management committees navigate local community cultural politics, needs and aspirations through the bureaucratic, neoliberal agendas of the state. This has been particularly important in the context of our local community which has witnessed more than its fair share of failed Indigenous organisations over the past few decades and, in many cases, has revolved around family disputes and nepotism (actual and perceived). In fact, it was from the demise of a fairly large Indigenous organisation within the Inala community that Inala Wangarra was itself established.

Inala Wangarra was established as a steering committee in 2003, after a major Indigenous organisation within the community went into administration. The Administrator advised of the organisation's closure at a large community meeting and suggested that various services provided by the organisation's 'community arm' were effective and important for the community to continue. The Steering Committee was nominated by those in attendance and was tasked with developing a new community organisation model. Supported by Brisbane City Council's Community Development Officer, the steering committee invested in a two year process of

consultation with the community to chart the future model and focus of the organisation as well as investigate what could be learnt from the past. Much was learnt, but two very important recommendations came from our community which focused on 'getting the right people' and 'keeping the right people' to run the organisation. From this, community members recommended that all future Board members be subjected to regular criminal history checks and that no more than one family member should serve on the Board at any given time. For the purposes of our constitution, a family member is considered an immediate family member (such as a spouse, parent, grandparent, child, or sibling), though we acknowledge family has a different cultural resonance in our community. It is the latter strategy that has proven most effective in how the organisation is perceived within the community and among funding providers and what has enabled it to be resistant to local community political turmoil.

Quite recently, the organisation had to manage a grievance with a disgruntled community member, upset that he had been overlooked for an employment opportunity within the organisation. The organisation's Board and staff were subjected to ongoing experiences of abuse, harassment and slander and this led to the rejection of membership applications from the complainant and a close relative who also engaged in the same behaviour. Both individuals also threatened to 'take over' the organisation and tried to enlist the support of other community members to step in to 'roll the Board', which is an all too familiar path for many of our Indigenous organisations. Inala Wangarra convened a special general meeting to enable the complainants to appeal their membership rejection and ensure that community members had their say. The membership did have their say and voted unanimously to uphold the Board's decision. What was significant about this event was that it was the first time the organisation rejected an individual's membership and it was also the first time the organisation had to manage this type of community politicking.

Upon reflection, we now appreciate just how profound the constitutional rules we'd developed around family and management committee membership actually were. In the past, community organisational conflict often centred on family versus family and organisational governance often sat in the hands of whoever had the biggest mob. However, the governance framework of Inala Wangarra provides for a model of community management with at least 8 different family groups from within the community represented. Attempts to destabilise the organisation because of personal grievances thus became more difficult. Rather than prevent community members from having a role in their local organisations, this strategy requires broader community investment and ensures greater accountability to the community rather than vested interests of more outspoken individuals or families.

The other part of the good governance story for us are the cultural systems and processes of the state that render community development goals almost impossible to achieve. The lack of trust toward the Indigenous community-controlled sector to manage our own affairs limits the capacity of Indigenous organisations to deliver and grow. Since the organisation's inception, many of our programs have been delivered in partnership with or auspiced by 'mainstream' NGOs, initially to get some runs on the board as a new organisation. However, 10 years on, we still find it necessary to partner with mainstream NGOs in order to harness their brand power. It is not because we are incapable of developing strategic and innovative service delivery models, write grants, manage projects, employ staff, deliver on outcomes and perform acquittals. It is simply that we still aren't trusted and it is clear that funding providers have a higher degree of anxiety about funding Indigenous organisations generally and the glossy tenders of larger competing NGOs are all too appealing.

The notion that Indigenous people can't be trusted to manage the money still runs through the minds of many of those assessing the suitability of Indigenous community organisations to deliver services, despite the emergence and uptake of Indigenous governance training across the country. For us, good governance requires the provision of financial capital as much as investing in human capital. We have learnt that a highly skilled and educated Indigenous management committee can only do so much. In the organisation's early days, many of our funding providers would not allow us to draw any management or administrative fees from the grants we received and we considered ourselves fortunate if we could obtain office on-costs as a budgetary item. Consequently, back then, Board members would process payroll and expenses for project staff, as well as provide operational management and supervision, prepare acquittals and engage in strategic advocacy with funding providers and Ministers while also navigating local community issues and problems, as well as run their own households, care for their children and families and maintain their own paid employment. Needless to say, this experience of community development didn't feel all that empowering for the Indigenous community members of this management committee.

In more recent years, Inala Wangarra has been more forthright in advocating for administrative and management fees to be drawn from grants with some success, though it continues to be a fight. Obtaining a 5, 10 or 15% management fee is almost always met with cautionary advice from well-meaning funding providers about their need to ensure 'value for money'. We've come to the realisation that we can no longer allow our passions, concerns and commitment to our community to persuade us to accept less than what is required to deliver high quality services to our community. This form of emotional blackmail has been used as a weapon against us on occasions; that is, 'if you don't take what we are prepared to give, the community will miss out on the program'. We now know that if we don't put our good governance first, there will be no programs at all.

It should be noted that despite these challenges, Inala Wangarra has been highly successful in securing funding to deliver services to our community. In fact, this year alone, we are managing 42 different grants, each of which required a funding application, milestone reports, financial acquittals and written reports. This financial year, the organisation's annual income was around \$600,000, which equates to an average grant value of \$14,000 each. Clearly, Board members and volunteers, no matter how skilled, cannot carry this burden and, according to 'good governance', should be dealing with strategic, not operational matters. Our endeavours to secure funding for a Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer(CEO) either directly or via management fees from grant income have been made possible through our own creative writing skills. The current joke within our organisation is how many names can you give a CEO? Very few funding providers want to fund CEOs of Indigenous organisations, but they love funding 'projects'. All of our CEOs and Finance Officers since our organisation's inception have had different names in order to couch their work into a project. While the objectives of these projects align perfectly with those of a CEO and Finance Officer, for some reason we can't call them that.

Given the moral imperative about good governance in Indigenous community organisations, we are perplexed that funding for management infrastructure causes so much anxiety. But more seriously, this game-playing hinders good governance rather than securing it. The only real and present threat to Inala Wangarra's future as an organisation today, is our ability to secure the necessary funding to pay the wages for our CEO and Finance Officer. We remain in a tenuous position in that our organisation is too big to not have this type of management infrastructure in place, but we remain too small to generate from existing grants the funds required to fully fund both positions. We agree wholeheartedly that good governance matters. We just suggest that the remedying of 'governance' issues in the Aboriginal community controlled service sector needs to move beyond remedying Aboriginal minds and be prepared to make the financial investments necessary to

enable Aboriginal bodies to collectively act and take control.

## Conclusion

The story we share here is not a sorry story. In highlighting these contradictions within Indigenous community development practice, we are not positioning ourselves as helpless victims. Because we are not. We are proud of our community and what Inala Wangarra has achieved, as well as our own resilience and creativity in our journey thus far. This is a story of how our organisation and our community continue to “walk tall, united in culture, spirit and identity” (Inala Wangarra 2010) regardless of the challenges we face. We hope that our reflections and learnings encourage more critical conversations around the taken-for-granted assumptions about Indigeneity which limit possibilities and capabilities, as well as around community development theory, policy and practice more broadly. Clearly, there are many competing tensions for Indigenous organisations situated at the interface of national Indigenous social policy agendas, state bureaucratic frameworks and community aspirations. While critical of the contradictions of community development practice within these sites, as a small Indigenous community controlled organisation, we remain hopeful that the community development goals of resourcing and empowering people to take control of their own destinies will feature more centrally and meaningfully in the lives of Indigenous Australians and in the minds of those that seek to work with us.

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## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the knowledge, wisdom, strength and resilience of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of Inala, as well as the passion and commitment of our current and previous Board members, staff and volunteers who all walk tall together. We also thank those that have walked beside us, including The Inala Elders Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, Wandarrah Preschool, West Inala Rugby League Football Club, McCullough Robertson Lawyers, Foundation for Young Australians, Australian Red Cross, Inala Indigenous Health Service, Institute for Urban Indigenous Health, Access Arts, Brisbane City Council, Contact Inc., and Vulcana Women's Circus. We would especially like to acknowledge Sara Lawless, a community development practitioner whose passion for community development inspired the formation of our organisation and continues to influence our practice today.



# Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015

*Walking Tall - United in Culture, Spirit and Identity*



inala wangarra

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## Foreword

We are pleased to present Inala Wangarra's Strategic Plan 2010-2015: *Walking Tall – United in Culture, Spirit and Identity*.

Our Plan outlines how we will use a strength-based approach to provide access to quality sport, recreation, cultural and arts programs and events that:

- Strengthen the educational and business knowledge, skills and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enhance competitiveness for employment and participation in social and cultural activities and economic and social enterprise development; and
- Build mutual awareness, understanding, empathy and respect through cooperation and partnership between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in our area.

We are a proud, financially secure and culturally strong and credible community-based organisation. Our Board and staff have an acute understanding of the negative aspects and impacts of Australian history and remain wholly committed to moving beyond the problems of fear, blame, ignorance and denial to restore a sense of pride, dignity, peace, happiness and harmony among all people.

We embrace the ancient knowledge, lores, customs, practices and values of Australia's Indigenous people<sup>1</sup> and will use our strengths-based approach to create positive change in the way young Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, in particular, think, feel and behave toward each other so that they heal the hurt and suffering of our nation's past and become proud, dignified and responsible leaders of the future.

Our Plan will build on the solid foundation established by our organisation by increasing local organisational coordination and collaboration, maximising resource efficiency and capitalising on the strengths and opportunities available to young people, their families and our community.

We encourage all community members and government and non government organisations to embrace our Plan and commit to working with us to build and sustain pride, dignity, peace, happiness and harmony among all people across our unique and special community.

  
for  
Uncle Albert Holt  
Chairperson

  
Chelsea Bond  
Treasurer

<sup>1</sup> The term Indigenous is used interchangeably in our Plan to embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise that the term Aboriginal was introduced to define all original inhabitant groups of Australia as one. We also acknowledge the distinct difference between Aboriginal people's and Torres Strait Islander people's and respect their inherent rights to maintain their unique cultural identities.

## Our Organisation

Inala Wangarra<sup>2</sup> Inc is located on the traditional land of the Jagera people in Inala, west of Brisbane. The organisation was established in March 2003 to provide access to quality sport, recreation, cultural and arts programs and events that strengthen the educational and business knowledge, skills and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and enhance competitiveness for employment, participation in social and cultural activities and economic and social enterprise development opportunities.

Inala Wangarra's Board of Directors consists of 8 local Indigenous people who are elected by the Members at each Annual General Meeting. The Board meets on a monthly basis and provides strategic direction and advice via the organisation's Chief Executive Officer.

Our organisation delivers two programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Inala area. These include:

1. **Young People's Sport & Recreation Program** - This program provides sporting and recreational opportunities for young people aged between the ages of 12 to 25 and includes: holiday activities, camps and annual netball and touch football carnivals. The program also co-ordinates the Inala Wangarra Youth Club and assists with the co-ordination of the Youth Committee. The program is jointly funded by the Queensland Department of Sport and Recreation and the Foundation for Young Australians and managed by one full-time employee.
2. **Community Engagement Project:** This project is a joint partnership with Volunteering Queensland and Brisbane City Council. The project strengthens participation and development of new and existing community activities, provides skill recognition for volunteers and links project participants to training and employment. The project is funded by the Queensland Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and is managed by a full-time employment Project Coordinator with the support of a Traineeship position and part-time Administration Officer.

Inala Wangarra also maintains an active interest and supporting role to the Inala NAIDOC Committee, Inala Panthers Touch Football Team, the GYPSIS Network, the Stylin' Up Community Crew and the Re-Create Network.

Through the successful implementation of this Plan, we aim to broaden our capacity and scope to deliver additional programs and events that continue to build mutual awareness, understanding, empathy and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in our area through cooperation and partnership.

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<sup>2</sup> The name "Inala Wangarra" was given to the organisation by local and respected elder and founding (and current) board member Uncle Albert Holt. Wangarra comes from the language of the Bidjara people in the western area of Queensland and is thought to mean "One People or All People".

## Statement of Commitment

Inala Wangarra works in cooperation and partnership with our community and government and non-government partners to facilitate the transparent and accountable delivery of quality sport, recreation, cultural, arts programs and events that:

- Strengthen the educational and business knowledge, skills and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enhance competitiveness for employment, participation in social and cultural activities and economic and social enterprise development; and
- Build mutual awareness, understanding, empathy and respect through cooperation and partnership between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in our area.

## Vision

**A strong, proud and prosperous community - Walking Tall *United in culture, spirit and identity.***

## Values

The traditional Indigenous values of Care, Share and Respect for the land, the people and the environment form the foundation of our organisation and guides our strategic and cultural focus and.

- We *Care* for the physical, spiritual, cultural, emotional, social and economic security, peace and well being of people.
- We *Share* a passion for moving beyond ignorance, fear, denial and blame and restoring dignity, peace, happiness and harmony among people.
- We *Respect* the strengths, cultural diversity, rights, views, values and expectations of people.

## **Our Strengths-Based Approach**

Inala Wangarra's strengths-based approach embraces positive attitudes toward people's dignity, capacities, rights, uniqueness and common interests.

Our fundamental belief is that all people, regardless of their cultural, social and economic background, have the strengths and resources within themselves to bring about real change in their lives, their families and their community.

While we acknowledge adversity and respect the problems, we remain wholly committed and focused on making real change by building on the strengths, opportunities and resources of our individuals, our families and our community.

The following principles support our organisation's values and underpin our strength-based approach:

### **Social Justice and Equity**

All people have a right to access, participation and equity.

### **Strength and Pride in Culture**

Knowing who we are, where we connect and where we belong reaffirms our cultural identity and pride and strengthens how we think, feel and behave.

### **Valuing People, Family and Community Strength and Capacity**

All people, families and communities are unique and special and each has the intrinsic strengths and resources to make real and positive change.

### **Cooperation and Partnership**

Working in cooperation and partnership promotes integrated community wisdom, unity and learning, shared responsibility and resource efficiency.

### **Ethical Decision-Making, Leadership and Governance**

Ethical decision making, leadership and governance demonstrate corporate professionalism, integrity and responsibility and ultimately determines organisational sustainability.

### **Creativity and Innovative Thinking**

Creativity and innovative thinking allows challenges to be identified and resolved, influences positive change, informs best practice and adds value for money.

## Our Community

The early settlement of the Inala area commenced after World War II when a group of ex-servicemen set out to provide affordable accommodation for returned servicemen and their families. The land was then purchased by Queensland Housing Commission in the 1940s with the majority of houses being rented to immigrants and ex-servicemen, including a large Dutch community in the 1950s.

Published historical accounts of the region rarely describe Aboriginal occupation in the area. However, locals report that there were a small number of Aboriginal families who had camped by local creeks around the Inala and Acacia Ridge area in the 1950's. One local historian (Howell 2000) reported that Aboriginal families had started moving into houses in the region in the 1960s and today, Inala is home to the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Brisbane.

Inala is commonly typified as a 'bad' neighbourhood, mostly by people who live outside of the region. A high level of public housing, low levels of home ownership, high crime rates, low income levels and a high proportion of Indigenous and non-English speaking populations are just some of the misconstrued markers that describe the area.

While Inala has had a tendency to be stigmatised in the public arena, its unique history and multicultural blend of people from a broad and diverse range of cultural, social and economic backgrounds, is in fact, one of the community's major strengths. This provides people with a very strong sense of community connection, belonging and pride.

Furthermore, places like Inala are viewed as places that people don't 'choose' to live, but are forced to reside due to economic hardship. However, within our community, while affordable public housing may have initially drawn many people to the suburb, the strong family and community cultural ties have ensured that generations of Indigenous families have continued to call Inala home.

While many Indigenous families within our community do experience hardship and struggles, our identity as a community, a culture and as a strong organisation of people are not defined exclusively by the perceived problems experienced.

Pride in community is manifested in the attachments people have to the street names, the post code, points of social contact, songs people have created, memories and stories of the struggles, the success of many 'Inala people' and the language and culture that is proudly proclaimed as Inala's.

By embracing our organisational values and strength-based method of service delivery Inala Wangarra will reconfigure the negativity in which communities such as Inala are typically viewed.

While our community's problems may seem complex and sometimes insurmountable to outsiders, the effective harnessing of our enormous social and cultural strength and capacity will result in ongoing positive social change and reaffirm local people's pride in our community.

# Key Result Areas, Objectives and Priorities

## 1

### Ethical Decision Making, Leadership and Governance

#### Objective

To facilitate the transparent and accountable delivery of quality sport, recreation, cultural, arts programs and events.

#### Priorities

- Maintain the appropriate size, composition and functions of Inala Wangarra's Board of Directors. Maintain organisational infrastructure, equipment, systems and insurances in accordance with national and state standards, principles and requirements for sport, recreation, cultural and the arts.
- Maintain professional policies, standards, systems, practices and procedures to ensure total resource management transparency, compliance and accountability.
- Recruit, train and retain culturally competent and skilled Board members and staff and ensure access to ongoing professional training, performance appraisal and capacity building programs in response to need.
- Maintain active presence, participation and involvement with all relevant regional, state and national government and non-government and community- based sport, recreation, cultural and arts organisations.
- Monitor individual, family and community sport, recreation, cultural and arts interests and respond to changing trends.
- Maintain an up-to-date Website to promote the organisation and its programs, services and events.



# 2 Arts, Craft and Cultural Programs and Events

## Objective

To be recognised as leaders in the delivery of quality arts, craft and cultural programs and events.

## Priorities

- Maintain quality partnership linkages with key government and non-government arts, craft and cultural event organiser and provider organisations to increase local knowledge and awareness and maximise access and participation in quality programs and events.
- Ensure the availability, delivery and broad community access and participation in quality arts, craft and cultural programs and events.
- Ensure access and participation of local artists and performers in quality regional, state and national arts, craft and cultural events.
- Provide quality advice, guidance and mentoring support to local individuals, families and the broader community.

# 3 Sport and Recreation Programs and Events

## Objective

To maximise access, participation, success and enjoyment of local individuals, families and the broader community in quality sport and recreational events.

## Priority Actions

- Maintain quality partnership linkages with key government and non-government sport and recreation program organiser and provider organisations to increase local knowledge and awareness and maximise access, participation, success and enjoyment.
- Ensure the availability and delivery of quality sport and recreational programs and events.
- Ensure access and participation of local individuals and teams in quality regional, state and national sporting carnivals and events.
- Provide quality advice, guidance and mentoring support to local individuals, families and the broader community.

# 4 Community Education, Training and Capacity Building

## Objective

To build on the strength and capacity of local individuals, families and the community to maximise success and improve quality of life.

## Priority Actions

- Maintain quality partnership linkages with key government and non-government education and training provider organisations to increase local knowledge and awareness and maximise access and participation.
- Ensure the availability and delivery of quality education, training and capacity building programs.
- Provide quality advice, guidance and mentoring support to local individuals, families and the broader community.

# 5 Economic and Social Enterprise Development

## Objective

To increase capacity and maximise opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create self employment and generate wealth through sound economic and social enterprise development.

## Priority Actions

- Maintain quality partnership linkages with key government and non-government business support and lending organisations to increase knowledge and awareness and maximise access and participation of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business aspirants.
- Ensure the availability and delivery of quality economic and social enterprise development programs.
- Maintain an active interest, support and mentoring role to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business operators and ensure their active involvement and participation in local cultural and arts programs and events.
- Maintain Strong Indigenous Business Support Networks.

## Promotions and Marketing

Inala Wangarra will actively promote its programs, events and services to all individuals, families, government and non-government organisations and businesses in the Inala community and across the broader south east Queensland region. In particular, we will:

- Maintain an active interest, involvement and supporting role with the local Inala NAIDOC Committee, Inala Panthers Touch Football Team, the GYPSIS Network, the Stylin' Up Community Crew and the Re-Create Network to promote our programs, events and services;
- Develop and maintain a Wangarra Website to provide up-to-date information on programs, events and services across the broader community;
- Maximise exposure locally and across the broader community through an increased presence and participation at schools and social and cultural events; and
- Develop a localised cross-cultural communications program and marketing materials to actively promote and market our organisation, our programs, events and services and our local artists and performers.

## Monitoring and Reporting

Inala Wangarra's Board of Directors will monitor the implementation of this Plan and evaluate performance and achievements against each of our key result areas.

The Chief Executive Officer will report on all planning activities, programs and initiatives to the Board of Directors on a monthly basis and represent the Board at all meetings relating to the business of Inala Wangarra.

The Chief Executive Officer will also be responsible for:

- The development, implementation, monitoring and supervision of the organisation's Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans; and
- The provision of evaluation and performance reports in accordance with partnership funding conditions and requirements.

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**From:** PM&C Officer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 15, 2014 12:58 PM  
**To:** undisclosed-recipients:  
**Subject:** Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funding round information [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Dear Stakeholders,

As you know the IAS Grant Funding Round 204 closes this Friday. Below is the Commonly Asked Questions, also assessable through [http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous\\_affairs/ias/funding/index.cfm](http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous_affairs/ias/funding/index.cfm).

We'd also like to draw your attention to a couple of critical matters:

1. The round closes **2pm EDST Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014**. Please remember that is 1pm here in Queensland.
2. Due to the timeframes required to assess applications and negotiate funding agreements no extensions will be granted for applications.
3. Please refer to the Application Kit for details on where to lodge your application. Do Not send your application to the regional office. [Application Kit - DOCX 276KB](#) | [PDF 304KB](#)
4. It is one application per Legal Entity. If you are not a legal entity in your own right you may not apply. Eligibility criteria is available in Part C of the Application Kit.
5. As per previous email distribution, please note changes to NAIDOC Funding.

Again if you have any questions you can send questions to [IASGrants@pmc.gov.au](mailto:IASGrants@pmc.gov.au) or phone 1800 088 323.

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### *Commonly Asked Questions*

#### General

#### *What funding can I apply for?*

The five new programmes under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy are:

- Jobs, Land and Economy;
- Children and Schooling;
- Safety and Wellbeing;
- Culture and Capability; and
- Remote Australia Strategies.

Further information can be found on each of these programmes in the IAS Funding Guidelines.

Organisations can apply for funding from one or more of these programmes through a single application, and receive a single funding agreement from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

Funding will be allocated to projects that focus on:

- Getting Indigenous Australians into work, fostering Indigenous business and ensuring Indigenous people receive economic and social benefits from the effective management of their land and native title rights;

- Ensuring Indigenous children regularly go to school, improving literacy and numeracy and supporting families to give children a good start in life;
- Increasing Indigenous Year 12 attainment and pathways to further training and education;
- Making communities safer so that Indigenous people enjoy similar levels of physical, emotional and social wellbeing as that enjoyed by other Australians;
- Increasing participation and acceptance of Indigenous Australians in the economic and social life of the nation; and
- Addressing the disproportionate disadvantage in remote Australia and the need for strategic grant funding for local solutions.

*When can I apply for funding?*

Applicants can submit their application throughout the grant funding round period, which opened on 8 September 2014 and closes at 2pm EDST, 17 October 2014. This round will enable providers to apply for funding for 2015-16 and beyond (for financial year funding), or from 1 January 2015 (for calendar year funding). Most IAS funding will be available through the annual round. However, applications for time limited opportunities, such as the creation of an Indigenous job, may be received at any time. Interested applicants should contact their local PM&C office. Further guidance is provided in the Application Kit.

*When does the funding round close?*

The funding round will close at 2pm EDST Friday 17 October 2014, allowing six weeks for applications to be submitted.

*Can I apply for an extension to the closing date?*

No. Due to the timeframes required to assess applications and negotiate funding agreements, there is no scope to extend the closing date beyond 2pm EDST, 17 October 2014.

**Application**

*Is there a limit to how much information I can provide in my application?*

Applications should not exceed the 5mb file size limit and have no more than 5 attachments (inclusive of the total 5mb file size). The Application Form should not exceed a total of 60 A4 pages (excluding attachments and verification documents) whether it is submitted in electronic or hard copy form. Attachments cannot be in the form of multi-media files/presentations, videos or large documents such as annual reports. Acceptable formats are PDF and Microsoft Word documents.

*Is there a word limit for the IAS grant application form?*

There is no word limit for the IAS grant application form. However, there are overall size restrictions for each application as outlined above.

*How much detail do I need to include in my budget?*

There is no requirement to provide a full breakdown of your project's budget in your application. However, if you are applying for funding for multiple projects, you will need to include a budget for each project. Your budget should be split by year if you are applying for multi-year funding. Capital funding should be separately identified, where applicable. Applicants may provide additional budget information in an Attachment.

*If we apply for both calendar year funding and financial year funding, do we still submit only one application?*

Yes. You can apply for funding from 1 January 2015, financial year 2015-16, as well as future years funding in the one application. Organisations that can demonstrate a strong track record in this area *may* be offered a multi-year contract of between 1-3 years from 2015 at the sole discretion of government.

*We are an organisation with a number of businesses (with separate ABNs) under the umbrella of a lead organisation. Can we submit a separate application form for each business/ABN?*

No. You must submit only one application for your lead organisation.

*What is meant by 'Supply Nation' (question 7 on the application form)?*

Supply Nation certifies Indigenous business suppliers as majority Indigenous owned, managed and controlled. Australian companies and Government agencies that are members of Supply Nation can then access the database of Indigenous

suppliers for procurement opportunities. Under the IAS, there is no requirement to be a member of Supply Nation and membership status will not advantage/disadvantage applicants.

*How should I apply for NAIDOC funding?*

Grant funding for NAIDOC related activities may be sought through a separate process that will be undertaken at a later date. Funds will not be provided for NAIDOC related activities through the current grant application process. Further information on how to apply will be issued in the near future.

*Can one part of an application be approved but another part be rejected through the assessment process?*

Yes. It is possible that one part of your application could be successful while another part could be unsuccessful.

*Will feedback be provided if my application is unsuccessful?*

If your application is unsuccessful you can contact the Department for feedback after the assessment process.

*How do I submit my application?*

You may submit your application either electronically or in hard copy by mail. Please see the Application Kit for details.

## Funding

*My organisation received a contract extension from PM&C. Will it be honoured?*

Contracts were extended to allow PM&C time to implement the IAS and undertake the current funding round. It is the department's intent that all existing contracts will be honoured until their end date.

*My organisation received a contract extension from PM&C. Can I receive another extension?*

Current contracts are not likely to be extended further. Instead, applications for funding will be considered through the grant funding round or at any time for demand driven activities.

*My organisation received a six month funding extension until 31 December 2014. Can I apply for funding from 1 January 2015?*

Yes. You can apply for funding from 1 January 2015 if the project requires it and meets the IAS Guidelines and priorities of government.

*I previously received funding under one of the Indigenous programmes that were transferred to PM&C. Can I still apply for funding under those former programmes?*

No. From 1 July 2014, most of the Indigenous programmes and activities that transferred in to PM&C have been streamlined into five flexible, broad programmes under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. This means that funding under the legacy programmes is now no longer available, and organisations need to apply for funding from one or more of the five new Indigenous Advancement Strategy programmes.

A list of the [legacy programmes](#) previously funded and a guide to which programme they may now fall under for [consideration for funding under the IAS](#) is available to assist applicants.

Special accounts, special appropriations and payments to states/territories under National Partnership Agreements are not included under the IAS and not covered by the IAS Guidelines.

*My organisation already has a funding agreement in place with PM&C. Can I apply for further funding under the IAS?*

Yes, the funding round provides an opportunity for those organisations with a current funding agreement to apply for additional funding. This additional funding cannot duplicate the services provided under the existing agreement while the existing agreement is still in place, and will not support activities that are the responsibility of another government agency, or duplicate funding already provided for activities/outcomes.

*Is there a maximum amount that I can apply for in the competitive grant funding round?*

No, there is no maximum amount; each application will be assessed on the value for money of the proposed project and outcome to be achieved.



Applications for demand driven funding should be submitted separately.

*How do I work out what length of funding to apply for?*

The length of the funding you apply for should be guided by the outcomes and expected duration of your project.

*I'm unclear which programme I should be applying for. Can someone please advise?*

Please refer to the IAS Guidelines and IAS Application Kit for a description of the IAS programmes and guidance on what you can apply for.

If you are uncertain about the information provided, you may wish to send an email to [IASGrants@pmc.gov.au](mailto:IASGrants@pmc.gov.au) or call 1800 088 323.

The Government may decide that funding would be more appropriately provided through a different IAS programme to the one you selected. If this is the case, we will advise you when we notify you of the results of your application.

A list of the [legacy programmes](#) previously funded and a guide to which programme they may now fall under for [consideration for funding under the IAS](#) is available to assist applicants.

*Can I apply for more than one programme stream?*

Applicants can apply for funding from one or more of the five programmes through a single application. You will not be disadvantaged by applying for either one or more programmes.

*If I am applying for funding in multiple locations and multiple programmes do I need to submit more than one application?*

No, you must only submit one application. The single application can cover multiple locations, programmes and proposed outcomes. Successful applicants will receive a single funding agreement from the Department.

Applications for demand driven funding should be submitted separately.

*Can I apply for funding if we want to service a community and not a whole region?*

Yes, you can apply for funding under the IAS if the activity relates to a single community. You will not be disadvantaged by focusing on a single community.

*Can I apply for multi-year funding?*

Over time it is the Department's intention to offer multi-year funding agreements to organisations that are working closely with Indigenous communities to develop strategies that work, and are improving Indigenous outcomes in areas of need. Organisations that can demonstrate a strong track record in this area *may* be offered a multi-year contract of between 1-3 years from 2015 at the sole discretion of government.

*Can schools apply for funding?*

Only entities that are a legal entity with capacity to enter into the funding agreement may submit an application for funding from the Commonwealth through the IAS. If you are not a legal entity in your own right, you may not apply. Eligibility criteria is available in Part C of the Application Kit.

- [Application Kit - DOCX 276KB](#) | [PDF 304KB](#)

Schools which are not legal entities in their own right but fall under the State Department of Education or some other legal entity that administers the school will need to apply under the legal entity they form part of.

*Can I apply for funding through the IAS if I am a sole trader?*

Yes. Sole traders are legal entities (ie have their own legal personality) and are therefore eligible under the IAS Guidelines.

*Can I apply for funding through the IAS if I have applied for funding through another Government Agency?*

Yes. However, the Australian Government will not fund activities through the IAS that are the responsibility of another government agency, or duplicate funding already provided for activities/outcomes.

*Are we able to apply for funding to cover capital costs such as a vehicle, IT equipment or staff?*

Yes. Your application should contain the budget that is required for the delivery of the project to achieve the outcome.

*Can we apply for funding to build or maintain Indigenous staff housing in remote locations, where there is currently a shortage?*

The Remote Australia Strategies (RAS) Programme may support proposals for remote infrastructure that include a staff housing component. However, the application must clearly demonstrate how the proposal contributes to the programme objectives and achieves real outcomes for Indigenous people in relation to school attendance and attainment, employment, community safety and other enabling services. The RAS Programme will not support activities that are the responsibility of other Commonwealth Government departments, State, Territory or local governments or other relevant entities (such as private companies and non-government organisations).

*Is business development/start-up funding for organisations available through the IAS?*

Applicants should include the total cost of the project in their application, including any necessary business development and/or support costs. The IAS Guidelines state that activities that strengthen the capacity of Indigenous organisations so that they are able to effectively deliver Government services to Indigenous people and communities may be supported under the IAS.

*Is there opportunity for funding to contribute towards paying for overseas trips for youth on projects that increase their leadership capacity, cross cultural exchange and public awareness?*

Potential applicants should consider the available documentation to determine whether the proposed project meets the criteria and the objectives of the IAS. Activities that improve leadership and governance capacity of Indigenous people, families, organisations and communities may be considered under the IAS. It should be noted that only legal entities or individuals providing services which are intended to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians are eligible for grant funding.

*How does PM&C intend to ensure that smaller community organisations receive sufficient support to apply for IAS programme funding, noting they will be competing with much larger organisations?*

Applications will be assessed on a number of criteria which consider how organisations will involve Indigenous communities in the development and delivery of projects, and employ Indigenous Australians. Community organisations are likely to be well placed in this regard.

PM&C Network staff will be consulting with Indigenous communities and organisations in the lead up to the grant funding round. Nominated staff will also be available to assist organisations during the application process.

*How often are the funding rounds?*

We anticipate that funding rounds will be held annually.

#### **Incorporation Requirements**

*How do I know if the Incorporation Requirement applies to me?*

All organisations receiving cumulative funding of more than \$500,000 in any single financial year under the Strategy are required to meet the Incorporation Requirements. This requirement applies to all grant funding under agreements or variations executed on or after 1 July 2014.

The incorporation requirements do not apply to statutory bodies, state, territory or local governments. Schools, colleges, universities or any organisation operating under specific legislation are also exempt.

Organisations do not need to meet this requirement in order to apply for funding under the IAS. It only applies once an agreement is in place.

For further information please refer to the [Strengthening Organisational Requirements page](#).

#### **Reporting and evaluation**

*Will there be a penalty if the activity that is funded doesn't meet its agreed outcomes?*

The Department may consider reducing or redirecting grant funding, or ceasing the grant funding if outcomes are not being met. The funding agreement provides further details about the terms and conditions associated with funding.

*If there are multiple schedules under my organisation's Funding Agreement, will this mean multiple reporting requirements?*

Where there are multiple schedules under a Funding Agreement the reporting requirements will be coordinated so that reporting for each schedule will usually take place in one reporting cycle.

Further questions

*Who can I talk to about the Indigenous Advancement Strategy open grants round?*

If you have questions about funding under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, and what it means for you, please send questions to [IASGrants@pmc.gov.au](mailto:IASGrants@pmc.gov.au) or phone 1800 088 323.

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Version: 2014.0.4765 / Virus Database: 4040/8390 - Release Date: 10/14/14

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**From:** PM&C Officer  
**Sent:** Monday, September 01, 2014 9:11 AM  
**To:** undisclosed-recipients:  
**Subject:** FW: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Indigenous Advancement Strategy Information Session [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Please distribute and note two additional information sessions added; Cleveland and Sunshine Coast.

Dear Stakeholder,

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will be holding a number of information sessions on the new ***Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)*** in the south east Queensland area. The information sessions will be held in the following locations:

**Monday 1st September**

10.00am – 12.00 midday

**Koobara Aboriginal and Islander Kindergarten**

421 Beams Road

**ZILLMERE**

**Tuesday 2nd September**

10.00am – 12.00 midday

**Wandarrah Preschool and Community Centre**

Cnr Poinciana & Azalea Streets

**INALA**

**Wednesday 3rd September**

10.00am – 12.00 midday

**Salvation Army**

123 Paradise Road

**SLACKS CREEK**

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00am – 12.00 midday

**Ipswich City Council**

45 Roderick Street

**IPSWICH**

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00am – 12.00 midday

**Redland City Council**

**Cleveland Library – The Elders Room (Ground Floor)**  
**Corner of Middle and Bloomfield Streets**  
**CLEVELAND**

**Friday 5th September**  
**10.00am – 12.00 midday**  
**Community Solutions Group**  
**Community Capital Centre**  
**100 Sportsmans Parade**  
**BOKARINA (Sunshine Coast)**

The information session is focussed on the broader strategic directions of the Australian Government, namely the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and Indigenous Affairs Network.

As we are heading into a national competitive funding round, the information session will not contain detailed information to aid applications. Information to this level can be sourced by reading the Programme Guidelines in detail. As such we suggest the information session is best attended by representatives responsible for service delivery design and direction setting in your organisation.

For organisations unable to attend the information sessions, communication about the IAS is set out below and can be found on the PM&C website. Alternative I can be contacted on the below details to discuss the new IAS arrangements.

Regards

Brisbane Office | Indigenous Affairs Network (Queensland)  
Indigenous Affairs Group | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

GPO Box 9932 BRISBANE QLD 4000  
[www.dpmc.gov.au](http://www.dpmc.gov.au) | [www.indigenous.gov.au](http://www.indigenous.gov.au)

*The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.*

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As you know this Government undertook a major review of the Indigenous Programs. Through the review and other forms of engagement the Government has heard the concerns of service providers, communities, employers and individuals.

As a result, the new Indigenous Advancement Strategy will offer:

- Less red-tape and bureaucracy for Indigenous Australians, service providers, business and government.
- Organisations the ability to apply for funding under one set of guidelines, through one application form, and have a single agreement with the Department.
- Government the ability to better look holistically at all the proposals being put forward for a community or region and in collaboration with them determine what projects will work best in their area.

We now have five new programmes under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS), being:

1. Jobs, Land and Economy
2. Children and Schooling
3. Safety and Wellbeing
4. Culture and Capability
5. Remote Australia Strategies

**Program Guidelines** have now been finalised and can be found at [www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous\\_affairs/](http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous_affairs/). I would encourage you to familiarise yourself with these Program guidelines heading into the funding round.

**A national competitive Funding Round** will open on 8 September 2014 and run for 4 weeks, enabling providers to apply for funding for 2015/16 and beyond. This will include funding under the IAS from 1 January 2015 (for organisations funded on a calendar year basis such as education activities) and 1 July 2015 (for organisations funded on a financial year basis).

I will send out further emails to alert people to the commencement of the Funding Round closer to the date. I'd like to also reiterate previous advice that all current funding contracts will be honoured.

Funding under the IAS will be allocated to projects that focus on:

- Getting Indigenous Australians into work, fostering Indigenous business and ensuring Indigenous people receive economic and social benefits from the effective management of their land and native title rights;
- Ensuring Indigenous children regularly go to school, improving literacy and numeracy and supporting families to give children a good start in life;
- Increasing Indigenous Year 12 attainment and pathways to further training and education;
- Making communities safer so that Indigenous people enjoy similar levels of physical, emotional and social wellbeing as that enjoyed by other Australians;
- Increasing participation and acceptance of Indigenous Australians in the economic and social life of the nation; and
- Addressing the disproportionate disadvantage in remote Australia and the need for strategic grant funding for local solutions.

Most IAS funding will only be available through the annual round. However, applications for time limited opportunities, such as the creation of an Indigenous job, may be received at any time. Interested applicants should contact this office.

Assessment Panels will be established for each programme stream, including staff from the regional network. To ensure place based decision making and regional intelligence informs our program investment, Proposals will be assessed at the regional level, prioritised and put forward to each Assessment Panel.

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Version: 2014.0.4745 / Virus Database: 4015/8119 - Release Date: 08/29/14



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 2033.0.55.001 - Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2011 Quality

Declaration

Latest ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 28/03/2013

### MEDIA RELEASE

28 March 2013

Embargo: 11:30 am (Canberra Time)

42/2013

### **New data from the 2011 Census reveals Queensland's most advantaged and disadvantaged areas**

New figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today have provided a new perspective on the wealth of statistical information collected in the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

The third release of 2011 Census data includes the release of Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), which ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage.

For the purposes of SEIFA, the ABS broadly defines relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in terms of *people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society.*

Director, Analytical Services Branch, Dr Phillip Gould, says that SEIFA can be used to compare the relative socio-economic characteristics of areas at a given point in time.

"It's important to remember, that indexes are assigned to geographic areas, not to individuals.

"For example, it's possible for a relatively advantaged person to reside in an area which may have a low score on some or all of the indexes. It's also not uncommon to see a Local Government Area that has pockets of advantage and disadvantage," Dr Gould added.

SEIFA can be used by government, business and communities for many purposes, such as to determine areas that require additional funding for improved services, to identify potential business opportunities or to research the relationship between health and education outcomes and the socio-economic conditions of an area.

For the first time, anyone can freely download files which allow them to display SEIFA data using Google Earth®, which makes interpretation easier than ever.

Data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing is now available on the ABS website. Our range of new, easy-to-use tools makes searching Census data quick and easy. Visit [www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census)

Key SEIFA data for Australia, Queensland and the Greater Brisbane area are detailed below:

## Australia

Peppermint Grove (WA) is reported to be Australia's most advantaged Local Government Area (LGA), followed by Ku-ring-gai (NSW), Nedlands (WA), Cottesloe (WA) and Cambridge (WA).

Australia's most disadvantaged LGA is Yarrabah (QLD), followed by Cherbourg (QLD), Belyuen (NT), Aurukun (QLD) and Woorabinda (QLD).

## Queensland

Brisbane was recorded as the most advantaged LGA in Queensland, followed by Weipa on the Gulf of Carpentaria, Redland, Isaac and the Central Highlands.

Yarrabah was recorded as Queensland's most disadvantaged LGA, followed by Cherbourg, Aurukun in the state's far north, Woorabinda and Napranum.

## Greater Brisbane

Pinjarra Hills-Pullenvale was recorded as the most advantaged Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) in Greater Brisbane followed by Fig Tree Pocket and Brookfield-Kenmore Hills. Chapel Hill was recorded as the fourth most advantaged SA2 in Greater Brisbane followed by Wakerley recorded the fifth most advantaged SA2.

Riverview was recorded as the most disadvantaged SA2 in Greater Brisbane followed by Inala-Richlands and Wacol. Logan Central was the fourth most disadvantaged SA2 followed by Woodridge.

### Media note:

- While SA2s can be referred to generally as areas, they should not be referred to as suburbs or LGAs. In urban areas SA2s generally reflect one or more gazetted suburbs. Large suburbs may be split into multiple SA2s.

Further information, media requests and interviews contact **Census Media 02 6252 5161**

This page last updated 11 November 2014

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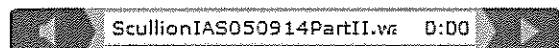
## Australian Government

Connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with Australian Government policies and programmes.

# Minister Scullion: A new era of Indigenous grant funding commences

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[Announcements \(/taxonomy/term/2\)](#) | [Indigenous Advancement Strategy \(/indigenous-advancement-strategy\)](#)



**Duration:** 0:17

**Talent:** Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion

8 Sep 2014

[Article](#)   [Transcript](#)

Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, announced the first grant round for funding under the \$4.8 billion Indigenous Advancement Strategy will open today, Monday 8 September 2014, for six weeks.

"This first round will provide funding for activities that commence from January or July 2015 and provides the opportunity for organisations with a current funding agreement expiring in the 2014-15 financial year to apply for future funding," Minister Scullion said.

"It also gives the opportunity for new organisations to apply for funding under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

"Funding agreements for successful organisations in this first round will focus on delivering measurable outcomes for Indigenous people in the Government's priority areas - getting children to school, adults into work and building safer communities.

"These new funding arrangements are intended to make funding more flexible and better designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"Funding for demand-driven programmes such as those designed to generate specific employment opportunities will be considered as they are received throughout the year. However I encourage service providers to look at the grant round and consider how their proposals may fit."

The IAS streamlines 150 Indigenous programmes and activities into five broad-based programmes that will focus on getting children to school, adults into work and making communities safer. The five programmes are:

- Jobs, Land and Economy Programme
- Children and Schooling Programme
- Safety and Wellbeing Programme

- Culture and Capability Programme
- Remote Australia Strategies Programme

“Organisations will be able to apply for funding from one or more of the IAS programmes through a single application, and receive a single funding agreement,” Minister Scullion said.

“This will make it easier to apply and will reduce red tape with one funding agreement for multiple programmes and deliverables.

“If you have questions about funding under the new Indigenous Advancement Strategy, and what it means for you, you can contact your local PM&C office on 1800 079 098.”

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## Find out more

The Indigenous Advancement Strategy Guidelines apply to the \$4.8 billion of programme funding over four years that is available under the five IAS programmes. The Guidelines, application kit and application form are available at the [Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website \(http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/grants-and-funding/funding-under-ias\)](http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/grants-and-funding/funding-under-ias). The first grant funding round under the IAS opened on Monday 8 September 2014 and will close at 2pm EDST on Friday 17 October, allowing six weeks for applications.

Visit the [media gallery \(http://www.indigenous.gov.au/news-and-media/media-gallery\)](http://www.indigenous.gov.au/news-and-media/media-gallery) to download the audio file above.

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Published on *Nigel Scullion* (<http://www.nigelscullion.com>)

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# Indigenous Grant Round

Monday, November 24, 2014

## Category:

Indigenous Affairs



The Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, said today more time would be taken to assess funding applications received under the Government's \$4.8 billion Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS).

The Minister said there had been an overwhelming response to the first grant funding round and his Department had requested more time to ensure the assessment process produced the best long-term results for Indigenous Australians and the seamless delivery of services, particularly those provided by smaller Indigenous organisations.

"More than 5000 applications for separate projects have been received. It is fair to say they are of varying quality – and more work is needed to match services with needs. Of particular concern is that a number of current providers of services with contracts that cease at the end of December 2014 may not have applied," Minister Scullion said.

"Of the almost 2300 individual applications lodged, more than half were either late or had some compliance issues including, at times, insufficient detail for immediate assessment. Many of these are from smaller Indigenous organisations. This does not reflect their ability to deliver effective services on the ground, but highlights they may not have the resources or administrative structures to support the lodgement of effective funding applications.

"More than 500 current service providers whose funding is due to expire at the end of December 2014 have lodged applications for further funding and there are about 75 service providers that my Department has identified may have not applied for funding through the grant round."

The Minister said that an overriding imperative must be on ensuring that vital services continue to be provided. Getting the best assessments is essential to a good outcome which takes account of our smaller Indigenous service providers that are very good at delivery on the ground.

"In May the Government announced an ambitious reform agenda for Indigenous affairs, one that was focussed on the Government's priorities of getting children to school, adults into work and ensuring communities are safe," the Minister said.

"The IAS is an ambitious exercise – but is the right thing to do and I am focussed on getting this right the first time, which means taking the necessary time needed to do it properly."

Minister Scullion said it was critical to ensure that vital frontline services continued.

“For organisations that have ongoing service delivery contracts expiring on 31 December 2014, I have agreed to a six month funding extension which will allow them to continue to provide vital services to the community.

“Importantly, this also means these organisations will have some certainty over funding going into 2015 and ensure they are able to retain staff and operations.

“To ensure certainty for the 2015 school year, funding for a small number of existing providers of school-based scholarships, cadetships and traineeships will be extended to 30 December 2015. This will enable individual students to take up or continue education opportunities in the 2015 school year.

“To rush the assessment process through would do an injustice to Indigenous Australians. We must learn from past mistakes where programmes and policies failed because their implementation was rushed. History shows this situation does not achieve the best results for Indigenous Australians and also wastes billions of dollars in taxpayers’ money.

“I will not allow a rushed implementation, as we saw regularly under Labor, such as in the introduction of the Remote Jobs and Communities Programme which caused a serious disruption of services and disengagement with employment services in remote communities.

“We need to get this right.”


Minister Scullion said the assessment period extension would have no impact on organisations which are currently funded until June 2015.

“I believe we have a once in a generation opportunity to change the way government, services providers and communities can work together to make a long-term difference to lives of Indigenous families and children,” Minister Scullion said.

Minister Scullion stressed there would be no loss of the current momentum to finalise the round. Outcomes from the round will be known by early March 2015 to provide ample time for negotiation of funding agreements and staffing arrangements before new funding commences on 1 July 2015.

“My department has written to all applicants to advise them of this decision and organisations can call 1800 079 098 or email [iasgrants@pmc.gov.au](mailto:iasgrants@pmc.gov.au) if they have any questions.”

#### **Download media release:**

 [2014-11-24 IAS Final.pdf](#)

[None](#)   [Indigenous Affairs media](#)

**Source URL:** <http://www.nigelscullion.com/media-hub/indigenous-affairs/indigenous-grant-round>