



RED COCKATOO AUSTRALIA  
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Submission No. ....12.....
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BY: ATSLA

To whom it may concern,

Tuesday 15 July 2008

My business Red Cockatoo Australia is an award winning Indigenous Arts Development business working in collaboration with many local Aboriginal artists in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Region.

I have worked with the local community in my previous position as Blue Mountains City Council's Cultural Development Officer and in my own time on a volunteer basis. I now have a business with financial investment from one of the Aboriginal Artists working within this group.

I would like to address the inquiry's focus questions for Developing Indigenous Enterprise. My responses are as follows.

-whether current government, industry and community programs offering specific enterprise support programs and services to Indigenous enterprises are effective, particularly in building sustainable relationships with the broader business sector;

We have requested assistance from several organizations and have been told constantly that there is money for 100% Indigenous business but as yet we are unable to find money for a small business with Indigenous and Non Indigenous collaboration.

This is a difficult circumstance when I have personally funded many initiatives I believe could benefit by professional assistance in business management working in collaboration with Aboriginal people.

In my experience the Aboriginal artists I work with have been informally mentored by me but this is an unpaid, time consuming process which is extremely valuable and yet not particularly sensible in a business sense. To get some kind of financial assistance and guidance in mentoring artists would be a great benefit to these artists as I feel my time is always very limited in this process.

identifying areas of Indigenous commercial advantage and strength;

The Blue Mountains is a popular and very busy tourist destination with no Aboriginal Arts Infrastructure. This business aims to make a small start. Local artists have formed their own group known as The Marra Mob which is also significant progress for this region.

Echo Point, Katoomba New South Wales is one of the most visited sites in Australia. Right now there is NO ABORIGINAL representation at Echo Point. This seems very unjust and a huge commercial advantage for local Aboriginal people missed.



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Whether incentives should be provided to encourage successful businesses to sub contract, do business with or mentor new Indigenous enterprises.

My business is currently involved in many mentoring programs with several local Aboriginal Artists.

I have *self funded* this process in addition to self funding many arts development ideas simply because we haven't been able to receive the financial and business assistance required now.

Many funding rounds are simply not responsive to situations that are current.

This group of artists have been working together for two solid years have formed their own arts group and recently one of the members has invested in my business to professionally present product to the tourism and retail markets.

I have received the NEIS program support to start this business but the my complexities and detailed time spent in community consultation process and the mentoring process are simply not funded or supported in any way via this program.

The local Aboriginal artists here are already successful in selling their original artworks and our Eco product Aboriginal Art Gift Cards have been very well received locally.

We continue to look for financial and professional support for a business of Indigenous and Non Indigenous people working together successfully.

Members of the Aboriginal Arts Group have asked me for business planning assistance and mainly for product development assistance in creating textiles with artwork prints, fabric, scarves and notebooks.

In my experience they lack the skills and confidence required to negotiate the possibilities for support via other agencies and Government bodies.

As a sole trader I need financial support to enable many of these artists to create for themselves a sustainable income from their artworks and product sales.

Yours sincerely,  
Tracey Allen  
Business Manager

Red Cockatoo Australia

Red Cockatoo Australia acknowledges  
the traditional custodians of this region,  
the *Darug and Gundungurra* people.