



# Desart

## Training Book



## Acknowledgements

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# Part One

## *The Desert Training Network*





## 1.1 How Desart works

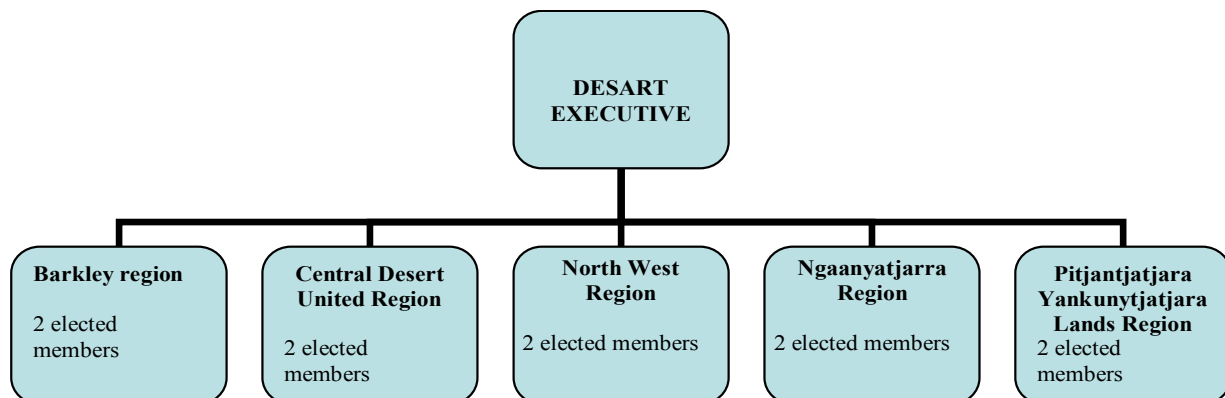
Desart is the Association of Central Australian Aboriginal Art and Craft Centres representing approximately 40 Aboriginal owned and controlled Art Centres. These Art Centres provide support to some 3,000 artists and generate about \$11 million annually in art and craft sales.

Desart was first incorporated under the *Northern Territory of Australia Incorporation Act* in 1993. Members of Desart are Indigenous owned incorporated Art Centres or Art Centres affiliated with Local Community Government Councils. There are also some member organisations established as Proprietary Limited Companies owned and directed by Aboriginal people.

From December 2004, a new regional structure within Desart means the Executive Committee is comprised of two elected representatives from each of the five regions of the Association.

These regions are:

- The Barkley Region
- The Central Desert United Region
- The North West Region
- The Ngaanyatjarra Region
- The Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands Region



The twelve elected members then elect the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, and Treasurer.

## **1.2 The Desart Training Network**

Desart is developing a Training Network to support Aboriginal Art Centres in Central Australia by building training partnerships between Art Centres and Registered Training Organisations, and, where appropriate, other participants in the Aboriginal Art Industry of the Central Desert.

### **Why a DESART Training Network?**

Art Centres need training for all of their people:

- Artists and art workers
- Executive members of Art Centres
- Art Centre managers

Lots of work has already been done to figure out what these training needs might be, but realising training which works for people, including the development of sustainable opportunities, is not easy.

### **How we can help?**

Our Training Network creates a map so we can see:

- Registered Training Organisations offering training that meets identified needs of Art Centres: how, what and where
- Government funding which may assist Art Centres to get the right training, and assist training organisations to provide the right training
- Participants in the Art industry with ideas and perhaps resources to contribute.
- Available resources and initiatives

With this map, Desart can facilitate getting together the right mix of people, ideas and funding to get things happening.

### **Who can join?**

The Desart Training Network is open to all participants in the Aboriginal Art Industry of the Central Desert who have ideas.



## Benefits to participants

The Network offers *Art Centres* the opportunity to tell Desart what they need and what they don't need, what will work and what won't work, as well as share past experiences, good and bad. The Network helps Art Centres to say what they want from training to training providers and to work with training providers to get it.

The Network offers *training providers* the opportunity to be part of a community of practice and to register on our participants list. This way they will learn about possible opportunities and projects.

The Network offers all participants in the *Aboriginal Art Industry of the Central Desert* the opportunity to contribute ideas and other opportunities for training. These may be artists, galleries, academics, suppliers, tourist centre staff and peak organisations as well as others.

The Network offers *Government* a forum to match national training policy and funding with the needs of Art Centres in Central Australia in practical and inclusive ways, some of which will be tried and true, some of which will be new.

The Desart Training Network is an ongoing commitment to finding out what we need from training, which training works the best, and which training organisations will work with us to achieve this.

- We will learn how Desart can help make training happen, and put that into the Desart Strategic Plan.
- Art Centres will also be able think and plan for training, if they want to.
- We will develop training resources for Art Centres.
- We will match ideas with Art Centres, training organisations and funding so that projects can happen.
- Everyone will learn more about Art Centres and what training they need.
- Everyone will learn more about National Training and how it can work for Art Centres.

This Training Book arises from workshops held in all five regions of Desart member Art Centres, as well as meetings with Government representatives, training providers, and other in the Aboriginal Art Industry of the Central Desert.

It is a beginning. There will be many other organisations that will wish to participate, and many new strategies and initiatives that can be incorporated.

### **1.3 About Art Centres**

Art Centres may meet many roles within a community. Primarily they are places for the creation and development of Aboriginal art: new media, new products, fine arts, painting, batik and fabric, print work, pottery, baskets and punu, tourist artifacts etc. But they also may serve the following purposes:

#### **Cultural maintenance**

Aboriginal law and culture are the foundation for all the arts and crafts produced and sold at Art Centres and the means whereby Aboriginal identity is further defined and celebrated.

#### **Places of renewal**

Art Centres are places where communities can renew culture, values, law and economic integrity. They are places where Aboriginal culture is valued in both worlds. Attachment to country is renewed and strengthened. It is a place where Aboriginal communities can draw upon achievement, and engage with the mainstream community on the basis of this achievement.

#### **As a place of work and earning income**

In most communities, Art Centres provide the major, if not the only source of self generated income as well as providing an important platform for cultural maintenance and education. They play an important role in the financial well being of the community. The Art Centre in the economy is examined in section 1.4 of this resource.

#### **As a distributor to markets**

Some Art Centres focus on the international market, some on the tourist market and some on the collection and distribution of arts and crafts for sale. Some Art Centres maintain galleries on communities, some sell to national and international galleries some sell wholesale, but all Art Centres have to locate their market and distribute their work.

#### **Strengthening the community**

A strong Art Centre means a healthy community. Art Centres play an important role in broader family and community social support. The future of communities lies with its youth and this is recognised by many artists. They are seeking a way to engage youth in the activities of Art Centres. Many Art Centres work with schools and kindergartens and play a role in disability support, and programme for petrol sniffers and others. Arts practice is used by some artists to teach bush tucker and healthy eating. In some cases Art Centres work with other community initiatives to grow employment opportunities and skill.

### **As places of learning**

Artists and executive members are not just learners, but also educators, mentors and facilitators. Through their work and their practice they are growing an understanding of Aboriginal law, culture, heritage and history for both Aboriginal people and for others who engage with their work. Art Centres may be engaged in training under CDEP or other arrangements. They are also places where people can learn money story and how to manage things; learn how to ‘walk in two worlds’.

### **Places of respite and care**

Art Centres may provide a safe place for older people and women, where one can find company, a cup of tea and support. They also may provide food (breakfast and lunch) and many different informal support roles, from translating documents to arranging accommodation, transport and financial support.

## 1.4 Understanding the economy of an Art Centre

Aboriginal Art from the Central Desert has a high profile, both in terms of Australian iconography and because the Australian Indigenous art movement is highly regarded both here and overseas. The national value of Aboriginal visual art sales is between \$100 million and \$300 million. (Altman 2003, 2005)

The perception of success can lead to certain policy and funding assumptions which impact also on training, so it is important to briefly outline the economic profile of an Art Centre.

- Art Centres are located in communities whose social and economic status diverges significantly from the mainstream. The geographic location of most Art Centres is in remote areas away from market, enterprise and employment opportunity.
- For some Aboriginal people on communities the opportunity to engage in the production and sale of Aboriginal art represents their only opportunity to engage in the mainstream economy. It may be their only opportunity to earn discretionary cash, outside of welfare income. This does not mean however that the artist understands the mainstream economy, how the artwork is sold, and the price of the artwork arrived at.
- It also does not mean that Art Centres are in themselves the answer to creating market economies and employment of communities. Using figures from the 2001 census, Altman calculates that each artist would receive an average arts income of \$1,400 per person representing just 2% of gross reported Indigenous income.
- In the case of the Aboriginal art industry, the fact that the artists receive welfare income has not undermined the sustainability and growth of Aboriginal art. However, if the industry was organised in some other way, this could occur. The economic models of sustaining some Art Centres may not work on others for a whole range of reasons. For example, the very different roles of CDEP in Art Centres.
- There are many other sectors of the Australian economy that are indirectly (and directly) benefiting from Aboriginal art such as tourism and commercial galleries. There are also many parts of Australian cultural life that benefit, from the recording of stories and heritage through the art work to the influence of the design and cultural elements on our national understandings.

A typical Art Centre may receive a grant from government which may cover the cost of employing an Art Centre manager, usually at between 35k and 50k, running a vehicle and some materials. However the majority of materials and freight will be raised from Art Centre earnings. When a painting, pot, fabric or art work is sold, an artist may receive 50% to 60 % of the sale price of the painting. The rest will go straight back into the Art Centre to cover the costs of canvasses, stretching, materials, paints raffia, brushes needles packaging, additional vehicles, tables, chairs, additional

labour, refreshments, building maintenance, car maintenance, travel, accommodation, postage, computers, website, telephone etc. In this sense, Art Centres are more like co-operatives where the more successful artists are subsidising the work of others from their earnings.

To imagine from this model that Art Centres can afford to pay even one full time additional member of staff defies an accurate analysis of the economies of an Art Centre. Some Art Centres receive no core grant at all, and a very few may attract additional royalties from the community or investment from industry; the less sales an Art Centre makes the more the money is needed for the Art Centre's operations, so that the artists receive less and less income. There may be anything from 5 to 30 artists working at a Centre. Even with 30 working artists only a few will be making big sales. When examined this way, it can be seen that perceptions that Art Centres may be the focus of a recovery in the Indigenous economy or the central plank of Indigenous economic development must be treated with caution.

This is especially the case when one considers that the majority of artists in remote areas speak a first language other than English, are not confident in English and are informed by a world view significantly different to one that underpins mainstream economic understanding. In many remote communities there is little ongoing training support.

The economic sustainability of Art Centres will be dependent on maintaining market demand; ensuring security of supply; and maintaining operational support where this is critical to market engagement owing to market failure.

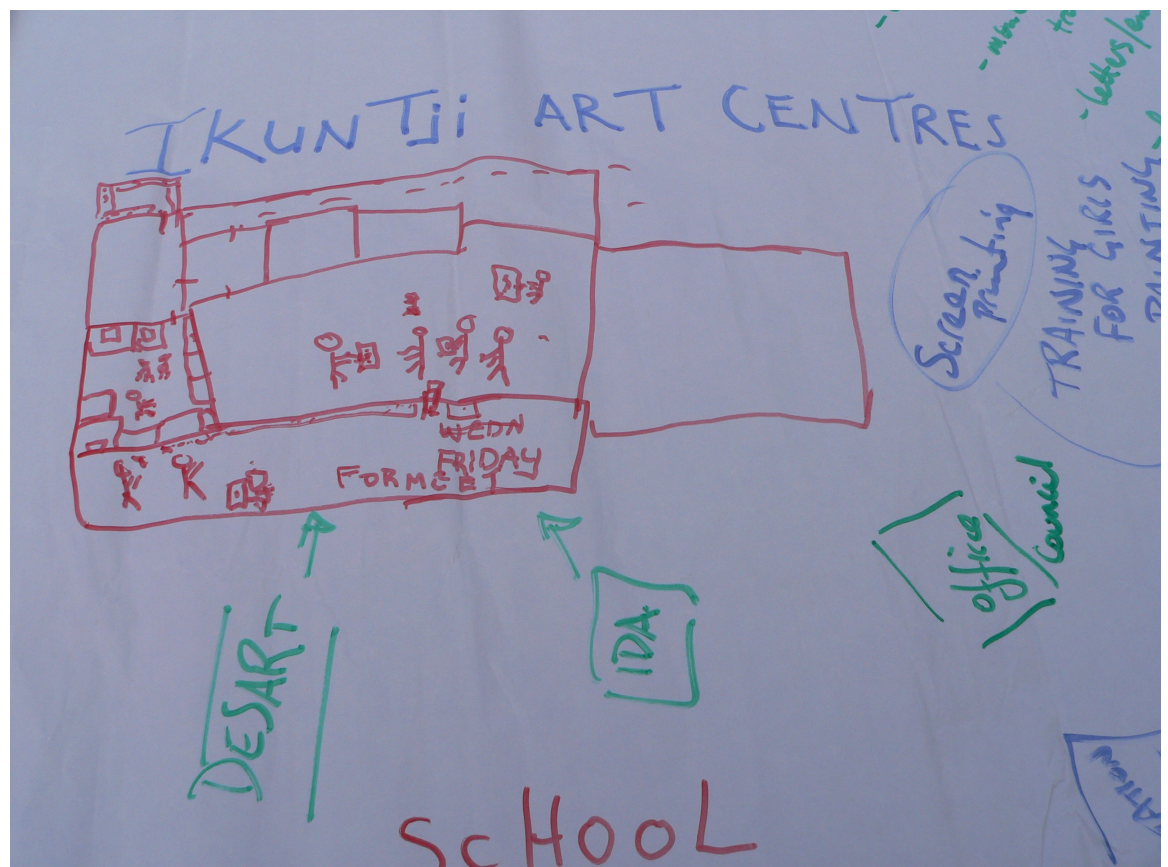
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# PART TWO

*Skill required by Art Centres*



## 2.1 How we identified these skills

### Identifying these skills

The Desert project team traveled to five regional meetings in South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory talking with people about what training they would like, and how they would like it. At these workshops, participants worked in groups that they determined: sometimes particular Art Centres, sometimes mens' group and womens' group, young people and older people. Artists presented the information in any way they liked, as a picture, map, or as text, or by simply talking. Information could be presented in the language they felt most comfortable with: English or one of the fifteen Aboriginal languages. Firstly, the facilitator explained as briefly as possible what the workshop was about; speaking in English and drawing a map of an Art Centre. Participants then worked in groups. Finally, we gathered together again and all the groups presented their discussions and findings.

We took photographs and presented reports with images of people at work and also of the presentations, diagrams and charts. This meant that participants could see who was present and what they had discussed in the report of the meeting, even if they couldn't read the accompanying text.

At the end of each meeting we would ask how people found the meeting; whether it worked or was useful. One of the most common feedback was "Good two way learning". At one meeting, artists joked "Four way learning!" There were four language groups in that meeting. This meant that the group clearly could see that we were learning from them, and indicated that they had learnt from us. They were also learning from each other, and this was one of the most important things participants told us they took away from the workshops.

This section is in two parts

- A list of skills identified by artists and Art Centre managers at workshops
- A map of those skills against units of competency in Training Packages



## 2.2 Skills required by Art Centres

Skills for our Art	Skills in the Office	Skills for Art Workers	Working with Community	Working with galleries, culture centres and other outlets
<p><i>Sewing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making quilts</li> <li>• Patch working</li> </ul> <p><i>Craft:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making bracelets</li> <li>• beads, chains</li> <li>• Bush beads</li> <li>• Printing shirts</li> <li>• Paper making</li> <li>• Ceramics</li> </ul> <p><i>Technique:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to draw people</li> <li>• Using shades</li> <li>• Using colors</li> </ul> <p><i>Puni:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How to find wood</li> <li>▪ How to prepare wood</li> <li>▪ Boomerang</li> <li>▪ Woomera</li> <li>▪ Spear</li> <li>▪ Nulla Nulla</li> <li>▪ Traditional technique eg spinifex resin</li> </ul> <p><i>Products:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T-shirts</li> <li>• Skirts</li> <li>• Batik</li> <li>• Baskets</li> </ul>	<p><i>Planning and training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying own training needs</li> <li>• Identifying needs</li> <li>• Succession planning</li> <li>• On the job learning</li> <li>• Cross cultural training</li> </ul> <p><i>Meetings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to run meetings</li> <li>• Minutes</li> <li>• Making decisions</li> </ul> <p><i>Computer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking photos</li> <li>• Keyboard skills</li> <li>• Printing</li> <li>• Emails</li> <li>• Computer literacy</li> <li>• How to use the internet</li> <li>• Cataloguing work</li> <li>• Generating certificates</li> <li>• Developing and managing the web site</li> </ul> <p><i>Clerical:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filing</li> <li>• Travel arrangements</li> <li>• Writing letters/emails</li> <li>• Bookwork</li> </ul> <p><i>Legal issues:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ownership of paintings</li> <li>▪ Incorporation</li> <li>▪ Copyright</li> <li>▪ Ownership of stories</li> </ul>	<p><i>Preparing for art:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation of wood</li> <li>• Preparing wood</li> <li>• Preparing canvas</li> <li>• Preparation of materials</li> <li>• Care of Brushes</li> <li>• Mixing paints</li> <li>• Organising paint pots</li> <li>• Collecting and recording artists stories</li> <li>• Organising paintings into finished and unfinished</li> <li>• Stretching and painting canvases</li> </ul> <p><i>Maintenance of Centre:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Fixing windows and doors</li> <li>• Keeping clean</li> <li>• Repairs</li> </ul> <p><i>Everyday support:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid.</li> <li>• Driving and driver education</li> </ul>	<p><i>Health Centre:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petrol sniffers</li> <li>• Old people</li> <li>• Providing healthy tucker</li> <li>• Providing plenty of water</li> </ul> <p><i>School:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning stories: particularly young ones</li> <li>• Learning ceremony</li> <li>• Learning bush tucker</li> <li>• Working with young people</li> </ul> <p><i>Municipal office:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community development</li> <li>• Joint projects</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Creating jobs</li> </ul>	<p><i>Managing our own art:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance and expression of traditional culture</li> <li>• Committee meetings</li> <li>• How to talk to tourist people</li> <li>• How to talk to gallery buyers</li> <li>• Working with other Art Centres</li> <li>• Working with Galleries</li> <li>• Maintaining stock</li> <li>• Sales</li> <li>• Explaining culture and stories</li> <li>• Display</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Ethics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representing artists</li> <li>• Accountability</li> </ul> <p><i>Managing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance (Money story)</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Writing stories for Art works</li> <li>• Managing and recruiting staff</li> <li>• Stocktaking and orders</li> <li>• Managing supplies</li> <li>• Helping artists</li> </ul> <p><i>Managing Art:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selling and talking to buyers</li> <li>• Galleries</li> <li>• Photography/documentation of art works; artists profiles, taking stories.</li> <li>• Videos for use in galleries/festivals/exhibitions</li> <li>• Which work goes to what sort of outlets</li> <li>• Presenting work for sale</li> <li>• Safe packaging and distribution</li> <li>• Pricing</li> <li>• How to organize exhibitions</li> <li>• How to recognise and deal with unscrupulous traders</li> <li>• Exhibition hanging</li> <li>• Timetabling exhibitions</li> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul> <p><i>Working with government:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing submissions</li> <li>• How to get funding</li> </ul> <p><i>Language:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literacy in first language</li> <li>▪ Literacy and numeracy in English</li> </ul>	<p><i>Cleaning studio:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweeping</li> <li>• Mopping floor</li> <li>• Tidying paints</li> <li>• Cleaning sink</li> </ul>	
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## 2.3 Training Packages

The Training Packages that match these skills are inclusive of:

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| • Visual Arts, Craft and Design           | CUV03 |
| • Business Services                       | BSB01 |
| • Transport and Distribution              | TDT02 |
| • Printing and Graphic Arts               | ICP05 |
| • Museum and Library/Information Services | CUL04 |
| • Retail                                  | WRR02 |
| • Tourism                                 | THT02 |
| • Community Services                      | CHC02 |
| • Wholesale                               | WRW01 |

Desart will map the identified skills against these Training Packages, which will then assist Art Centres in matching training needs with funding programmes in their State or Territory.

# Part Three

## *Training Delivery*



### 3.1 Principles for training

These principles have been developed as a guide from workshops discussions and research.

1. Training should promote Aboriginal philosophy, ideas, hopes and aspirations.
2. Art Centre training should be developed in accordance with the expressed skill needs of the artists and the Art Centre. It should be Art Centre driven (industry led).
3. The training programme or course should be negotiated together with appropriate advice from the artists, art workers and community. Training delivery should reflect this process of negotiation.
4. The training programme or course should identify how traditional culture, knowledge and law can be incorporated and how trainers can work side by side with the holders of that knowledge.
5. Where units of competency and qualifications are used from Training Packages, customisation of the training programme or course must occur to meet the skill requirements identified by the artists and the Art Centre. If customisation cannot occur within the Training Package, a new training programme or course should be developed, or an appropriate non-accredited training programme sourced. The relevant Industry Skills Council should be informed of the omission within the Training Package.
6. Training should be delivered in the language of the participants or in both English and language. Where the trainer does not speak the relevant language, an interpreter should be provided.
7. Training should support genuine outcomes for the Art Centre, the community and participants, so that training is seen as successful and useful.
8. Training should be active and applied. Training should incorporate the experiential nature of learning on community; it should be two way so that all participants can recognise and reflect upon their contribution.
9. Training providers must hold the necessary intercultural skills and competence, and be able to demonstrate respect for Aboriginal cultures of the Central Desert. Training providers must be able to demonstrate an understanding of the issues and challenges involved in working together on community.

10. Trainers should share their experiences with other training providers so that successful training can be applied elsewhere, and others can avoid mistakes where possible.
11. Successful training outcomes will necessarily require continuous learning, application and relearning. Both funding providers and trainers need to consider making a consistent and long-term commitment to training on community over time.

## 3.2 Training issues

Desart Art Centres want to acquire the range of skills that allow them to be successful artists and craftspeople, to meet the legislative and financial requirements of running an Art Centre, to support the Art Centre and to support the promotion, marketing and sale of their art. The National Training Framework may help artists to achieve these aims, but it is important to recognise the range of issues that need to be addressed for effective outcomes from training. To establish the relevant training, and delivery methods, trainers need to listen and be prepared to change learning strategies, time taken, resources and outcomes on a regular basis.

### 3.2.1 Issues for artists as art practitioners

Artists talked about two areas of skill development:

- The **first** was their own development as artists
- The **second** was developing skills, in promoting, representing and selling their art.

#### Developing as Artists

Artists constantly express how much they like to learning from each other. Artists reunited at regional meetings after a long time reflected upon their art experience and development: what they had learned together in the past, learning about what is going on, sharing stories and seeing everyone from different communities. At other meetings, artists spoke about learning from visiting artists and “artists in residence”

Artists are interested in exploring style, technique and expression to develop their own vision. They are also interested in strengthening regional styles; an example given was “Arrente style, not Utopia.”, and in making these regional styles wider and deeper. They want to make sure that the creation of art was not driven solely by what the tourist market wanted, or what is currently fashionable in Sydney or Melbourne.

#### Promoting, representing and selling their art.

There is a lot of interest in learning about the sales process from the office to the Gallery. Artists express particular interest in developing skills related to talking to tourist people about their art, and selling paintings in the Art Centre, as well learning as how to talk to Gallery buyers, how to organise exhibitions, exhibition timetabling and dates, the safe packaging of art work, and how to price art work.

Artists travel all over for meetings and exhibitions: Sydney, Melbourne, Darwin, Adelaide, sometimes overseas. Artists would like to learn how to represent their paintings to galleries and people in galleries, how to tell their stories both at exhibitions away, and when people visit the Art Centre.



Learning about ethics and when people are cheating the artists is important. Education is needed about how the Art Centre model works and why selling to unscrupulous is not in the artists own interests in the long run. Mr Jones, the Chairman of Desart often spoke about the importance of Art Centres representing artists properly so they get the right money back.

### 3.2.2. Managing the Art Centre

Artists would very much like to learn more about:

- Managing the Art Centre as executive members; and
- Office management skills and Art Centre business.

They would also like to see employment of local people in Art Centres.

#### Managing Art Centres as executive members

For Aboriginal people, learning how to run Art Centres and governance training is important. It is important to write the correct job description for Art Centre managers and to know how to work with them to achieve aims. It is important to provide Art Centre managers with the training and support they need if part of their duties is to provide mentorship and side by side learning to artists and arts support workers, as well as to executive members.

Executive members also need to know and understand money story, and they need to learn how to identify funding sources and how to write letters and submissions to Government to source that funding.

#### Office management skills and Art Centre business

There is a strong preference for working side by side with the Art Centre manager to learn office management skills and Art Centre business. Artists say they feel like children when they do not know what is happening. *"We should work as a team so we can learn as we work."* When the Art Centre manager goes away; the Centre is closed, so there is no art happening. People want to learn administration so that the Centre can be kept open. *"White people working and teaching us as well as they could. Team work so we can learn about administration: paper work, money story."*

#### Employment of local people in Art Centres

Mr Jones, the Chairperson of Desart, spoke about how there were a lot of Aboriginal organisations where Aboriginal people were not engaged to do the paid work and where they need training. Young people need to learn how to use computers properly so that they can be trained in office administration and some of the other jobs in running an Art Centre.

Artists would also like to see young girls and others from the community have the opportunity to learn skills for the office and art worker skills so that the Art Centre can employ Aboriginal people.

### 3.2.3 Working with community

Artists have a vision of different organisations contributing to each other on communities: artists working with the health centre, people coming from the health centre to paint, artists teaching culture in schools, kids coming to the Art Centre to learn. Artists could help with community programme. They also had a strong vision of different Art Centres learning together through meetings, sharing experiences, ideas, 'mentoring' each other.

Art Centre training can affect and be affected by issues in the community. For example learning may be affected by people sniffing petrol. But opportunities in Art Centres can create new activities. Some petrol sniffers can end up as art workers. This has happened in some Art Centres.

#### Working with young people

Artists are concerned that when young people finish school there is no work, and they are not offered training. TAFE can teach them a lot of skills so they will know enough to work in the Art Centre, as artists or as managers and support workers.

Artists want to help schools and TAFE teach kids about traditional bush foods, law, ceremony and culture. Young people need to learn about good food so they are strong and healthy. Artists feel they can teach them in the bush, as well as at school, and that this two way learning can compliment each other, and enable young people to develop confidence in both cultures.

At the Ngaanyatjarra regional meeting, held at Warakurna we were lucky to have a young people's group. Young people talk about the whole of Warakurna; the Art Centre in the community. They want to study on the community and to work in the community not to go elsewhere. They want real jobs in the community, and they would like secondary and tertiary education available at Warakurna

Warakurna Art Centre had recently re-established a Gallery at the Roadhouse. Young people felt that they could learn to manage the Gallery: sales and managing stock, selling to the tourists. They could learn to document art and its stories: photographing and cataloguing. The artists could also go into the school and teach younger people there. They felt that the arts centre could play a role in making young people strong, teaching culture and helping create jobs.

This view of Art Centres in the community is strongly supported by Art Centres and artists. Young people could be trained in the work of the Art Centre, both in office tasks, and as Art support workers. This would create opportunities on the community when they leave school, and perhaps a chance to earn some money or create employment.

## Teaching traditional knowledge, law and culture

Men's groups continually express concern about young men and their future. Older men would like to teach young men how to find wood, how to prepare wood and how to make traditional instruments and art works, such as punu, spears and spear throwers, boomerangs etc. They are very concerned about unemployment, and young men drifting. They ask: How do you get young fellas to work when they don't want to work? How do you teach them when they are always tired? They felt that young men do not always want to learn what older men have to teach them.

### **3.2.4 Managing and understanding training**

#### **Distance**

There is a stark contrast between accessibility of training for people who live in major centres along the Stuart Highway, and those who live on remote communities. The longer the dirt track, the less training they are likely to have received, and the experience of training is very different.

Artists in remote areas, see training in much broader terms; and do not associate learning with formal training arrangements, with which they are unfamiliar. Artists in South Australia were able to talk about TAFE (there is likely to be a TAFE building on each community, but these are not necessarily in use) but do not speak about any remembered training experience.

#### **Planning for training**

The artists in Central Desert United Region and North West region are familiar with training organisations, speaking positively of the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous tertiary Education, and the Institute for Aboriginal Development in particular. However, they also spoke of training which is not well organised so that they (the artists) are pulled in lots of directions, and there are many artists who feel oversupplied with training. Training also stops artists from painting. A few artists at Tenant Creek and in Alice Springs were able to talk about and identify the qualifications they had received.

#### **Two way learning**

Two-way learning is about the trainer respecting the knowledge, learning processes and perspectives of another people and recognising that they are learning about another culture and knowledge system, at the same time as sharing their own knowledge. It is about working together to find the basis from which new knowledge can be developed in a way that is relevant to the learners concerned, and can be grasped by them. This is the preferred mode of training delivery of many artists.

#### **Learning side by side and mentoring**

Often the preferred method of instruction is mentoring and learning side by side. The members of Desert want to develop jobs for Aboriginal people in Art Centres. They want Art Centre managers, who are always non-Aboriginal people, to train local people over time in the functions of their job. However, learning side by side is a skill and non-Aboriginal workers need training and support in working side by side. Side by side learning means that not only do non-Aboriginal workers share their skills, Aboriginal people and the community are strengthened into the future and the non-Aboriginal worker has made an on-going contribution well after they have left the community.

## Artists as Teachers

Artists can deliver training in traditional knowledge, law, history and culture and passing onto a new generation their heritage. Some artists are interested not just in teaching visual arts, but also performing arts, such as dance. Some are also interested in teaching ceremony. Artists have a role to play in ensuring the relevance of training, that it incorporates Aboriginal needs, knowledge and requirements and they can also assist with language and engaging the community. The respect and recognition of this role is not always recognised within Training Packages, and therefore may remain unrecognised in training programmes and courses.

## Training the Trainer

Trainers and educators often need to learn how to work and teach in cross cultural and multilingual environments. Many of us are monolingual and mono cultural, and we need further skills and understandings if we are to work effectively in these environments. Sometimes it will mean learning another language.

## Functional language and literacy

Functional language and literacy is a critical skill which can assist in artists and Art Centres achieving their aspirations. On many communities English is the language of whitefella business, but at all times an Aboriginal language is spoken. English is critical, because this is how, in the end; Art Centres can be run by Aboriginal people. But artists pointed out that literacy and numeracy in first language is also needed and that without this English language literacy is difficult to acquire. In addition, without English language and literacy, trainers should be providing training in language or with the assistance of an interpreter. Otherwise the training will not be understood and will fail in its purpose.

### **3.3.5 Issues for the National Training Framework**

#### **Customisation of Training Packages**

Customisation of Training Packages is inevitably necessary. Desert members are looking for training linked to the particular goals of their Art Centre and/or community. They may want immediate and short-term training or the acquisition of skill within long term projects. So it is important to offer modules that are relevant, not simply modules included in a national qualification. Remember, in designing Training Packages, we work within the dominant culture, in the often highly technical language of that culture, and in English.

#### **Flexibility**

Flexibility is required to adapt these national outcomes to the needs of an Art Centre where the English is at best a second language for artists and many art workers. The communities in which the overwhelming majority of Art Centres are based exist outside of the mainstream economy and industry. The worldview of the artists and art workers and executive committee is informed by a completely different cultural and knowledge base to that within which Training Packages are conceptualised. Effective customisation is what is required if competency benchmarks ever going to be translated into meaningful training for Aboriginal Australians in the Central Desert.

#### **Qualifications**

Once an individual can see that training can work in achieving a particular and relevant goal to themselves and their community, then training can be valued and an individual may be motivated to acquire additional modules to achieve a qualification if they want to, and will have developed more confidence in their ability to do so. A qualification for an individual, while always valuable, may not be the priority outcome from the training desired by Art Centre participants.

#### **Relevance**

If we cannot establish the relevance of Training Package outcomes to Aboriginal Australians within their own communities, then they may not be relevant, a fact we find easy to accept within industry, but often dismiss as a failure to understand the customisation processes or indeed VET when expressed by Aboriginal people and/or their training providers. It is important that where there are issues of relevance for Aboriginal Australians that these are incorporated into Training Package design. This way the Training Package will meet the needs of all industry in Australia, including the Aboriginal Art industry of the Central Desert, and of all Australians requiring vocational skills.



## Funding

Art Centre managers work on their own with a range of competing pressures and with very little support. They may struggle to find the capacity and support to deliver side by side learning on top of pressing daily tasks. Training providers are rarely funded to support them, let alone to learn language and/or use interpreters. The funding rarely allows for the financial recognition of the contribution from holders of traditional knowledge. Nor does it cover the costs of providing training consistently over time on community. It may simply not be flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of approaches necessary for long term outcomes.

# Part Four

*What we are going to do*



## 4.1 The Desert Training Plan

The Desert Training Network aims to work collaboratively with each other, and our partners:

- to create stronger, sustainable Art Centres
- to help Aboriginal artists make decisions and run their Art Centre business
- to help Aboriginal people create healthy, strong communities
- to support Art Centre diversity, and to grow good business practice.

### OUR PARTNERS:

NGOs	Ananguku Arts and Culture Aboriginal Organisation (KU Arts) Araluen Cultural Precinct Arts Law ArtsMARK Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAAA) Barkly Regional Arts CHARTTES Training Advisory Council Innovation Business Skills Australia Museums Australia National Association for Visual Artists (NAVA) SA Recreation & Arts Industry Training Council Viscopy WA Arts Sport & Recreation Industry Training Council
Commonwealth	AUSTRADE Australia Council for the Arts Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination – Indigenous Coordination Centres
South Australia	ARTS SA Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (DAARE) Department of Education Department of Families and Communities Indigenous Affairs Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet TAFE: APY TAFE
Western Australia	Department of Culture and the Arts Department of Local Government and Regional Development Office of Aboriginal Economic Development, Department of Industry and Resources WA Tourism Commission
Northern Territory	ARTS NT NT Department of Business Industry and Resource Development (DBIRD) NT Department of Employment and Training Tourism NT

**OUR PLANS:**

1. Develop a Desart Training Plan.
2. Grow the Desart Training Network.
3. Develop and prioritise Desart training programmes.
4. Create opportunities for the learning of new skills:
  - 4.1 Work with RTOS to create flexible relevant training
  - 4.2 Work with Governments to create relevant training
  - 4.3 Work with Non-Government Organisations, Industry Skills Councils and other participants in the Aboriginal Art Industry of the Central Desert.
5. Strengthen Desart's capacity to advise and support members with regard to training.

**HOW WE WILL DO THIS:**

We will start small and build upon achievements

<p><i>What we are going to do</i></p> <p>1. Develop a Desart Training Plan</p>		
<p><i>Why we want to do this strategy</i></p> <p>Artist have said that there is some training that is not well organised so that they are pulled in lots of directions. Other artists have not received any training.</p> <p>A Training Plan enables Desart to manage training in a planned way and to show people what has happened, and what is going to happen. It can be reviewed and improved. Training can be integrated into the Desart Strategic Plan so that it supports industry business.</p>		
<i>How we are going to do it</i>	<i>When we have finished</i>	
	✓	<i>Date achieved</i>
1.1 Consult with artists across Desart's five regions.	✓	2005 (ongoing)
1.2 Write down what training needs, issues and principles artists have identified.	✓	2005
1.3 Consult with Art Centre managers regarding training delivery.		
1.4 Identify the training needs of Art Centre managers		
1.5 Identify a series of achievable outcomes for the Desart Training Plan.	✓	2005
1.5 Review the Desart Training Plan annually.		
1.6 Map the Desart Training Plan and achievements against the Desart Strategic Plan annually.	✓	AGM 2005 (ongoing)

<p><i>What we are going to do</i></p> <p>2. Grow the Desart Training Network</p>		
<p><i>Why we want to do this strategy</i></p> <p>Art Centres need training for all of their people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists and Arts workers</li> <li>• Executive members of Art Centres</li> <li>• Art Centre managers</li> </ul> <p>We have already begun a Desart Training Network. We need to grow the Training Network in order to support and obtain the training Desart members would like.</p>		
<i>How we are going to do it</i>	<i>When we have finished</i>	
	<i>√</i>	<i>Date achieved</i>
2.1 Continue to identify Registered Training Organisations offering training that meets identified needs of Art Centres: how, what and where.	√	<i>Ongoing</i>
2.2 Continue to map Government funding which may assist Art Centres to obtain the right training, and assist training organisations to provide the right training.	√	<i>Ongoing</i>
2.3 Develop a stronger understanding of potential participants and training systems in particular in South Australia and Western Australia.	√ (some)	<i>Ongoing</i>
2.4 Identity ideas and initiatives which have worked in the past, which may work in the future, and which may help now.	√	<i>Ongoing</i>
2.5 Identify available resources and initiatives from the non-government sector which can help.		

<p><i>What we are going to do</i></p> <p>3. Develop and prioritise Desert Training programmes</p>		
<p><i>Why we want to do this strategy</i></p> <p>So that we can advise people on the training available for the skills that they want for their Art Centre and their art practice, and so that we can put in place training as quickly as possible.</p>		
<i>How we are going to do it</i>	<i>When we have finished</i>	
	√	<i>Date achieved</i>
3.1 Identify the skills the artists need.	√	2005
3.2 Develop the Desert Training programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills for Our Art</li> <li>• Skills in the Office</li> <li>• Skills for Art Workers</li> <li>• Working with Community</li> <li>• Working with Galleries, Culture Centres and other outlets</li> </ul>	current	
3.3 Map the skills against Training Packages and units of competencies.	current	
3.4 Identify where there is no nationally recognised training available.	current	
3.5 Map and record training achievements in each area.		



