

Indigenous Engagement with Science:

Towards deeper understandings

Prepared by the Expert Working Group on Indigenous Engagement with Science as part of the Inspiring Australia initiative

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Key findings

The Expert Working Group on Indigenous Engagement with Sciences recognises the urgency of increasing the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the development and communication of sciences in Australia. An important step in achieving this is understanding and valuing Indigenous knowledge systems, acknowledging the significant contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have already made to the development of science in Australia, and communicating this to the scientific and broader Australian community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have unique knowledge systems that can contribute to all fields of scientific endeavour, including science-based activities such as the management of Australia's natural resources. However, the traditional science knowledge and skills of Australian Indigenous peoples are not just undervalued, they are also poorly resourced and the transfer of traditional knowledge and skills to future generations is critically threatened.

Urgent action is therefore required to:

- Maintain and enhance intergenerational transfer of Indigenous knowledge, while protecting the relationships between Indigenous people and their knowledge and skills;
- Create new understandings of Indigenous knowledge systems to deepen the value and relevance of science in Australia, through the development of tools that improve the cultural competency of scientists and enable the full and equitable participation of Indigenous knowledge holders in the sciences;
- Identify local and regional initiatives that protect and strengthen the ownership and integrity of Indigenous knowledge by aligning development initiatives with the growth and support of Indigenous livelihood;
- Enable Indigenous priority setting by collaborating with and resourcing Indigenous communities, leaders, knowledge holders, researchers, trainees and students wherever possible in the communication and practice of science.
- Influence research project design and evaluation to ensure that Indigenous people are empowered and Indigenous knowledge is protected; and to reward research outcomes that ensuring meaningful participation, appropriate protocols, data sharing and examination of sustainable investment and benefit to Indigenous people and communities.
- Develop an Indigenous specific media and communication strategy engage Indigenous people in science and inform the broader Australian community of Indigenous achievements in science.
- Develop education and outreach programs to engage Indigenous young people in the sciences.

Unlike other Expert Working Groups contributing to the Inspiring Australia initiative, this group did not attempt a broad survey or consultation process in developing this report. It was strongly agreed by the members that the interests of remote Indigenous communities would not be met by attempting this within the time and resource constraints of the project. Rather, it will be essential to undertake future, dedicated work to ensure that traditional knowledge holders and language speakers are able to participate in a meaningful way in augmenting and implementing the recommendations of this report.

Introduction

Inspiring Australia is a national strategy led by the Federal Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) with the broad aim of realising the full social, economic and environmental benefits of investment in science and research. Through the facilitation of national leadership, coherent action and cooperation it is hoped that Australian science will receive recognition internationally and be able to ensure Australia has a capable science workforce with people from across the country from all backgrounds engaged in science. Expert working groups have been formed to investigate particular priorities and make recommendations on the way forward. A key priority is the engagement of Indigenous Australians in urban, regional and remote locations as a way of increasing the capacity of the science workforce through the development of the potential and interest of Indigenous Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010).

As the Indigenous peoples of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander have unique rights and a unique contribution to make. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are distinct and diverse communities and cultures and a successful science engagement strategy must recognise and respond to this. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data from 2006, the estimated resident Indigenous population of Australia was 517,043 or 2.5% of the total Australian population, with approximately 24% living in remote or very remote areas, compared to about 2% for the non-Indigenous population. The Indigenous population has a different age distribution profile with 38% of the total Indigenous population aged 15 years or younger compared to 19% of non-Indigenous Australians. At the other end of the age spectrum, only 3% of Indigenous Australians are aged 65 years or older compared to 13% of non-Indigenous population (ABS, 2006). This results in a population pyramid for Indigenous Australia more typical of a third-world population than one resident in a developed nation.

According to the ABS data from 2006, Indigenous people are less likely to be employed in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services than non-Indigenous people (approximately 2% compared to 7%). Roughly the same proportion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Industry (around 4%) (ABS, 2006). The Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) noted in 2006 that Indigenous people made up just 0.19% of medical practitioners (AIDA, 2010). There is a clear need for action to employ more Indigenous Australians as scientists, engineers and doctors to reach comparable rates of employment with non-Indigenous people and increase the capacity of the Australian science workforce overall.

In order to increase the number of Indigenous Australians participating in the science, education needs to provide a solid grounding in scientific literacy. The latest data from the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that in 2009 Indigenous 15 year old students were still under-performing compared to non-Indigenous students, with only 37.8% of Indigenous students compared to 68.5% of non-Indigenous students reaching the accepted level for proficiency in science literacy. There was no statistically significant improvement from the 2006 results (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011a). A secondary analysis of the 2006 results showed that the under-performance could largely be explained by the

variability in reading literacy and that Indigenous students were shown to be just as interested (actually slightly more interested) in science as their non-Indigenous peers (McConney, Oliver, Woods-McConney & Schibeci, 2011).

History of Indigenous Engagement with Science

The earliest history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' engagement with Western science was one in which they were the subjects of morbid curiosity and were examined as one would the flora and fauna of the country. In some cases the flora and fauna were treated with greater admiration and respect than Indigenous people. The advent of Social Darwinism acted to reinforce racial hierarchies rather than improve the recognition of intrinsic human rights and Indigenous knowledge was (and in some instances still is) dismissed out of hand as offering no genuine contribution to science.

For most of the last two centuries, Indigenous people continued to be excluded from having any status as partners or participants in scientific investigation. Prevailing colonial attitudes, reinforced by a wide range of government policy resulted in minimal recognition, and often de-valuing of Indigenous knowledge systems. Limited access to school education and almost total exclusion from participation in higher education ensured that the cultural, social, political and economic development of Aboriginal communities was at the mercy of a disinterested or often antagonistic White Australia. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, this exclusion is understood as stemming from being placed in low position on the Darwinist ladder and the privileging of Western Science as the "teller of truth" (Rigney, 2001).

Since the late 20th century, as Western science has become increasingly focused on environmental sustainability, climate change and global warming, there has been a significant shift towards seeking solutions within Indigenous knowledge systems in order to mitigate the impact of globalised industrialisation. Central to this is an increasing awareness of the intrinsic resilience of Indigenous communities. At the same time, Western science has also sought the knowledge of Indigenous peoples to gain insights into the properties of plants (e.g. Kakadu plum) as a source of products for medical and food research. This research collaboration has yet to significantly contribute to the livelihood of Indigenous communities and while they may no longer be considered simply as subjects of analysis, Indigenous peoples' standing has progressed little beyond roles as informants or field assistants to researchers. The Indigenous contribution to science has become welcomed, but not well-recognised or rewarded.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique access to land and sea resources as Traditional Owners should be expected to provide an economic base on which to build enterprise and employment. Business ventures in Australia (and across the world) that are land or sea-based, including pastoralism, forestry, eco-tourism, fishing and aquaculture, are increasingly threatened by fire, drought, flood, climate change and depletion of fishing stocks. The current difficulty for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in having their knowledges recognised and in accessing and participating in science research effectively limits the capacity of

Australia's Indigenous culture to contribute solutions to these challenges. At the same time, opportunities for Indigenous communities to develop sustainable livelihoods are also curtailed - thereby maintaining and exacerbating the gap in social and economic outcomes between Indigenous and other Australians.

In recent years there has been an increasing recognition of the critical contribution that Indigenous knowledge makes to biodiversity conservation, ecological processes and sustainable resource use and management. Indeed, the rapid grass-roots driven growth of an Indigenous community ranger workforce in recent decades, especially in central and northern Australia, is one of the strongest areas of Indigenous engagement in science (Kennett, Morrison and Jackson 2011; Luckert et. al. 2007). However, research in these domains has been dominated by researchers operating within a Western science framework and with outcomes that are usually defined and driven by government policies, programs and funding guidelines (Lane, Robinson and Taylor, 2009), and by researchers themselves, rather than by Indigenous community interest. The politics surrounding the evaluation of projects in natural resource management has been found to be especially problematic when the parties seek differing outcomes and benefits (Robinson, Taylor and Margerum, 2009). In research contracts and agreements, government or commercial/corporate parties maintain a dominant influence, which does not always give proper consideration to the provision of mutual benefits for Indigenous parties. There have been recent positive developments such as fire research programs that are helping create longer-term livelihood opportunities based on the carbon pollution reduction benefits of Indigenous traditional burning practices (Barnsley and NAILSMA, 2009). However in the majority, the benefits that do accrue to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from ecological research has often been short term – often only for the duration of the particular research and or dependent on future government funding on a year to year basis. To date, within the plethora of science research, there is little if any that can be credited with achieving sustainable outcomes for Indigenous Australians or where substantial benefits have accrued to Indigenous people.

In the rapid movement toward a knowledge-based economy in Australia and globally, it is imperative that Indigenous knowledge systems are appropriately acknowledged for the contribution that they currently make, and appreciated for their capacity to contribute even more. The acceptance of the term 'traditional knowledge' rather than Indigenous knowledges within intellectual property law has limited and constrained the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples as owners of comprehensive and evolving knowledge systems and thereby has limited their rights as beneficiaries (Janke and Frankell, 1998). In this way, Indigenous rights have been and continue to be constrained by government and Australian legal definitions, rather than being recognised as having pre-existing and intrinsic rights and values within Indigenous law and practice. Although international covenants have been established on the protection of rights of Indigenous peoples globally (e.g. UN Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD] relating to genetic resources and Indigenous knowledges and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [UNDRIP]) there is still a failure within intellectual property law to give Indigenous knowledge its full due.

The UNDRIP and the CBD provide building blocks to legitimize Indigenous rights inclusion within scientific research. However the continuing limited participation of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples undertaking science in higher education institutions precludes Indigenous Australians from taking advantage of the opportunities that may be afforded. Studies have shown that Western science does not allow for a range of differing cultural aspects to be expressed and valued; and where education is not culturally responsive it becomes irrelevant to those it endeavours to inform (Fleer, 1997 in McKinley Jones Brayboy and Castagno, 2008; McLisky and Day, 2004). There is also a language within the delivery of science education that serves to hamper Indigenous participation. This too often results in limited interest or participation beyond secondary school, where students have a choice in the studies they undertake.

At the tertiary level, it has been found that the lack of Indigenous students undertaking science is based on the belief amongst the students that there would be “no mentors, no role models, no future prospects for careers and no perceived positive outcomes for them or their communities” (McLisky & Day, 2004). Research undertaken by institutions over the years by CSIRO, various co-operative research centres and government departments has not produced long-term employment at the level of science researchers. Often any Indigenous employment that has occurred is short-term; limited by ephemeral grant funding. Such employment is often limited to short periods of 1- 3 years, or to the life of the particular project and therefore does not encourage Indigenous people to look to science research as a long-term career. Within Australia’s current research base, no synergies have eventuated that produced overall or sustained benefit or education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples nationally.

Indigenous Knowledge and Science – complementary systems

Globally, there has been increasing interest in, and recognition of the value of Indigenous peoples’ knowledge, which is referred to by various nomenclature and acronyms including Indigenous Knowledge (IK), Indigenous Environmental Knowledge (IEK), Traditional Knowledge (TK), Traditional Ecological or Environmental Knowledge (TEK) with a range of accompanying but broadly overlapping definitions. More recently there has been a strong emphasis, particularly by Indigenous peoples on a broader understanding of Indigenous knowledge as a product of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS).

Indigenous knowledge systems held by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are a unique and vital part of Australia’s knowledge capital and link to other Indigenous knowledge systems worldwide. Within Australia ‘Indigenous Knowledge’ and ‘Indigenous Knowledge Systems’ are widely used within the higher education sector evidenced by the number of university centres and schools with ‘Indigenous knowledge’ in their titles, such as the School of Indigenous Australian Knowledge Systems at Charles Darwin University. The (Bradley) Review of Australian Higher Education Final Report, in 2008 included in its Findings that ‘Indigenous knowledge should be embedded into the curriculum to ensure that all students have an understanding of Indigenous culture’. The Report also concludes in Section 3.2 that ‘Indigenous involvement in higher education is not only about student participation and the employment of Indigenous staff. It is also about what is valued as knowledge in the academy’ and that ‘as the academy has contact with and addresses the forms of Indigenous knowledge, underlying assumptions in some discipline areas may

themselves be challenged.’ The Report of the Cutler Review, *Venturous Australia* in the same year also acknowledged ‘...the unique value of indigenous traditional knowledge and practices within Australia’s innovation system’ (Recommendation 7.13).

‘Indigenous Knowledge’ and ‘Indigenous Knowledge Systems’ currently do not exist as recognised disciplinary areas in any of Australia’s National Academies and should not be confused or conflated with ‘Indigenous Studies’, which historically has more often been about rather than by Indigenous people and is primarily located within a Western knowledge disciplinary framework. Australia’s Indigenous knowledge systems are by their very nature complex holistic and interdisciplinary systems that cannot be viewed merely as potential subsets of Australia’s Western knowledge system. The cognitive mining of Indigenous knowledge systems, for the ‘useful bits’ can often miss the broader understandings and complex relationships that underpin it, leading to research outcomes that provide a quick fix rather than sustainable solutions. While there can be tension between Indigenous knowledge systems and Western science, there are increasing examples of projects that combine the two as complementary rather than competing systems to produce highly successful and innovative outcomes. A good example of this from Health has been the employment of Ngangkari (traditional Aboriginal healers) by the NPY Women’s Council in Central Australia. The achievement of the Ngangkari in connecting traditional practices with modern medicine was recognised when they were awarded the International Sigmund Freud Prize in 2011.

Indigenous Languages – storehouses of knowledge

The threat to Australian Indigenous languages cannot be overstated. In general, Indigenous languages have been in catastrophic decline since first European contact (Henderson & Nash 1997). At the time of early European contact, it is estimated that there were 250 languages spoken in Australia with most languages having a number of distinct dialects. Today, less than 20 are considered ‘strong’ with a number of these languages showing signs of endangerment due to a small group of surviving older speakers (DEEWR 2008, McConvell & Thieberger 2001). There are many reasons why language loss has occurred. From the beginning of European colonisation, Indigenous people have suffered dispossession from traditional lands, violence, various epidemics that decimated local populations, family dislocations, and a myriad of exclusions and social controls (Zubrick et al 2006). Missions and government settlements, although providing some protection from the violence of frontier life, actively suppressed the use of local language.

When we lived out at Santa Teresa, we were taught in English when we were still only small children...They [the nuns] used to tell us of – ‘Don’t talk that yabba-yabba language (Dobson 2007, p.xviii).

Language loss has been characterised as being ‘at the heart of many of the negative aspects of black / white relations in Australia since colonisation’ (Ash et al 2003, p.v).

Despite this rapid decline, language continues to play an important role in Aboriginal people’s lives and the knowledge embedded in language is highly valued – something to be handed on to future generations. It is a common occurrence

throughout Australia for Indigenous people to introduce themselves firstly by identifying their language group. Language maintenance and revival efforts are increasing and there is widespread recognition about the urgent need to record and document Indigenous languages and associated cultural knowledge (Johnson 2006). Many Indigenous groups throughout Australia are working hard to maintain or revive their local languages and language programs in schools are increasingly requested (DEEWR 2008, Hartman & Henderson 1994).

Language and Indigenous Ecological Knowledge

Indigenous language is inseparable from people's connection to country, kinship, ceremony and law (Rose 2005). It is now becoming increasingly recognised that socio-cultural and linguistic knowledge are interdependent and embedded within relationships to country, natural resources and each other (Ochs 1985; Maffi 2001). Language is inextricably bound to how people relate to each other and their environments and lies at the very heart of Aboriginal identity, cultural beliefs and the way knowledge is managed and transmitted (Smallacombe et al 2005, Maffi 2005). Indigenous groups around the world do not distinguish between the environment and their social and spiritual beliefs (Berkes 1999, Turner 2004). The United Nations report, *Spiritual and Cultural Values of Biodiversity* (Posey 2000) is a compilation of independent case studies and statements by Indigenous people that outline these connections. Indigenous groups from the local to the international levels continually maintain the importance and interdependence of language, country, kinship and ceremony to local knowledge systems, ecological understandings and wellbeing (Burgess et al 2009, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2005).

Aboriginal languages – economic value

In Australia, English and migrant languages are 'widely regarded as being economically useful languages as opposed to Aboriginal languages' (Mühlhäusler & Damania 2004). Dockery (2009) advocates that a new approach must be developed based on an assumption that Aboriginal knowledge and language are equally valid for promoting development outcomes. Indigenous languages and associated knowledge are an important asset in natural and cultural resource management, biodiversity conservation, art and creative industries, new and emerging economies (such as carbon farming) and the knowledge economy generally (including research, linguistics, climate change adaptation). In remote Australia, it is reported that Indigenous ecological knowledge is critical to linking Aboriginal people with market economic activity associated with the use, management and knowledge of the natural environment (Altman 2003, Walsh & Douglas 2009, Cunningham et al 2009, CRC-REP 2011).

Intergenerational learning – the importance of language to Indigenous Knowledge

In a fast-changing world, the maintenance of language and cultural values is more important than ever before. Indigenous people place a high priority on language maintenance, especially in light of the delicate relationship between loss and generational change and difference (Cristancho and Vining 2009). Senior Indigenous

people have experienced profound and rapid change during the course of their lifetime and know exactly what the losses are, although such loss remains largely unaccounted for by Australian society at large.

For Indigenous people, language and its specialised vocabulary encapsulates the depth and breadth of cultural understandings and shows respect for the Jukurrpa / Dreaming. As Veronica Dobson, a senior Eastern Arrernte woman explains,

Language is important for maintaining all traditional knowledge. Everything on the land has Arrernte names and stories about them in Arrernte. If language is lost, the knowledge is lost and it can't be handed down to younger generations. For example, many younger Arrernte people nowadays believe that a particular butterfly (intelyapelyape) is connected to the ayeparenya caterpillar, when it is really the butterfly from the caper bush grubs. In actual fact, the ayeparenya caterpillar turns into a moth, called arrellyapelyape, but most Arrernte people don't know that word anymore. So with the word forgotten, so too is the moth's connection to the lifecycle of the ayeparenye caterpillar. This is one of the main totems for Alice Springs and the loss of this knowledge is very significant thing for our people.

(Veronica Dobson quoted in Johnson 2006, p.32)

Changing Cultural Paradigms

Cultural competency is rapidly emerging as a significant issue across policy, research and service provision and is particularly important as a tool for responding to the challenges of improving Indigenous engagement with science. Cultural competence has been usefully defined as a system that acknowledges and incorporates – at all levels: 'the importance of culture, assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge, and adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs'. (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo and Ananeh-Firempong 2003).

Improving the cultural competency of those involved in program development and delivery is a key strategy in addressing sociocultural barriers to equity in participation and in changing racial or ethnic disparities in outcomes across health, education, employment and, indeed, most social and economic indicators.

Universities Australia has recently completed a project in association with the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council to provide Australian universities with tools to embed cultural competency at an institutional level, to provide encouraging and supportive environments for Indigenous students and staff, and to produce well-rounded graduates with the skills necessary to provide genuinely competent services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Pilot projects at Edith Cowan University and the Universities of Wollongong, Newcastle and Western Australia were successfully completed and a best practice framework was adopted in November, 2011. This framework comprises five principles:

- Indigenous people should be actively involved in university governance and management

- All graduates of Australian universities will have the knowledge and skills necessary to interact in a culturally competent way with Indigenous communities.
- University research will be conducted in a culturally competent way in partnership with Indigenous participants
- Indigenous staffing will be increased at all appointment levels and, for academic staff, across a wider variety of academic fields
- Universities will operate in partnership with their Indigenous communities and will help disseminate culturally competent practices to the wider community

Role and composition of the Expert Working Group

The Expert Working Group on Indigenous Engagement with Sciences is a diverse group of experts from the research, education and community development sectors. The full list of Expert Working Group members is in Appendix 1.

The role of the group was to review the state of Indigenous engagement with science in Australia and develop a set of recommendations that could help strengthen the science community's role in increasing Indigenous participation in and engagement with science. The Group held four face-to-face meetings and one teleconference during the period June 2011 to February 2012. The Group also undertook an indicative review of current programs to gain a snapshot view of the nature and range of Indigenous engagement in science (see Appendix 2).

The members were acutely aware of the absence of a Torres Strait Islander on the group and acknowledge the need for further consultation to ensure that Torres Strait Islander issues and interests are adequately considered by the Inspiring Australia Project.

Recommendations

Theme 1. Indigenous Knowledge Systems

While there are a number of recommendations in the report, the critical underpinning upon which their success is dependent, are the key recommendations made in this section. This recommendation is urgent and needs immediate and sustained action.

To be able to see their own reflection in Australia's knowledge systems is critical to the future aspirations of young Indigenous Australians and the regeneration of Indigenous communities. The Indigenous knowledge systems of Australia are both ancient and unique to this continent. Unlike their Western knowledge system counterparts, if they are not maintained, practiced and developed in Australia as vibrant living knowledge systems, they will not exist anywhere else in the world.

Recommendation 1

Resource and support Indigenous knowledge systems to maintain and enhance intergenerational transfer of Indigenous knowledge while protecting the relationships between Indigenous people and their knowledge and skills by ensuring that

engagement with Indigenous ‘scientific’ knowledge occurs on mutually agreed terms and through adherence to appropriate protocols.

Recommendation 2

Recognise and increase support for Indigenous languages as integral to the health of Indigenous knowledge systems.

Reasoning

Government, universities and science organisations need to make a major financial and infrastructure investment in supporting and maintaining Indigenous knowledge systems as healthy vibrant and living knowledge systems, and recognising and supporting Indigenous custodians and knowledge holders as expert educators in their communities. Indigenous peoples’ knowledge systems are embedded in country with knowledge held by senior custodians. Traditional ecological and environmental knowledge is essential to Australia’s future, but will not exist without Indigenous communities who face continuous threats from mining and development, government planning, limited community resources, weak heritage protection regimes and inadequate intellectual property rights and protections. Despite these, perhaps the greatest challenge for Indigenous communities is the loss of Indigenous custodians and knowledge holders at relatively young ages. According to the ABS 2006 data, less than 3% of the Aboriginal population is aged 65 years or older and with an increasingly younger Indigenous population there are fewer and fewer elders to pass on knowledge to the next generation.

While these problems have been recognised by many people, it has also often been coupled with an underlying assumption that Indigenous knowledge systems mainly benefit Aboriginal people and that therefore Indigenous people are the only ones who need to protect and maintain them. However, Aboriginal people no longer have the resources to protect, sustain and continue to develop their knowledge systems. There is also a strong assumption that the intergenerational transmission of knowledge or the Indigenous ‘education’ system can function without resources and infrastructure, on the expectation that it is something that Aboriginal families and communities can deliver in their spare time, holidays and weekends. In stark contrast, Australians recognise the massive systems and infrastructure in which Western knowledge is achieved (the ‘collective’ of Australian state and territory education systems). There are no similar plans or infrastructure to enable Indigenous knowledge systems to contribute to education at the same level as their Western counterparts. Indigenous languages rely on living speakers, who are often key knowledge holders and need significant support to maintain and teach languages.

Theme 2. New understandings of Indigenous knowledge systems: value, respect, relevance and professional cultural competence

Recommendation 3

Create new understandings of Indigenous knowledge systems to deepen the value and relevance of science in Australia, through the development of tools and the capacity to improve the cultural competency of scientists and enable the full and equitable participation of Indigenous knowledge holders in the sciences.

Recommendation 4

Develop an Indigenous Australian Science Agenda that has longevity and connectivity and is guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve synergy with cultural, economic, social and environmental outcomes for communities.

Reasoning

While considerable work has been undertaken around cultural competency in health sciences, it is not clear the extent to which this is a part of other science areas. However in 2011, Universities Australia (UA) released The National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities, to 'provide the higher education sector with a framework for embedding Indigenous cultural competencies within and across the institution'. The Framework considers that 'Indigenous cultural competency refers to the ability to understand and value Indigenous perspectives. It provides the basis upon which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians may engage positively in a spirit of mutual respect and reconciliation' (UA, 2011). This provides a key role for the sciences in not just recognising the value of Indigenous knowledge, but questioning long held assumptions within their own fields of study and avoiding the compartmentalisation and deconstruction of Indigenous knowledge systems into 'useful' and 'less useful' parts.

With more than 370 million Indigenous people worldwide, understanding and valuing Indigenous knowledge and its relationship to science in Australia is a building block to the development of global cultural competence in professional scientific contexts. Developing a National Indigenous Science Agenda not only engages more Indigenous people in science at significantly higher levels; it is likely to produce better research and research outcomes for Indigenous people.

It is widely known that Indigenous people suffer a high burden of illness and die 15-20 years earlier than non-indigenous counterparts. There are also countless examples where western scientists attempting to study the causes of or epidemiology of disease within Indigenous communities have failed to inform or seek appropriate consent from the Indigenous communities. This history has served to cause further divide between western and indigenous communities. Today, we have begun a new wave of scientific research, the genetic revolution. Indigenous peoples are seen as an untapped source for genetic biodiversity studies, a high priority for scientific research. Whilst a 'best practice framework' may exist, there is currently no capacity or funding system for scientists to adequately engage with Indigenous communities to participate in adequate community consultation in regards to research conducted within that community.

The Working Group noted that in New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi is a significant driver for the science agenda. There is a need in Australia for a similar driver. This might be found through the COAG National Indigenous Reform Agreement.

Theme 3. Local and regional initiatives

Recommendation 5

Identify local and regional initiatives that protect and strengthen the ownership and integrity of Indigenous knowledge by aligning development initiatives with the growth and support of Indigenous livelihood.

Reasoning

It is important at a community level that Indigenous people benefit from science research and engagement. This means developing assessment criteria, critical evaluation mechanisms and longitudinal studies to fully measure the impact of research and its value for particular localised communities. Funding assessment and budgeting processes must include a matrix of benefit and report back requirements to community. While there is some requirement to state what will be done in various research grants, there are seldom any real compliance checks. If done, these rarely consider Indigenous viewpoints. The longevity of some projects (over 5 years) makes it difficult for Indigenous communities, often located in remote areas, to maintain oversight and control of the research process and outcomes.

Theme 4. Indigenous priorities

Recommendation 6

Enable Indigenous priority setting by collaborating with and resourcing Indigenous communities, leaders, knowledge holders, researchers, trainees and students wherever possible in the communication and practice of science. This resourcing should include support for Indigenous organisations to recruit scientists to work in-house towards community priorities.

Recommendation 7

Influence research project design and evaluation to ensure that Indigenous people are empowered and Indigenous knowledge is protected, by ensuring meaningful participation, appropriate protocols, data sharing and examination of sustainable investment and benefit to Indigenous people and communities.

Recommendation 8

Influence the identification of research 'impact measures' and evaluation frameworks so as to reward research outcomes and outputs that address Indigenous priorities and promote Indigenous engagement and appreciation of science

Reasoning

Indigenous communities are interested in science and in working collaboratively with scientists across Western and Indigenous knowledge domains. Indigenous land and

sea management, in particular, is a growth area in which the demand for scientific knowledge, tools and expertise is increasing. To meet this demand and to enhance scientific and community outcomes, initiatives are needed to increase the placement of scientists within Indigenous organisations such as land and sea management organisations.

Similarly, Indigenous land and sea managers are pursuing access to research funding and research partnerships in order to secure scientific expertise. Indigenous perceptions of the value of science are greatly enhanced in programs where there is a dedicated effort by research organisations to ensure Indigenous participation in decision making in research design, conduct and outcomes; and to create post-hoc evaluation frameworks that consider benefits to Indigenous peoples.

Further, research and development projects are often funded on the basis of 'return on investment'. It is important to ensure that Indigenous community and cultural development are properly valued as valid returns and this should be articulated in terms of 'science impact areas' and research expectations. Too often, research outputs that are of value to Indigenous communities but that don't fit a narrow assessment criteria (eg a focus on conventional peer-reviewed articles), are undervalued in existing science 'impact' assessments. Current work to review 'impact measures', such as by Australian Technology Network of Universities and similar endeavours, should be encouraged to consider broader measures of benefit/impact/success that include benefits to Indigenous communities.

Theme 5. Communication

Recommendation 9

Develop a specific Indigenous media and communication strategy to engage Indigenous people in science and to inform the wider community about Indigenous science achievement.

Reasoning

As the Inspiring Australia Report states, 'If the communication of science is to be effective it needs to recognise the audience to be engaged'. This is particularly true for Indigenous peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities are diverse communities, with a significant proportion of Indigenous people living in remote and very remote areas with less access to the full range of media that may be available in larger urban areas.

Indigenous media is a thriving and important means of communication for Indigenous peoples and includes national newspapers such as The Koori Mail and the National Indigenous Times, and Land Right News, Indigenous radio stations in most capital cities, in regional areas and in remote communities, broadcasting in English and in local Indigenous languages.

While there are stories about Indigenous engagement in science across mainstream and Indigenous media, in many cases these are not explicitly identified or perceived as stories about 'science'; but more often seen as having a cultural or community

interest focus. The broader Australian community needs to become more informed of Indigenous achievements in science and the relationship between Indigenous knowledge and science, and some thought and research needs to be focused on how this is best achieved.

The development of Indigenous specific awards within Australia's premier science awards may be an important means to recognise and highlight Indigenous knowledge and science achievement (see also Recommendation 11).

Theme 6. Engage Indigenous young people in the sciences

Recommendation 10

Develop educational and outreach programs that engage Indigenous young people in science leading to professional careers in science and science related areas.

Reasoning

It is well recognised that Indigenous Australians are under-represented in higher education overall and especially in science courses. The Indigenous community widely acknowledges an urgent need for more well educated and qualified leaders in the sciences. According to Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) statistics, in 2010 only 11% of total Indigenous enrolments (1,236 Indigenous students) in higher education were in the broad education fields of Natural and Physical Sciences, Information Technology, Engineering and related technologies, Agriculture, Environmental and related studies and Architecture and Building, compared to 33% (3,623 Indigenous students) of Indigenous enrolments in Society and Culture alone. While enrolments are better in Health, with 20% of Indigenous higher education enrolments (2,119 Indigenous students), Indigenous students are still significantly under-represented in key professional health areas such as Medicine and Dentistry (DEEWR, 2011).

The Indigenous population is essentially a youthful one, with 38% of Indigenous people aged 15 years or under. This is double the proportion of the non-Indigenous population (ABS, 2006). With this figure expected to rise, it is important that programs are developed to enable Indigenous students to develop their full potential in the sciences.

A number of universities and scientific organisations already offer outreach programs and activities. The ongoing success of programs such as the Indigenous Australian Engineering Summer School (IAESS) at Curtin University and UNSW, and the UWA Indigenous Science and Engineering Camp in attracting participants have demonstrated that Indigenous students are interested in science. For many Indigenous students, such programs are the first time anyone has said that they can become a scientist or engineer and shown them the pathways to get there. Programs often include Indigenous science activities as well as meeting Indigenous science students and graduates recognising that cultural relevance, peer support and role models are critical to Indigenous educational success. The Aspiration Initiative academic enrichment program, run by the Aurora Project, includes a science program and is committed to supporting and inspiring Indigenous students to go to University. This project is currently mostly funded from corporate, philanthropic

and higher education sources. With high numbers of Indigenous students in regional, remote and very remote areas, the delivery of outreach programs is costly and ongoing funding support is required.

Recommendation 11

Map and monitor Indigenous student enrolments and graduates in science and science related areas to establish a clear picture of achievements and any 'gaps'. Develop promotional material and information on Indigenous science students and graduates to inspire, motivate and support Indigenous young people to undertake science careers.

Reasoning

While individual universities and other organisations develop such material there needs to be a national, coordinated approach to looking at the achievements across the sector as a whole. This is critical if planning for an Indigenous professional workforce in science is to be a serious objective. While significant development has been done in relation to the Indigenous health workforce, other areas of science have received limited, if any, attention. Such information, particularly graduate and student profiles, could also contribute to the development of a media and communication strategy to engage Indigenous students and communities in science. As an example, the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, Journeys Into Medicine, profiles 15 Indigenous Medical graduates and 15 students (AIDA, 2009). The Aspiration Initiative release a handbook every year listing scholarships available for Indigenous students and profiling Indigenous graduates.

Recommendation 12

Develop and sponsor dedicated Indigenous young scientist and Indigenous knowledge in science awards within Australia's national prestigious science awards and within the Deadly Awards, to recognised and profile Indigenous achievements in science.

Reasoning

National awards recognising Indigenous scientific achievement will bring these to the attention of the wider Australian community, challenging long held assumptions and stereotypes as well as providing important role models for Indigenous young people. The Deadly Awards are national Indigenous awards that include a number of awards categories such as Arts, Sport, Music and Community (including Education). There is currently no specific category for Science. Development of awards in this category would be an important step in communicating the science message to Indigenous communities and young people.

Appendix 1: Expert Working Group composition

Name	Affiliation	ATSI	Discipline	Bio
Winthrop Professor Jill Milroy AM (Chair)	Dean, School of Indigenous Studies, University of Western Australia	Y	Science Education (Medicine/Engineering)	Palyku, Pilbara. Dean of the School of Indigenous Studies at UWA, developing preparatory and support programs for Indigenous students in Law and Medicine. Currently working on a project to design Indigenous curriculum in Engineering.
Dr Peter Radoll	Director, Tjabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre, ANU	Y	Information Technology	Anaiwan People, northern tablelands NSW. Director of the Tjabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre. His PhD examined the adoption and effective use of Information Communication Technologies in Australian Indigenous Communities. Taught Information Systems in the College of Business and Economics at the ANU. Research interests Information Systems, Information Technology adoption and Information Technology development projects in Australian Indigenous Communities.
Dr Misty Jenkins	Research Scientist, Peter MacCullum Cancer Centre.	Y	Immunology and Cell biology	Gunditjmara nation, Victoria. Research scientist. Completed her PhD with Nobel Laureate Peter Doherty at The University of Melbourne. Post-doctoral fellowship in Oxford and Cambridge with Prof Gillian Griffiths. Studies killer T cells and mechanisms for killing virus-infected and cancer cells.

Name	Affiliation	ATSI	Discipline	Bio
Dr Rod Kennett	North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance.	N	Biology	Manager of Saltwater Country Management Program. Has worked in marine and terrestrial science and management in tropical north Australia for over 25 years. Initiated the NAILSMA I-Tracker Program securing resources and partnerships, tools and training to Indigenous rangers to combine scientific knowledge with Traditional Knowledge to manage traditional estates
Josie Douglas	Aboriginal Research Fellow, CSIRO	Y	Science Education/Research/Indigenous Environmental Knowledge	Wardaman, Katherine. Previously an Aboriginal Research Fellow at Charles Darwin University. Research examining environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability of bush food harvesting and micro-enterprise in Central Australia, remote Aboriginal education and relationships between Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK), sustainable livelihoods and community school based education. Current PhD research project 'Indigenous Ecological Knowledge: Continuity and Change across Generations in Central Australia'.
Dr Anne Poelina	Managing Director of Madjulla Inc.	Y	Health/language /sustainable community development	Nyikina, Kimberley. Remote area nursing, academic and community education and training, Australian language maintenance, Indigenous publishing, empowerment evaluation and research consultancy.
Graeme Gower	Edith Cowan University/ Scitech	Y	Science Education	Former Head of Centre for Indigenous Australian Knowledges, ECU. Currently researching engagement of Aboriginal students and teachers with science in co-operation with Scitech

Name	Affiliation	ATSI	Discipline	Bio
Dr Michael Fletcher	Research Fellow, School of Culture, History and Language, ANU	Y	Paleoecology	Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Ecology and Biodiversity, Universidad de Chile (2009-2011); Indigenous Research Fellow at Archaeology and Natural History, Australian National University (current).
Jim Walker	Indigenous Engagement Officer, CSIRO	Y	Science engagement, natural resource management	From the Yiman and Goreng Goreng peoples of Central Queensland. One of two Indigenous Engagement Officers within CSIRO. Development of intellectual property protocol on Indigenous engagement; development of Indigenous science education pathways; increasing Indigenous employment within CSIRO; provision of science study awards for Indigenous tertiary students; and assisting researchers engage with Indigenous communities. Previously ATSI State Manager in Tasmania, Victoria and Northern Territory and Co-ordinator of the National Indigenous Forestry Strategy.
Greg Lehman (Convenor)	Visiting Indigenous Research Fellow, AIATSIS	Y	Natural and Cultural Heritage Management and Interpretation	Palawa, Tasmania. Former Director of Riawunna, Centre for Aboriginal Education, University of Tasmania. Current Director, Board of Skills Tasmania and Board of Natural Resource Management South – Tasmania. Previous research in Indigenous weather knowledge and fire management, co-management of Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area.

Appendix 2: Education Through Consultation, Recognition and Access

Building the interest of Indigenous students in science offers fertile ground for enhancing the engagement of Indigenous people. Many organisations are already delivering a wide array of initiatives and programs that aim to engage Indigenous people in science. In order to account for the critical importance of education in improving Indigenous engagement, this Appendix presents results of an indicative survey of initiatives and programs to underpin the Working Party's analysis of the current situation and to identify key stakeholders, issues and thereby begin the process of developing a strategy for government that identifies the next steps forward.

Consultation emerged as a significant way Indigenous people are engaged in science, and programs appeared to fall into two categories: consultation that was externally driven and involved Indigenous people in response to a necessity; and consultation that was community initiated in which Indigenous people took a proactive role in all decisions and implementation from the outset.

The next theme was apparent in programs that encompassed recognition and respect for Indigenous Knowledge. These programs were vast and included strategies such as making formal commitments through Reconciliation Action Plans and Engagement Strategies, providing training for staff who engage Indigenous people in science in many contexts, providing employment opportunities and building understandings with Indigenous knowledge through collaborations. The third category of programs could all be linked through their approach to support Indigenous people in gaining access to science. These programs raise awareness for Indigenous engagement in science through direct promotion and through the media. They provide bridging opportunities to further science study or training in science, and they provide support to access and ensure retention in initiatives. Finally, many programs specifically targeting Indigenous school students with programs that reach out to schools – either through visits to schools, the hosting of school students at organisations (such as through camps and activities).

The current picture of Indigenous engagement in science is complex and while all programs surveyed by this project fell under these four broad themes, some used multiple strategies. The numbers of organisations involved in engaging Indigenous people in science is large and the number of strategies they employ even larger.

In attempting an indicative study, the Expert Working Group considered only programs that were currently operating and appeared to be ongoing. In line with the National approach this review took a broad notion of science, which includes natural and physical sciences (e.g. biology, physics, chemistry and geology), applied sciences (e.g. engineering, medicine and technology), emerging fields of science (e.g. Environmental and nanotechnology) and mathematics. The social science and humanities, which are seen as an interface between science and society, were omitted (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010).

There are many programs available for mainstream science engagement that may be effective for many Indigenous people, but a critical examination of these was

considered beyond the scope of this project – only programs that specifically target Indigenous participation were considered.

The four themes emerged. These are considered along with examples of programs employing such strategies to provide a snapshot of current approaches to Indigenous engagement in science in Australia.

1. Consultation

A significant way Indigenous people engage in science is through the process of consultation with external organisations. Consultation occurs when groups come together to develop and implement programs. As a process, it can be undertaken in different ways. One approach sees the consultation process externally controlled — driven by professional knowledge and priorities. In this way, the consultation process can be characterised as more instrumental in nature as Indigenous engagement in science is seen as a means to achieving professional ends. Alternatively, consultation can be community initiated. This is a bottom-up approach in which consultation is driven by the knowledge and priorities of the Indigenous community. As such, consultation becomes a more developmental process in which Indigenous engagement with science is a key outcome.

Externally controlled, top-down consultation can involve organisations simply telling or informing Indigenous people about a particular scientific issue. Smith (2007) describes a case when a scientific organisation, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, informed a local Indigenous community in the township of Coen about the risks associated with flying foxes because of an outbreak of the Hendra virus through a public meeting. The author noted there was some confusion over the issue because members of the Aboriginal audience were alienated by the scientific language used and because of a discrepancy between scientific and local knowledge about the origins of flying foxes.

Another example of externally controlled consultation comes from Canada where scientists involved in forest management looked at implementing a realistic 3D mapping technique to visualize future landscapes so that the Indigenous community could comprehend the information and have more meaningful input into discussions about future possibilities (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006). Whilst in this second example the organisation was facilitating the capacity of Indigenous people and hence giving them a voice in the discussion, ultimately the end goals were those of the organisation rather than those initiated by the community.

A higher level of consultation occurs when Indigenous people are the drivers of a project. This kind of consultation is a necessary feature when groups successfully co-manage projects, examples of which are highlighted through a series of case studies about the management of the Great Barrier Reef. Here Indigenous communities drove the development of the program, including facilitating the contribution of other external resources from programs such as Community Development Employment Program to help support initiatives to forward planning about how the community would eventually negotiate outsourcing management services to Aboriginal people (Ross, Innes, George & Gorman, 2004).

Below are examples of Indigenous engagement in science through consultation, either externally-controlled or community initiated.

1.1. Externally-controlled consultation:

Fortescue Metals Group – Pilbara Iron Ore and Infrastructure Project. According to their own report consultation was undertaken with landowners and relevant parties in the design of a rail corridor and heritage surveys were conducted. The aim of project was to build a rail corridor and consultation was a necessary step to reach the aim (Fortescue Metals Group, 2008).

Horizon Power – Aboriginal and Remote Communities Power Supply Project (ARCPSP). A project to improve power supply to remote communities. Sessions were held for Horizon Power staff to explain the use of pre-paid power cards and electrical safety (Horizon Power, 2010).

1.2. Community initiated consultation:

CRC Reef Research Centre – cooperative co-management of the Great Barrier Reef, with three case studies demonstrating that long-term observational knowledge can inform projects and enable Indigenous communities in making decisions about the directions and implementation of projects (Ross et al., 2004).

Natural Resource Management – Bundjalung Nation. Members of the community identified issues with externally-controlled consultation and recommended two-way cultural competency training to increase Indigenous people's understandings of the 'white' processes so they could have a more significant voice in consultation, including effectively communicating traditional knowledge to facilitate genuine co-management. Training was also undertaken to increase understanding of non-Indigenous participants so they could more effectively communicate with traditional owners (Lloyd & Norrie, 2004).

CSIRO and Bushfire CRC – Aboriginal wetland burning in Kakadu. This project is led by Indigenous research officers working for the CSIRO in partnership with traditional owners of the land. They utilise their knowledge to implement the program of burning (CSIRO, 2011a).

Booderee National Park (Jervis Bay Territory), a co-management initiative by the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community and Parks Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011b).

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance runs projects in natural and cultural resource management across north Australia. It supports community consultations to identify Indigenous research priorities and fosters strategic partnerships with government, industry, NGOs and research organisations to secure funds, resources and scientific expertise.

2. Recognition of and Respect for Indigenous Knowledge

Science organisations can engage Indigenous people when they act upon strategies that value and respect Indigenous knowledge. These strategies are diverse and can include making commitments through formal Reconciliation Plans or Engagement strategies, providing training for staff to effectively engaging Indigenous people in science, providing employment opportunities for Indigenous people or including Indigenous knowledges in the production of new understandings, through research, collaborations, conferences or professional associations.

The strategy to respect Indigenous knowledge employed by the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences at the Australian National University (ANU) is a Reconciliation Action Plan that commits to improving Indigenous and non-Indigenous engagement through other strategies. This includes seeking to employ Indigenous people, training staff in cultural competency and becoming engaged in outreach programs to attract Indigenous students (ANU, 2011a).

Another example of training provided to improve engagement is professional development for teachers of Indigenous students. The Australian Academy of Science has produced teaching resources for science, which incorporate Indigenous perspectives, as well as training for teachers in its application (Bull, 2008). Researchers indicate that teachers need explicit instruction to incorporate Indigenous knowing in science materials and that doing so is a way of capitalising on Indigenous student interest in science (McConney et al., 2011).

Many science organisations provide employment opportunities for Indigenous people. The NSW Department of Primary Industries does this through the use of an Indigenous Employment Strategy, which aims to increase Indigenous employment and train and up-skill employees (State of New South Wales, 2011). A number of science organisations, including private resource company Rio Tinto, utilise the Federal Government's Indigenous Cadetship Support to provide employment opportunities for Indigenous students studying in relevant tertiary areas (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011c and Rio Tinto, 2011). These programs value Indigenous knowledge by recognising the value Indigenous employees can bring to companies or organisations. Other employment strategies, such as traineeships, are discussed in the 'Access' section as they provide a means to prepare Indigenous people for the workplace rather than value the skills they already have.

Indigenous knowledge is also clearly valued when it is incorporated into the generation of new understandings. The CSIRO, for example, have a program to record traditional wetland burning knowledge that aims to "create models to help integrate Indigenous Australians wealth of ecological knowledge with Western knowledge systems" (CSIRO, 2011c). These new understandings also come from collaborations such as the Australian Aboriginal Astronomy Project at Macquarie University and professional bodies such as the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association, which publishes materials and hosts symposiums and conferences (Hamacher, 2011 & AIDA, 2011).

2.1. Commitment to Indigenous Knowledge

CSIRO – an engagement strategy that aims to ethically research issues that impact the quality of life of Indigenous peoples, increase Indigenous employment, engage in educational outreach and broaden the staff understandings of Indigenous issues (CSIRO, 2011b)

College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences – ANU. Reconciliation Action Plan developed to build respect for Indigenous people amongst staff, consolidate ANU's position of leader in Indigenous research, give students an understanding of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives, attract and support Indigenous students, as well as Indigenous general and academic staff (ANU, 2011a)

Australian Defence Force – Defence Reconciliation Action Plan (ADF, 2011)
Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research –Reconciliation Action Plan that commits to building science and research capacity (DIISR, 2010)

2.2. Training in Indigenous Knowledge.

Australian Academy of Science – Primary Connections Indigenous Perspectives. Resources that incorporate Indigenous knowledge into science curriculum, gives web links for further information and training on their implementation (Australian Academy of Science, 2011)

Scitech – Aboriginal Education Program. Provides training and resources for teachers and Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers in remote schools in WA on running experiential and discovery activities with students (Byrne, Galloway, Gower & Weissfner, 2008 and Scitech, 2011)

RoleM – Australian Catholic University. A professional learning program for teachers of mathematics that is run as a collaborative partnership with the community to implement culturally appropriate maths activities (ACU, 2009)

Living Knowledge Resource – compares Indigenous and Western science. Includes advice on how to embed Indigenous knowledges into science curriculum (The Living Knowledge Project, 2008)

The Kimberley Indigenous Management Support Service (WA). Develops the technical and management skills of Indigenous directors, managers and workers on Indigenous-owned Kimberley cattle stations (Indigenous Land Corporation, n.d. -b)
Centre of Cultural Competency Australia lists the following science-related organisations as their current clients (Centre for Cultural Competence Australia, 2010):

- Alzheimer's Australian
- Australian Diabetes
- Australian General Practice Network
- Australian Sports Commission
- Autism Association of WA

- Cairns Audiology Group
- Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- Department of Defence
- Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation Queensland
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Department of Health NSW
- Department of Health Queensland
- Department of Health Victoria
- Department of Health WA
- Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport (NRETAS)
- Forests NSW
- General Practice NSW
- GP Down South
- North and West Queensland Primary health Care
- Perth Zoo
- Rio Tinto Iron Ore
- The Pharmacy Guild of Australia
- WA General Practice Network
- West Sydney Area Health Service
- Wheatbelt General Practice

2.3. Employment opportunities for Indigenous people

NSW Department of Primary Industries – Indigenous Employment Strategy. Aims of their strategy include increasing Indigenous employment and training and up-skilling employees (State of New South Wales, 2011).

Gunbalanya Station and Meats (NT), a pastoral business and meatworks being developed by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC), is providing employment to Indigenous people (Indigenous Land Corporation, n.d. -a)

Rio Tinto – Indigenous Cadetships. Students studying science or engineering at university can receive financial support, paid vacation employment, career development and mentoring (Rio Tinto, 2011). Cadetships have helped increase the proportion of Indigenous employees at Rio Tinto from 0.5 per cent to 8 per cent (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011a).

Other science organisations providing Indigenous Cadetship programs are:

- Woodside
- BHP Billiton
- Defence Indigenous Cadetship Project (DICP)
- NSW Allied Health Aboriginal Cadetships.

2.4. Building Understandings with Indigenous Knowledge

CSIRO – Recording traditional wetland burning knowledge. This project aims to build new understandings based on Indigenous knowledge of the ecosystem (CSIRO, 2011c)

Aboriginal Astronomy Project – Macquarie University. Collaboration of researchers studying Indigenous astronomy knowledge and traditions (Hamacher, 2011).

The Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association. Non-for-profit, non-government group, which supports Indigenous students and doctors and produces knowledge through publications and symposiums (AIDA, 2011).

3. Access

There are a number of organisations that provide opportunities to increase Indigenous engagement in science by providing access. These initiatives and programs include promoting awareness of opportunities and inspiring Indigenous people to engage, providing training and skills students may need to engage in science and providing support for students to participate in such training programs. Robertson, Dyson, Norman and Buckley (2002) provide an example of how to set up a comprehensive program to facilitate Indigenous access to IT programs at the University of Technology, Sydney. This included building awareness through school outreach, consultation with Aboriginal land councils, involvement of Indigenous IT professionals as role models and development of promotional materials. A dedicated 4-week pre-IT course was designed to provide students with necessary skills to access IT study at university, offered some block-release components and include Indigenous perspectives in the IT curriculum. Finally, it provided appropriate student support for students in the program, which included tutoring, ensuring home computer access, employing and training Indigenous staff to run the program, setting up mentoring programs, providing culturally appropriate spaces for staff and students and providing a range of scholarships and cadetships (Robertson et al., 2002).

Another popular strategy is to use web presentations, such as the Living Knowledge Project and the Edith Cowan University's Health Info Net (The Living Knowledge Project, 2008 & ECU, 2011a). The on line resources enhance further engagement in science by providing a flexible and highly accessible way to raise awareness amongst Indigenous people of science issues and knowledge. TV, radio, publications, blogs, bulletins etc – also play a significant role in awareness-raising and can be better aimed at engaging Indigenous people in science.

The University of Western Australia offers a general science bridging program, through the Aboriginal Orientation Course, which is a one-year course that prepares students to go onto studies in any scientific discipline of their choosing, including medicine and engineering (UWA, 2011b). Private companies also use this strategy to help Indigenous students' access careers in science. For example, Argyle Diamonds has an extensive range of programs that includes pre-employment training, accelerated training, flexible traineeships & apprenticeships, new entry points and 'alternative' employment (Rio Tinto, 2009). These strategies all aim to

build skills and capacities for Indigenous people from communities near their mines to access careers in science. To ensure student's succeed in training initiatives, many forms of support can be offered to increase access, including financial support such as the BHP Billiton Iron Ore Indigenous Scholarships Program for Indigenous university students at UWA and Curtin University to study engineering or relevant sciences (e.g. geology) (The Good Universities Guide, 2011).

Academic support is by culturally competent maths tutors in the bridging program at Central Queensland University's Indigenous Learning, Spirituality and Research Centre (Makuwira, 2008). Other forms of support include provision of safe learning spaces and pastoral care programs. Student Services at the School of Indigenous Studies at UWA, concentrate on being responsive to students and tailoring specific programs to meet their individual needs (UWA, 2011c & Andersen, Bunda & Walter, 2008).

3.1. Awareness

Living Knowledge Resource – online resource which compares Indigenous and Western science, flexible and accessible strategy to promote science engagement to Indigenous people (The Living Knowledge Project, 2008)

Edith Cowan University – Health Info Net. Provides information about health issues that affect Indigenous people (ECU, 2011a)

Indigenous Science Network Bulletin. A web-based exchange of information and ideas on Indigenous science engagement, a form of media that builds awareness and inspires Indigenous engagement in science (Michie, 2011)

National Centre of Indigenous Excellence – Indigenous Innovation Blog. This blog includes regular updates about Indigenous innovation which is an example of a strategy to inspire participation (National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, 2011)

The University of Western Australia – School of Indigenous Studies. Website provides profiles of Indigenous science, engineering and medicine graduates, which can be an inspiration way to engage the next generation of Indigenous scientists (UWA, 2011a)

Bureau of Meteorology – Indigenous Weather Knowledge. Has information about seasonal weather from cultural regions across Australia – can be used as a tool to promote science engagement (BOM, 2011)

Indigenous Allied Health Australia. Website which promotes the work of Indigenous professionals in Allied Health to inspire others to who are interested in contributing to improved Indigenous Health (Indigenous Allied Health Australia, 2011).

3.2. Bridging

Argyle Diamonds – Indigenous partnerships. Offers pre-employment training, accelerated training, flexible traineeships & apprenticeships, new entry points and 'alternative' employment (Rio Tinto, 2009)

The University of Western Australia – Aboriginal Orientation Course. One-year course that prepares students to go onto studies in any scientific discipline of their choosing, including medicine and engineering (UWA, 2011b)

Other universities that offer bridging units for Indigenous students into science-related tertiary study include:

- The University of Newcastle – Yapug. Program offers four streams: Health Science; Engineering and Science; Business, Law, Commerce and IT; and Education. Year long program, intake in first and second semester (University of Newcastle, 2011)
- The University of New South Wales – Nura Gili. Offers year-long enabling programs to enter degree areas, one of which is Science, Engineering and Technology (The University of New South Wales, 2011).
- The Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE) is a joint initiative between Charles Darwin University (CDU) and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE). Offers Preparation for University Studies (PTS). The PTS provides general preliminary units and then mathematics and introductory science units (Batchelor Institute, 2011)
- Central Queensland University – Nulloo Yumba. Tertiary Entry Program (TEP) is a full-year program which offers cores units plus electives including: Numeracy Concepts and Applications, Introductory Applied Science, Preparing for Health Sciences, Preparing for Biology, Preparing for Chemistry, Preparing for Physics and Advanced Numeracy Concepts and Applications (CQU, 2011)
- James Cook University – School of Indigenous Australian Studies. Offers a Tertiary Access Course which can be studied full-time for 6 months and prepares students for a range of undergraduate degrees (James Cook University, 2011)
- University of Tasmania – The Riawunna Centre offers a Murina Preparation Pathway for Indigenous students across all faculties according to individual student aspiration. (University of Tasmania, 2011)
- Curtin University of Technology – Centre for Aboriginal Studies. The Aboriginal Bridging Course is a two-semester, full-time program. Includes core literacy and communications skills and electives in the humanities, sciences or arts streams. The Indigenous Tertiary Enabling Course is a six-month (second semester only) program that is almost identical to the second semester of the ABC (Curtin, 2011)
- Edith Cowan University – Kurongkurl Katijin. Offers Indigenous University Orientation Course, one year full-time. Includes, some maths and computing skills but no other science (ECU, 2011b).

3.3. Support

BHP Billiton Iron Ore Indigenous Scholarships Program. Financial support for Indigenous university students at UWA and Curtin University to study engineering or relevant sciences (e.g. Geology) (The Good Universities Guide, 2011).

The University of Queensland – Indigenous Science Scholarship (The University of Queensland, 2011)

South Australian Research and Development Institute – The SARDI Science Bursary for Aboriginal Students. Provides \$1500 to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander graduate to undertake post-graduate study in science at a tertiary institution in South Australia (SARDI, 2011)

Murdoch University – Waardong. Support and pastoral care for Indigenous students studying veterinary science, biomedical science and chiropractic at Murdoch (Murdoch, n.d).

4. Reaching Out

There are a number of organisations that run programs for and in schools to specifically engage Indigenous school students in science. A common strategy for engagement includes visiting schools with outreach programs, such as those that deliver science and maths activities. Scitech's Aboriginal Education Program takes hands-on science activities to schools in remote Aboriginal communities in WA (Byrne et al., 2008) while the Queensland University of Technology's YuMi Deadly Maths Program works in six schools in regional Queensland and includes delivering a Federal Government program aimed to accelerate Indigenous student learning in mathematics (Queensland University of Technology, 2010). Kulig, Duke, Solowoniuk, Weaselfat, Shade, Lamb & Wojtowicz (2010) recommend the hands-on approach adopted in these strategies, as it allows for experiences and observational learning that can enhance student engagement in science. Additionally many smaller one-off visits to schools occur, such as those supported by National Science Week grants that are held throughout any given year (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011d).

Many organisations adopt the strategy of hosting students. Indigenous Science Camps, like the University of Western Australia's Indigenous Science, Engineering and Health Camp (UWA, 2011d) and the Aboriginal Summer School for Excellence in Technology and Science (RiAus, 2011) offer residential camp programs that aim to promote and raise awareness in a way that will enhance Indigenous students' engagement in science, build self esteem and motivation and break down perceived barriers. Features of these programs include using Indigenous role models, and making sessions relevant by linking them back to Indigenous culture and anthropology (Aldous, Barnes and Clarke, 2008).

Rather than visiting or hosting Indigenous school students directly, other organisations were found to provide support for programs that made use of these strategies. One example of this is Woodside's sponsorship and in-kind support of the UWA Science, Engineering and Health Camp –providing financial assistance to help students access a program that includes engineering and geology activities. (UWA, 2011d).

Other support includes providing opportunities for Indigenous students to participate in existing mainstream programs, such as the Indigenous Scholars Program, which provides five scholarships to Indigenous students to attend the International Science School (The University of Sydney, 2011).

4.1. Visits

Scitech – Aboriginal Education Program which visits schools in remote Aboriginal communities in WA with hands-on science activities that aim to increase interest and participation in science (Scitech, 2011)

Macquarie University (NSW) – Indigenous Science Education Program works with four high schools in NSW and uses science as a motivator for students to stay at school and consider further study (Macquarie University, 2011)

Queensland University of Technology – YuMi Deadly Maths Program, which works in six schools in regional Queensland and includes delivering a Federal Government program aimed to accelerate Indigenous student learning in mathematics (Queensland University of Technology, 2010)

Townsville Intercultural Centre – ‘Townsville Dreaming’. One-off National Science Week event, examining the night sky over Townsville picking out Indigenous and conventional star constellations. Two storytellers, both Indigenous and/or professional actors, will tell stories of the constellations drawn from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous myths (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011d).

4.2. Hosting

The University of Western Australia – Indigenous Science, Engineering and Health Camp. One-week residential camp held annually in July for around 50 Indigenous schools students in Years 9 – 11 from Western Australia. (UWA, 2011d)

Aboriginal Summer School for Excellence in Technology and Science (ASSETS). An annual, national program designed to engage 30 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in science education. The program provides opportunities to participate in a science, cultural and leadership program. Conducted by educators and scientists at The University of South Australia, SA Water, RiAus and the Australian Science and Mathematics School. (RiAus, 2011)

Indigenous Australian Engineering Summer School. An annual event, established in 1998 by Engineering Aid Australia. Open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from around the country. It is a seven-day live-in Summer School, featuring a combination of engineering and social activities. For last three years there have been 2 summer schools, one in Perth at Curtin University and the other in Sydney with the University of Sydney (Engineering Aid Australia, 2011)

Indigenous National Youth Science Forum. Currently no information available online – ran first week-long residential camp in October 2011 in Perth focusing on Indigenous high school students from Pilbara region. Utilised Follow the Dream Coordinators as supervisors. Activities held at UWA and Curtin (anecdotal)

University of New England – ‘Science in the Bush’ National Science Week. One-off event held at UNE for primary and secondary students from indigenous and remote

areas participate in a day of science activities including hands-on experiments, quizzes and lively presentations (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011d).

4.3. Support

Indigenous Scholars Program – International Science School. The ISS is a free science education program created by Professor Harry Messel in 1962, funded by the Science Foundation for Physics and held in the University of Sydney for students in Year 11 or 12. Run every second year. In 2011 took eight Indigenous Australian science students on scholarships that covered all expenses (University of Sydney, 2011)

National Youth Science Forum. Camp for top Australian science students held in Canberra and Perth each year. Do not traditionally get much Indigenous participation. In 2011 ran Indigenous NYSF in Perth to encourage Indigenous participation (NYSF, 2011)

Woodside – sponsorship of UWA Indigenous Science, Engineering and Health Camp. Woodside provide financial assistance to help students access the program and run engineering and geology activities relevant to their industry to further enhance the value of the program (UWA, 2011d).

Appendix 3: Program Links

In text citation	Title of Page	Web address	Date last accessed
Australian Academy of Science (2011)	Primary Connections: Indigenous Perspectives	http://www.science.org.au/primaryconnections/indigenous	20th December 2011
Australian Catholic University (2009)	RoleM: Future Dreaming. Our Maths, Our Way	http://www.rolem.com.au/cms/	25th November 2011
Australian Defence Force (2011)	Indigenous Overview	http://www.defencejobs.gov.au/campaigns/indigenous/supportPrograms.aspx	8th December 2011
Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (2011)	Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association	http://www.aida.org.au	5th December 2011
Australian National University (2011a)	College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences Reconciliation Action Plan.	http://reconciliation.anu.edu.au/rap/college_division_rap.php	25th November 2011
Batchelor Institute (2011)	Batchelor Institute	https://www.batchelor.edu.au/	9th December 2011
Bureau of Meteorology (2011)	Indigenous Weather Knowledge	http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/	25th November 2011
Centre for Cultural Competence Australia (2010)	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence Course – Clients	http://www.ccca.com.au/clients	8th December 2011
Commonwealth of Australia (2011b)	Boorderee National Park	http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/boorderee	21st December 2011
Commonwealth of Australia (2011c)	Indigenous Cadetship Support	http://www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Employment/Programs/IEP/Pages/IndigenousCadetshipSupport.aspx	5th December 2011

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Commonwealth of Australia (2011d)	National Science Week Grants 2011	http://www.scienceweek.gov.au/National/Pages/2011Grants.aspx	8th December 2011
CSIRO (2011a)	Aboriginal Wetland Burning in Kakadu	http://www.csiro.au/en/Outcomes/Environment/Bushfires/KakaduWetlandBurning.aspx	5th December 2011
CSIRO (2011b)	CSIRO Indigenous Engagement	http://www.csiro.au/Portals/About-CSIRO/Who-we-are/CSIRO-Indigenous-Engagement.aspx	5th December 2011
CSIRO (2011c)	Recording traditional wetland burning knowledge	http://csiro.au/science/recording-traditional-burning.html	5th December 2011
CQU (2011)	Tertiary Entry Program: What Can I Study?	http://www.cqu.edu.au/study/special-programs/enabling-programs/tep/what-can-i-study	9th December 2011
Curtin (2011)	Indigenous Tertiary Enabling Course	http://courses.curtin.edu.au/course_overview/undergraduate/Indigenous-enabling	9th December 2011
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2011)	Indigenous Cadetship Support	http://www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Employment/Programs/IEP/Pages/IndigenousCadetshipSupport.aspx	5th December 2011
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ECU (2011b)	Indigenous University Orientation Course: Our Courses Information	http://www.ecu.edu.au/future-students/school-leavers/our-courses/view?id=C11	9th December 2011
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Hamacher, D. (2011)	Australian Aboriginal Astronomy	http://aboriginalastronomy.blogspot.com/	5th December 2011
Horizon Power (2010)	Aboriginal and Remote communities Power Supply Project	http://www.horizonpower.com.au/documents/ARC_PSP_2_STAKEHOLDER_BROCHURE.PDF	9th December 2011
Indigenous Allied Health Australia (2011)	Indigenous Allied Health Australia	http://www.indigenousalliedhealth.com.au/	9th December 2011
Indigenous Land Corporation (n.d. –a)	Gunbalanya Station and Meats (NT)	http://www.ilc.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=315	22nd December 2011
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James Cook University (2011)	Tertiary Access Course	http://www.jcu.edu.au/sias/JCUDEV_002310.html	9th December 2011
Macquarie University (2011)	Indigenous Science Education Program	http://web.science.mq.edu.au/groups/iesp/	8th December 2011
Michie, M. (2011).	Indigenous Science Network	http://members.ozemail.com.au/~mmichie/network.html	8th December 2011.
Murdoch (n.d)	Waardong	http://www.vetbiomed.murdoch.edu.au/waardong	9th December 2011
National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (2011)	Indigenous Innovation	http://ncie.org.au/blog/	8th December 2011
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NYSF (2011)	National Youth Science Forum	http://www.nysf.edu.au/	8th December 2011
RiAus (2011)	Aboriginal Summer School for Excellence in Technology and Science	http://riaus.org.au/programs/education/assets/	8th December 2011
Rio Tinto (2009)	Indigenous Partnerships	http://www.argylediamonds.com.au/indigenous-partnerships.html	5th December 2011
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The University of Sydney, 2011	News: Indigenous students win record number of science school scholarships	http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=7233	8th December 2011
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University of Tasmania (2011)	Riawunna: Murina Preparation Pathway	http://www.utas.edu.au/riawunna/studentinformation/Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20Students/Murina/murinawithoutcoursestructure.htm	9th December 2011
The University of Western Australia (2011a)	Indigenous Graduate Profiles	http://www.sis.uwa.edu.au/courses/profiles	22nd December 2011
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