Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Initial Consultation Report

‘Nyangkami’ – a collaborative artwork between Penny K Lyons, Rosie King Tarku, Rosie Goodjie, Cory Wakartu Surprise, Nada Rawlins and Purlta Maryanne Downs
warning

This document may contain names and pictures of people who have passed away.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding
Funding for the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project, including this initial consultation report, was generously provided through the Commonwealth Suicide Prevention Trial program and resourcing allocated to the WA Primary Health Alliance. Further contributions were made by Aarnja Limited and LotteryWest.

Commissioning
This project was commissioned by the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre.

Compilation
This Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Initial Consultation Report was compiled by Frank Davey, Merle Carter, Melissa Marshall, Wes Morris, Kate Golson, Pat Torres, Maya Haviland and Rowena O’Byrne-Bowlan, with input through community workshops, participant surveys and one-on-one interviews with representatives from the Aboriginal organisations featured in this document. Linguistic assistance was provided by Thomas Saunders and transcription by Larissa Searle.

Foreword
We would like to sincerely thank June Oscar AO, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, for providing the foreword to this document.

Front Artwork
‘Nyangkarni’ is a collaborative artwork by Penny K Lyons, Rosie King Tarku, Rosie Goodjie, Cory Wakartu Surprise, Nada Rawlins and Purlta Maryanne Downs. It depicts significant desert sites from the women’s family Country, including Yataru Jila, Parnta, Kurtal, Pirrmal, Kulijirti Jumu and Jilji this side of Kiriwirri.

Used with generous permission from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, ‘Nyangkarni’ perfectly encapsulates one of the central threads behind the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project – collaboration and joint endeavour towards a common purpose.

Other Images
All other images reproduced within this document are owned and approved by KALACC. Any images not reproduced by KALACC are acknowledged and used with kind permission from their respective owners.
# CONTENTS

- **Acknowledgements**
  - iii  
- **Foreword**
  - 1  
- **Executive Summary**
  - 2  
- **Introduction**
  - Project Purpose
    - 5  
  - Project Stages
    - 6  
  - Project Objectives
    - 7  
- **Background**
  - Culture is Key
    - 9  
  - Learning From the Message Stick?
    - 10  
  - The Need for a Collaborative Approach
    - 11  
  - The Significance of the Caring for Culture Plan
    - 13  
- **Process & Structure**
  - Community Consultation
    - 16  
  - Methods of Engagement
    - 16  
  - Consultation Report Structure
    - 18  
- **Caring for Culture in the Kimberley**
  - Western Tradition (Broome & the Dampier Peninsula)
    - 22  
  - Central Tradition (Derby, Fitzroy Crossing & the Fitzroy Valley)
    - 37  
  - Eastern Tradition (Kununurra, Warmun, Halls Creek & Surrounds)
    - 61  
  - Northern Tradition (Wyndham, Kalumburu & the Gibb River Road)
    - 72  
  - Southern Tradition (Bidyadanga through to the Tjurabalan)
    - 78  
  - Regional Bodies
    - 83  
- **Initial Consultation Report Outcomes**
  - Key Initial Findings
    - 91  
  - Discussion of the Key Initial Findings
    - 92  
  - Key Informed Projects
    - 95  
- **Key Recommendations from Published Reports**
  - KALACC’s Cultural Solutions Paper: Key Recommendations
    - 96  
  - Key Coronial Recommendations Regarding Culture
    - 98  
  - Key Message Stick Report Culture-Based Recommendations
    - 100  
- **Initial Consultation Report Conclusion**
  - Recommendations Require Meaningful Action
    - 102  
- **References**
  - 103  
- **Appendices**
  - Appendix 1: Media Release for the Feb 2019 Coroner’s Report
    - 106  
  - Appendix 2: Workshop Format
    - 108  
  - Appendix 3: Survey Template
    - 110
FOREWORD

Culture underpins all of who we are. It is both what we learn, and the framework for how we live and engage with each other and our surrounds. Culture constructs our society and identities, our strength, self-worth and resilience, and in times of great sadness – of trauma, loss and grief – culture heals us. The Kimberley region is home to 30 distinct Aboriginal groups that practices culture in diverse and vibrant ways. Our traditions and languages that connect us to Country and each other come from a deep lineage of ancestral knowledge and strength.

The Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Initial Consultation Report captures this remarkable heritage. It reflects the powerful leadership that has always been present in the Kimberley in keeping our culture alive and protected. In 1984, our people from diverse traditions across the Kimberley gathered at Ngumpan. At this historic bush meeting, we recognised that alongside our rights to our land we must protect and practice our Law and culture. We stood for our rights to be on Country, to speak our languages, and to be in control of our knowledge and resources. As a result, we established the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre, the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, and Magabala Books, the first and now longest running Aboriginal publishing house in Australia.

Since then, we have been a part of achieving the extraordinary legal milestone of Native Title which destroyed the myth of Terra Nullius, and we have established and strengthened our many community-controlled organisations. The Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Initial Consultation Report and the forthcoming Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan reminds us of these achievements and the ways in which we continue to thread culture into every aspect of our lives.

This consultation report provides an overview of over 60 Kimberley community-controlled organisations that work across every sector from health, justice and education to arts, enterprise, women’s supports, childcare, land management and aged care, amongst many others. These organisations, led by our people and built on our cultural values and principles, deliver vital culturally-based services and programs designed to maintain, strengthen and revitalise our culture.

The forthcoming Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan is not for the shelf. It will sit alongside other major reports and recommendations which acknowledge that our people on the ground and our community organisations have the solutions. Central to our solutions is caring for our culture.

It is time that Governments and policy-makers work with us. We have to respond to these reports and this plan so we can invest in community-led solutions over the long-term. In being supported to practice and care for our culture in everything we do our distinct rights as Indigenous Peoples are realised. When our culture is strong, we are strong. We can maintain the transference of knowledge to all our children, and revitalise generational success, health and wellbeing.

Our culture, practiced in our homes, families and communities and supported by our organisations, brings about the future we all want – a future self-determined by our people.

Yaninyja.

Thank you.

June Oscar AO, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We have to let culture speak for itself.

– Rachel bin Salleh (Magabala Books)

In an area geographically larger than the state of Victoria, the Kimberley is home to the oldest living continuous culture on the planet and the primacy of culture is continuously and repeatedly asserted by Kimberley Aboriginal People.

The Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC) has been the Kimberley’s peak Aboriginal body since we were established in 1985. We are mandated to protect, preserve and celebrate Law and Culture across the region.

Despite repeated calls for Government action, a 2016 Medical Journal of Australia article found that the suicide rate in the Kimberley region had not only doubled in five years, but it was among the highest in the world.

About the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project

The Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project is part of KALACC’s effort to improve resource distribution, foster a collaborative approach between Aboriginal stakeholder organisations and the Government, and address the broader impact of intergenerational trauma and suicide that overwhelmingly grips our region.

Project Objectives

- Map and gap the current service provision
- Foster collaboration and cohesion amongst Kimberley Aboriginal Non-Government Organisation (NGO) service providers
- Contribute to the development of macro Government policies and strategies
- Contribute to important research into and strategies towards improving Indigenous outcomes

Project Process

A total of 61 Aboriginal organisations participated in the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project, from a cross-section of key service areas regarding Aboriginal welfare and wellbeing. Organisations were given the option of contributing via surveys, workshops or one-on-one meetings or workshops. Several organisations chose to engage with more than one of these methods.

Stage 1 – Initial Consultation Report

The Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Initial Consultation Report (KACfC Initial Consultation Report) is the culmination of the year-long consultation process and is intended to:

- Represent the preliminary collation and summation of the materials gathered from more than 60 Aboriginal-led organisations – effectively, a consultation summary
- Provide a collective voice for various key Kimberley Aboriginal organisations
• Showcase their culturally-based activities, partnerships, achievements and aspirations within a range of sectors

Utilising the framework of the Kimberley’s five cultural blocs, the organisational information that was collected during the consultation process is reported in the following order:

• **Western Tradition** – Broome and the Dampier Peninsula
• **Central Tradition** – Derby, Fitzroy Crossing and surrounds
• **Eastern Tradition** – Halls Creek, Warmun and Kununurra
• **Northern Tradition** – Wyndham, Kalumburu and the Gibb River Road
• **Southern Tradition** – from Bidyadanga across to the Tjurabalan
• **Regional Bodies** – organisations operating across the Kimberley region

**Stage 2 – Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan**

The material reported in this document will be further finessed and analysed in the final *Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan (KACfC Plan)*.

The KACfC Plan is set to be published in June 2019 and will:

• Provide a framework for Government and other supporting organisations to develop future policies, practices and strategies relating to Aboriginal people in the Kimberley region – one that ensures culture is at the core
• Identify recommendations and opportunities for enhanced service provision
• Include additional information gathered during our consultation with schools in the Kimberley that offer culturally-based programs and initiatives
• Provide a review of the relevant academic and Government policy literature regarding the relationship between Aboriginal culture and wellbeing

**Overview of the Key Initial Findings**

Underlying the cultural components and core activities of each Aboriginal organisation are the following culturally-embedded principles:

• Connection to Country must be maintained
• Country, Culture and Language are inseparable
• Aboriginal advancement and wellbeing can only be achieved through Aboriginal empowerment and self-determination
• Senior People have the authority and are the Knowledge Holders

Overarchingly, all of the Aboriginal community organisations’ activities are guided by Cultural Governance; incorporate Cultural Knowledge and practices; and celebrate Culture, Language and Country.

**Key Informed Projects**

During the consultation process, KALACC identified the two activities that we believe best fit within the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial mandate. They were the:
• **Wirnan Project** – funding for the Kimberley Art Centres Collective to implement the Wirnan Project, which aims to “revitalise cultural connections and creative intersections between communities ensuring the vitality of Kimberley cultures and the maintenance of Cultural Knowledge and identity for future generations”

• **Culturally-Based Project Measurement & Evaluation Framework** – the development of method and tool for evaluating the outcomes of culturally-based projects, which can then be applied to the Wirnan Project

A project proposal has been submitted to the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial Steering Committee for approval at their next meeting on 19 March 2019. An update on the outcome of this proposal will be provided in the forthcoming *KACfC Plan*.

### Meaningful Action is Desperately Needed

Countless recommendations in relation to improving the welfare and prosperity of Aboriginal communities have been published in numerous reports to date – many of which the State and/or Federal Government are yet to respond to. In the ‘Key Recommendations from Published Reports’ section, KALACC has outlined culturally-relevant recommendations from three key documents.

Importantly, this includes calls for the development of a Cultural Investment Strategy, in addition to the establishment of a National Indigenous Arts and Cultural Authority (NIACA).

The need to for significant improvements to Aboriginal welfare is now, and through the forthcoming *KACfC Plan* we seek to inform meaningful progress as Australia moves into a new decade. It is our sincere mission to assist State and Federal Governments to invest in culturally-embedded strategies and practices, which evidence proves actually work to reduce Aboriginal suicide and the devastation currently experienced in our communities.

In the words of the Kimberley Cultural Bosses on page 6 of KALACC’s *Cultural Solutions Position Paper*:

> To heal our people, we must heal our families. To heal our families, we must heal our communities.

> Culture is the key.
INTRODUCTION

We tell these lads their skin group, that’s who they are and how they fit together in the community. Language is important. They’ve got to know this so they know their culture and who they are. If they lose language and connection to culture they become a nobody inside and that’s enough to put anyone over the edge.

– Walmajarri Elder and KALACC Cultural Boss Mr Joe Brown (p18, The Elders et al)

Culture is an intrinsic part of our identity as Aboriginal people – it is the foundation of who we are and how we make sense of the world. This is why Aboriginal organisations across a spectrum of service areas in the Kimberley embed culture within everything from governance structures to programs. Simply put, culture drives us.

Often asked to introduce initiatives that align with prescriptive Government policies rather than proven cultural processes, the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC) has been the Kimberley’s peak Aboriginal body since we were established in 1985. We are mandated to protect, preserve and celebrate Law and Culture across the region.

KALACC has long lobbied for the meaningful improvement of Government policies and practices enacted in the Kimberley. In particular, acknowledgement and respect that culture is fundamental to Aboriginal wellbeing, and for significant support for culturally-embedded programs.

A prime example of our advocacy efforts includes writing to previous WA State Coroner Alistair Hope regarding the 11 people who took their lives in Fitzroy Crossing in 2006, which instigated the subsequent 2008 inquest into a total of 22 youth suicides across the Kimberley.

However, despite Coroner Hope’s findings, there has been little progress in addressing this crisis and it has only worsened since. In 2016, a Medical Journal of Australia article found that the suicide rate in our region had not only doubled in five years, but it was among the highest in the world.

There can be no doubt that urgent action is needed from the State and Federal Government to improve Aboriginal wellbeing in the Kimberley.

PROJECT PURPOSE

Lot of things to culture; not just ceremony – it’s wider than that... it’s in everything.

– Frank Davey, KALACC Chairperson (during the KACfC Project consultations)

The Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project is part of KALACC’s effort to improve resource distribution, foster a collaborative approach between Aboriginal stakeholder organisations and the Government, and address the broader impact of intergenerational trauma and suicide that overwhelmingly grips our region.

As noted by State Coroner Ros Fogliani in her February 2019 Coronerial Inquest Findings Report, which investigated the tragic deaths of 13 children young people in the Kimberley:

There is a wide and respected body of research that establishes the relevance of cultural continuity to the formation of a person’s identity and their own drive for self-continuity. In other words, it can help to prevent suicide. It is a uniquely protective factor that can assist
in counterbalancing the social and economic factors giving rise to the vulnerability of young Aboriginal persons in the presence of adversity (p139).

KALACC recognises that a great many Aboriginal organisations all across the region contribute towards positive community outcomes by keeping culture strong – many of which are underfunded, as recognised by Coroner Fogliani (p9). Therefore, we have worked with over 60 local and regional organisations for the past year to identify, articulate and demonstrate the multitude of ways in which culture already defines and bolsters so much of what we do in the Kimberley.

We do so in the acute hope that the State and Federal Government will recognise how crucial culture is to significant, sustainable solutions and invest accordingly in culturally-embedded initiatives.

**PROJECT STAGES**

The Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project is comprised of two stages that are outlined below.

**Initial Consultation Report**

The *Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Initial Consultation Report (KACfC Initial Consultation Report)* is the culmination of the year-long consultation process and is intended to:

- Represent the preliminary collation and summation of the materials gathered from more than 60 Aboriginal-led organisations – effectively, a consultation summary
- Provide a collective voice for various key Kimberley Aboriginal organisations
- Showcase their culturally-based activities, partnerships, achievements and aspirations within a range of sectors

KALACC is in no way attempting to define or describe what culture is for Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. Our recent position paper *Cultural Solutions: Shared Pathways for Engagement in the Kimberley (Cultural Solutions Position Paper)* describes what this means for us. Instead, we are taking the opportunity to demonstrate how culture is embedded and delivered through various mechanisms by participating organisations across the Kimberley region.

**Final Plan**

The material that has been provided in the *KACfC Initial Consultation Report* will be analysed in the final *Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan (KACfC Plan)*, and updated regarding further organisational feedback.

Set to be published in June 2019, the *KACfC Plan* will:

- Provide a framework for Government and other supporting organisations to develop future policies, practices and strategies relating to Aboriginal people – one that ensures culture is at the core
- Identify recommendations and opportunities for enhanced service provision
- Include additional information gathered during our consultation with schools in the Kimberley that offer culturally-based programs and initiatives
- Provide a review of the relevant academic and Government policy literature regarding the relationship between Aboriginal culture and wellbeing
PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The following four key objectives have guided the overarching process for the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project:

1. Map and gap the current service provision
   - Identify and describe the culturally-based services that are currently provided across 35 or more service providers in the Kimberley, including at least 4–6 schools
   - Identify and describe a range of community interests and the gaps that exist between community aspirations and the current suite of services provided
   - Identify and describe opportunities for enhanced delivery of culturally-based services

2. Foster collaboration and cohesion amongst Kimberley Aboriginal Non-Government Organisation (NGO) service providers
   - Having mapped the current suite of services provided, identify opportunities for service providers to work collaboratively in order to maximise community outcomes
   - Identify opportunities to create networks and consortiums regarding the provision of culturally-based services
   - Identify opportunities to create networks and collaborations with Indigenous and non-Indigenous providers that do not provide specific culturally-based services but holistic, whole-of-community outcomes can best be achieved through such partnerships (e.g. sports organisations, ranger groups and so on)

3. Contribute to the development of macro Government policies and strategies
   - Provide insights, demonstrated outcomes and lived experiences that inform and improve Government policies and strategies, including the:
     - Development of a National Framework for evaluating and measuring Aboriginal culture, which is currently being led by Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and is resulting in periodic reports to Government on the status of Aboriginal culture
     - Development of the proposed National Indigenous Cultural Policy – recommended via a joint initiative between Western Australia’s Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Department of Culture and the Arts
     - Closing the Gap Refresh
     - Implementation of the 2018 iteration of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023
     - Support the development of a National Indigenous Arts and Cultural Authority (NIACA)
     - Contribute to improving delivery of the Regional Services Reform Unit (RSRU)
     - Allocation of Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funding from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)

4. Inform important research into and strategies towards improving Indigenous outcomes
   - Mayi Kuwayu: The National Study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing (Ray Lovett, Australian National University)
   - Living Culture: First Nations Arts Participation and Wellbeing (Australia Council for the Arts)
• **2018 Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023**

• Commissioning phase of the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial, which is administered by the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) and led by a Steering Committee

• Responses to State Coroner Fogliani’s February 2019 *Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley Region, Western Australia findings report* by the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial Steering Committee and other organisations (in addition to those already provided by Aarnja, Nyamba Buru Yawuru and KALACC)

• Collective, collaborative and unified representation of Kimberley Aboriginal organisations to Government regarding the broad suite of recommendations to be identified in the forthcoming *Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan* (scheduled for release in June 2019)

• AIATSIS development of a national reporting framework to report to Government on the status of Aboriginal culture
BACKGROUND

This brief background aims to further contextualise the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project, including this KACfC Initial Consultation Report. This information may be added to as part of the KACfC Plan. Scheduled for release in June 2019, the plan will contain a standalone literature review that can be viewed in conjunction with this section.

CULTURE IS KEY

The introductory sections of the seminal Crocodile Hole Report by the Kimberley Land Council and Warringarri Resource Centre state that:

*Culture is written in the land [...]*

The Kimberley Aboriginal Working Group must ensure the primacy of the Cultural rights of the Aboriginal people and embody the following fundamental principles as an integral part of all research, training and development activities and tasks in the Kimberley:

- Culture is collective memory and the Law
- Culture is continuity
- Culture is a way of life
- Culture is being together
- Culture is maintaining its continuity
- Culture is the care and use of land
- Culture is a bond that ties Aboriginal people to Country
- Culture is a living, dynamic force continually adapting (pili–2)

The 2017 Closing the Gap Refresh Discussion Paper identified the need to support the cultural maintenance of the world’s oldest living culture by recognising culture as foundational to any strategies and/or initiatives. In the February 2019 Coronial Inquest Findings Report regarding 13 youth suicides in the Kimberley, State Coroner Fogliani likewise refers to this need as follows in Recommendation 42:

*The Western Australian Government develop a state-wide Aboriginal cultural policy that recognises the importance of cultural continuity and cultural security to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people in this State (p372)*

This vital realisation is certainly reflective of what the community of Fitzroy Crossing had to say on 29 November 2017 during the community consultations undertaken as part of the Closing the Gap Refresh:

*We should take a strengths based approach – we need to respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal resilience. We no-longer want to be seen and treated in the deficit.*

*Government works with individuals however Aboriginal people are communal in nature and practice – so we need communal approach to family support services.*

*Culture and place in Aboriginal society is grounded in respect – it may seem like little things but it is big because it helps address conflict, issues, problem solving – we have cultural advisors to manage issues our way. Elders need to be validated and included in good*
community governance, and justice issues. Without culture Aboriginal people can go mad, have conflict and be chaotic. We need to balance our community norms through respect for elders.

We respect our elders but some problems are so complex it cannot be fixed by KALACC and elders alone. We need to work together and negotiate solutions and ways of working together. It’s not always what we do but how we choose to work together. History tells us government likes to see us in conflict. We need to rise above the past and fix our difference and work as a united community that respects each other’s rights and responsibilities. We need to come back to the camp fire and have long healthy conversations about how we move forward together.

LEARNING FROM THE MESSAGE STICK?

The Kimberley is home to the oldest living continuous culture on the planet and the primacy of culture is continuously and repeatedly asserted by Kimberley Aboriginal people. Yet in terms of engagement with the wider world, the sad reality is summarised by the Wunan Foundation in their Empowered Communities: Empowered Peoples Design Report as follows:

The fundamental challenge faced in every attempt to influence policy, programs and services has been the need to retrofit Kimberley Aboriginal people’s ideas, plans and goals to successive Government priorities [...] Culture is at our core. Rarely, if ever, is our Aboriginal culture considered when governments design, develop and deliver policy and services for the West Kimberley (p160–162).

This total and perennial disjuncture between the needs and priorities of the people and the policies and priorities of Government was characterised by anthropologist Martin Preaud in his 2009 doctoral thesis as being “a dialogue of deaf people” (p66).

A further example of this dialogue was the 14 October 2017 meeting between KALACC and the Hon Nigel Scullion, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Held in Canberra, the Minister stated in the meeting that the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet did not fund cultural maintenance and had no interest in backfilling policy and funding responsibilities that had been abrogated by the Commonwealth Arts Department. Although this discussion was directed at KALACC as an organisation, it demonstrates the disconnect between Canberra and Aboriginal Australia.

To address this gap, recommendations such as those identified within the Western Australian Legislative Assembly Education and Health Standing Committee’s 2016 Learning from the message stick: The report of the Inquiry into Aboriginal youth suicide in remote areas (Message Stick Report) were proposed to reconnect Federal and State Governments with regional realities and concerns. In a recent combined letter to the State Government of Western Australia, the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, KALACC and the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) asked for a response to the Message Stick Report, specifically regarding culturally-based wellbeing, stating:

All 44 recommendations contained in the Message Stick Report are important. However, the Report is very clear that there are some areas that need more urgent attention than others. The Report states as follows:
Perhaps the most important, yet least enacted [recommendations from earlier reports], were about the role of Aboriginal culture, both as a primary protective factor building resilience in young people, and also ensuring that programs and services are culturally appropriate. [Chairman’s Foreword, page One].

Culture is the key protective factor which must be present in all strategies, programs and services in which Aboriginal people participate, whether run by governments, non-government organisations or private companies. [Executive Summary, ii].

Finding 8, Page 57 There is increasing evidence that culturally-based programs have the greatest impact in preventing suicide; however, the WA Government has demonstrated reluctance in funding programs of this nature.

Recommendation 8, Page 57 That the Western Australian Government set aside an appropriate portion of grant expenditure to fund more culture-embedded programs for Aboriginal young people across the state.

Recommendation 13, Page 79 That the Western Australian Government shifts its focus from government owned and run programs and services for Aboriginal people to Aboriginal owned and run programs. The Committee acknowledges that this will be a gradual process; however, it can begin immediately by designing strategies, services and programs with the aim of empowering Aboriginal communities.

In September 2018, Premier McGowan wrote to Kimberley organisations advising that a substantive response would be forthcoming once Coroner Fogliani’s report was released. However, this response has not yet transpired, resulting in a challenging time for Aboriginal organisations, communities and individuals in the region, as we enter the third year since the Message Stick Report was released.

Moreover, Coroner Fogliani’s February 2019 Coronial Inquest Findings Report provided a further 42 recommendations. This signifies the overwhelming level of improvement required in such a large geographic space. It is simply unfathomable. As noted by Professor Patrick Sullivan in an Inside Story article:

[…] it is no coincidence that things have got worse psychologically for Aboriginal people as they have become better in material terms. The things that bind Aboriginal people together in social solidarity – shared language, sacred areas, religious ceremonies, ancient land-related values – have been consistently undermined. These are not part of the wider society’s economic development agenda, or are believed to actively undermine it.

THE NEED FOR A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

While the role of culture has long been overlooked, Professor Sullivan also importantly identifies boundless opportunities for a collaborative approach between local and Government organisations that acknowledges the central role culture plays in Aboriginal wellbeing and meaningful progress in this area:

Local support and prevention is vital, and cultural support essential, but state intervention also plays a part. It can be particularly powerful when both work together, and a recent joint initiative of Western Australia’s Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Department of Culture and Arts has that potential.
In a proposal put to the state cabinet in May but not yet released, the two departments argued for a “cultural investment strategy” for the state’s Aboriginal population. Such a strategy would “use the support of cultural activities to improve cultural growth, social cohesion and engagement; and use culturally based activities to improve outcomes in health, education, community safety and employment.”

It is within this framework of a promised Cultural Investment Strategy coalescing that the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project has been facilitated by KALACC. Through intertwining initiatives represented in Figure 1 below, KALACC argues that all sides of the spectrum – from Western through Hybrid to Traditional and the principles connecting them – are required if improvements are to be realised.

![Figure 1: Responsive behaviours to address suicide and improve Aboriginal wellbeing.](image)

Conceptually, this diagram considers the three elements and their place in the prevention and treatment of those at risk of self-harm:

1. **Western** – clinical, individualistic, therapeutic, medical intervention (known as ‘Indicated’ in suicide prevention jargon)
2. **Hybrid** – culturally-appropriate, including the work that the Aboriginal Medical Services offer (known as ‘Selected’ or ‘Targeted’ in suicide prevention jargon)
3. **Traditional** – this can be labelled as culturally-based or culturally-embedded (known as ‘Universal’ in suicide prevention jargon)

Although KALACC is a cultural organisation that provides and supports successful culturally-embedded initiatives such as the Yiriman Project, current Government investment is still only restricted to the Western and Hybrid methods.

Whilst recognising that suicide is multifactorial and therefore requires multifactorial responses across all three elements, there is currently next to no level of investment in to Traditional or Cultural mechanisms. In fact, the May 2016 *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more*
effective outcomes from WA State Government services discussion paper identified that, investment in “direct Aboriginal cultural activities in WA” equalled a mere “0.72 per cent of total Australian and State Government expenditure in Aboriginal services” (24).

As articulated powerfully in a recent publication by Indigenous Canadian journalist Tanya Talaga:

[…] a community function[ing] proudly, steeped in its culture, heritage, and language, [then] they could reduce the suicide rates among the youth (p129).

We can therefore recognise the fluidity and diversity of the use of the word ‘culture’ across the 61 Aboriginal organisations who participated in this project. While not asserting nor prescribing what culture means throughout the KACfC Initial Consultation Report or forthcoming KACfC Plan, we need to be clear that we operate within the third culturally-embedded Traditional stream, as illustrated in Figure 1.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CARING FOR CULTURE PLAN

A regional plan of this nature is long overdue and frequent attempts by Government at all levels are often ill-directed, struggling to meaningfully and sustainably improve services and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from policy development through to implementation and the delivery of programs.

This situation is summarised in recent correspondence to KALACC from the Minister for Aboriginal Health, the Hon Ken Wyatt, who wrote:

One consistent feature of these consultations was that culture is central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing and needs to be embraced and embedded across a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait and mainstream services – both as a protector and enabler of health and wellbeing. The Implementation Plan will be updated in 2018, with a strengthened focus on the social determinants and cultural determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Current Macro Processes

Though there has historically been a policy void and vacuum around Aboriginal culture, a number of key processes are currently underway at a national and state level, including policy and strategy reviews. KALACC, with the support of the Kimberley community, recognised that it was an optimal time to conduct the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project, in the hopes that the outcomes and recommendations, as outlined in the forthcoming KACfC Plan, will inform the following macro policies and strategies:

- **Closing the Gap Refresh** (Council of Australian Governments 2017; Council of Australian Governments 2018)
- Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial, as part of the National Suicide Prevention Trial (Hunt 2018; Ley 2016; Wyatt 2017)
- **Empowered Communities initiative** – including proposed structural changes to the way in which Commonwealth IAS funding allocation decisions are made (Aarnja Limited 2018)
- Formation of a National Indigenous Arts and Cultural Authority (Australia Council for the Arts 2018)
Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project 2019
– Initial Consultation Report

- Possible development of Australia’s first ever National Indigenous Cultural Policy
- 2018 Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023 (Commonwealth of Australia Department of Health 2018)

The above represents a rapidly changing policy landscape – one in which, for the first time in over a decade, Aboriginal culture could actually be valued and thus measured and reported on. This could potentially signify the catalyst that is required to enact the substantial, integral and meaningful change that is so desperately needed in order to ensure the welfare and prosperity of Aboriginal people in the Kimberley.

Current Regional Processes

Additionally, in the short and medium terms, this KACfC Initial Consultation Report and the final KACfC Plan will be a deliberate and specific response to elements of the Operational Plan of the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial, which includes the following references to culture and to culturally-based programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSAL/INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY WIDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primordial Prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community challenges, poverty, trauma, social determinants of health</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural elements – building identity, social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB), healing, return to Country</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map cultural elements (existing and gaps) and build evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement other healing and SEWB programs as part of community planning process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELECTIVE AT RISK GROUPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and Young People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Map culture being taught in schools</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify what cultural programs are being taught in Kimberley schools, gaps and a strategy for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If gaps in SEWB, plan project proposal to address gaps in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth peer-to-peer mentoring / education / leadership / diversion programs / (inc. sport) / connecting to Country, elders, culture / hope</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop youth specific programs as part of community planning process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMON ELEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Leadership / Cultural Framework</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community empowerment, development, ownership – community specific responses, involvement of Elders, cultural framework</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Aboriginal leadership and decision making across the trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural security and cultural-based programs be considered across each activity of the trial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The KACfC Initial Consultation Report and forthcoming KACfC Plan will also align with the interests of Aboriginal regional body, Aarnja Limited, and the Aarnja Strategic Plan, further assisting Aarnja in their task of creating a Kimberley Development Plan, which includes the following goals:

- Identify policies and programs that really work and to collaborate with Government, Non-Government and Aboriginal organisations to expand them
- Be the backbone organisation that supports strong, independent Aboriginal organisations to work together through coherent and agreed Kimberley-wide governance and accountabilities
Both documents likewise reference the importance of culturally-based youth programs and Juvenile Justice issues.

Thus, whilst it is hoped that the KACfC Initial Consultation Report and the forthcoming KACfC Plan will have a usefulness and value beyond the immediate short-term context, the development of these documents is also very much intended to contribute towards the crucial collaborative planning processes that are currently being undertaken in the Kimberley.

By developing the final KACfC Plan at this time, we hope to honour and fulfil the vision and the aspirations articulated by the Kimberley leaders since the time of the Noonkanbah stance – the birthplace of Aboriginal political representation in the Kimberley and the Kimberley Land Council over 40 years ago – and the political agenda articulated for Kimberley Aboriginal people at the subsequent Crocodile Hole meeting in 1991. This symbolic coming-of-age facilitated multiple regional bodies working together for the common goal of cohesive Aboriginal advocacy within the Kimberley region.

**Plan Influences**

The KACfC Initial Consultation Report has been informed by a number of critical reports into transgenerational trauma, Aboriginal welfare and the importance of culture. This includes:

- **Learning from the message stick: The report of the Inquiry into Aboriginal youth suicide in remote areas** (referred to as the ‘Message Stick Report’) – Parliament of Western Australia Legislative Assembly Education and Health Standing Committee, 2016
- **My Life My Lead – Opportunities for strengthening approaches to the social determinants and cultural determinants of Indigenous health: Report on the national consultations** – Commonwealth of Australia Department of Health, 2017
- **The Elders’ Report into Preventing Indigenous Self-harm and Youth Suicide** – The Elders et al, 2014
- **Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services** – WA Department of Culture and the Arts and WA Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 2015
- **The Ngumpan Statement** – Kimberley Land Council et al, 2018
- **Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley Region, Western Australia findings report** (referred to as the ‘Coronial Inquest Findings Report’), State Coroner Ros Folgiani, February 2019 – with KALACC’s response to this included as Appendix 1
- **Cultural Solutions: Shared Pathways for Engagement in the Kimberley Position Paper** (referred to as the ‘Cultural Solutions Position Paper’) – KALACC, 2017
- **Solutions That Work: What the Evidence and Our People Tell Us (ATSISPEP Report)** – University of Western Australia, 2016
- **National Suicide Prevention Conference Keynote Address** – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO, 2017
- **Mabu liyan – I hope you feel good in your heart: The coronial inquest into 13 suicides in the Kimberley** (maiden Senate speech) – Senator Pat Dodson, 2017
- **Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Country Plan** – Kimberley Land Council, 2010

This list of influences will be revisited within the final KACfC Plan.
PROCESS & STRUCTURE

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

A total of 61 Aboriginal organisations throughout the Kimberley participated in the development of the KACfC Initial Consultation Report and forthcoming KACfC Plan, representing a cross-section of the following key areas (see also Table 1 for the full list of the contributing organisations):

- Cultural Centres – 1
- Arts Centres – 6
- Language Centres – 5
- Men’s Centres – 2
- Women’s Centres – 3
- Native Title Bodies – 1
- Native Title Organisations – 7
- Rangers & Indigenous Protected Areas – 14
- Health Organisations & Programs – 6
- Media Organisations – 6
- Other Service Providers – 4
- Other Cultural, Youth & Arts Organisations – 4
- Supporting Organisation & Programs – 2

METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

A consultation group, led by KALACC, was formed to gather the necessary information for the KACfC Initial Consultation Report. Chosen to maximise accessibility, three comparative methods were used – organisational surveys, community workshops, and one-on-one meetings.

Surveys

The survey was distributed in February 2018 as an introduction and invitation for approximately 60 Aboriginal organisations and community groups to participate in the project (see also Appendix 3). The majority engaged in the consultation process in at least one of the above three options, with a dozen groups completing the surveys.

One-on-One Meetings

Organisations were also able to participate by attending one-on-one meetings with the consultation group. In the major towns across the region, a dozen organisations chose to do this – some in addition to attending the community workshops and/or completing the survey.

Workshops

For those who preferred, a series of workshops were held throughout the Kimberley between March and June 2018, taking place in Broome, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Kununurra, Warmun and Halls Creek (see also Figure 2 and Figure 3 below). Over 30 organisations attended these workshops.

An example of the workshop agenda, which focussed on deliberate input in response to the overarching project objectives, has been included in Appendix 2.

In addition to the centralised workshops, the consultation group initially planned to also visit Bidyadanga, the Dampier Peninsula and the Gibb River Road. However, the organisations in these locations instead nominated to participate via the survey option.
Each workshop was opened by KALACC’s own Cultural Bosses, our Chairperson Frank Davey (West Kimberley) and our Women’s Chairperson Merle Carter (East Kimberley). They each shared their perspectives on the role culture has played in their lives:

**Address by Frank Davey (KALACC Chairperson 2017–Present)**

> Our experience on Bardi Country is that it has been difficult at times due to so many changes that happen that affect our lives. But culture is always there for us – it’s not just ceremony, its wider than that... it’s in everything.

> Our biggest challenge was setting up our PBC [Prescribed Body Corporate]. To start with there was only a little bit of Aboriginal protocol in there (as it was set up by lawyers) and it didn’t work well. We got Native Title which should mean that culture is in there, but it wasn’t. I was the first chair and part of setting it up and we recognised this problem. We were trying to make it work but then we changed it to bring it back to the PBC we wanted, with more of a cultural base and a cultural way of how to deal with issues.

> This helped in so many ways, especially with our rangers – we take elders out on Country and can give advice there. We have support from KALACC in this. We also have been able to make use of the rangers to get Aboriginal culture and language into the school more. We take kids on Country, the rangers do that. Our Men’s Shed is also supporting these kinds on trips and training of our kids... This is what we’re doing on Bardi Country. While I’m not as involved directly, I am still a Cultural Advisor out there. I am responsible for driving it along with the people and getting younger ones involved. I also support the repatriation work of KALACC (Neil Carter) and we are setting up a Keeping Place there. We also did the Galwa Project, building a galwa [Traditional canoe] that is now displayed at the WA Museum.

> I’m also the leader of the Bardi Dancers – one of the most famous in the world! We’re the only ones to ever dance in Stonehenge; actually we’re the first Aboriginal group to be there. We dance our stories that go way back and have been handed down. We don’t dance anything new but what’s been handed down through the generations. We also have photos on Facebook with Yawuru and Karajarri – our next door neighbours.
Address by Merle Carter (KALACC Women’s Chairperson 2017–Present)

We live and breathe culture. It is who we are. We grew up with it. As the Women’s Chair of the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, which is the peak body for Law and Culture, I have represented my people in meetings with ministers and others, teaching them how you can’t separate culture from language or from Country, about how culture empowers us, about how it teaches us respect for our elders, for our brothers and so on.

In Miriwoong and Gajirrawoong country, and across the Kimberley, while culture is strong and people are making it stronger, the senior people are trying to make sure that young people are engaged. We have to pass on the knowledge and skills, hand this on to them, about places on country, bush medicines, language.

When we’re fighting for change, for justice, through our organisations, like the KLC [Kimberley Land Council] at Noonkanbah, like the way young people are treated in the justice system, we’re fighting for recognition of who we are and what our cultural identity is. We are fighting for ownership of what is ours and culture is at the centre of this.

CONSULTATION REPORT STRUCTURE

As the region’s peak law and culture body, we believe it is culturally-appropriate to present the consultation data summaries within the five key cultural blocs identified in the Kimberley Language Resource Centre’s Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Country Plan, rather than a town- or community-based perspective. Comprised of Western Tradition, Northern Tradition, Eastern Tradition, Central Tradition and Southern Tradition, the cultural blocs were collectively described as (see also Figure 4 below):

Cultural blocs do not equate with the four different landscape types of saltwater, freshwater, desert and rangelands or cattle country. The distinct nature of these landscapes affect how people relate to different types of Country, but not how Law informs rules and practices for specific Country. When TO’s choose to meet in their cultural blocs, all the right people, for the right place and with the right knowledge about that Country can be consulted and the best solutions reached.

Cultural blocs are the right fit for decision making and planning over large areas throughout the Kimberley. People relate to their region and to the groups they share a cultural identity with and have responsibilities to. When doing smaller projects within Country that has been determined under Native Title, PBCs or individual language groups, communities, clans or families will direct the work that needs to be done in their own area of Country and responsibility. They will also respect the larger cultural bloc where other permissions are needed, or where people need to be informed.

TO’s are refining these ‘boundaries’ to align more closely with cultural governance. Participation in meetings of cultural blocs will be somewhat fluid depending on the issue to be discussed or the areas of Country that may be affected. For example decisions about matters such as the mining of resources, access across Country, land clearing, sustainable use of cultural resources, or proposals for development will be made by the appropriate groups.
Rebuilding after colonisation has taken over one hundred years, but the foundations of cultural governance go far deeper. They are rooted in thousands of years of culture and more recently, to decades of Aboriginal community organisations representing and working for Kimberley Aboriginal people (36).

Utilising this framework, the organisational information that was collected during the consultation process is reported in the following order (see also Figure 4 below):

- **Western Tradition** – Broome and the Dampier Peninsula  
- **Central Tradition** – Derby, Fitzroy Crossing and surrounds  
- **Eastern Tradition** – Halls Creek, Warmun and Kununurra  
- **Northern Tradition** – Wyndham, Kalumburu and the Gibb River Road  
- **Southern Tradition** – from Bidyadanga across to the Tjurabalan  
- **Regional Bodies** – organisations operating across the Kimberley region

![Map of Kimberley's Five Key Cultural Blocs](image-url)  

*Figure 4: The Kimberley’s five key cultural blocs (KLRC Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Country Plan, p35).*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Centres</th>
<th>Art Centres</th>
<th>Language Centres</th>
<th>Men’s Centres</th>
<th>Women’s Centres</th>
<th>Native Title Bodies</th>
<th>Native Title Organisations – Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Tradition</td>
<td>Central Tradition</td>
<td>Eastern Tradition</td>
<td>Northern Tradition</td>
<td>Southern Tradition</td>
<td>Regional Bodies</td>
<td>Cultural Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC)</td>
<td>- Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre</td>
<td>- Warumun Art Centre</td>
<td>- Kira Kiro Art Centre</td>
<td>- Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre</td>
<td>- Babagarra Aboriginal Incorporated</td>
<td>- Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Nyikina Incorporated</td>
<td>- Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Gawooleng Yawoodeng</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Broome Men’s Outreach Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Yanunijarra Aboriginal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Derby Men’s Shed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangers &amp; Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs)</td>
<td>Western Tradition</td>
<td>Central Tradition</td>
<td>Eastern Tradition</td>
<td>Northern Tradition</td>
<td>Southern Tradition</td>
<td>Regional Bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bardi Jawi Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bardi Jawi IPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dambimangari Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dambimangari IPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nyikina Mangala Yimardoowarra Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bunuba Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gija Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uunguu Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wunggurr Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wilinggin IPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Karajarri Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Karajarri IPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ngurrara Rangers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ngurrara IPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Organisations &amp; Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alive and Kicking Goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yira Yungi Medical Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service (KAMS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goolarri Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goolarri Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 6DBY Larrkardi Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wangki Yupurnanupurru Radio 936AM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 6PRK Radio Halls Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation 6WR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Service Providers (e.g. Education, Enterprise &amp; Employment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Winun Ngari Employment Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Youth, Cultural &amp; Arts Organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Marrugeku</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Magabala Books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yiriman Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Halls Creek NAIDOC Week Organisers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Organisations &amp; Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aboriginal Training Support, North Regional TAFE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enterprise Partnerships WA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Organisations that participated in the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project consultation process, organised by Cultural Bloc.**

| Total: 61 | 10 | 20 | 12 | 7 | 6 | 6 |

Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project 2019
– Initial Consultation Report
CARING FOR CULTURE IN THE KIMBERLEY

Culture is a core component of much of what we do in the Kimberley. While culture can mean so much to so many, what it means for Aboriginal people and our organisations across the region underpins all that we are able to achieve.

In an area geographically larger than the state of Victoria, the KACfC Initial Consultation Report showcases a range of community organisations that have participated in this process. Though specific service offerings and delivery may vary, all are guided by diverse yet connected cultural frameworks that ensure the cultural security of Aboriginal people across this region.

The organisational information provided is the result of the consultation and engagement process, supplemented in some instances by additional material published on respective websites. Reported through the lens of the Kimberley’s cultural blocs, it outlines each organisation’s Cultural Governance structures; current culturally-founded programs, projects and/or partnerships; and their aspirations.

Importantly, all information has been provided for review and approval by each subject organisation prior to completion of the KACfC Initial Consultation Report and ahead of the June 2019 release of the KACfC Plan.

Please note:
Each blurb is written from the perspective of the subject organisation. For ease of reference:

- All organisations are referred to by their full title at all times, except in their own blurb – the only exception is KALACC, as the facilitating organisation
- Abbreviation standards are ‘contained’ within each blurb, so each organisation can be read both within the context of the KACfC Initial Consultation Report and as stand-alone information (i.e. abbreviated concepts are spelled in full and followed by the abbreviation in brackets in the first instance; this format is utilised for the same concept within multiple blurbs)
- Common concepts are abbreviated using the above format even if they are only mentioned once within a blurb, to recognise that some common concepts may primarily be known only by their abbreviation
- Aboriginal language phrases are defined within each blurb, even if they appear in multiple

WESTERN TRADITION (BROOME & THE DAMPIER PENINSULA)

Located in the far-west of the region, the Western Tradition cultural bloc encompasses the West Kimberley Saltwater Country and is comprised of the Language Groups of the Dampier Peninsula (including Yawuru) and the Broome Region.

A total of 10 Aboriginal organisations from the Western Tradition participated in this project, namely:

- Broome Men’s Outreach Service
- Babagarra Aboriginal Incorporated
- Goolarri Media and Goolarri Radio (collaborative response provided)
• Bardi Jawi Rangers and the Bardi Jawi Indigenous Protected Area (collaborative response provided)
• Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation
• Marrugeku
• Magabala Books
• Alive and Kicking Goals

**Broome Men’s Outreach Service**

The Men’s Outreach Service (MOS) based in Broome provides services that foster resilience while promoting the wellbeing of men, their families and their communities across the Kimberley. We deliver a number of programs and projects that incorporates medical health, socioeconomic and cultural service provision.

All of MOS’ services aim to reconnect people with Country as much as we can because we recognise its importance for people finding and staying on the right path.

*It is important to be on Country – in town they lose track and unsure of what Country means to them. Only to have to see the ocean and I know I feel calm.*

*A lot of kids today have grown up in four walls. Before it was wide open spaces, under the trees. They lose identity and Culture this way. We get them out on Country and from there they can pass message on to their own children.*

*Old KALACC Bosses found it hard to articulate this in kartiya [non-Indigenous] way... don’t have katiya talk to do it. Give sense of strength, sense of spirit. Find it more noticeable in guys who are finding it most difficult – take them to a fishing place, they light up. They feel good and strong.*

— Doolie King (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Our programs help men retune their senses for Country – to connect not just physically but spiritually too. It often does not matter which Country because just getting way from distractions allows boys and men to reorganise their thoughts, identify what is missing and re-evaluate their own paths. So many countrymen like to go camping, fishing and hunting but might not realise why. Getting out helps them to reconnect, to rediscover themselves and who they are, and to build resilience. Once they go then they want to keep going back out because it makes them feel better – their passion for Country is reignited.

*Re-focus – you have to focus when on Country – where you can and can’t go. You can’t just go anywhere i.e. Wangkatjungka asked that old man – where can we go – only that side – then you only go that side. On ocean the same – don’t focus you drown. Drinking, suicide, this is what we need to clear our heads of. Walk blind and bump into trees, trip on sticks. Got to be alert. In town when you’re drinking you lose this alertness, you need to refocus.*

*Many of the adults here in town using services were law men and they too have forgotten obligations to young men. Need to remind them of this. This is the disconnect. Young people choosing own pathways in life and going off track looking to wrong videos, wrong
people in town. Need to reconnect this to support young people. A challenge for sure but we need to do this. Getting out on Country reignites this passion. Critical of some people as they aren’t fulfilling their roles. Need to realign old and young people again. Middle-aged men also missing this too. Forgotten responsibilities and obligations to their future tribe.

Responsibility around Law lasts a lifetime.

– Doolie King (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Alive and Kicking Goals
Established by members of the Broome Saints Football Club and auspiced by MOS, the Alive and Kicking Goals (AKG) program was created in response to increasing concern about suicide among young Indigenous men. Further details on A KG are provided in a separate organisational blurb at the end of the Western Tradition section.

Headstone Project
The Headstone Project is a grief and loss program in development for Aboriginal men and their families. It involves restoring the graves of family members at cemeteries in Bidyadanga, Beagle Bay and One Arm Point.

Changem Ways Program
Changem Ways is a rehabilitation program for Aboriginal men who have been involved in family violence in the Broome area and want to return to live with their families. Under the formation of a cultural reference group, it is different to past initiatives, particularly because the partners of the men are also engaged on a voluntary basis in a parallel program. This initiative utilises a holistic model that involves culturally-strong people supporting those seeking help.

MOS finds that a lot of younger men who are violent are also disconnected from their roots and identity. We try to support them to reconnect and find peace in their liyan (spirit).

Bidyadanga and Dampier Peninsula Men’s Groups
MOS supports Men’s Groups in Bidyadanga and on the Dampier Peninsula, which often includes cultural camps.

Drop-In Homeless Men’s Service
We run a drop-in service to support homeless men in Broome, who have often travelled from the Fitzroy Valley and East Kimberley. MOS primarily helps these isolated and lonely men to access health care, although we are not resourced for this service. We currently work in partnership with Mambulanjin (Kullarri Patrol) and the Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service to provide more targeted support and programs for these men.

Prison Reintegration Program
Via our continuity-of-care program regarding post-prison health, MOS provides support for offenders leaving prison to maintain their health upon returning to community life.
Additional Activities
MOS regularly conducts numerous activities that provide a platform for old people to share stories with younger guys. This includes supporting ‘on Country’ trips with the Yiriman Project; developing and supporting other Men’s Sheds programs in places like Fitzroy Crossing and Bidyadanga; and holding ‘Fathers/Sons Days’ with support through the Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service. Previously we have been specifically funded to assist more in the Fitzroy Valley and East Kimberley and continue to seek additional resources to do so.

Our Men’s Behavioural Change Program aims to effect positive change, especially for those who have children or who are younger and replicating their parents’ behaviour. We recognise the importance of working with youth productively and without aggression, and have an overarching Aboriginal Advisory Group to provide support with cultural protocols for our programs, and a Cultural Advisor role that employs a respected local Elder to provide advice directly to our Chief Executive Officer.

MOS is a Member of the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services’ Mental Health Sub-Committee, and we recently endorsed cultural security protocols for health services across the Kimberley. We also have a ‘Cooking to Enrich’ service that supports men, women and youth.

Support for Women
MOS has also created programs to support women as we note that there is a gap in these types of services presently. This includes:

- A weekly ‘Women’s Day’
- ‘Healing Spirit’ gardening projects
- Changem Ways partners’ program
- On-Country activities with Kullari Patrol
- A gender-specific DVD to support young women at risk of self-harm and suicide (via the Alive and Kicking program)

In all of these services MOS aims to reconnect people with Country as much as we can.

Our Partnerships
Over the years MOS has developed a number of partnerships and often works with the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Kullari Patrol, the Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, and Milliya Rumurra Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation. This type of collaboration helps us address the complex needs of our clients. We also advocate for a cultural approach, particularly around family violence, and recognise that everyone needs to be involved in the process. Any potential partner organisation needs to also recognise the disconnect men and boys feel from Country.

We work with our clients to show them how to maintain core values and walk in both worlds. It is fortunate in the Kimberley we still have stories, songs, language and culture to share with them. This is why we seek partnerships with other men’s Aboriginal organisations to deliver culturally-based programs, rather than the retrofitted options available from large organisations such as Anglicare or Centacare.

– Peter Mitchell (during our KACfC Project consultation)
MOS’ work in this area has been acknowledged in academic spheres through key partnerships developed with the University of Western Australia’s School of Law, which has completed research into crime and justice issues in the Kimberley. We have also supported research out of Deakin University in Aboriginal Men’s Health and work with the Black Dog Institute in a suicide prevention trial that is seeking to provide evidence through measurable outcomes regarding where lives are saved.

MOS continuously advocates that culture and culturally-based programs need to be defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ourselves, so that we are walking the talk. This includes advocating for paid mentorship to the Federal Government, to recognise the integral role mentors have in creating connections between old and young.

**Babagarra Aboriginal Incorporated**

Babagarra Aboriginal Incorporated (BAI) was established in Broome to provide social and cultural services for women, children and their families to ensure their socioeconomic, physical and emotional wellbeing, while also fostering resilience in our young people.

We do this by preserving the Cultural Knowledge of our heritage, sense of identity and place, culture and material history for future generations. We are advocates for the continuity of Aboriginal ways of healing and handing down information and knowledge to those who come after us.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

Through family support services and art therapy workshops, we provide services in the medical health, socioeconomic, arts performance, heritage, culture, language areas, as well as support Law, myth, ceremony and sacred service delivery. This is undertaken through a number of key programs:

- **Welcome to Country in Djugan/Yawuru Languages** – provided on request for special Government and non-Government events, including conferences and festivals
- **Healing Smoke Rituals** – using Traditional plant materials as part of a Welcome to Country for programs or events
- **Spiritual Cleansing Rituals** – for lingering spirits or deceased persons in homes at the family’s request, which we also teach to interested youth and women
- **Art Therapy Workshops** – using local plant materials to generate artworks for sale at the Mary Minyarl Centre, which supports arts practice, wealth creation and the healing of women in crisis
- **Emerging Artists Program** – to empower women, youth and men to practice Aboriginal art and design by creating jewellery, fabrics and paintings using Traditional Design Knowledge, which are for sale to tourists and locals and raise self-esteem in our people

**Our Partnerships**

BAI has a series of strategic partnerships, including one with KALACC. We provide a bush tucker and bush medicine workshop at KALACC’s festivals and Annual General Meeting, which supports women who want to be involved in these activities in their communities. Many Aboriginal women have benefited by seeing how they can value-add to their Traditional Knowledge of plants and become a small business operator.
This type of Traditional cultural activity has many strengths, including continuing cultural practices, acknowledging and honouring Elders’ knowledge and skills, and teaching younger generations skills within a culturally-safe environment.

BAI also supports and helps to run:

- **Women’s Community Groups** – such as the Women’s Centre at Beagle Bay, the Bidyadanga Women’s Group and the Yiriman Project
- **Micro-enterprise Workshops** – about the collection and use of Traditional seeds and shells for micro-enterprise, which strengthen Aboriginal women’s knowledge, skills and wealth
- **Culturally-Based Schools Programs** – which feature language, bush foods and bush medicine
- **NAIDOC Activities** – for NAIDOC Week in the Broome area
- **Spiritual Healing Programs** – for ‘youth at risk’ and particularly truants (these programs are also at times used by Youth Justice Programs for youth to complete community orders in a culturally-safe environment with support and advice from Elders)
- **Product Development** – helping individuals in their communities to establish bush food and bush medicine products and event catering for tourists as part of community development plans

BAI have been involved in numerous research and community projects over the years, including those driven by KALACC (such as the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project). We continue to collaborate with numerous local organisations, including Kimberley Stolen Generations, Men’s Outreach Service and Milliya Rumurra in the importance of Cultural Knowledge transmission, strengthening identity and fostering Aboriginal ways of parenting using narrative and art therapy.

**Goolarri Media and Goolarri Radio**

Goolarri Media and Goolarri Radio actively (Goolarri) works to preserve Aboriginal Culture and Language by:

- Assisting the development of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communications in the Kimberley region
- Helping to cultivate Indigenous musicians throughout Western Australia
- Creating and producing valuable events and activities for the entire community
- Delivering nationally accredited training in media and events management
- Sharing our Cultural Knowledge and awareness through various forms of media, including film, radio and theatre (with services also provided for various events)
- Providing programs such as our Yawuru Word of the Day
- Facilitating online language teaching and stories, which are recorded and produced by the Kimberley Language Resource Centre
- Providing training in oral histories
- Operating radio licences at 14 sites across the Kimberley via Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media (PAKAM), which sits under Goolarri and has 10 people who specifically support cultural recording

In addition to ensuring there is a cultural component to the annual NAIDOC celebrations, Goolarri supports other local events with cultural content such as Taste of Broome, Kimberley Girl, Aarnja
Leadership Program and the Yawuru Dancers. Goolarri also provides production support for these types of events and the Annual General Meetings of KALACC, the Kimberley Land Council and the Kimberley Language Resource Centre.

Our Partnerships

Goolarri is currently working with the Kimberley Land Council on a documentary about the organisation, has supported the National Native Title Conference when it was held in Broome in 2018, and has been involved in research projects with Nulungu Research Institute (e.g. the Anne Street Reserve Project).

Advocating continuously to preserve Aboriginal people’s rights and their Intellectual Property (IP), we work with moviemakers when they come to the region to ensure that Aboriginal consent is obtained where required. We fundamentally support and facilitate meaningful interaction between the film industry and local people.

Many of our films are broadcast online or through the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) or National Indigenous Television (NITV), and we advocate for Indigenous broadcasting at a national level on the SBS Board and First National broadcasters.

Bardi Jawi Rangers and the Bardi Jawi Indigenous Protected Area

The Bardi Jawi Rangers are based at Ardyaloon (One Arm Point) Community on the Dampier Peninsula and care for Bardi Jawi Country, including the Bardi Jawi Indigenous Protected Area. Managed by the Bardi Jawi Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate (RNPBC), we receive our funding through the Working on Country Program and are part of the Kimberley Land Council’s Kimberley Ranger Network.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Established to assist Bardi Jawi People, we want to conserve and live on our own Country by maintaining healthy land and sea Country and preserving Traditional Cultural Knowledge and practice for future generations. Servicing key areas of land, sea, heritage and culture, we provide a number of key programs, including:

- **Cultural Awareness Package** – videos and/or PowerPoint presentations that are developed to raise cultural awareness for tourists, visiting workers, partner organisations and agencies, and are delivered by Bardi Jawi ranger staff and Cultural Elders

- **On-Country Visits** – to see the work and places that are important for the Bardi Jawi Rangers program and culturally-significant to the Bardi Jawi People, such as driving to land sites or taking boat trips to coastal places and islands/reefs of significance (as part of the Cultural Awareness Package)

- **Assistance with School Culture Programs** – at Ardyaloon Remote Community School and Djarindjin Christ the King, including fish trap maintenance at Mulumb Anchorage, Middle Beach and Gambanan, spear-making, fish poisoning, camp set up and activities, and NAIDOC Week activities and support

- **Cultural Heritage Management** – for significant places and sites on Bardi Jawi Country, under the direction of our Elders and including historical places like Sunday Island mission sites, Bulgin (Hunter Creek) Homestead gravesites and old camping sites
• **Transmission of Traditional Ecological Knowledge** – through recording Elders’ stories
• **Cultural Mapping** – of important sites in Bardi Jawi Country using a variety of formats

The Bardi Jawi Rangers work closely with Aboriginal Community Councils in our Native Title Determination Areas as they hold land interests and we need to inform them of any activities to be undertaken on the sections of land. The Kimberley Land Council also auspices our funding from State, Federal and corporate areas and continues to offer technical support around ranger and Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) capacity building as a cultural natural resource management entity, while working under the direction of our PBC and Elders.

We are guided in all of our work by our Cultural Bosses and our Healthy Country Plan which in turn informs our rangers with their annual Work Plan. All of this has a cultural base – the foundation upon which we work. We target seven areas primarily, which are:

- Marnany (Fringing Reefs)
- Aarli (Fish)
- Odorr (Dugong) and Goorilil (Turtle)
- Significant Sites
- Language, Law and Culture
- Traditional Oola (Water) Places
- Indigenous Plant Resources

As part of our Indigenous Protected Area Work Program (IPA Work Program), we dedicate time to support specific Law and Culture activities. A minimum of two weeks is put aside each year for the rangers to help prepare for Bardi Jawi Law and Culture. The rangers (mostly culturally trained men) have access to reliable vehicles and well maintained equipment to upgrade Law Time camps, and create artefacts and other infrastructure to facilitate Law Business when the Cultural Bosses call for it. Our key Senior Cultural Ranger position facilitates the necessary work, as directed by the Law Bosses, with the younger rangers and men helping with preparation.

The rangers undertake other cultural activities throughout the program and are entitled to five days’ cultural leave as specified by the KLC Enterprise Agreement and that we strongly endorse. This time is used for family obligations that relate to Law and Culture.

**Our Partnerships**

The Bardi Jawi Rangers believe our impact is evident in the number of partners and service providers that work with us and look to us for leadership in various areas of our IPA Work Program. This includes supporting our local schools with NAIDOC Week, WA Police, Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), community councils, outstations, and tourism ventures on fire management strategies and programs.

Furthermore, the fact that the IPA Work Program is funded until 2023 and the Indigenous Ranger Program is funded until 2021 recognises the value of these programs to the national landscape and the communities they belong in.

The number of jobs since the program began under the former Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) in 2006 has also increased. We originally had six CDEP rangers on 17 hours per week and one full-time coordinator – 7 total. In 2019, we have 15 staff for Bardi Jawi Country – a full-time
IPA coordinator, a full-time Men’s Ranger Coordinator, a 0.9 Full Time Employment (FTE) Women’s Coordinator, a full-time Senior Cultural Ranger, three full-time Men’s Rangers, three 0.8 FTE Men’s Rangers, three 0.8 FTE Women’s Rangers and a 0.6 FTE Admin Assistant.

**Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation**

Located in Broome, the Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation (NAC) provides services in the health, education and employment sectors, delivering programs and projects that align with the following mission:

> For Service Members, Member Communities, and indigenous people within the Kimberley: we assist with cultural development, employment, training, sustainable environmental health, and social and economic opportunities. We aim to achieve self-sufficiency, self-management, and a better standard of living.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

NAC is able to fulfil our core business through a number of activities, which are outlined below.

**Environmental Health Program**

NAC has partnered with the Western Australian Department of Health to offer an Environmental Health Program, which educates the Kimberley’s communities about environmental health issues and promotes sustainable environmental health practices. Services are tailored to meet the requirements of each location through community Environmental Health Action Plans.

**Support and Tenancy Education Program (STEP)**

Nirrumbuk Environmental and Health Services, in partnership with the Department of Housing, delivers the Support and Tenancy Education Program (STEP) to the Kimberley region. Through STEP, eligible tenants receive education and case management to improve their living skills, independently manage their tenancies, and reduce the likelihood of homelessness.

**Youth Services**

Through our Aboriginal Counselling Service, Pinakarra, NAC assists youths with their issues and needs that they may be facing in today’s society. We believe small steps make big changes. Working one-on-one with individuals from all backgrounds, Pinakarra develops a case management plan for their specific needs. We support and coach young people through the steps needed to help them make positive changes for themselves and their families.

**Djaringo**

Djaringo is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that provides training and education opportunities in the Kimberley region to help individuals and communities build a better future. As a division of NAC, we are managed and owned by Aboriginal members with a Board of 11 Indigenous people from Broome and the Dampier Peninsula. We offer a range of nationally accredited courses for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

**Nirrumbuk Group Training and Labour Hire**

Nirrumbuk Group Training and Labour Hire offers traineeships and apprenticeships for local Aboriginal people. To do this effectively, we manage a database of skilled labour and employees. Our support
and mentorship for trainees, apprentices and labour hire employees, combined with our strong relationships with local employers provides solid foundations for real employment outcomes.

**Other Support**

NAC also offers member support through environmental health services and financial support for cultural activities.

**Our Partnerships**

NAC’s key partners are Nirrumbuk Environmental Health, Kimberley Employment Services, Broome Electrical Services, Kullarri Building, Nirrumbuk Group Training and Nudj Plumbing. Fostering a ‘one stop shop’ capability, these partnerships support NAC’s primary objective to build the capacity of the local Aboriginal community by offering culturally-appropriate and culturally-sensitive education, training and employment opportunities.

NAC also works with Kimberley Land Council, Police and Community Youth Centres, Jawan and local employers such as the Broome Shire. We are members of peak Federal and State Government bodies. During discussions with Ministers and senior Government staff, NAC continuously advocates for culture as a foundation for all of our operations and a major contributing factor to the success of our programs.

Additionally, we have developed research partnerships with Telehealth, Telethon Kids and various universities. Statistical analyses from this research show the impact of Nirrumbuk Environmental Health’s best practice strategies in providing essential services and secure meaningful outcomes for individuals and communities. This is further evidenced by requests from Government and non-Government organisations for assistance with their own service and program delivery.

**Marrugeku**

Marrugeku pursues powerful new forms of Cultural Knowledge and the survival, preservation and growth of Indigenous story, dance and language through the making of new intercultural performance works.

An unparalleled presence in Australia today, Marrugeku is dedicated to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians working together to develop new dance languages. We build bridges and break down walls between urban and remote dance communities, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and between local and global situations. Our works are created out of urgent and insurgent reciprocities, believing, on our watch, we face major change in Indigenous Australia and that telling stories together is one of the simplest and hardest things we can do.

Marrugeku is led by co-Artistic Directors: Dalisa Pigram (choreographer and dance) and Rachael Swain (director and dramaturg). Working together for 24 years, they co-conceive and facilitate Marrugeku’s productions and research laboratories, introducing audiences to the unique and potent structures of Indigenous Knowledge systems and the compelling experience of intercultural performance. Marrugeku’s performers come from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, collaborating to co-create each production. Our patron is Yawuru Law Man and national reconciliation advocate Patrick Dodson.
Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Harnessing the dynamic of performance exchange drawn from remote, urban, intercultural and trans-Indigenous approaches, Marrugeku expands the possibilities of contemporary dance. Our productions tour throughout remote Australia, including Mowanjum, Ardyaloon, Bidyadanga in the Kimberley; regional and capital city venues across Australia; and to other Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts throughout the world.

Mimi
Marrugeku began with the project Mimi, which was commissioned by Perth Festival to premiere in 1996. Named after ancestral spirits in Arnhem Land that often feature in local rock art, the production was made in Gunbalanya, Western Arnhem Land. It is based on the stories of Kunwinjku painter and storyman Thompson Yulidjirri, and the Karrparra song cycle of Kunwinjku songman Bruce Nabegeyo, from an original concept by Kamilaroi/Mandandanji choreographer Michael Leslie in collaboration with Stalker Theatre.

Crying Baby
Mimi was followed in 2002 by Crying Baby, which was also developed during long residencies in Gunbalanya and premiered at the Perth Festival. In 2003 Marrugeku shifted its base to Broome – the home of several founding company members.

Burning Daylight
Burning Daylight, the company’s first Broome-based production in 2006, was borne from following cultural protocol, talking to Elders to hear of their concerns for the youth losing connection to their rich, cultural history. Burning Daylight toured nationally to wide acclaim in 2009.

Buru
Marrugeku’s subsequent work, Buru explored the experiences of Broome’s Indigenous young people living in their unique environment. With a name meaning ‘Country’ or ‘land’, the piece was structured around the Yawuru seasons and the Dreaming stories offered by Elders in the community who could speak for those stories. Buru incorporated dance on stilts, video, and songs and rap performed in Yawuru and English, touring throughout the Kimberley in 2011 and Canada and the United States in 2012.

Gudirr
Gudirr, a solo piece for Dalisa Pigram, explored the challenges of decolonising the minds of our people, identity and the devastating rates of suicide in our region for our people. The name refers to a small Guwayi (snipe shorebird). Premiering in 2013, Gudirr has toured nationally and internationally since then until the latest tour to the Sydney Opera House in 2018.

Other Productions
Cut the Sky premiered in 2015 and since then has toured all mainland states as well as to Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, New Caledonia, the United States and Canada. In 2018, Marrugeku premiered a triple bill, Burrbgaja Yalirra (‘dancing forward’), in Broome and following season Perth. Also premiering in 2018 in Sydney was Le Dernier Appel (‘the last cry’), an intercultural and trans-Indigenous production with dancers of First Nations, immigrant and settler descent from Australia and New Caledonia, with touring followed to New Caledonia, France and Belgium.
Our Partnerships
Marrugeku has developed a number of collaborative partnerships in the Kimberley region, including Alive and Kicking Goals, senior high school dance programs and the initiatives that are outlined below.

Touring to Remote Communities
Seeing the potential of returning and further cultivating the connections we have made over the years, Marrugeku is developing a small touring circuit with remote communities in our region, in the hopes of growing audiences for contemporary dance and storytelling in these locations. Our Cultural Advisory Committee supports and advises the company to ensure cultural respect is maintained and that we follow cultural protocols when working with and in different Indigenous communities.

Supporting Emerging Artists
Marrugeku believe it is important to support emerging artists and encourage them to hold onto their own Cultural Knowledge and experience while attending training institutes outside of the Kimberley. As performers, the ability to contribute our own cultural experiences to an intercultural process and contemporary storytelling offers a chance to expand our and others’ ideas of what contemporary Indigenous dance can be. Through dance theatre we can give voice to issues that might not be expressed otherwise on stages from Indigenous points of view.

Marrugeku not only makes internationally renowned productions that have toured extensively to regional, remote, urban and international venues – we also invest in developing opportunities through our dance laboratories, workshop series, masterclasses and mentorship programs that connect artists to our process.

Additionally, whenever we have visiting artists ‘in Country’ we invest in connecting them to that Country through learning from the First Peoples’ perspective of that land.

Magabala Books
Based in Broome, Magabala Books is Australia’s leading Indigenous publisher and celebrates the talent and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) voices by producing quality Indigenous Australian literature.

Magabala Books has released more than 200 titles from a range of genres and received various prestigious literary and national achievement awards since our incorporation in 1990. Our first published titles included Mayi (food), Jagala, Story of Crow and Do not go around the edges.

At this time, Magabala Books published the works that came to us. We now commission works and have a national focus, and are particularly interested in the reflection of what Aboriginal people think culture is at that time.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
As published by Mowaljarlai with his book Yorro Yorro, we like to say that humanity came from Kimberley Basin. We definitely lead the way for Australia in terms of culture and the publication of cultural content – thinking and shaping things both nationally and internationally.
Cultural Knowledge and Language
Magabala Books seeks to address the gaps in Cultural Knowledge, the relaying of historic information, the sharing of Cultural Languages and so on. We are committed to the meaningful cultural representation and dialogue that has not been part of Australian history, while also recognising that culture is not static and is indicative of the time.

We have to let culture speak for itself.

– Rachel bin Salleh (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Child Literacy Programs
It is important that this type of cultural material is delivered to children from a young age and education should be seen as the cornerstone to this – we need literacy in this world and we need to help our kids.

Magabala Books’ has a program called ‘Big seeds, little seeds’, which pairs our senior authors with younger people to work alongside them and develop their literary skills. Our ‘Magabala Books for Little Hands’ program is a philanthropic project that pairs children in need with donated books to increase child literacy. We are also seeking further funding to develop additional early literacy programs.

ATSI Books for Education Programs
Magabala Books is looking for a partnership to introduce ATSI books into all education programs, bilingual or otherwise. Our primary goals are for ATSI authors to be recognised alongside their peers and to educate the community on ATSI resources that are invaluable for all children in their respective learning environments.

To this end, Magabala Books tries to gather cultural stories for publication, including everything from Dreamtime stories to 50 people talking about hunting on Country. The purpose is not to make money, but to ensure cultural stories are shared with our People.

Young Authors’ Award
As part of our commitment to groom young authors, we have recently established a young authors’ award – the Daisy Utemorrah Award. Named after one of our original authors, we are investing in our young people to share stories with their peers. Not only is this important for reflecting their cultural identity back to them, but also in receiving broader cultural recognition for ATSI voices. The book ‘Are you Australian? Na’ has attempted to address this in some ways.

Commissioned Works
Recognising the cultural richness and inspiration in the Kimberley, Magabala Books is now commissioning literacy works that specifically reflect culture. Our Hero series is an example of this, which features local people who are important to our mob. This is not decided externally – Magabala Books identifies these people ourselves.

Aboriginal Staff Employment
As an Aboriginal organisation that recognises the importance of cultural visibility and voices, we prioritise the employment of Aboriginal people at Magabala Books. We make sure that the first person customers see is an Aboriginal staff member. We also encourage and upskill Aboriginal people into higher positions such as editors.
Advocacy
Magabala Books also advocates that ATSI writers should not have to only write about ATSI culture. We find that we are fighting barriers such as this all of the time. However, we seek a non-confrontational way of educating everyone and representing culture in all forms.

Our Partnerships
Over the years Magabala Books has collaborated with a number of organisations and communities to create books by their local community for their Country. This has included creating the Bardi Jawi book that has since become a template for other cultural groups, as well as similar projects in Maningrida, Balgo and North Queensland to name a few. We have found that the children love to create artwork and stories as part of this process that become insights for rest of their Country.

We partner with various arts organisations and at times commission stories about artworks and/or artists, or illustrations for stories. For example, our Kimberley Arts Program partnership that involves the five regional Aboriginal Art Centres, whereby the artists are paid on commission for their illustrations and narratives. They also receive royalties from book sales.

Magabala Books ensures that cultural protocols are embedded within the process and copyright stays with the storyteller, artist and anyone else who collaborates on the book. While Intellectual Property (IP) and copyright is sometimes shared with outsiders, it must always stay with the Aboriginal contributor(s). We do not engage with projects that are unwilling to do this.

Alive and Kicking Goals
Alive and Kicking Goals (AKG) was established in 2008 by members of the Broome Saints Football Club (the AKG Steering Group) in response to increasing concern about suicide among young Indigenous men. In 2009, the Steering Group chose to partner with the Men’s Outreach Service (MOS) in Broome, to auspice the funding and management of the program.

Since then, the program has grown and now seeks to empower Kimberley youth to recognise the value of their lives, take ownership of their lives and choices, and seek support.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
Operating in the area of mental health, suicide prevention and community empowerment, we work primarily across the West Kimberley and are engaged by the East Kimberley on invitation. We deliver a number of key programs and resources, including:

- Educational Alcohol and Drug Workshops – for young Aboriginal people in the Kimberley, delivered by local Aboriginal staff
- Suicide Prevention Awareness Workshops – that are delivered by Aboriginal staff, with versions specifically for males, females and under 15-year-olds
- Individual and School-based Mentoring – from male and female Aboriginal workers
- ‘On-Country’ Workshops – for groups in communities around the West Kimberley
- DVDs – for our young men and women, as part of our suicide prevention programs (currently works in progress)
Our Partnerships

Throughout this process, AKG has developed a number of collaborative partnerships with organisations such as the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Garnduwa, Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation, Clontarf, Girls Academy, Our Mob (St Mary’s Playgroup), Beagle Bay School and the Kimberley Land Council Ranger Program.

We are active in the research space, presenting at national and state conferences, and contributing to the early meetings of the National Critical Response Team, Blank Page Summits and draft regional Cultural Security Protocols. AKG has also delivered pilot programs for Black Dog Institute (I-Bobbly) and ‘Footprints for better health’.
CENTRAL TRADITION (DERBY, FITZROY CROSSING & THE FITZROY VALLEY)

The Central Tradition cultural bloc encompasses the Fitzroy River (Marawarra/Mardoowarra) and surrounding Fitzroy Valley, as it flows west from the central Kimberley to its mouth in the King Sound (at Moorool Moorool). It includes the Wangkatjungka, Walmajarri, Gooniyandi, Bunuba, Walmajarri and Nyikina Mangala Language Groups, as well as the larger towns of Derby and Fitzroy Crossing.

A total of 20 Aboriginal organisations from the Central Tradition participated in this project, namely:

- Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (Mowanjum Artists Spirit of the Wandjina Aboriginal Corporation)
- Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency
- Madjulla Incorporated
- Nyikina Incorporated
- Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre
- 6DBY Larrkardi Radio
- Wangki Yupurmanupuru Radio 936AM
- Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation, Dambimangari Rangers and the Dambimangari Indigenous Protected Area (collaborative response provided)
- Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation and Nyikina Mangala Rangers (collaborative response provided)
- Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuba Rangers (collaborative response provided)
- Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation, Winun Ngari Employment Services and Derby Men’s Shed (collaborative response provided)
- Yiriman Project
- Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services
- Aboriginal Unit, North Regional TAFE

Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (Mowanjum Artists Spirit of the Wandjina Aboriginal Corporation)

Run by the Mowanjum Artists Spirit of the Wandjina Aboriginal Corporation, the Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (Mowanjum Arts) is based in the Mowanjum Aboriginal Community on the outskirts of Derby.

Mowanjum Arts is the creative hub for the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Wunnumbal tribes, whose Traditional Lands are in the central and north parts of the region. Brought together to this community during historic times, the three groups are interconnected through the Wanjina-Wunggurr and united by their belief in the Wandjina as a sacred spiritual force and the creators of the land. These three Language Groups are the custodians of Wandjina Law and iconography and this is represented in the artworks produced here.

Ultimately, Mowanjum Arts is here to support cultural practices and we are guided in all we do by our Cultural Board. Engaging old and young in the production of art and performance, we keep culture strong for all.
Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Mowanjum Arts has a gallery and studio space, often hosting exhibitions, workshops and community projects, as well as the annual Mowanjum Festival – one of Australia's longest running Indigenous cultural festivals.

Critical to our success has been our relationship with the community – we are an integral part of it. We have a strong group of Cultural Leaders as our Board, who know what they have to do to keep people strong. Often outsiders and outside organisations come in, meaning well, but they do not know the people or the place, and often cost more than direct investment in community people would.

Dolord Mindi Community Archive

In addition to our arts and cultural celebrations, Mowanjum Arts has a community archive we call Dolord Mindi. The name means a ‘deep cave’ and is where people would traditionally shelter and store things for safe keeping. Art can be found in the Dolord Mindi, as well as stories and Language that echo through the space. This knowledge resonates with those who are listening and those who carry it out onto the land.

Many of our cultural projects start here and the archive helps to both facilitate these projects and store their outcomes. The archive includes cultural mapping programs on-Country that are then represented in our ‘cave’, which showcases our culturally-embedded activities.

Through Dolord Mindi we are able to celebrate our Culture with our next generations through our art and performance. This is part of an important process as we prepare for our Mowanjum Festival program each year.

Art and Artefact Collections

Mowanjum Arts’ comprehensive collection of art and artefacts are the heart of our arts centre – it feeds into everything. A great example is the resurgence of old images and audio visual material that often inspire the next generation – providing a cultural bridge between old and young, and helping to revive and revitalise our Traditional practices.

Junba Project

This type of intergenerational transfer of Cultural Knowledge is also embedded within our Junba (song and dance) Project, an Aboriginal performance program that we undertake in collaboration with the University of Melbourne.

Mowanjum Arts is committed to supporting the transference of songs, Language, dance and body art associated with Junba. We have young people learning singing from Elders, and then performing together at the Mowanjum Festival. We record these experiences and share them through sensory means at the arts centre. We are also in the process of introducing more interactive material.

Body Painting

This investment in our own young people is critical and right now we have young people in particular who are interested in learning more about the specifics of body painting. Unfortunately, there has been a break in the knowledge transfer associated with body painting – the process and what the symbols mean.
In partnership with the Dambimangari Rangers, we are researching this art-form, with local young people working with the Elders and the archives simultaneously. The research will produce a new collection of resources for the archive, providing multimedia training and capacity building of those young people as they create the records themselves. All of these contribute to Dolord Mindi and are housed in our Storylines database.

**Photography and Screen-Printing**

Another contemporary medium that is utilised at Mowanjum Arts is photography, the outputs of which lead to the screen-printing of designs.

**Cultural Governance**

Community Cultural Governance is just as important for these types of initiatives and Mowanjum Arts makes sure that our Cultural Bosses are paid for their expertise. We are investigating further ways this can happen, such as engaging with the tourist market more and providing educational services in cultural protocols on-Country.

**Rock Art Education**

Mowanjum Arts is interested in doing more around education relating to rock art sites — that is, letting people know that there are cultural processes to follow and how to approach sites in a culturally-secure manner.

One way we could do this is through interpretative touch screens in Dolord Mindi that provide information on the site of Namarali, which is located on Worrora Country. Namarali has been recorded in 3D in collaboration with the University of Western Australia (UWA). While there is a lot of interest in the site, it is also sacred, so we have sought to provide a satisfactory experience without revealing the location or any sensitive material.

**Cultural Awareness and Cross-Cultural Safety**

Soon a guided tour will be shown utilising archival films, to share more information about culturally-safe behaviour on-Country. Examples include the need to leave cultural material, such as paperbark parcels and grinding stones, where they are found.

This is culturally important and helps to look after Country and keep it healthy. When things are taken it often leaves people sick. Therefore, in the spirit of the return of ‘sorry rocks’ at Uluru (ones previously taken as souvenirs), we want to discourage negative behaviour like this for the Kimberley.

**Our Partnerships**

Our artists work in our studio space and, unlike other Aboriginal art centres, most do not want to engage directly with tourists. So that the artists are not made to feel like exhibits themselves, we showcase their paintings and cultural material in the gallery, where sales are then made.

Once artists have been paid, sales profits and Government funding provide our primary resources. Though we invest in our archive and community cultural programs, we do not raise revenue from these activities. Rather, we struggle to maintain administrative support positions and find, like so many in the region, we are bound by one small, short-term funding agreement after another.

Despite this, we have forged numerous collaborative partnerships over the years, including with Derby District High School, the Derby Youth Centre, the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Nulungu
Research Institute (University of Notre Dame). KALACC continues to be a key partner, working together particularly on the repatriation of material to Wanjina-Wunggurr Country.

We also partner with other art centres in the region, such as Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, Warrirringarri Aboriginal Arts and Warmun Art Centre. We try to work with Kira Kiro, the arts centre in Kalumburu as well but, as with most organisations, this can be difficult at times due to distance. Recent funding through the Indigenous Language and Arts Program has assisted to facilitate this process.

Mowanjum Arts also has crucial partnerships with the Art Gallery of Western Australia (e.g. the Desert River Sea: Portraits of the Kimberley exhibition), University of Western Australia (particularly the Centre for Rock Art Research and Management), state and national museums, and the Wanjina-Wunggurr Aboriginal Corporations (Wilinggin, Dambimangari and Wunambal Gaambera). The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and Indigenous Community Television (ICTV) assist with the archive and broadcasting of our videos, particularly of the Mowanjum Festival events.

Links with language organisations like the Kimberley Language Resource Centre and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education have been important and we have spent much time of late nurturing these relationships.

**Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency**

Mangkaja Arts developed in response to a local initiative of the former Karrajili Adult Education Centre in 1981. Led by the local men, the initiative provided a place where people could study and paint their personal stories, bush trips and histories.

By 1993, Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency (Mangkaja Arts) was established in our own right and we are now in our third home, which is located in Fitzroy Crossing town centre. We obtained the name *Mangkaja* from a Walmajarri word for the wet weather shelters the Walmajarri people in the Great Sandy Desert erected during the wet season. Named by one of Mangkaja Arts’ founding members, Kumanjayi Skipper (deceased), the echidna in our logo was his totem.

Mangkaja Arts is steered by a Board of Directors that is elected each year at our Annual General Meeting and meets regularly to discuss decisions affecting the development of the art centre. This decision-making process is taken seriously.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

Today, Mangkaja Arts functions as a fine art gallery, specialty store, and studio space for the artists to paint and make cultural artefacts. We are funded through a range of Government agencies and our other operational income is derived from commissions and sales.

**Cultural Immersion and Back-to-Country Trips**

Providing a dual service that facilitates back-to-Country trips for cultural engagement and immersion, we likewise cater to the tourism market. Mangkaja Arts is able to do both through our collaborative partnerships with ranger teams, where we provide cultural guidance for the rangers and they conduct Caring for Country activities while on the trips, including fire management.
These programs also help getting the kids out of town; we can take them, they can walk, they can dance, go that old road coming down, take them out there, something like that. We need continuing support for this.

– Mervyn Street (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Our old people are going good with painting here at Mangkaja Arts. They paint Country and trips are important for them to go and paint there. Telling their story this way is an important part of the creative process. The tips also give us the chance to teach the young people stories and about bush plants, which we share with the rangers who are still learning too. We tell them they have to speak Language on-Country. This way they learn their identity, and about their relationships to different people and different places.

Can’t separate art and culture. No culture, no art. No art, no culture.

– June Davis (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Other Cultural Practices
For some of our old people, even these bush trips are hard and they find it difficult to get out on-Country, so they paint Country instead. This helps them feel strong in themselves too. Culture makes us strong and so do our songlines (sacred Dreaming tracks that chart the Australian landscape and inform Aboriginal culture) – knowing this is everything.

Sometimes we wonder how we will teach our Culture if our Land is not accessible – many companies come in and want it all, which will potentially leave the next generation with money but no Culture, no Language, no Land.

To reduce the chances of this, Mangkaja Arts invests in reigniting other cultural practices and focusses not just how to create things but how to access and harvest the materials needed to make them. This includes Traditional forms of art for contemporary audiences, like hair weaving, for example.

Like this NESP [National Environmental Science Program] project. We gotta teach our kids so they know so that mining people won’t be able to take Country. That irrigation get bigger we gotta teach them – won’t be able to swim with chemicals – Margaret and the Fitzroy River. Not just Culture, we gotta teach but about the river too.

– Lynley Nargoodah (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Community Cultural Education
Mangkaja Arts is in the process of creating a travelling exhibition about the Fitzroy River, which will start in Perth. We also occasionally hold film nights to provide cultural education opportunities for the community.

Youth Programs
Sometimes Mangkaja Arts visits the local schools, including Wesley Yiramalay Studio School and its parent school of Wesley College (Melbourne), to teach about Country and Culture. Working with the students, we have introduced digital animation into our contemporary mediums and are trialling this technique in Milijidee and Yakanarra. As a result, students are engaging more with cultural arts in these locations than ever before.
We try to focus on providing activities to the town kids rather than just those in the broader Fitzroy Valley – the community kids have more access to cultural activities so Mangkaja Arts feels it is important to provide these avenues for the town kids too.

**Cultural Knowledge and Story Sharing**

Mangkaja Arts works hard to share stories in contemporary ways. These are culture-based narratives about Country rather than fighting (as we see in so many apps today), with many using technologies to reinstate this Cultural Knowledge. We find that we have more than 30 years of stories here on canvas as part of Mangkaja’s art collection. This is one of the ways that we have been working to make the cultural stories that are represented in the artworks accessible for everyone to engage with.

Assisted by our Cultural Governance framework that provides representation and guidance from members of our five Language Groups, we speak to representatives of each of the Language Groups for the respective on-Country before trips, as well as relevant archive material. The Board also assists and encourages us to record the stories to keep them alive.

**Our Partnerships**

Mangkaja Arts has a multitude of creative culturally-embedded initiatives and strategic collaborations with key organisations to achieve further success.

Initiatives and links with Kimberley-based arts centres have meant that together we have been able to showcase Kimberley art. Mangkaja Arts is also engaged for public artworks in broader Fitzroy Crossing town. Collaborating with Juvenile Justice (Department of Justice), the Shire of Derby / West Kimberley (SDWK) and Garnduwa, we have produced the most appropriate works for our local Country in a number of public spaces.

Our strong connections with other local organisations, such as the Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre, Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services and the WA Police, have resulted in collective resources that enable greater access to Country.

Mangkaja Arts even connected with the Karajarri mob last year and had support for our old people through Juniper Gwardi Ngadu Residential Care. Research is happening in this space – in the role that the Elders and elderly play in our arts centres – and hopefully recognition will follow for our artists. Mangkaja Arts also tries to support other activities in the Looma and Jimbalakudunj communities, who have been making scarves in partnership with the Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre.

Garnduwa and Mental Health (through Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services) provide support for our younger and emerging artists, though we are limited in our staffing resources. Therefore, as part of a joint initiative Garnduwa and Mental Health are assisting us with additional staff, which will have flow-on effects for other initiatives. For example, our school partnerships for NAIDOC Week activities at Bayulu, school visits to Mangkaja Arts, and disability services that assist students to get to remote schools.

Mangkaja Arts provides pathways to assist job seekers, including:

- Oral history recording
- Developing the text and illustrations for language books, in collaboration with a linguist and the Kimberley Language Resource Centre (e.g. a Gooniyandi book, and a collaboration with
Kimberley-based Aboriginal artists about early station life that was published by ABC Kimberley and is available through Magabala Books)

- Dance performers via our relationship with KALACC

### Madjulla Incorporated

Madjulla Incorporated (Madjulla Inc) was established to support the social development of our members in all ways – building trust and friendship between ourselves and other people in the sharing of our unique Indigenous culture, knowledge and practice as original Australians from a globally unique region. We are based in the community of Balginjirr (Lower Liveringa) on the banks of the Fitzroy River and also operate out of Broome and Derby on Nyikina Country.

With a focus on research, education, evaluation and cultural tourism, all we do is underpinned by a cultural framework that is reflected in the six principles of our Constitution:

- To support the education, training, research, evaluation of human resource and community services and support, work and housing for our members
- To help and encourage our members to keep and renew their affairs upon the custodianship of their own lands
- To help and encourage our members to keep and renew their Traditional Culture and spiritual values
- To make every effort as Australian Traditional Owners and custodians to achieve ecological sustainability for the planet Earth by doing all things designed to protect the natural environment both in Australia and elsewhere
- To generally take such action as we consider necessary or appropriate in the interest of promoting conservation
- To foster custodianship of the earth's natural resources in a manner that maximises options for current and future generations

### Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

#### Cultural Development Programs

Nyikina Culture is the foundation for grounding our philosophy and practice. Madjulla Inc has worked in close partnership over the past 15 years with Nyikina Incorporated and senior Cultural Elders from across the West Kimberley in community cultural development work.

We have been able to work with a wide range of national and international universities to support our cultural mapping and recording of culture within our cultural landscape. With this knowledge we have been able to incorporate Traditional Cultural Knowledge (Indigenous science) with Western science to overlay Cultural and Environmental Knowledge that showcases the *Mardoowarra* (Fitzroy River) as a globally unique geo-heritage cultural landscape.

### Income and Employment Opportunities

Within our membership Madjulla Inc also has several talented artists, painters, potters and sculptors who have all been able to sell their products at high-end markets. We have built a catalogue of their pieces, and these examples are used to support opportunities to promote and market our services on-Country.
Several Aboriginal people in the region have been employed as a result of our community cultural development knowledge and practice over the past 15 years. This economic investment has helped strengthen their capacity to take up other employment and economic opportunities in the region. Many have gone on to work in the culture and arts industries nationally.

**Majala Wilderness Centre**

Additionally, over the past 10 years Madjulla Inc has been building the Majala Wilderness Centre in our remote community. It will become our major economic investment and we have applied for funding support to operationalise this facility in 2019.

The Majala Wilderness Centre will also be available for other institutions and agencies to purchase accommodation, meals, venue usage and support services for other purposes, such as residential training and education programs, staff development workshops and retreats. It will also be a retreat for families wanting to connect and have time on the river Country to strengthen their social and cultural time with their families.

**Mardoowarra Institute and Mardoowarra College**

In 2019 we are also looking to partner with Nyikina Incorporated to develop the concept of a Mardoowarra Institute and Mardoowarra College. Founded on principles of reintegrating the arts, science, culture and nature and of practices of connecting people to Culture and Country, it is visualised as an innovation hub and centre for excellence in sustainability and liveability for the tropical savannah.

It will promote health, education and empowered development initiatives that focus on creating transformative futures. Most importantly, it is a social and economic endeavour for targeting and investing in young Indigenous people throughout the West Kimberley.

**Arts Performance**

Madjulla Inc has successfully secured funding to develop several art performances that incorporate paintings, poetry, dance and live theatre. In partnering with professional arts-based organisations, as well as local and international artists, these performances have toured regionally, nationally and internationally. We are currently planning to take our most recent performance, *Song for the Mardoowarra*, to France in September 2019.

Our organisation has several talented Nyikina men who work nationally in the arts, theatre, media and music spaces. A core group of these men developed their dance, music and song abilities to form the ‘Liyan Dancers’ and are keen to return to the Kimberley for specific art performance events.

Madjulla Inc believes the Majala Wilderness Centre will become an inviting space to develop and host live performance within the next two years, as well as potentially to provide other artistic experiences and workshops. We look forward to sharing the space with others.

**Heritage**

Our Nyikina heritage is grounded along the river Country. Heritage includes place-based *songlines* (sacred Dreaming tracks that chart the Australian landscape and inform Aboriginal culture), which are grounded in our bloodline. As Nyikina People, we have family members buried at Yeeda, Pandanus Park, Balginjirr, Mt Anderson through to Nookanbah – our grandmothers’ Country. We have developed our cultural heritage with a focus on our mother’s Country at Balginjirr community.
By extensively culturally mapping the heritage sites located around our community, we have generated an extensive cultural heritage database that documents maps, songs, stories, photos and plants. This process has enabled us to record a new heritage site, which was listed with the Department of Indigenous Affairs in 2017.

Our university partnerships have given us the opportunity to use drones to map a vast amount of heritage, including the medicine and food sources around Balginjirr community. This has been extended to aerially map registered sites as well as new heritage sites.

**Ecological Guardianship and Sustainability**

As original Australian Traditional Owners and custodians who care about ecological sustainability for our region, nation and planet Earth, Madjulla Inc is committed to making every effort to protect the natural environment. Our advocacy fosters custodianship of the earth’s natural resources in a manner that maximises options for current and future generations. This supports the principles of do no harm to people, the environment or, most importantly, Mardoowarra Country.

We believe the Mardoowarra is a living ancestral being with the right to life and we have been published in legal and scientific journals to influence public opinion and policy in this field. As custodians and guardians of the Mardoowarra we believe the River owns us and it is a major cultural, environmental and spiritual asset for sustaining the lives of all people who share and live along its living water systems.

**Our Partnerships**

**Universities and Researchers**

Madjulla Inc mostly collaborates with universities and independent researchers, scientist and legal entities. Our management team are experienced professional people with a great deal of experience in managing projects with Aboriginal community, university and Government agencies.

As recognised senior academics, Madjulla Inc continues to partner with universities in developing curriculum and teaching pilot courses, conducting research projects, publishing academic journal articles, serving on committees and supervising post-graduate students. We offer our research, training and evaluation skills on a fee-for-service basis to support our organisation.

We will continue to strengthen these collaborations into the future.

**DreamWorld**

Our cultural programs and knowledge have created a long-term relationship with DreamWorld on the Gold Coast and our photos, stories and images are on public display to showcase our work.

In December 2017 senior women were able to share their songs and stories with Dreamworld and incorporate them into two new public exhibitions that opened in early 2018 on the Gold Coast. These stories are now part of the permanent exhibition titled ‘Corroboree’ (meaning ‘dance ceremony’) that accompanies the large Kimberley Exhibit on the Fitzroy River and the Rainbow Serpent. We have documented this partnership in film and written reports, which are available on request.
Nyikina Incorporated
Madjulla Inc has successfully secured Federal Government operational and workforce funding to develop and deliver community cultural development and projects in partnership with Nyikina Incorporated.

Nyikina Language and culture projects include the Nyikina dictionary in electronic and text formats, and producing Nyikina Language teaching materials and resources in film, text and bilingual children’s audio picture books. Intended to educate about the globally unique biodiverse landscapes of the Fitzroy River valley, these resources will be available for sale. We are currently completing a series of animations, but have now transitioned away from the language work and advocated to the Federal Government that any future investment in this area should be directed towards Nyikina Inc.

Government Policy Input
As professional researchers and evaluators, we collaborate with others to evaluate a range of Government community development, cultural and the arts policies and practices. Much of this work regards critiquing and documenting systemic racism and structural violence. Madjulla Inc continues to use our capacity to create reports and film stories from individuals and communities as a means for advocating change and sustainable cultural development.

Madjulla Inc’s most contemporary work and publications involve building a sound body of evidence to shift policy and investment towards the recognition that, as Aboriginal people, we are in a post Native Title Determination phase – and must therefore think strategically about how we frame our cultural rights around First Law, Customary Law, and our human right to reach our full potential as unique Indigenous Peoples. We need to strengthen our capacity and ensure we have both sustainable lives and sustainable development on our river Country.

Tourism
In more recent times, Madjulla Inc has been published in international journals and books regarding the unique cultural experiences and landscape as a global destination. This information is shared with other organisations, such as the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council (WAITOC), to showcase their capacity in supporting cultural tourism experiences in the region.

On-Country Education
Much of what we do and share is reflected in the Majala Wilderness Centre. Stemming from the experience Balginjirr community members had pioneering block-mode (intensive, fast-tracked course delivery) university and community education and training programs in the 1980s, these intense experiences on-Country produced outstanding results, particularly for Indigenous students.

While there are many university courses that teach Indigenous studies ‘from a text book’ in a classroom, at Majala Wilderness Centre we provide an opportunity for students who are interested in Indigenous studies, the environment, history, geology or other disciplines to gain comfortable, safe and guided field access to pristine wilderness.

Nyikina Incorporated
Officially named the Nyikina Association, Nyikina Incorporated (Nyikina Inc) was set up by Nyikina Elders in the township of Derby to look after Language, Culture, Country and Community in
partnership with Nyikina People. The following three core principles reflect our cultural underpinnings:

- To bring about the self-support and advocacy of our members and their extended families and communities through the development of culture, conservation, heritage and science economies
- To help and encourage our members, as well as their extended families and communities, to keep and renew their affairs upon the custodianship and guardianship of our own lands and living waters, inclusive of the Lower region of the Mardoowarra (Fitzroy River)
- To help and encourage our members, as well as their extended families and communities, to keep and strengthen our Traditional culture and spiritual values.

Culture is the capital for connecting us as a unique people to the Kimberley and beyond to the world. We share First Law and Customary Law with all our neighbours, extending from the Mardoowarra (river Country) and the hill Country to the sea.

Nyikina People are connected by kinship, bloodlines and songlines (sacred Dreaming tracks that chart the Australian landscape and inform Aboriginal culture) via ceremony, trade and cultural exchange throughout the region and into broader Australia. We are connected through culture through a set of rules, First Law, that promotes the right to life for all living things.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

**Mardoowarra Heritage Recognition**

Nyikina People’s identity is constructed around our deep relationship with Mardoowarra (Fitzroy River) Country. This river is globally unique and not found anywhere else on the planet. As guardians and custodians from the mouth of Mardoowarra to Mijirrikan, from the beginning of time we have a duty of care to protect the heritage of the river Country for human and non-human beings for generations to come.

Our cultural stories and connection to the Mardoowarra is recognised as a major cultural and environmental asset, which is recognised in both a WA Aboriginal Heritage Site Listing and National Heritage Listing (2011), for the whole river as one intact system. This strong link between people, place and heritage is seen in the Kimberley Caring for Country Plan’s land management vision: “Healthy country, healthy people” (Griffiths & Kinnane 2011).

**Nyikina Cultural Centre, Language Database and Language Resources**

We have been working on refurbishing the historic Holman House in Derby as the Nyikina Cultural Centre for a number of years and this project will be realised in 2019–2020. During this time Nyikina Inc has worked tirelessly to develop extensive language and cultural content, which would not have been possible without our Nyikina Elders, who have championed the need to ensure our own ‘cultural solutions’.

Our accessible Nyikina Language resources include films, books, CDs, podcasts, a plant database, songs and cultural maps that have been produced by two of our fluent Nyikina Language speakers, sisters Lucy Marshall and Jeannie Warbie. Nyikina Inc has used this work to produce a Nyikina dictionary and CD with audio of people speaking, as a language resource of world’s best practice standard.
We have also had the opportunity to share Nyikina Language in public live performances regionally, nationally and globally.

**Nyikina Language App**

However, Nyikina Language remains critically endangered. We need to advocate for additional resources to continue this vital work, so we can find new ways for our community to learn and apply Nyikina Language in everyday use. To this end, we are seeking to develop the database into a Nyikina App so people can hear, learn and say Language wherever they are.

**Our Partnerships**

Nyikina Inc’s strategic cultural actions and solutions strengthen our capacity to help people to reach their full potential as human beings who are Nyikina. This relationship is deeply connected and invested with the Mardoowarra – a sacred ancestral being with a right to life because it gives and supports life. This life force is the spiritual essence of our culture.

We have been fortunate in working with many Nyikina People to strengthen our capacity in the maintenance and survival of our Nyikina Language. Nyikina Inc also recognises and values the contribution made by the Kimberley Language Resource Centre to the preservation of Kimberley Aboriginal Languages, including Nyikina.

However, the cultural materials generated over the past 14 years have been done so despite the competitive yet often unsuccessful grant applications submitted, which reflects a major gap and failure by Government policy, practice and investment in Aboriginal Languages. It is critically evident that State and Federal Governments need to shift away from one-year grant funding cycles for organisations that can demonstrate value, transparency and accountability for public monies received.

Instead, triennial funding models would allow us continue the vital work generated by Nyikina Inc to date and sustain it into the future. Federal and State Governments need to work together to seriously invest in and support Aboriginal organisations.

Like many other Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberley region and across Australia, Nyikina Inc urgently needs funding because within the next five years, we are unlikely to have fluent speakers of high cultural degree sharing their culture, knowledge and practice. Australia cannot afford to allow the loss of the remaining Aboriginal Languages.

**Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre**

Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre (MWRC) is a centre of inspiration that provides women and their families a place for positive change and leadership. Marninwarntikura is a Walmajarri word – Marnin means ‘women’, Wanti means ‘big mobs of women’, and Kura means ‘belonging to’. When said together, it means that the women who belong to this region, these countries and each other have come together.

MWRC’s vision is to “strengthen the power of women and their families to create culturally rich, engaged and healthy lives for Indigenous peoples living in the Fitzroy Valley and beyond”. Underpinning this vision is the following set of core values:
• We value and respect every person, operate with feeling and sensitivity and embrace cultural diversity
• We encourage and support personal growth, pride and leadership
• We work collaboratively
• We are accountable to the community

Our goals for our organisation, our community and our families are:

• Nurturing children and young people to reach their full potential
• Strengthening families through the journey of healing from intergenerational and early life trauma, grief and loss
• Building a sustainable and enabling organisation
• Facilitating participation in economies and activities that enhance wellbeing

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
To do this, MWRC has been engaged in numerous programs and projects, all of which are culturally-driven responses to support our community. Our work is directed by our Board, which consists of representatives from each of the five Language Groups of the Fitzroy Valley, who each contribute to our Cultural Governance structures. This enables MWRC to work in a culturally-safe place and facilitate social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) outcomes for all involved.

Social Enterprise
Much of the work MWRC does is in the area of social enterprise, including:

• **Culture and Story Sharing** – to generate income that helps families living on-Country and facilitates the intergenerational transfer of Cultural Knowledges
• **Therapeutic Spaces** – to deal with trauma and intergenerational trauma through art enterprises
• **Trips to Country** – collecting bush materials and visiting places that women want to return to
• **‘Learning You Mob’** – transfer of knowledge and skills between generations (while specific funding for this program has ceased, we continue to pursue resources as there is a continuous call for this program from the community)
• **Women from Fitzroy Valley Communities** – women who come to work and bring home resources, or sell their crafts

Our Partnerships
Previously MWRC facilitated the Fitzroy Valley Women’s Bush Meetings, which provided a forum for local women to come together to share Cultural Knowledge with bush tucker, medicine and healing sessions. This initiative also offered support on various other topics, including Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD).

Funding for these important meetings has not been available in recent times, with the last bush meeting being five years ago at Mimbi. We would like investment so MWRC can revitalise and facilitate this important coming together of women in our local community.
6DBY Larrkardi Radio
Derby Media Aboriginal Corporation commenced radio broadcasting in 2003 on frequency 97.9FM to the township of Derby and nearby Aboriginal communities, including Mowanjum. Known locally as Larrkardi Radio, we have won six national Community Broadcasting Australia Association (CBAA) awards to date in our short history.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
During this time, Larrkardi Radio has also added a recording studio and training area to our existing studios so we could better provide for our local musicians to meet and record their music.

We are committed to our Aboriginal community and undertake a number of projects to publicise cultural content, including:

- **Cultural stories** – recording stories about Ngarinyin Country, as well as children’s stories and family interviews
- **Community Facebook page** – creating and maintaining a Facebook page that contains community promotions in Language (e.g. about health)
- **Language** – broadcasting Nyikina words and phrases in our radio programs
- **Events** – doing live NAIDOC Week broadcasts and participating in the Boab Festival Committee
- **Local music** – recording local bands and musicians
- **Advertising** – producing radio advertisements for local organisations

In the future, we aim to increase our connections with town-based youth through film projects.

Our Partnerships
Larrkardi Radio develops further language products in collaboration with local communities, such as audio and film recordings of Dreamtime stories with the Looma and Jarlmadangah Burru communities.

We also provide media training opportunities at the local prison. This includes work with Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media (PAKAM) that is streamed live for an hour on Wednesdays and Fridays before being replayed nationally on the following Monday.

We also are looking to expand on existing skills in media certificates through TAFE and the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA), and encourage the next generation to engage in these types of cultural interactions.

Wangki Yupurnanupurr Radio 936AM
Wangki Yupurnanupurr Radio 936AM (Wangki Radio) was developed in the late 1980s by Elders and our community, who came together at Karrayilli Adult Education Centre and travelled all over Australia to lobby for a radio station. They envisaged a way to service the needs of our local people by passing on Culture, maintaining Language, and sharing the stories, news and music that we like in the Fitzroy Valley.

Commencing initially as a segment on ABC Kimberley, Wangki Radio soon became a station in our own right and we now broadcast to over 40 communities from at least six Language Groups: Bunuba, Gooniyandi, Walmajarri, Nyikina Mangala, English and Kriol. We actually have a 400 km wide listening
diameter, stretching all the way from the Erskine Ranges to Halls Creek, up along the Gibb River Road, into the Peninsula, south to Bilyluna, and sometimes as far as Balgo or Lombadina.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

Currently, up to six employees in addition to volunteers from our local communities help us to support a range of programs, including:

- Providing news, stories and music to the general community about local Aboriginal culture
- Recording and broadcasting Elders telling stories and oral histories in the local languages
- Broadcasting the music, projects and events of local musicians
- Gathering and broadcasting local news, information and current issues that support our local community members
- Providing access to our broadcasting for all Fitzroy Crossing community members

**Our Partnerships**

Wangki Radio provides relevance to the community, broadcasting new developments in Government policy and engagement initiatives. By providing access to broadcasting to all community groups and interested individuals, we promote the value of cultural programs.

Some of our partnerships include:

- **Local schools** – providing access to local schools via youth broadcasts and media development opportunities, which develops relevance amongst our youth who will soon be adults
- **Sports coverage** – supporting sports organisations like the Central Kimberley Football League (CKFL) and Garnduwa by covering the games for listeners across the Valley
- **Local police** – conducting occasional interviews with the officer in charge, which fosters better relationships between police and community members
- **Fitzroy Valley Men's Shed** – encouraging participation in their programs and other means of support
- **Health organisations** – enabling them to utilise our broadcasting service to engage with their clients and the general community

Other local organisations who are given access to our broadcasting include Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation, Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, and the Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) program.

**Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation, Dambimangari Rangers and the Dambimangari Indigenous Protected Area**

The Dambimangari People (from *dambeema* meaning ‘homelands’ and *ngari* meaning ‘belong to’) live in and around the township of Derby and community of Mowanjum. Although dislocated from Traditional Country by Government policy and history, Dambimangari People have clear sense of identity and tradition.

The Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation (DAC) is committed to self-determination for our members. One of the key objectives of the group’s work is the development of a new generation of leaders to preserve their Language and Culture while building a successful future for their families and community.
Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

As part of DAC’s work supporting our community members, Aboriginal leaders and social workers implement various programs, including:

- Youth suicide prevention
- Subsidised medical and health services
- Employment and training initiatives
- Education support and collaboration with tertiary education institutes
- Payment of social benefits
- Funding for hardship relief

Dambimangari Future Generations Project

As part of our commitment to self-determination, the Dambimangari Future Generations project involves working with old people and researchers to prepare language materials, cultural heritage maps, databases and family trees, as well as publishing *Barddabardda Wodjenangorddee: We’re Telling All of You* – a book about Dambimangari history, Country and culture that was launched in 2018; with a second book (in conjunction with Wunambal Gaambera Aboriginal Corporation) launched in 2019 entitled *Nyara pari kala niragu (gaambera): gadowara ngyaran-gada (wunambal): inganinja gubadjoongana (woddordda): we are coming to see you.*

This four-year project is seen as a key to preserving heritage and identity and helping young people understand their Country and ancestry.

Back-to-Country Trips and Cultural Knowledge

Part of our success has also been the development of our Dambimangari Rangers team and establishment of our Dambimangari Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) off the coast of Derby. We facilitate back-to-Country trips for social and emotional wellbeing, which involve taking young people out with the Elders and rangers.

These trips enable us to engage in Traditional learnings of songs, stories and ‘talking to Country’. DAC also supports media training so we can record these trips to Country for our next generations.

Our Dambimangari Rangers lead our cultural immersion programs on-Country and additional stories are incorporated into books for bush walks and tours. Six young people are learning cultural dance and are part of a collaborative project with Ngarinyin People to record the dances and keep them in the Songlines archive. We are also learning more about body painting and what it represents.

Our Partnerships

In partnership with the Western Australian Museum, our Wandjina Project illustrates respectful ways to visit Country. We have also collaborated with Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre and the University of Melbourne to create our Junba Project, which is about Traditional storytelling through song and dance.

In the future, DAC wants to do more on-Country work, recording the visuals while exploring our family roots. We also want to implement a Visitor Pass that is based on the Uunguu Rangers’ model, to make sure people are culturally-safe and contribute to caring for Dambimangari Country.
Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation and Nyinkina Mangala Yimardoowarra Rangers

*Walalakoo* means ‘a big mob of people together’ and the Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation (Walalakoo) was established as the key political, social and economic body that represents the Nyikina Mangala People of the Kimberley region.

Based in Derby, Walalakoo looks after a number of existing interests on our Country. These include mining and pastoral interests, which we are involved in as a way to create economic opportunities for Nyikina Mangala People and also to ensure our Country and cultural heritage are protected.

Walalakoo’s vision is to be a self-sufficient organisation that adopts the world’s best practice in environmental and agricultural sustainability, while providing social and material prosperity to Nyikina Mangala communities. We aim to preserve Culture, provide Indigenous employment opportunities and operate as an influential organisation with strong internal and external communication channels.

We are guided by Cultural Governance structures that allow us to represent members of our remote communities across Nyikina Mangala Country. Overseen by a group of Cultural Advisors, we manage the Nyikina Mangala Yimardoowarra Rangers, and are in the process of finalising an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) on our Country.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

Recently implementing a Healthy Country Plan to care for our Country, Walalakoo also undertakes three primary programs, which are outlined below.

**Land and Sea**

The Nyikina Mangala Yimardoowarra Ranger program is funded by the Federal Government. Delivering land management activities on primarily Native Title Lands, the program also has a strong focus on back-to-Country trips that allow Traditional Owners to visit their Country, which due to remoteness and resources are normally difficult to access.

**Socioeconomic**

We manage a members’ benefits policy that seeks to address some of the socioeconomic issues faced by the Nyikina Mangala Community. The policy provides small amounts of funding to members to under the categories of education, arts, Law and Culture, funeral assistance and emergency medical assistance.

**Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company**

Walalakoo maintains a majority share in the Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company (KAPCO), having provided the initial seed funding to start the company. KAPCO is a social enterprise that focusses on delivering social outcomes, mainly in the form of employment. Net revenue generated through the business is used to deliver further social outcomes.

**Our Partnerships**

To undertake these interests and fulfil the requirements of our community, Walalakoo also has strategic partnerships with both the Kimberley Land Council and Kimberley Regional Economic Development (KRED) Enterprises.
Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuba Rangers

The Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC) was established to look after the interests of Bunuba People on our Native Title Lands. This includes much of the area around Fitzroy Crossing and the sections of the Fitzroy River, extending to the Oscar, Napier and Erskine Ranges. Together we stand with the following united vision:

Thirrili warawara yarrangangu muwayi (We stand strong for our country).

Bunuba people, country and culture are powerful, proud and everlasting. We carry the spirit of Jandamarra. Our Junba, culture and our country keep us strong. Together our Jalangurru Muwayi will create pathways, partnerships and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for Bunuba so that our future generations are empowered to protect and manage all our lands and garuwa (water).

Directed through a Cultural Governance structure that ensures representation on our Board for all of the muwayi (clan areas), these cultural protocols include who is eligible for selection in each instance. We utilise this structure further to address disputes, and all on-Country activities are done so in consultation with those who speak for that place.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Some of BDAC’s general activities include performing smoking ceremonies and Welcome to Country, providing cultural security advice, and sharing and teaching our Bunuba Culture with the local schools – in particular, Wesley Yiramalay Studio School.

Bunuba Rangers and On-Country Programs

BDAC and the Bunuba Rangers spend a lot of time on-Country, looking after sites, and strengthening knowledge and stories. Some of our people were greatly impacted as Stolen Generation and we have invested a lot of time in supporting them to reconnect with place.

Language and Dance

BDAC wants to see more Bunuba Language and dance practiced as part of our everyday lives. We also see economic sustainability as the key to getting out on-Country more and are investing time and resources into developing a number of these culturally-based opportunities.

Bunuba Genealogy Database Project

We are currently repatriating our own information, which was collected prior to and during the Native Title process through surveys and anthropological or archaeological studies. This information will be held in the Bunuba Genealogy Database, with security protocols in place. Audio language resources will assist with language knowledge transfer and the whole project will provide opportunities for us to teach children again.

Our Bunuba dictionary is also being connected to the Bunuba Genealogy Database as well, with an online version due for release in the near future.

Cultural Competency Training

BDAC is developing informal cultural competency training, to ensure people can live and work in our community in a culturally-safe and culturally-secure way.
Our Partnerships

Bunuba Cultural Caretakers Project
We created the Bunuba Cultural Caretakers Project in partnership with Nulungu Research Institute (University of Notre Dame Australia) specifically to look after sites on-Country using both scientific and cultural mechanisms. Intergenerational transfer of knowledge is interwoven into this project and we are in the process of developing a database to hold this information.

Language
In the past we have undertaken numerous language projects in partnership with the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Karrayili Adult Education Centre and Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre.

On-Country
Environs Kimberley has worked with our rangers and Elders to record bush medicine and bush tucker on Bunuba Country, along with Bush Heritage Australia and the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) – which contains the Kimberley District of the Parks and Wildlife Service (also known as DPaW).

It is through this resourcing of our Bunuba Rangers that we are able to specifically employ people to look after Cultural and Dreaming Sites, rock art, burials and ceremonial sites, from Darnku to Dimond Gorge (where the proposed new National Park will start). This involves not only the men but also a dedicated team of Women’s Rangers. As part of this we take multi-day guided tours on the Twin Gorges walk a couple of times a year, sharing our Cultural Knowledge with those who attend.

KALACC
BDAC has a strong relationship with KALACC, which is evident through the Fitzroy Crossing Old (Pioneer) Cemetery Project. Involving the relocation of almost 100 people from the old cemetery to the new one, Bunuba people were involved in the project from the beginning.

Additionally, we have supported KALACC through their repatriation programs and during Law Time. This is reciprocated with support for our on-Country programs during school holidays. Language immersion is important and the generations spend time together learning, teaching, fishing and camping – like old people used to do.

Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation, Winun Ngari Employment Service and Derby Men’s Shed
Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation (WNAC) is the largest community development provider for remote Aboriginal communities in the West Kimberley. We service communities in and around Derby, several remote communities located along the Gibb River Road and riverside communities on Nyikina Mangala Country near the Fitzroy River.

WNAC is dedicated to ensure Indigenous communities in the West Kimberley continue to have the strength and ability to celebrate their Culture, manage their own Country and grow their own futures. As an organisation, WNAC’s values are focussed around five key areas: staff, governance, communications, cost efficiencies and relationships.
Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

The support WNAC provides differs from community to community. However, services include enterprise and business development, employment and training, health and wellbeing support, governance and administration.

We provide the Winun Ngari Employment Service to assist job seekers in our community and also support the Derby Men’s Shed. Some of the programs we run that have a cultural input or base include:

- **Work for the Dole** – art activities that include the use of bush medicine and knowledge, which feeds into the tourism sector in Derby and beyond and often involves Mowanum Artists
- **Job Seeker Placements** – often delivered to non-vocational areas, including cultural and mental health, with organisations such as the Derby Aboriginal Health Service (DAHS)
- **Workshops** – held on relevant issues such as counselling and cross-cultural protocols
- **Mentoring** – Aboriginal cultural mentoring and communication for internal staff and provided to external organisations on request
- **Community Development Program (CDP)** – both town-based and regional projects
- **Balginjirr Community Program** – a specific culturally-based program that is run by staff at Balginjirr Community
- **Men’s Shed** – assistance with NAIDOC Week and the delivery of social and emotional wellbeing programs that involve everything from aquaculture to provision of fencing services

We also support aquaculture initiatives and hold information workshops of relevance for our members. Working with each individual, we provide job-ready pre-work opportunities to build self-esteem.

Our Partnerships

In the future WNAC would like to see:

- Ownership and leadership of programs and projects by Aboriginal organisations
- Maintained commitment to the projects, ideas and partnerships of Aboriginal organisations from investors, such as State and Federal Governments
- Resourcing of support and referrals from appropriate agencies
- The development of community-based projects such as cultural tourism

Additionally, staff are interested in supporting individuals and communities with the development of language books and other cultural products (such as bush medicine).

Yiriman Project

Auspiced by KALACC, the Yiriman Project is an initiative of four Indigenous Language Groups of the Kimberley region: Nyikina, Mangala, Karajarri and Walmajarri. Senior Elders from these groups came together close to 20 years ago to request assistance from KALACC to support our young people to deal with contemporary issues within cultural frameworks.

‘Building stories in our young people’ is the Yiriman Project’s philosophy and we have been recognised nationally for our resilience and Cultural Governance structures.
Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
The specific Men’s Programs and Women’s Programs both focus on the intergenerational exchange and strengthening of Cultural Knowledges. Utilising the ‘back-to-Country’ method, young people and Elders undertake camps on-Country from a few days up to a couple of weeks.

During this process, we often find that our Yiriman Project rangers become mentors, assisting with Cultural Knowledges, literacy and numeracy. Digital media plays a large role as well, including capturing trip activities on film.

Social Enterprise Development
The Women’s Program in particular places a large focus on social enterprise development based on Traditional Ecological Knowledges. Products created during these activities are value-added for sale at the local markets.

Cross-Cultural Tourism
We engage in cross-cultural tourism through a number of opportunities, which we have found allows us to combine Traditional Knowledge with economic return. We invest in these opportunities regularly, growing the relationships and creating pathways for our young people to follow. The connections remain intact both on-Country and in town.

Cultural Health
The Yiriman women have run professional development workshops for midwives and palliative care workers and are increasingly approached by individuals and organisations to provide such cultural health products.

While tourism has often been the focus of the Karajarri Rangers and Nyikina Mangala women at Jarlmadangah, the Walmajarri women are leading a focus on health and wellbeing, with practices shared and utilised in the contemporary cross-cultural health space. This is growing interest in the space for the women from all of the Language Groups and the Yiriman Project is strategically progressing this.

Our Partnerships
We have strong links with our respective ranger teams (Nyikina Mangala, Karajarri and Ngurrara), as well as other Aboriginal organisations such as the Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre, Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services, and a number of universities. At times our partners attend our on-Country trips.

The Yiriman Project has also spent time developing a business plan with Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) support, which is encouraging us to strategically undertake further bush product development.

We are particularly interested in reconciliatory cross-cultural programs that foster Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians journeying together into the future.

Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services
Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services (NCHS) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO). Commencing in 1995 following wide-reaching community consultation, NCHS
was established in partnership with the Fitzroy Valley Health Service as the type of health service the local community wanted.

The clear message from the community consultation was that they sought an ACCHO service that:

- Is holistic, culturally-appropriate and recognises the impact of Aboriginal Law, Culture, Spirit and Land issues on community health
- Focuses on disease prevention and health promotion
- Works together with the existing State-run hospital programs to avoid service duplication and improve service quality for our local people

Fulfilling the above requirements, NCHS has three main divisions – Health Promotion, Health Services and Community Services. Additionally, we also provide culturally-secure services for both patients, staff and those at the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA). We explain that cultural boundaries need to be recognised and understood, as health outbreaks do not follow kartiya (non-Indigenous) boundaries and cultural information can help predict where outbreaks may spread.

Everything we do is underpinned by Cultural Governance structures – although we have found that they are not always valued by funding bodies, are at times seen in opposition to mainstream models, and often result in pressure from resources agencies that oppose these structures.

In light of this, we advocate for respectful engagement of all Language Groups and an inclusive process. Our approach involves sharing health information in Language, providing appropriate resources for meetings that are often larger than streamlined governance processes, and giving flexible or extended timeframes that allow for Cultural Business, Sorry Business and wet seasons (including floods).

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

NCHS’ advocacy allows us to successfully deliver a number of culturally-based programs, which are outlined below.

**Spiritual Health Program**

Our Spiritual Health Program records what is important to people, which all services in Fitzroy Valley can utilise and benefit from. It also means NCHS can support Law Business, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) staff, criminal matters that are dealt with internally or in partnership with KALACC, and even nutrition in the form of healthy tucker cookbooks via nutritionists.

A longstanding initiative, the Spiritual Health Program incorporates talking with Elders, recording stories and songs in Language, and working with young people into health services. This has been done for generations and has been helpful for the five Language Groups of the Valley – for example, if someone would rather engage with an Elder to address issues rather than a counsellor.

**Mental Health Program**

NCHS’ Mental Health Program is holistic and delivers culturally-appropriate services that are respectful of Language Group differences. Our approach centres around the Aboriginal view that everything is linked, providing for holistic preventative care rather than reactive responses to critical self-reaction that can manifest as, for example, suicidal tendencies.
Other Programs

- **Bush Medicine** – a male staff member who has a strong relationship with communities leads this program, and also works with women on-Country at times to make oils, creams and soaps
- **Home and Community Care** – we support family both at home and in taking them on-Country, with gender-specific services that follow cultural protocols and are delivered by Aboriginal staff members
- **Health Promotion** – primarily about sexual health and is delivered gender-specifically

Our Partnerships

As part of our Spiritual Health Program, NCHS links with partners such as the Yiriman Project and the Ngurrara Rangers to talk to people on-Country.

A Culturally-Developed Family Approach Model

Having undertaken a prevalence study regarding chronic illness in the Fitzroy Valley that looked at poor medication compliance, we have identified a significant gap in the models currently applied.

Rather than a solely individual focus, we are developing a family approach model around chronic disease. This model is not just about supporting the individual (e.g. to take their medication), but also engaging with and supporting their families to encourage lifestyle changes for the family unit (e.g. improving nutrition for the whole family). To ensure success, ongoing assistance is additionally needed through a general practitioner who can have a relationship with the families and community for the long-term.

In short, the existing models are not working and NCHS is seeking funding for our own culturally-developed model that would align with the improvements that are sought through the Closing the Gap initiative. Furthermore, if you compare outcomes between Aboriginal health organisations and those in the mainstream, it is evident that we are providing better, longer-term outcomes.

ATSI Reporting Improvements

We also need to work to improve reporting and acquittal regimes for ATSI organisations – there is a burden on organisations like NCHS that is not experienced in by mainstream organisations. This needs to be addressed in the future.

Aboriginal Training Support, North Regional TAFE

North Regional TAFE (NRTAFE) is the largest provider of training and vocational services in the north of Western Australia, operating across a region that exceeds 1,000,000 km². NRT has 11 campuses, from Wyndham in the north to Newman in the south, and our three largest delivery centres are located in Broome, Karratha and Pundulmurra (South Hedland).

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

NRTAFE has a designated Aboriginal Training Support Team (ATS Team). All members of the team are Aboriginal and are dedicated to Aboriginal advancement towards equity with the broader Kimberley/Pilbara community.

Our three key guiding principle themes of ‘Attraction’, ‘Retention’ and ‘Completion’ both summarise the ATS Team as a collective and the model we aim to achieve for our current and potential ATSI students.
The ATS Team has identified various strategies and actions within the 2019 Aboriginal Training Plan, with the intention of maintaining the ongoing continuity of quality ATSI student support services, while also ensuring that culturally-appropriate training service delivery needs are being consistently met and delivered for Indigenous clientele throughout the Kimberley/Pilbara Region.

Our mission is to ensure best practice student training and employment support services to Aboriginal people of all ages who aspire to improved life circumstance for themselves, their families and their community through education, training and participation in the workforce of the Kimberley/Pilbara and beyond.

The ATS Team strives to achieve and excel in:

- Aboriginal consultation, representation and leadership in the strategic planning and service delivery modelling of NRTAFE’s ATS Team
- Continuous improvement in ATS support program delivery, with ATS staff engaged in the development and implementation of collaborative work practices required to achieve an ‘employment outcome’ Vocational Education and Training (VET) service delivery model
- Collaboration within NRTAFE to continuously improve staff cultural competency and the overall attractiveness and accessibility of NRTAFE campuses and learning facilities to Aboriginal students
- Increasing the level of Aboriginal participation in the NRTAFE regional workforce through apprenticeships, traineeships and collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal communities, Government agencies, non-government service providers, industries and employer groups
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal students completing their existing course of study and choosing to transition into further training, higher education (Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate III and above) and/or engagement in the NRTAFE service area workforce
- Engagement or re-engagement of Aboriginal youth in education, training and work experience to build individual motivation for active participation in continuing education, VET training and employment in the NRTAFE service area workforce

Our Partnerships

In Derby, NRTAFE runs workshops with Nyikina Language speakers and engages with other service providers to share culturally-appropriate ways of working, including the Shire of Derby and West Kimberley police forces, prisons and hospitals.

In the future we would like to develop a four-hour on-Country course with Nyikina Mangala People that provides a mixture of freshwater and saltwater Cultural Knowledge for those who are interested in this type of advanced course.

Additionally, NRTAFE is committed to educating the wider population about Nyikina history, culture and stories, while illustrating the diversity of our Nyikina People.

We hope to achieve these aspirations soon as we have guaranteed resources for the ATS Team and are looking forward to solidifying our relationship with KALACC through collaborative activities into the future.
EASTERN TRADITION (KUNUNURRA, WARMUN, HALLS CREEK & SURROUNDS)

The Eastern Tradition cultural bloc includes the Miriwoong Gajirrawoong, Gija/Kija, Malarngowem, Malngin and Kukatja Language Groups. Additionally, the larger towns of Kununurra, Warmun and Halls Creek are located here.

A total of 12 Aboriginal organisations from the Eastern Tradition participated in this project, namely:

- Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre
- Warmun Arts Centre
- Waringarri Aboriginal Arts
- Yarliyil Art Centre
- Gawooleng Yawoodeng
- 6PRK Radio Halls Creek
- Warringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation 6WR
- Gija Rangers
- Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation
- Yura Yungi Medical Service
- Ord Valley Health Service
- Halls Creek NAIDOC Week Organisers

Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre

At the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre (MDWg), which is incorporated as Mirima Council, we work to document, revitalise and maintain Miriwoong (and to some extent Gajirrawoong) Language and Culture. We deliver a range of programs and other activities to achieve this, building on our documentation and archiving activities to enable Miriwoong people to learn and engage with their Language and Culture.

MDWg was incorporated in 1986 to service the Miriwoong community and our Cultural Governance consists of a Board of Miriwoong Elders.

*Our governance is driven by the old people. They need to approve the information. Their knowledge is in areas of language, dance, Traditional skills and ancient stories. We depend on them to teach us and to pass on their wisdom to younger generations. The information and insights gained from Elders form the basis of all our other activities and helps us progress towards our goal of ‘Saving Miriwoong’.*

— MDWg representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Underpinning all of our activities, the Miriwoong Knowledge Cycle brings our Senior People together with younger language learners and MDWg linguists to discuss, consult and receive advice about a variety of different aspects. For example, how to best teach younger generations, document stories and share knowledge of Country, as well as other insights, cultural advice and leadership.
Everything comes down from our old people, they are the authority. They drive Language Centre activities.

– MDWg representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

**Documenting and Archiving Language On-Country**

As part of our commitment to document and archive our Language, we go ‘out bush’ on field trips to significant places on-Country, where we immerse ourselves in the views, sounds and smells of our Country.

**Miriwoong Resources and Publications**

MDWg’s ‘Let’s Learn Miriwoong’ resources help make language learning possible for children and adults anywhere, in even the remote parts of Miriwoong Country. They bring the stories, lessons, and wisdom of our ancient Language and Culture into the modern world.

Additionally, we produce radio shows, write bilingual books with audio support, record videos, undertake language consultancies, develop interpretive signage and have created a Miriwoong language app.

**Language Education**

MDWg has built a strong team of Miriwoong Language engagement officers and other language workers by training younger people who have learnt their Language and are teaching it in schools in the area, or who are in the process of learning themselves.

MDWg also runs an early childhood language learning program (the Miriwoong Language Nest). The aim is to increase the knowledge and use of Miriwoong in the community, especially within early childhood.

**Dance and Cultural Performances**

MDWg receives requests for Traditional dance performances and other kinds of cultural involvement for a range of events throughout the year, including NAIDOC Week and at the Ord Valley Muster. We also regularly organise Corroborees (dance ceremonies) during the cooler months, and assist in finding speakers for ‘Welcome to Country’ at events in Miriwoong Country.

**Our Partnerships**

MDWg works in partnership with other organisations, including Waringarri Aboriginal Arts and the Miriuwung Gajerrong ranger program.

> Elders go with the rangers to teach them Language, Culture and bush skills. That’s intergenerational teaching. The rangers need to know how and what to look after.

– MDWg representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

By teaching cultural awareness to local organisations and agencies, we are building respect for Miriwoong culture.

**Warmun Art Centre**

Warmun Art Centre (Warmun Arts) exists to celebrate and encourage the expression of Gija Culture through the arts, and to support the continued development of innovative contemporary art by both
established and emerging Warmun artists. Striving to do this by developing and maintaining a commercially viable arts enterprise, Warmun Arts provides a diverse range of cultural and economic opportunities for individuals and the community as a whole.

Incorporated in 2005, Warmun Arts is situated in the Warmun Aboriginal Community in the central east Kimberley, and works with our People in the community and surrounding Gija lands.

Our primary goals are to conserve culturally and socially significant objects and knowledge systems, and foster the production of art as a means of cultural continuity, transmission and innovation.

_We are an art and culture centre. There are a lot more layers than just the art that people buy. You can’t separate art, Language, Culture, dance, song and story._

– Warmun Arts representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

**Warmun Arts Studio**

The studio at Warmun Arts is where ideas emerge, stories are shared and art is made, and where people come every day to drink _nalija_ (tea), cook _mangarri_ (food) and _jarrag_ (chat). Many of the long-term art and cultural projects that become touring exhibitions, publications and videos unfold here.

In the studio, artworks are photographed and catalogued, and bodies of work are selected for exhibitions and freighted across Australia and overseas. In this place many things occur – different techniques of crushing, cooking and mixing ochre, wood being cut and dried for carving and canvas being stretched, as well as a lot of conceptual development around artistic and cultural ideas taking shape.

**Warmun Arts Gallery**

At our peak, we have received over 10,000 visitors annually who come to engage with Gija Art and Culture. Our gallery space displays contemporary works, is a significant attraction for visitors, and generates considerable economic benefit for the community.

**Joonba Program**

Warmun Arts has a _Joonba_ program. _Joonba_ are cycles of song and dance that incorporate painting, theatre, story and history. They are learned from childhood and practised throughout life, and are intrinsic to Aboriginal art and cultural practice across the Kimberley.

**On-Country Trips**

Bush trips to Country ensure that our Cultural and Artistic Knowledge and techniques are passed on to the younger generations. This includes knowledge related to song, dance, Language, _mangarri_ (food) and artistic materials, such as ochre, _garliwoony_ (tree sap) and wood for carving. The on-Country trips also enable our senior speakers to pass on Gija song, story and oral Language practices. Warmun Arts directors are drawn from a broad age range within the community.

Furthermore, these bush trips directly benefit the senior and emerging artists of Warmun Arts and our wider community, through cultural maintenance and intergenerational knowledge transfer that, in a sense, can be viewed as cultural professional development opportunities. Teachings have a direct impact on deepening the quality of art by increasing the knowledge of emerging artists and building respect and pride in cultural identity.
Our Partnerships

Warmum Arts has proposals and pending funding applications for various activities, including:

- **On-Country Trips** – nine or 10 on-Country trips over two years with the Gija Rangers and the youth program, with our Elders determining how these trips will unfold, such as what they want to teach and achieve (e.g. the location of the trip and cultural activities while on-Country, with art production being a potential by-product of the trip)

- **Gija Language Revitalisation** – language revitalisation through film, which promotes storytelling, allows people to take on acting roles, creates jobs and uses humour (in collaboration with Alison Page and the Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media (PAKAM))

- **Art Conservation** – a pilot program in intercultural tertiary education and training pathways in art conservation for remote art centre workers (in collaboration with Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA) and the University of Melbourne)

**Media Lab and PAKAM Partnership**

One of the most important activities we have identified is the opportunity for our young people to work continuously with the Elders to learn Language and stories. This is why we established a Media Lab – so the older people can teach and nurture the younger ones, whose knowledge we also value and who can use and develop their skills in media to find relevant ways of keeping our Culture alive and strong.

The Media Lab, which is coordinated by PAKAM, aims to provide jobs and training for Aboriginal arts workers. However, we are currently struggling because continuous management is not available. Therefore, Warmun Arts is working with PAKAM to reorient this program to focus on a smaller project that will reactivate the lab.

**Waringarri Aboriginal Arts**

Waringarri Aboriginal Arts (WAA) was established in the late 1970s in Kununurra, the heart of Miriwoong country, and incorporated in 1999. We are a living, growing art centre that celebrates Miriwoong cultural identity and the importance of our Country while supporting financial independence for Aboriginal artists and their community.

As the first wholly Indigenous owned art centre established in the region, WAA is one of the oldest continuously operating art centres in Australia. We support more than 100 participating artists, performers and community members with arts development, social and cultural wellbeing activities, and economic participation in the creative and cultural industries. Centred around Kununurra, we also work with the artists of Kalumburu via the Kira Kiro Art Centre.

WAA’s overarching vision is to build a sustainable enterprise that provides creative opportunities with social, cultural and economic benefits for our artists and community.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

**Cultural Knowledge and Engagement**

WAA plays a central role in maintaining Cultural Knowledge and nurturing the social and cultural wellbeing of our local community by providing:
Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project 2019 – Initial Consultation Report

- An open and welcoming environment for all local people and visitors that substantially helps foster social connectedness and reconciliation within the broader community
- Regular community nights, weekly school visits and workshops, Miriwoong cultural tours and other intercultural opportunities, which promote social and cultural engagement

Dawang Linawoong Ngoondengig-gerring Studio Program
Dawang Linawoong Ngoondengig-gerring (DLNg), is an arts development studio program that focuses on maintaining Cultural Knowledge, enabling creativity and promoting sustainable arts practices in order to support the next generation of arts practitioners.

Supported by senior artists and cultural leaders who mentor young and emerging artists, DLNg means ‘place where ideas are made good’ in Miriwoong. It describes the creativity that happens daily in the WAA studios.

Return-to-Country Program
Integral to our work, WAA supports artists and their families to return to Country and hunt for bush foods, visit sites of significance and learn Cultural Knowledge from the Elders.

Art and Culture Programs
WAA provide regular cultural performances, such as the Waringarri Dancers celebrating Country and Culture through their performances at various festivals and art fairs. Additionally, WAA offers a range of art and culture tours with Miriwoong guides who share their skills, knowledge and stories of their Culture, Country and art at locations that are special to Miriwoong People.

Waringarri Textiles
Growing out of the DLNg Program, Waringarri Textiles allows artists to experiment with designs of bush plants and cultural stories. In turn, this helps maintain Cultural Knowledge.

Senior artists mentor artists of all ages who are developing skills in stamp and screen-printing techniques. In partnership with designers, textiles are being produced as fashion and interior homeware products.

Yarliyil Art Centre
Driven by the desire of our local artists to practice and express culture through the visual arts, the Yarliyil Art Centre (Yarliyil Arts) was formed in 1998 and is located in the town of Halls Creek.

After a five-year period when we did not operate due to lack of funding, the centre officially reopened in November 2010. The name Yarliyil means ‘small paperbark tree’. Walmajarri, Jaru and Kija are the prominent Language Groups of artists working here.

Yarliyil Arts is a space for cultural expression and the production and sale of Aboriginal art. Working across a range of styles and painting in a variety of mediums, we depict stories of our history and people, as well as the Country and its cultural significance.

Yarliyil Arts supports culture by maintaining, documenting and sharing Traditional Cultural Knowledge and activities while providing employment and training opportunities for local Aboriginal people.

When we’re working on our canvases, we’re expressing our culture through our art. Our paintings show our side and the younger ones what it is to be Aboriginal. I seen my mum
painting with the old people, I was meant to become like them, my interest came from growing up around the older people who were painting old time stories.

– Yarliyil Arts representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Gallery
Our artists, who have always included people from the desert communities of Ringers Soak, Balgo, Billiluna and Mulan, have worked out of various buildings in Halls Creek over the years. Some painted from home and many of us enrolled at TAFE so we could have a space and support from a coordinator.

In 2015, Yarliyil Arts’ new building opened and we now have a dedicated gallery and artists’ studio. It was our hope that the senior artists would use the studio so younger people can learn from them, and this is happening more and more frequently.

Town Beautification
Yarliyil Arts has been engaged and commissioned for various functional and decorative artworks by the Shire of Halls Creek.

Over the past two years, one of our main community projects has been painting the bins in Halls Creek with bold and striking cultural images. This has been a change for our mainly Aboriginal town, where there are still few signs of Culture and heritage visible.

Our artists also painted a series of artworks on old car bonnets for the Shire in 2018. They were used for signage in and around Halls Creek, including Caroline Pool, Sawpit Gorge and Old Town. Additionally, Yarliyil Arts painted a number of big signage boards for the new Shire buildings to provide information to locals and visitors.

We would like to do more of these types of collective and community projects in the future, in addition to our individual works.

Gawooleng Yawoodeng
Gawooleng Yawoodeng is an Aboriginal owned and controlled organisation in Kununurra. We provide crisis accommodation and other support services for women in need. Led by Cultural Governance structures, our Board is made up of the Miriwoong Women’s Law Bosses.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Law Ground
With Law and Culture running through the area, Miriwoong Gajirrawoong women previously set up a Law Ground with infrastructure and equipment to support this process. Then Law stopped for a few years because of the loss of old people, and during this time the Law Ground was broken into and vandalised. We now keep our secret and sacred cultural material for Women’s Law Time at our safe-house.

A central priority of Gawooleng Yawoodeng’s Board is to re-establish the Law Ground so that the sacred objects can be returned and stored safely there. Our Board also wants to secure enough funding for the Women’s Group to be able to organise Law Business each year, including to be able to run a bus from town to and from the site.
Our Partnerships
Family is central for us culturally, and Gawooleng Yawoodeng intends to walk hand-in-hand with the Men’s Group that has just started in Kununurra, to ensure our mutual continued strength and resilience.

6PRK Radio Halls Creek
6PRK Radio (6PRK) was founded in 1990 in Halls Creek. Part of the Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media (PAKAM) Radio Network that is based in Broome, we are part of the regional service delivery that includes the sharing of news, information, special broadcast events, music and stories by Aboriginal stations in all the regional towns and many remote communities.

Broadcasting in the Halls Creek Shire area 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 6PRK has a music recording studio and provides services in outdoor broadcast, video production, and CD/DVD copying, printing and duplication. We also have a DJ set with lights and a smoke machine, and outdoor cinema facilities.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
Media Training
Over the years, the station has trained interested locals in media and entertainment, such as how to talk on radio and present their own shows, produce music, DJ, and produce videos. This includes the Kija and Jaru Language stories that are broadcast every Wednesday by language workers from the Kimberley Language Resource Centre.

Our Partnerships
6PRK would like to produce more local cultural content and we are seeking partnerships with other Aboriginal organisations for this purpose. This includes projects such as profiling artists who work at the Yarliyil Art Centre and visually recording stories and activities, including making films.

We are currently funded by musician Alan Pigram (one of the Pigram Brothers) and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) to showcase six Aboriginal bands in a live show recording. At the moment, this is our focus.

Overarchingly, 6PRK wants to broaden our impact in this area. There is an opportunity to greatly strengthen cultural activities and promotion using media such as broadcasting and film-making. However, a lack of funding is holding things back and we want to see more support for our cultural programs in the future.

Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation 6WR
Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation 6WR (Waringarri Media) has operated in the East Kimberley region for over 30 years as a not-for-profit organisation. Well known for our slogan, “The Aboriginal voice of the East Kimberley”, our services include the local Waringarri Radio, which broadcasts in Kununurra (693AM), Wyndham (102.1 FM), Warmun (102.1FM), Kulumburru (103.1FM), Argyle Mine (104.3FM) and Tourist Radio (87.6 FM). Our footprint also spreads across to remote communities in the North East Kimberley and the Northern Territory.
Waringarri Media also operates video productions services, outdoor broadcasting, graphic designing and social media marketing.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
Waringarri Media was established to support the Culture, Traditions and Language of the local area. We provide quality radio programs to the Aboriginal community of Kununurra and surrounding areas, and access to other forms of media, such as television.

Our key objectives are to reinforce Indigenous cultural identity, promote trust and friendship among Aboriginal people and the wider Australian community, and provide training and employment in various aspects of media to Aboriginal people.

Our Partnerships
Collaborations also allow Waringarri Media to actively promote Aboriginal culture and tradition – for example, partnering with the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre to produce the ‘Let’s Talk Miriwoong’ program.

Gija Rangers
Based in Warmun, the Gija Rangers were formed in 2012 to look after and manage Gija Country using a combination of Traditional Knowledge, Western science and modern technologies. We are also a member of the Kimberley Ranger Network through the Kimberley Land Council.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
In 2017, we had seven employees. However, with the closure of a key funding program only two full-time rangers remain. They are supported by a mixture of Working On Country Program funds and fee-for-service work in the Warmun area.

Before these changes, the Gija Rangers were able to work more closely with our Senior People on mapping Country, going out with the kids who were learning dance and bush skills, and so on. We still work with school kids, but unfortunately we are not able to take on as much as we did before.

Our Partnerships
Our collaboration with the Warmun Art Centre has been strong over the years. In the past, the Gija Rangers were able to help Warmun Art Centre look after important sites they could not look after by themselves. While Warmun Art Centre is able to pay us to go on bush trips with Elders, with only two rangers it has been very hard to do all that is needed.

The Gija Rangers also find we need to prioritise fee-for-service work at the expense of undertaking the cultural activities that should be our focus. Additional resources would allow us to avoid predicaments like this.

Following the Native Title determination in 2019, the possibility of establishing an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) on our Country may lead to funding for more rangers once again. We continue to investigate other funding as well.
Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation

Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation (MG Corp) was established in 2006 as a Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate (RNTPBC). We represent the interests of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong People, who are the Native Title Holders of the Traditional Lands that span large areas in the north east Kimberley.

In addition to managing the benefits received in an agreement with the State Government, MG Corp protects, preserves and enhances Miriuwung and Gajerrong Heritage and Culture. Our mission is to build a strong social, cultural and economic and social base that achieves wellbeing for our People.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

MG Corp does many things that incorporate culture, so at times it is hard to categorise individual cultural elements within our organisation when so many overlap. However, here are a few examples:

Heritage Surveys
Together with the Department of Parks and Wildlife, we manage the Miriuwung Gajerrong Rangers. Their activities include coordinating heritage surveys and other heritage matters on behalf of our Traditional Owners.

Cultural Law and Activities
Additionally, and importantly, MG Corp provides support for Men’s and Women’s Cultural Law, and culture activities and events. In 2018, we held our first ceremony in this area to re-bury the repatriated bones of Miriuwung and Gajerrong People who were taken from their Country years ago.

Our governance and decision-making is based on Traditional Cultural Structures, including dawang (estate groups) and the Garralyel – the Traditional authority for Law and Culture. Miriuwung and Gajerrong Elders who hold Traditional Knowledge of Country sit on the Garralyel to guide and advise our Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs) on Native Title, Country, Culture, Law and Language.

The Dawang Land Trust holds the titles to our Traditional Lands, including areas of cultural and historical significance.

Our Partnerships

MG Corp works with most of the other Aboriginal organisations in the area to benefit of our members, other Aboriginal people and the wider East Kimberley community. We maintain an integrated community development approach to support our networks.

Any requests to provide cultural awareness are referred to the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre and we work collaboratively with the organisation to deliver the material.

Through funding we receive under the Native Title Agreement, MG Corp has been able to provide additional resources for cultural activities to other local Aboriginal organisations, including Waringarri Aboriginal Arts and the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre.
Yura Yungi Medical Service

Yura Yungi Medical Service (YYMS) was established in 1987 to service the needs of the Aboriginal people of the town of Halls Creek and surrounds. We are a member of the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, which is managed and controlled by Kimberley Aboriginal people.

Aligning with the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service mission, YYMS aims to be locally and nationally recognised as an effective advocate for the Kimberley Aboriginal health sector and to provide and support the provision of effective holistic and culturally-appropriate primary health care services for Aboriginal people in the Kimberley.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Social and Emotional Wellbeing Services

In addition to primary health services such as general practice clinics, YYMS delivers Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Services to restore the physical, spiritual, cultural, environmental and social factors necessary to sustain resilience, strength and overall wellbeing in our Aboriginal people.

Consisting of a variety of staff including Aboriginal counsellors, the activities of our SEWB Services team are diverse. They include counselling, suicide prevention and support for the Stolen Generations to go to Country to assist in addressing intergenerational trauma.

Our Partnerships

Importantly, YYMS’ SEWB team is further supported by the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, which provides a variety of training in mental health and suicide intervention, as well as staff support and mentoring.

We are local, our programs are culturally-appropriate, we speak Language and are aware of skin names. We are the voice for our people who don’t have one or an understanding of the systems and ways of doing things.

It is a two-way process, we are cultural brokers and mediators for grief and loss, for substance abuse.

– YYMS representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service

The Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service (OVAHS) is a community-controlled Aboriginal Health Service with a Board of Directors that is drawn from the local Miriuwung Gajerrong community. Incorporated in 1984 and operating from Kununurra, we provide clinics at Doon Doon community and the outstation at Glen Hill.

Our mission is to work with communities to improve health and lifestyles, and build a new, healthier generation. Similarly, OVAHS’ vision to provide culturally-appropriate health care through professionalism, clear communication and a welcoming environment.
**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

OVAHS’ main activities are clinical services, mental health services, health promotion and education programs in the areas of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) prevention, smoking cessation, chronic disease prevention, childhood health promotion and sexual health.

We were previously funded to deliver the SEWB Program. However, in 2017 this passed over to the Kununurra Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation. This transition was undertaken because many identified it was a better fit for a local Aboriginal community organisation that works closely with community members across a range of areas.

**Our Partnerships**

OVAHS continues to support local events and festivals such as NAIDOC Week.

**Halls Creek NAIDOC Week Organisers**

The Halls Creek National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week is an important event on our town’s annual calendar. Every July, we celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples both from our area and nationwide.

NAIDOC Week in Halls Creek is one of the only times – if not the only one – where Traditional dance and song is performed for the townspeople and there are opportunities for everyone to learn and participate in the performances.

_We want to see more dancing and more people doing it. The Stolen Generations, we missed out on this knowledge. I wouldn’t mind joining in._

— Halls Creek NAIDOC Week Organisers representative

*(during our KACfC Project consultation)*

**Our Partnerships**

All of the Aboriginal community-based organisations – namely, the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Yarliyil Arts Centre, 6PRK Radio Halls Creek, Yura Yungi Medical Service and Jungarni Jutiya Alcohol Centre – as well as the Wunan Foundation and Shire of Halls Creek, come together to support the community and each other in the holding of NAIDOC Week events.

These collective efforts and contributions mean that the Halls Creek NAIDOC Week Organisers can focus on securing funding for our opening ceremony, which includes dancers and those who can teach others how to dance.

The Kimberley Language Resource Centre takes the lead in coordinating the performers, with Stewart Moreton and Valma Banks teaching the younger dancers.
NORTHERN TRADITION (WYNDHAM, KALUMBURU & THE GIBB RIVER ROAD)

Featuring the larger towns of Wyndham and Kalumburu, the Northern Tradition cultural bloc encompasses the:

- West Kimberley Saltwater Country that is north of Derby and along the Gibb River Road, with the Worrorra, Wunumbal Gaambera and Ngarinyin Language Groups
- North Kimberley Saltwater and Mitchell Plateau Country, with the Eastern Dambimangari, Wunambul Gaambera, Southern Balanggarra and Nyarinyin Language Groups, and touching the Nyikina, Bunuba and Gooniyandi Language Groups

A total of seven (7) Aboriginal organisations from the Northern Tradition participated in this project, namely:

- Kira Kiro Art Centre
- Wunambal Gaambera Aboriginal Corporation and Uunguu Rangers (collaborative response provided)
- Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation, Wunggurr Rangers and the Wilinggin Indigenous Protected Area (collaborative response provided)
- Enterprise Partnerships WA

Kira Kiro Art Centre

Kira Kiro Art Centre (Kira Kiro Arts) is located at Kalumburu in the northern Kimberley. *Kira Kiro* or *Kirri Kirri* are Kwini or Gwion spiritual figures that are featured in the rock art galleries around Kalumburu and believed to have been painted by the beak of the Sandstone Strike Thrush with blood from the tips of its wings.

Artistic practice has always played a cultural and economic role in Kalumburu, and in 2009 Kira Kiro Arts was established with assistance from Waringarri Aboriginal Arts in Kununurra.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Kira Kiro Arts Project

Managed by both Waringarri Aboriginal Arts and Kalumburu-based arts workers, the Kira Kiro Arts Project provides enterprise opportunities for artists to develop arts practice skills and cultural traditions, while promoting ethical sales to collectors and providing visual art spaces to create works for national and international markets.

The project emphasises the support of Traditional skills such as bark harvesting and painting and the collection of local *olmal* (white ochre), as well as the production of cultural artefacts and storytelling through contemporary works.

Art practice in our area is grounded in the rock art tradition, in particular the *Wandjina* (rain maker spirit) and *Kira Kiro* or *Gwion Gwion* figures – the helpers of the *Wandjina*. Contemporary practice includes secular themes of land animals, sea life and seasonal flora, and artists have developed botanical themed works that include bush foods, medicinal plants, and freshwater and aquatic plants.
Artists paint with natural ochre pigments on canvas, paper and bark and are skilled boab nut engravers.

**Wunambal Gaambera Aboriginal Corporation and the Uunguu Rangers**

Located in the far north of the Kimberley region, the Wunambal Gaambera Aboriginal Corporation (WGAC) is based in Kalumburu. WGAC supports the Uunguu Rangers and is guided by our Healthy Country Plan, which contains a 10-year vision that includes:

- Look after our Country in the way of our Wanjina Wunggurr Law
- Live on and make business from our Country
- Protect and share our cultural places as our Traditional Law says
- Use our Traditional Knowledge and Western science to care for our Country so that no plants and animals are lost
- Be respected as the proper owners and managers of Wunambal Gaambera Country
- Have ranger stations on-Country to help us look after Country
- Have the Cultural Knowledge of our Elders – both us and our future generations
- Be given a healthy life by our Country – both us and our future generations

Supporting Traditional Owners from the Wanjina Wunggurr Uunguu Native Title Determination Area (Wunambal Gaambera), most people live in Kalumburu, Mowanjum and Kandiwal.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

We focus on a number of areas within a cultural framework, including the socioeconomic, land and sea, heritage, Culture, Language, as well as Law, myth, ceremony and sacred, which feature in many of the programs we deliver.

**Cultural Knowledge**

WGAC’s Cultural Knowledge Program focusses on recording Cultural Knowledge with Elders and passing this information on to young people. Two important culture books have been completed as a result of this program – *Uunguu Plants and Animals: Aboriginal Biological Knowledge from Wunambal Gaambera Country in the North-west Kimberley, Australia* (ethno-ecology) and *Nyara pari kala niragu (gaambera): gadawara ngyaran-gada (wunambal): inganinja gubadjoongana (woddordda): we are coming to see you*” (a Traditional Owner perspective on Wanjina Wunggurr culture and rock art). All land and sea work also aims to use and pass on Cultural Knowledge while providing opportunities for Traditional Owners to get out on-Country.

**Cultural Education**

With the longer-term intent of creating a formal learning program, the initial efforts of our Cultural Education Program have centred on Language and *Junba* (Traditional storytelling via song and dance) workshops. The Uunguu Rangers also support school-based culture camps.

**Cultural Site Management**

This program is about managing Cultural Sites by recording, monitoring and managing threats such as visitation, cattle, fire, climate change, and loss of Traditional or Cultural Knowledges.
Visitor Management
Used by approximately 15,000 tourists annually, the Uunguu Visitor Pass (UVP) ensures visitors to Country have permission from Traditional Owners and visit in a culturally-appropriate way. This includes accessing the coast on cruise vessels or visiting Mitchell Plateau by road.

The UVP provides significant opportunities for both WGAC and the Uunguu Rangers to share cultural stories with visitors and offers opportunities for Traditional Owners to participate in the industry.

Additionally, generated funds are used to manage Cultural Sites that are open to visitation; train rangers and guides in how to tell stories and welcome visitors to Country; and develop interpretive materials to make sure visitors are getting the right (correct) story for Country.

Getting Back to Country
WGAC supports Traditional Owners to live on or to visit Country through project work so they can maintain their connection to Country and maintain Cultural Knowledge and practice.

Our Partnerships
Our primary partnership is with the Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation and the Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation. Collectively, our three corporations combine within the broader Wanjina Wunggurr Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) and share the same Law and Culture.

Partners for WGAC’s on-Country programs include Bush Heritage Australia, Kimberley Land Council (ranger program support), Department of Parks and Wildlife, Parks Australia and the Federal Government.

Our cultural programs have been supported by various partners, including:

- **Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education** – language projects via expertise in language learning and training (e.g. two workshops in 2018)
- **Nulungu Research Institute (University of Notre Dame Australia)** – previous Cultural Site work and upcoming research
- **Mowanjum Aboriginal Art & Culture Centre** – *Junba* projects

Considered a national and international leader in Healthy Country Planning, WGAC has academic publications to our credit that outline how Healthy Country Plans can be used to meet Traditional Owners’ vision for looking after Country and Culture (Austin et al; Moorcroft et al).

WGAC is also supporting Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation and Balanggarra Aboriginal Corporation to extent the visitor pass model to their Countries.

Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation, Wunggurr Rangers and the Wilinggin Indigenous Protected Area
The Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation (WAC) was established to support the interests of Ngarinyin Traditional Owners on the Wanjina Wunggurr Wilinggin Traditional Lands. Based in Derby, we support Traditional Owners within our four clan estates in the Central Kimberley along the Gibb River Road. Much of this Country falls within the Wilinggin Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) and is cared for by our ranger team, the Wunggurr Rangers, who are based in the Ngullagunda Aboriginal Community (Gibb River Station).
Our vision for our Country, as stated in the Wilinggin Healthy Country Plan (HCP), is that Ngarinyin communities can work together in our homelands, keeping Language, Culture and Country healthy while being supported by Traditional and Western education.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

WAC delivers a series of culturally-based programs and projects that focus on socioeconomic, land and sea, heritage, Culture and Language outcomes, including:

- **Back to Country** – annual trips to different locations in Wilinggin Country each year, which focus on passing Cultural Knowledge and practices from older to younger generations
- **Ngarinyin Language** – recording Ngarinyin Language for topics related to healthy Country; developing tools to support the Wunggurr Rangers to incorporate the use of Ngarinyin language into their day-to-day work; and supporting younger generations to learn and practice Ngarinyin Language.
- **Cultural Site Database** – developing a database of Cultural Sites, which will be used to prioritise the Wunggurr Rangers’ work in monitoring and protecting the sites
- **Traditional Fire Management** – reinvigorating Traditional fire management practices on a landscape scale using new technology (e.g. helicopters, aerial, incendiaries) and undertaking more Traditional fire walks across Country, which generate an income for WAC that is reinvested activities that promote the health of Ngarinyin Culture and Wilinggin Country
- **Clan Groups** – supporting people in their respective clan groups to maintain connection with their Country through the development of plans and strategies to live and work on-Country

WAC advocates for cultural elements to be incorporated into all of the work we do and ensures this is reflected in the Work Plans we submit to funding bodies, including:

- Incorporating sound Cultural Governance into Wilinggin’s HCP, such as engaging with the right clan groups for each area of Country and making decisions at appropriate levels
- Contributing to research and advocacy about the broader social, cultural and economic benefits of Indigenous land management, including the ‘Country Needs People’ campaign

Finally, the program guided by the Wilinggin Healthy Country Plan (HCP) is in the process of developing a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Plan that will specify key indicators and result chains.

Our Partnerships

To deliver our culturally-based programs and others, WAC has developed strong and strategic partnerships, including:

- **Mowanjum Aboriginal Art & Culture Centre** – collaborative annual back-to-Country trips and the development of the Wunnan Storylines database (an accessible online, password-protected database of cultural and natural heritage recordings managed by the Wanjina Wunggurr groups)
- **Yiriman Project** – conducting annual back-to-Country trips that focus on bush medicine
- **Nulungu Research Institute (University of Notre Dame Australia)** – cultural heritage management
Kimberley Land Council – cultural and natural resource management issues, and sharing knowledge and experience across the Kimberley Ranger Network (KRN)

Enterprise Partnerships WA

Enterprise Partnerships WA (EPWA)’s model is based on successful not-for-profit organisation Enterprise Learning Projects (ELP), which launched in the Northern Territory in 2010 and has supported Western Australian activities under the ELP banner since 2015. EPWA and ELP now work together at a strategic level to drive sector-wide initiatives and enable grassroots enterprise development across remote Australia, while maintaining separate legal entities and governance processes.

EPWA is a not-for-profit social enterprise that works with remote Aboriginal community members to foster local micro-business development and engage in the wider economy. Our approach is to help local people to build their capacity as entrepreneurs and in enterprise development (i.e. their skills, knowledge, confidence and networks). This includes the areas of governance and decision-making, financial literacy, creative thinking and problem solving, and the self-assurance to explore opportunities and take measured business risks.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

EPWA works closely with the Kalumburu community and will expand our work to other East Kimberley communities in 2019. Our initiatives focus on how enterprise activities can contribute to health, wellbeing and suicide prevention by supporting meaningful engagement in culturally-based enterprises.

The Kalumburu community believes that strong cultural identity is fundamental to their health and social and emotional wellbeing, as well as being a powerful suicide prevention tool. They want to curb the high rates of youth substance abuse and in the criminal justice system by exploring enterprise opportunities that revive these and other Traditional practices.

Tramalla Strong Women’s Group and Enterprise Learning

In 2015, the leaders of the Tramalla Strong Women’s Group (Tramalla) in Kalumburu invited EPWA to work with them and the Kalumburu Aboriginal Corporation to develop local enterprises that can become vehicles for economic and social change, including cultural enterprises. The aim is to create jobs, to reconnect young people with Country, to create pride in the community, and to offer their culture to the market.

So far, the emerging opportunities being explored include pandanus weaving, Traditional carving, photography and tourism, with a focus on strengthening the governance of Tramalla and fostering leadership for women to be able to determine and control their own futures.

Over 60 community members are currently participating in these enterprise learning and development activities. EPWA also supports communities to develop a supportive ecosystem that helps establish the partnerships required for successful remote enterprises.

Photography

The Kalumburu Photography Collective micro-enterprise has created local economic opportunities and products for the tourism market. The young participants identified digital photography as a
pathway to micro-enterprise, and began taking photos for the local school and for agencies in the community, as well as to sell to visitors to their Country.

In 2017 and 2018, Tramalla participated in workshops with a professional photographer to learn about how photos can be used to record culture, exhibited in their community and developed as saleable products. Over the long-term the women are seeking to acquire the skills, knowledge and confidence to successfully manage photography-based enterprises.

**Carving**

Initiated by the older women, Tramalla and EPWA are running a carving project for Elders to mentor and share Traditional skills with younger women to stay connected to Country and to keep culture strong. Kalumburu men are assisting with the project, which has been challenging due to the lack of a Men’s Space in the community. Despite this, we are achieving results.

**Pandanus Weaving**

Another project that the women in Kalumburu are pursuing is reviving pandanus weaving practices. The longer-term plan is to create a sustainable enterprise that is based on senior Wunambal Gaambera women sharing their Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

**Healing and Skills-based Bush Camps**

Healing camps and skills-based bush camps held in 2017 and 2018 linked cultural enterprise activities to commercial opportunities. The purpose of the camps was to share Traditional Knowledge and skills with the younger generations to increase resilience, develop local networks of strength and healing, and expose them to enterprise opportunities.

**Community-run Op Shop**

Tramalla is in the process of establishing a community-run op shop, where profits from the sale of donated clothing will be used as seed funding for cultural enterprise activities that preserve and revitalise Traditional Knowledge and practices. The Women’s Group is currently negotiating a lease space with Kalumburu Aboriginal Corporation and the Aboriginal Lands Trust.

**Textiles**

In 2018, EPWA facilitated an opportunity for the Kalumburu community to be involved in a design workshop that was run by ELP-supported social enterprise Magpie Goose – an emerging fashion social enterprise that highlights the market demand for Indigenous designed and printed textiles.

With their focus of fostering capacity and building opportunities with Aboriginal communities, Magpie Goose licensed the designs of women from the Kalumburu Strong Women’s Centre who participated in the workshop.
SOUTHERN TRADITION (BIDYADANGA THROUGH TO THE TJURABALAN)

The Southern Tradition cultural bloc spans from the Pilbara through the southern Kimberley and includes the Karajarri, Yawuru, Nyikina-Mangala, Walmajarri, Juand and Kukatja Language Groups. It also features the larger town of Bidyadanga and the Tjurabalan Native Title Lands.

A total of six (6) Aboriginal organisations from the Southern Tradition participated in this project, namely:

- Karajarri Rangers and the Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area (collaborative response provided)
- Yanunijarra Aboriginal Corporation, Ngurrara Rangers and the Ngurrara Indigenous Protected Area (collaborative response provided)
- Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group

Karajarri Rangers and the Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area

Situated approximately 200km south of Broome is the Aboriginal community of Bidyadanga on the Karajarri Traditional Lands. Covering approximately 32,000km², the Karajarri Rangers look after much of this Country, which also falls within the Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Our rangers are mandated to:

Improve the lives of our members through maintaining strong living culture, protecting Country, driving projects that create jobs and income, and fulfilling aspirations to sustain our futures on-Country.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

The Karajarri Rangers primarily deliver culturally-underpinned land, sea and heritage programs that are outlined below.

Healthy Country Plan – Looking After Country

We have eight full-time rangers and three coordinators, as well as the equipment, resources, partnerships and knowledge to implement the Karajarri Healthy Country Plan (HCP) – the strategic document that guides land, sea and cultural management for all Karajarri Country and People. As part of looking after Country, the Karajarri Rangers and IPA Work Program undertake activities such as Cultural Site management, Indigenous Knowledge transfer, repatriation of knowledge and documents, and so on.

The Wanjira-Nangkyrin Cultural Arm

The Wanjira-Nangkyrin cultural arm of the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA), the Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) of Karajarri People. Wanjira-Nangkyrin is facilitated by the Karajarri IPA Work Program, with the purpose of supporting Karajarri Law and Culture. Supporting both the maintenance of Law and culture activities associated with ceremony time and funerals, the arm additionally looks after cultural places, protocols and processes. Wanjira-Nangkyrin is rapidly becoming a key focus for our group.
Karajarri Enterprise Development

Both the Karajarri Rangers and IPA Program support the Yiriman women and the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA) to undertake enterprise development that is centred on land, sea and cultural management. This includes cultural tourism, bush medicines, product development and Indigenous Knowledge transfer.

Our Partnerships

To complete these programs, the Karajarri Rangers have cultivated a series of collaborative partnerships, including:

- **Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)** – access to archives, institutions and project support for repatriation projects
- **Nulungu Research Institute (University of Notre Dame Australia)** – access to experts in archaeology and Indigenous studies for cultural heritage management
- **Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC)** access to grants and financial support for land acquisition and management
- **WA Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW)** – joint management of conservation estates held in reserve by the state, as well as Indigenous land management
- **Environ Kimberley** – scientific technical support and project development advice
- **Kimberley Land Council** – contract management and project management support group

We also work closely with our neighbouring Ngurrara, Yawuru, Nyangumarta, and Nyikina Mangala. The Karajarri Rangers have a long history of advocating the importance of cultural revitalisation to external regional, state, national and global audiences and/or forums, such as our:

- Canadian study tour and cultural exchange to Canada
- Participation in the World Youth Forum as part of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) conference
- Participation in the Australian Youth Parliament
- Ranger exchange to north Queensland

With direct employment and training for more than 10 rangers, this number has steadily risen over the past five years and has seen greater involvement and engagement of both youth and Elders. The Karajarri Rangers now also actively work with the local school and employ two school-based trainees as part of our on-Country work programs.

Additionally, the Karajarri Rangers have implemented a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Program that indicates progress towards implementing our HCP and improvement averages for the health of targets (which, as identified in our HCP, include looking after cultural sites, doing fire management the right way, using Language and so on), as well as the reduction of threats that impede our ability to meet our Healthy Country targets. We have also developed a research protocol with the Indigenous Saltwater Advisory Group (ISWAG) network.
Yanunijarra Aboriginal Corporation, Ngurrara Rangers and the Ngurrara Indigenous Protected Area

Yanunijarra Aboriginal Corporation (YAC) looks after Ngurrara Country in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The Ngurrara Rangers were established to manage approximately 77,595km² of exclusive possession Native Title Land.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

YAC strives to develop a range of business initiatives for Ngurrara people. In addition to managing a team of rangers who carry out conservation and land management work, we are currently developing a Tourism Management Strategy for the Canning Stock Route and continually create opportunities for our people to work on-Country, look after Country and teach about Country.

On-Country Programs

As part of YAC’s commitment to taking people out on-Country, we have developed a specific youth program. Through all of our on-Country programs we support peoples’ Liyan (spirit) – which helps with their sense of identity by sharing knowledge about where our ancestors come from and how each young person belongs. This also inspires youth interest in land management, as being on-Country often involves activities such as water monitoring and climate change monitoring.

Mixing Western and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) knowledges to present information and learn land management skills helps us to increase youth engagement while on-Country. For example, using a tablet device to assist with our Work Plans while listening to Traditional Knowledge. We go beyond merely being a land management organisation.

Youth Justice Program

YAC addresses youth justice issues through collaborative partnerships with the Yiriman Project and the courts, where we encourage young people to make positive choices. In our experience, there are nowadays not enough programs for the young people to engage with and to help keep them out of trouble. We would like to be able to bring back some of the old culturally-focussed programs that worked with community in more appropriate ways.

Cultural Database

To align with our dedication to continuously improving our programs and operations, we have developed a cultural database with gender-based and self-managed Sorry Business practices to ensure that we inherently apply our cultural protocols to all that we do. The database is managed by the Ngurrara Rangers and is utilised by researchers who use the same specific identifiers for cross-referencing. We also assert our Intellectual Property (IP) rights and make sure appropriate consent is obtained if the researchers wish to use our data.

Yanunijarra Strategic Plan

An ongoing issue for ourselves and all Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporates (RNTPBCs) is the limited resources that we have. To obtain independence from representative bodies, we need large resources for administration, which is at times unfeasible.

In response to taking over responsibility for our Ngurrara Rangers, YAC has developed policies and procedures to secure the ranger team contract with the Federal Government, hold our own insurance and so on. We also recognise that this is an important strategy for fostering youth participation in the
longer-term. Therefore, we are in the midst of developing a Strategic Plan for YAC that will help our administrative staff manage the Ngurrara Rangers.

**Our Partnerships**

Culture and Cultural Governance are important central elements for YAC and we deliver cultural awareness sessions to miners and Canning Stock Route tourists. Through a partnership with Shell, we run culturally-based programs with our local schools and are about to celebrate a milestone for the ‘Ngurrara Canvas’, which our artists made with support from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency during our Native Title process.

Yanunijarra continually sources further business and partnership opportunities. For example, we talk to pastoralists about working on things like fire management, including Gogo and Cherubin Stations, the WA Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). Additionally, we collaborated with Karajarri people to secure further joint funding so more rangers could undertake Traditional burning on the western edge of our estate, near Dragon Tree Soak.

**Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group**

A new initiative of the Karajarri Law Bosses and the Yiriman Project, the Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group was recently formed in response to the growing interest in using Aboriginal Traditional medicine alongside the established health profession.

There is unfortunately very little policy or support in this space currently. For example, the Federal Government has not previously enacted legislation, and there is no legal recognition, regulation or financing for Aboriginal Traditional medicine nor the Aboriginal healers associated with Traditional healing practices.

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

**Bush Knowledge and Business Development Plan**

Despite the lack of support and funding, the Yiriman Project women’s community have recently put a great deal of effort into a Bush Knowledge and Business Development Plan, which has identified four priority areas:

1. Bush Health Care Product Range
2. Cultural Health Service
3. Cultural Experiences
4. Art and Design

**Cultural Health Service**

Linking specifically with the second priority, the Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group has been fashioned to align with the Cultural Health Service that is already in development. We are now seeking resources to fully implement a pilot project through the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial that is led by the Western Australian Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA).

Elder Yiriman women have a wealth of knowledge and a solid core group of younger women who are keen to learn. They have already successfully delivered workshops in Traditional maternity health care and been sought after for their Cultural Knowledge. Supported by business plan development from
Stepwise Heritage and Tourism and financial planning by Impact Seed, the Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group will be able to introduce a Cultural Health Service in its entirety.

As part of this initiative, attention will be given to creating young mother support programs, mental health support programs and on-Country healing programs that are designed around Traditional Knowledge. Capacity will be built to assist in the treatment of patients in conjunction with health care professionals that operate within Western medical practices.

While yet to be fully realised, the key elements of the Cultural Health Service include:

- Strong support from KALACC’s Directors for both the Yiriman women leading the program and the program itself
- A proposed trial site of Bidyadanga due to its connection to the Yiriman women
- The development of a measurement and evaluation framework to guide the process
- A Project Officer who will be responsible for coordination and logistics

Our Partnerships

At the KALACC Directors Meeting in December 2018, Yiriman woman Tina Watson gave a stand-out presentation to inform the Directors of our cultural business initiatives (i.e. our Bush Knowledge and Business Development Plan, Cultural Health Service and our group), which was very well received.

The Yiriman women were then invited to be part of the KALACC Women Directors Meeting where many shared concerns were discussed, including suicide, substance abuse and intergenerational trauma. It was also agreed that Traditional healing practices and medicinal products represent significant methods for helping to address these issues.

Moving forward, the focus of the Bidyadanga Traditional Healers Group will be to:

- Source a partnership with the community clinic for the Traditional healing practices and bush medicinal products to be readily available
- Collaborate with Allied Health Service professionals
- Develop a measurement and evaluation framework (as noted above)
- Cultivate partnerships with NPY Women’s Council and their Ngangkari Traditional Healers Program and/or Ngangkari Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (ANTAC) to develop a Working Group Terms of Reference that potentially serves as a support mechanism over the life of the Cultural Health Services pilot project
REGIONAL BODIES

In addition to the organisations that are located within the five discrete cultural blocs, a number of representative bodies operate across the whole Kimberley region. Five (5) such regional bodies participated in the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Project consultation process, namely:

- Kimberley Language Resource Centre
- Aboriginal Interpreting Western Australia
- Kimberley Land Council
- Wunan Foundation
- Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service

Kimberley Language Resource Centre

The Kimberley Language Resource Centre (KLRC) was the first regional language centre established in Australia. Set up in 1984 and incorporated in 1985, it is the peak representative body for Aboriginal Languages in the Kimberley. Together with the Kimberley Land Council and KALACC, the KLRC protects the heritage of Kimberley Aboriginal people.

Based on a foundation of Land, Law, Language and Culture, the KLRC’s mission is to:

- Advocate for Kimberley Languages on all levels
- Promote recognition that diversity in languages is central to Kimberley Culture, land and identity, and that Aboriginal Languages have value in today’s world
- Work in partnership with the diverse Kimberley language communities
- Ensure Kimberley Languages are passed on to our children

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Over the last 25 years, many KLRC projects have been documentation or community resource projects. In 1996, the KLRC set up an archive to maintain and provide access to the language materials, including audio, visual and written items, that have been collected by linguists, researchers, language workers and others since the 1980s.

*There are tape recordings of old singing and we want to teach young people these. There is much other cultural information held such as photos from Moola Bulla times.*

— KLRC representative (during our KACfC Project consultation)

Halls Creek Children and Family Centre

In more recent years, the KLRC has supported projects that communities have themselves developed, KLRC linguistic and other expertise being provided as the community requests.

Such projects include working with the Halls Creek Children and Family Centre’s early childhood programs, where the collaborating organisations have taken children on trips to Old Town, China Wall and Red Hill with Elders and parents. On these trips, Senior People talk about the cultural significance of these places to the Jaru and Kija People of the area and pass on knowledge about the bush foods, animals and plants in Language.
Our Partnerships

Teaching On Country

Among the priority areas that KLRC has identified for seeking funding and/or partner support for are ‘Teaching on Country’ activities, where KLRC community coordinators facilitate trips to Country with all age groups. The central goal is language transmission, but healing and strengthening families are also a big part of this process.

Partnering Kimberley ranger groups with Natural Resource Management (NRM) activities is seen as a potential way of Caring for Country while also transmitting knowledge and language.

Julurruru Song and Language Project

An example of how this is being undertaken currently is the State Government’s investment in the support of Traditional Languages in the Kimberley via the Julurruru Song and Language Project, which is a partnership between KLRC and KALACC.

The Julurruru, a shared junba (Traditional storytelling via song and dance) between the northern Aboriginal Language Groups of the Kimberley and Pilbara, was a seminal cultural phenomenon in these areas. This was the first junba that spread through the whole Kimberley and into the Pilbara, and the only known junba to be shared and performed by all of the Kimberley’s culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This project is supporting the artistic resurgence of the junba as an artform celebrated with public performances on regional and national stages.

KLRC are a key project partner, assisting KALACC to identify linguists in the communities where Julurruru workshop activities, which include learning the songs and dance with Cultural Bosses from the respective Language Groups, are taking place. We then work with the artists and performers within each community to document and record the songs and stories associated with this regional cultural performance.

International Year of Indigenous Languages

This type of activity is of particular importance in 2019 as it is the ‘International Year of Indigenous Languages’. The KLRC and KALACC are actively exploring opportunities to support language activities and practices throughout the year, including developing potential projects with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

Aboriginal Interpreting Western Australia

Aboriginal Interpreting Western Australia Aboriginal Corporation (AIWA) is a community organisation that provides over 100 qualified, accredited interpreters for more than 40 Aboriginal Languages. A member of the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT), we maintain close ties with the Western Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters (WAITI), the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), and the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) in the Northern Territory.

AIWA operates on a fee-for-service basis, although we receive organisational funding from the State and Federal Governments. Initially, AIWA was established as a business unit of the Mirima Council and we became the Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS) in our own right in 2012. In 2018, our scope broadened beyond the region to the entirety of Western Australia. It was in March 2018 that we officially became AIWA.
With our mission “to do all that is required to ensure that language is not a barrier for Aboriginal people”, AIWA’s interpreters are often found in the health and justice sectors providing communication and engagement services for Aboriginal people.

Governed by a Board that is comprised of Language and Cultural Leaders from across Western Australia, we ensure all of our operations are run from a cultural perspective that recognises the intrinsic link beyond language and culture. This cultural focus is reflected in the service AIWA provides, where we match the most culturally- and linguistically-appropriate interpreter to the person requiring assistance.

Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives
AIWA is available 24/7 onsite or via phone or video-link to assist all Government departments and community organisations with any engagement they have with Aboriginal Language speakers. Indeed, we are engaged to provide standby interpreters in Kimberley hospitals every day (including the Broome Mental Health Ward), as well as various courthouses on circuit across the state, and Centrelink offices. We also respond to individual client bookings for the WA Police and so on.

Cultural Continuation and Equal Access
Enabling people to converse in their own language through interpreters:
- Assists the continuation of Language and Culture
- Ensures appropriate understanding between language speakers and service providers
- Enables equal access to health and justice

There are many mental health benefits for those provided with interpreters – not to mention the legal, medical and financial benefits. This was evident in State Coroner Ros Fogliani’s inquest findings into the death of 13 children and young persons in the Kimberley, which highlighted the value of language and cultural continuity for health and wellbeing.

Cultural Insights
We recruit, train and support a growing Western Australian workforce of Aboriginal Language interpreters, who work across all areas of life and particularly where key Government agencies now accept the important role interpreters play in securing understanding.

Importantly, cultural context is often explained through interpreters. For example, Legal Aid engaged an AIWA interpreter in Balgo to represent an Elder who was charged for shouting and being threatening while holding a ‘weapon’. Through our interpreter, it was revealed that not only was the Elder practicing his cultural right and responsibility to hold a talking stick (a cultural object that is understood as a sign of cultural authority) – he was actually telling people to *cease* fighting.

Increasing Awareness and Providing Training
Allowing people to understand and be understood in their first language is a basic human right. Though AIWA currently provide more interpreters in locations across the state than ever before, not all Government services appreciate the impact of engaging interpretation services. For example, even Coroner Fogliani’s February 2019 delivery of her inquest findings was given in high English alone, after rejecting AIWA’s offer of an interpreter to sit with her and speak in Kriol – an accessible language for Aboriginal community members to have understood as she video linked from Perth to the Kimberley courthouses.
AIWA aspires to see an increase in the number of interpreters used by Aboriginal organisations, other community organisations, and all Government departments. An important component towards this goal is to raise awareness of our availability and the right to access our services.

As part of this commitment, AIWA trains service providers in the use of interpreters, appropriate ways of working with Aboriginal people, and the integral role interpreters can play in many processes and services, as well as ensuring people are afforded their basic cultural and linguistic rights.

**Our Partnerships**

AIWA works closely with any agency that provides services to Aboriginal people where understanding is important. We advocate for inclusion and understanding at every opportunity, and when we learn of a potential need for interpreters we call service providers and advise them.

Working directly with policy makers and the political process to raise understanding and to argue for change and progress, AIWA has been involved in national, state and individual agency developments. We have campaigned for workforce development and have contributed to interpreter training and accreditation throughout the Kimberley and broader Western Australia.

AIWA advocates that effective communication is key to self-determination, and this is clearly demonstrated through our work. For example, when interpreters are used in health services clinicians understand their patients and their patients leave informed about their conditions and what they need to do about them. When interpreters are used in the administration of justice, justice happens. Through this process, Aboriginal people understand what they are being told because the information shared by their counterparts, local Aboriginal people acting as interpreters, and they therefore understand what is being said to them.

**Kimberley Land Council**

Kimberley Aboriginal people have undergone rapid and significant changes since European colonisation but we have resisted, survived and adapted.

The Kimberley Land Council (KLC) was formed in 1978 by Kimberley Aboriginal people as a political land rights organisation for the benefit of our communities. One of the region’s peak Indigenous bodies, we work with about 25 Native Title groups to:

- Secure Native Title recognition
- Protect and enhance the high biodiversity values of the region
- Conduct conservation and land management activities
- Develop cultural business enterprises
- Improve our socioeconomic circumstances

The Kimberley is known for its strong and significant Aboriginal culture and heritage, and it is KLC’s aim to ensure that our Land, Law, Language and Culture lives on and continues to be vibrant and long-lasting. We do this by getting back our Country, looking after our Country and securing our future.
Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives

Cultural Archive
Over the years, a great deal of energy and resources have been put into Native Title research and, until recently, that is where the bulk of our funding was sourced. A positive by-product of this process is that the KLC has collected a great deal of cultural information, as well as developing numerous resources. The result is a substantial cultural archive.

Once the Native Title processes have been determined, the KLC is now facilitating the return of this information to each of the Native Title groups – often through their respective Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporates (RNTPBCs).

We are also working with groups to identify how they would like to use this cultural material in the future, such as personal statements, reports, genealogies, site maps and so on. Though it is often a complicated, this process can produce great cultural research for today’s generations, containing much information that was shared from our old people who are no longer with us.

Working on Country Ranger Programs
Historically, the Native Title process often facilitated getting people back out on-Country in areas that were previously inaccessible without substantial resources. The Desert is a great example of this.

Nowadays, our Working on Country ranger programs continue to foster this process. Whether it is to develop Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) or create visionary Healthy Country Plans (HCPs), ongoing cultural maintenance is embedded in these initiatives.

ATSI Employment
KLC employs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) staff at all levels and we have specific Indigenous leadership programs for staff to move into senior management. We also employ Cultural Advisors for all Native Title meetings, with interpreters also often being engaged.

Land and Sea Management Unit
Many of our cultural programs tend to be done through our Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU), which houses the Kimberley Ranger Network (KRN). With each Native Title group having its own Cultural Governance, the KLC is also able to provide pathways for young people into land management. This also includes our carbon abatement programs, all of which are delivered through processes dictated by the relevant Cultural Bosses.

Cultural Awareness Training
Additionally, cultural awareness training is mandatory for all KLC staff. We would like to see this extended to support Aboriginal communities so that all Aboriginal people living on-Country can be assured staff members from their respective community organisations (who are often sourced from outside the region) have had the appropriate level of training in cultural awareness.

The KLC recently provided cultural awareness information to the Grey Nomad’s Guidebook for tourists to our region. However, opportunities for us to deliver cross-cultural training to mining companies continue to be missed because, despite KLC’s insistence, they are at times reluctant to work with Cultural Advisors to respect cultural sites.
Research Ethics Advisory Committee

To guide our research process, the KLC has a Research Ethics Advisory Committee (REAC) that:

- Ensures appropriate conduct for researchers when engaging with Aboriginal communities and Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs)
- Helps to inform best practice for communities, which includes ensuring that there is free, prior and informed consent to research through a process that is understandable for community participants to engage with
- Facilitates who to engage with and how in each instance

We also advise on the strict guidelines and statements relating to Intellectual Property (IP).

Our Partnerships

There are also broader views regarding where culture fits in across our organisation. KLC’s rangers are fundamental to this, some of whom are working with Social Ventures Australia (SVA) to write a report on the importance of rangers in communities, in particular the stature they have with young people. This important work needs to become more integrated across the region.

Additionally, KLC wants to provide RNTPBCs with additional support and policies around Cultural Governance and operations. While we have been able to deliver this occasionally in the past, we would like to improve on our efforts collaboratively with KALACC in the future. Closing this gap will support RNTPBCs to make free and informed decisions with prior consent when deliberating requests for mining and development on their respective Country.

Wunan Foundation

The Wunan Foundation (Wunan) is an Aboriginal development organisation that focusses on family empowerment, and a key organisation in the Empowered Communities initiative. Our purpose is to drive long-term socioeconomic change for Aboriginal people by:

- Providing real opportunities
- Investing in people’s abilities
- Encouraging and rewarding aspiration and self-responsibility
- Building capacity
- Supporting individuals, families and community organisations

Established in 1997, Wunan is based in Kununurra and operates in the East Kimberley. We have built a strong asset base that includes commercial investments and allows us to invest in and facilitate long-term, independent strategies for change. We are committed to creating functional families and recognise cultural development as a central part of this process.

Our Programs, Initiatives and Partnerships

We are culturally staffed and deliver programs and policies in alternative ways to support our Aboriginal community with mainstream services and career development. Wunan specifically engages in children’s and family services within the education and care sectors because they are vital to supporting socioeconomic growth in the Kimberley.
Kununurra Child and Parent Centre
In partnership with the WA Department of Education, Wunan manages the Kununurra Child and Parent Centre (CPC) where one of the Miriwoong Language nests is run, along with other cultural programs and performances. Language learning is a priority for many people and should be available to all, but there are large gaps in accessing these, even privately.

Kimberley Education Excellence Program
As part of our children’s services engagement, Wunan has created the Kimberley Education Excellence Program (KEEP) – a scholarship program that provides some 60–70 kids from the East Kimberley with the opportunity to receive a high-quality education in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne. Additionally, Wunan recognises the importance of the house-parents in boarding schools being Aboriginal, in order to maintain the students’ cultural connections and identity.

Swimming the River Program
Wunan’s ‘Swimming the River’ program builds the capacity of individuals to thrive and become independent from welfare assistance. It recognises the impact of European settlement, the difficulties faced by many Aboriginal people in trying to adapt to the changing environment, and the resulting damage to people and culture.

The Swimming the River also proposes a solution – Living Change – whereby Aboriginal people accept responsibility for their future, capitalise on their abilities and, with help, learn to ‘swim the river’ and prosper from the opportunities that exist across the Kimberley region and beyond.

NAIDOC Week
Wunan also recognises the importance of NAIDOC Week for cultural strength in Kununurra and other towns, as well as the need for these events to be ongoing rather than only once-a-year.

Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service
The Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service (KAMS) operates across the Kimberley region, facilitating access to health services in our communities and towns. Established in 1986, KAMS is a membership based regional Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) that supports and represents the interests of seven independent ACCHOs in the Kimberley, which are member services.

KAMS delivers our services through the following set of core values:

- **Accountability and Responsibility** – We set goals and we hold ourselves to account
- **Sustainability** – We are here for the long-term, and we seek to minimise our impact on the environment and leave a positive legacy for future generations
- **Leadership** – We strive for excellence and encourage our staff to achieve great results
- **Innovation and Continuous Improvement** – We seek to push the boundaries, we do not accept mediocrity and we actively learn from our mistakes
- **Aboriginal Community Control** – We are an organisation of Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people, controlled by Aboriginal people
- **Caring** – We care about our patients, our staff and our stakeholders
- **Culture** – We respect the diversity of Aboriginal people and endeavour to embed, promote and protect the cultural values and practices of all Kimberley Aboriginal people
- **Integrity** – We are transparent, honest and we do what we say we will do
• Respect – We are fair and we treat each other, our clients and our stakeholders with dignity

**Our Programs, Projects and Initiatives**

Guided by a Board of Aboriginal representatives from across the Kimberley, KAMS delivers a range of programs and projects in the region.

**Mental Health**

KAMS is involved in the Kimberley Aboriginal Mental Health Planning and we have done this for a long time. Previously there were no protocols and we have now been able to introduce cultural awareness training across the region.

KAMS also supports the mental health needs of individuals and organisations, as well as providing guidance regarding Aboriginal protocols in communities.

**Cultural Awareness**

As part of our commitment to creating a culturally-appropriate and culturally-secure environment, we:

- Ensure all KAMS staff members complete mandatory face-to-face cultural security training as part of their recruitment
- Have developed cultural security guidelines, which have now been implemented across KAMS’ policies and procedures to support engagement with our clients and the presentation and arrangement of our work environment
- Assure clients that they are in a culturally-secure space by ensures that the first thing people see when they arrive is Aboriginal Staff, artwork and flags
- Provide appropriate, culturally-sensitive support for all of our associate Aboriginal organisations, which we are able to do this because we know how to engage with community and solve our issues on-the-ground

**Suicide Prevention**

KAMS has recently recruited a local Suicide Prevention Coordinator who is specifically available to provide support and advocacy within both the health and mental health services. Tasked with building capacity across community, the responsibilities of this position also include empowerment and healing.

**Other initiatives**

Additionally, KAMS provides women’s cultural health programs and health promotions. As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), we also facilitate training and education – particularly for the Aboriginal Health Worker Certificates (II-IV).

**Our Partnerships**

As well as the support and representation that KAMS provides to the seven independent Kimberley-based ACCHOs, we provide representatives to state and national health Boards across Australia, including the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA).
INITIAL CONSULTATION REPORT OUTCOMES

KEY INITIAL FINDINGS

As evident from the information provided during the consultation phase, the culturally-based organisations of the Kimberley are distinctive, founded both in their own traditions and histories as well as those they share.

Below are some initial findings and discussions based on the gathered material, which will be further analysed, explored and added to in the final KACfC Plan (due for release in June 2019).

Culturally-Embedded Principles

Underlying the cultural components and core activities of each Aboriginal organisation are the following culturally-embedded principles:

- Connection to Country must be maintained
- Country, culture and language are inseparable
- Aboriginal advancement and wellbeing can only be achieved through Aboriginal empowerment and self-determination
- Senior people have the authority and are the Knowledge Holders

Culturally-Embedded Components & Practices

Common to all of the Aboriginal community organisations are the following overarching culturally-embedded components and practices:

- **Cultural Governance**, which connects members and constituents of these organisations culturally and socially, whether it is Native Title, family group, people with shared histories and so on
  - Aboriginal empowerment and ownership of initiatives, services and programs
  - Employment and retention of Aboriginal staff across all organisational levels
- **Cultural Knowledge and Practices**, with foundations in Country, Language, art-making, storytelling, song, dance and/or performance
  - Aboriginal ways of sharing knowledge and working together, which consider kinship and complex relationship systems and include:
    - Intergenerational transfer of knowledge
    - Shared cultural and/or social identity among members
- **Celebration of Culture, Language and Country**, which facilitates the sharing of and immersion in Cultural Knowledges to the wider public
  - Production of cultural materials
  - Cultural elements being part of the physical setting (including artworks on display)

Culturally-Embedded Activities

Associated with one or more of these overarching components are the core culturally-embedded activities that the Aboriginal community organisations engage in and/or deliver:

- Going and being ‘on-Country’ (e.g. ‘back-to-Country’ trips)
• Maintaining and teaching bush knowledge and skills (e.g. hunting, bush tucker and bush medicine)
• Enabling young people to participate in cultural activities
• Using Aboriginal Languages and art to convey information
• Documenting, storing, archiving and sharing Cultural Knowledge and activities
• Promoting Aboriginal Culture, Language, art and Knowledge
• Participating in cultural festivals, events and performances
• Giving ‘Welcome to Country’ talks and acknowledgements of Traditional Owners
• Mandating cultural awareness training for staff
• Utilising Traditional cultural healing methods

DISCUSSION OF THE KEY INITIAL FINDINGS

Identification and exploration of these key cultural components will assist government to understand not only the complexity of culture but also that culturally-embedded strategies must be developed and controlled from within Aboriginal community organisations. Though external organisations have a role to play in strategies concerning Aboriginal welfare, success will only be ensured if they invest in and follow us, rather than trying to curtail or lead us.

In this section we specifically consider these key cultural components in isolation, in order to foster a broader comprehension of the complexity and crucial nature of culturally underpinned and embedded programs. Please note that the below forms an initial discussion following the organisational information provided herein, which will be revised and added to in the forthcoming KACfC Plan.

Cultural Governance

Cultural governance is fundamental to the roots of many of our local organisations, whereby ownership for the development and delivery of our respective services and programs is held by our own people. Cultural governance ensures that we deliver culturally secure solutions, rather than only culturally appropriate and culturally safe initiatives.

As described by Coffin, “cultural awareness and cultural safety are important foundations for the attainment of cultural security. The first two levels must be addressed in order to progress to the next level”. Within a health context, she utilises this example:

Another practical application of the three levels can be seen in addressing how to organise waiting rooms. Awareness could simply be recognising that Aboriginal men and women do not wish to be grouped together in the same room. Safety is where two exits are provided and two different rooms are utilised for such purposes. In a culturally secure service, male and female doctors and appropriate staff also utilise two rooms for treatment of patients. In other words, without the establishment of some awareness in a health context. it is hard to appreciate what safety and security in a cultural sense would look like… (p22–23)

Security is likened to the highest attainment level. It is the hardest to achieve but. like a house if the foundations are good. it will stay strong and be easy to maintain for many years to come.
What we as Aboriginal organisations do cannot be replicated through engagement of nor consultation by external organisations. Involving Aboriginal people on a Board, Steering Committee or Working Group to guide or implement processes in merely culturally-appropriate ways is simply insufficient towards meaningful outcomes. The application of Cultural Governance processes ensures that cultural security is provided to our people – whereby cultural protocols and processes, including kinship and familial considerations, are incorporated into the organisational structures and internal operations.

**Successful Governance Structures**

Examples of successful governance structures include peak regional Aboriginal organisations such as KALACC, the Kimberley Land Council, the Kimberley Language Resource Centre and Aarnja Limited. Additionally, smaller organisations implement structures that are relevant to the groups they represent, such as those for Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation (Nykina and Mangala People) and Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation (to look after the interests of Ngarinyin People).

KALACC has also undertaken our own research in this area with the assistance of the Nulungu Research Institute at the University of Notre Dame Australia, which has culminated in an extensive report on the intricacies of Cultural Governance by Professor Patrick Sullivan and Adjunct Research Fellow Stephen Kinnane titled *An evaluation of the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) Cultural Governance Programme 2013–2015*. The overarching sentiment behind this evaluation report is that, since 2006, Government policy regarding Indigenous Affairs has been driven by a mainstream, Westernised, corporatised and commercialised ‘service delivery’ paradigm that is antithetic to the interests of Aboriginal Cultural Governance and culturally-based initiatives – and therefore long-term Aboriginal welfare and prosperity.

**Aboriginal Employment**

The Yawuru Community Wellbeing Project, as outlined by Yap and Yu, provides a positive approach to the measurement of Yawuru wellbeing. Essentially, it reflects the strengths and capabilities of Yawuru People, is informed by Yawuru culture and is contextualised by the historical challenges faced by the Yawuru community.

This project exemplifies the empowerment and ownership of initiatives, services and programs that is integral for Indigenous Australians. After countless failed external policies and programs, realisation that change is required from within government itself has started to occur, to begin to address the shortcomings that have been rife since the dawn of colonisation in Australia. This is addressed through the employment of Aboriginal staff who are not merely included marginally on the peripheries of organisations, but who are attracted, developed, retained and advanced or promoted across all operational levels and, in particular, in senior management.

**Cultural Knowledge**

The utilisation of Cultural Knowledge and practices is inherent and evident within all areas of output from our Aboriginal community organisations. Aboriginal Languages, art-making, storytelling, song, dance and/or performance are fundamental elements of any service or program.

Importantly, all of these mechanisms are guided not just by ancient Traditional Knowledges passed down through the generations, but intricately woven into our fabric and delivered through complex
kinship systems and familial relationships, which also dictate who can work together and in what ways. This is the Aboriginal way of sharing knowledge and collaborating.

**Elders as Knowledge Holders**

In the Western sphere, the elderly are frequently shifted to the margins. However, this is not so for our Indigenous communities – the knowledge of ‘who’ and ‘how’ is obtained through decades of cultural lived experience, and it is our Senior People who teach the next generations.

As illustrated in the KALACC logo, the elderly are our cultural core. Our Senior People, Cultural Advisors and Law Bosses are respected Elders in our community. They are the Knowledge Holders and authoritative figureheads who ensure the cultural security of our people. Without them, the system erodes and loses shape. Respecting, recognising and referring to our Senior People is crucial for the intergenerational transfer of knowledge and delivery of all services and programs across the Kimberley.

**Cultural Identity & Kinship**

This sharing between generations likewise facilitates the interchange of Aboriginal cultural and social identities, each intertwined within our own complex kinship networks and familial structures. Aboriginal relationships cannot be understood in terms of Western ideals of family or even community. It is an intricate web that governs how every individual interacts with each other, with culture and with Country. The importance and magnitude of these bonds cannot be overlooked – particularly when it comes to the social and emotional wellbeing of our people.

This intimate knowing leads to *Mabu Liyan* (‘good spirit’), as determined by the Yawuru people, which is a key contributor to improvements in mental health (Yap and Yu). These links will be further examined in the *KACfC Plan*.

**Cultural Celebration**

Once the elements of Cultural Governance and Cultural Knowledge are realised, the celebration of Culture, Language and Country becomes intrinsic within everything that we do. Cultural materials are produced at all levels and are part of the physical setting of our organisations, adorning our walls with Aboriginal arts and imagery while celebrating the resilience and strength of our people.

It is then that we are able to facilitate a return to Country, as part of back-to-Country trips for the maintenance and teaching of bush knowledge and skills (such as hunting, bush tucker and bush medicine) as part of our core business. This practice likewise involves and facilitates engagement and enabling young people to participate in various cultural activities. Doing so on-Country, guided by senior Knowledge Holders, is something that can only be shared through the intricacies of Aboriginal Languages and with the information also represented and conveyed in our art.

Embracing digital technologies and multimedia has meant that we are not only able to document these cultural experiences and interactions, but also store and archive them to share with future generations. In turn, the material can be used to promote Aboriginal Culture, Language, art and Indigenous Traditional Knowledges, which are also showcased through participation in cultural festivals, events and performance, as well as the provision of ‘Welcome to Country’ talks and acknowledgements of Traditional Owners at various meetings, conferences, events and festivals across Australia.
Whilst we have summarised Aboriginal cultural complexities into a handful of paragraphs, many of the organisations featured in the KACfC Initial Consultation Report also share this information with external parties via cultural awareness and cross-cultural training. In fact, organisations such as the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service and Kimberley Land Council have mandated it for all staff. This is an important step in attaining cultural security, as previously discussed.

**KEY INFORMED PROJECTS**

During the consultation process, KALACC identified the two activities that we believe best fit within the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial mandate. They were the:

- **Wirnan Project** – funding for the Kimberley Art Centres Collective to implement the Wirnan Project, which aims to “revitalise cultural connections and creative intersections between communities ensuring the vitality of Kimberley cultures and the maintenance of Cultural Knowledge and identity for future generations”
- **Culturally-Based Project Measurement & Evaluation Framework** – the development of method and tool for evaluating the outcomes of culturally-based projects, which can then be applied to the Wirnan Project

A project proposal has been submitted to the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial Steering Committee for approval at their next meeting on 19 March 2019. An update on the outcome of this proposal will be provided in the forthcoming KACfC Plan.

Additionally, KALACC recognises that Binarri-Binyja Yarrawoo (BBY) – the backbone organisation for the Empowered Communities initiative in the East Kimberley – is holding a major workshop for East Kimberley cultural organisations on 1 May 2019. The purpose of this workshop is to develop a reporting tool that can be used to measure and evaluate the community outcomes from culturally-based programs. This, in turn, will become the framework that is used to assess and report on the Wirnan Project activities.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PUBLISHED REPORTS

Countless recommendations regarding improving the welfare and prosperity of Aboriginal communities have been published in numerous reports to date – many of which are yet to be responded to by the State and/or Federal Government. The following three key documents represent the spectrum of recommendations that have been made (and often repeated multiple times), which are outlined in this subsection:

- KALACC’s Cultural Solutions Position Paper
- Coroner Fogliani’s February 2019 Coronial Inquest Findings Report
- WA Legislative Assembly Education and Health Standing Committee’s Message Stick Report

Additionally, the KACfC Plan that is scheduled for release in June 2019 will include a literary review of the associated academic and Government publications and documents regarding the relationship between Aboriginal culture and wellbeing.

KALACC’S CULTURAL SOLUTIONS PAPER: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Kimberley Aboriginal Cultural Bosses recently released the Cultural Solutions Paper via KALACC, which includes their definition of culture and how to implement programs of change through self-empowerment. In it, KALACC identified a number of key principles regarding cultural solutions, which are each relevant to the KACfC Initial Consultation Report and forthcoming KACfC Plan:

1. Cultural solutions are crucial to empower Kimberley Aboriginal communities, families and individuals to heal the cultural and social trauma that has taken hold for many of our people.

2. Our young people are our future. Building stories in our young people, connecting to Country, family and community is how we build their future.

3. Investing in cultural solutions on Country prevents young people from becoming trapped in the criminal justice system, setting them on the right path instead of spending millions of dollars locking them up.

4. Cultural solutions have the greatest impact in preventing youth suicide utilising an ‘upstream methodology’ to engage young people by culture, Country and community.

5. Cultural leadership is based on cultural authority. Cultural authority is respected, empowering and effective in delivering real cultural and social change that our communities need and value.

6. Our young people need to be strong in two worlds – culture, language and education go hand in hand.

7. Cultural governance, when respected and supported, upholds cultural and social values and increases community responsibility and effectiveness.

8. Kimberley Aboriginal communities are founded on respect for family, Law, culture, language and Country.
9. Remote communities are the lifeblood of Kimberley Aboriginal community;
supporting culture, language, education, connection to Country, belonging, identity
and responsibility.

10. Cultural economies empower Aboriginal families to build on cultural assets of
Country, language, culture, and Indigenous Knowledge to create direct employment
and wellbeing (p7).

Within the Cultural Solutions Position Paper, KALACC also identified a series of 15 key
recommendations “across five key themes informed by evidence-based analysis” (p6), most of which
relate to culture, as follows:

1. Consolidate and resource the Yiriman Project to expand the model Kimberley-wide
and over the longer term to support Kimberley Aboriginal youth at risk.

2. Ensure resources allocated to the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Trial engage and
resource Indigenous community based organisations that are most able to effect
change at the community level based on cultural solutions that are effective for our
people.

3. Resource the Agents of Change Program to transmit knowledge and develop cultural
authority in our young men and women, identifying and supporting emerging leaders.

4. Target support for Aboriginal Women’s Law and cultural practice to match the
growth of male leaders through dedicated cultural maintenance funding.

5. Commonwealth and Western Australian State Governments to collaborate with
KALACC, the KLC, KLRC and through Kimberley Futures, and through Aarnja and the
Empowered Communities Model.

6. Transfer decision making and financial resource allocation for programs supporting
culture, healing and wellbeing to Kimberley regional governance bodies, including
KALACC, the KLC, the KLRC through Kimberley Futures and Aarnja.

7. Resource and expand successful repatriation program as part of cultural healing.

8. Invest in the long planned and well developed KALACC Cultural Centre in Fitzroy
Crossing to uphold cultural foundations, healing programs and development of
cultural enterprise.

9. Develop a long-term cultural festivals investment plan and program of support for
the triennial KALACC Festival, and re-establish the nationally successful Stomp’Em
Ground Festival as part of showcasing Kimberley Aboriginal cultural performance and
investment in cultural enterprise.

10. The WA Government to collaborate with KALACC and key Aboriginal community
cultural organisations to practically and tangibly implement an Aboriginal Cultural
Investment Strategy.
11. Build a close partnership with KALACC and Aarnja to develop a Kimberley Regional Cultural Investment Strategy that builds on current development of cultural performance, festival programs, Aboriginal art and cultural tourism.

12. Empower the Aboriginal community to own and deliver cultural enterprise programs through community based cultural organisations supporting cultural economy pathways and small-scale business development.

13. The Western Australian Government to directly engage with Kimberley Futures and Aarnja (Empowered Communities) to review all aspects of the RSRU based on community consultations and through the Kimberley Leadership.

14. Collaborate with Kimberley regional Aboriginal organisations in identifying and supporting remote community based needs and opportunities assessments.

15. Resource Aarnja, Kimberley Futures and related regional Kimberley Aboriginal organisations to undertake the work of the Remote Services Reform Unit (RSRU) reporting to the Minister for Local Government: Heritage, Culture and The Arts (WA) (p8).

KEY CORONIAL RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CULTURE

The February 2019 Coronial Inquest Findings Report released by Coroner Ros Fogliani includes numerous recommendations, though the following recommendations are of particular importance in the context of supporting culturally-embedded Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberley:

Recommendation 16 – Expansion of Yiriman Project (p299–305)

That the Yiriman Project or a model akin to the Yiriman Project be extended across the Kimberley, and that consideration be given to the following matters in connection with the extension:

a. That the Western Australian government through its various health and justice branches should explore opportunities for the implementation of models akin to the Yiriman Project in other remote parts of Western Australia with priority given to those areas with high rates of Aboriginal youth suicide.

b. That funding providers for the Yiriman Project and other programs akin to the Yiriman Project should acknowledge the need for key performance indicators that are flexible and reflect the difficulty such organisations have in providing quantitative and qualitative data on the success of individual interventions with at-risk clients.

c. That the Western Australian government should consider guaranteed funding for the Yiriman Project on a longer term basis, whether through funding provided by the Department for Corrective Services for diversionary programs, through ATSIEP funding, or through funding coordinated through the Mental Health Commission.
Recommendation 17 – Consultation with Aboriginal communities (p305–308)
That the Government and its service providers continue to ensure that the strategies for addressing Aboriginal suicide be implemented in consultation with appropriate representatives from the Aboriginal community, that the representatives which are appropriate to consult are identified on an ongoing basis, and that such representatives be provided with an opportunity for involvement in the co-design of such strategies.

Recommendation 24 – Traditional cultural healing and mental health (p329–332)
That mental health treatment plans for Aboriginal persons offer the option of the inclusion of traditional cultural healing, and where that option is accepted, that all efforts be made to work collaboratively for the benefit of the patient.

Recommendation 25 – Development of cultural healing projects (p332–334)
That there be funding by Government for the development of cultural healing projects in the Kimberley Region such as the one being developed by the Nyamba Buru Yawuru Centre in Broome.

Recommendation 33 – Expansion of Elders’ Reference Group (p349–351)
That the Elders Reference Group presently in operation in Halls Creek be extended to other Kimberley town sites and that this work be CDP recognised, and that current police efforts continue and be supported.

Recommendation 39 – Yiriman Project linked to schools (p363–364)
That the Yiriman Project or a model akin to the Yiriman Project be linked to schools within the Kimberley Region.

Recommendation 42 – Mutually agreed outcomes (p370–372)
I recommend that:

The principles of self-determination and empowerment be given emphasis in initiatives, policies and programs relating to Aboriginal people in Western Australia and that the Western Australian Government introduce measures to enable Aboriginal people and organisations to be involved in setting and formulating policy that affects their communities;

That in developing such measures, consideration be given to negotiating mutually agreed outcomes, with service delivery responsibilities as between the Western Australian Government and Aboriginal people and organisations; and

The Western Australian Government develop a state-wide Aboriginal cultural policy that recognises the importance of cultural continuity and cultural security to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people in this State.

However, it should be noted that the Coroner’s findings are by no means ‘news’. Recommendations frequently made by inquiries, inquests and reports that examine Aboriginal health, wellbeing and suicide repeatedly include the following:
- **Policymakers should focus on immediate and underlying issues** – clinical interventions are necessary but it is crucial to concurrently address cultural, emotional and social factors (i.e. ‘upstream’ initiatives as well as ‘downstream’ ones)
- **Programs should be culturally-based** – designed to help Aboriginal people to develop a strong sense of cultural identity and connection to place that builds resilience and wellbeing
- **Programs should be culturally-appropriate** – applying knowledge of local Aboriginal culture, customs and resources to service delivery, including a whole-of-community approach in remote areas and working with extended family groups (i.e. not merely the immediate family)
- **Policymakers should empower Aboriginal communities** – by involving Aboriginal communities in the design of programs, supporting community-run initiatives, and developing the capacity of community members
- **Coordination of service delivery to Aboriginal people needs to be improved** – specifically to address the lack of inter-agency collaboration and coordination, which restricts effectiveness
- **Policymakers and service providers should recognise trauma** – that is, be sensitive to and work to address the devastating and pervasive effects of intergenerational, community and individual traumas

KALACC has long advocated for change. This has included writing to previous WA State Coroner Alistair Hope regarding the 11 people who took their lives in Fitzroy Crossing in 2006, which instigated the subsequent 2008 inquest into a total of 22 youth suicides across the Kimberley.

However, despite Coroner Hope’s findings, there has been negligible progress in addressing this crisis and it has only worsened since. In 2016, a Medical Journal of Australia article found that the suicide rate in the Kimberley had doubled in 5 years. Recommendations such as these need to be urgently addressed. Foglani’s final recommendation may provide the key to this, in the form of a WA Aboriginal Cultural Policy:

*The Western Australian Government develop a state-wide Aboriginal cultural policy that recognises the importance of cultural continuity and cultural security to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people in this State (p372).*

**KEY MESSAGE STICK REPORT CULTURE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS**

The November 2016 *Message Stick Report* identifies some 40 reports over 15 years that had not been meaningfully responded to. The following findings are of particular importance to the overarching goal of addressing and reducing the impact of suicide across the Kimberley:

**Finding 1:** The WA Government has failed to adequately respond to recommendations made by previous inquiries for more than 15 years (p13).

**Finding 2:** The WA Government’s failure to respond to previous recommendations has contributed to the current poor state of the wellbeing of Aboriginal people in Western Australia, in particular to the crisis levels of Aboriginal youth suicide (p13).

**Finding 8:** There is increasing evidence that culturally-based programs have the greatest impact in preventing suicide; however, the WA Government has demonstrated reluctance in funding programs of this nature (p57).
**Finding 9:** By their very nature, culturally-based programs must be tailored to suit the particular community that will be using the program (p57).

**Finding 13:** Empowering Aboriginal communities is fundamental to reducing the high rates of Aboriginal youth suicide (p77).

**Finding 15:** Aboriginal people should be fully engaged and involved in every facet of creating strategies and developing programs and services which are relevant to them. This is not a new concept, with inquiries recommending increasing engagement with and involvement of Aboriginal people consistently for more than 15 years (p85).

**Finding 16:** The WA Government has demonstrated a significant lack of vision by failing to engage Aboriginal people in making decisions and developing strategies, programs and services which affect them (p85).

**Finding 21:** Empowering Aboriginal communities requires WA Government agencies to relinquish their power when setting and implementing policies for Aboriginal people and undertake a fundamental shift in the way government does business (p104).

**Finding 23:** Suicide Prevention 2020: Together we can save lives is a generic suicide prevention strategy which does not specifically address the needs of Aboriginal communities (p120).

**Finding 42:** Very little Royalties for Regions funding has been directed towards Aboriginal-specific or youth-specific suicide prevention or postvention initiatives (p206).

Moreover, the recommendations provided in the *Message Stick Report* are yet to be responded to and are nowhere near being realised. As the report pertinently notes:

> Perhaps the most important, yet least enacted, were about the role of Aboriginal culture, both as a primary protective factor building resilience in young people, and also ensuring that programs and services are culturally appropriate (Chairman’s Foreword).

> [...]  

> Aboriginal culture and identity has been degraded by colonisation and discrimination. Restoring this culture and sense of identity has been consistently identified as a key protective factor. Previous reports and inquiries have recommended that this can be achieved through various means, primary of which is culturally-based programs, such as on-country camps and activities (pii).
INITIAL CONSULTATION REPORT CONCLUSION

The need to for significant improvements to Aboriginal welfare is now, and through the forthcoming KACfC Plan we seek to inform meaningful progress as Australia moves into a new decade. It is our sincere mission to assist State and Federal Governments to invest in culturally-embedded strategies and practices, which evidence proves actually work to reduce Aboriginal suicide.

RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRE MEANINGFUL ACTION

In a display of solidarity, more than 60 Kimberley Aboriginal organisations came together to share their knowledge and vision for a culturally-secure Kimberley – one in which our next generations not only survive but thrive. All of the previously identified recommendations can be addressed through reasonable, responsible State and Federal Government funding for the culturally-embedded components and activities that are outlined in the KACfC Initial Consultation Report.

Our culturally-embedded initiatives are not short-term quick fixes. They are not predicated upon rescuing one soul at a time. Rather, they propose a wholesale change that is contingent upon investing in the empowerment of Aboriginal people – that is, a strengths-based agenda that places culture firmly and intentionally at the centre of any strategies.

From a position of cultural strength, our Aboriginal organisations have the demonstrated ability to create, manage and deliver these initiatives. We have the capacity to positively and profoundly impact our communities and enact real, sustainable change. We just need to be heard and invested in.

Fundamental to the success of any efforts will be the respect, recognition and unwavering support from Government at all levels of our four underlying cultural principles, as previously identified:

- Connection to Country must be maintained
- Country, Culture and Language are inseparable
- Aboriginal advancement and wellbeing can only be achieved through Aboriginal empowerment and self-determination
- Senior People have the authority and are the Knowledge Holders

With this in mind, we echo the words of the Kimberley Cultural Bosses on page 6 of KALACC’s Cultural Solutions Position Paper, for these words remains as pertinent now as they were two years ago:

We call on the Commonwealth and Western Australian Government to work with us to design and deliver a Cultural Investment Strategy to create pathways to sustainable, healthy, and prosperous communities based on cultural solutions that work for our people. Solutions do not come from outside our communities. Solutions that work for our people have always come from our Cultural leaders and have been driven by our own organisations.

Now is the time to cut through and to build on the nice words, promises of change and short-term, fragmentated and piecemeal program approach that governments and communities have been burdened with for too long. Real change means working from the cultural strength that has been the key to our survival. To heal our people, we must heal our families. To heal our families, we must heal our communities.

Culture is the key.
REFERENCES


ATSISPEP (2016). Solutions that work: What the evidence and our people tell us. University of Western Australia. Perth, University of Western Australia.


Victorian Department of Aboriginal Affairs (2018). "Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework" 

WA Department of Culture and the Arts and WA Department of Aboriginal Affairs (2015). *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services.* Perth: Government of Western Australia.

Western Australia Parliament Legislative Assembly Education and Health Standing Committee (2016). *Learnings from the message stick : the report of the inquiry into Aboriginal youth suicide in remote areas.* Parliament of Western Australia. Perth, Parliament of Western Australia.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: MEDIA RELEASE FOR THE FEB 2019 CORONER’S REPORT

MEDIA RELEASE  •  KIMBERLEY ABORIGINAL LAW & CULTURAL CENTRE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CORONER’S REPORT MARKS MILESTONE IN ADDRESSING ABORIGINAL YOUTH SUICIDE

7 February 2019

Today the WA State Coroner, Ros Fogliani, released her Inquest Report into the 13 youth suicides in the Kimberley – with the youngest being only 10 years old. In the report, Coroner Fogliani called on the State Government to take significant steps towards reducing the Aboriginal youth suicide rate.

The Kimberley Aboriginal Law & Cultural Centre (KALACC), which was named as one of the organisations that the State Government should be working with, welcomes the candour of the Coroner’s Report. Recommendations included expanding our award-winning Yiriman Project, developing cultural healing projects and developing mutually agreed outcomes (i.e. self-determination and Aboriginal empowerment).

“KALACC is hopeful that the State Government will listen to and act upon the findings and recommendations of the Coroner’s Inquest Report. It affirms what we have been saying for 35 years – that culture needs to play a crucial role if any initiatives are to be successful”, says KALACC Woman’s Chairperson Merle Carter.

“Without a Government commitment towards a formal partnership with KALACC to support culturally based programs, everything else will fail. Collaboration is key here.”

In turn, this coincides with the release of KALACC’s Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Report (Culture Report) on 14 March, which provides details of the culturally based governance, programs and projects of Kimberley based Aboriginal organisations within a range of key areas. Reported through the lens of the Kimberley’s five cultural blocs (West, Central, Desert, North and East), the organisations share current and aspirational activities. The release of the Culture Report is timely given that Acting Premier Sue Ellery also recently made a statement to the media that:

This Government recognises Aboriginal people and their culture as one of the State’s great assets and we are working closely with Aboriginal people to deliver culture-centred and community-specific outcomes to improve the outlook for young people.

We look forward to the opportunity of working with the State Government collaboratively towards meaningfully addressing this crisis.

However, it should be noted that the Coroner’s findings are by no means ‘news’. Recommendations frequently made by inquiries, inquests and reports that examine Aboriginal health, wellbeing and suicide repeatedly include the following:

- Policymakers should focus on immediate and underlying issues – clinical interventions are necessary but it is crucial to concurrently address cultural, emotional and social factors (i.e. ‘upstream’ initiatives as well as ‘downstream’ ones)
- Programs should be culturally based – designed to help Aboriginal people to develop a strong sense of cultural identity and connection to place that builds resilience and wellbeing
- Programs should be culturally appropriate – applying knowledge of local Aboriginal culture, customs and resources to service delivery, including a whole-of-community approach in remote areas and working with extended family groups (i.e. not merely the immediate family)
- Policymakers should empower Aboriginal communities – by involving Aboriginal communities in the design of programs, supporting community-run initiatives, and developing the capacity of community members
- Coordination of service delivery to Aboriginal people needs to be improved – specifically to address the lack of inter-agency collaboration and coordination, which restricts effectiveness
- Policymakers and service providers should recognise trauma – that is, be sensitive to and work to address the devastating and pervasive effects of intergenerational, community and individual traumas

In fact, 11 years ago KALACC wrote to previous WA State Coroner Alistair Hope regarding the 11 people who took their lives in Fitzroy Crossing in 2006, which instigated the subsequent 2008 inquest. Despite Coroner Hope’s findings, there has been little progress in addressing this crisis and it has only worsened since. In 2016, a Medical Journal of Australia article found that the suicide rate in the Kimberley had doubled in 5 years.

Meaningful action is long overdue – action that focusses on effective strategies and culturally based solutions that are created and implemented in collaboration with Aboriginal organisations.

KALACC remains, as we always have, available to assist the State Government in the design and implementation of programs that provide positive outcomes for the young people of the Kimberley and the community as a whole.
Media Contact
Name: Wes Morris, KALACC Coordinator
Phone: 0437 809 103
Email: coordinator@kalacc.org.au

Key Coronal Recommendations Relating to KALACC
- Recommendation 16 – Expansion of Yiriman Project (p299–305)
- Recommendation 17 – Consultation with Aboriginal communities (p305–308)
- Recommendation 25 – Development of cultural healing projects (p332–334)
- Recommendation 33 – Expansion of Elders’ Reference Group (p349–351)
- Recommendation 39 – Yiriman Project linked to schools (p363–364)
- Recommendation 42 – Mutually agreed outcomes (p370–372)

About KALACC
Established in 1984 and based in Fitzroy Crossing, KALACC is the Kimberley region’s peak Aboriginal cultural centre and supports the cultural practices of the 30 local language groups. We have a proud history of advocating for culturally based self-determination in the Kimberley and directly delivering services that are designed to enhance the social and emotional wellbeing of our local communities.

We created our award-winning Yiriman Project in 2000 – an intergenerational ‘on-Country’ program that separates young participants from negative influences and reconnects them with their culture in remote and culturally significant places under the care and guidance of Elders. This is exactly the type of culturally based program that the State Government needs to support, as identified by WA State Coroner Ros Fogliani in her Inquest Report.

KALACC works closely with Binrri-binyja Yarrawoo, Arnhem, Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Language Resource Centre and we are represented on both the Working Group and the Steering Committee to the Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial.

Further Reading & Resources
- Coroner’s Inquest Report: Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley region, Western Australia, 7 February 2019
- Elders’ Report into Preventing Indigenous Self-harm & Youth Suicide: People Culture Environment in partnership with Our Generation Media, 2014
- Solutions That Work: What the Evidence and Our People Tell Us: ATSIPEP Report – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Project, November 2016
- Closing the Gap Refresh website and Closing the Gap Refresh Public Discussion Paper
- My Life My Lead – Opportunities for strengthening approaches to the social determinants and cultural determinants of Indigenous health: Report on the national consultations
- Empowered Communities website and Empowered Communities: Empowered Peoples Design Report
APPENDIX 2: WORKSHOP FORMAT

Kimberley Caring for Culture Plan

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FORMAT

Introduction (1pm – 1:30pm):

Pat Torres
- Welcome and housekeeping
- Run through workshop format

Frank Davey
- Set the scene for the workshop, discussing the importance of culture and the way that Bardi have integrated culture into governance, organisations and school

Wes Morris
- Discuss KALACC’s cultural programs and portfolio

Session 1 – Mapping and Gapping (1:30pm – 2pm):

Pat Torres/Wes Morris
- What programs/projects are your organisations running that integrate culture?
- What programs/projects are under development or aspirations of your organisation?
- What are the programs/projects that your organisation has identified that are still required in your area/ across the region?

Session 2 – Collaboration (2pm – 2:30pm):

Pat Torres/Wes Morris
- How are our organisations already working together in partnerships or programs?
- How can we all be further supported in this?
- Can we identify additional opportunities to collaborate on cultural programs?

INTERMISSION – 15mins
Session 3 – Connecting with policies (2:45pm – 3:15pm):

Pat Torres/Wes Morris (bringing discussion back to current government policy and connecting links)
- Closing the Gap Refresh
- My Life My Lead
- Empowered Communities
- Other policies...

Session 4 – Concluding discussion (3:15pm – 3:30pm)

Pat Torres
- Final comments bringing the discussion together
- Where to from here?
  - Collation of survey information
  - Option to contribute to review of workshop notes and/or overarching report
    - provide names to Mel Marshall
  - Final reminder re one-on-one meetings

MEETINGS CLOSE 3:30pm
APPENDIX 3: SURVEY TEMPLATE

An Invitation to Aboriginal NGOs in the Kimberley to Contribute to the Development of a Kimberley Caring for Culture Plan

Dear Colleague,

KALACC has operated since 1985 as the Kimberley Region’s peak Aboriginal cultural centre. With a mandate to protect, preserve and celebrate law and culture across the region, in September 2017 KALACC published its KALACC Cultural Solutions Position Paper. While this provides an insight into KALACC’s position, we understand that a great many Aboriginal organisations all across the region make important contributions towards providing good community outcomes by keeping culture strong.

We are seeking to develop an overview and snapshot of the cultural programs which each of you provide to the Kimberley community. We therefore invite you to make a contribution towards the development of a Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan. There will be four main objectives for the development of the document:

- Mapping and Gapping of Service Provision – we want to know what cultural services your organisation and other organisations in the Kimberley are actually delivering;
- Collaboration and Cohesion Amongst Kimberley Aboriginal NGO Service Providers – we want to know who you work with, why you choose to work with them and what the benefits of collaboration are;
- Contributions towards macro government policy development – in relation to the cultural programs which you deliver, in what ways do you advocate for the importance of cultural programs?
- Contributions towards important research work on improving Indigenous outcomes – how do you know that you make a positive contribution to the community and what is your evidence?

The plan itself will be developed and published in three parts, as follows:

- Narrative and discussion regarding the scope of cultural programs which Aboriginal NGOs provide in the Kimberley
- Narrative and discussion regarding school cultural programs
- Appendix: Compendium of Survey Responses from Aboriginal NGOs.
The development of a *Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan* does not seek to replace any of your normal advocacy, engagement and promotional work. However, it will provide your organisation with an opportunity to have its work included in what will be a compendium and overview of cultural programs offered in the Kimberley.

It is envisaged that there will be multiple audiences for the completed *Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Culture Plan*. Thus, through the plan there is the opportunity for the work which your organisation does to be read and understood by a range of readers. Whilst it is hoped that the Plan will have a shelf life of some years, it is nonetheless unashamedly linked to current government initiatives.

The proposed development of this plan is timed to strategically coincide with changes at the political level. We are witnessing important macro policy processes which recognise the central role of culture. These processes include:

- Closing the Gap Refresh
- Implementation of the 2018 Iteration of the Indigenous Health Plan
- Planned establishment of a National Indigenous Cultural Authority
- Kimberley Suicide Prevention Regional Trial.

In the first instance we are asking you to complete the attached short Survey Form. As above, your responses to that Survey form will then be published collectively in a compendium of responses.

Secondly, if there are key themes and concepts which you wish to bring to KALACC’s attention for the narrative and writing stage of the project, then please feel free to share with us written documentation in whatever form you desire.

Kind regards

Wes Morris

Wes Morris  
KALACC Coordinator  
Phone: 0437 809 103  
Email: coordinator@kalacc.org.au  
“To assist and promote the ceremonies, songs and dance of Kimberley Aboriginal people, to encourage and strengthen their social, cultural and legal values and ensure their traditions a place in Australian society.”
Kimberley Caring for Culture Plan – Survey Response Form

**Part A: Organisational Details**

1. Name of Organisation

2. Respondent’s Name i.e Contact Person for the Organisation:

3. Sector [e.g. health, sport, arts, education etc.]:

4. Date of Incorporation:

5. Geographical Focus
   a) Where is your organization based?

   b) What part of the Kimberley do you service?

6. Organisation’s Mission Statement:
Part B: Mapping and Gapping of Service Provision – We want to know what cultural services your organisation is delivering

Please examine the diagram below. Recognising that all organisations straddle a range of classification, which of the above categories would your organization primarily be aligned with?

- Through your constitution and mission
- Through the activities and programs that you actually deliver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical Health</th>
<th>Socio-Economic</th>
<th>Arts. Performance</th>
<th>Land / Sea</th>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Law, Myth, Ceremony, Sacred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please provide up to one paragraph each describing up to five cultural programs which your organization delivers in the Kimberley:

1. Program #1:

2. Program #2:

3. Program #3:
4. Program #4:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

5. Program #5:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Part C: Collaboration and Cohesion Amongst Kimberley Aboriginal NGO Service Providers – we want to know who you work with, why you choose to work with them and what the benefits of collaboration are

Please contribute up to two paragraphs describing who your key partners are and what the benefits of working with those partner organisations is.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Part D: Contributions towards macro government policy development – in relation to the cultural programs which you deliver, in what ways do you advocate for the importance of cultural programs?

Please contribute up to two paragraphs describing what actions you take to advocate externally beyond your organization with a view to promoting the value of cultural programs.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Part E: Contributions towards important research work on improving Indigenous outcomes – how do you know that you make a positive contribution to the community and what is your evidence?

Please contribute up to two paragraphs describing how you measure the contribution which your cultural programs make to the community and what your evidence base is.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Part F: Please provide any further comments which you wish to share.

Thank you for your time