a worthwhile exchange:
a guide to indigenous philanthropy

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND SUCCESS STORIES FROM PHILANTHROPY
SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE
acknowledgements:

A Worthwhile Exchange - a Guide to Indigenous Philanthropy has been the product of collaboration between individuals and organisations, all of whom have shared their expertise, time and resources because they care deeply about investing in and working more closely with Indigenous Australians to meet their needs and aspirations. This initiative would not have moved beyond a creative idea without the dedication of Tanya Hosch, Aden Ridgeway, Simon Nish, Melanie Wilson, Henrietta Marrie and Kristi Mansfield. We extend our thanks to Susan Smyllie and Wendy Scaife from the Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at QUT, and to all of the participants in the research from both philanthropic trusts and foundations, and community organisations. We would also like to extend our thanks to the many people who worked with us to identify stories and case studies, with special thanks to Rachelle Tawart (AILC), Jack Manning Bancroft (AIMIE), Stacey Thomas (Telstra Foundation), Viv Sinnamon (Kowanyama Aboriginal Land and Natural Resources Management Office), Michael Bissell (RNFC), Andrea Goddard (The Clontarf Foundation), Caroline de Mori (EON Foundation), Peter Downing (Stronger Smarter Institute), Gillian Harrison (ArtSupport) and Michelle Young (Tjanpi Desert Weavers). Thank you to Bruce Argyle and Louise Burton from Philanthropy Australia for their valuable contribution. We would also like to acknowledge and thank Anne Summers, Trish Burrows and Joy Love who played important roles as special advisors, and to Amanda Lear and the design team at Gilimbaa for their great work. Finally, we express thanks to our peer reviewers: Michael Bissell, Alberto Furlan, Christa Momot, Jill Reichstein and Stacey Thomas.
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research for the guide:

In October 2009 and February 2010 research was undertaken for the first time to map the Indigenous philanthropic effort in Australia.

This examined the experiences and perceptions of grantmakers and grantseekers.

The Greenstone Group led the way with a qualitative study of thirty Australian foundations, trusts or funds that provide grants for Indigenous organisations, issues or projects. It also investigated current attitudes, approaches and perspectives on grantmaking with Indigenous communities.

The Guide includes research findings from the Centre for Philanthropy and Non-Profit Studies at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). This research probed the experiences of fourteen Indigenous people who have had different degrees of success in seeking funding from philanthropic organisations. This research shows how grantmakers can make a significant difference in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

notes on language:

WE HAVE USED THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE IN THE GUIDE:

- ‘Effective grantmaking’ describes grants that support social outcomes with Indigenous people and foster equitable relationships between grantmakers and grant recipients.

- ‘Capacity building’ describes strengthening organisational ability to deal with problems, mitigate risks and to deliver on program funding. It also refers to the development of individual skills within the grantseeking organisations.

- ‘Governance’ describes how an organisation is guided internally, including how important decisions are made and the processes in place to ensure strong systems as well as accountability.

- ‘Grantmaker’ refers to philanthropic donors including private foundations, trusts, Private Ancillary Funds (PAFs), donor advised funds, corporate foundations and individual donors.

- ‘Grantseeker’ refers to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people and organisations seeking funds and/or partnerships with grantmakers.

- ‘Philanthropy’ or the ‘philanthropic sector’ refers to the group of organisations and individuals making grants. The terms ‘social investment’ or ‘community investment’ are also sometimes used to describe philanthropy and/or grantmaking by some organisations. When we refer to philanthropy and/or grantmaking in this guide, we also mean social or community investment.

- ‘Community led’ describes initiatives, programs or projects that come from within Indigenous communities over which communities feel ownership and direction.
about the guide:

The purpose of The Guide is to inform, educate and inspire philanthropists to work more closely with Indigenous Australians to meet their needs and aspirations.

Drawing on years of combined experience and recent research, The Guide sets out to challenge the way we think about philanthropy in Australia, how we engage with Indigenous people, and to find practical, better and more effective ways to engage.

Today more and more foundations and individual donors are increasing their investments with Indigenous communities. We hope this trend will accelerate. We also hope that The Guide, filled with real life stories that demonstrate the enduring value of these partnerships, will encourage donors who have not yet worked with Indigenous grantseekers to consider doing so.

The Guide is the result of collaboration between the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund, The Christensen Fund, both of whom provided funding for its development, and the Greenstone Group. It reflects the commitment of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund and The Christensen Fund to increase the effectiveness of their own philanthropic investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

For the first time we identify our Top 10 Australian philanthropists who are engaged with Indigenous people and communities. We list how much money is being allocated to Indigenous projects and we use this information to make a better case for more effective spending so that the outcomes are successful and lasting. We re-affirm what philanthropy can and does do.

At the same time, it highlights the capacity across Indigenous Australia to engage in and effectively use relationships with philanthropic organisations to improve community wellbeing.

The Guide aims to be practical. It offers an array of tools: information, case studies and the findings from the research studies.

If you are new to grantmaking, we recommend you read The Guide in its entirety. If you have some experience, The Guide will no doubt add to the range of reference tools and knowledge you have already acquired and are putting to good use.

THE GUIDE IS BUILT UPON THREE FUNDAMENTAL PILLARS:

- better knowledge
- changing the landscape
- self-evaluation

Yours faithfully,

Mr Chris Renwick
Chair, Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund

Dr. Ken Wilson
Executive Director, The Christensen Fund
Philanthropy in Australia, for the most part, can be described as successful in supporting social change and in giving individuals a chance, through an array of different initiatives, to the same opportunities in life as all other Australians.

Over the last decade and longer, there has been an emerging trend to support new initiatives with Indigenous people and communities – much of this driven by the various debates and conversations in relation to reconciliation, native title, better community engagement, and more recently, Closing the Gap campaign.

Sometimes, if we are lucky, the work being done in ‘Indigenous philanthropy’ matches-up with the work of Governments but for the most part, funds for Indigenous projects are dedicated to where it is thought we could make the biggest difference, but with little or no co-ordination between and with other philanthropists.

Indeed, Indigenous philanthropy tends to be focused on individual projects addressing issues within specific geographic regions, and or targeted populations, and normally done over a limited period of time.

It is acknowledged that resources for philanthropy are finite, and the way in which this sector has developed has not been even or uniform. Philanthropic foundations and the like are at various stages of their own development, some have highly developed capacity, skills and staff, while others operate with lower budgets and more limited capacity.

Despite this circumstance, this does not detract from the enormous good will shown by so many foundations, corporate Australia, and wealthy benefactors in contributing to Indigenous causes.

The clear question, however, is “Can we say that our investments are making a real difference?”

We think for the most part the answer is Yes but given the limitations in available monies, the different levels of capacity within the philanthropic sector, and the way that things have tended to develop, the real challenge is about promoting greater effort, better understanding, and more effective collaboration between and with other philanthropists and Indigenous people, themselves.

To assist in how we might develop new ways of thinking and to create dialogue and conversation around much of what is presented in this Guide, we have developed a three Pillars framework. The framework makes use of the comprehensive and rich information obtained as a result of the research conducted for The Guide.

These Pillars are:

- **better knowledge**
- **changing the landscape**
- **self-evaluation**

**BETTER KNOWLEDGE**

Better knowledge and understanding of our partners is crucial if we are to make greater in-roads in the area of Indigenous philanthropy. The importance of a two-way learning process cannot be underestimated.

Each partner has stressed the need for improved knowledge to build capacity and leverage better outcomes. The Guide contains case studies which demonstrate valuable partnerships.

**CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE**

Changing the way we think about Indigenous philanthropy is also crucial for future success. In particular, there is a need to increase Indigenous involvement at the Board level, and improve accessibility and communication about available funding. Fundamental ways to change the landscape are suggested in The Guide.

**SELF-EVALUATION**

Improving our own capacity to be able to assess in real and practical ways the effectiveness of our engagement is paramount. The Guide contains a comprehensive tool kit and checklist to assist philanthropists in being able to better judge the value of their investment.
CHAPTER TWO

guiding principles
for a worthwhile exchange:
In order to successfully engage with Indigenous communities, grantmakers need to be aware of the following key principles which will inform, guide and help achieve a worthwhile exchange:

1. **Take the opportunity to fund innovation, recognising that most traditional funding sources work to low risk margins.**

2. **Listen to what the community identifies as the point of impact. Communities and grant seekers are a great source of expertise on what is needed to create significant and positive change.**

3. **Recognise that funding is only part of the exchange; there is also non-financial support by leveraging relationships and access to other people as well as the mutual transfer of knowledge on both sides.**

4. **Be open to long-term investments. Investing in organisations or leaders through larger, longer-term grants has led to breakthroughs in key areas.**

5. **Take responsibility for your own learning and development of cultural competency.**

6. **Be alert to the diversity of the Indigenous community (remote, rural, region, urban, different levels of education and employment experience, different aspirations etc).**

7. **Look for long-term results and measure beyond the life of the funding agreement.**

8. **Celebrate success of the activities funded.**

9. **Listen, listen, and listen!**
indigenous philanthropy - a relationship of exchange:
SUMMARY: This chapter examines where philanthropic grantmaking to Indigenous projects is successful in building capacity and supporting leadership development.

It also looks at specific projects designed to improve educational outcomes and provides answers on the key reasons to fund, and shows how philanthropy can complement the work of Government.

WHY GIVE?

Philanthropic organisations have the power to create opportunities for Indigenous individuals and communities, allowing them to share more fully in the overall benefits of Australian life. They are motivated to invest for three main reasons:

1. A strong sense of social responsibility
2. A belief in social justice
3. Disappointment with Government support.

"Philanthropy is an exchange. We learn so much when we give the funding," says Christine Edwards CEO of the Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund.

"We then become better equipped at our job, which we see as being able to fund what Government can’t, doesn’t or indeed, shouldn’t fund."

Jill Reichstein, chair of the Reichstein Foundation puts it another way: “Our driver is social justice and a vision for equality for people, especially the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised people”.

IMPROVING OUR KNOWLEDGE

The importance of a two-way learning process cannot be underestimated.

The research highlights how the relationship between grantmaker and grantseeker is a worthwhile exchange which benefits both parties. This exchange is not only monetary. Both sides stressed the importance of knowledge transfer, sharing ideas and access to networks among themselves and with each other. Each partner has stressed the need for improved knowledge to enhance capacity and leverage better outcomes.

For a community it often means becoming empowered to make their own decisions and, in some cases, this might mean grantmakers working with those organisations on getting their funding applications right.

“You give to the things identified by the communities as being necessary, not what you think is necessary and good,” says Edwards.

For a grantmaker seeking to fund solutions, the greatest chance for positive change can occur, when it invests in organisations or people,

PHILANTHROPY’S SUCCESS STORIES

Part of the solution in Indigenous philanthropy is to understand what works well.

The research indicates that grants which fund organisations and support capacity building are more effective than short-term project funding (usually one year).

The major successes are in:

- Education – improving school attendance, year on year retention, graduation rates and transition to employment
- Culture – re-awakening pride through festivals, art and craft, and other cultural events
- Leadership training – providing skills for the next generation of Indigenous leaders
These successes started in 2005 when experienced grantmakers such as the Reichstein Foundation, The Christensen Fund, and the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund changed their Indigenous grantmaking strategies from short to long-term.

The result of long-term investments can lead to breakthroughs in key areas including leadership ideas and organisations.

EDUCATION

In education, philanthropy is now leading the way and Government is following. Long-term investment in individuals and organisations has led to a greater understanding of how to engage young Indigenous people to improve educational outcomes.

Indigenous leaders like Dr Chris Sarra at the Stronger Smarter Institute, Brisbane, Jack Manning-Bancroft at the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Enterprise (AIME), Sydney, and Gerard Neesham at the Clontarf Foundation, Perth, have all benefited from this long-term investment approach.

Dr Sarra’s Stronger Smarter Institute in Caboolture, an outer suburb of Brisbane in Queensland, is working to turn the tide of low expectations in Indigenous education. Supported by a collaborative investment between the Telstra Foundation and the Sidney Myer Fund, Dr Sarra is achieving an enormous improvement in attendance, retention and graduation rates among primary school children. This in turn prepares them for high school.

This initiative has been so successful that the Federal Government now funds 200 new schools using Dr Sarra’s winning formula.

More details on the Stronger Smarter Institute, the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME), and the Clontarf Foundation are given in the case studies in Chapter Five.

CULTURAL FESTIVALS

Currently philanthropy provides most of the funds for Indigenous cultural festivals across Australia. These play an enormous role in Indigenous communities, providing employment and improving wellbeing, resilience and capacity.

Festivals such as The Dreaming in Queensland and the Garma Festival in the Northern Territory are shining examples of how festivals can reinvigorate Indigenous culture in urban/rural and remote locations. Building on this foundation, there is a strong call for other grantmakers to invest in Festivals.

An external evaluation funded by the Telstra Foundation into three major Cultural Festivals (Garma, The Dreaming and CrocFest on Thursday Island) show how they contribute to communities:
By increasing individual and community self-esteem

Boosting cultural confidence

Developing local leadership

Creating social, cultural and economic initiatives

Opening creative spaces for individual and collective opportunity

Providing a focus for Governments and other service providers to better engage community needs and aspirations

More details on the Cultural Festivals mentioned above are given in the case studies in Chapter Five.

LEADERSHIP

Initiatives such as the Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership and the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre’s Leadership Plus program have been initiated or backed by philanthropic grantmakers who want to support Indigenous leaders and their ideas.

These investments are strengthening Indigenous leadership across many sectors. With the support of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund (RTAF) and the Telstra Foundation, there is now an impressive alumni network of over 800 people who have been through these training programs.

Their aspirations are being nurtured and their dreams supported so they can assume leadership positions across the country.

Clearly, this number of emerging Indigenous leaders reflects a real momentum.

But it can’t stop here.

It requires ongoing investment and partnership from grantmakers willing to maintain this growth and work together to break the glass ceilings that have kept Indigenous people from realising their true potential and career success.

A PROBLEM SHARED IS A PROBLEM SOLVED

The research indicates that monetary exchange is only ever part of the story.

For Indigenous grantseekers, what is also important is an exchange of expertise and resources. Partnerships can provide invaluable in-kind assistance to projects through various ways – office space, access to pro bono services, volunteers, business and CEO mentoring, marketing and communications support.

Through the case studies in Chapter Five, we show how working together can increase the potential for lasting outcomes that are often even more beneficial than was initially anticipated.

WHAT GRANTSEEKERS WANT

The research found that the relationship between grantmakers and Indigenous groups or communities needs to be an equal one based on mutual respect.

Grantseekers are calling on grantmakers to work closely with them, and with each other, to develop ways of addressing the funding barriers.

The grantseeker research revealed that there are still considerable gaps in the knowledge and understanding of how philanthropy works, in addition to specific comments about the perceived weaknesses of the philanthropic process.

Grantseekers said they were keen to have grantmakers communicate what philanthropy is, as well as conveying the specifics about what their organisational values are and what they are trying to achieve through funding.

Many grantseekers also expressed the desire for a more collaborative and supportive relationship between philanthropy and Government funding.

Effective granting needs to be flexible on the ground, grantseekers said.

To assist in capacity building and community development it was desirable that supportive, long-term relationships between grantseekers and grantmakers be developed.
Both partners need to communicate with and support each other through ‘real’ people who can spend time with the grantseekers and who are also willing to become both culturally aware and competent.

Several grantseekers gave voice to the frustration they often felt when dealing with funders who do not understand what is involved, in ‘a proper partnership’.

According to one grantseeker,

“It’s a very difficult aspect to communicate to somebody that your leadership is expected here. This means that you don’t just give the money. You don’t just visit. It means that when the policy particulars get tough you’re there as well.”

Leadership might also entail the philanthropists exerting their influence - through social or political connections - to assist in solving a problem. “I don’t think many understand that,” said the same grantseeker. “I don’t think there’s much understanding of their potential leverage. They have great scope to do far more work influencing others than they do in just providing their own funding”.

HOW GRANTMAKERS CAN SHIFT SOCIAL PARADIGMS

There is a strong belief within the grantmaker community that philanthropy can make a real difference with Indigenous communities and can, in fact, do better than Government when it comes to empowering and working with communities to overcome disadvantage.

“We are trying to change the social fabric and the way Government and society engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,” says Jeff McMullen, CEO of the Ian Thorpe Fountain for Youth.

Among established funding groups this form of philanthropy is about more than just granting funds; it is about changing the paradigm of power.

The prospect of being involved in a partnership that could achieve real and lasting change can be a powerful motivator for grantmakers, but there are some obstacles that need to be overcome (see Chapter Four).

Many grantmakers who want to see positive outcomes and benefits from their investments are nevertheless challenged by the idea of a partnership. Some may see it as relinquishing control.

In fact it entails sharing power.

Veteran grantmakers recognise that successful partnerships are founded on interpersonal relations, sitting down with people and building a rapport. “The people serious about supporting Indigenous communities are aware of learning about cultural differences and ways of working. [They know] the hurdles and the disadvantages”, says Gillian Harrison, Northern Territory manager for Artsupport Australia.

KNOWING WHAT IS A WORTHY PROJECT

In deciding which organisations to support, grantmakers are encouraged to respond broadly to need and to avoid stereotypes.

Some philanthropic bodies take the view that projects in remote communities are somehow more deserving than those in cities and towns. Yet approximately one-third of Australia’s Indigenous population lives in urban areas and the success in funding urban projects is just as attainable.

Assumptions are also made that because an organisation is well known and flourishing, it does not need further funding. For example, this assumption may have prevented the Bangarra Dance Theatre, the only National Indigenous performing arts company in the country, from being able to attract a principal sponsor in recent years.
After five years of funding, primarily from philanthropy, KALNRMO has developed into a world class, independent Indigenous land management organisation with a diversified revenue stream, full management of its own lands and direction over the land priorities and research agenda.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between grantmaker and grantseeker is an exchange to which both bring significant value. This marks a new approach for some grantmakers and individual donors. But the research for The Guide illustrates how both sides benefit when there is better knowledge and an understanding of the two-way dynamic.

Working together has far greater potential to create lasting change with each side learning how to respond to setbacks and other problems.

"Investing in good ideas and good people, moving forward together through the challenges with each partner and learning from each other, will result in a partnership that has the best chance of producing a satisfying and uplifting result for all the stakeholders", says Tanya Hosch, a Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund director.

"We need to stop expecting short-term relationships to deliver what only a long-term relationship can produce."

MULTIPLIER EFFECTS

Another reason to fund is the multiplier effect.

This is when long-term investments produce unexpected outcomes which go beyond the initial reason to fund. In the 1990s, for example, a computer was gifted to the Kowanyama Aboriginal Land & Natural Resource Management Office (KALNRMO) in Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland.
CHAPTER FOUR

research findings:
SUMMARY: Using two sets of research that for the first time map Indigenous philanthropy in Australia, this chapter documents the views of Indigenous grantseekers and the extent of grantmaking. It looks at what is working and the obstacles that need to be overcome to ensure mutually beneficial partnerships.

HOW MUCH IS AUSTRALIA’S PHILANTHROPIC DOLLAR?

The research found that although there is an increasing willingness to support funding in Indigenous projects, the share of funds going to these projects remains low compared to the amount directed to other sectors.

While the total philanthropic ‘pie’ from trusts and foundations in Australia exceeds $1 billion each year, only a tiny fraction finds its way to Indigenous projects.

The 30 grantmakers surveyed for this Guide (all of them involved in Indigenous projects) reported a total spend of $261.2 million in 2009. Yet only eight per cent of this – or $19.8 million – was allocated to Indigenous philanthropy and only four of the organisations spend 100 per cent of their funds on Indigenous projects.

The top three Australian funding organisations supporting Indigenous people in 2009 were:

1. Lottery West which allocated 7 per cent of its budget, an amount of $5,640,000.

2. The Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund gave 100 percent: $1,800,000.

3. The Christensen Fund also gave 100 percent: $1,730,000.

The level of funding to Indigenous people and communities is under constant review. One third of the grantmakers report that they will increase Indigenous investment this year and a further fifty per cent say they will maintain the same level of funding. Four grantmakers indicated they would reduce Indigenous funding in 2010.

Overall, half of the grantmakers surveyed have been involved in Indigenous philanthropy for five or more years. Their trustees and staff have developed considerable expertise: they know what works and how to shape policy to support successful outcomes.

TABLE 1: INDIGENOUS SHARE OF PHILANTHROPIC MONEY GRANTED IN FY2009

- $19.8M for Indigenous philanthropy
- $241.4M for other sectors
## TABLE 2: PHILANTHROPIC MONEY GRANTED IN FY2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantmakers</th>
<th>Total Grants</th>
<th>AUS$ grants to Indigenous (FY2009)</th>
<th>% grants to Indigenous (FY2009)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Andyinc</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
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<td>ANZ Trustees *</td>
<td>$69,000,000</td>
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<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Balnaves Foundation</td>
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<td>Colonial Foundation</td>
<td>$6,400,000</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Foundation for Young Australians (FYA)**</td>
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<td>Goldman Sachs JB Were Foundation</td>
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<td>Ian Potter Foundation</td>
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<td>$750,000</td>
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<td>Lotterywest</td>
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<td>Macquarie Group Foundation</td>
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<td>$4,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund</td>
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<td>The Christensen Fund (NT)</td>
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<td>$1,730,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>WA Community Foundation</td>
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<td>Westpac Foundation</td>
<td>$1,300,000</td>
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<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Only 3 of 239 Trusts/PAFs can give to Indigenous projects.

** FYA is no longer a grantmaking organisation. Instead, it is an organisation that is now focused on creating the greatest possible impact for young Australians by delivering: influential research and evaluation; targeted advocacy and campaigning; demonstration projects; and brokering significant investment.

*** Between 15 to 20 of MCF’s sub funds have major interest in funding Indigenous projects and communities.

Notes: 30 grantmakers were included in this study; 29 approved use of this information publically.

Artsupport Australia, an initiative of the Australia Council for the Arts to grow cultural philanthropy, contributed to research for this study. Artsupport Australia plays a brokering and facilitating role with philanthropic trusts and foundations, PAFs and individual donors, as well as mentoring organisations to build their capacity to access philanthropic funds. In the year ending 30 June 2009, Artsupport Australia facilitated more than $10 million of philanthropic funding nationally including over $1.3 million to Indigenous arts.
### TABLE 3: TOP 10 GRANTMAKERS SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (IN DOLLARS) FY2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantmaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ian Potter Foundation</td>
<td>$13,000,000</td>
<td>8.26%</td>
<td>$1,080,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Foundation</td>
<td>$6,400,000</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>$640,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Thorpe Fountain for Youth</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ventures Australia</td>
<td>$3,400,000</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>$542,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4: TOP 10 GRANTMAKERS SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF GRANTS) FY2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantmaker</th>
<th>Total Grants</th>
<th>AUS$ Grants to Indigenous (FY2009)</th>
<th>% Grants to Indigenous (FY2009)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund</td>
<td>$1,800,000</td>
<td>$1,800,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christensen Fund</td>
<td>$1,730,000</td>
<td>$1,730,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Thorpe Fountain for Youth</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Foundation</td>
<td>$375,000</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary MacKillop Foundation</td>
<td>$460,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telstra Foundation (Community Development Fund)</td>
<td>$3,500,000</td>
<td>$1,250,000</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westpac Foundation</td>
<td>$1,300,000</td>
<td>$410,000</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey Wheel</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reichstein Foundation</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$228,000</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation for Young Australians (FYA)*</td>
<td>$1,300,000</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* FYA is no longer a grantmaking organisation. Instead, it is an organisation that is now focused on creating the greatest possible impact for young Australians by delivering: influential research and evaluation; targeted advocacy and campaigning; demonstration projects; and brokering significant investment.
TRENDS IN FUNDING: WHAT ATTRACTS THE TOP DOLLAR

While grants for education, health, economic activity, culture and the arts are still the most common, there are emerging trends in funding that are creating new opportunities for grantmakers.

A key trend is toward funding Aboriginal organisations, away from non-Indigenous institutions or organisations that deliver services or programs to Indigenous people.

Experienced grantmakers are moving away from ‘piecemeal’ project funding toward longer-term capacity building or community development funding, for example the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund and Telstra Foundation support of the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre.

In addition, grants for land management and return/connection to country, development programs for young people, traditional knowledge, bio-cultural diversity, political participation, innovation and supplementary funding to Government service provision are all emerging as exciting opportunities in areas that have previously been overlooked by philanthropy.

SHARING WHAT WE KNOW

A principal purpose of The Guide is to initiate a conversation among grantmakers.

Its aim is to encourage philanthropic organisations to be innovative when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Today, while many new foundations are saying they want to contribute to Indigenous communities, the reality is many do not know how.

THE GUIDE OFFERS ANSWERS.

- It shows the importance of sharing knowledge, not only between grantmaker and grantseeker, but also among other grantmakers.
- Philanthropists interviewed said that they could make a bigger difference by working more closely with each other, but are unsure how to do this.
- Too often philanthropic grantmakers are working in isolation, independently identifying groups and communities to support, and providing money to those who meet their specific funding criteria.
- They are not always sharing their experiences with the wider philanthropic community and consequently do not benefit from lessons previously learned by others.

“The success stories need to be shared. If we can focus on what is working, we’ll be doing our job,” says Genevieve Timmons, board member of the Inner North Community Foundation.

The Melbourne Community Foundation (MCF) is an example of donors coming together to share success stories. This has led to increased funds and new, much needed initiatives such as the Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership, a sub-fund of MCF.

“Four or five years ago, a small group of committed donors began sharing the successes and learning
from each other", says Trudy Wyse, grantmaking and community relations manager at MCF.

"Today grantmaking on these issues with Indigenous communities is a major priority for MCF and our donors".

Other examples include Philanthropy Australia’s Indigenous Affinity Group, who provide space for discussion and learning, and The Loddon Mallee Philanthropic Partnership, another positive case in point of a collaboration between several trusts.

The collaboration includes the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, the Reichstein Foundation, and the Department of Human Services, Mildura Aboriginal Corporation and Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative. The program aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities in the Loddon Mallee region through jointly funding a self-determination plan for the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation.

WHAT WORKS WELL IN INDIGENOUS PHILANTHROPY

Being knowledgeable is only ever part of the solution. For the strongest outcomes, other factors are required:

- Grantmakers who put in time in the preparatory phase of a project are more likely to get better outcomes sooner. This is because relationships take time to build and once trust and respect are established, positive results follow.

- Depending on the project and how quickly a rapport is established, it can take up to four to five years for grantmakers working with Indigenous communities to understand what works. Rather than viewing this as a deterrent, it is best understood as an integral part of the process.

- The research suggests that the most effective grantmaking supports Indigenous people whose ideas are community led and which are backed by organisations with strong governance in place.

- It also found that better outcomes are more frequently achieved as a result of funding organisations, rather than specific projects.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

The research indicates that although grantmakers are driven to collaborate and work more effectively with Indigenous communities, achieving this may be a challenge.

Grantmakers report it can be difficult to identify the organisations and leaders to support and they lack the time to invest in developing relationships required for a successful partnership.

Most grantmakers (or Foundations) do not have a large staff; often they are part-time and seldom are they specialists in Indigenous affairs.

Furthermore, the philanthropic sector has limited existing networks with Indigenous people and is constrained by a lack of internal resources. Yet inroads can be made.

The Woor-Dungin Project, in partnership with the Koorie Heritage Trust and the Reichstein Foundation, is an example of a groundbreaking collaborative project between grantseekers and grantmakers which aims to develop stronger connections between both sides.

The program builds the capacity of community members across Victoria to work with philanthropic trusts and foundations. It also builds the capacity of the philanthropic community to collaborate with grantseekers. (The Woor-Dungin Project was formally the ATSI Community and Philanthropy Partnership Program initiated by the graduates of a 2005 Indigenous Capacity Building program.)

Jason Eades, Executive Officer of the Koorie Heritage Trust, says a challenge is sourcing the funds for the part of the program that builds the capacity and linkages to communities for grantmakers: “We know this is needed, the grantmakers and grantseekers have identified this, but until now the philanthropic community is not investing in its own capacity to collaborate effectively”.

Inroads can be made through programs such as the Woor-Dungin Project, which provides a foundation through which grantmakers and Indigenous people can work together.

The collaboration includes the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, the Reichstein Foundation, and the Department of Human Services, Mildura Aboriginal Corporation and Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative. The program aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities in the Loddon Mallee region through jointly funding a self-determination plan for the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation.

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The research confirms the need for such an approach; grantmakers are calling for mechanisms and channels that can support collaboration that is ‘do-able’ with limited resources.

Foundations that are increasing their grant funds say they are doing so because they are having a positive impact: they are seeing demonstrated outcomes.

A leading example is the Clontarf Academies established in Western Australia to improve social and educational outcomes for Aboriginal boys and young men through football.

In 2005 Goldman Sachs JB Were provided $1.2 million in untied funds to enable the Clontarf Foundation to vastly expand its program.

“We were ready to back Clontarf’s judgement and, so long as there was transparency, we were happy for the funds to be used in the way the Foundation needed for growth”, says Christopher Thorn of Goldman Sachs. “We didn’t want them to fit an expectation of ours”.

Gerard Neesham, founder and CEO of Clontarf, says this freedom provided the catalyst for growth:

“Philanthropy is one way to step outside the squares created by Government, because those investing in social change can take greater risks, are not constrained by public policy limitations and can be more innovative,” says Aden Ridgeway, former Senator and now a director of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund.

Philanthropy can complement Government funding by investing in organisations, and by developing partnerships with individuals and organisations. The stringent reporting requirements of some Government departments can mean that, in practice, there are as many as twenty different acquittal processes required for each grant, each of them with different reporting criteria.

As the case of the Clontarf Foundation demonstrates, philanthropy offers great potential for organisations to build new relationships, develop fresh thinking and grow while still working with Government.

These are all crucial considerations for Indigenous grantseekers.

MANAGING RISK

A topic of extensive discussion by grantmakers who participated in the research was how to manage risk.

Many grantmakers say their role is to fund what is risky, and this can sometimes mean becoming involved with ideas, leaders or organisations that are untested.

More experienced grantmakers reported little or no risk associated with Indigenous grantmaking compared to funding other disadvantaged groups.

Generally, grantmakers manage or mitigate any risk, including issues of leadership burn out, governance, organisational capacity and community support, through the due diligence process.

Risk is perceived somewhat differently by both grantmakers and grantseekers.

Grantmakers’ concerns range from fear of money being spent unwisely, to a partnership not proceeding smoothly, to a project not being completed and lastly, to concerns about governance.

PHILANTHROPY AND GOVERNMENT FUNDING

We have already touched upon how philanthropy can do better than Government when working in Indigenous communities.

It is also important to understand how the two might on occasions interact or complement each other.

“We used this as seed money to start new Academies, which led to attracting more support from local communities, business and Government.”
While grantseekers often share similar concerns, they also fear not being able to complete projects because of insufficient funding (sometimes the result of lack of trust).

“I think they need to do more work to explain to people what their rules are about and why they’re important and why certain guidelines lead to better outcomes,” says one grantseeker.

Inspiring stories like Jack Manning-Bancroft’s entrepreneurial vision for mentoring Indigenous young people completing higher education and Dr Chris Sarra’s model for Indigenous education and teacher training in schools are just two examples of how taking risks can pay dividends.

Both of these projects were untested and funded early. It’s unlikely that either would have been funded by Government.

Many grantmakers acknowledge that one of the risks to the investment was their lack of knowledge. “The risk is increased when funders are specific about funding projects, when they won’t fund capacity building and infrastructure,” says Jill Reichstein, chair of the Reichstein Foundation.

Capacity building funds are a critical way to mitigate the risk, or perceived risk, of funding Indigenous groups.

Many funders said issues of governance, if they occur, can be addressed by reviewing the capacity of the organisation you want to support and providing funding to bridge the gaps.

“**Barriers and perceived risks are because of the knowledge gap of the philanthropist, not the lack of will.**”

— Alberto Furlan of the Ian Potter Foundation

**TWO-WAY LEARNING: THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING**

A recurring theme in the research is that grantseekers are keen for grantmakers to value what actually works in the community (which might be different from what works in other contexts) and to be willing to fund things that might not normally be funded in other sectors.

That means more than having goodwill; it means being willing to really listen. In the words of one grantseeker: “It’s a two way learning.”.

Listening means sitting down with community members and representatives to talk and to learn.

It takes time.

“We started to build trust by taking the time to get to know the organisation face-to-face and started a conversation with them which led to better applications,”

said Chris Wootton, grants executive at the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust.

“We have found that Indigenous organisations don’t tend to have an understanding of who we are, and so they weren’t sure if they could trust us.”
Personal contact between grantseeker and grantmaker was consistently identified as a preferred way of working, and a necessary means of developing the kind of communication that is essential to a successful partnership.

Many of the grantseekers interviewed said from personal experience that such contact was a major factor in achieving successful applications and outcomes.

Many had stories to tell of meetings with grantmakers who were unaware of relevant Indigenous cultural issues and unintentionally acted in an inappropriate way such as raising negative stereotypes that are portrayed in the media.

It was especially important in remote Aboriginal communities where, as one grantseeking interviewee expressed it, "It’s about going to those communities, sitting down, talking... It’s not until you go and sit down and meet face to face with these people, that’s when the process properly starts".

While the most commonly funded areas are arts, health and education, the research found that grantseekers would also welcome investment in activities that could help deliver economic development and long-term self-determination.

These include feasibility studies in the areas of economic development, infrastructure or biodiversity, keeping culture alive and, especially, grants that address building capacity within communities and organisations.

In particular, there is a need to increase Indigenous involvement at Board level, and improve accessibility and communication about available funding.

The research reveals that just seven out of 30 grantmakers have one or more Indigenous people on their boards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantmaker</th>
<th>Indigenous Person on the Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Foundation</td>
<td>2 of 5 board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary MacKillop Foundation</td>
<td>1 of 6 board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myer Foundation/Sidney Myer Fund</td>
<td>1 of 12 board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund</td>
<td>3 of 7 board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reichstein Foundation</td>
<td>1 of 6 board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telstra Foundation</td>
<td>1 of 8 board members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christensen Fund</td>
<td>3 of 10 board members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no shortage of corporate or Government funding. Philanthropy can help drive this huge opportunity by growing what is already being done well and not duplicating,”

Jeff McMullen of the Ian Thorpe Fountain for Youth.
Of the 188 board members and trustees of grantmaking organisations in the study, only 12 board members or 6 per cent are Indigenous people.

**TABLE 6: INDIGENOUS PERSONS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BOARD MEMBERS (2010)**

CONCLUSION

For more than a decade a small group of foundations and individuals in Australia has been investing in Indigenous communities.

In that time they have learned what works and how to shape policy to support successful outcomes for the mutual benefit of grantmakers and grantseekers.

It has been a journey of building trust, understanding how to develop and maintain relationships and, often, bridging a cultural and knowledge gap.

The overriding lesson from the research is that active engagement by grantmakers is essential to a successful partnership.

Jeff McMullen of Ian Thorpe’s Fountain for Youth, one of only four organisations in the study to spend 100 per cent of its funds on Indigenous projects, says: “Where there is active participation by the investor, the energy level is entirely different and likely to be sustained. If this is possible, there’s a new frontier for individuals, trusts and corporates”.

Ian McAdam and Clontarf Academy students from Alice Springs
CHAPTER FIVE

what is working: case studies
SUMMARY: The most exciting aspect of Indigenous grantmaking in Australia today is the large number of real-life success stories from across the country. The nine case studies presented in this chapter are grouped under categories that illustrate the many ways in which philanthropy provides key support to improve and transform the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Philanthropy has made a discernible difference in funding areas such as leadership, education, health, sport, professional associations, cultural festivals and arts and crafts. It has also helped build capacity in organisations and initiated partnerships with other grantmakers to ensure that successful organisations are funded sufficiently to build on their achievements.
Case Study 1: 
**Rumbalara Football and Netball Club (RFNC)**

**Working Together: A first-time partnership**

This is an example of a successful ‘first-time’ partnership between a sports community organisation and a major philanthropic foundation.

**INITIATIVE**

The Rumbalara Football and Netball Club (RFNC), is an Aboriginal community-owned and controlled sports and community development organisation based in Shepparton, in the Goulburn Valley, Victoria.

It is much more than just a sports club. The RFNC, which supports nine netball and four football teams each week in the Murray Football and Netball League, encourages its playing and social members to pursue their dreams through a range of community development initiatives across Aboriginal cultural identity, expression and celebration, leadership, education, health, employment and social inclusion (reconciliation).

RFNC is a significant leadership organisation within the broader community and plays a crucial role in making local services accessible, improving community self-esteem, and in encouraging and supporting individual members to realise their full potential.

**CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS**

To do its work, most of RFNC’s funding has come from Government agencies, with an additional mix of self-generated earnings and sponsorship from local businesses.

In the past, RFNC has also had small-scale engagement with a range of philanthropic organisations such as the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, and the Melbourne Community Foundation.

RFNC is an organisation which has steadily grown over many years and while it recognises its own potential, the challenge has been to grow its capacity and expand its funding base so that its future ability is more secure.

In 2007, the RFNC began a partnership with the Pratt Foundation, which has enabled them to better plan for the future, enhanced its capacity to make local services more accessible, and provided a stable platform from which to operate its sporting and service activities.

**OUTCOME**

After many years of providing services and leadership within the Goulburn Valley, the RFNC now operates in a more stable environment as a result of the partnership with the Pratt Foundation.

With the Pratt Foundation, says Paul Briggs, OAM, President of the RFNC, “We are in a partnership as equals. This creates a great sense of openness, trust and shared responsibility for delivering the outcomes. The underlying ‘feel’ is one where we, as the Aboriginal community, are in control and this is critical for community legitimacy and engagement. This fits with our perspective about community development, which is ‘community control’, ‘Government facilitation’ and ‘private and philanthropic partners’.”

According to Michael Bissell, CEO of the RFNC, the Pratt Foundation fundamentally understand the socio-economic circumstance of the Aboriginal community in the Goulburn Valley. “They have great clarity around the role of RFNC in community development in that context – they do not see us as just a sports club”, says Bissell. It is important to RFNC that the Pratt Foundation understands the entrenched challenges it faces, and has committed to work with them long term to deliver real change. The Foundation takes the time to investigate links through their networks for additional support and is always looking for opportunities to promote the partnership and the outcomes RFNC is looking for.
Case Study 1:
Rumbalara Football and Netball Club (RFNC)
Working Together: A first-time partnership

“Their perspective is to partner with our community without that partnership being a burden. While they require high standards of accountability they do not impose rigorous reporting needs,” says Bissell.

The relationship is maintained both formally and informally, with RFNC acknowledging the partnership at every opportunity. What the community values the most are the informal opportunities to meet with representatives from the Foundation and to invite them to events, whether in Melbourne or in Shepparton. Although this is the Club’s major relationship with the philanthropic sector it does not take up a lot of time on a daily or weekly basis. In contrast relationships with the Government sector “take up significantly more time due to the complex nature of contractual obligations and in particular the reporting requirements across agencies”, says Bissell.

In December 2009, the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club, was officially recognised for its efforts when VicHealth awarded it a Community Development award as part of its annual statewide health awards.

For more information about Rumbalara see:
www.rumba.org.au

Kira Windmar getting the game underway
**Case Study 2:**  
*Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre*  
*Small grants helping to build organisational capacity*

This illustrates how grantmakers are prepared to fund long-term and form partnerships, along with other funders, with the grantseeking organisation.

**INITIATIVE**

In 2001, the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre (AILC) was established as Australia’s first national centre providing leadership training for Indigenous people. It was intended from the start, that the AILC would initiate, plan and manage training programs.

**CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS**

In its first year of operation, it received a $1 million grant from Citigroup to enable it to offer leadership courses for Indigenous people. It received its funding after Corporate Good Works principals, Brian Babbington and Wendy McCarthy, encouraged Citigroup worldwide to invest in the leadership initiative.

While there is an ongoing relationship with Citigroup, managed by McCarthy and an internal Citigroup executive, the responsibility for the program rests with the internal AILC leadership.

The critical requirements for the future involve being able to sustain their current level of activity as well as develop new and innovative initiatives, which might also encourage other potential funders to form a collaborative partnership with the AILC.

**OUTCOMES**

As part of the programs, a two-year diploma course was established, as well as a two-week certificate course. Over 300 people took the initial courses. Their success has brought in new corporate and other funders as well as the ongoing support from Citigroup.

More recently in 2010, the AILC has been successful in creating an innovative partnership with the RTAF and the Telstra Foundation, to become principal founding partners, in the new Leadership Plus program.

This program is about bringing together the alumni network of some 800 Indigenous people who have done earlier leadership programs, to extend their skills and their networks.

Since its inception in 2001 the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre (AILC) has aimed to foster new Indigenous leadership at all levels. “The AILC is the only accredited provider for leadership training”, says AILC Chair, Tom Calma. “Students are from across Australia, from the private, public and community sectors and many are now leaders in their own right”. The Centre is committed to creating a strong Indigenous talent pool “so that increasing numbers of Indigenous people can take up roles in Australian workplaces”, says AILC CEO Rachelle Towart. “For leadership to be effective it needs to be exercised in all areas of life, not just in the Indigenous community alone but also in business, Government, churches, schools, sporting organisations and in the provision of community services”.

**THE WAY FORWARD: A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE**

The development of the AILC’s new Leadership Plus program illustrates a way forward in philanthropy. In 2009, the RTAF approached the AILC with the broad purpose of supporting further Indigenous leadership development. The AILC identified the development of their alumni network as the most promising way to expand Indigenous leadership capability. The RTAF worked with the AILC for over a year to grow this idea into a program, and then to jointly seek out other funding partners whose values were aligned with the vision of the AILC and the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund.

The Telstra Foundation became the other principal founding partner of Leadership Plus, which connects over 800 AILC alumni to extend their leadership skills, build leadership networks, and also research Indigenous leadership.
Case Study 2: 
Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre 
Small grants helping to build organisational capacity

“Working this way with the AILC has been very valuable”, says Simon Nish, a director of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund.

“Through this long collaboration with the AILC we have been able to bring our experience and networks to the table, gain a much better understanding of the values and culture of the AILC, and develop a well understood common purpose.”

Rachelle Towart describes the AILC’s relationship with the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund as “the most satisfactory partnership AILC has had with a philanthropic partner. When we approached other potential supporters with the support of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund, it made all the difference.

“The AILC would not function as effectively as it does without the in kind support of our philanthropic funders”, continues Towart. "Both the Telstra Foundation and the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund provide financial support, which is much needed, as well as in kind support. The impact of the funding is multiplied when they support us with their business skills and networks".

The AILC continues to offer a variety of leadership training to Indigenous people and to seek individual as well as corporate donations to fund the work. “Demand is high, but not all who want to participate are able to due to funding restrictions. Philanthropy can make a real difference to building the capacity of Indigenous leadership”, says Calma.

For more information see: www.indigenousleadership.org.au
Case Study 3: Kowanyama Aboriginal Land and Natural Resources
Small grants helping to build organisational capacity

This illustrates how a small grant can help build organisational capacity which in turn attracts more substantial support enabling the organisation to transform itself into a world-class land and cultural management body.

INITIATIVE

More than 1000 people live in Kowanyama, an Aboriginal community on the Gulf of Carpentaria in Far North Queensland, making it one of the largest communities on Cape York Peninsula.

Since the early 1990s, KALNRMO has managed more than 4,000 square kilometres of Kowanyama Aboriginal owned lands. It operates an assertive ‘cooperative management’ model, using community consultation and direction to ensure Aboriginal management of the natural and cultural resources of its traditional estate.

Aboriginal ‘self-governance’ is the founding principle of the agency’s operations which continues to take joint direction from its Aboriginal Council and other Traditional Land Owners of the region. Since the planning stage, the agency has been influenced strongly by an active and long lasting association with the Pacific Northwest fishing tribes of Washington State in the US that began in 1988.

Six years later, at a bush planning retreat with Elders and agency staff, operation of the office was established with a clear vision and thirteen principles. Located in the Mitchell River Delta, KALNRMO’s community development agenda includes programs in fisheries management, coast and waterways surveillance, tourism and visitor management, introduced weeds management, cultural landscape mapping, Native Title claims, and a groundbreaking negotiated national park co-management agreement with the State.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS

Over the past decade and longer, KALNRMO has witnessed enormous change and growth since its humble beginnings in 1990 - it epitomises the true meaning of from little things, big things grow.

Its critical requirements in the early years revolved around clear operational principles and the capacity to document and manage information in relation to the cultural estate of its people. As a consequence, a computer was gifted to the organisation and this was part of its first philanthropic grant in 1993.

In the early 1990’s Kowanyama featured in a brochure on Indigenous activities in Australia produced by Community Aid Abroad (CAA). In 2000 the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) provided the initial grant money to develop a project that evolved into the Kowanyama Wetlands Program of the Mitchell River Delta. This innovative program was the first cultural and biological mapping of the wetlands, important for bioregional planning and biodiversity conservation.

From the initial grant and subsequent monies received, KALNRMO were successful in 2005 in attracting major philanthropic funding from The Christensen Fund (TCF) to provide the internal capacity and resources to strengthen the Kowanyama Wetlands Program. Over US$200,000 was invested over two years (2010-2012) to support KALNRMO in continuing the Kowanyama Wetlands Program.

Its ongoing critical requirements are about maintaining a solid foundation from which to continue to do new and groundbreaking initiatives into the future.

The organisation also has a Human Resources Development policy that values staff and community social capital, recognising social capital as key to successful Aboriginal land management. The Kowanyama Ranger Service established in 1989 has become an integral part of the agency’s operations.
Case Study 3: Kowanyama Aboriginal Land and Natural Resources
Small grants helping to build organisational capacity

OUTCOMES

Today KALNRMO employs 17 staff including administration staff, rangers, manager, cultural heritage officer, coordinator and a Geographic Information Systems specialist. The organisation engages international experts to complement local management activities and the community agency’s ethic of Aboriginal governance of Aboriginal lands and waters. It has also now developed new revenue streams through the provision of land management services with clients such as Australian Quarantine Service, CSIRO, Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge Program and others. This new money has provided the resources for a Scholarship Fund to encourage the young people of Kowanyama to undertake further studies in natural resources management and prepare them as future leaders and land managers.

New income will also assist the sustainability of the agency through funding future operational costs, future employment of agency staff and the development of job opportunities for Kowanyama people. This is also part of Kowanyama’s own local initiatives to Close the Gap of Indigenous Australians’ disadvantage.

Following the production of a short documentary in 2009 featuring Kowanyama people’s perspective on climate change by the United Nations and University of Tokyo, The Christensen Fund support has also permitted staff training and development through travel to national and international climate change fora in Darwin, Gold Coast and Anchorage, Alaska. Universities of New South Wales and Melbourne have also assisted in making travel possible to some events.

“The grant money from The Christensen Fund gave us ownership,”

says Viv Sinnamon of KALNRMO. “It allowed us to have non-Government support. We were able to establish a technical advisory group and attract the independent expertise needed to complement existing local cultural knowledge and existing agency expertise in the provision of an effective decision support system.

“We have been able to strengthen ourselves so Kowanyama could say ‘this program is truly ours’.”

More recently Oxfam sponsorship and agency scholarship funds has allowed junior staff to train in human rights advocacy and diplomacy and funded learning experiences involving travel to New York, Timor Leste, and Sydney. A staff member also travelled as a youth delegate to the United Nations in 2009.

KALNRMO is currently fundraising $6 million for an Arts Culture and Research.

Through the initiatives of KALNRMO, the Kowanyama community is widely regarded as a leader and advocate in Indigenous land management in Australia. KALNRMO’s vision is to be a strong sustainable Aboriginal agency that maintains its core operations with a diverse range of supporters.

For more information see: www.ghostnets.com.au

KALNRMO rangers work with international experts.
Case Study 4: Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME)
Taking risks by backing an untested concept

This highlights how innovation in the early years can build the capacity of the mentoring organisation.

INITIATIVE

Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) partners university student volunteers in one-on-one weekly mentoring relationships with Indigenous high school students. The goal is to improve Year 10 and Year 12 completion and university admission rates. It is an example of an untested initiative created a few years ago in Sydney by a young Indigenous man, Jack Manning-Bancroft, when he was just 19 years of age. Manning-Bancroft is now the organisation’s CEO.

AIME also offers a significant opportunity for university students (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to gain invaluable experience working with Indigenous high school students. It provides an ideal base for university marketing and recruitment, and fosters long-term partnerships between universities and their local high schools.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS

AIME was supported in its early years by the Ian Thorpe Fountain for Youth and long term investor Social Ventures Australia (SVA) whose grant of $1 million was critical in helping AIME grow its own capacity and generate results. AIME has now attracted new support from the RTAF and Google.

“It’s a simple model that can be transferred across the nation”, says Manning-Bancroft. “SVA and our other philanthropic investors have helped us build the infrastructure we need to develop the potential to help make huge changes in Indigenous education.

“...We are lucky to have the support of companies and foundations are willing to give you the dollars needed and show the courage to back new leadership and new ideas to make sure we can continue to improve Year 12 completion rates, and uni admission rates for Indigenous kids across our country.”

This is an example of a range of grantmakers coming together in the early years of a project to back an untested concept: a one-on-one mentoring program of previously low-achieving Indigenous high-school students.

OUTCOME

In 2009, 73 per cent of Year 12 students in the program completed school compared with the NSW-wide benchmark of 60 per cent, and 38 per cent were admitted into university compared with the 1.25 per cent of Indigenous university participation rate nationally.

“AIME is action, and AIME works”, says Manning-Bancroft.

AIME is now seeking new partnerships with universities and the corporate sector. AIME’s staff, board, mentors, and supporters are now rolling out the Program around the country, and early indications show it is achieving results like no other Indigenous education initiative.

For more information see: www.aimementoring.com
Case Study 4: 
Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME)  
Taking risks by backing an untested concept

An AIME Mentee and their Mentor work together through an AIME Program session on campus at the University of Sydney.

An AIME Mentee discusses AIME Textbook tasks with their Mentor, who also participated in the AIME Program when they were in high school.
Case Study 5:  
The Clontarf Foundation  
Taking risks by backing an untested concept

Clontarf staff Ian McAdam and Charlie Maher with students from Centralian Middle School in Alice Springs, at Anzac Hill (2010).

Students from Years 7-12 at the Bairnsdale Clontarf Academy with Director Paul Carroll on camp at Cape Conron in Eastern Victoria (2010).
Case Study 5:  
The Clontarf Foundation  
Taking risks by backing an untested concept

This is an example of how a grantmaker devoting a large, untied investment in an organisation can trust it to develop its vision for improved educational engagement among Indigenous boys and young men.

INITIATIVE

The Clontarf Foundation was established in Western Australia in 2000 to improve the social and educational outcomes for young Aboriginal boys and men through Clontarf academies.

In 2002, Goldman Sachs JB Were conducted a major review of its grantmaking activities and, as a consequence, decided to focus its new efforts on a smaller number of more significant investments to increase the impact of its grant making.

Once it had decided to focus on disadvantaged youth, Goldman Sachs identified Clontarf as an organisation they could partner with that had the potential to ‘shift the dial’ in generating change and improving educational outcomes for Indigenous boys.

“We didn’t want them to fit an expectation of ours. We were ready to back Clontarf’s judgement and, so long as there was transparency, we were happy for the funds to be used in a way that Clontarf felt was needed to achieve their objective,” says Christopher Thorn, head of Philanthropy Services for Goldman Sachs JB Were.

In the first three years $1.2 million was provided ‘untied’ and this enabled Clontarf to seed new Academies and new ideas. By 2005, Clontarf had successfully expanded to four Academies and seen a six-fold increase in the number of male students attending school in locations where there is a Clontarf Academy.

Gerard Neesham, founder and chief executive officer of Clontarf, says this freedom provided the catalyst for growth: “We used this as seed money to start new Academies, which led to attracting more support from local communities, business and Government”.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS

The critical requirement for the Clontarf Foundation was to find a potential partner who was willing to commit to a long-term arrangement and back a concept that had not being widely tested or supported, and so long as there was transparency, support Clontarf in being the sponsor, creator and driver of its own ideas.

OUTCOMES

As a direct result of funding from Goldman Sachs JB Were, the Clontarf Foundation will have opened 35 Academies around Australia. Around 2,500 students are enrolled in schools in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Victoria in 2010. School attendance is approximately 80 per cent (up from 30 per cent in some locations) and retention term to term, year to year, is 90 per cent.

After school, three in four graduates of the program have transitioned to employment within six months and more than 75 per cent of graduates achieved full time employment within a year of graduation.

The relationship has further led to many unanticipated benefits on both sides. These include more than $1 million of additional financial support as a result of introductions to other grantmakers by Goldman Sachs JB Were, and partnerships with other schools and community organisations working in the Indigenous sector that Goldman Sachs JB Were have supported.

For more information see: www.clontarffoundation.com.au
Case Study 6: EON Edible Gardens
Community-led ideas backed by philanthropy

This is an example of how a practical program can exceed grantmaker’s expectations.

INITIATIVE

The Edible Gardens concept, started by the EON Foundation in Western Australia in 2007, grew out of EON’s existing programs for prevention of diabetes through improving nutrition. The concept is supported by the communities and aims to give local people, especially children, regular access to fresh fruit and vegetables, which they grow, harvest and make into meals.

EON Foundation ran its first pilot edible gardens project at the Djarindjin/Lombadina Catholic School in the Kimberley, where it had a long-standing relationship with the school (with 90 Aboriginal children from Kindergarten to Year 10) and community, which was experiencing many of the health problems, disrupted education, and social instability associated with remote communities.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS

The critical requirement for the seven communities involved in this project was to find a philanthropic partner willing to support what was important to their communities and schools, especially for their children.

“We don’t impose ourselves on communities, that is a proven failure”, says Caroline de Mori, founder and trustee of the EON Foundation. “EON discusses ideas with the elders of the community and with their agreement will commence a project. Community buy-in and ownership is essential to the longevity and success of anything we do with our community partners.”

It is an example of a simple but ‘do-able’ idea which has compounding positive effects in remote Indigenous communities in which it has been established.
Case Study 6:  
EON Edible Gardens  
Community-led ideas backed by philanthropy

OUTCOMES

The success of the pilot project led to the introduction of EON Edible Gardens in six other communities, with a significant expansion planned over coming years.

Now each of the seven school communities, have individual edible gardens and together they are reaping a multitude of outcomes.

While the official goal of the program is in tackling significant medical issues, such as diabetes, and improving healthy eating habits, the simple activity of gardening is leading to many other beneficial social outcomes. These include:

- Increasing children’s awareness of the role of certain foods in a healthy diet
- Encouraging children to reconnect with traditional culture and bush tucker through sharing traditional knowledge with local elders
- Greater social cohesion between families and the school and community
- Cross-generational education through health and well-being
- Learning about the environment and gardening

Together these work to build and maintain key pillars in community development.

For more information see: www.eon.org.au
Case Study 7:  
**Stronger Smarter Institute**  
*Funding education, collaboration between large grantmakers*

Sarra introduced a ‘strong and smart’ philosophy to reset expectations and beliefs for both students and teachers. The practical steps he took included:

- Engaging with the powerbrokers in the community - community council, Elders, parents - to help forge a mutually shared vision for the school.
- Children monitoring their own unexplained absences at class by explaining to the whole school at assembly. Every Friday, the class with the fewest absences won free ice blocks from the tuckshop.
- Expressing individual and collective pride by introducing a school motto, uniform, and song. Students were also assigned to keep different areas of the school tidy and litter free.
- Altering the school maintenance contract so local Aboriginal people could be engaged to provide another set of role models apart from teachers and aides.
- Making an Aboriginal studies program integral to the curriculum for two hours a week for students from Preschool to Year 7, with studies focussing on the local area.

The Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund supported Sarra’s early work at the Institute with some seed funding.

Encouraged by the successful outcomes, the Telstra Foundation was moved to support the next step of taking this philosophy and practice to educators and principals around Australia, as the stronger smarter philosophy, and this still continues today.

In 2007, the Telstra Foundation extended its support for the Stronger Smarter Institute and with the Sidney Myer Fund collaborated to provide three years funding of $2,425,000.

In 2010 the Telstra Foundation committed to a further $1,205,000 funding over three years. The Sidney Myer Fund has also agreed to another two years of funding.

This shows how a small experiment in education in Queensland became a highly successful national program with philanthropic support from two major grantmakers, and has now led to significant Government funding.

INITIATIVE

Led by Dr Chris Sarra, the Stronger Smarter Institute, located at the QUT, Brisbane, is transforming how teachers and principals in Indigenous schools think about educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

Dr Sarra began his work in 2005 with 250 students at Cherbourg, formerly known as Barambah, which is Queensland’s third largest Aboriginal community.

When he arrived at the school, academic performance was extremely poor.

“The Year 7 students left for high school...like lambs to the slaughter, with no idea about how to conduct themselves in a regular classroom and nowhere near the personal skills or the literacy and numeracy skills to survive”, says Sarra. “Most would drop out before the end of year 8 and disappear into the oblivion of society”.

![Young students at computers, Derby District High School, Derby, WA.](image-url)
Case Study 7:  
**Stronger Smarter Institute**  
**Funding education, collaboration between large grantmakers**

**CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS**

The critical requirements really relied upon belief and trust that something so simple could be so effective in ways unimagined. This is particularly the case when the idea is untested and requires philanthropists to back individuals like Dr Chris Sarra, as much as the ideas that they are promoting.

It also demonstrates that risk is about jumping across that canyon of doubt, and once the idea is backed and proven, Governments are also more likely to play their part in expanding the impact of the original initiative.

**OUTCOMES**

Student attendance in school increased from 63 per cent to 94 per cent in the first year.

“As a result of our work, kids are increasingly proud to be Aborigines. They are willing to attend school more regularly and have better results,” says Sarra.

The impact of the Institute has been formidable, both among state and federal policy makers, and community groups. By July 2010, 542 schools were participating in its programs.

In September 2009, the Federal Government acknowledged the success of the project by announcing $16.4 million to fund the next stage of the vision, the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities. This is a national network of ‘learning communities’ that will support and develop leaders in schools and will challenge other schools around them to develop higher expectations for Indigenous students.

There will be 60 community hubs and 240 affiliated schools engaged in this very successful initiative.

For more information see:  
[www.strongersmarter.qut.edu.au](http://www.strongersmarter.qut.edu.au)

“Part of the challenge for Governments is not creating new bureaucracies but identifying ways of utilising the well honed work of existing best leadership practice such as the Stronger Smarter leadership program. The notion of sustained high expectations can be strengthened by Governments adopting the Stronger Smarter philosophies, which can ensure the financial and creative sustainability of the Institute beyond the period of philanthropic support.”

Dr Chris Sarra, the Stronger Smarter Institute
This case study illustrates how effective evaluation can build an evidence base to continue funding a particular issue.

INITIATIVE

From 2006 to 2009 the Telstra Foundation funded three cultural festivals and associated activities: Crocfest on Thursday Island; the linked youth media project in Aurukun at Garma in Arnhem Land; and, The Dreaming in Woodford, Queensland.

To build an evidence base for the philanthropic sector, the Telstra Foundation funded Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) to conduct an evaluation of these Indigenous Festivals and their link to community wellbeing.

The evaluation found the Indigenous festivals sector in Australia is a dynamic and rapidly growing component in the Australian Indigenous arts, culture and community development landscape. This cultural dynamism is broadly consistent with Indigenous festivals developing in similar jurisdictions internationally, but as in other areas of Indigenous policy, is less clearly supported in Australia. It also found the sector is at a crucial stage of development with the emergence of outstanding examples of best practice in a general context of institutional instability, lack of sectoral coordination and structural vulnerability.

Governments have generally failed to recognise the enormous value leveraged from the sector, resulting in mostly insecure funding supplemented by the philanthropic sector.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS

While there is always a need to ensure that the funding base for such initiatives is sound and sustainable, this case study demonstrates how philanthropists can lead by undertaking evaluation, building the knowledge-base, and highlighting the positive effects of such initiatives within Indigenous communities.

The importance of culture and arts for Indigenous people cannot be underestimated particularly where it is not always easy to measure and quantify the benefits.

OUTCOMES

The evaluation of the three initiatives found there were specific, measurable benefits, as well as more intangible positive benefits for individuals from these festivals. These include the following:

- The youth multimedia program at Garma resulted in two scholarships being offered to Yolngu young people to undertake tertiary level film courses;
- Short-term increase in school attendance, motivation and self-esteem of students in Aurukun as a result of the Crocfest program and related multimedia training, including the creation of a permanent media record of those achievements;
- The experience of cultural employment for performers at The Dreaming, and immediate exposure to an international arts market.

These festivals also attract positive local, national and even international media coverage which is an antidote to the negative coverage that so many communities receive.

“The Telstra Foundation understands the importance of celebrating, maintaining and strengthening Indigenous culture as a key strategy in its support of Indigenous community development. Community festivals are an important way to do this”, says Telstra Foundation National Manager Georgia Symmons.

“This research shows how festivals contribute to increasing Indigenous community wellbeing and strengthening capacity and resilience.

“If you are looking for ways to improve individual self-esteem, connections within the community, cultural confidence and local leadership opportunities then festivals are a real vehicle for this to occur.”
Case Study 8:  
Cultural Festivals
Evidence base for future funding – support for cultural festivals

For more information about Telstra’s Indigenous programs see: www.telstrafoundation.com.au
Case Study 9:  
Tjanpi Desert Weaver  
Evidence base for triennial funding

Tjanpi Weavers from Blackstone Community with the Telstra Indigenous Art Award Winning Tjanpi Toyota, 2005, ©Tjanpi Desert Weavers.

An example of triennial money from a private foundation enabling this desert arts organisation to thrive.

INITIATIVE

Tjanpi Desert Weavers, is an arts and social enterprise of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women’s Council. This is a resource, support and advocacy organisation based in Alice Springs, servicing Anangu and Yamangu (Aboriginal) women, who share strong cultural and family affiliations in a region covering 350,000 square kilometres of the remote tri-State cross-border area of Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

The Tjanpi – meaning ‘dry grass’ – program began in 1995 as a series of basket-weaving workshops in Papulankutja (WA). It was initiated by the NPY Women’s Council in response to Anangu women wanting employment in their homelands. Weaving skills were quickly shared with relations in neighbouring communities, and basket-making spread across the NPY Lands and beyond.

The essential structural – and cultural – component of the baskets, and the sculptures that began to be made three years later, is desert grasses: minarri, wangurnu and ilintji. While out collecting grass, women take time to hunt, gather food, visit sacred sites and teach their children about country.

At its core, Tjanpi is about family and community.

The Tjanpi family is now a wide-reaching network of over 400 mothers, daughters, aunties, sisters and grandmothers whose shared stories, skills and experiences are the bloodline of the desert weaving phenomenon.
**Case Study 9: Tjanpi Desert Weaver**

**Evidence base for triennial funding**

**CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS**

The critical requirements for an initiative of this sort is in being able to recognise the value of culture and arts, and the important role that women play in the lives of Indigenous communities.

This particular project has had profound effects by playing to the strengths and resilience of women, and their traditional leadership roles within family, clan and community.

**OUTCOMES**

In 2005 a group of twenty Ngaanyatjarra Tjanpi weavers won the major prize at the 22nd Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award, with the Tjanpi Toyota. This is a life-size model of a Toyota car woven from desert grasses.

The much loved, admired and respected work shows all the hallmarks of becoming an iconic piece of Australian art. It is a testament to the wit, resourcefulness and creativity of Tjanpi weavers.

This major award alerted the national and international arts industry to the Tjanpi weaving phenomenon which now works with artists from 28 remote desert communities and creates employment for Indigenous women.

In 2007 the Northern Territory Office of Artsupport Australia assisted Tjanpi in sourcing funds to support its growing cultural and artistic program, including development of a book documenting the innovative Tjanpi weaving phenomenon.

Gillian Harrison, NT Manager of Artsupport Australia, also worked with Tjanpi staff to submit an application to philanthropists and Tjanpi succeeded in receiving substantial financial support over three years from the Balnaves Foundation.

"It was fantastic to secure this triennial project money," says Karin Riederer, then manager of Tjanpi Desert Weavers. "It means we have a much greater capacity to meet the artists’ desire for creative and technical skills development opportunities."

The touchstone of building and maintaining this partnership was clear communication. "Key learnings included the realisation that clear articulation of our objectives and requirements as a philanthropic fund is imperative", says Alexandra Honor, a Trustee of the Balnaves Foundation. "But this needs to be tempered with the recognition and appreciation of the significant constraints which organisations, such as Tjanpi, function within". Moreover, it is important, says Honor, that for the relationship between both organisations to develop soundly, that this 'positioning' is done prior to granting, “allowing for a sustained and productive commitment despite difficulties that may arise”.

The money has been used to support workshops in remote locations to bring together non-Indigenous fibre artists and the Tjanpi artists to stimulate an artistic dialogue. The work produced in these workshops has developed into an art exhibition ‘Kura Alala’, which is touring nationally. This initiative, together with the work on the book, has helped to further build Tjanpi’s unique profile in the art industry, nationally and internationally.

For more information see: [www.tjanpi.com.au](http://www.tjanpi.com.au)
CONCLUSION

These case studies provide a rich and inspiring array of real-life stories from across Australia. The key characteristics and attributes include:

- Indigenous-run and/or owned – this is particularly important if we want community ‘buy-in’.

- Appropriate technology – simple enough to be sustainable yet powerful enough to be effective.

- Project Scale – give thought to where innovative projects might lead or whether it can be ‘scaled-up’ with Government support.

- Funding – provide funding that is reliable and long-term.

- Risk – taking risks has its own rewards.

- Collaboration – work with others can produce bigger and better results.

- Leadership – back people with great ideas.

In short, the case studies are a call to action, encouraging grantmakers to think big and to take risks, knowing that the greatest rewards are when bold ideas get the backing they need to succeed.

“It’s good to go and talk to the senior elders and the traditional owners whenever you get an opportunity and it’s - you know - you’ve got to put aside that adage of I’ve got to be here by this time or that time because you’ve got to work on the community’s times and when people are ready to meet with you, they’ll meet with you.”

- Grantseeker interviewee.

Eunice Porter surrounded with Tjanpi Minyma at Warakurna Sorry Camp Workshop 2010. ©Tjanpi Desert Weavers.
Eunice Porter surrounded with Tjanpi Minyma at Warakurna Sorry Camp Workshop 2010. ©Tjanpi Desert Weavers.
what you can do:
SUMMARY: This chapter provides a practical, hands-on guide to become a successful grantmaker to Indigenous people.

FIRST YOU LEARN

Just as grantseekers need to research the organisation they are seeking funds from, to understand its guidelines, address its criteria and fulfil all other requirements, so the grantmaker needs to research and understand the context of the Indigenous community or organisation that is seeking funding.

The first and perhaps the most important step is for you as a grantmaker to acquaint yourself with the culture and history of the Indigenous people you intend to work with. (This is often described as developing ‘cultural competence’.)

This means getting to understand their history from a cultural, sociological and psychological perspective, the processes that inform decision-making in Indigenous communities and learning basic courtesies and rules that will ensure your interactions are meaningful and productive.

It may entail dealing with the following issues: general cultural awareness, community access, Indigenous engagement and protocols, and community politics.

Cultural awareness means recognising that there are certain protocols that need to be researched, understood and practised, and that these can vary from community to community.

You will find that this is a lifelong path of learning and enrichment.

You need to get to know the community’s leadership, to learn about the support the organisation or project has in the community and whether it has developed partnerships with other organisations.

Such relationships are best developed and nurtured through face-to-face contact, as this builds trust. This is one of the most important pre-requisites for a successful relationship.

“If grantmakers take the time to participate in an effective cultural awareness training program, they will develop a greater appreciation for the beauty, richness and diversity of Indigenous peoples, societies and cultures. This will increase the value of their philanthropic investments,”

says Grant Sarra a leading consultant in cultural awareness.

“It will also help to develop a more detailed understanding and appreciation of the very real and complex challenges faced by Indigenous peoples throughout Australia.”

This type of knowledge, says Sarra, will mean grantmakers will be in a better position to make informed decisions for social return.

There are plenty of resources available to help grantmakers develop cultural competence. General advice and a list of resources is provided by Reconciliation Australia.

www.reconciliation.org.au

THE NEED FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Improving your own capacity to be able to assess in real and practical ways the effectiveness of your engagement is paramount.
Grantmakers committed to working with Indigenous people have an obligation to improve their own practices.

The ideal approach is to learn from other organisations with pre-existing relationships with Indigenous organisations or from brokering organisations.

It is important to note that a strong relationship with one or two individuals in a community does not necessarily mean that this translates an entire community; there will always be a range of expectations to consider.

**Community Entry:** You will need to research the particular community you propose visiting. It is important to know the history of the place, be it urban, regional or in a remote location.

Most communities have websites you can explore, and there are many public sources of information on most towns, and other locations. You will need to take into account issues such as whether the community was once a mission, whether people were removed from that community, whether the people’s land rights have been recognised and other relevant factors.

In addition, when dealing with remote communities, no amount of Western style engagement – boardroom meetings in the city, phone-calls, teleconferences, emails – is going to substitute for face-to-face sitting down and talking – and, crucially, listening.

Knowledge of the particular place is also important and necessary. For instance,

“If they’re going up to the north-west of the Kimberley, they need to know that decisions are made after dark,”

said one participant in the grantseeker research.

Above all, it is essential that you set aside city-based, formal schedules and notions of time, and be willing to devote as much as time as possible to just engaging with people.

In some instances, engagement may happen quickly; in others, it may require time and patience.

While Aboriginal communities are experienced in engaging with non-Aboriginal individuals and groups, it is also necessary to be aware that there can be different levels of experience among different groups – even within the same community.

*The Politics of Indigenous communities* is not something that you, as a grantmaker, should get involved with, but nor should it discourage you.

The research suggested that you enter communities respectfully and ask to talk to a community-nominated representative who has knowledge of the project design and desired outcomes. “There’s always politics, but that’s just the reality”, said one grantseeker. “How you go about it is by letting the community decide”.

**Engagement** describes the relationships between you the grantmaker (or your organisation) and Indigenous grantseekers. The participants in the grantseeker research acknowledged that this can sometimes be difficult – for both sides.

Grantmakers need to be wary of tokenism and stereotyping and be open to listening to advice from a wide range of people in the community. At the same time, as one of the grantseekers put it: “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities could do with training in philanthropic engagement”.

**ENABLING COMMUNITIES AND OTHER INDIGENOUS GRANTSEEKERS**

In the research, Indigenous grantseekers identified communications and accessibility as the two main barriers to successful engagement with grantmakers.

People in rural and remote locations are particularly disadvantaged when it comes to knowing what philanthropic funds might be available. Grantmakers should be aware of the difficulties remote areas often have in accessing this information and consider making direct contact with community organisations in these locations.

Grantseekers require clear information and communication about available funding. Specifically, they need to be find out what philanthropic funds are available, the timing of grant rounds and basic eligibility criteria.
Often, grantseekers stumble upon information about philanthropic grants by accident or by word of mouth. A more systematic and transparent means of sharing this basic information would avoid a lot of frustration and time wasting. This would work both ways and enable grantmakers to become aware of Indigenous grantseekers who may meet the criteria for their funding needs.

Grantmakers need to be clear about what that they are interested in funding, especially if their interests are more specific than their guidelines imply or state.

Grantmakers will need to take into account that for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, regardless of where they live, English is not the first – or even the second or third – language.

In these circumstances, marketing strategies in major Indigenous languages or using other means of communication, such as radio and posters, could be useful in promotion.

Having a presence at Indigenous community events such as NAIDOC week festivals is another way of disseminating information. It is important to remember, however, that many Indigenous grantseekers are based in urban areas and are just as deserving of having their projects considered for funding as those in remote locations.

SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS

Grantseekers also state that although philanthropic processes are much simpler and more accessible than the Governments’, the processes are still quite daunting.

They ask that information about eligibility, and the application and reporting processes for philanthropic grants, be made simpler and easier to access.

Grantseekers report that applying for grants is an ‘energy sink’ and an emotionally draining experience. There is a tremendous amount of paperwork required and if a project is not funded, this increases the frustration. “You don’t get a lot of feedback as to why you didn’t get it”, said one grantseeker. Another participant urged funders to be more ‘upfront’ about what they can and cannot do.

PICK UP THE PHONE

If philanthropic application processes could be simplified, this would ease pressure on grantseekers.

One grantseeker suggested that there be more communication by phone in advance of submitting an application: “If you’ve got doubts, just ring them up and say does my project suit? So you’re not wasting a lot of time putting together a fabulous application only to find that they don’t really fund that area”.

Some grantseekers expressed annoyance that when they tried to speed-up the process in this way, their calls were not returned.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS

When there is a commitment to grant long-term, there are better outcomes.

Although short-term funding can address particular needs, for example, funding travel, buying a piece of equipment or ensuring that a specific short-term project can proceed, one-year grants are often not enough to make a difference.

Philanthropists should be committing to grant cycles of three years or, depending on the program, even five to 10 years.

As several of the case studies in the previous chapter demonstrated, longer granting cycles can help develop more realistic expectations about results. With a longer-term project, the grantmaker can proceed slowly, adjust expectations, and let the organisation and people being funded focus on attaining their project’s mission and goals.

CONCLUSION

If grantmakers follow the principles and advice in this chapter they will learn invaluable lessons in how to engage with Indigenous communities and how to initiate enduring and productive partnerships with Indigenous people.
CHAPTER SEVEN

changing the landscape:
ideas for the future
SUMMARY: Changing the way we think about Indigenous philanthropy is crucial for future success. Philanthropists are only one part of the equation. It is essential for Governments to think differently about how to deliver funds to Indigenous communities and how to unlock access to finance. The old ways are no longer working. This chapter explores various ideas for boosting investment in Indigenous communities with innovative approaches such as tax credits and the rapidly growing concept of impact investing.

PHILANTHROPY TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT POLICY

“Aboriginal organisations have to have status in the markets to alter the power dynamic,”

says Aden Ridgeway who gives the example of the Government’s rhetoric about Closing the Gap.

“While this is very powerful, there are no incentives in place to make it actually happen. We have a new slogan, and a new framework. But everything else is still the same.”

Recent trends indicate that grantmakers will increasingly affect Government policy, using their influence (which often arises from their market power and financial assets) to promote social change and to expand their role as advocates on behalf of, and with, Indigenous communities.

Philanthropy is one of many players in the political scene who influence Government policy on a micro and macro level. On a micro level it disburses funds to improve the capacity of organisations.

It also supports Indigenous leaders who are working for change and whose successful programs, such as Stronger, Smarter Learning can shape Government policy.

At the macro level, fundamental new policy ideas are needed to drive social investment in the form of capital into Indigenous communities.

It is in this area that the philanthropic sector could affect huge change by collectively identifying and lobbying for policy changes. This in turn would dramatically increase resources from the private sector into Indigenous community development.

There are several ways this could be done:

- Initiatives under the tax system
- By Government guaranteeing or underwriting funding arrangements initiated by private donors.
- For instance, a tax credit scheme might be an effective means of providing incentives for grantmakers, including high net worth individuals, to align their investment strategies with grantmaking. This would create opportunities for the philanthropic sector to use a greater proportion of its financial assets for social change.

TAX INCENTIVES FOR SOCIAL INVESTMENT

In the United States tax credits have long been used effectively to develop community development finance.

In early 2010 US President Barack Obama announced a significant increase in funding to the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program which supports private investment into disadvantaged communities through the use of tax credits.

Since its inception in 2000 the NMTC has supported some US$26 billion of investments, into approved community developments. In announcing a $5 billion increase to the program, President Obama noted that, “every $1 of foregone tax revenue under the NMTC leverages about $12 of private investment in distressed communities”.

The tax credit program complements a traditional community grants program run by the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund, part of the US Treasury. The fund is designed to promote access to capital and local economic growth in urban and rural low-income communities across the US.
The CDFI has a social purpose. Its aim is to deliver wealth creation and asset building into communities that are most disadvantaged or under served. This is achieved by channelling investment into these communities; building, managing and making the best use of community-owned assets; and supporting people to get access to the capital needed to develop their assets as a pathway out of poverty. Although they might resemble banks or investment companies, what distinguishes CDFIs in the market is their social purpose. CDFIs have been used to provide capital and finance for economic development into Native American communities.

For more information see: www.cdfifund.gov

In Australia, a similar approach could assist the development of a Community Development Finance industry.

Tax incentives could provide significant opportunities for Indigenous communities to develop enterprises or businesses that have a social objective.

It would allow Indigenous organisations to access a range of capital to diversify revenue streams, and thus move away from grants as the predominant funding channel.

Such capital could be in the form of start-up or seed capital, fixed asset capital (for equipment), working capital to deal with cash flow, and growth and development capital.

At present, raising any kind of capital is very difficult for Indigenous people and organisations, and this prevents them from developing economic activities to benefit their communities.

**IMPACT INVESTING**

New forms of philanthropy are emerging around the world, which are fundamentally changing the relationship involved in the current practice of granting funds.

These are also likely to develop in Australia in the near future: social investment, values based investment, creative capitalism and impact investing are all terms used to describe these new forms of funding that are gaining momentum in other countries among foundations, corporations, and high net worth individuals.

The critical difference with these new forms of funding is that they are loans, not grants.

“In the future philanthropy will work toward greater support of Indigenous communities and funding will increase. There is a great deal to be done and the cultural divide is huge - philanthropy can only offer a small piece in this but this piece will be increasingly more potent, more effective.”

— Tanya Hosch director of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund
They are designed to empower their recipients, and to encourage them to see themselves as businesses, in ways that a grant recipient cannot.

The transformative effect of micro-credit loans to impoverished entrepreneurs in developing countries is a comparison worth making.

‘Impact investing’ is the term used to describe placing capital in organisations that generate social and/or environmental good and return at least nominal principal to the investor.

The purpose of such investing is to place capital with organisations that can provide solutions on a scale that purely philanthropic grantmaking cannot reach.

Impact investing is still in its nascent stage in Australia.

Over the next decade it is likely to provide grantmakers within the philanthropic sector with a range of investment opportunities both domestically and internationally with Indigenous communities and businesses becoming major benefactors.

The Global Impact Investing Network and the Monitor Institute predict the rise of impact investing as this market develops.

**COLLABORATIVE FUNDING**

Collaboration between grantmakers is another trend that is likely to accelerate in Australia if overseas experience is any guide.

In Australia, there is a lack of formal infrastructure to support collaborative efforts between grantmakers, yet working together could increase the overall affect of giving as shown by the Loddon Mallee Philanthropy Partnership and the Melbourne Community Foundation’s donor circle.

It will, however, mean working differently and this will present challenges to foundations which are typically set up as vehicles for individual grantmaking and who, like most individual givers, have long operated in relative isolation.

There is merit in exploring ideas to support more collaboration.

One idea is for groups of grantmakers and grantseekers to come together to create an annual ‘market day’ to kick-start new conversations between grantmakers and grantseekers. This market day could initiate more investment collaboratively in areas of opportunity.

Alternatively, affinity groups could evolve naturally into a funder collaborative, a formalised structure that allows participating grantmakers, including individual donors to pool funds, develop joint strategies, and collaborate to achieve outcomes that they couldn’t achieve on their own.

This could become usual practice with all the attendant benefits of sharing resources and experience if affinity groups saw their current activity as a foundation worth building on.

An Indigenous funder collaborative would need to actively engage Indigenous people to ensure success. Philanthropy Australia’s Indigenous Affinity Group was created as a way to bring together foundations in Melbourne and Sydney to meet, discuss work, and share experiences, but not necessarily to act together.

Perhaps there is scope for this group to generate a funder collaborative.

For more information about Philanthropy Australia go to: [www.philanthropy.org.au](http://www.philanthropy.org.au)

In the US, funding networks have been formalised or new intermediaries created to facilitate these connections.

For instance, Funders’ Collaborative for Strong Latino Communities launched by Hispanics in Philanthropy in 2002. This US$16.5 million grantmaking initiative consists of more than 119 local, national, and transnational funders and corporations in 15 sites across the U.S. and Latin America.

The Funders’ Collaborative provides grants to small-to-medium-size Latino non-profit organizations in an effort to develop the infrastructure of the Latino non-profit sector and cultivate the next generation of Latino philanthropic leadership.

For more information go to: [www.hiponline.org](http://www.hiponline.org)
With this sort of initiative in mind, the potential benefits of an Indigenous Funders Collaborative could be to:

- expand the financial resources available to Indigenous grantseekers
- promote funder learning
- build knowledge and exchange between grantseekers and grantmakers
- provide neutral space for discussion of issues and ideas
- foster new linkages and capacities
- create innovations in the grantmaking sector and beyond
- enable streamlined and shared evaluation and reporting frameworks

Collaboratives can also coordinate grantmaking. Whether additional dollars are generated or not, collaboratives can provide a mechanism through which existing grantmaking across different foundations is better coordinated or focused.

This is already happening with the RTAF/Telstra Foundation collaboration with AILC in the area of Indigenous leadership.

There is scope for collaborations around other issues, for instance improving girls’ school retention rates. The assumption is that such coordination leads to either increased efficiency or to greater impact.

In Victoria, the Reichstein Foundation has brought together funders on a range of issues and initiatives. Formalising this collaborative effort, and expanding it to other states, could be an important next step for grantmakers working in this sector.

In Australia, the challenge for the sector is to find a structure, formal or informal, that can support collaborative effort across the country. This has the potential to increase human resources within foundations, so they do not become a resource drain.

Although there are many issues to consider, including the impact on individual program officers, the time-consuming nature and potentially inefficient nature of the coordination required, the rewards could be worthwhile.

**PROJECT MARKETPLACE**

Another funding strategy is to apply the work of the Alaska Federation on Natives’ initiative Alaska Marketplace to philanthropy.

This is a competition in which aspiring Indigenous entrepreneurs pitch their business ideas to a panel of judges in the hope of winning seed money and twelve months of business mentoring, as well as access to experts in the legal, accounting, marketing, information technology and human resources fields.

Most of the money is donated by the private sector and the object of the marketplace, which is based on a World Bank model for alleviating rural poverty, is to encourage disadvantaged people to develop business skills.

In 2006, more than 170 entrepreneurs submitted business ideas to the first-ever Alaska Marketplace, which saw an initial award pool of US$250,000 which more than doubled to US$500,000 due to a surprise, last-minute donation from BP.

Twenty-one applicants were selected and received awards ranging from US$8,000 to US$50,000 to start their businesses. The community investments were increased further for the second year when more than US$1 million was raised from the original and new corporate donors.

All finalists enhanced their knowledge and business skills, and top candidates left the marketplace with the resources and investments to launch new businesses.

Veronica Slajer, project director for the first Alaska Marketplace says “Before the creation of the Alaska Marketplace, rural Alaska entrepreneurs had little guidance and few funding possibilities for many
business ideas that could capitalise on unique rural opportunities for harnessing local resources, meeting customer demands, and creating sustainable jobs. Traditional business grant programs were encumbered with many restrictions. Now, with the Marketplace’s competitive process, mentorship practices and grant awards for the best ideas, a path to success has been established*.

Four years and four marketplaces later, hundreds of Alaska’s Indigenous peoples have participated and the benefits have multiplied.

The idea driving the Alaska Marketplace could be adapted to fit the Australian philanthropic landscape.

For more information on the marketplace concept go to:

www.alaskamarketplace.org

THE GENDER LENS

Traditionally philanthropic grantmaking has tended to be ‘gender blind’ with an unconscious bias towards granting to projects that mostly benefitted men and boys. Today, philanthropy is increasingly applying the ‘gender lens’ to grantmaking, to ensure that gender is considered and issues of gender inequality are addressed. The outcome is increasingly the focus on the needs of women and girls as recipients and beneficiaries of philanthropic grantmaking. Nowhere is this more urgently needed than in Indigenous philanthropy because so many Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander women are doubly disadvantaged, by their gender as well as their race. Grantmakers to Indigenous projects can help change this by considering issues of gender in grantmaking, the role of women in culture and communities, and funding organisations that directly benefit women and girls. Equally, they can require that organisations they give money to take special steps to consider the needs of women and girls in their programs.
CONCLUSION

Philanthropy in Australia has grown steadily over the last 20 years as a result of a national ‘culture of giving’.

While uneven in its growth, in-roads have been significant and effective, and a wider group of Australians have benefited from the philanthropic foundations laid down.

Indigenous Australians have been one of the many beneficiaries of this philanthropic effort – mostly driven by issues such as reconciliation, native title, and Closing the Gap campaign. Still, much more remains to be done.

There are a variety of reasons as to why some groups miss out on all of the opportunities available in life but Indigenous people in particular stand out as burning examples on a landscape littered with too many examples of failure rather than the achievement of a common good.

Philanthropy has and continues to play a significant role in the lives of so many Indigenous Australians and while the investment is needed, there is still greater room for more enduring and valuable partnerships with Indigenous people.

At the present time, while many foundations, corporations and wealthy individuals have ventured into Indigenous communities, it is still unclear what are the best choices for social investment.

The Guide has been produced following extensive research with grantmakers and Indigenous grantseekers. Its purpose is to better inform the decisions made for Indigenous community engagement, as well as providing information and tools for partnerships and self-evaluation.

The Guide also shows through the case studies that Indigenous philanthropy is much more than money – it is also about an exchange of ideas and knowledge and access to other capacity and knowledge.

Valuable partnerships and the significant multiplier effect of such arrangements have also been singled out as better ways of meeting the growing challenge but also to illustrate how good ideas and a common effort can work together.

As The Guide demonstrates, there are huge opportunities for Australian philanthropy to deepen its involvement with Indigenous Australia.

The current levels of grantmaking, while very welcome, are embarrassingly low: just eight per cent of total funds spent by the 30 organisations surveyed for The Guide go to Indigenous projects.

In the short term, if The Guide can persuade philanthropic organisations, corporate Australia and wealthy benefactors to lift this level of funding to, say, 20 per cent within five years, with additional increases being targeted over the following decade, then it will have served its immediate purpose.

In the medium and long term, we hope that The Guide will create new ways of thinking around Indigenous philanthropy and will provide a blueprint for the future.

In particular, we need to have greater clarity and understanding about the role of Government and we need to start a dialogue about the creation of a social marketplace, to increase Indigenous involvement at Board level, and the role we can play in diversified revenue streams for Indigenous communities.

The need is great, the opportunities are almost boundless and, as the case studies have shown, the ability to create worthwhile and lasting change has never been greater.

The evidence is clear that grantmaking to Indigenous Australians is a worthwhile exchange, a very worthwhile one indeed.

Some of this might present a challenge and The Guide deliberately sets out to help us better understand what we do and how to do things better.

Philanthropy in Australia does more than fund buildings, equipment and garden meals, it funds the very things that makes the life of one person better.

This is what we can do and this is why The Guide is a call to renewed action.

Now, it’s over to you.
Students in class at Muludja Remote Community School, Muludja, WA
tools for change:

Practical tools for those who are new to Indigenous philanthropy and refresher ideas for those who are already grantmaking.
SUMMARY: This chapter provides practical steps to get started in Indigenous grantmaking, ideas for ways to spend your philanthropic dollar, checklists to help assess applications for grants, and a checklist for evaluating your own performance.

GETTING STARTED – PRACTICAL STEPS

The following practical steps are drawn from the recommendations made by grantseekers and grantmakers who took part in the research for this Guide and are a roadmap for getting started in Indigenous grantmaking.

1. Communicate widely about what grantmaking is, what your organisational values are, what you are trying to achieve and how you think you will achieve it in simple, direct English and in ‘language’ where appropriate.

2. Increase the accessibility of funding processes by being flexible about when grantseekers can apply and how they can apply – consider verbal or videoed applications.

3. Provide easy and timely access to a ‘real’ person to help potential applicants decide if their project fits your guidelines. For example, you could provide a service, online or via telephone, where people could outline their proposed project and obtain an immediate and straightforward answer as to whether or not it meets your guidelines.

4. Consider being involved with auspicing arrangements or having a special pool for non-DGR projects as many worthy organisations do not have Deductible Gift Recipient status, which precludes them from being funded.

5. Take a ‘big picture’ view, understand the system as a whole, see where you fit and work towards co-funding, partnering and collaboration. For instance, consider common reporting requirements within a collaborative model that would apply across a number of funders, possibly including Government. (Some grantseekers are currently negotiating to establish this)

6. Nurture supportive and long-term relationships with grantseekers.

7. Identify what cultural competency means for your organization and work towards achieving it.
## WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR PHILANTHROPIC DOLLAR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRANT PER YEAR</th>
<th>STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS ORGANISATIONS</th>
<th>STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTING TO EVIDENCE BASE</th>
<th>BUILDING INDIGENOUS-LED INSTITUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$500,000+</td>
<td>Long term, ‘untied’ investment to support scale nationally</td>
<td>Chair at University Endowment of leadership fellowship</td>
<td>Research investment through institution (health, medical, economic or education outcomes)</td>
<td>Endowment Contribute to seed funding for development or capacity of new or existing institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(may be applied as multi-year funding)</td>
<td>Major partner on new innovation or program</td>
<td>Investment in social entrepreneurs program to support Indigenous leaders and changemakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major investment in new organisation</td>
<td>Major investment in scholarship program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $250,000</td>
<td>Support untested program</td>
<td>Bursaries or scholarships at tertiary or secondary level</td>
<td>Funding external evaluation</td>
<td>Funding to support executive officer and/or staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding to support executive officer and/or staff</td>
<td>Financial support to recognised leaders (prize or scholarship)</td>
<td>Funding feasibility</td>
<td>Capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capacity building Infrastructure</td>
<td>Mentoring Business planning &amp; personal development</td>
<td>Funding start up research or business plans for new concepts</td>
<td>Funding sector-wide tools and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 - $100,000</td>
<td>Program funds to help a proven program or organisation to grow</td>
<td>Travel and conference fees for multiple leaders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 - $50,000</td>
<td>Marketing or communications (including documentaries)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$10,000 - $25,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Grants</td>
<td>Equipment Infrastructure Training Courses in marketing, fundraising or governance Reference materials or tools Travel and conference fees</td>
<td>Training Leadership or education scholarships Mentoring Membership fees (access to networks) Travel and conference fees</td>
<td>Supporting research Funding external evaluation</td>
<td>Donation to institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 - $10,000</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
grant application checklist

Grantmakers can use the following checklist to help them to review a grant application and to assess their capability to fund a particular organisation, community or project.

1. Are there any preconditions for compliant grantmaking that should be considered before we fund an Indigenous organisation, project or community? (All Private Ancillary Funds must fund organisations with Deductible Gift Recipient status.)

2. Are we compliant with our trust deed and with ATO requirements when supporting the grantseeker?

3. Values Alignment
   - Do the grantseeker’s values align with ours?
   - If the grantseeker’s values are not formally written, have we talked with them about our values and are we aligned?

4. Evidence base
   - Is there a strong evidence base to support our philanthropic investment?
   - If not, are we willing to take the risk?

5. Grantseeker’s Capacity
   - Has the idea or program been delivered before?
   - If not, is the idea sound and proven elsewhere?
   - How willing are we to take a risk if this is untested?
   - Can we provide funding for the idea to be developed?

   - How willing are we to take a risk if this is untested?
   - Is this scalable?
   - Is the timeframe realistic?
   - How will the project be evaluated?
   - Can we provide additional funding to support external evaluation?

6. Leadership
   - Is the leader or CEO of the organisation recognised as taking a leadership role in their community?
   - If not, do community leaders support them?
   - Does the leader have a track record?
   - Is the leadership supported within the organisation?
   - Could the leadership benefit from additional capacity? Can our funding include capacity building for leadership?
   - Is success being driven by people who are not occupying formal positions? (some community people prefer to work ‘under the radar’)

7. Community support
   - Is the program or organisation initiated by the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community?
   - If yes, how is this illustrated or represented?
   - If not, why?
   - Can other people within the Indigenous community confirm support for the program or organisation?
   - Is the organisation or program led by Indigenous people? If yes, how? If not, how are Indigenous people involved?
   - If there is a lack of Indigenous involvement, is it appropriate to fund?
8. Governance
- What processes and resources are in place to meet the financial responsibilities of the organisation?
- Who is on the board of the organisation?
- Does the board have a track record in good governance and delivering organisational objectives?
- Can our funding support any gaps?
- Are there other streams of revenue apart from ours?
- How much Government funding is received?
- Is the organisation reliant on Government funding, and what is the interplay between Government and project reporting?

9. Our role as Partner
- Is the grantseeker under-resourced and in great need of funds?
- If yes, will we be one of the only philanthropic funders?
- Do we understand the importance of our role in supporting this grantseeker with flexible practices?

10. Are we prepared to support the grantseeker long term?
- Is the grantseeker a new organisation and in need of capacity building support?
- If yes, what in-kind support such as mentoring, introduction to networks and other skills can we offer (if asked)?

11. Mutual Expectations
- Does the grantseeker have support from a diverse group of funders, including philanthropy and Government?
- Can we offer opportunities to leverage our brand, people and internal processes to support their success?
- Do we understand the expectations of the grantseeker for the project and are we comfortable with these expectations?
- Do we understand what the grantseeker expects of us as a grantmaker and are we confident we can meet those expectations?
- Have we explained what we are or are not able to commit to prior to proceeding with the grant?
- Have we have discussed our expectations for the relationship (as distinct from the project) and do we feel confident in proceeding?
- Are we willing to join with the grantseeker in celebrating successes?

12. Additional support
- What other assistance, networks, introductions will assist the grantseeker?
- Can we provide these?
Grantmakers can use the following checklist to review their approaches and processes to make their Indigenous grantmaking more effective.

1. **Do we understand the issue?**
   - Do we have experience grantmaking to other organisations on this issue?
   - If not, do we need to seek advice or guidance from an Indigenous person?

2. **Do we involve Indigenous people in our decision-making?**
   - If not, what are the reasons for this?
   - How do we propose to change this?

3. **Do we understand the community group or organisation we are looking to fund?**
   - Have we met the leadership and the operational people?
   - Have we made a site visit? Site visits may not be necessary and in some cases (particularly if small grants) may not be warranted. In these cases, has material been requested or enough spent time on the phone to begin the relationship?
   - Have we talked with other grantmakers who have supported the organisation previously?
   - Have we talked with other community members or grantseekers who may be partners with this organisation?

4. **Have we engaged with the grantseeker through the application process?** (Grantmakers making small grants may choose not to engage during the application process to avoid time wasting for the grantseeker. Large and long term grants generally require a higher level of engagement during the application process.)
   - Have we been able to discuss the application before it was submitted?
   - Have we been able to make comment on the application, particularly if some elements were unclear or unrealistic such as timelines or budgets?
   - Have we given the grantseeker an opportunity to explain the application verbally?
   - Have we provided an opportunity for the grantseeker to make reviews to the application thereby finetuning the application and program?
   - How flexible are we with application processes and mediums? Would we consider accepting an application if it was in video or verbal format (instead of, or as well as, in written form)?

5. **Will the grant meet the needs of the grantseeker for the project or initiative as described by the community it represents? How do we know this?**
   - Have we consulted with community members, Traditional Owners or other Indigenous people to whom the grant is directed and whom it is intended to benefit?
   - Do we understand the issues related to gender and does the program effectively address these issues?
grantmakers capacity to fund

6. Do we have internal people who can work directly with this community or organisation?
   - Does this grantseeker want this?
   - What could be the role of our internal person?
   - Do we have the skills and expertise to meet the needs of the grantseeker?

7. What can we offer in kind assistance to support our financial grant?
   - Networks – what networks are appropriate? Do we have collaborators or partners in our network that would also fund this organisation with us?
   - Mentoring – what type of mentoring could benefit the grantseeker?
   - Marketing and communications – do we have access to skills that could benefit the grantseeker? Are we able to assist the organisation by including information about the grant on our website and through our own communications?
   - Fundraising – to what extent are we prepared to help the grantseeker access additional funding? Will this be within the philanthropic community and networks only?
   - Advocacy and influence – is it appropriate for us to advocate either together with or on behalf of the grantseeker? How would the grantseeker want this to happen? When would this occur? What could we do to advocate or lend influence?

8. What are our internal review and evaluation processes? Are we flexible with timings and acquittals?

9. How willing are we to back this organisation long term?

10. Have we identified the risks with funding this organisation? Have we mitigated those risks through our grant review process?

11. What is the impact and success we envisage, and does this align with the vision of the grantseeker? (If not, should we proceed?)
This is a list of questions to assist grantmakers with internal review and reflection on their effectiveness.

1. How effective are our approaches to Indigenous grantmaking?
   - Do we listen to Indigenous leadership?
   - Do we back community-led initiatives?
   - Are we willing to prioritise organisational capacity over projects?
   - Do we value and respect mutual exchange?
   - Do we showcase success stories?
   - Do we advocate with communities?
   - Do we invest in building and maintaining trusting relationships?

2. How effective are our grantmaking processes?
   - Do we engage pre-application?
   - Do we have flexible application processes?
   - Do we fund long-term?
   - Do we provide in-kind support?
   - Do we collaborate?

3. Is there a way for us to work with Indigenous grantseekers to lead and drive our grantmaking strategy and decision-making?
   - How could we make this work?
   - Would we first start with the Indigenous organisations we currently support?
   - What other organisations or people would we connect with to enable this approach?
   - How do we review the effectiveness of our communications with grantseekers?
   - Is there a mechanism for grantseekers to provide feedback?
RESOURCES AVAILABLE

This Guide is also available for download from the Worthwhile Exchange website: www.indigenousphilanthropy.com.au.

A list of web resources is available at this website.

FUTURE UPDATES

New success stories and outcomes from this Guide will be updated on the website: www.indigenousphilanthropy.com.au.

Suggestions for changes and additions may be made through this website.