INDIGENOUS TOURISM BUSINESSES IN QUEENSLAND: CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

An Australian case study towards the development of a national diagnostic tool for Indigenous tourism businesses

Michelle Whitford and Lisa Ruhanen
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Author: Whitford, Michelle.
Title: Indigenous tourism businesses in Qld: criteria for success / Michelle Whitford, Lisa Ruhanen.
Other Authors/Contributors: Ruhanen, Lisa. CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd.
Dewey Number: 338.479194

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First published in Australia in 2009 by CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd

Printed in Australia (Gold Coast, Queensland)
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Abstract

Indigenous tourism has become an integral, albeit niche part of Australia’s tourism industry (Hollinshead 1996; Moore & Herron 1997) with federal, state and territory governments seeking to grow ‘Indigenous involvement in the tourism industry to not only capitalise on the potential for the industry to provide wealth creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people but also to expand the tourism product and appeal for domestic and international tourists’ (Tourism Queensland 2004, p. 6). To date however, there has been limited empirical research into Indigenous tourism in Australia. With few exceptions, little attention has been given to supply side capacity, in particular, the nature, scope and development of Indigenous tourism enterprises. Indeed, little is known about the factors that contribute to the success and long-term viability of enterprises in Australia’s Indigenous tourism sector (Boyle 2001). Given this, it was considered imperative to identify those underpinning factors that are associated with the success of Indigenous tourism enterprises and concomitantly, the role of government support and funding.

Utilising seven case study businesses from Queensland, a range of issues were uncovered through the research pertaining to drivers, inhibitors and opportunities, as well as the role and nature of government support for Indigenous tourism businesses. Based on the findings, a diagnostic tool was developed as a guide to establishing and operating a successful and sustainable Indigenous tourism business. The success factors were found to include: training and knowledge; product development; funding; community connection; business strategies; government support; cultural sustainability; triple-bottom line; authenticity; uniqueness; collaboration; ownership; reliability; family support; commitment; commercial experience; and respect. The criteria for success and diagnostic tool should form the basis for a training program and training materials for Indigenous tourism businesses. However, before such training programs and materials can be developed and implemented, further research is required to test the diagnostic tool on a wider base.

Acknowledgements

The Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, established and supported under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centre’s Program funded this research. The authors would like to acknowledge the participants in this research for devoting their time to undertaking the telephone and in-depth interviews and providing such valuable insights into their business operations. The authors would also like to acknowledge Mr Nigel Bond, The School of Tourism, The University of Queensland, who was involved in the data collection for this study.
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SUMMARY

Growing global interest in Indigenous culture is stimulating demand for products involving Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As a result, Indigenous tourism has become an integral, albeit niche, part of Australia’s tourism industry (Hollinshead 1996; Moore & Herron 1997). Tourism Australia (2007) figures show an estimated 830,000 international visitors to Australia experienced one or more Indigenous cultural activities during their visit, representing some 15% of the total international visitor market and in response throughout Australia the states and territories are attempting to ‘… grow Indigenous involvement in the tourism industry to not only capitalise on the potential for the industry to provide wealth creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people but also to expand the tourism product and appeal for domestic and international tourists’ (Tourism Queensland 2004, p. 6).

In Australia, Indigenous tourism is a small and emerging market, however, benefits are already being realised including new business development, local employment, and increased commercial revenues for the broader host region (Alston 1998; Van de Wagen 2005). In fact, in Australia it is recognised that Indigenous tourism can be particularly beneficial for the economic development of regional and remote areas and can be used as a stimulus for sustaining declining regional economies (Chang 2006; Tourism Australia 2007). As such, new opportunities are being created for Indigenous peoples and communities to develop enterprises in locations where other economic prospects are limited. As Freeman (2008, p.1) noted, tourism ‘… provides the opportunity for involvement in the real economy and enables our young people to stay on country. Additionally it provides the opportunity for Aboriginal people to share their intimate knowledge of the landscape with tourists’.

Objectives of Study

To date there has been limited empirical research into Indigenous tourism in Australia. With few exceptions, little attention has been given to supply side capacity, in particular, the nature, scope and development of Indigenous tourism enterprises. Indeed, little is known about the factors that contribute to the success and long-term viability of enterprises in Australia’s Indigenous tourism sector (Boyle 2001). One exception is a study undertaken by Fuller et al. (2005, p. 893) who concluded that ‘there has been a less than desirable success rate in Indigenous tourism enterprises’. Given this, it was considered imperative to identify those underpinning factors that are associated with the success of Indigenous tourism enterprises. Utilising seven ‘successful’ case study businesses from Queensland, the research sought to explore the development, operation and management of these enterprises with the objective of identifying the inhibitors and facilitators to business success from the perspectives of both community operated organisations and individual entrepreneurs.

Similarly, there is a dearth of literature examining the underlying success of Indigenous tourism enterprises and how this is affected by the range of government policy. Government policies and practices have promoted tourism as a means to reduce Indigenous dependence on welfare (Altman & Finlayson 1992; Dyer, Aberdeen & Schuler 2003; Butler & Hinch 2007). However, the development of such policy, at both federal and state levels has been questioned by authors in terms of their appropriateness to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Altman 1988; Finlayson 1993; Hollinshead 1996; Whitford, Bell & Watkins 2001). Most of the policy assumptions about factors for success in Indigenous tourism enterprises are drawn from overseas literature. The Australian situation is unique in terms of culture, sovereignty, service delivery arrangements and funding and as such there is a need to engage in empirical research focused on the factors underpinning successful Indigenous businesses in an Australian context.

Given this context the objectives of the study were to:

- analyse and evaluate the creation, operation and management of a selection of commercial (i.e. sole traders, partnerships or proprietary limited companies) and community based Indigenous tourism enterprises in Queensland
- identify the nature, range and impact of government policy pertaining to Indigenous tourism enterprises
- categorise the underpinning facilitators and inhibitors of successful Indigenous tourism enterprises to underpin the development of a diagnostic framework of criteria for success.
Methodology
The research objectives were achieved through a two-phase interpretive qualitative research process. A comprehensive review of the literature and Australian government policies and business support programs pertaining to Indigenous tourism provided the foundation for the primary data collection which included a qualifying telephone interview and in-depth face-to-face interview.

- A database of Indigenous tourism enterprises in Queensland was constructed and each business was contacted and a representative invited to participate in a telephone interview. The objective of this phase of the study was to provide some basic qualifying information about Indigenous tourism businesses to assist in the selection of businesses to participate in the second phase of the study in which in-depth interviews were undertaken. Importantly, the telephone interviews provided additional information on key aspects of Indigenous tourism businesses that could not otherwise be obtained through the limited number of in-depth interviews undertaken due to budgetary and time constraints.
- Using the telephone interviews as a sampling framework, seven Indigenous tourism business operators representing both commercial and community enterprise structures in Queensland were invited to participate in an in-depth, face-to-face interview. Participants were asked a range of questions about their business structure, customers and employees, management, support systems and networks, sustainability and future issues and challenges. Interview transcripts were analysed using content analysis.

Key Findings
A range of issues was uncovered through the research pertaining to drivers, inhibitors and opportunities, as well as the role and nature of government support for Indigenous tourism businesses. Based on the findings, a diagnostic tool was developed as a guide to establishing and operating a successful and sustainable Indigenous tourism business. The broader criteria include:

- Training and knowledge
- Product development
- Funding
- Community connection
- Business strategies
- Government support
- Cultural sustainability
- Triple bottom line
- Authenticity
- Uniqueness
- Collaboration
- Ownership
- Reliability
- Family support
- Commitment
- Commercial experience
- Respect

Future Action
The criteria for success and diagnostic tool could form the basis for a training program and training materials for Indigenous tourism businesses. However, before such training programs and materials can be developed and implemented, further research is required to test the diagnostic tool on a wider base.

The results of the study suggest such government support systems and policy might take into account the following recommendations:

- recognise governance as a significant factor and an integral component in the development and operation of Indigenous tourism businesses
- increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous governance arrangements to avoid imposing western values and ideas during negotiation and/or consultation
• provide more sustained, long term educational opportunities (e.g. educational scholarships, mentor programs) to enhance business and management capacity rather than providing a plethora of one off and/or superficial training programs which are apparently providing little more than perfunctory introductory skills for tourism businesses
• provide specific and targeted educational programs to increase Indigenous capacity for decision-making and change to facilitate flexible and timely governance
• maintain and/or increase collaborative opportunities with government tourism bodies to allow Indigenous tourism businesses to network and/or gain experience and exposure
• facilitate increased participation in government tourism planning and development particularly at the local and regional level to increase Indigenous tourism business ownership
• provide more efficient access to, and utilisation of, information, support mechanisms and processes to reduce bureaucratic red tape and increase user friendly systems and procedures
• provide face-to-face, long term, sustained assistance with implementation and support strategies rather than relying upon referrals to web based support systems
• facilitate a move towards a market driven, as opposed to a product driven, approach to Indigenous product/service development
• deliver more timely and appropriate visitor data to ensure strategic business decisions are based on current factual information
• investigate funding regimes and protocols in relation to individual versus community enterprises to ensure opportunities are equitable and flexible.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Increased demand for Indigenous cultural tourism experiences is creating new economic opportunities for many Indigenous communities around the world. Tourism is undoubtedly a significant economic, socio-cultural and political phenomenon and has been identified as a basis for Indigenous peoples and communities to develop a better socio-economic future (Ryan 2002; Deutschlander & Miller 2003; Fuller, Buultjens & Cummings 2005; Butler & Hinch 2007). Globally, the diversity in Indigenous tourism product demonstrates the scope and potential of this market with Indigenous tourism now including wildlife tourism in national parks (e.g. South Africa and Tanzania); village tours (e.g. Bali and Pacific islands); Arctic tourism (e.g. Canada and Alaska); cultural tours and treks (e.g. Southeast Asia, Africa and Central and South America) and cultural heritage tourism (e.g. New Zealand and Australia). The increased demand for Indigenous cultural products can also be seen in the growth of the artefacts and handicrafts sector (Smith 2003).

Indigenous tourism can be defined as, ‘tourism activity in which Indigenous people are directly involved either through control and/or by having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction’ (Butler & Hinch 2007, p. 9). Although Indigenous tourism is a small and emerging market, benefits are already being realised including new business development, local employment, and increased commercial revenues for the broader host region (Alston 1998; Van de Wagen 2005). In fact, in Australia it is recognised that Indigenous tourism can be particularly beneficial for the economic development of regional and remote areas and can be used as a stimulus for sustaining declining regional economies (Chang 2006; Tourism Australia 2007). As such, new opportunities are being created for Indigenous peoples and communities to develop enterprises in locations where other economic prospects are limited. As Freeman (2008, p. 1) noted, tourism ‘… provides the opportunity for involvement in the real economy and enables our young people to stay on country. Additionally it provides the opportunity for Aboriginal people to share their intimate knowledge of the landscape with tourists’.

To date however, there has been limited empirical research into Indigenous tourism in Australia. With few exceptions, little attention has been given to supply side capacity, in particular, the nature, scope and development of Indigenous tourism enterprises. Indeed, little is known about the factors that contribute to the success and long-term viability of enterprises in Australia’s Indigenous tourism sector (Boyle 2001). One exception is a study undertaken by Fuller et al. (2005, p. 893) who concluded that ‘there has been a less than desirable success rate in Indigenous tourism enterprises’. Given this, it was considered imperative to identify those underpinning factors that are associated with the success of Indigenous tourism enterprises. Utilising seven ‘successful’ case study businesses from Queensland (see chapter 3), the research sought to explore the development, operation and management of these enterprises with the objective of identifying the inhibitors and facilitators to business success from the perspectives of both community operated organisations and individual entrepreneurs.

Similarly, there is a dearth of literature examining the underlying success of Indigenous tourism enterprises and how this is affected by the range of government support structures and policy. Government policies and practices have promoted tourism as a means to reduce Indigenous dependence on welfare (Altman & Finlayson 1992; Dyer, Aberdeen & Schuler 2003; Butler & Hinch 2007). However, the development of such policy, at both federal and state levels has been questioned by authors in terms of their appropriateness to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Altman 1988; Finlayson 1993; Hollinshead 1996; Whitford et al. 2001). Most of the policy assumptions about factors for success in Indigenous tourism enterprises are drawn from overseas literature. The Australian situation is unique in terms of culture, sovereignty, service delivery arrangements and funding and as such there is a need to engage in empirical research focused on the factors underpinning successful Indigenous businesses in an Australian context. Given this context the objectives of the study were to:

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The research objectives were achieved through a two-phase interpretive qualitative research process including a comprehensive review of the literature and Australian government policies, telephone interviews and in-depth face-to-face interviews. This report outlines the results of the study and presents a diagnostic tool based on the identified criteria for success to guide the establishment and operation of Indigenous tourism businesses. Additionally, recommendations for government are also proposed based on the identified criteria for success.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE AND POLICY REVIEW

Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are two of the world’s oldest living cultures. Interest in Indigenous culture is providing new economic opportunities for Indigenous communities and people. This growing interest is facilitating the development of Indigenous tourism, which in turn, places Australia in a position to capitalise on such opportunities (Office of National Tourism 1998). Consequently, Indigenous tourism has become an integral, albeit niche, part of Australia’s tourism industry (Hollinshead 1996; Moore & Herron 1997). Tourism Australia (2007) figures show an estimated 830 000 international visitors to Australia experienced one or more Indigenous cultural activities during their visit, representing some 15% of the total international visitor market. It is forecast that this figure will rise to be over 1.3 million visitors by 2016 (Tourism Australia 2007). Not surprisingly, throughout Australia the states and territories are attempting to “… grow Indigenous involvement in the tourism industry to not only capitalise on the potential for the industry to provide wealth creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people but also to expand the tourism product and appeal for domestic and international tourists’ (Tourism Queensland 2004, p. 6).

In Australia, there is a diverse array of Indigenous tourism product offerings. These include bushwalks, safaris, staying in Indigenous accommodation for a short period (e.g. 3–10 days), going on a tour with an Indigenous guide, visiting an Indigenous site or community, attending live performances (e.g. dance, drama, music) and appreciating visual arts in state museums and galleries or commercial art and craft enterprises (Fourmile 1992; Tourism Australia 2007). Australia has a significant Aboriginal arts and crafts industry. In 1999 the Office of National Tourism estimated the worth of the Indigenous arts and crafts industry to be approximately $200 million per annum and arguably this figure would be much higher in 2009.

Undoubtedly the growing interest in Indigenous peoples as a tourism ‘product’ has created significant impacts for the communities and people who are the focus of the tourist experience. As with all forms of tourism development, a tenuous balance exists between the opportunities and challenges arising from tourism development. Arguably, numerous benefits can be realised from tourism, notably, the enhancement of the socio-economic status of Indigenous people and communities. Tourism can provide much needed income in regions that offer few permanent jobs. For instance, in Australia, 69% of Indigenous people live in regional, remote or very remote regions of the country (Australian Bureau of Statistics ABS 2007) which are invariably outside the mainstream of national economies and development support systems and importantly, in areas that are more likely to lack suitable infrastructure such as roads, schools and health services (Deruyttere 1997; Engles 2001; Carino 2003). Unfortunately such areas also have a small pool of consumers and skilled labour (Schaper 1999), both key factors in the successful development of a tourism industry.

An often cited benefit, or perhaps justification, of Indigenous tourism is its capacity to preserve and revitalise culture through the education of visitors. For instance, the development of cultural heritage tourism has been seen to have a positive impact on native Indian culture in both the United States and Canada. In particular, cultural centres and museums have helped reaffirm cultural identity by providing a means of preserving cultural artefacts, languages and skills of traditional communities (Notzke 1999; Smith 2003). Similar benefits have been noted in relation to New Zealand cultural heritage and arts and crafts tourism (Barnett 1997; Ryan & Crotts 1997; Zeppel 1997) as well as in small mountain villages of South America (Engles 2001). Engles’ (2001) study of tourism within the Peruvian Amazon and Gruenwald’s (2002) research on Pataxo Indians in Brazil both found that showcasing culture for tourists allowed Indigenous people to preserve elements of their traditional culture such as clothing, dances and handicrafts. Other authors have considered the benefits of Indigenous tourism in the context of conferring status, empowerment, dignity and pride to participants (Cohen 1988; Boissevain 1996), whereas Higgins-Desbiolles (2003) focused on the role of tourism in the process of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Although Indigenous tourism has the potential to revitalise culture and generate positive economic benefits, concomitantly involvement in tourism has also been found to cause a gradual decline in traditional social values, acculturation and increased pressure on natural habitats (Boissevain 1996; Smith 2003; Butler & Hinch 2007).
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Boissevain’s (1996) research on Indigenous communities in Malta found negative impacts of Indigenous tourism to include: loss of meanings, beliefs and value of culture; the degrading of traditional culture; the exploitation of participants; the simplification of culture; and exposure of secret/sacred knowledge to others. Ryan (1997, p. 258) referring to past experiences of tourism in New Zealand’s Maori communities notes issues of ‘ethnocide’ and lack of control and power. Within Canadian and Alaskan Indigenous communities Blundell (1993) describes the ‘commoditisation’ by non-Indigenous visitors; the breakdown of cultural integrity; presentation of stereotypes and (mis)representation of Indigenous culture; and cultural appropriation. Certainly tourism marketers are guilty of reinforcing stereotypes of Indigenous culture (Altman & Finlayson 1992; Hollinshead 1992; Ryan & Crotts 1997; Ryan & Huyton 2002; Deutschlander & Miller 2003; Medina 2003). In many countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, images of Indigenous peoples have been used to embellish the cultural attractiveness of the country as a tourism destination (Hollinshead 1992; Blundell 1993; Ryan 1997; Butler 1998; Zeppel 1999).

In spite of the challenges and problems associated with tourism activity, governments, the tourism industry and Indigenous communities and individuals continue to actively pursue tourism as a development tool to provide a better socio-economic future (Ryan 2002; Deutschlander & Miller 2003; Fuller et al. 2005; Butler & Hinch 2007). Yet in many countries, Indigenous tourism business operators face considerable and unique challenges that extend beyond those that afflict all forms of enterprise. Many Indigenous communities and peoples throughout the world face social and economic disadvantage with standards of living in terms of economic, educational and basic human standards below that of the dominant groups in these societies (Deruyttere 1997; Altman 2001; Lindsay 2004; Fuller et al. 2005).

A further challenge in Australia is that there are two distinct forms of Indigenous business ventures whose business structures differ according to their process of incorporation, their business philosophies which assign relative priorities to commercial and social interests, and their governance or reporting requirements. Firstly, there are standalone commercial businesses including sole traders, partnerships or proprietary limited companies incorporated under the Australian Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997, and ‘community’-based businesses incorporated under the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 or one of the many state associations acts (Foley 2006). The challenges associated with the operation, management and government support for these types of businesses can inhibit the development of commercially viable and successful enterprises. Given this context, the importance of understanding the nature of Indigenous tourism enterprises and the value in identifying those factors which make these types of businesses successful is paramount.

Indigenous Business Facilitators and Inhibitors

A review of the literature in the field has identified a number of factors that can facilitate successful Indigenous businesses. If however, these factors are not appropriately managed, they can inhibit the growth and long-term viability of the business. Such factors can be themed in terms of operational business aspects including strategic planning and management, access to start-up finance and capital, product development and market research, adequate supply and access to skilled labour, and education and training. Broader, external issues pertaining to the success of Indigenous businesses include governance, community participation and control, government support systems and funding, entrepreneurship and traditional lands and land rights.

Strategic planning and management

The importance of a strategic orientation to business planning and management is a widely accepted principle of successful business management and numerous authors have reinforced this importance in the context of Indigenous businesses (Leistritz, Ayres & Stone 1992; Alvaraz, Diemer & Stanford 1999; Loomis 2000; Lindsay 2004; Notzke 2004). This issue is particularly pertinent in the case of community owned/operated enterprises where shared responsibility for decision-making and multiple stakeholder participants can complicate the day-to-day operations of the business. The process of strategic planning for the community can assist in achieving a degree of consensus on community goals and identify available and appropriate use of resources vis-à-vis the community’s comparative advantage to other communities and localities.

Start-up finance and capital

Like all businesses, a strong financial position is an underpinning and crucial factor in both the initial feasibility and long term viability of Indigenous enterprises (Leistritz et al. 1992; Deruyttere 1997; Loomis 2000; Rogers & Ryan
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2001; Altman 2003; Banerjee 2003; Krishnamoorthy 2007). However, accessing start-up and capital expansion funds is a major impediment. Commercial banking institutions are traditionally the main source of business start-up funds yet the socio-economic situation of some Indigenous communities and individuals with lower income and asset levels means that collating the personal equity required by major commercial financial institutions as collateral for business loans can be difficult (Indigenous Fund For Agricultural Development [IFAD] 2003). Additionally, Indigenous people often lack access to financial capital, credit and equity because of inalienable land titles (Lindsay 2004). In Australia, banks will not establish flexible lending practices or provide financial services on Indigenous-owned lands (Dodson & Smith 2003). In comparison, the Canadian banking sector has sought to foster Indigenous economic development with specialised banking services, credit schemes, publications, and managerial training. In Australia however, such an approach is uncommon and is generally confined to corporations that have a specific vested interest in Aboriginal issues (e.g. mining corporations) (Schaper 1999).

Increasingly, prospective Indigenous business operators are looking for alternate and innovative sources to secure start-up funding and indeed, access long-term debt for financing business expansion plans (Altman 2003; Lindsay 2004). For instance, international banking organisations such as the International Development Bank specifically fund Indigenous community development initiatives (Deruyttere 1997). Other authors have proposed seeking funding from credit unions which are often more willing to support business in smaller towns and communities, micro-financing options and revolving loan funds (Dyck 2002; Lindsay 2004).

Another successful approach to securing funding for establishing Indigenous enterprises is based on forming silent partnerships. For instance, in British Colombia, collaborative partnerships between government, local business and Indigenous communities have proven to overcome issues of accessing traditional start-up funds (Jago 2004). Indeed in Australia, a lack of suitable commercial funding avenues has meant that Indigenous businesses tend to rely on government funded/sponsored initiatives (Buultjens, Waller, Graham & Carson 2002). Warden-Fernandez (2001) however, warns Indigenous communities to be wary of forming partnerships with outside sources without first exploring all the implications for both the individual business and the community as a whole. Buultjens et al. (2002) claim that the failure in particular, to find suitable financing, has increased the likelihood that for many Indigenous communities, developing viable, commercial tourism ventures depends on the establishment of joint businesses with mainstream tourism operators which in turn, has the potential for Indigenous communities to lose control of the enterprise.

Product development and market research
Altman and Finlayson (1992) advocate the importance of practising market realism, including undertaking professional market research as an underpinning factor in the development of successful, commercially viable Indigenous tourism businesses. In presenting their arguments, Altman and Finlayson (1992) discuss the establishment of the Tjapukai Dance Theatre in Kuranda, Queensland; a joint venture between the local Aboriginal community and a private investor. Importantly, the venture received no assistance via government funding and the success of Tjapukai is attributed to, among other things, accurately identifying a niche in the market and giving due attention to product detail and undertaking research on the needs and expectations of the international and domestic tourist market.

Unfortunately however, the success enjoyed by Tjapukai appears to be the exception to the rule. More often than not, the pressure associated with the need to maximise short-term profit or provide employment opportunities results in insufficient consultation and planning, giving rise to short cuts being taken by developers and funding agencies (Fuller et al. 2005). It has been argued that government funding bodies often do not pay sufficient attention to commissioned market research when assessing the commercial potential of an Aboriginal tourism venture (Altman & Finlayson 1992). Alternatively, market research is often used to artificially inflate estimates of the project's potential by overestimating sales or visitor numbers. Altman and Finlayson (1992) stress the importance of realistic assessments of a product's value in the market, particularly as such overestimates cause the lead times needed for project viability to be underestimated and participants and funding agencies expect returns on investment too early. They further note that, ‘many Aboriginal communities have unrealistic expectations of the economic benefits of tourism which are often fuelled by over-optimistic consultants’ reports and unrealistic bureaucratic desire to view tourism as a means of getting Aboriginal people off welfare’ (Altman & Finlayson 1992, p. 10).

Skilled labour
Employment is an important indicator of economic participation and has been linked to increased income levels, better health, improved education outcomes, enhanced self esteem and increased social integration (Steering
Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision SCRGSP 2007). Indigenous unemployment is a challenging issue in Australia and based on 2006 census data; the Indigenous unemployment rate was 16% which is relatively high vis-à-vis the 4.6% unemployment rate for the non-Indigenous population (ABS 2006).

Indigenous communities are often remotely located away from major markets and have high transportation costs, small populations and low economies of scale. Further, such regions are often burdened with poor roads, a lack of adequate sewage systems, schools and medical facilities (Lindsay 2004). This obviously has considerable implications for access to an appropriate labour supply and the inherent nature and remoteness of many communities means that it is often difficult for organisations to attract and retain suitably qualified and experienced professional staff (Altman 2001; Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS] 2007). Additionally population exodus from remote areas impacts on staff turnover and further inhibits business operations. This highlights the importance of developing capacity within the communities themselves through education and training.

Altman and Finlayson (1992) raise additional challenges with respect to Indigenous employment in the tourism industry. They note that employment in service industries such as tourism requires a high level of literacy and communication skills to cope with direct and intensive social interaction with tourists. As a result, many Aboriginal people are unwilling or unable to undertake such positions. For instance, research undertaken on the role of Aboriginal employees in national parks shows that Aboriginal people have avoided employment opportunities in tourism for these same reasons (Altman 1988; Kesteven 1987). Indeed, Altman (1988) claims that there is a definite preference for indirect economic participation in the industry, such as manufacturing arts and crafts for retail sales. Further, a lack of requisite skills means that employment opportunities for Indigenous peoples in tourism are often limited to unskilled or semi-skilled positions. In fact, Altman and Finlayson (1992) claim that few Aboriginal employees in the hospitality sector hold managerial positions.

**Education and training**

Historically low levels of formal education have meant that the Aboriginal workforce is still comparatively short of qualified labour and professionals (Schaper 1999). However, the development of business capabilities within Indigenous communities has been shown to have a significant, positive impact in terms of community development and capacity building (Leistritz et al. 1992; Altman 2003; Lindsay 2004; Hunt 2005). In fact, according to Lindsay (2004), it is pivotal that individuals, or indeed communities, are skilled in particular aspects of business if their enterprise is to be successful. Such skills include financial management, business planning, merchandising, inventory management, personnel management and customer relations (Lindsay 2004). For tourism businesses, Fuller et al. (2005) identified the need for skills and experience in promotion and marketing.

Yet research has identified there is a lack of financial management and business skills within Indigenous communities, as well as poor general literacy and numeracy skills (Loomis 2000; Dodson & Smith 2003, SCRGSP 2007). For example, the ability to prepare a formal business and financial plan as required by mainstream commercial lenders can in itself be a barrier to securing start-up capital (Lindsay 2004). Specifically, the lack of financial literacy within communities and organisations make them vulnerable to both financial malpractice and financial and cultural exploitation (Altman 2001; Lindsay 2004; Tourism Victoria 2006; AIATSIS 2007). Not surprisingly then, Dodson and Smith (2003) have claimed that Indigenous peoples and community organisations lack the human capital and the means to develop the human capital that is necessary for successful economic development.

Therefore, Hunter (1999) claims that government programs for business support are not as important as addressing the low levels of education amongst Indigenous peoples and cites a need for increasing the level of business qualifications among the self-employed to ensure they can assess and manage the manifold risks in an increasingly globalised marketplace. Foley (2006) however, questions whether education provides the direct skills required to ensure business success, although he does acknowledge that it can provide exposure to life skills, networking and the sourcing of business contacts. In Foley’s (2006) study of Indigenous entrepreneurs in Australia, some 88% of the survey participants in the study had completed secondary education and over three-quarters had tertiary and/or formal trade qualifications. Given that only 36% of Indigenous Australian students complete Year 12 compared with 76% of non-Indigenous Australians, Foley (2006) concludes that the concentration of educated entrepreneurs supports the link between formal education and Indigenous business success.
Governance
In a community context, for development projects to be effective there is a need for collaboration between governments, project stakeholders, and local community representatives (Dodson & Smith 2003, Lindsay 2004). Lindsay (2004) maintains local governance is most effective where it involves cooperation between the elected leader/s within and between communities. Arguably, it is vital that the community are actively engaged in the decision-making process. In the case of New Zealand’s Maori communities (Loomis 2000) and Canadian Indians (Dodson & Smith 2003), strong community governance was identified as a key to successful Indigenous business development. Similarly, Lindsay (2004) advocates the need for a combination of strong community organisations and local business groups; cooperation between regional and local councils; and a strong spirit of, and commitment to, cooperation between organisations within communities. Armstrong (2003) though, claims that evidence shows that such partnerships are proving difficult to sustain and indeed, claims that in Australia, communities lack effective ‘whole of community’ planning (Armstrong 2003).

Altman (2002 p. 12) identifies the need for Indigenous leadership and governance, at the national, regional and community levels, as a means of developing successful Indigenous enterprise. He notes that:

- ‘at the national level there is need for greater collaboration between existing Indigenous institutions, but also for alliance-building with mainstream business, including the banks
- at the regional level there is a need for a more strategic regional approach to development that can be auspiced by robust regional institutions. In a complex world, there is a need for the critical mass and expertise that robust regional organisations can provide to ensure intercultural mediation between Indigenous interests, in all their diversity, and the market
- at the local level there is also a need for institutional strengthening to generate appropriately structured community development institutions that are commercially realistic and have the means to deliver local political stability; and that trade to generate a capital pool from the expenditure undertaken at remote communities. It is important that the multiplier effect of such income does not dissipate to non Indigenous commercial interests, but is retained and accumulated locally for development purposes’.

Community participation
Community participation and control has proven to be an important criterion for successful Indigenous tourism enterprises (McIntosh, Zygadlo & Matunga 2004). Indeed as McIntosh et al. (2004, p. 336) noted, within New Zealand Maori communities ‘Maori-centred tourism’ that is, tourism initiatives founded on a list of specific cultural values, including ‘Tino rangatiratanga’ (i.e. self determination), and ‘puawaitanga’ (i.e. principle of best outcome) have been essential in the development of successful Maori tourism enterprises. The key factors here are culture and control. That is, whoever has control of the tourism initiative determines such critical factors as the scale, location, pace, nature and outcome of the project. However, there is a high degree of tourism activity that is developed around Indigenous culture and themes but the Indigenous communities themselves have almost no controlling interest. Such tourism ventures have become increasingly controversial and create heated debate about cultural expropriation, Indigenous intellectual property rights and copyright infringement (Butler & Hinch 2007).

Indigenous communities have historically been subject to top-down policy approaches based on current government objectives. As a result, initiatives have generally not been instigated at the grass roots level, nor guided by community priorities (Jollands & Harnsworth 2007). As a result, there has been limited control over projects by the communities themselves. For example, Blundell (1993) reports that the majority of Canadian Indigenous arts and crafts tourism products offered for sale are not produced by the communities themselves, even though the manufacture of such ‘artefacts’ by non-Indigenous peoples is prohibited by law. Indigenous communities receive no financial benefit from the sale of such artefacts and further, can not compete with the inexpensive price-tag often attached to the inauthentic objects (Blundell 1993). Numerous authors have commented on the fact that external influences from governments and/or large corporations such as mining and agricultural companies often overshadow the needs of Indigenous communities and exploit Indigenous resources and culture for commercial gain (Blundell 1993; Matuszewski 1993; King & Steward 1996; Butler & Hinch 2007; Ryan 2002, Smith 2003). It is vital then, that strong community governance is used as a means of ensuring that resources, heritage and intellectual property are protected.

The extent of Indigenous involvement in and control of, cultural tourism development varies across communities and depends on the context in which development is taking place (i.e. at a community or individual business level) (Smith 2003; Butler & Hinch 2007). While Indigenous communities rarely have complete control over Indigenous tourism products and businesses, there have been moves towards consultative, joint, or cooperative management
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

such as those discussed previously. Such arrangements have been shown to be beneficial, as long as the Indigenous communities themselves are treated as equal partners. Indeed, Smith (2003) claimed that there are a number of examples of Indigenous tourism ventures failing, precisely because local communities have not been given appropriate control over the ventures. Certainly, studies of tourism development initiatives in the Canadian Arctic have shown tourism ventures have largely been unsuccessful due to a lack of internal control and community consensus as to which direction tourism initiatives should take (Anderson 1991; Smith 2003).

Government support

It has been claimed that only when government support is in place, including the facilitation of effective governance and holistic development strategies, that Indigenous economic development projects have the chance of becoming sustainable (Cornell & Kalt 1992; The World Bank 1994; Cornell & Gil-Swedberg 1995; Hylton 1999; Institute of Governance 1999; Plumptre & Graham 1999; Jorgensen 2000). In Australia, government support systems and funding are a major factor in the development of Indigenous enterprises, in part due to the government’s intervention in Indigenous affairs, as a derivative of welfare provision and due to the limited funding opportunities available from other sources such as commercial finance lenders.

It has been claimed that as a result of government sponsorship and continuing financial subvention in Indigenous affairs, economic independence is impossible (Altman 1992). Schaper (1999 p. 91) writes that, ‘for a very long time, many Aborigines were forced into dependency on governments for their material needs. Restrictions on the ability to work, confinement to reservations and the absence of pay for work rendered, meant that public sector welfare was a dominant institution in many people's lives’, compounding over several generations to create a significantly disadvantaged underclass. Attempts to assist Indigenous people in overcoming their disadvantaged socio-economic position can in fact place many Indigenous Australians in a ‘poverty trap’ (Pearson 2000; Buultjens 2005) and Dodson and Smith (2003) claim that community organisations are tied to the grant funding ‘drip-feed’. Pearson (2000, p. 30–32) argues that, ‘welfare dependency has become a pervasive component of contemporary Aboriginal values—a mentality—and has poisoned people’s capacity to assume responsibility for themselves and their fellows. This dependency has inevitably locked people out of participating in a “real economy”’, either the “real” market economy or the “real” economy of traditional society’. He further notes that ‘the problem with the welfare economy is that it is not a real economy. It is a completely artificial means of living.’ (Pearson 1999, p. 30).

Government funding support does not only impact on the self sufficiency and bona fide viability of Indigenous enterprises, it also instils a new raft of performance indicators including upwards accountability and externally imposed structures and constitutions. It has also been claimed that government policy and service delivery is poorly coordinated and inefficiently delivered (Dodson & Smith 2003, Tourism Victoria 2006), with stop-start funding, scattered across numerous departments in different program structures that lack transparency and ‘downward accountability’ (Dodson & Smith 2003, p. 7). A further inhibitor in the context of government support for tourism business development is that Australian governments have tended to fund tourism projects at a community level on the questionable assumption that communities are homogeneous social groups. In reality, Aboriginal communities are often divided, with community factions having different views about economic development options (Altman & Finlayson 1992) thereby highlighting flaws in current funding models.

Entrepreneurship

To move away from a dependence on government resourcing there is a need to cultivate and encourage a culture of entrepreneurship amongst Indigenous communities and individuals (Neblett & Green 1999). Indeed, there is substantial literature on Indigenous entrepreneurship (Hailey 1992; Anderson 2002; Fuller & Cummings 2003; Lindsay 2005; Anderson, Dana & Dana 2006; Dawson 2006). Particularly relevant to this study is research undertaken by Foley (2006) on Indigenous Australian entrepreneurs. The research showed that entrepreneurs have several motivators that drive them to achieve success including a hatred of poverty, which results in a strong desire to provide a better life for their children and achieve financial independence. Foley (2006, p.10) claims that, ‘in contrast to the historical background of their youth, (or their parents’ upbringing), they obtain a degree of self-determination and control over their lives, at least prima facie’.

Entrepreneurs are crucial in an economy for developing new business opportunities, sourcing requisite start-up finance, creating employment, increasing production and developing the necessary partnerships with other business, government and non-government agencies (Hailey 1992; Neblett & Green 1999; Fuller & Cummings 2003). Reporting on the role of entrepreneurs in developing countries, Neblett and Green (1999) claim that additionally
entrepreneurs contribute to: restructuring and diversifying the economy; reducing the concentration of economic power through a wider dispersal of industry ownership; reducing market inefficiencies by making the marketplace more dynamic and competitive; improving the social welfare of a country by harnessing dormant, previously overlooked talent; and creating new markets.

However, when considering the role of the entrepreneurs in a collective setting such as an Indigenous community, particular culturally bound issues arise. For instance, a study of Australian Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs identified significant cultural differences between Indigenous entrepreneurs and western entrepreneurs (Lee-Ross & Mitchell 2007). Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs demonstrated little tolerance for unequal power distributions, businesses were more likely to be developed around a cultural collective where there were close family ties amongst staff and profits were shared with the community. Alternatively, amongst western entrepreneurs, there was strong support for power differentials and a desire amongst entrepreneurs to dominate their social structure (Lee-Ross & Mitchell 2007). Furthermore, amongst western entrepreneurs, there was a strong belief that it was up to the individual to bring about change or business success, while amongst Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs there was the strong belief that change and success are facilitated by the collective, not the individual (Lee-Ross & Mitchell 2007). Schaper (1999) also identifies differences between Aboriginal Australians and Non-Aboriginal Australians in terms of attitudes and values to business related variables (Table 1).

Table 1 Differences in business-related values attitudes towards … Aboriginal Australians Non-Aboriginal Australians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes towards</th>
<th>Aboriginal Australians</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal Australians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possessions</td>
<td>Utilise</td>
<td>Accumulate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share</td>
<td>Acquire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>Relationship with</td>
<td>Ownership of</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>Kin obligations</td>
<td>Individual rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Operating Unit</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Schaper (1999)

Schaper (1999) maintains that in Aboriginal culture, possessions are traditionally seen as belonging to the group and as such, business owners sometimes have pre-existing obligations which require them to distribute profits among other members of the family or community. In fact, often other goals take precedence over profit for the Indigenous business owner including the maintenance of kin relationships, social obligations and preservation of one's cultural identity. Thereby the success of Aboriginal business people cannot be measured solely by conventional western ideas of entrepreneurship, wealth creation and management. Indeed, Schaper (1999) said the result is that in many remote communities, cash and traditional subsistence economies have merged. This means a business may not be profitable or successful by western standards of business efficiency, but does meet community needs and expectations.

While the development of an entrepreneurial attitude within Indigenous communities may be beneficial, it can also be a difficult task for Indigenous communities, especially if the ‘community does not have an entrepreneurial spirit’ (Matuszewski 1993, p. 62). Nevertheless, entrepreneurship can be accomplished through a number of methods including: public recognition of local entrepreneurs, promoting success stories and having major industries encourage start-ups through initial contracts, prompt payments and managerial assistance (Matuszewski 1993). Support from major businesses, which may provide initial contracts, is very important in the early stages of community economic development and a ‘buy local’ policy is recommended for these industries (Lindsay 2004). In addition, while the individual characteristics and attitudes of an entrepreneur are important, successful entrepreneurship is most often not an isolated occurrence, but happens within the social context of a community and a supportive relationship between the entrepreneur and his/her environment (MacKenzie 1992).

Anderson et al. (2006 p. 45) in their work with Indigenous communities in Canada, also stressed the importance of community support for new enterprises, particularly in relation to the identification of new opportunities and the creation of ventures to exploit these opportunities for the benefit of the entire community – a process they refer to as ‘social entrepreneurialism’. Social entrepreneurialism emphasises social purpose as the principal driver of the activity, with organisational sustainability as a core objective. Social purpose is achieved primarily through entrepreneurship and there is little if any distribution of profit to individuals as any surplus is reinvested for the long-term benefit of the community (Anderson et al. 2006). Anderson et al. (2006) maintain successful social
entrepreneurship is a means to an end including the creation of employment, the generation of capabilities, control of traditional lands and activities on these lands together with the creation of wealth to fund education, health and wellness, housing, and other social programs.

**Traditional lands**

Arguably one of the most important issues facing Indigenous communities is the issue of land ownership and the control of natural resources (Altman 1992; Loomis 2000; Banerjee 2003; Dyer et al. 2003; Lindsay 2004; Beeton 2005; Anderson et al. 2006; Johns 2007). Indeed, the recognition of control over land and other resources is an issue common to Indigenous communities not only in Australia but also New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, Africa, Northern Europe, Asia and the South Pacific (Hall 1996; Loomis 2000; Fuller & Cummings 2003; Lindsay 2004; Anderson et al. 2006; Johns 2007). According to Anderson et al. (2006), land is important in two respects. Firstly, traditional lands are the ‘place’ of the nation and are inseparable from the people, culture and identity. Secondly, land and resources are the foundation upon which Indigenous communities can build economies to improve socio-economic circumstances. For example, Loomis (2000) reported that substantial treaty settlements in the form of property and money have allowed Maori communities to undertake major commercial ventures, as well as allowed local operators to develop small business ventures. Consequently, many local communities are establishing small business ventures in areas such as fishing, arts and crafts and cultural tourism.

The realisation of Aboriginal rights to lands and resources are recognised as being critical to building capacity to enable economic development (Hall 1996; Fuller & Cummings 2003; Anderson et al. 2006; Johns 2007). These rights represent a considerable capital that can be used as leverage in terms of economic bargaining with government departments. Beyond their economic values, these rights give Indigenous communities control over activities that take place on traditional lands including the right to ‘veto’ resource development projects (Anderson et al. 2006, p. 47). However, the challenge is that even if communities have access to natural resources, very few have either the legal control, or the local infrastructure to be able to manage them in a way that would bring sustained economic benefits (Dodson & Smith 2003, Lindsay 2004, SCRGSP 2007). For instance, some Indigenous communities have statutory property rights, but limited or non-existent revenue-raising jurisdiction (Altman 2001a). Other Indigenous groups have regained ownership of land however the land has been badly degraded by previous non-Indigenous owners, requiring substantial financial inputs and rehabilitation (Broun 2005).

**Policy Review: Australian Government Involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism**

**Federal government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism policy**

Tourism has been viewed by consecutive federal governments as an economic activity that can improve the socio-economic situation of Indigenous Australians. As early as 1965, Indigenous involvement in the tourism industry was specifically recommended in the first government-initiated national report on the tourism industry, *Australia's Travel and Tourism Industry*. However, prior to the 1967 referendum on the *Constitution Alteration (Aboriginals) 1967*, the Commonwealth Government had limited involvement in policy-making with responsibility for Indigenous people’s welfare under the auspices of the respective state governments. After the 1967 referendum, which removed the impediment in Section 51 of the Australian Constitution to the Commonwealth Government making special laws with respect to Aborigines, the Commonwealth began to take a limited role in policymaking pertaining to Indigenous affairs and service delivery including funding assistance for Indigenous business (Pratt & Bennett 2004). The introduction of *The Aboriginal Enterprises Assistance Act* in 1968 was established to provide loans and guarantees as well as facilitate and mentor Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses.

It was not until the Whitlam Government came to power in December 1972 that the Commonwealth Government began to play a significant role in policy-making and service delivery in Indigenous affairs and established the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA). The DAA’s role was to provide both advice to the Government on Indigenous affairs policy, as well as implementing and administering government programs. The DAA was the central Commonwealth Indigenous affairs agency until the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) commenced operations in March 1990 (Pratt & Bennett 2004). Importantly it was during this era that Indigenous people themselves began to have a presence in the decision-making structures for Indigenous affairs policy. According to Pratt and Bennett (2004), the policy framework was moving from ‘assimilation’ and ‘integration’ to ‘self-determination’ where Indigenous peoples were involved in decision-making about, and the
management of their own affairs. Altman (2000) argues that the ‘assimilationist’ approach was based on the assumption that if sufficient public funds were devoted to Indigenous education, health, housing and employment programs, then material betterment would automatically follow and Indigenous people would be able to compete directly with other Australians, both in the formal labour market and in the business sector.

Under the Whitlam government, the first federal level Department of Tourism and Recreation was created in 1973. However in 1975, under the new Liberal Federal Government led by Malcolm Fraser, tourism became a branch of the newly created Department of Industry and Commerce. The Select Committee on Tourism concluded that tourism ‘is of considerable economic significance and deserves greater recognition’ (cited Craik 1991). Approximately ten years later this recognition was reinforced in The Report of the Australian Government Inquiry into Tourism (Commonwealth Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism 1986) which among other things identified the untapped source of employment opportunities gained by participation of Aborigines in cultural tourism.

Another change of government in 1983 saw the opportunities to develop cultural tourism and in turn, employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians, again identified in an inquiry instigated by the Hawke government. The Miller Report however, emphasised Indigenous arts and crafts as a priority industry above other tourism ventures (Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations & DAA 1985). This view was reiterated in the 1986 Kennedy Report (Commonwealth Department of Sport, Recreation & Tourism 1986), along with the suggestion to develop a National Tourism Policy to facilitate Aboriginal involvement in tourism in culturally appropriate ways.

In 1988, The Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories claimed Indigenous tourism to be the ‘jewel in the crown’ of Australia’s tourism industry and declared that Australia's Aboriginal culture provided a unique contribution to the national heritage and offered significant opportunities for the diversification of Australian tourism. Consequently, ATSIC, which was established in 1989, created an industry advisory committee to develop tourism strategies.

Also during 1989, the Federal Government’s Industries Assistance Commission [IAC] importantly defined the role of government as facilitating the economic climate for tourism. The IAC (1989) acknowledged that growth in tourist activity was occurring on or near Aboriginal land, with increasing emphasis being placed on Aboriginal culture and heritage in the promotion of tourism, but admitted the net effect of exposure to tourism on Aboriginal people was not clear. The outcome of such promotion was evident in a study conducted by the Australia Council in 1990 (Altman 1992), which found that forty-nine percent of international visitors surveyed were interested in seeing and learning about Aboriginal art and culture.

In 1992, as a result of the legal land rights case of Eddie Mabo and Others versus the State of Queensland, the Federal High Court held that Australia was not ‘terra nullius’ or empty land when settled by the British in 1788, but was occupied by Indigenous peoples. Much attention was focused on the Mabo case and Indigenous peoples, highlighted by the inclusion of Indigenous tourism in the subsequent Keating Labor Government’s National Tourism Strategy (Commonwealth Department of Tourism [DOT] 1992). The strategy also noted the need to develop an Aboriginal Tourism Strategy to facilitate the growth of Indigenous tourism enterprises and opportunities and to foster links with the tourism industry.

The possibility for Indigenous peoples to realise tourism opportunities became evident with the passing of the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 (The Office of National Tourism 1998a). Dillon (1987) and Altman (1992) believed that Aboriginal ownership of land should be the leverage that allows Aboriginal interests to extract a share of the tourism rent generated by businesses that provide goods and services to visitors. Moreover, the Pacific Asia Travel Association (1990) stated that until the communities are confident that they can exercise effective and unchallenged control over the lands they occupy, they will continue to be distracted from all other concerns and will lack incentive to develop the tourism potential of the area.

In 1993, DOT identified as a priority for future action in the National Tourism Strategy Progress Report No 1, the need to provide opportunities for Indigenous employment in the tourism industry through the development of a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy (Commonwealth Department of Tourism 1993). The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy Major Consultancy Report [NATSITIS: MCR] (1994), was undertaken to identify and establish the potential of Indigenous participation in the Australian tourism industry. The Draft National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Industry Strategy [DNATSITIS] was
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

released later that year and specified objectives to enhance opportunities for self-determination, self-management and economic self-sufficiency in tourism for Indigenous people.

In 1997, three years after the release of the draft document and now with a Liberal National Coalition Government in office under the leadership of John Howard, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Industry Strategy [NATSITIS] was launched. NATSITIS was developed in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991), as were the National ATSI Rural Industry Strategy (ATSIC 1997), the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Industry Strategy (ATSIC 1997) and Queensland Cultural Tourism: A Framework for Development (The Arts Office and Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation 1996; Zeppel 1999). According to the Office of National Tourism (1998), NATSITIS provided a blueprint for future development of Indigenous tourism in Australia such as the National Aboriginal Culture Centre at Darling Harbour in Sydney, which opened in July 1998.

Further research by the South Australian Tourism Commission [SATC] (1998), and ATSIC and The Office of National Tourism (1997) focused on tourism as a means of providing Indigenous peoples with an opportunity for economic advancement, business development, job and educational opportunities and the preservation of an ancient culture. At the same time, Indigenous participation in Australian tourism was also viewed as a means of providing a unique product opportunity for the tourism industry, provided that in any partnership between the tourism industry and Indigenous peoples, both parties received education on varying issues (e.g. cross cultural awareness and or management skills) for such partnerships to succeed.

The next major milestone for Indigenous tourism development in Australia occurred on the 20th November 2003, when the Australian Federal Government’s Tourism White Paper was released. The White Paper announced, among other things, that ‘tourism offers particular opportunities for Indigenous Australians’ including ‘much needed opportunities for employment, social stability and preservation of culture and traditions’ (Commonwealth of Australia 2003, p. 41). The White Paper identified the potential of utilising tourism as a means of realising some of these opportunities but noted that the ‘tourism market is only meeting half the demand for Indigenous tourism products’ (Commonwealth of Australia 2003, p. 4). In 2004 ATSIC was officially abolished by the Federal Government and superseded by the establishment of a new agency ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services’ [ATSIS]. The role of ATSIS was to administer the former ATSIC’s programs and make decisions about the allocation of ATSIC grants.

In 2005, the Federal Government officially established Indigenous Tourism Australia [ITA] as a division of Australia’s peak tourism body, Tourism Australia. Funding was provided to ITA by the Australian Federal Government as part of its commitment to grow quality Indigenous niche tourism experiences in Australia. Aden Ridgeway, Executive Chairman of Indigenous Tourism Australia, described the role of the organisation to ‘create a more conducive environment for these communities and families who choose tourism to come together as a way forward’ (no author 2007). He further noted that ‘it helps tourism businesses access capital, as many communities cannot mortgage their land to raise money because of land rights restrictions. Many indigenous families also have no credit record’ (no author 2007).

In 2006 the Federal Government’s Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism was granted funding of $4 million with the objective of assisting Indigenous Australians to achieve economic independence while demonstrating the Federal governments’ commitment to the growth of Indigenous tourism.

In 2008, the newly elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a historic Apology to the Stolen Generations and in doing so set a mission to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Federal and state/territory government partnerships have sought to address Indigenous disadvantage in terms of health, housing, early childhood development, economic participation and remote service delivery (Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2008). Within this context, the government have set the ambitious objective within the Indigenous Economic Development Strategy to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. A range of business and employment programs have been implemented.

State/territory governments’ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism policy

Despite Federal government recognition of the potential value of Indigenous tourism, it was not until 1971 in the Northern Territory, that specific State/Territory Government involvement in Indigenous tourism first occurred.
Northern Territory Government via the Northern Territory Newsletter (1971) announced new training courses for young Aboriginal women to become ‘efficient’ tourist guides, bus hostesses or kiosk attendants. This provided the impetus for other state governments to address Indigenous tourism.

In Queensland, tourism development was a core policy of the Bjelke-Petersen National Party, which held office from 1957 to 1989, with high levels of political intervention and vigorous promotion (Craik 1991). According to Craik (1991) the government created conditions that were conducive to the rapid development of the tourism industry although this approach did attract great political debate as to the veracity of development, with suggestions being made that the ‘development at all costs’ attitude often occurred at the expense of both mainstream and minority (i.e. Indigenous) communities.

In 1979 the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation was established as a marketing and development organisation, taking over from the Department of Tourism. In the early years of the QTTC, the macro-level focus on positioning Queensland as a tourist destination meant that niche sectors such as Indigenous tourism and others were not a key focus at the time. Nonetheless, the Queensland Government was recognising both the economic and cultural significance of Indigenous peoples. Brennan (1992) claimed that during the mid 1970's to mid 1980's, the Queensland Parliament had passed more laws regarding Aboriginal land title and local government than any other parliament in Australia.

Indigenous tourism came to the fore in 1986 when the Queensland Department of Aboriginal Affairs gave approval for the establishment of the Dreamtime Cultural Centre in Rockhampton. This was followed in 1987 by the formation of the privately owned and funded Tjapukai Aboriginal Dance Theatre in Kuranda, near Cairns in North Queensland. Today, the company operates under the name of Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park in Cairns, and has received numerous awards in recognition of its success as an Indigenous tourism operation. Based on the assumption that the Tjapukai Aboriginal Dance Theatre and the Dreamtime Cultural Centre assisted in preserving, maintaining and fostering Indigenous cultural heritage, a dichotomy existed at this time. The Cultural Record Act 1987 was passed and according to Fourmile (1992) it was “a legislative blueprint for the obliteration of much of the Indigenous cultural heritage of Queensland.” Fourmile’s argument would appear to be based on the grounds that the Act would legally sanction the exploitation of Indigenous culture and heritage yet the Queensland Branch of the National Party of Australia showed little interest in expanding Aboriginal options for creative artistic work other than by providing a sales outlet for craft work (Finlayson 1991).

In 1979 the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau became the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation [QTTC]. In the early years of the QTTC, Indigenous tourism did not appear to be of enough importance to warrant a specific unit within the organisation. Nonetheless, the Queensland Government was recognising both the economic and cultural significance of Indigenous peoples. Brennan (1992) claimed that during the mid 1970's to mid 1980's, the Queensland Parliament had passed more laws regarding Aboriginal land title and local government than any other parliament in Australia. While the laws regarding Aboriginal land title should have provided opportunities for new Indigenous tourism development, the QTTC, by concentrating their interests on conventional developments such as coastal resorts, ignored both the potential for Aboriginal employment in tourism and Aboriginal tourism projects (Finlayson 1991). In Queensland, the state tourism industry did not see Aboriginal tourism as having any substantial role to play within the industry, despite the fact that North Queensland and the Cape York Peninsula were attracting increased interest as a new commercial frontier (Finlayson 1991).

During the late 1980’s, tourism in Queensland was enjoying strong growth and Indigenous tourism was receiving more attention through the opening of the Kuku-Yalanji Cultural Centre at Mossman Gorge in 1987, the establishment of the National Centre for Studies in Tourism at James Cook University in Townsville and more significantly, World Expo 88 in Brisbane. In 1989, the Goss Labor Government won office in Queensland and The Report of the Review Committee into the Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Industry (DAA 1989) was released. The Report revealed that in comparison to Aboriginal arts and crafts in the Northern Territory, the arts and crafts of Indigenous peoples of Queensland were largely unknown and unappreciated due to the underdevelopment of the industry within the state.

The Warrama Living History Centre in Cairns, funded by the Federal Aboriginal Development Commission and the Queensland Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Finlayson 1991) was opened in August 1990. Although the Centre operated only for a limited period of time, it was developed as a major cultural base for North Queensland Indigenous communities. Through the aforementioned activity and policy development, albeit not always directly related to tourism, Queensland State Government interest in Indigenous tourism appeared to be increasing. This was
reflected in the formation of an Indigenous tourism unit within QTTC in 1992 and the appointment of an Aboriginal tourism officer in 1993. The purpose of the unit was to discover the nature of existing Indigenous products and to raise the awareness levels of relevant QTTC departments and the tourism industry concerning the existence of such products. In the same year, the Northern Territory Tourist Commission [NTTC] in partnership with ATSIC, hosted an Indigenous tourism conference which resulted in the NTTC examining an array of issues pertaining to the growth and development of Indigenous tourism which would later inform the development of an Indigenous tourism strategy. In essence, by the mid 1990s, Indigenous tourism was gaining momentum, visibility and significance at both state/territory and federal government levels.

In December 1995, the Queensland Government Department of Tourism, Sport and Youth (1995; 1997) launched the Draft Queensland Ecotourism Plan and the final Queensland Ecotourism Plan in 1997. In the same year, QTTC (1997) launched A Framework for the Future, declaring QTTC would be actively involved in promoting the development of Indigenous tourism product along with other special interest groups, which included markets such as wine, farming and rural tourism. Despite the QTTC goal to raise awareness levels of Indigenous tourism, Miller (1995) maintained that QTTC support had not been converted into a stronger more reliable Indigenous product. Furthermore, Fourmile (1992) reiterated sentiments from the 1989 Report of the Review Committee into the Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Industry (DAA 1989), stating that despite the enormous potential for Indigenous tourism in Queensland, the QTTC ‘lags well behind its counterpart in the Northern Territory with regard to the official promotion of its state’s Indigenous cultures.’ This became even more evident in 1996, when the NTTC published its first Aboriginal tourism strategy and in 1997 Tourism Victoria produced its first industry development plan for Indigenous tourism.

Additionally, the Victorian Government and ATSIC embarked upon a joint tourism venture which focused on marketing strategies to support the growth of Indigenous tourism in Victoria. The Victorian Government’s Tourism Industry Strategic Plan 2002–2006, was launched and it acknowledged Aboriginal tourism as a product segment offering potential growth. Meanwhile, Tasmanian government agencies were acknowledging the potential for Aboriginal tourism at a series of meetings conducted from 1999–2001. The Tasmanian Government instigated Tasmania Together in 2000 which acknowledged the contribution that the Aboriginal community and their culture made to Tasmania and its identity. Indigenous Themes was released in 2001 and recommended that the Tasmanian State Government proceed to create an Aboriginal tourism development plan. Similarly, the Western Australia Government was also developing initiatives for Indigenous tourism including assisting ‘Aboriginal people to set up and participate in economically and socially beneficial tourism ventures based on their culture and affinity with the environment.’ (Western Australian Tourism Commission 2001, p. 3). Furthermore, Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee Association Inc. [WAITOC] was incorporated in 2002. WAITOC was the only group of its type in Australia and was acknowledged as the peak industry representative body for Indigenous operators in Western Australia.

In 2005, the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania released the Indigenous Employment Strategy after realising that no definite work had been undertaken to examine training and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in the hospitality and tourism industry. In 2005–06, the Victorian Government launched the Aboriginal Land and Economic Development Program which aimed to, among other things; involve more Aboriginal people in land and natural resource management and sustainable tourism. Also in 2006, the New South Wales, Western Australian and Victorian Governments launched their new Indigenous tourism policies. In 2007, Tasmania released its Aboriginal Tourism Development Plan. Additionally, the Queensland Government introduced the Cape York and Torres Strait Tourism Development Action Plan in 2008 to help Indigenous Queenslanders to gain employment and promote economic development in their communities.

The Way Forward

In 2008, newly elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a formal apology to the Indigenous people of Australia. This was the first formal apology delivered to Indigenous peoples by an Australian Prime Minister. During the apology, many of the social and economic hardships facing Indigenous Australians in contemporary society were highlighted. One of the key issues raised was how the government, and indeed, the nation, could address the economic divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians; problems that are linked to issues of health provision, education, and the low life expectancy of Indigenous Australians.
Undoubtedly Indigenous communities face a number of harsh realities (Smith 1996). Poor levels of education, substance abuse, deteriorating health outcomes and increasing rates of imprisonment are having a destructive impact on Indigenous social and cultural capital (Dodson & Smith 2003; SCRGSP 2007). Economically, most communities need sustainable income streams through some form of financially viable activity to generate local employment. Concurrently, there is a need for improved education to develop skills. Tourism has the potential to address some of these issues; it can provide employment and industry, as well as return a sense of pride, dignity and a chance to reinforce culture. Yet, despite the increased demand for Indigenous tourism, the tourism phenomenon has done little to date to resolve the socio-economic problems facing Indigenous people, and in many cases, tourism has exacerbated these problems further (Altman 1992; Altman 2003; Deutschlander & Miller 2003; Smith 2003; Lindsay 2004; Butler & Hinch 2007). Clearly there are barriers that can and do impact on the ability of Indigenous communities to develop commercially successful business ventures including obtaining finance via non-government sources, accessing educated and skilled labour, developing appropriate product and fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, among others.

However, for tourism to make a meaningful improvement to the socio-economic situation of Indigenous people, development must take into account the social, historical and political contexts and outside pressures, as well as considering the world-view of the local or Indigenous peoples involved in tourism and ‘how they feel about their culture being used as a commodity’ (van Den Berg, Collard, Harben & Byrne 2005, p. 76). The challenge going forward is for Indigenous communities and policy makers to discover or create opportunities that will lead to commercially successful enterprises that can deliver the benefits afforded by tourism.
Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODS

To date, there has been limited empirical research into Australian Indigenous tourism enterprises and as a result little is known about the factors that contribute to the success and long-term viability of enterprises in Australia’s Indigenous tourism sector (Boyle 2001). Yet one exception is a study undertaken by Fuller et al (2005, p. 893) who concluded that ‘there has been a less than desirable success rate in Indigenous tourism enterprises’. Given this, it was considered imperative to identify those underpinning factors that are associated with the success of Indigenous tourism enterprises. This research project responds to the identified need to understand the development, operation and management of these enterprises with the objective of identifying the inhibitors and facilitators to business success from the perspectives of both community operated organisations and individual entrepreneurs. Similarly the relationship between the underlying success factors associated with Indigenous tourism enterprises and how this is affected by the range of government support structures and policy. Utilising cases from Queensland, the research objectives of the project included:

- analysing and evaluating the creation, operation and management of a selection of commercial (i.e. sole traders, partnerships or proprietary limited companies) and community based Indigenous tourism enterprises in Queensland
- identifying the nature, range and impact of government policy pertaining to Indigenous tourism enterprises
- categorising the underpinning facilitators and inhibitors of successful Indigenous tourism enterprises to underpin the development of a diagnostic framework of criteria for success.

To identify those factors which underpin successful Indigenous tourism enterprises, a two-phase qualitative interpretive methodology was employed. A comprehensive review of the literature and Australian government policies and business support programs pertaining to Indigenous tourism (i.e. section two) provided the foundation for the primary data collection which included telephone and in-depth, face-to-face interviews.

Methodology

The research was conducted utilising an interpretive approach. This approach was applied to guide both the telephone and in-depth interviews. The interpretive paradigm is based on the concept of empathetic understanding and according to Weber (1978, p. 5), ‘empathetic or appreciative understanding is attained when, through sympathetic participation, we can adequately grasp the emotional context in which the action took place’. Researchers are seen to be part of the research process as they seek to uncover meanings and understandings of the broad interrelationships in the situation they are researching by relying on the people being studied to provide their own explanation of their situation or behaviour.

The interpretive paradigm therefore takes the view that the world is socially constructed and subjective and that there is no reality outside of peoples’ perceptions (Ticehurst & Veal 1999). That is, the individual and their world are co-constituted, with the person having no existence apart from the world and the world having no existence apart from the person (Valle & King 1978; Maykut & Morehouse 1994). It also considers the world as being constituted of multiple realities, with the researcher assuming an inductive approach to research and commencing the study in the empirical world in order to develop explanations of the phenomena (Jennings 2001). According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), the way we understand the nature of reality directly affects the way we see ourselves in relation to knowledge. Therefore, if knowledge can be separated into parts and examined individually, then the researcher can stand apart from who or what they are examining. However, if knowledge is constructed, then the researcher cannot totally be separated from what is known (i.e. the world is co-constituted).
Qualitative research seeks answers to questions by examining social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings (Berg 2001). Qualitative research methods are a set of interpretive techniques that describe, decode, translate and attempt to develop meaning from a phenomenon, as opposed to a quantitative approach, which essentially records the frequency of the phenomena (Van Maanen 1983). Such techniques allow researchers to share in the understandings and perceptions of others and to explore how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives, through the collection of ‘rich’ information from respondents (Brunt 1997; Berg 2001). To analyse this information, the data can be subject to content analysis, a process of organising it into objective categories on the basis of themes, concepts or similar features, from which new concepts are developed, conceptual definitions are formulated and relationships among concepts are examined in relation to the research question and pre-existing theoretical understandings (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Sapsford & Jupp 1996; Janesick 2000; Neuman 2000; McKee 2003).

Data Collection Phase One: Telephone Interviews

In line with the scope of the research objectives and to inform and provide a sampling framework for the in-depth interviews, the first phase of the data collection involved a telephone interview with Indigenous tourism business operators in Queensland. Firstly, a database of currently operational Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland was constructed. This desk-based task used several sources to compile the database including: Tourism Queensland and respective Regional Tourism Organisation’s and Local Tourism Authority websites, general web searches for businesses and operator lists such as those provided by Aboriginal Tourism Australia and Black Pages, an online Indigenous business and community directory. Given the broad and diverse nature of businesses included within or on the periphery of the tourism industry, businesses were delimited by their core business objectives and/or the markets they actively serviced. For inclusion on the database, the businesses must include tourism as one of their objectives or tourists as one of their customer markets.

A total of 43 Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland were identified in the compilation of the database. Attempts to contact each of these businesses revealed that 19 of the 43 businesses were non-operational at the time of sampling. Each of the operational businesses contacted were provided with a brief explanation relating to the purpose of the study and invited to participate in a short phone survey which would take approximately five minutes to complete. Each of the persons contacted were informed that their participation was both voluntary and anonymous. Participation in the telephone survey was an indicator of consent. Only nine of the 24 businesses contacted elected to participate in the survey representing a response rate of 37% (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of businesses identified through audit</th>
<th>Contactable</th>
<th>Telephone Interview Sampling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-operational*</td>
<td>Operational**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Non-operational businesses were classified as those where they had either ceased operations or telephone/email communication was disconnected/non-responsive.

**Operational businesses were classified as those where the researcher established contact with the business and verified that the business is still operating.

Of the nine businesses surveyed, five of these were cultural centres with tourism components and/or markets; three were tour operators and one participant represented an Indigenous art gallery (Table 3). Respondents were asked a series of structured questions including:

- length of operation and structure of the business (i.e. community owned, sole proprietor, etc.)
- operational aspects including number of days per week business operates, number and skills levels of employees
- perceived factors that could help their business grow and factors that could (or do) inhibit the growth of the business
- criteria for a successful Indigenous business
- willingness to participate in further research (Appendix A).
The telephone interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were subject to content analysis.

### Table 3 Nature of business operation: telephone interview participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Centre</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Operator</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Gallery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Data Collection Phase Two: In-depth Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with seven representatives of Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland. Interviewing is a common means of collecting data in qualitative research and can be defined as simply, a conversation with a purpose, with the purpose being to gather information (Dexter 1970; Denzin 1978; Babbie 1998; Marshall & Rossman 1999). In-depth interviewing refers to respondents giving detailed, reflective answers based on consideration of their evidence and experiences. The advantage of in-depth interviews is researchers have the opportunity to obtain thoughtful answers based on the experience of participants as well as gain an insight into the topic from diverse viewpoints. They also allow researchers to find out about things that they did not directly observe, in this case the creation, operation and management of Indigenous tourism enterprises. A further advantage is the ability to collect detailed data in a relatively short period of time, as well as allowing for clarification of issues with participants on their thoughts.

While several types of interview categories can be utilised from completely standardised to completely un-standardised interview structures (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979; Maykut & Morehouse 1994; Babbie 1995; Berg 2001), the semi standardised (or semi structured) interview technique was adopted for this study. Under this type of interviewing structure, a number of predetermined open questions are asked of each subject in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers have the freedom to digress to probe beyond the answers to the prepared and standardised questions (Berg 2001).

An interview guide was prepared in advance of the interviews, based on the key theories and issues raised in the literature and policy review pertinent to the research objectives of this study. The objective of preparing an interview guide with a series of questions or topics was to ensure that the same information was obtained from all participants in the study (Patton 1990). The interview guide (Appendix B) was structured around themes including:

- background information
- customers
- employees
- management
- support systems and networks
- sustainability
- looking to the future

### Sampling framework

The telephone interviews conducted in the first phase of the research provided the sampling framework for the in-depth interviews. Each of the nine participants in the telephone interviews were asked whether they would be willing to participate in further research and all indicated a willingness to do so. However, participants were purposively selected from this sample to ensure that where possible, representatives of each of the business structures were included (i.e. community owned, sole proprietor, etc.) (Table 4 & Table 5). Due to this sampling strategy not all phase one participants were included in phase two of the research. Doing so would have created duplication as certain business structures would have been overrepresented in the final results. Further, geographical spread was sought but this was limited by budgetary constraints and participant availability during the data collection period and so to some extent, this further influenced the purposive selection of participants from phase one for the in-depth interviews undertaken in phase two.
Of the nine businesses surveyed in the first phase of the study, six were selected for inclusion in the second phase of the research. An additional business was included in phase two although they were not originally available to complete a telephone interview. This was necessary to meet the sampling strategy requirement to interview representatives of different business structures (i.e., community owned, sole proprietor, etc.). This business was included as it is a large, internationally recognised and award winning facility that has been operating successfully for over 20 years and fulfilled one of the pertinent business structure criteria.

Interviews were conducted with a representative of each of the seven businesses at a time and place of their convenience. Interviews were tape-recorded and participants informed of this both verbally and via the information and consent forms provided prior to the interview.

| Table 4 Nature of business operation: in-depth interview participants |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| **Business type**         | **Frequency** |
| Cultural Centre           | 3           |
| Tour Operator             | 3           |
| Art Gallery               | 1           |
| **Total**                 | **7**       |

| Table 5 Ownership structure of business |
|----------------|-------------|
| **Business type**       | **Frequency** |
| Community owned         | 3           |
| Sole operator           | 3           |
| Partnership (private-community owned) | 1 |
| **Total**               | **7**       |

**Content analysis**

Interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim and analysed using content analysis techniques. As in-depth interviews generally result in large amounts of rich data, the data must be reduced and transformed into an accessible and understandable form so that the various themes and patterns associated with the participants being studied can be identified (Dey 1993; Berg 2001; Neuendorf 2002). Content analysis requires that the data is analysed through a process of induction, where the researcher constructs and reconstructs meaning in the data in relation to the research question (Janesick 2000). A central idea in content analysis is that the many words of the text are classified into much fewer content categories, which may consist of one, several or many words (Weber 1990; Swift 1996).

To achieve the objectives of the study (i.e. identify the nature, range and impact of government funding support for Indigenous tourism enterprises and identify the underpinning facilitators and inhibitors to successful Indigenous tourism enterprises) the seven interview transcripts underwent manifest coding. Singular or multiple words and or phrases deemed relevant to the study objectives were selected from the transcripts. Selected words and or phrases were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet. The importance of words and/or phrases was determined by knowledge gained from issues raised in the review of literature and a critical colleague validated their importance. Manifest codes for each interview transcript were then sorted alphabetically for visual ease of identification in an Excel spreadsheet. The same manifest codes were also combined and sorted alphabetically in a separate summary Excel Spreadsheet. The summary manifest codes underwent a system of latent coding described below.

A coding framework (Table 6) was developed for the study to provide latent codes for analysis. The framework was developed in conjunction with the literature and according to the study’s objectives. Therefore the latent codes included 1) drivers, 2) inhibitors, 3) opportunities, 4) positive government support of Indigenous tourism businesses and 5) criteria for success. In order to increase reliability in this process, the assigned latent codes were first checked by a critical colleague, knowledgeable in the use of this procedure, to validate their suitability then justified according to their appropriateness, in the narrative findings of the research. Latent codes were allocated to the manifest codes in the summary Excel spreadsheet and placed in a corresponding column in the spreadsheet. Latent codes were sorted by alphabetical order to provide visual ease of identification for grouping. The number of latent codes within a latent code grouping (e.g., drivers, inhibitors etc) were recorded, providing data for ensuing analysis.

Table 6 identifies the characteristics allocated as the latent codes of drivers and inhibitors of Indigenous tourism businesses, opportunities for Indigenous tourism businesses, positive government support for Indigenous tourism
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

businesses and criteria for success for Indigenous tourism businesses. A summary of the criteria for each characteristic is provided, which was used as a reference throughout the latent coding of the interview transcripts.

Table 6 Framework for latent coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent Codes</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drivers of Indigenous tourism businesses</td>
<td>1. strong community organisations and local business groups (Loomis 2000; Dodson &amp; Smith 2003; Smith 2003; Lindsay 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. strong financial position (Deruyttere 1997; Rogers &amp; Ryan 2001; IFAD 2003; Lindsay 2004; Krishnamoorthy 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. new and diverse local businesses (Leistritz et al. 1992; Loomis 2000; Lindsay 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. strong marketing campaigns (Leistritz et al. 1992; Ryan 2002; Tourism Victoria 2006; Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. social entrepreneurship (Lindsay 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. tourism management skills and experience (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhibitors of Indigenous tourism businesses</td>
<td>1. inadequate finances and financial literacy (AIATSIS 2007; Tourism Victoria 2006; Lindsay 2004; Altman 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. lack of appropriate infrastructure in remote communities (AIATSIS 2007; Lindsay 2004; Altman 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. unequal collaboration between governments, project stakeholders, and local community representatives (Dodson &amp; Smith, 2003; Lindsay, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. lack effective ‘whole of community’ planning and training and factionalism within Indigenous communities (Armstrong 2003; AIATSIS 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. unsustainable continuity of knowledge and administrative capacity (Dodson &amp; Smith 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. inalienable land titles (Altman 2001; Lindsay 2004; Broun 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. poorly coordinated and inefficiently delivered government policies and service delivery (Dodson &amp; Smith 2003; Tourism Victoria 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Indigenous tourism</td>
<td>1. entrepreneurship and economic development (Anderson 2002; Fuller &amp; Cummings 2003; Anderson, Dana &amp; Dana 2006; Dawson 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>businesses</td>
<td>2. starting/recruiting new businesses (Leistritz et al. 1992; Loomis 2000; Ryan 2002; Altman 2003; Lindsay 2004; Fuller et al. 2005; Butler &amp; Hinch 2007; SCRGSP 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. expand the tourism product and grow Indigenous involvement in the tourism industry (Tourism Queensland 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. improved education, increased employment, enhanced self esteem (SCRGSP 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. improved and increased marketing (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. preservation of culture and traditions (Commonwealth of Australia 2003; Deutschlander &amp; Miller 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government support of Indigenous tourism</td>
<td>1. government policy frameworks are complicated and confusing (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>businesses</td>
<td>2. bureaucratic and policy constraints (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. marketing strategies to support the growth of Indigenous tourism (Victorian Government, 2006; Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. business planning and training (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. inadequate infrastructure (AIATSIS 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. provision of business programs (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criteria for success of Indigenous tourism businesses

1. economic diversity (Leistritz et al. 1992; Alman 2003; Lindsay 2004)
2. strategic planning (Leistritz et al. 1992; Alvaraz, Diemer & Stanford 1999; Loomis 2000; Lindsay 2004; Notzke 2004)
3. adequate local infrastructure (Lindsay 2004)
4. succession planning (Leistritz et al. 1992)
5. skill development (Leistritz et al. 1992; Alman 2003; Lindsay 2004; Hunt 2005)
6. adequate funding resources (Leistritz et al. 1992; Deruyttere 1997; Loomis 2000; Alman 2003; Banerjee 2003; Krishnamoorthy 2007)
8. entrepreneurship (Anderson 2002; Fuller & Cummings 2003; Anderson, Dana & Dana 2006; Dawson 2006)
10. community participation and control (McIntosh, Zygadlo & Matunga 2004)

Ethical considerations

The University of Queensland has strict guidelines relating to ethical approval for research which was complied with in undertaking this study. These guidelines extend to the establishment of procedures for the informed consent of research participants, the protection of participant identity, as well as the appropriate management of research findings including data storage and member cross checking.

Informed consent involves participants understanding the nature and purpose of the research and consenting to participate without coercion (Burns 1997). Participants must also be made aware of the purpose of the research and how the findings will be used, as well as any potential risks or harm (de Vaus 1995). In accordance with ethical regulations, participants were supplied with an information sheet to be retained for their record, detailing the nature of the project as well as the contact details of the researcher and supervisory team should they wish to discuss the project further. In addition participants were provided with a consent form, which was signed and returned to the researcher before the interviews began. Participants were also made aware both verbally and on the consent form that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. In addition participants were notified and their permission sought for the use of a digital recorder in the interview. The stated measures regarding informed consent were deemed sufficient, as the research was not seeking any type of controversial information from respondents.

Confidentiality and anonymity refers to protecting names and keeping the confidence of participants in the study. Although qualitative methods preclude total anonymity, as the researcher knows the participant, participants in the study have not been individually identified in any way in the report and were notified as such in the consent forms and information sheet provided prior to conducting the interview.

Member cross checking involves giving participants a copy of the interview transcript so that they have an opportunity to refute or verify the researcher’s interpretation of their comments. Member checks are seen as an important process due to the subjective nature of qualitative research, and are also viewed as a form of methodological triangulation (Schwandt 1997). To remove researcher bias all participants in the study were provided with a written copy of the interview transcripts and were asked to check the documents for accuracy of meaning and to rectify any comments that they felt had been misinterpreted.

Research limitations

The study was limited by the following:

- Subjectivity is an essential part of the interpretive analysis, and the researcher’s values and interests and Anglo-Celtic background may have influenced interpretation of the text pertaining to Indigenous peoples.
- During analysis the researcher’s own awareness of factors outside the social and historical context may distort the process. Gadamer (1976) pointed out that the contemporary consciousness of history can be fundamentally different from the apparent reality prevailing at the time.
- As the research moves between concrete specifics in and across contexts for more abstract comparisons, meanings and understandings may become distorted.
- In many instances, policies and related documents, which may affect the outcome of the final study, may no longer be available or were not identified.
• Budget limitations restricted the size of the sample therefore, before training programs and materials and policy framework can be developed and implemented, further research on a wider, national scale is required to test the diagnostic tool.
Chapter 4

RESULTS OF PHASE ONE RESEARCH: TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

To provide a sampling framework for the research process, a comprehensive audit of Indigenous tourism business operators in Queensland was undertaken and compiled in a business database. Using this database, each business was contacted via telephone and invited to participate in a short telephone interview. The results of phase one of the research provides a broad overview of the nature and scope of Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland.

Indigenous Tourism Businesses in Queensland

The database included 43 Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland, although the verification process showed that only 24 of those businesses on the database were currently operational (Table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of businesses identified through audit</th>
<th>Contactable</th>
<th>Telephone Interview Sampling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Non-operational businesses were classified as those where they had either ceased operations or telephone/email communication was disconnected/non-responsive.

**Operational businesses were classified as those where the researcher established contact with the business and verified that the business is still operating.

Business Structure

Telephone interview participants were asked a series of preliminary questions about the nature, length of operation and the ownership structure of their business. Respondents were also asked to describe, if applicable, the nature and scope of involvement in the business by the local Indigenous community.

Nature of business operations

The majority of the nine businesses (n=5) represented in the telephone survey were cultural centres that had significant tourism operations including tour guiding and hospitality outlets. Three of the respondents were tour guiding companies and one was an art gallery with a tourism focus (Table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Centre</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Operator</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Gallery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ownership structure of business
Almost half of the businesses surveyed were privately owned (n=4). The public company and community owned enterprises surveyed were predominantly the cultural centres and art galleries (Table 9).

Table 9 Ownership structure of business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business structure</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private ownership</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public company</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community owned</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government owned</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Length of operation
The majority of the nine businesses (n=7) have been operating for less than five years. Only two of the businesses surveyed had been operating for more than 10 years (Table 10).

Table 10 Number of year's business has been operating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Operation</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years or more</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Business Operations

Number of days business operates per week
The businesses surveyed varied in the number of days per week they operate. Most of the businesses operated five or six days per week, whereas other businesses operated only by demand or closed during the summer wet season (Table 11).

Table 11 Number of days per week business operates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days per Week</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 days</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 days</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 days*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By demand only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The business operates seven days per week in the peak season but closes during summer (the wet season).

Employment
A number of the businesses surveyed would be classified as micro business operations due to their number of employees (ABS 2001). More than half of the businesses had less than four full-time employees (n=6) and the majority also had very few part-time or casual employees (Table 12).
Respondents were also asked about the availability of suitably qualified employees to staff their business operations. The majority of respondents (n=6) considered the skill levels of their staff to be appropriate (Table 13) and there was a general consensus that traditional values and cultural knowledge such as dance, arts and crafts, traditional hunting, fishing skills, etcetera were the most important attributes for employment within their business. Some respondents did acknowledge that it was at times difficult to find community members who had sufficient cultural knowledge or confidence in communication to be involved in the ‘front-of-house’ operations. It was also noted that it can be difficult to attract and retain employees from outside the local community due to the remote locations of many of the businesses surveyed. Several of the businesses discussed the training and mentoring programs they offer employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Full-time Employees</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Part-time Employees</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Casual Employees</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suitability qualified staff</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community Engagement**

The vast majority of the businesses surveyed were affiliated in some way with the local Indigenous community. A number of the businesses had community representatives on the executive board (n=4) while several respondents discussed that although the community has varying levels of involvement with the business, either through support/endorsement or supplying products, it generally did not extend to involvement in day to day management operations (Table 14). It was noted by some respondents that community ownership and involvement can be a barrier to business success due to inter-clan relations, individual conflicts, and a perceived lack of coordination and infighting.
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

Table 14 Links to local community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community ownership</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Represented on board</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General community participation</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business partner</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No affiliation</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully owned by community</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Business Success

To assist in determining appropriate businesses to undertake further in-depth research pertaining to factors for success, respondents were asked whether they considered their business to be successful. The majority (n=6) do consider their business to be successful and three respondents stated that there was opportunity to improve their operations but all felt that given time and resources their business would be a success (Table 15).

Table 15 Operating a successful business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither yes nor no - improving</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary: Phase One Research Results

The results of the telephone interviews provide some preliminary insights into the nature and scope of Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland. The majority of businesses surveyed have not been operating for more than five years and so are still in the relatively early stages of establishing the businesses operations. Additionally, all of the businesses are in the micro (i.e. less than five employees) and small (i.e. less than 19 employees) business categories (ABS 2001). It was also found that the ownership structures of the businesses vary, as does the extent to which the local Indigenous community are engaged with the business. These factors were explored further in the in-depth interviews.
Chapter 5

RESULTS OF PHASE TWO RESEARCH: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In-depth interviews were undertaken with representatives from seven Queensland Indigenous tourism businesses to provide greater insight into 1) management issues, 2) government support and 3) drivers and inhibitors relative to Indigenous tourism businesses. Interview transcripts underwent content analysis utilising manifest and latent coding and the following section presents the results of the critical analysis.

Management Issues

The seven Indigenous tourism businesses utilised in this study were purposively selected to provide a cross section of the sector. Consequently, the content analysis of the interview transcripts reveals the diverse and unique nature of these Indigenous tourism businesses in relation to management issues. For instance, their business structures vary between community, government and family run businesses which are set up as either companies, partnerships or sole operators. Staffing levels vary between the businesses ranging from owner operators to one or two casual employees to the equivalent of 80 full time staff. Some of the businesses have business plans while others do not. Similarly, some of the businesses only attract low visitor numbers per annum while others receive up to 30–35 000 visitors per year. Additionally, the businesses encompass a wide range of target markets ranging from domestic and international visitors, grey nomads, students, backpackers and families.

Obviously there are other remote communities and very intimate Indigenous experiences all over Australia that are now starting to blossom and come into being, so they offer something that is different (interview respondent).

Government Support and Drivers and Inhibitors of Indigenous Tourism Businesses

During the content analysis of the data, six themes were established utilising manifest and latent coding. The dominant latent codes to emerge from the interviews are inhibitors of Indigenous businesses (35.5%) and criteria for success (33%), while the weakest latent code is positive government support (5%) (Figure 1).

![Figure 1 Latent codes from in-depth interviews of Indigenous tourism businesses](image-url)
The manifest codes that constitute the six themes are shown in Figures 2 to 7. For instance, Figure 2 reveals that the most dominant inhibitors of Indigenous tourism businesses are seen to be issues pertaining to government processes (19%) and funding (16%). Issues relating to community (1.5%) and competition (1.5%) are identified much less often.

![Figure 2 Manifest codes of inhibitors of Indigenous tourism businesses](image)

Table 16 provides examples of excerpts from participants’ statements that are representative of each of the seventeen manifest codes constituting the latent code of inhibitors of Indigenous tourism businesses in Figure 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifest Code</th>
<th>Excerpts from Participant Statements from Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government processes</td>
<td>government processes take too long and opportunities are lost and can't give community what they want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to funding</td>
<td>lack of capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources</td>
<td>lack of access to statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural boundaries</td>
<td>lack of copyright facilitates exploitation of Aboriginal culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate marketing</td>
<td>uncoordinated and poorly marketed product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management processes</td>
<td>no specific business plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>community control lacks continuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>competition with other destinations that have more to offer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective collaboration/networking</td>
<td>lack of collaboration with business associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of education/training</td>
<td>shortage of Indigenous expertise in tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of tourists</td>
<td>lack of tourist numbers to the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor product development</td>
<td>product is underdeveloped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote locations</td>
<td>remoteness - cost of travel, accommodation, minimum tourist infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of autonomy</td>
<td>centre run by non Indigenous people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonality</td>
<td>seasonality a problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3 shows there are seventeen manifest codes pertaining to critical success factors of Indigenous tourism businesses. While training and knowledge (13%) are deemed the most important, other critical success factors include community connection (11%), cultural sustainability (7.5%) and ownership (3%).

![Critical Success Factors of Indigenous Tourism Businesses](image)

**Figure 3 Manifest codes of critical success factors of Indigenous tourism businesses**

Table 17 reveals indicative excerpts from participants’ statements pertaining to the manifest coding of critical success factors for Indigenous tourism businesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifest Code</th>
<th>Excerpts from Participant Statements from Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training and knowledge</td>
<td>need to maintain staff training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product development</td>
<td>need evolving depth of product necessary for sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>more easy access to capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community connection</td>
<td>need to listen and liaise with the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business strategies</td>
<td>need business plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government support</td>
<td>need flexible government funding programs - less red tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural sustainability</td>
<td>maintenance and continuation of culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triple bottom line</td>
<td>balance between commercial and cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>need authenticity, localised and personalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniqueness</td>
<td>unique product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>need to establish contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>make sure it is run by people who have ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>need reliability and consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support</td>
<td>strong family commitment to business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>commitment to the business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial experience</td>
<td>need commercially savvy and professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>need respect boundaries, follow protocols, educate where necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 shows that participants believe that, of the five manifest codes identified in relation to why participants thought their business was successful, product (30%) is where participants feel their business has been most successful.
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

Figure 4 Manifest codes of successful elements of Indigenous tourism businesses

Examples of excerpts from participants’ statements and their associated manifest codes in relation to successful elements of Indigenous tourism businesses can be seen in Table 18.

Table 18 Examples of manifest codes of successful elements of Indigenous tourism businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifest Code</th>
<th>Excerpts from Participant Statements from Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>interactive product, business mix across all market segments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>good at marketing, reaching our target audience, money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>collaboration between tour operators good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Preservation and</td>
<td>experiences for tourists &amp; passing on traditional cultural skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revitalisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>only used private money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to interview respondents, increased development of an education product (36%) is the primary opportunity for Indigenous tourism businesses (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Opportunities for Indigenous tourism businesses
Table 19 shows participants’ statements and associated manifest codes for opportunities for Indigenous tourism.

**Table 19 Examples of manifest codes of opportunities for Indigenous tourism businesses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifest Code</th>
<th>Excerpts from Participant Statements from Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational product</td>
<td>educational opportunity for community and increased appreciation of Aboriginal culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand product</td>
<td>product development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand business</td>
<td>increased staff, increased tours, increased profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>tourism specific training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase government support</td>
<td>increased assistance with implementation of strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop marketing</td>
<td>develop a marketing strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results reveal that the main drivers of Indigenous tourism businesses are issues involving funding (37%) as shown in Figure 6.

![Drivers of Indigenous Tourism Businesses](image)

**Figure 6 Drivers of Indigenous tourism businesses**

Manifest codes relating to drivers of Indigenous tourism businesses are shown in Table 20.

**Table 20 Manifest codes for drivers of Indigenous tourism businesses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifest Code</th>
<th>Excerpts from Participant Statements from Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding assistance</td>
<td>funding injections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business structure</td>
<td>business is growing organically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural preservation</td>
<td>tourism business was an extension of everyday life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>attending tourism symposiums and expos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to expertise</td>
<td>outsource marketing takes the pressure off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government support</td>
<td>partnership deal with local council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native title</td>
<td>native title recognition made it easier to negotiate with different stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance and respect</td>
<td>Kevin Rudd apology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Government support also emerged from the content analysis of in-depth interviews (Figure 7). As shown in Table 21, nearly 75% of the manifest codes are negative responses to government support.
Government Support of Indigenous Tourism Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifest Code</th>
<th>Excerpts from Participant Statements from Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive collaboration</td>
<td>collaboration with government tourism bodies are good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictive and convoluted processes</td>
<td>too much government red tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support</td>
<td>little to no assistance from government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No collaboration</td>
<td>no collaboration with government tourism bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible support</td>
<td>utilising support from government tourism bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely advice</td>
<td>good, timely advice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7** Government support of Indigenous tourism businesses

Table 21 Manifest codes for positive government support

**Summary: Phase Two Research Results**

The results of content analysis of the in-depth interviews with seven Indigenous tourism businesses operating in Queensland, Australia provided further insight into issues pertaining to 1) the management of Indigenous tourism enterprises in Queensland, 2) the nature, range and impact of government policy and funding support for Indigenous tourism enterprises and 3) facilitators and inhibitors of Indigenous tourism enterprise.

The results reveal that due to the diverse nature of Indigenous tourism businesses, management issues overall, are dependent upon the size, nature and purpose of the individual business. Importantly though, Indigenous tourism businesses should be cognisant of market segmentation and associated demand while ensuring product development and supply meets cultural and community expectations. Furthermore, the results reveal that respondents are quite concerned about inhibitors to Indigenous tourism businesses including a lack of resources such as capital, trained staff and government support. Not surprisingly then, respondents believe that funding and increased resources are important drivers to achieve success. Most businesses feel the most successful element of their business is marketing and opportunities for Indigenous tourism businesses include increasing tourism education and awareness and product development.

_The product is culture so we have to be very sensitive to that to make sure we have the integrity there through everything - be it marketing, collateral, the look and feel, the people that we employ._
Chapter 6

DISCUSSION

Tourism is increasingly being viewed as an economic development vehicle that has the potential to provide socio-cultural and economic benefits to Indigenous peoples around the world. The purpose of this study was to identify inhibitors and facilitators of Indigenous tourism businesses and determine the critical success factors for Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland, Australia. Overall the results of the study reveal that a common element among the diverse Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland is the need for a stronger business focus rather than a heavy reliance on the capacity of the product/service to attain successful business outcomes. This product driven approach may very well be a result of, among other things, inadequate training, education and knowledge pertaining to core business skills and management expertise which arguably, is not an uncommon criticism of tourism businesses generally. Ironically however, it was not product development but training and knowledge that was identified as the dominant critical success factor to facilitate a sustained tourism business.

The Management of Indigenous Tourism Businesses in Queensland

The results of this study indicate that Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland are diverse by nature. Importantly, the varied nature of these businesses not only refers to the organisational and operational structures of the businesses but also to the products and/or services they are providing. For instance, some of the businesses are privately owned organisations whereas others are community owned. Some are micro businesses while others are small to medium size businesses. Most of the businesses operate five or six days per week while some operate only on demand and close during the summer wet season. Moreover, the diversity of products and/or services the Indigenous tourism businesses offer range between, among other things, cultural experiences, adventure tours, educational opportunities and outback experiences.

Such diversity is indicative of Indigenous tourism businesses around the globe (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005). A commonality amongst Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland however, is arguably the necessity for the business to be managed according to sound business practices based on best practice business principles. For instance, an interview respondent said the sustainability of their particular business is due to, among other things, mainstream tour operators knowing:

*We are professional and commercially savvy in that regard. We’ve got that business expertise behind us so they know we can deliver a product, not just the cultural side but the commercial side of it as well.*

Arguably then, recognised core business components (Morden 2007) such as the development of business plans, financial strategies and management skills, among others, are generic, essential components required to facilitate success and sustainability in either Indigenous or non-Indigenous businesses. According to Foley (2006), without the necessary financial and management skills and the provision of business infrastructure, community-based businesses are being set up for failure. Alarmingly, the results of this study reveal that some of these core generic business components have not always been at the forefront of management practices of the Queensland Indigenous tourism businesses in this study. Several businesses admitted that they did ‘not have a business plan’ or they could ‘not see the point of a business plan’. This is a significant result considering 70% of successful Aboriginal businesses in British Columbia; Canada had business plans (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005). Furthermore, Foley (2006) found sound education and industry experience are common characteristics of successful Indigenous Australian urban entrepreneurs. Yet numerous respondents admitted to limited training and education, particularly in relation to accessing capital and business finance. Accordingly, the results reveal that business funding problems were common and while one respondent felt the problem was because many ‘Aboriginal people don’t have any money’, overall, interview respondents were cognisant that funding issues are probably exacerbated by a lack of financial experience and education in particular and an overall lack of tourism education, training and expertise in general (Loomis 2000; Dodson & Smith 2003; Lindsay 2004; SCRGSP 2007).
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

There appears to be little argument then, that the acquisition of core generic business skills is undoubtedly an influencing factor in the facilitation of a successful Indigenous tourism business. Interview respondents acknowledged the significance of such generic business components for the facilitation and sustainability of a successful tourism business. Yet too many respondents made assumptions, similar to those identified in Fuller et al.’s (2005) study, that the nature and uniqueness of the product or service offered by their business would ensure their business was a success regardless of acknowledged inadequacies in management and business skills. In many instances, the Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland were started, relying solely on the product/service in spite of the business owner possessing little to no business knowledge or expertise pertaining to either the tourism industry in general or in the operation of a tourism business in particular. For instance, one respondent said ‘we had no idea what we were doing and we actually got no support from anybody’ while another respondent said, operating a tourism business is ‘just not something people from the local communities have done’ to date.

Nevertheless, many respondents are very confident of their tourism product/service, mainly because of the Indigenous component and because ‘I think we are unique’. Yet what became evident when compiling the contact database of Indigenous tourism businesses in Australia was that many businesses offer similar experiences which surely must detract from their uniqueness and competitive advantage. Respondents also appear to rely on the nature and ability of the product/service to successfully market itself with some businesses operating on the assumption that ‘the main thing is to deliver a product that we’ve got here’. In essence, an Indigenous product/service was typically identified as having potential as a tourist attraction and was the catalyst for developing a tourism business. Obviously, a product/service is a vitally important component of any business and undeniably, ‘there are obviously some fantastic Indigenous products out there. We form part of a niche market at the moment’. However, given the high failure rate of Indigenous tourism businesses in Australia (Fuller et al. 2005) perhaps too much importance and reliance is placed on Indigenous product/services over and above the significance and importance of acquiring and developing a solid foundation in generic core business skills such as business planning and operations.

According to Fuller et al. (2005), there has been a less than desirable success rate among Indigenous tourism businesses. Perhaps such failure is partly occurring because too many businesses are started based on assumptions that they can ‘run before they can walk’. This could be because some businesses are too product focused and are ‘jumping the gun’, looking for instant gratification instead of ensuring sustainable building blocks (i.e. business skills, strategic planning) are in place before business operations begin. In essence, in too many instances, the business has been developed in an ad hoc manner and ‘just sort of built into an activity where visitors can come and take a peek into an Aboriginal lifestyle’. For instance, according to the results of the study, Indigenous tourism operators thought they have been most successful in areas such as marketing the product, developing the product and working in conjunction with other operator’s products and preserving and revitalising the product. Similarly, the results reveal that Indigenous tourism business operators believe the greatest opportunities for their businesses lie in product development. Arguably, this approach indicates that the underlying business philosophies of these businesses could be fundamentally flawed. That is, placing too much reliance on a product/service without acquiring the skills and resources and infrastructure to ensure efficient and effective utilisation of the product/service. While there is always an exception to the rule, strategic business management practices would suggest that, among other things, Indigenous tourism businesses should refocus their initial efforts on, among other things, developing effective business plans, acquiring business education and up-skilling staff.

In order for Indigenous tourism businesses to successfully refocus efforts, governments’ approach to Indigenous tourism development needs revisiting. Tourism has been actively promoted as a vehicle for economic development for Indigenous communities (Buultjens et al. 2002), yet the results of this study suggest that this overt focus on promoting tourism as a panacea for Indigenous people via economic benefits is arguably flawed. For instance, one respondent said ‘there’s a big push to get Indigenous people off CDFP ... So I don’t know whether there’s this unreasonable expectation that the government has been giving people that they can run the tourist businesses so they make a lot of money. There are huge costs associated with businesses here’. Not surprisingly then, many Aboriginal communities have unrealistic expectations of the economic benefits of tourism brought about because of impractical bureaucratic objectives to use tourism as a means of getting Aboriginal people off welfare (Altman & Finlayson 1992). Moreover, tangible benefits for politicians such as increased numbers of Indigenous businesses and increased Indigenous employment produce timely political benefits by facilitating ticks in boxes which ultimately reflect well on governments. In comparison, long term investment by governments to strengthen and improve education qualifications for instance, is time consuming and not results oriented in the shorter term. But arguably, it is the longer term investments that will provide a more successful and sustainable future for Indigenous tourism businesses.
Government Support of Indigenous Tourism Businesses

Hunter (1999) stressed the need to increase the level of business qualifications among the Indigenous self-employed to ensure they can strategically manage the various risks in a globalised marketplace. Thus the potential for Indigenous peoples to be effective entrepreneurs, including tourism business operators, depends on many Indigenous tourism business operators gaining increased knowledge and education about the tourism industry (Altman & Finlayson 1992). The results of this study identify numerous government programs (Appendix C and Appendix D) that offer various elements of education, training, mentoring and support for Indigenous business operators. Yet the results also reveal respondents thought that a lack of readily available training and education opportunities is an inhibitor to successful Indigenous tourism businesses. For instance, several businesses have staff undertaking TAFE based diplomas in 'sales and marketing to human resources through to management style module'. However, the respondent said the business also has ‘a lot of people here who have finished school but don’t have any other qualifications. There’s a lot of that going on as well’. Additionally, it was noted by another respondent that ‘there's training offered all the time through online training but we also focus on experience professional development’. Thus, training opportunities are available and in demand, but according to Fuller et al. (2005), the skills and experience required to promote and market a business in interstate and international markets is still often lacking in Indigenous tourism businesses. Given that a high level of literacy and communication skills is a requisite for much employment in the tourism industry (Altman & Finlayson 1992), many of the training and education programs on offer to Indigenous tourism businesses must be less than adequate as they are apparently failing to address training and education deficiencies. Interestingly, Buultjens et al. (2002) found that not only have many programs been poorly coordinated but also the focus of many programs has been on promoting the idea of Indigenous peoples’ participation in tourism rather than providing resources to realise participation.

Out of necessity and instigated by a lack of technical and managerial expertise and resources (Ferrazi 1989), it may be worth considering Fuller et al.’s (2005) suggestion that Indigenous tourism businesses could consider teaming with an appropriate joint venture partner who has experience in the tourism industry. According to Altman and Finlayson (1992) some of the few examples of commercial success in Aboriginal cultural tourism are joint ventures between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal partners. This sentiment is reiterated in the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy for British Columbia (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Colombia 2005) which states successful First Nation tourism businesses used outside advisors such as accountants, more frequently than did less profitable operations. Indeed, Altman and Finlayson (1992) maintained that an advantage of joint ventures is that they seem to have a greater ability to attract private sector finance. Therefore, potential benefits of utilising external partners include obtaining finance, transferring managerial and technical skills and attaining total or partial control of development, among other things (Ferrazi 1989). Thus it would appear fair to suggest that until government training and education programs become more appropriate and relevant, Indigenous tourism businesses might consider utilising external professional specialist advice and assistance. For instance, a respondent said:

*We wanted to make sure that we were business-focussed, and we wanted to make sure we had a hand from a black and white perspective, because we had two white fellas on the board. But we had them there because of their business expertise, because at the end of the day we didn’t want to be tied down to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander politics, and that’s where we were heading when we first kicked off there.*

Such assistance from external expertise may also help Indigenous tourism businesses navigate what interview respondents describe as a minefield of bureaucratic red tape in relation to government support and processes and thus an inhibitor to achieving a successful business. In fact, the results of the study reveal that government processes are seen by respondents as the most significant inhibitor to the success and sustainability of Indigenous tourism businesses. According to one respondent, government agencies ‘are valuable but more and more it’s becoming ivory tower like with access and communication and you always start to question how valuable is this partnership’. Additionally, many respondents complain that government processes take too long and result in lost opportunities. One respondent said, ‘the red tape back when we started, it was just too much. To do the forms that we needed to do and to keep doing what we needed to do would have just bogged us down’. Other respondents maintained ‘if you ring up (government support) and ask about something they’ll say have you seen our website, and they’ll tell you to go there. That doesn’t tell me anything. That’s not giving me information’.
Respondents said they are looking for more hands on practical support from government agencies to assist them in all aspects of business development and operations. For instance, one respondent said:

Tourism Australia and the Indigenous part of that are never proactive ... IBA’s different, that’s semi-government and private and quite different and with TTNQ you’ve got to pay your membership so unfortunately we’ve always got to work them harder as a customer to get bang for your buck as a member. ... it’s up to you to work them for as much information or value from a report or from whatever it might be.

So although there were some positive results in relation to government support, nearly three quarters of the comments made by respondents in relation to government support of Indigenous tourism businesses were negative. Consequently, from a practical perspective, there appears to be a need for government policy and programs to be far more proactive, user friendly, relevant and responsive to the needs of establishing, developing and expanding Indigenous tourism businesses.

Inhibitors and Drivers of Indigenous Tourism Businesses

Of course, one of the areas where government support is often most sought after is assistance in accessing funding for businesses. The results of the study reveal that respondents believe that accessing and acquiring funding is the second most dominant inhibitor to success. Often accessing financial assistance is dependent upon the organisational structure of the business. For example, most Indigenous tourism businesses are either community based or privately operated. Community based businesses are often incorporated under the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 or one of the many state associations Acts whereas privately owned businesses are often standalone commercial businesses incorporated under the Australian Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997 (Foley 2006). Due to the nature of some community based businesses they often 1) experience conflict due to community factions who may have different views about development options, 2) experience a lack of coordination (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005) and/or 3) experience situations where ‘local Aboriginal and Torres Strait politics get in the way’. Additionally, in community based businesses, cultural demands often determine the use of funds rather than prudent financial management. Consequently, communities may experience difficulty in acquiring funding, particularly commercial funding, due to poor community capacity for economic development, inadequate human and financial capital, substantial infrastructure gaps and high rates of capital deterioration (Dodson & Smith 2003). When however, community organisations are successful in obtaining funding, they are more often than not, ‘tied to the grant funding drip-feed, overloaded with inappropriate program objectives and performance indicators, and onerous “upwards accountability” burdens’ (Dodson & Smith 2003, pg. 7). Not surprisingly then, several respondents said that funding and community ownership can be inhibitors to business success. Consequently, Hunter (2004, p. 86) warned that ‘funding structures need to recognise that the blanket application of policy towards Indigenous “communities” is misinformed and outdated’. Concomitantly, other respondents said having a privately owned business was also an inhibitor because as a private enterprise, they were ineligible to apply for government grants. Indeed, Indigenous private enterprise has often been overlooked because it is a common federal government practice to fund tourism projects as community enterprises on the assumption that communities are homogeneous social groups. For instance, one respondent said ‘if you want that funding you’ve got to apply as an organisation’ while another said ‘we applied through ICC, that’s the corporation, because as a corporation we got a funding for $50 000 to do workshops, passing on traditional cultural skills’. Yet according to another respondent:

We did that off our own bat, so we never really went out there and applied for loans, so to speak; we never got a loan or anything like that. We did everything, and it was all our own voluntary work that we did so funding wise it’s just too hard, I mean like to get money to do things.

Overall, respondents identify an array of issues relating to problems associated with accessing funding as a dominant inhibitor to the development of Indigenous tourism businesses. Therefore there is little doubt there is much room for improvement in existing government support and in particular, existing funding systems. For instance, a respondent noted that instead of receiving funds from government, ‘the bureaucracy chewed up all the funding, so the funding didn’t actually get out to where it was supposed to go, it was chewed up in the office. The same thing that it’s doing here’. Furthermore, historically, raising money has been difficult for Indigenous Australians. For too long, many Aborigines were forced into dependency on government with public sector welfare dominating people’s lives (Graetz & McAllister 1994). Consequently, most capital has had to be obtained from government sources (Schaper 1999). For instance, one respondent said ‘we meet with lots of funding agencies about finding funding for different activities that we want to do’. Additionally, the current system still discourages private sector financing for
Indigenous enterprises. Therefore, dependency on government over many years has created passive welfare which Pearson believes is ‘lock(ing) people out of participating in a “real economy”, either the “real” market economy or the “real” economy of traditional society’ (Pearson 2000). According to Fuller et al. (2005), in order to overcome passive welfare, Indigenous peoples must become increasingly self reliant. This sentiment is reiterated by Loughnane (2004 p. 6) who claims there is a 'need to focus on individuals by encouraging self-reliance … (and) enhancing the capacity of … individuals to manage their own affairs'. Hence, the prominence placed on funding issues by the majority of respondents in this study may be a consequence of two scenarios. On the one hand, the strong focus on the need to source and acquire funding may emanate from diminishing influences of passive welfare (Fuller et al. 2005) and the recognition that the business ‘doesn’t need to be government run anymore. That’s what they’re asking for. Is for you to be self-sustainable now and get out and stop this relying on the government’. Perhaps numerous Indigenous tourism businesses are heeding the words of Pearson (2000 p. 2) who stated ‘economic development requires individuals to come to the fore, to be mobile and not look in the communal for material sustenance’. Interestingly, the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy for British Columbia (Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia 2005) found that businesses owned by individuals were more likely to be operating at a profit or break-even than those involving community ownership. This increased entrepreneurial activity has been called the ‘second wave’ of Indigenous economic development (the ‘first wave’ being direct economic assistance) (Stevens 2001 cited Peredo, Anderson, Galbraith, Honig & Dana 2004) as people increasingly acknowledge that ‘there’s no top up funding from that. So you’ve got to actually make the money now’. On the other hand, a respondent said:

_We need that capital funding all the way through. We haven’t got one cent in the last six or seven years, to do up any of our air conditionings or carpets or painting. We have to look after that ourselves. So at the end of the day, we’re really struggling._

Therefore many of these businesses may still be too reliant on government funding because passive welfare (Fuller et al. 2005) is still the dominant ideological paradigm. This sentiment is strengthened by the results of the study that reveal accessing government funding assistance is a driver for Indigenous tourism businesses to succeed. While it is acknowledged that many Indigenous tourism businesses may require some start up assistance due to being located in remote, small locations in outback Australia where commercial opportunities are heavily restricted (Altman 2002), ultimately the success of a business is the responsibility of the owner(s) (Pearson 2000) and as one respondent noted, ‘It’s up to us. The buck stops with us’.

It is important to identify other drivers of Indigenous tourism businesses and the results reveal that cultural preservation is viewed as the third most dominant driver. Interestingly, Hindle and Lansdowne (2005) said Indigenous culture will shape Indigenous entrepreneurial attitudes and according to the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (2005), successful businesses were more likely to have incorporated a cultural component or experience into their operations. Most respondents in the study rely on, to varying degrees, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural component as a part or all of their tourism product/service. For example, one respondent said that ‘the product is that culture so we have to be very sensitive to that to make sure we have the integrity there through everything’. However, another respondent claimed that ‘culture doesn’t make money. The cultural component of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture doesn’t make money’. Therefore some respondents view tourism per se, as a vehicle for creating economic benefits while others also believe tourism provides a means to fulfill cultural goals. These goals include utilising tourism as a tool for language and cultural preservation and as an educational tool for not only non-Indigenous people but also Indigenous peoples because ‘I want them to learn about their own culture, because a lot of Indigenous people don’t know about their own culture’. In fact, the results of the study reveal the development of an educational product is the dominant opportunity for Indigenous tourism businesses. One respondent in particular, saw opportunities for increasing youth education stating:

_I think we’ve got to do more in the education system by going and visiting schools. Getting schools to come here, but be able to say to government that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture should be in the curriculum of the schools._

Overall however, all respondents said, in order to ensure success, the business must remain faithful to the culture because, ‘if you’re representing a culture you can’t divorce yourself from being authentic and sincere and interactive. You can’t have one without the other’.
Criteria for Success

While culture and cultural sustainability are viewed by respondents as a factor for successful businesses, the results of this study reveal the cultural component is but one of seventeen identified as criteria for success for Indigenous tourism businesses as shown in Table 22. Of the seventeen critical success factors, training and knowledge was viewed by the respondents of this study as the most dominant factor. Interestingly, previous research has linked formal education with Indigenous business success (Foley 2000) including a study undertaken by Yusef (1995) on critical success factors for small Indigenous businesses in the South Pacific. Similar to this study, Yusef (1995) identified the need for more rigorous training in management and business. Interestingly, similar criticisms have been leveled at non-Indigenous tourism businesses, particularly those that can be classified as SMEs (Page, Forer & Lawton 1999; Braun 2002; Morrison 2003). Therefore, while this might be a generic issue associated with SMEs in tourism it would seem fair to assume that with improved education, business managers will increasingly be able to develop and implement effective business plans, to obtain and utilise resources effectively, to balance traditional obligations with business demand and to accurately keep records and control finances (Yusef 1995). Concomitantly, obtaining government support was also identified as a critical success factor. Consequently, numerous respondents felt the success of their business was reliant on flexible government funding programs, less red tape, provision of basic infrastructure, training facilities, tax incentives and protection against competition from big businesses (Yusef 1995).

While the financial aspects of the business were seen as critically important, credence was also given to the socio-cultural and environmental aspects of the business. This is not surprising as Indigenous values and thinking are generally recognised as being holistic, thus Indigenous success is measured in terms of various interrelated economic and non-economic dimensions (Foley 2003). Thus the need to adopt a triple bottom line approach was also viewed as a critical success factor because the triple bottom line approach advocates that ‘it is essential not only to make a profit, but also to care about people and protect the environment, and to be accountable for all three’ (Adam 2004, p. 1). The triple bottom line captures the whole set of values, issues and processes that must be addressed in order to minimise any harm resulting from activities and to create economic, social and environmental value (Adam 2004). Importantly, the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (2005) maintains that successful Indigenous tourism businesses were more likely to have incorporated a cultural component or experience into their operations. According to the respondents of this study, those tourism businesses that can successfully utilise and combine all, or at least some, of the seventeen critical success factors identified in this study will enjoy success and long term sustainability. Therefore, the following diagnostic tool was developed as a guide to establishing and operating a sustainable Indigenous tourism business.
### Table 22 Diagnostic tool to facilitate successful Indigenous tourism business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Success</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Government</th>
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</table>
| **1. Training and Knowledge:** *'you're doing the company a disservice by not mentoring, training, and professionally developing your staff'* | Training and knowledge is necessary to mitigate tourism operations stagnating and/or closing down due to inadequate core business skill acquisition. | • increase secondary and tertiary education qualifications, programs and initiatives  
• attend regular skill development, training and mentoring programs  
• attend workshops and professional development programs  
• network at conferences, seminars | • increase business management education (secondary /tertiary) opportunities  
• provide hands on practical skill development (e.g. workshops, internships, mentorship)  
• provide educational scholarships  
• improve access to support programs  
• provide face-to-face training opportunities  
• improve access and usability of information tool kits |
| **2. Product Development:** *'sustainability depends on product development'* | Appropriate product development is a core component of the tourism business and when managed effectively can be utilised to showcase and inform visitors about culture. | • develop authentic market ready product that matches consumer needs  
• ensure product is consistent and reliable  
• build in cultural protection mechanisms  
• be aware of market trends  
• ensure adequate physical infrastructure support  
• build in an educational component | • develop mechanisms to facilitate investment in product  
• integrate product into local, regional and state destination marketing strategies  
• provide timely statistics for visitor forecasting  
• increase current consumer data |
| **3. Funding:** *'we need more easy access to capital'* | Funding a business is a vital component which facilitates business development and operations. | • increase capacity to access financial capital  
• increase awareness of funding sources other than government  
• lessen dependency on government support  
• improve financial education | • increase funding for training and education  
• provide programs and incentives that offer greater access to start up capital, loan funds and operating funds  
• improve awareness and access to information relating to existing funding programs  
• revise legislation to foster Indigenous economic development |
### 4. Community Connection:

*’It is important to listen and liaise with the community’*

- Connection with the host community is necessary to ensure tourism is a viable, acceptable and sustainable development option.
- Consult with community to identify community needs
- Increase community awareness of tourism
- Develop effective community approval processes
- Identify governance issues
- Establish a council to bridge the gap between management and the community
- Consult with community to identify community needs
- Provide tourism awareness programs for community to ensure community readiness
- Facilitate community planning programs
- Provide community training programs

### 5. Business Strategies:

*’By nature of the market we have to have different strategies’*

- Strategic business planning will facilitate effective, efficient and appropriate development of a tourism enterprise.
- Develop timely and appropriate business strategies more consistently
- Increase awareness of the significance of business plans
- Increase human resource capacity
- Increase human resource capacity
- Provide business management educational programs
- Provide support for practical application of business principles

### 6. Government Support:

*’There is a need for increased awareness of available resources’*

- Effective, efficient, appropriate and accessible government support is a vital component of business development and operations.
- Increase self sufficiency
- Increase capacity to utilise government support programs more effectively
- Limit bureaucratic and policy constraints
- Provide more face to face consultation opportunities
- Improve follow up assistance
- Simplify processes
- Ensure programs and strategies are appropriate for grass roots level
- Facilitate community capacity development

### 7. Cultural Sustainability:

*’We need to respect and acknowledge aboriginal culture and heritage’*

- Cultural sustainability facilitates the utilisation of tourism to preserve, protect and promote Indigenous culture.
- Ensure cultural issues go through a rigorous approval process
- Incorporate educational component into product/service
- Increase educational opportunities for Indigenous culture in schools
- Retain authenticity
- Provide information on cultural protection protocols
- Increase campaigns to improve visitor awareness of cultural protocols
- Update cultural protection protocols
- Increase educational programs on Indigenous culture
## INDIGENOUS TOURISM BUSINESSES IN QUEENSLAND: CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

| 8. Triple Bottom Line: ‘need to balance financial imperatives with cultural obligations’ | A triple bottom line approach will lead to holistic planning and development of tourism businesses and facilitate sustainability. | • recognise and incorporate socio-cultural, economic and environmental factors in business plans and be accountable for all three areas  
• increase awareness of governance issues | • develop strategies and programs from an holistic perspective incorporating issues of governance |

| 9. Authenticity: ‘we need an authentic, localised and personalised product’ | Authentic in products will meet customer expectations while preserving and protecting the culture. | • the product/service must be developed and maintained to ensure quality, reliability and authentic standards are reached  
• reiterate and reinforce culture, language and heritage values | • ensure there are processes to identify Indigenous tourism products meet cultural and industry standards  
• provide assistance in protecting tourism businesses from the theft of cultural property and restricting imports of imitation products |

| 10. Uniqueness: ‘I think we are unique’ | Unique characteristics provide opportunities to utilise tourism as a means of reinforcing and showcasing a culture. | • recognise and capitalise on unique nature of product/service  
• incorporate unique attributes into marketing strategies | • provide mechanisms to prevent exploitation of unique products |

| 11. Collaboration: ‘keep in contact with clients to look for new opportunities’ | Collaboration is necessary to expand knowledge base and increase development opportunities for the tourism business. | • network and establish contacts and collaborations with a diverse array of stakeholders  
• attend conferences, seminars, workshops | • provide networking opportunities  
• provide timely databases of tourism businesses in region |

| 12. Ownership: ‘make sure it is run by people who have ownership’ | A strong sense of ownership of the business will increase positive attitudes and approaches to the development of the tourism business. | • recognise stakeholder involvement  
• encourage all people involved in the tourism business to have a sense of ownership of the enterprise | • recognise and support local governance and decision-making |

| 13. Reliability: ‘need reliability and consistency’ | Reliable product/service will instil confidence among stakeholders and facilitate increased partnership opportunities with external tourism companies. | • the tourism business must present and perform in a professional manner  
• provide a consistent product in a timely manner | • provide education and training opportunities to increase professionalism |
14. **Family Support:** *‘strong family commitment to business’*

- Support from family members will promote the sustainability of the tourism business.
- Participating members must demonstrate a commitment to developing a sustainable business.

15. **Commitment:** *‘the business needs commitment and passion’*

- Commitment by stakeholders will contribute to the success of the tourism business.
- Participating members must demonstrate a commitment to developing a sustainable business.

16. **Commercial Experience:** *‘there is a need to be commercially savvy and professional’*

- Commercial experience is necessary to effectively compete in a globally competitive marketplace.
- Recognise the need to gain both theoretical and practical professional experience.
- Attend conferences, seminars.

17. **Respect:** *‘I think respect is something that people really need to take into consideration. Having that respect for whoever; whether it’s your own people or it’s the business people that come to your door’*

- Respect underpins Indigenous culture and is a vital component of a sustainable tourism business.
- Respect all boundaries, follow protocols and educate where necessary.
- Respect boundaries, follow protocols and educate where necessary.

The criteria for success and diagnostic tool should form the basis for a training program and training materials for Indigenous tourism businesses. Significantly, several of the criteria for success identified in this study reiterate success factors identified in studies undertaken by Finlayson (2004, 2007). Nevertheless, before training programs and materials, based on the criteria identified in this study, can be developed and implemented; further research is required to test the diagnostic tool on a wider geographical base.
Chapter 7

CONCLUSIONS

Around the globe, Indigenous peoples are increasingly viewing tourism as a vehicle to facilitate sustainable Indigenous development. Concomitantly and to varying degrees, the market is responding with renewed interest and seeking Indigenous tourism experiences. Consequently, as the Indigenous tourism sector expands, albeit slowly but surely, it must increasingly compete in a volatile, aggressive and often fickle industry. Globally to date, there have been enough successful Indigenous tourism businesses to suggest that they can carve out and maintain their market share and successfully compete in the tourism industry. This study has been focused on identifying the numerous factors that may have facilitated or hindered such success.

One of the factors the study investigated was the creation, operation and management of Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland. It was found that the creation and development of numerous Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland were based on the assumption that the business would succeed primarily because it could offer the visitor a unique Indigenous experience. Arguably the tourism businesses investigated in this study have relied almost exclusively on the Indigenous component of their product/service. That is, the operators tended to focus on the notion that they were offering an Indigenous product/service rather than a tourism product/service that just happened to be differentiated from their competitors by an Indigenous component. The problem with this focus is that it appears to have generated an arguably unrealistic idea that the Indigenous product/service would sell itself and therefore otherwise requisite tourism skills, knowledge and education could be obtained along the way, if deemed necessary. It is argued here, that with exceptions, this type of focus is likely to be setting up the business for imminent failure. Instead, a candid reality check is probably needed to ensure that the business has, at the very least and in addition to the unique product/service, some, if not all of the generic core business skills and education identified in the literature as necessary to operate a business. Such skills will facilitate the development and marketing of a product/service that will be able to secure its position in an increasingly global and competitive industry.

It would appear fair to suggest then, that there is a need for a more pragmatic approach to developing and operating Indigenous tourism businesses. This approach needs to be adopted by both the private and public sectors. A second objective of this study was to identify the nature, range and impact of government policy and funding support for Indigenous tourism enterprises. The results of this study suggest that too often, government policy invariably presents tourism as a panacea for Indigenous problems. Often such policy encourages unrealistic expectations while associated programs apparently often only provide superficial assistance to realise these expectations. Undoubtedly, such programs are too often utilised by governments as a means of demonstrating their commitment to addressing Indigenous issues. Moreover, government policy also covers an array of funding issues pertaining to Indigenous tourism businesses, including the call for Indigenous self sufficiency. The results of this study suggest however, that there is still an expectation by numerous Indigenous tourism operators that obtaining government funding is necessary, and often the only way, to get started and succeed in business. Arguably though, success is more dependent upon the capacity of the operator to access and manage all the resources necessary to function and sustain a successful business.

According to Altman (1992), sustainability will require a triple bottom line approach facilitating the achievement of a balance between three variables 1) commercial success, 2) the resilience of cultural integrity and social cohesion and 3) the maintenance of the physical environment. A triple bottom line approach underpinned by holistic principles is undoubtedly an appropriate approach to Indigenous tourism development. At present however, the degree to which numerous Indigenous tourism businesses in Queensland can enjoy commercial success is questionable. For instance, while a business remains dependent upon, and inextricably linked to, government financial support, it cannot claim self sufficiency and thus economic sustainability. Additionally, commercial success may also be hindered by the business structure (i.e. community cooperative, private company, individual enterprise) and associated issues of power, policies, roles, responsibilities, and processes that guide, direct and control the business. Therefore, it is proposed that a quadruple bottom line approach recognising the role of governance would be a more holistic and thus appropriate and advantageous approach to the development of successful and sustainable Indigenous tourism businesses.
Chapter 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

The quadruple bottom line approach could be used to underpin flexible government support systems and policy that not only recognises the diverse and heterogenic nature of Indigenous tourism business but also facilitates the development of sustainable, self sufficient businesses. The results of the study suggest such government support systems and policy might take into account the following recommendations:

- Recognise governance as a significant factor and an integral component in the development and operation of Indigenous tourism businesses.
- Increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous governance arrangements to avoid imposing western values and ideas during negotiation and/or consultation.
- Provide more sustained, long term educational opportunities (e.g. educational scholarships, mentor programs) to enhance business and management capacity rather than providing a plethora of one off and/or superficial training programs which are apparently providing little more than perfunctory introductory skills for tourism businesses.
- Provide specific and targeted educational programs to increase Indigenous capacity for decision-making and change to facilitate flexible and timely governance.
- Maintain and/or increase collaborative opportunities with government tourism bodies to allow Indigenous tourism businesses to network and/or gain experience and exposure.
- Facilitate increased participation in government tourism planning and development particularly at the local and regional level to increase Indigenous tourism business ownership.
- Provide more efficient access to, and utilisation of, information, support mechanisms and processes to reduce bureaucratic red tape and increase user friendly systems and procedures.
- Provide face-to-face, long term, sustained assistance with implementation and support strategies rather than relying upon referrals to web based support systems.
- Facilitate a move towards a market driven, as opposed to a product driven, approach to Indigenous product/service development.
- Deliver more timely and appropriate visitor data to ensure strategic business decisions are based on current factual information.
- Investigate funding regimes and protocols in relation to individual versus community enterprises to ensure opportunities are equitable and flexible.

These recommendations have emerged from this study and could be utilised by policymakers as the basis for a policy framework to facilitate the development of Indigenous tourism businesses. However before a policy framework can be developed, further research is required to test the recommendations on a broader scale.

This study has provided the foundations for further research to be conducted in relation to the successful and sustainable development of Indigenous tourism businesses. A future research agenda emanating from this study includes:

- similar studies conducted at the national level to expand the data set. This will not only promote increased understanding of Indigenous tourism businesses but will also facilitate the development of a clear policy framework for better cooperation and collaboration across all spheres of government in Australia.
- further research, to expand the dataset to a national base in order to increase the reliability and validity of the criteria in the diagnostic tool which should be tested before roll out.
- the latter research should be utilised to undertake longitudinal studies conducted at the national level. This research will not only provide a useful means of tracking and monitoring Indigenous tourism business development over time, but will also facilitate increased understanding of Indigenous tourism in relation to national tourism development while presenting Indigenous tourism businesses with opportunities that will strengthen competitive advantages in the global economy.
APPENDIX A: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What is your role in this business?
2. How long has this business been operating?
3. What is the structure of this business i.e. community owned, sole proprietor, partnership, company?
4. (If applicable) Can you please tell me a little more about your business structure i.e. who are your partners/what community is the business affiliated with? To what extent do partners/the community take part in everyday business operations and management?
5. On average, how many days per week does your business operate? Is your business affected by seasonality?
6. How many people, including you, are employed by this business?
   Full-time _______
   Part-time _______
   Casual _______
7. Are the skills and education levels of your employees appropriate for your business?
8. What are the major factors that could help your business grow i.e. funding/government assistance, additional resources, skilled employees, etc?
9. What are the major factors that could (or do) inhibit the growth of your business?
10. What makes a successful Indigenous tourism business? Do you see your business as successful?
11. Would you be willing to participate in further research?
Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

APPENDIX B: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

BACKGROUND:
1. To begin with could you tell me a bit about the background of your business and how/why it was first established?
2. Do you consider your business to be unique (in the region, the state, Australia)? What makes it unique?
3. In what areas has your business enjoyed success? Why?
4. In what areas has your business not been unsuccessful? Why?

CUSTOMERS:
5. Thinking back over the last five years how many customers/visitors do you estimate your business received (if exact numbers are not known estimates are acceptable) in:
   2008 ____________________________
   2007 ____________________________
   2006 ____________________________
   2005 ____________________________
   2004 ____________________________
6. When thinking about your client base for 2008, what percentage of them would you estimate to be international visitors and what percentage domestic?
   International _____ % Domestic ______ %
7. How do you currently promote your business? Do you have different promotional strategies for international and domestic visitors?
8. Do you believe your marketing/advertising has been successful? Are there areas you would like to improve or change?

EMPLOYEES:
9. How many employees do you currently have? How many of these are full-time and how many are part-time?
   Full-time _______ Part-time _________
10. Do your employees come from the local area? Do you try to employ people from the local area where possible?
11. How many of your employees are Indigenous? Do you try to employ Indigenous people where possible?
12. Do you have difficulty in attracting and retaining suitable employees (i.e. appropriately skilled/qualified for your business needs)?
13. Do you offer training/further education for your employees?
14. If applicable - How is the organisation related to the Indigenous community in which it is located or which it serves?

MANAGEMENT:
15. Does your business have a documented business plan?
16. Do you regularly update your business plan? If so, how often does this occur? If no, are there reasons for not doing so?
17. What are the major factors that could (or do) help your business grow? How can you (or do you) capitalise on these factors?
18. What are the major factors that could (or do) inhibit the growth of your business? How will you (or do you) address these inhibitors?

19. Do you see any potential opportunities for the expansion of your business?

20. Do you believe you have adequate capital resources/assets to undertake your business?

21. Is there anything that particularly worries you about your business? (i.e. better promotion/advertising, raising capital, etc.)

**SUPPORT SYSTEMS & NETWORKS**

22. Are you a member (or have any other involvement) with your local or regional tourism authority? If not, why? If yes, what type of involvement?

23. Are you a member of any other business associations such as the local Chamber of Commerce or your respective regional economic development organisation? If not, why? If yes, what type of involvement?

24. What other networks or support systems do you utilise now and/or have you utilised in the past for your business? Do you have any comments regarding your involvement with these support systems/networks such as benefits/problems?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support System</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business consultants/advisors/mentor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External accountants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicitors/legal services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government business agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Tourism Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Business Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other businesses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. Do you collaborate/engage with the state government in relation to your business? If yes, which departments?

26. Do you collaborate/engage with your local government in relation to your business? If yes, which departments?

27. Did you receive any form of government funding/grants/assistance in the set-up of your business? If so which program?

28. Do you receive any ongoing government assistance for the operation of your business? If so which program?

29. How appropriate and how effective have these programs/assistance been?

30. In what way/s could the program/s you accessed be improved?

31. What has been the influence/impact of these programs on the success your business?

32. Who do you consider to be the major stakeholders in your business? E.g. government, media, community, bank, etcetera.

33. Where do you receive/source information from to help you run your business? E.g. visitor statistics from RTO, business advice/resources from government agencies.
34. Would you like/do you require more information/advice/resources to assist you in the running of your business?

SUSTAINABILITY:

35. In your opinion, what are the factors that make a business sustainable?

36. Do you consider your business to be sustainable? If so, what factors make your business sustainable? If not, why?

37. Would you consider your business to be environmentally sustainable? If so, in what ways does your business address environmental sustainability?

38. Does your business have policies/ways of making sure Indigenous culture/heritage is managed appropriately? If so, how?

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE:

39. Where do you see your business in the next 5–10 years?

40. Given the current economic situation in Australia and overseas what concerns (if any) do you have for your business this year?

41. What advice, if any, would you give to someone starting a tourism business? Do you have any advice for an Indigenous person wishing to start a tourism business?

Thank you for your participation in this study.
### APPENDIX C: CURRENT COMMONWEALTH INDIGENOUS BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates*</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Program Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Wage Assistance</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Provides a subsidy to Indigenous and non-Indigenous employers to employ Indigenous job seekers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Provides Indigenous businesses access to commercial finance, and culturally appropriate professional and mentoring support services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Indigenous Small Business Fund</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Provision of funding to Indigenous community-based organisations to assist Indigenous peoples learn about business, develop good business skills and expand their businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Indigenous Self Employment Program</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Provides business advice and support to help individual Indigenous Australians establish their own small business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Structured Training and Employment Projects</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Provide flexible funding for projects that lead to lasting employment for Indigenous job seekers. Assistance is tailored to business needs and could, for example, include funding for apprenticeships, mentoring and other innovative approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>A flexible package of funding available to major private sector companies employing Indigenous Australians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>National Indigenous Cadetship Project</td>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Assists in finding a cadet for employers and enables Indigenous university students to gain professional work experience and financial support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Business Ready Program For Indigenous Tourism</td>
<td>DITR</td>
<td>The Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism aims to support emerging and established Indigenous tourism businesses so they can develop sound business plans and strategies that will enable them to effectively address consumer demand for Indigenous tourism experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Indigenous Business Australia (formerly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides funding and business finance to Indigenous business operators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Aboriginal Tourism Australia’s ‘Respecting Our Culture Tourism Development Program’</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides assistance, advice and support to assist tourism operators to develop business practices that will lead to long term business growth and enhanced opportunities for local employment. Mentoring and coaching is offered and workshops provided to assist those, particularly those in rural and remote regions, with practical information for day-to-day business operations. Publication of financial management guide – The Business of Indigenous Tourism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dates the programs commenced – N/A: dates not available

**FaHCSIA: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
### APPENDIX D: CURRENT COMMONWEALTH INDIGENOUS BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates*</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Program Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Indigenous Business Development</td>
<td>DEEDI**</td>
<td>Funding assistance for eligible Indigenous businesses and organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Indigenous Business Capacity Building</td>
<td>DEEDI</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Indigenous Business Establishment</td>
<td>DEEDI</td>
<td>Funding to support the establishment of Indigenous businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Indigenous Enterprise Development Officers</td>
<td>DEEDI</td>
<td>Regional officers providing advice and support to Indigenous businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Backing Indigenous Arts</td>
<td>DEEDI</td>
<td>Program to provide grants and support for Indigenous arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dates the programs commenced and ceased – N/A: dates not available

**DEEDI: Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation. DEEDI established March 2009 and supersedes former Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry.
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Towards the Development of a National Diagnostic Tool for Indigenous Tourism Businesses

INDIGENOUS TOURISM BUSINESSES IN QUEENSLAND: CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS


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• Government policy makers

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KEY EC3 PRODUCTS

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Email: info@crctourism.com.au
Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) is established under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centres Program.

STCRC is the world’s leading scientific institution delivering research to support the sustainability of travel and tourism—one of the world’s largest and fastest growing industries.

Introduction

STCRC has grown to be the largest dedicated tourism research organisation in the world, with $187 million invested in tourism research programs, commercialisation and education since 1997.

STCRC was established in July 2003 under the Commonwealth Government’s CRC program and is an extension of the previous Tourism CRC, which operated from 1997 to 2003.

Role and responsibilities

The Commonwealth CRC program aims to turn research outcomes into successful new products, services and technologies. This enables Australian industries to be more efficient, productive and competitive.

The program emphasises collaboration between businesses and researchers to maximise the benefits of research through utilisation, commercialisation and technology transfer.

An education component focuses on producing graduates with skills relevant to industry needs.

STCRC’s objectives are to enhance:

- the contribution of long-term scientific and technological research and innovation to Australia’s sustainable economic and social development;
- the transfer of research outputs into outcomes of economic, environmental or social benefit to Australia;
- the value of graduate researchers to Australia;
- collaboration among researchers, between searchers and industry or other users; and
- efficiency in the use of intellectual and other research outcomes.