

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Product project

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The context

Tourism is one of numerous industry opportunities for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Developing the potential for participation in tourism for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will play an important role in addressing the high levels of social, economic, health and education disadvantages experienced by people living in remote regions.

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In addition, with tourism sensitive to external factors such as the strengthening Australian dollar and rising oil prices, there is a need for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be involved in tourism to better safeguard themselves into the future.

The project also aims to highlight the role of tourism in 'Closing the Gap' and identify strategies for tourism to remain important of the Reconciliation process. The project will work closely with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in tourism and with other stakeholders to develop appropriate knowledge that helps build a stronger and resilient remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism sector.

The research

Consultation with stakeholders led to the following research themes:

- understanding how remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises can effectively access remote area tourists
- generating knowledge and allowing operators to learn from each other
- formulating new insights into remote tourism systems
- developing innovative models for new remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises.

These themes will be explored through various sub-projects using research activities such as case studies, action research and surveys, as well as working in conjunction with other CRC-REP projects.

Research partners and locations

The project includes research partners Southern Cross University, University of South Australia, Flinders University and Iga Warta, while also involving various small to medium Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises and agencies involved in tourism. Research locations include the Kimberley, the Flinders Ranges region, far north Queensland and central Australia.

The outcomes

By including our stakeholders in every step of the research process, an important focus of this work is to generate and deliver outcomes that respond to the needs of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises. The research will build new research perspectives and complement existing knowledge and resources available for the sector. Project outcomes include new business models, market insights, training materials, new tourism opportunities and accessible knowledge resources. The project outcomes are oriented towards capacity building in business decision-making processes. Additionally, as insights emerge from working with many remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises, proposed project outcomes may also assist Government and funding agencies in providing a better operating environment for the sector.