

First Nations Community Engagement:

Industry Guide Phase 1

Dr Carolyn Daniels
Madeline Stewart
Professor Adrian Miller

THE OFFICE OF INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT



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First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase 1

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We acknowledge the First Nations communities, their leaders and community members where our collaborative work was undertaken.

We acknowledge the support of BHP and the following BHP Partners for their contributions in developing this document.

Appendix A provides a brief description of each partner organisation.



Cover Page Artwork

Billabong Camp depicts time-worn tracks that lead to a shady place of water. Clans gather under paperbark trees after a long, hot journey. The design places people at its centre – referencing students, researchers, people and community. Tracks, a place by water and paperbark trees symbolise the energising, holistic values of the learning journey. The motifs depict people, tracks and meeting places, a story which relates to each individual, a journey which holds limitless pathways of learning, growth and connection.

The Billabong Camp design was created for the Office of Indigenous Engagement (OIE) by graphic artists at BALARINJI, a Sydney-based, Aboriginal-owned design agency.

The Billabong Camp insignia, in its entirety, is a collection of emblematic symbols that articulates OIE's core values of inclusiveness, engagement and leadership; each separate symbol connects to an aspect of OIE's work. The design's complex yet simple construct expresses the vision and nature of place that OIE occupies in the University landscape; the work of this team affects staff, students and stakeholders in their interactions with First Nations people.

OIE holds exclusive rights for the use of this design. It is a hallmark and is intended for use as an OIE signature to events, publications, research projects, plans, strategies and messaging initiated by the office.



Foreword

The *First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase I* is the result of the combined efforts of the Office of Indigenous Engagement, BHP and collaborating BHP partners.

To cement our partnerships, we planned to convene a symposium to share our collective experiences in engagement practices with First Nations communities. A lifting of COVID-19 restrictions allowed the *BHP Partners Symposium* to proceed in March 2021.

At the 3-day *Symposium*¹, partners heard from Indigenous leaders discussing authentic First Nations engagement, cultural competency, training, mentoring and developing meaningful Reconciliation Action Plans. Partners also presented case studies. This allowed them to identify any gaps in their current engagement practices and share learnings about best practice industry engagement with First Nations communities.

This *Guide* draws on insights from research and practice, and from the *Symposium* outcomes. The *Guide* is a framework that aims to provide useful information for those who engage with First Nations communities and complement different organisations' Indigenous community engagement approaches.

We are committed to working in partnership with First Nations people to develop beneficial outcomes. These outcomes include engagement that is effective and productive for both First Nations communities and the organisations with whom they engage. The *First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase I* is our commitment to these outcomes.

We envision this *Guide* will provide a means of connection, learning and innovation for organisations across Australia.

The next phase of this work is to develop a *Guide* for First Nations community engagement from communities' perspectives, incorporating engagement protocols and identifying what First Nations communities want from their industry engagement and/or industry partners.

Professor Adrian Miller

Deputy Vice-President Indigenous Engagement,
CQUniversity

BHP Chair in Indigenous Engagement
Director of the Jawun Research Centre



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1 Please refer to the BHP Partners Symposium: First Nations Community Engagement, 23–25 March 2021, Event Report

Introduction

This *First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase I* (the Guide) was developed from discussions held with industry² leaders involved with the Office of Indigenous Engagement, CQUniversity, and First Nations³ community members and leaders.

This *Guide* draws on our own and our partners' community engagement principles and practices. We plan to develop a *Phase II Guide*, which will include community engagement guidelines and protocols for industry from a First Nations perspective.

Purpose

The purpose of the *First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase I* is to enhance engagement practices for industry and First Nations communities.

Phase I of the *Guide* offers:

- a brief history of First Nations community engagement practices to provide context
- a resource for organisations, which they can use to assess their current First Nations community engagement approaches
- a framework to support industry in engaging with First Nations communities in mutually beneficial and respectful ways
- examples of good practice and learning experiences through case studies.

While there are many ways of building strong relationships with First Nations communities, the collaborative development of this Guide aims to support the cultural capability of industry at policy, project planning and leadership levels to successfully engage with First Nations communities, leaders and organisations.

2 For the purposes of this report, the terms industry and organisations are used interchangeably to refer to a broad cross-section of business, government, not-for-profit and non-government organisations. https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_BusinessCommitteesSenate/Economics/Completed_inquiries/2008-10/charities_08/report/c02

3 The terms 'First Nations' and 'Indigenous' are used interchangeably in this *Guide*; the terms include all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and we acknowledge their rich traditions and heterogenous cultures.

Connection to Existing Engagement Frameworks

This *Guide* is meant to complement existing frameworks and strategies on First Nations community engagement within organisations.

As a practical resource⁴, the *Guide* should be interpreted in conjunction with organisations' engagement plans and frameworks, as determined by their engagement teams.

Methodology

Participatory Action Research (PAR) processes underpinned the development of this *Guide*, facilitating the partnerships and effective communications required for iterative development of the content. Using a PAR approach involves regular monitoring and integration of evidence. This allowed context-based, appropriate information to be added to the *Guide* to best meet First Nations community engagement needs.

A strengths-based approach that recognises and acknowledges First Nations communities' unique strengths is embedded in the development of the *Guide*.

The methodology used to develop this *Guide* includes the key activities described in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Methodology



Phase II of the *Guide*, yet to be developed, will see the methodology expand to include community knowledge and perspectives from First Nations community leaders and organisations. Community-based, co-designed engagement processes will ensure that engagement interactions are tailored to the local context but maintain comparability across communities through emphasis on best practice industry engagement as outlined by the community.

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⁴ Sourced from: https://www.regional.gov.au/territories/norfolk_island/working-with-the-community/framework.aspx

Strategic Approach

This *Guide* is intended to be adaptable and dynamic: a 'living document'. Annual reviews will be carried out to identify 'what works' in community engagement, identify where engagement practices can improve, and highlight emerging skills, knowledge and practice to ensure the *Guide* remains current.⁵

This Guide takes a principles-based approach to ensure First Nations communities remain at the centre of industries' community engagement activities.



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5 Sourced from: <https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/resources/datsima/involved/cultural-capability-training-strategy.pdf>

Context

This *Guide* has been reviewed and validated through the activities outlined in the methodology. The following sections provide context around First Nations community engagement, beginning with a general description of community engagement.

Community Engagement

Community engagement, depending on the sector, can be described as ‘any activity that helps to inform, listen to or encourage more active participation with the community through different means to connect and create ideas together to deliver outcomes’ (DITCRD 2019, p. 2).

First Nations Community Engagement

First Nations community engagement occurs across a range of sectors in Australia. Hunt (2013a, p. 3), describes effective First Nations community engagement as:

... a sustained process that provides Indigenous people with the opportunity to actively participate in decision making from the earliest stage of defining the problem to be solved. Indigenous participation continues during the development of policies – and the programs and projects designed to implement them – and the evaluation outcomes.

Acknowledging the impact of colonisation⁶ on First Nations community engagement approaches is fundamental to successful engagement practices (AIATSIS 2020b; Madden et al. 2013). It is important to understand that Indigenous Australians have a shared history of colonisation and its devastating impact to their way of life (Victorian Government 2020). Indeed, within community engagement practices, the history of colonisation has an impact on the way Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals communicate and exchange information (Bhabha 1993; Verran & Christie 2008).

Understanding the different world views between Eurocentric and First Nations perspectives is vital when developing engagement policies and frameworks (Arabena 2015).

6 Please refer to the following website: <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/what-is-reconciliation/>

A review of government engagement methods with First Nations peoples (Thorpe et al. 2016, p. 4) found that many engagement policies had 'commendable aspirations' for successful engagement with communities. However, promises of 'empowerment' and 'equity' within the relationships were rarely evidenced. This was attributed to complex local, state and federal bureaucratic systems; poor government accountability and evaluation processes; ambiguous methods; and low bureaucratic skill levels for transforming policy into practice (Thorpe et al. 2016).

Past Community Engagement Practices with First Nations Communities

Hunt's (2013a) review of Indigenous community engagement identified that Australian government approaches to engagement were largely consultative, where information-giving was accompanied by some discussion. This approach reinforces central decision-making models rather than encouraging the shared ownership and shared goals that are pivotal to success (Hunt 2013a). Departments and organisations operating in non-collaborative ways, each engaging individually with First Nations people and organisations, are unnecessarily burdensome and lead to consultation fatigue (Hunt 2013a).

Effective and Productive First Nations Community Engagement

Effective, productive, culturally safe First Nations engagement 'is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning together with dignity and truly listening' (Williams 1999, p. 213).

Organisations and individuals must take responsibility for their own learning and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and issues, recognising that every community has its own history, and every individual has their own story (AIATSIS 2012).

Effective and productive engagement includes incorporating Indigenous knowledges and practices into industry First Nations community engagement practices.

Incorporating Indigenous Knowledges and Practices into First Nations Community Engagement

Smith et al. (2017) suggest that incorporating Indigenous knowledges and practices into First Nations community engagement processes can potentially improve community engagement practices more broadly. Hunt's (2013a; 2013b) investigation into developing effective engagement relationships with First Nations communities found that successful engagement requires:

- understanding both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture and recognising the diversity of Indigenous communities
- cultural competency in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes; this includes respecting and valuing the cultural knowledge and skills of First Nations communities and organisations
- engaging early to enable discussion and time to deliberate about shared goals and, if required, support for Indigenous governance arrangements
- building trusting relationships with individuals and communities, which is key to successful partnerships

- understanding that successful engagement takes time, includes the right people with the right skills and approaches, and practices good communication and leadership
- developing long-term relationships of respect and honesty underpinned by accessible and ongoing communication and information exchange
- understanding that real power sharing is essential
- implementing clear steps to achieve mutually agreed outcomes, including the processes, roles and responsibilities to attain these goals and a willingness to share the responsibility for shared objectives
- partnering with First Nations communities and operating within a framework of self-determination and community-led decision-making.

It is important to understand that working in partnership with First Nations communities requires relationship building, long-term investment strategies and strengths-base practices that are foundational to best practice actions (AIATSIS 2020a).

This *First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase I* aims to build on these recommendations.

Industry: First Nations Community Engagement Practices

Drawing on key themes emerging from the *BHP Partners Symposium, First Nations Community Engagement*, 23–25 March 2021, it was noted that effective and productive First Nations community engagement for industry involves:

- **supporting First Nations voices** in engagement practices through:
 - focused collaborative work with First Nations communities
 - measurable outcomes of partnerships including employment pathways within partnering organisations
 - acknowledging cultural safety, particularly around transparency and inclusive processes
 - incorporating reconciliation actions
 - prioritising First Nations values and frameworks
- **authentic engagement**, which is required before co-design, achieved through:
 - building and banking trust
 - building adequate timeframes into projects to allow for relationship building and community timeframes
 - gaining community input into what the community considers to be priorities for engagement
 - recruiting the right people for the job
 - developing whole organisation understanding of authentic community engagement, including amongst leadership teams
 - developing culturally competent and confident industry and government workforces

- **true co-design**⁷ to achieve value-added project delivery for both communities and industry, through:
 - First Nations community engagement plans that are inclusive and co-designed
 - a space to have clear, transparent, honest conversations
 - clear governance structures designed with community, which include engagement protocols
- **local presence, local connections and long-term commitment**, achieved through:
 - involving senior leadership
 - connecting with local community (e.g., attend local events)
 - actioning cultural confidence strategies for industry, including through a training program to be developed from the rich information generated during the *BHP Partners Symposium*⁸
 - being committed to long-term engagement
 - leaving a legacy with project work, not dependence; this includes employing local people in the project
 - working together to collaboratively maximise community/industry project outcomes
- **truth-telling and treaty**, the next steps towards effective, authentic First Nations community engagement:
 - requires recognition of the need for, and actioning of, truth-telling discussions including measures to advance treaty and a voice in Parliament.

The current challenge to truth-telling is having a voice and being heard in the present structural arrangements within government and industry (AIATSIS 2020a).

Engagement: Embedded in Voice, Treaty, Truth

The *Uluru Statement from the Heart* underpins the concept of voice, treaty and truth. This *Guide* has been developed to advance First Nations community engagement practices for industry with the understanding that it is embedded in the powerful aspirations so clearly articulated in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, particularly those relating to self-determination, as detailed in the following excerpt:

‘... We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination ...’

7 Co-design ultimately means that government and organisations need to be working on their exit strategy (where they are no longer part of implementation) to enable self-determination (AIATSIS 2020a).

8 Please refer to: *BHP Partners Symposium: First Nations Community Engagement, 23–25 March 2021, Event Report.*

At the heart of the *Uluru Statement* is the need for dual and complimentary sovereignty, the route to decolonisation and a fairer, more just Australia (MacDonald 2017). MacDonald (2017) asserts that a treaty needs to come before constitutional change because a treaty needs to be the foundation for that constitutional change. A treaty can be followed by both a voice in Parliament and constitutional change. Overarching all of this is the urgent need for truth-telling about our history, as underscored by various speakers at the *BHP Partners Symposium*.

In line with the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, self-determination underpins this *Guide's* ethos for First Nations community engagement practice.

Self-Determination

The *Australian Human Rights Commission*⁹ defines self-determination for Australia's First Peoples as an ongoing process of choice to ensure that Indigenous communities are able to meet their social, cultural and economic needs.

Self-determination is not about creating a separate Indigenous state. Rather it is based on the simple acknowledgement that Indigenous peoples are Australia's First People, as was recognised by law in the historic Mabo Case.¹⁰

The loss of this right to live according to a set of common values and beliefs, and to have that right respected by others, is at the heart of the current disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians.

Without self-determination, it is not possible for Indigenous Australians to fully overcome the legacy of colonisation and dispossession (AHRC 2003).

A great example of a public sector program supporting First Nations self-determination is the Victorian Government's initiative *Barring Djinang Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework*.¹¹ It outlines a framework for embedding self-determination approaches within government systems which aim to transform current structures and systems. These actions, which are adaptable to industry systems and structures, focus on:

- prioritising culture
- cultural safety in workplaces
- addressing racism
- addressing trauma
- supporting healing
- transferring power and resources to community.

Industry can apply these enablers of self-determination to help address the structural and systemic barriers too often experienced by the First Nations communities with whom we engage.

9 <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/right-self-determination>

10 Mabo v Queensland (No 2) [1992] HCA 23 (3 June 1992) ("Mabo case").

11 Please refer to: <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/html-resources/aboriginal-cultural-capability-toolkit/>

Additionally, self-determination can be supported by industry in First Nations community engagement practice by:

- having a clear commitment to self-determination
- committing to cultural safety, which is reflected in engagement practices
- involving First Nations people in the decision-making processes
- partnering with First Nations people when designing services or programs
- having a First Nations employment strategy and being committed to strengthening Indigenous employment in senior roles
- ensuring First Nations communities have a voice regarding Indigenous business.¹²

Embedding self-determination in projects requires internal organisational transformation where the context for First Nations community engagement enables communities to be empowered to own and develop relevant projects that meet community needs and lead to improved outcomes (Victorian Government 2020).



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12 Please refer to: <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/html-resources/aboriginal-cultural-capability-toolkit/>

First Nations Community Engagement Framework

Reflecting on the need to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and practices into community engagement led to the development of the *First Nations Community Engagement Framework* which is built around the following five pillars.

- **Vision, values, principles and commitment** to positive engagement practice.
- **First Nations community engagement scale**, which is based on the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2 2015) and the preferred methods of First Nations community engagement captured at a recent AIATSIS (2020a) symposium. The engagement scale provides a shared language and identifies different levels of community engagement.
- **Steps for community engagement**, which sets standards for community engagement and outlines steps to ensure community engagement activities are culturally and contextually appropriate.
- **Engagement matrix**, which helps to define the level of community engagement required and mitigate risks of under- or over-engaging. The matrix assists with selecting appropriate forms of engagement through considering the impact to the community and an opportunity for the community to be involved in final decision-making.
- **Engagement methods**, which includes a non-exhaustive list of engagement methods or tools encompassing all types of engagement from 'inform' to 'self-determination'.

1. Vision, Values, Principles and Commitment

Table 1 outlines our vision, values, principles, and commitment to positive, productive and equitable engagement with First Nations communities.

Table 1 Vision, Values, Principles & Commitment

Vision 	Industry working in partnership with First Nations communities and organisations respectfully and transparently towards a sustainable future of self-determination.
Values 	Our shared values that enhance the ability to be culturally respectful include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reflecting on our own culture, attitudes and beliefs about ‘others’• communicating in a clear, value free, open and respectful way• developing trust• recognising and avoiding stereotypical barriers• engaging with others in a two-way dialogue where knowledge is shared• understanding the influence of culture shock (Muecke, Lenthall & Lindeman 2011; Trudgett & Franklin 2008).
Principles 	Our shared principles are built on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• inclusivity and respect• transparency and being responsive• being purposeful and practical• trust and face-based engagement.
Commitment 	Our five pillars for positive engagement include: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. engaging with First Nations communities in ways that are culturally and contextually appropriate2. using co-designed approaches to build meaningful partnerships¹³3. actively keeping the community informed about what we are doing and how the community can be involved4. continuously improving our capability to engage with First Nations communities5. committing to protect Indigenous cultural heritage and intellectual property rights in our contracts, protocols, strategies and policies.¹⁴

13 Adapted from: <https://aiatsis.gov.au/news-and-events/news/nyiyang-wuunggalu-lets-work-together-indigenous-terms>

14 Kearney, J & Janke, T 2018 <https://www.terrijanke.com.au/post/2018/01/29/rights-to-culture-indigenous-cultural-and-intellectual-property-icip-copyright-and-protoc>


2. First Nations Community Engagement Scale

IAP2 Engagement Spectrum

The International Association for Public Participation’s (IAP2) *Public Participation Spectrum*¹⁵ is a quality assurance standard that helps to define community engagement processes. IAP2’s spectrum, an internationally recognised platform, provides guidance to the public service and not-for-profit sectors, private industry and communities.

The matrix in Figure 2 is based on the IAP2 *Public Participation Spectrum* (2015, p. 11). It is important to note that the *Spectrum* illustrates different levels of engagement, depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and types of engagement for the issue being addressed (IAP2 2015). Because the level of engagement depends on the issue requiring engagement and the objectives to be achieved, engagement may need to increase or decrease over time (DITCRD 2019).

Figure 2 IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

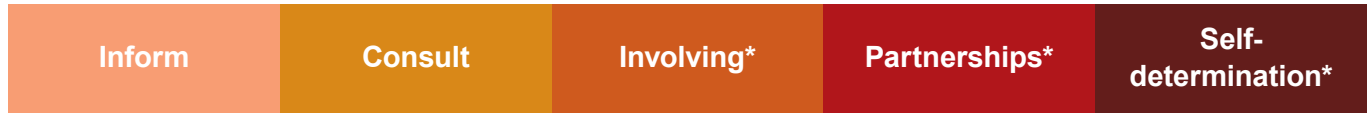
Increasing impact on the decision 					
Level of Engagement	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Engagement Goal	To provide community with information that helps to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions and the impact.	Community feedback on the issue, analysis or decision. Communities know what they need and what will work. Assists with making informed decisions.	Community involvement early in the process to ensure community views are understood and considered. Build trust early through ongoing community connection (e.g., through an advisory committee).	Partnering with community in each aspect of the decision and co-creating for solutions.	Place decision-making with the community.
Engagement Commitment	To keep the community informed.	To keep community informed, listen to and acknowledge issues, provide feedback as to how input affected the decision.	To ensure concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and to provide feedback as to how input affected the decision.	To seek advice and innovation from the community to formulate solutions and incorporate the advice into alternatives to the maximum extent possible.	To implement what the community decides.

15 (c) International Association for Public Participation: www.iap2.org.

First Nations Community Engagement and Self-Determination

Outcomes from a recent AIATSIS symposium on effective policy engagement and design, *Nyiyang Wuunggalu (19–20 February 2020)*¹⁶, emphasised the need for a different paradigm when working with Indigenous communities – one that is strengths-based, builds relationships, invests in long-term engagement, adopts Indigenous values and frameworks, and supports First Nations self-determination (AIATSIS 2020a).

A graphic recording image¹⁷ produced by Sarah Firth during the AIATSIS (2020a, p.14) symposium panel discussions, titled *Place-Based Policy: Implementing Local Decision Making*, illustrated the preferred methods of First Nations community engagement* as:



* Reflecting on the IAP2 spectrum, this approach renames those levels marked with an asterisk to provide a First Nations community engagement lens: IAP2's 'involve' is replaced with 'involving', 'collaborate' with 'partnerships', and 'empower' is replaced with 'self-determination'.

Involving in the *First Nations Community Engagement Scale* (Figure 3) refers to involving the community and those who are integral to the outcome of the project or issue early on in project development (AIATSIS 2020b; Hunt 2013a; 2013b).

Partnerships in the *First Nations Community Engagement Scale* are defined as partnerships based on respect for First Nations control, decision-making and priorities, within a framework of self-determination; a collaborative approach established on trust and respect that promotes openness and transparency (Hunt 2013b; WACOSS 2019). Partnerships are informed by evidence and best practice that includes the wisdom, knowledge and skills of First Nations leaders and communities (WACOSS 2019).

Self-determination is underpinned by the Australian Human Rights Commission's¹⁸ definition of self-determination for Australia's First Peoples. In the *First Nations Community Engagement Scale*, self-determination refers to communities engaging with industry to develop projects that stimulate self-determination outcomes through the sharing of resources and the power to strengthen:

- self-sufficient communities in control of their own affairs (Flanagan 2016)
- projects that optimise community assets for the benefit of the community (Flanagan 2016)
- First Nations communities and people to develop the 'necessary skills, resources, authority, opportunity, and motivation' (QPC 2017, p. 111)
- communities taking the lead in making decisions on issues, choosing and implementing activities, and evaluating outcomes (QPC 2017)
- First Nations communities' sustainable economic development (QPC 2017)
- communities managing resources and engaging external organisations as required.

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16 <https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/aiatsis-nyiyang-wuunggalu-symposium-report.pdf>


17 Refer to <https://aiatsis.gov.au/whats-new/events/nyiyang-wuunggalu-symposium> to download the AIATSIS Symposium Report 2020 to view the graphic recording image on page 14:and **Appendix C Place-based policy: Implementing local decision-making** for the graphic recording image.

18 Please refer to the following link: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/right-self-determination>

First Nations Community Engagement Scale

The following *First Nations Community Engagement Scale* (Figure 3) is based on the IAP2 spectrum¹⁹ with the adaptations of involving, partnerships and self-determination proposed as methods of First Nations community engagement.²⁰

Figure 3 First Nations Community Engagement Scale

Increasing impact on the decision 					
Level of Engagement	Inform	Consult	Involving	Partnerships	Self-determination
Engagement Goal	To provide community with information that helps to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions and the impact.	Community feedback on the issue, analysis or decision. Communities know what they need and what will work. Assists with making informed decisions. Active listening required.	Involving community early in the process to ensure community views are understood and considered. Build trust early through ongoing community connection (e.g., through an advisory committee).	Partnering with community in decision-making and co-creating for solutions. Drawing on community knowledge and expertise, sharing tools and knowledge to deliver outcomes.	Place decision-making with the community. Community drives the decisions and the outcomes. Supports self-sufficient and sustainable communities. Transfer of resources and power to communities.
Engagement Commitment	To keep the community informed.	To keep community informed, listen to and acknowledge issues, provide feedback as to how input affected the decision.	To ensure concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and to provide feedback as to how input affected the decision.	To seek advice and innovation from the community to formulate solutions and incorporate the advice into alternatives to the maximum extent possible.	To implement what the community decides.

19 (c) International Association for Public Participation: www.iap2.org.

20 The IAP2 International Federation granted permission to use the adaptations in the context of First Nations.

Table 2 Community Engagement Plan

1. Plan	<p>Clearly define the need behind the engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: Define the goals and objectives of the project. Clearly define the purpose of the engagement. Is it to inform, consult, involve, partner with the community, or work together for self-determination outcomes? • Scope: Be clear about the scope of work, understand decision-makers' expectations and know what aspects of the project are negotiable. • Audience: Identify who is interested in the project, who will be impacted and those who need a voice. • Sensitivities: Identify any potential sensitivities of this engagement. • Opportunities: Consider the opportunities to engage with community members and groups on the issue or topic. • Key messages: Develop the key messages prior to engagement activity. • Stakeholders: Identify who else may be interested in the engagement or have a stake in the outcomes (e.g., government agencies, community organisations and service providers) and what roles they may have in the engagement process. • Links: Identify if there are other related engagement activities that could be undertaken as a joint activity or event. Consider also other events or activities that may have an impact on participation in the event/engagement. • Resources: Identify resource needs. Every project has different requirements and resource needs, which may include specialist skills and responsibilities.
2. Collaborate	Connect with partnering community/s, stakeholders and organisations.
3. Decide	<p>Develop an engagement plan outlining the level of engagement required using the <i>First Nations Community Engagement Scale</i> (Figure 3).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Engagement Matrix in Table 3 helps to determine the level of impact to the community and level of community participation.
4. Engagement Methods	<p>Use multiple communication channels to share key messages and receive feedback and questions during the engagement. (Refer to Table 5 Methods to Engage).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have sufficient resources to be responsive.
5. Begin Engagement Activities	<p>After appropriate consultation and feedback, implement the engagement plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure engagement methods are fit-for-purpose, allowing for flexible and responsive action if required. • Make it easy for the community to be part of the conversation; ensure messaging is clear and that you are responsive. • If inappropriate comments appear in an online forum, take the comments down.
6. Reflect/Evaluate	<p>When the program of engagement has concluded, provide feedback to the community on the project outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how community input and suggestions were included in the final outcomes; this helps to build trust and is integral to forming strong relationships with the community. • Include evaluation processes to review any changes and the impact as a result of engagement outcomes.

The following questions are useful when designing an engagement approach:

- What are the issues that you or the community are seeking to address or resolve?
- Are you wanting to let the community know about something (*Inform*)?
- Are you seeking input into program or policy design (*Involving*)?
- Are you wanting to find out about an issue the community thinks is important, including the best way forward (*Partnerships*)?
- Is the community reaching out about an issue they think is important, including the best way forward (*Partnerships*)? (DITCRD 2019)
- How is your organisation facilitating self-determination in projects? (AIATSIS 2020b)

Being clear about the purpose of engagement from the beginning assists stakeholders and the community to understand the issue and the ideal outcome (IAP2 2015). It also helps the community to understand what it is that you are seeking and enables informed decisions about how they will engage.

4. Engagement Matrix: Evaluating the Level of Engagement

The **Engagement Matrix** (based on the ISO31000 Risk Matrix²²) **assists with understanding the level of community engagement required and mitigating risks of under- or over-engaging.**

The following *Engagement Matrix* (Table 3) provides an overview of the different forms of engagement and considers both the impact to the community and the capacity for community involvement in planning and decision-making (DITCRD 2019).

Table 3 Engagement Matrix

		1. Impact to the community				
		Negligible	Low	Moderate	High	Significant
2. Level of community participation (DITCRD 2019)	Minimal	Inform	Inform	Listen then inform	Listen then inform	Listen then involve
	Minor	Listen then inform	Listen then inform	Listen then inform	Listen then involve	Listen then involve
	Advisor role	Listen then involve	Listen then involve	Listen then involve	Listen then partner	Listen then partner
	Significant advisor role	Listen then involve	Listen then involve	Listen then partner	Listen then partner	Self-determination
	Formal decision-making authority	Listen then involve	Listen then partner	Listen then partner	Self-determination	Self-determination

The colour-coded scale of the *Engagement Matrix* (Table 3) – from light for ‘inform’ to dark brown for ‘self-determination’ – illustrates the level of impact to the community and level of community participation.

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22 Refer to the following link: <https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/store/en/PUB100426.pdf>

Engagement Dimensions: Impact to Community & Level of Community Participation

The two dimensions of the *Engagement Matrix* are depicted in the vertical and horizontal labels in Table 3:

1. impact to the community

2. level of community participation.

An explanation of these engagement dimensions is listed in Table 4.

Table 4 Engagement Dimensions: Community Impact and Participation

1. Impact to the community		2. Level of community participation	
What are the likely impacts on the community (such as environment, economic and traditions of the community), the extent of the change within the community, and the history of the topic in the community?		How much decision-making power does the community have as part of the engagement, how much will change be based on community input, and who share an interest in the outcomes; are their interests the same?	
Role	Definition	Role	Definition
Negligible	The issue impacts a minimal number of people in the community directly, with negligible impact on the sustainability of the community.	Minimal	There is no scope for sharing decision-making.
Low	The issue has a significant and direct impact on a small number of people in the community, therefore the community is invited to comment to ensure the work is delivered in contextually appropriate ways.	Minor	Community invited to comment to ensure the work is delivered in contextually appropriate ways.
Moderate	The issue has a direct impact on many people in the community, or it has the potential to have a long-term impact on sustainability of the community.	Advisor role	Communities have the capability, capacity and authority to be trusted advisors to decision-makers or partners.
High	The issue has a direct impact on many people in the community, a high probability of long-term impact on the sustainability of the community, and a risk that the community cannot absorb the short-term impact of change.	Significant advisor role	Community leaders and/or formal advisory groups have the delegated authority to explore an issue or topic. Their decisions influence decision-making.
Significant	The issue has a direct impact on most people in the community and will have a long-term effect on the sustainability of the community. In the short-term, the community may experience difficulty adapting to the change.	Formal decision-making authority	A formal decision-making group in the community, established within a legal framework, that has delegated authority to make final decisions on an issue.

Considerations for Community Engagement

When considering a project’s impact on the community, think about the range of views in the community as there are often diverse views and opinions. All engagement should be respectful and inclusive, with all voices empowered to contribute (DITCRD 2019).

When engaging in projects with First Nations communities, AIATSIS (2020b) principles for engagement recommend organisations aim for the highest level of engagement (as per IAP2 Engagement Spectrum), invest in relationship and capacity building, and give engagement processes appropriate timeframes.

It is important to note that community perspectives of the dimensions of impact and level of participation may differ from an organisation’s perspective. As well, an organisation’s approach may change over the duration of the engagement (DITCRD 2019).

Additionally, it is essential to remember that engagement activities planned on days of significance or when there is sorry business in the community is considered disrespectful.

5. Engagement Methods

Table 5 below outlines the different methods that can be used for community engagement, with corresponding colour-coded scales from the *Engagement Matrix* (Table 3). The list of methods and approaches, while not exhaustive, are helpful when planning ways to inform community.

Table 5 Methods to Engage

Ways to inform	Inform	Consult	Involving	Partnership	Self-Determination
Letterbox drop: Fact sheets, flyers, newsletters					
Print media: Media release, Editorials, Adverts					
Electronic media: Radio, website, interviews					
Social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram					
Issues paper: used in the legislative context to communicate on technically complex issues					
Open days: Information sharing					
Information repository: Drop-in centre, website					
Survey: online & hardcopy surveys					

Ways to inform	Inform	Consult	Involving	Partnership	Self-Determination
Written submission: Document outlining a response from a community group/member					
Focus group: facilitated small group discussions to explore topics in detail					
Interview: one-on-one interview to understand what is important to community, encourages story telling about experiences					
Advisory committee: Representative group involved in decision-making and consultation					
Expert panel: Interactive discussions with specialised input when required for a project. First ask whether the technical skills and/or knowledge can be sourced from the community.					
Workshop: Informal Meeting Presentations Exhibits Interactive Working Groups					
Working group: A core project team of experts and representatives, formed to develop a specific product or policy recommendations					
Digital formats (e.g., Zoom): Plan how online sessions will take place, provide clear information and guidelines for participants.					
Yarning: Is about building respectful relationships. Provides a safe place to be heard and to respond, promotes interactions and community connections (Bessarab & Ng'andu 2010).					
Ganmar: Two-way knowledge sharing (Living knowledge 2008)					
Dadirri: Deep listening (Ungunmerr-Baumann 1993)					
Citizens' juries: Group of citizens selected to learn about an issue and then examine the data by questioning decision-makers, technicians, and interested parties – all of whom are witnesses to the process. The Jury makes recommendations based on their evaluation of the discussions.					
Mediation, negotiation, dialogue: Designed to create shared meanings through effective listening and reflective questioning.					
Delegated decision-making: decisions making powers delegated to a special committee; ballots (elections)					

Project Evaluation: Applying the Engagement Scale

Case studies presented at the *BHP Partner Symposium 23–25 March 2021* illustrate how participating organisations engaged with First Nations communities in a range of contexts, and the learnings that emerged.

The following rubric (Figure 4), adapted from the *First Nations Community Engagement Scale* (Figure 3), provides a framework to explain the assessment criteria used to identify levels of community engagement for the case studies presented by the partners at the *Symposium*.

Figure 4 Case Study Assessment Criteria Rubric

Level of Engagement	Inform	Consult	Involving	Partnerships	Self-determination
Engagement Goal	To provide community with information that helps to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions and the impact.	Community feedback on the issue, analysis or decision. Communities know what they need and what will work. Assists with making informed decisions. Active listening required.	Involving community early in the process to ensure community views are understood and considered. Build trust early through ongoing community connection (e.g., through an advisory committee).	Partnering with community in decision-making and co-creating for solutions. Drawing on community knowledge and expertise, sharing tools and knowledge to deliver outcomes.	Place decision-making with the community. Community drives the decisions and the outcomes. Supports self-sufficient and sustainable communities. Transfer of resources and power to communities.

Each case study in the table below (Table 6) has been graded from **inform** to **self-determination** according to the assessment criteria depicted in Figure 4 above to indicate the level of impact to the community and the extent of community participation.

These assessments are based on the level of engagement implemented for each project as presented at the *BHP Partner's Symposium*. The assessments are not an evaluation of the organisations themselves or other projects they may have underway.

Table 6 Case Study Engagement Dimensions Comparison Table

BHP Partners Case Study Presentations	Level of engagement				
	Inform	Consult	Involving	Partnership	Self-Determination
Books in Homes					
Queensland Museum					
CQU First Nations Disaster Management					
AIME					
Bush Blitz					
Queensland Music Festival					
CQU PCYC in First Nations Communities					
Great Barrier Reef Foundation					
Polly Farmer Foundation					
Greening Australia					
Clontarf Foundation					
CQU Community Hubs					

It must be noted that the assessments in Table 6 were made by the authors on the presentations as delivered at the BHP Partners Symposium on the 23-25 March 2021 and were not self-assessed by the organisations.

Self-assessment and co-creation with First Nations community/s will be required when organisations use the *Case Study Assessment Criteria* (Figure 4) to plan, assess and evaluate their projects.

Some organisations' business plans will only utilise **Inform** and **Consult** criteria depending on the service delivered. However, within the Inform/Consult engagement activities with First Nations communities and/or organisations, the assessment criteria provide a clear and transparent view of the service delivered and the extent of such services.

For other organisations who utilise the engagement levels of **Involving** and **Partnerships**, the assessment criteria will assist in the planning stages with a view to achieving **Self-Determination** outcomes.

Some of the partners in the Comparison Table (Table 6) will attain Self-Determination outcomes from their projects, and for others, the service or scope of works will not lead to Self-Determination outcomes. The levels of engagement, however, provide a visual pathway for organisations to aim for their services and/or projects to achieve Self-Determination outcomes for the communities they partner and work with.

Case Studies



Books in Homes: Literacy, the Foundation of Success

Books in Homes® was founded in 1993 in New Zealand by Maori author Alan Duff, who wrote the widely acclaimed book *Once Were Warriors*. Books in Homes Australia was founded in 2001.

Books in Homes is a charitable foundation that provides books of choice to children living in remote, disadvantaged, and low socio-economic circumstances, ensuring crucial early literacy engagement and the development of reading skills needed for lifelong achievement. The program aims to overcome the inequality of educational opportunities in communities where access to books for families is limited or non-existent and resources are often scarce. In doing so, the program contributes to helping overcome generational poverty by enhancing the chances of success in early education, thereby opening up options, choices and potential in later life. Since 2001, Books in Homes has distributed over 2.7 million new books to children through schools and communities around Australia. Books in Homes Australia's vision is to create an Australia where every child and family has access to books in the home.

About us:

- Our vision is to have a book in every house of Australia
- We believe books can change a kid's life
- We aim to minimise educational disadvantage
- We have delivered over 60,000 books
- Evaluations are based on the number of orders received and the feedback given
- We believe in reading for fun through choice and ownership

Our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities:

- 25% of our catalogue must be authored or illustrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people



Queensland Museum Network: Project Dig

Queensland Museum Network, established in 1862, is a museum of natural history, cultural heritage, science and human achievement that tells the changing story of Queensland.

About the Queensland Museum Network (QMN):

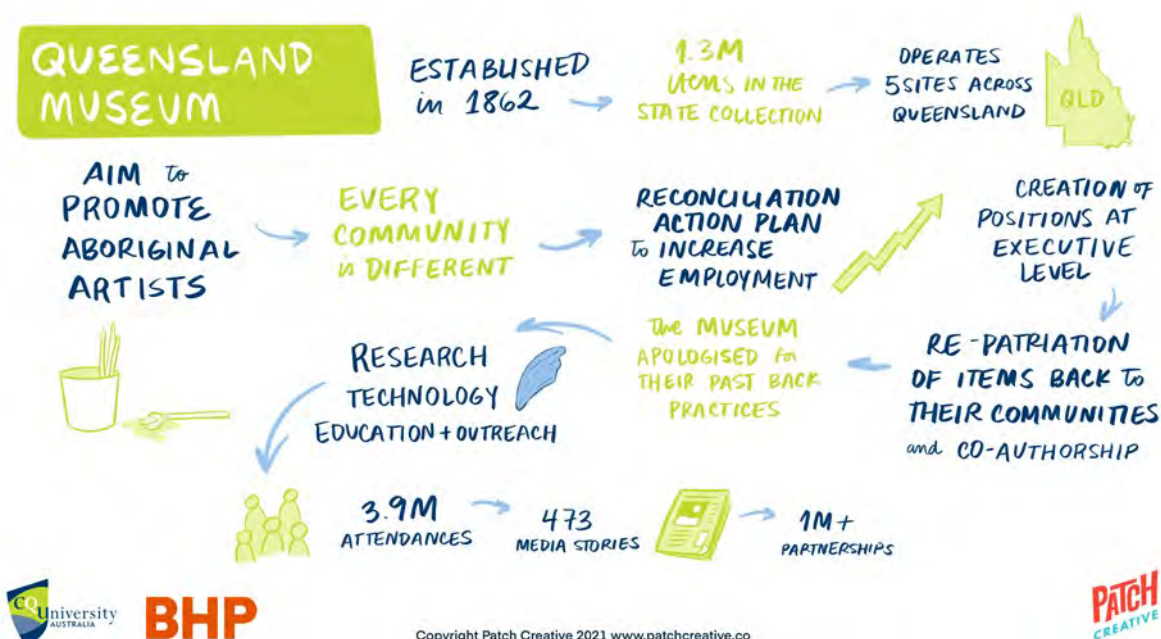
- 1.3 million items are housed in the state collection
- QMN is engaged in research, technology, education and outreach
- Five locations: Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Townsville and Hendra
- The museum believes every community is different

Indigenous engagement:

- QMN aims to promote Aboriginal artists
- The museum’s RAP aims to increase First Nations employment opportunities, including creating positions at the executive level
- QMN is involved in re-patriation of items back to their communities and co-authorship
- The museum has apologised for past practices

Project DIG (Digital Infrastructure Growth):

- QMN and BHP have a long partnership history that began with the discovery of megafauna fossils at the BMC South Walker Creek coal mine site near Nebo in 2008
- Megafauna fossils were first discovered by Barada Barna Traditional Owners during a routine cultural heritage survey in 2008
- The South Walker Creek site preserves fossilised evidence of a previously unknown ancient tropical ecosystem, full of extinct species known as megafauna
- These fossils may represent extinct species unique to tropical Australia
- South Walker Creek, the baseline project for Project DIG, is potentially the youngest megafauna site in Australia and may hold the key to understanding the evolution and extinction of Australia’s megafauna, especially how these species responded to past climatic changes and the arrival of humans in the tropical north
- By examining how the environment at South Walker Creek has changed over time, and how these systems are connected today, we can better understand how our environment might change in the future.



CQUniversity: First Nations Disaster Management Hub: Foundations

This research forms the foundational work of CQUniversity’s proposed *First Nations Disaster Management Hub* (FNDMH). The FNDMH, to be established at CQUniversity’s Townsville campus, aims to be a centre for national and international expertise, analysis and innovation on emergency and disaster management for First Nations communities (Figure 5).

The research aims to:

- evaluate local government disaster management plans impacting First Nations communities to identify gaps that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic
- understand disaster risk in First Nations communities
- identify barriers to data information availability
- develop culturally appropriate disaster management planning in accordance with the Sendai Framework

- recommend disaster management plans that embed First Nations knowledges to local government disaster management planning
- ensure First Nations knowledge and practices are used to complement scientific knowledge in disaster management.

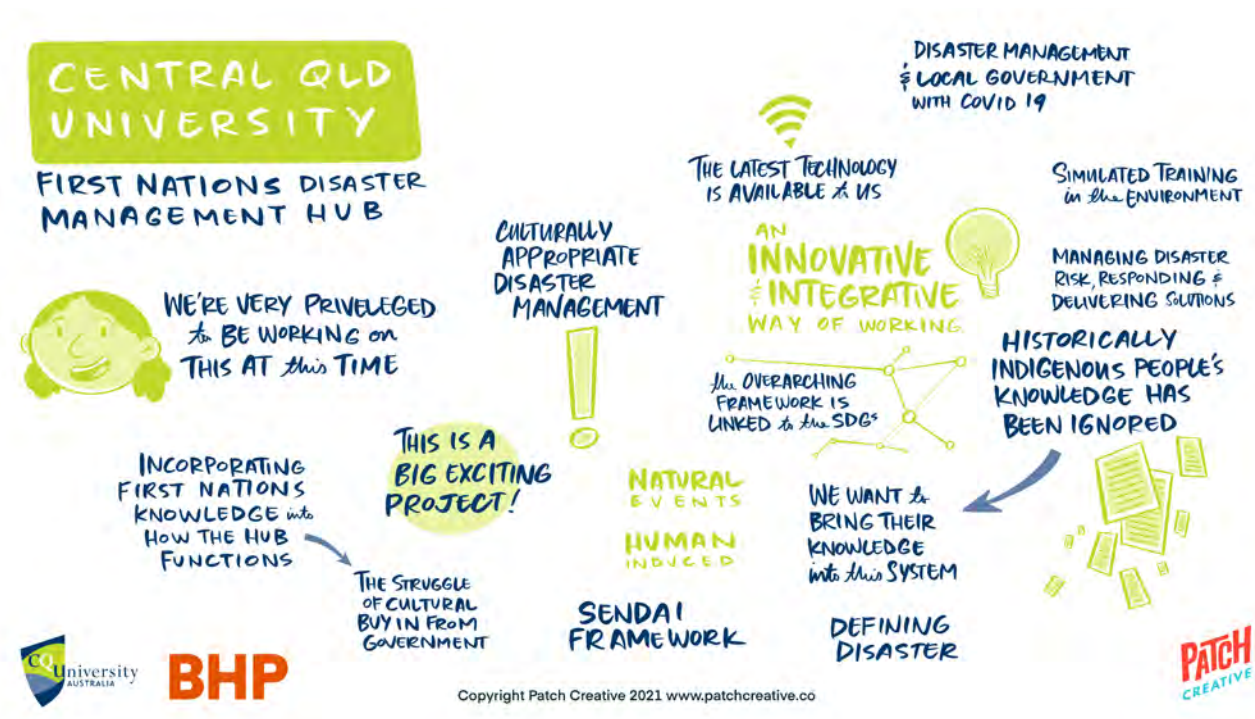


Figure 5 First Nations Disaster Management Strategy



Adapted from: CDMPS 2018; DoHA 2018; PAHO 2014; PAHO/WHO 2019; UNDRR 2015; UNSDG n.d.

AIME: Engaging for Success

AIME is a mentoring program that walks alongside Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students in high school to create equality with education. Five university engagements across the year allow AIME to walk alongside 1,500 high school students in the Central and Far North Queensland regions. AIME often sees significant behavioural change due to a shift in the mindset of mentees and this then leads to an engagement in the education system.

About AIME:

- We believe in young leadership and creating a fair world
- We provide support to believe it can be done; we want to build a better future
- AIME have a high number of students as well as university graduate volunteers

What is happening at AIME?

- Mentoring and mentorship unlocks opportunity
- AIME is building bridges of connection between organisations
- We support young leadership roles, for example having a 'Co-CEO'
- Imagination University (online TV) is a tool for teachers and students to connect
- Social media provides challenges to our communication ethics



AIME presenters Rhian Miller and Drew Paten (above) shared stories about their work.



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Bush Blitz: Australia's Largest Nature Discovery Program

Bush Blitz is Australia's largest nature discovery program, a partnership between the Australian Government through Parks Australia, BHP and Earthwatch Australia. Bush Blitz utilises the knowledge and expertise of its partner organisations to engage with First Nations peoples to share knowledge and data to support national and local level management of conservation areas and rare and threatened species. Bush Blitz documents plants and animals across Australia. Since the program began in 2010, Bush Blitz has discovered more than 1,700 new species and has added thousands of species records to what is already known, increasing our scientific knowledge to help us protect our biodiversity for generations to come.

Bush Blitz involves specialist taxonomists, Indigenous communities, rangers, landowners, teachers, students and BHP employees to share knowledge, gather data and raise awareness about Australia's biodiversity.

Bush Blitz achieves its outcomes by coordinating multi-disciplinary expeditions to areas that are known knowledge gaps for Australia's biodiversity. The program includes an extensive education component through engaging teachers in the

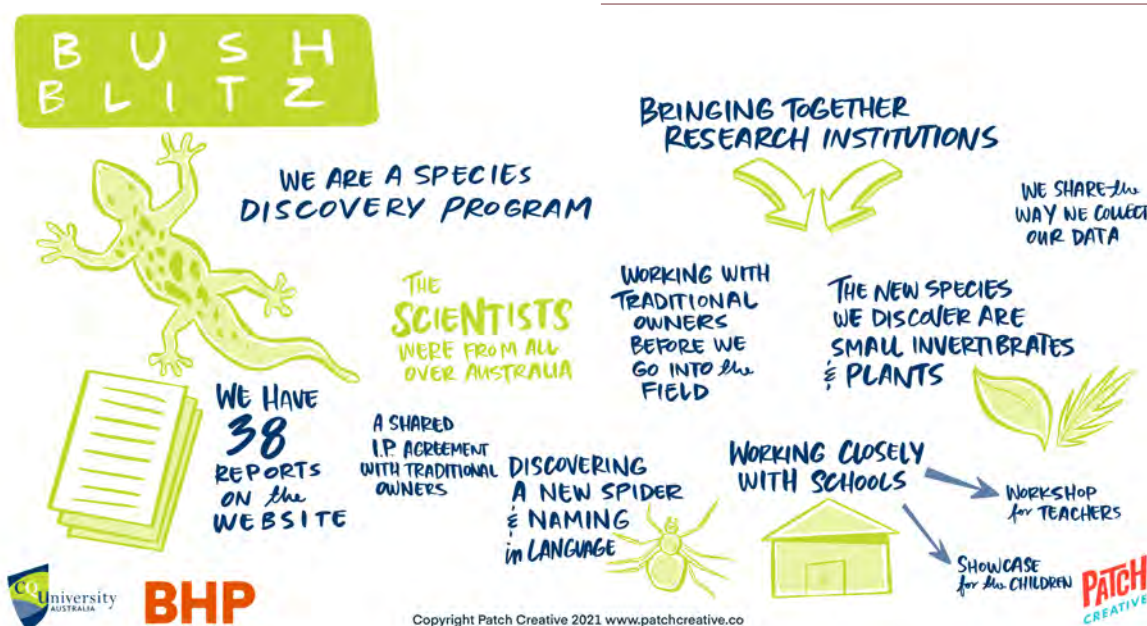
field and online resources. Raised awareness is achieved via community events, online resources and an active media campaign.

Who we are and what we do?

- We are a species discovery program
- The new species we discover are small invertebrates and plants
- We bring together research institutions
- We work closely with schools, run workshops for teachers and organise showcases for students and managers implement practices to protect biodiversity

How are we involved with First Nations communities?

- Work with Traditional Owners before we go into the field
- Share the way we collect data
- Share an IP agreement with Traditional Owners
- Language was used for the naming of a recently found spider: *Miturgopelma parui*, Parui is the north-west Tasmanian Aboriginal name for beetle.



Queensland Music Festival: The Power of Music to Create Positive Futures

Queensland Music Festival (QMF) is a strategic music agency that helps communities unlock the power of music to create positive futures. Our vision is a Better Queensland, built by music. Over its 20-year history, QMF has incubated a unique and artistically ambitious programming model that brings leading artists and communities together to create music experiences that celebrate the cultural identity of people and place. QMF's events are designed to help isolated and marginalised communities build bridges to the rest of the nation, create unity and pride within those communities, and facilitate the capacity of local people to tell their unique stories. First Nations stories have been integral to many of our signature community celebrations. For our production in Mount Isa in 2019, for example, there was a deep engagement with the local Kalkadoon people, who entrusted QMF to tell the story of the infamous 1884 Battle Mountain massacre.

What are we about?

- Local people and their stories
- Unlocking the power of music and promoting happiness through music
- Having a safe space to explore music
- There is truth in song
- Local community programs
- Reconciliation is important; we want non-Indigenous people to know the stories

How do we engage?

- We are embedded in consultation
- We need to be culturally aware
- We engage in respectful consultation
- The focus is always going to be multigenerational
- We can't play the piano with all the black keys or all the white keys; it has to be both

What have we learnt?

- We have learnt we need First Nations-led programs
- It is good to introduce yourself culturally
- To reflect by asking ourselves, have the projects truly engaged with the community?



CQUniversity: Engaging for Research, PCYC Project

Key stakeholders involved with PCYC in Woorabinda invited OIE to evaluate the establishment of PCYC in the community. The research aims to gauge community perceptions of PCYC and evaluate the impact PCYC activities are having on youth crime and community harmony. The PCYC project is linked to previous research in the community that focused on young people's health and wellbeing. It found establishing a youth program for young people was considered a priority.

Interviews and workshops are underway. Integration and interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative data will lead to a conceptual model of best practice for development, delivery and implementation of Indigenous youth programs in rural and remote Indigenous communities. The model will assist youth program developers to consider how they might best design, develop and deliver youth programs in remote Indigenous communities to achieve the greatest impact, as well as generate benefits for participating youth and their communities.

Our research:

- Is driven by ethics
- Must be safe and authentic
- Is different to projects; we are collecting and collating data
- Data is collected through interviews and workshops
- Seeks youth input into the program

How we engage:

- We are community centric and work to community time
- It is about building relationships and getting to know people
- We connect with community by attending different community events
- We bring together all the different views

Lessons learnt:

- Gaining community input is invaluable
- Take your time to yarn and build a more personal relationship
- Do not rush
- Interviewing one-on-one allows each person to share freely



Great Barrier Reef Foundation: Raine Island Recovery Project

Nowhere on Earth do more green turtles come to nest than Raine Island. But changes in the island’s landscape were threatening their survival and, without help, the outlook was bleak.

Together, BHP, Queensland Government, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), Wuthathi and Meriam Nation (Ugar, Mer, Erub) Traditional Owners and Great Barrier Reef Foundation commenced an innovative partnership to pioneer an ambitious, world-first conservation program to reverse the fate of the declining turtle rookery at Raine Island. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service manages the project’s coordination.

This partnership provides an example of an effective governance structure for co-management between reef managers and Traditional Owners in the Great Barrier Reef. A framework was established for Traditional Owners to continue to play a leading role in the long-term management of Raine Island. To date, 640,000 extra turtle hatchlings have begun life on the reef because of the partnership. Millions more are expected to be born over the next decade.

Features of the Raine Island Project:

- The island connects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- There are around 70 Traditional Owner groups whose sea country includes the Great Barrier Reef
- Traditional Owner protection of Raine Island is crucial
- We formed a partnership to protect and restore Raine Island’s habitat to help save the green turtle population
- Because of the project we have seen 640,000 extra hatchlings
- There will be a long-term, positive impact on this island
- We combine traditional knowledge and science
- This project increases the capacity of the First Nations rangers and scientists by sharing knowledge



Polly Farmer Foundation: Follow the Dream

Polly Farmer Foundation (PFF) was established in 1994 by Graham (Polly) Farmer MBE to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve academic success, engage positively in their education, and develop the attributes that enable them to be active members of their schools and communities. The first PFF secondary program (*Gumula Mirnuwarni – Coming Together to Learn*) was established in the Pilbara region of WA in 1997 with 25 students in Years 8–12. The program was delivered through a partnership between PFF, education providers (State and Commonwealth), private industry sponsors, Aboriginal community members and local organisations. This program, now known as *Follow the Dream*, supports more than 1,900 students in Years 7–12, across 30 programs.

Follow the Dream (FTD) provides enriched educational and experiential opportunities for male and female Aboriginal students. The FTD model places a strong emphasis on the engagement of First Nations people. The program is 'place based' and every program is supported by a local Operations Group (POG). In addition to overseeing program operation, the POG ensures the FTD program is culturally responsive, reflects the local context and is guided by First Nations people living in the local community.

Follow The Dream program:

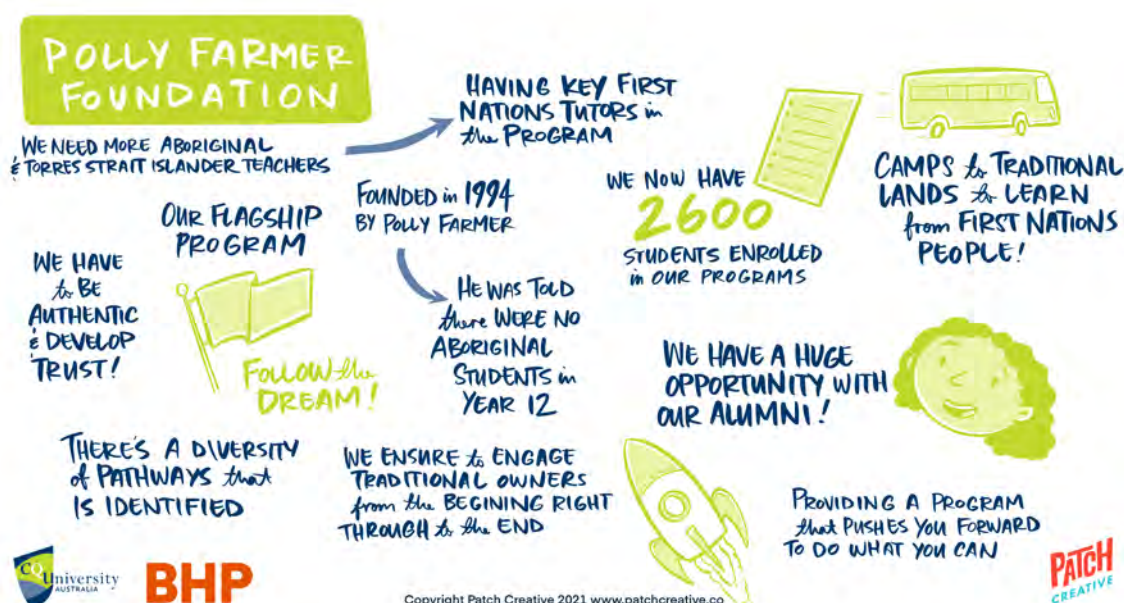
- Having key First Nations tutors in the program
- Providing a program that pushes you forward to do what you can
- A diversity of pathways are identified

How the PFF engages with First Nations people and communities:

- We ensure to engage Traditional Owners from the beginning right through to the end
- We connect with communities to establish a cultural foundation
- Camps to traditional land to learn from First Nations people

Lessons learnt:

- We have to be authentic and develop trust
- We have a huge opportunity with our Indigenous alumni
- The camps were a great way to learn and interact with communities



Greening Australia: Queensland Indigenous Land and Conservation Project

Greening Australia and BHP are partnering with Traditional Owners and Indigenous communities in the reef catchments of Central Queensland to heal Country and improve water quality for the Great Barrier Reef, by learning from each other to develop best practice methods for managing country, employment and enterprise development. Our vision for the long-term sustainability of the QILCP is to co-design pathways to skills, employment and enterprise development by forming Project Reference Groups with our Indigenous community partners.

To engage effectively, we **a)** gain understanding of the community/First Nation group and their social, environmental and economic influences and conflicts; **b)** ensure all views are represented; **c)** are regularly available; **d)** work together for a shared vision, design, responsibility and ownership; **e)** consult at an early stage; and **f)** ensure project planning timeframes align with First Nations communities' protocols and ways of working.

What do we want?

- Healthy and productive landscapes where people thrive
- To restore the gullies and help stop pollution run-off into the Great Barrier Reef

- To develop strategies to protect and value the land
- Help to heal country and create employment opportunities for Indigenous people

How do we engage with First Nations communities?

- Build respectful relationships with First Nations people
- Have one-on-one conversations in the community
- Through understanding, representation, ownership, availability and planning
- By connecting with the appropriate stakeholder/s
- Celebrating all the successes
- Looking at ways to help look after country

What lessons have we learnt?

- Informed and involved people are happy people
- Flexibility and innovation are a requirement
- Ask: Who are the right people I should be talking to?
- Gain a strong understanding of the different groups and connect with them



Clontarf Foundation: An Opportunity to Succeed

The Clontarf Foundation uses an innovative and highly successful approach to target one of Australia's most at-risk groups – young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Using the boys' existing passion for sport allows Clontarf to attract them to school and keep them coming. It's not a sporting program – it's about developing the values, skills and abilities that assist the boys to transition into meaningful employment and achieve better life outcomes. The Foundation partners with schools, communities, governments and the private sector to create 'Clontarf academies', which are embedded within the school grounds and education program. Where possible, we bring key stakeholders including family representatives to see established Clontarf academies so they can see the program in action and the impact it has on the lives of the young men and their families. We aim for young men to achieve their best.

How do we engage young Indigenous men to complete school & achieve their goals?

- Health checks are important, making sure students are healthy to attend school

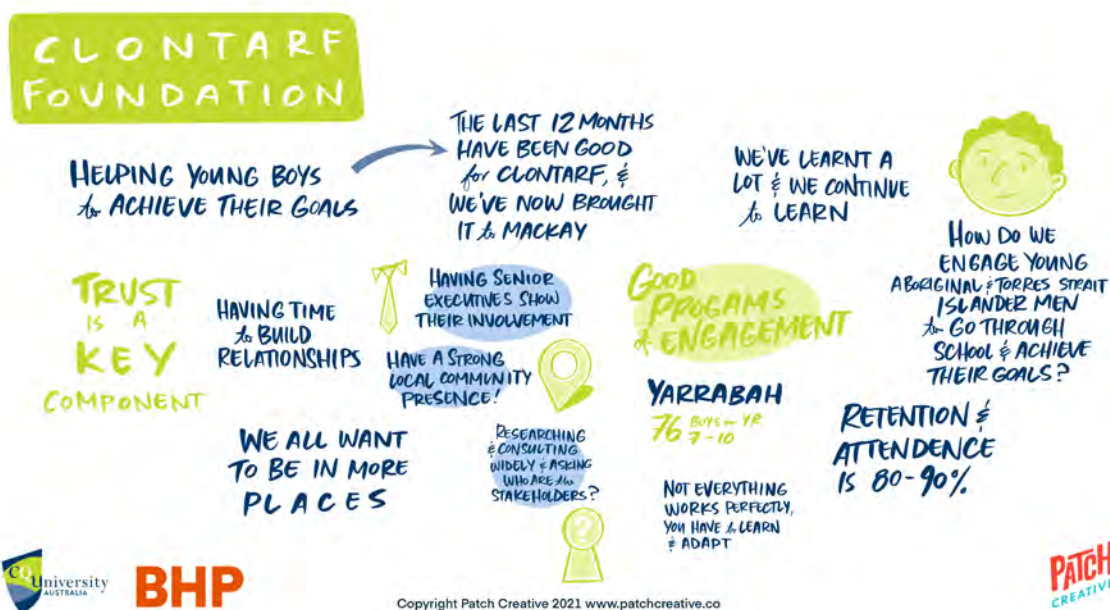
- Begin with good program engagement through:
 - Research and consulting widely and asking who are the stakeholders
 - Early consultation and having senior executives involved (Chair & CEO)
 - Spending time to build strong relationships with schools and community

What works?

- Recruiting local people
- Having a strong local community presence
- Having time to build relationships

What didn't work?

- Printed documents, such as newsletters, did not work
- Lessons learnt:
 - Allow time to build trust and relationships; trust is a key component
 - Every community is different, we keep learning
 - Not everything works perfectly, you have to learn and adapt
 - Never stop engaging
 - We all want to do more and be in more places



CQUniversity: Community Designed Education/Enterprise/Research Hubs

Research highlights the need for jobs, education and enterprise opportunities to address economic and employment issues in First Nations communities (Fredericks et al. 2019; Miller et al. 2015; QPC 2017). Working in partnership with community and key stakeholders progressed the concept of an education/enterprise/research hub. The research plan encompasses community and stakeholder engagement:



A theory of change model guides the hubs' development and implementation. A Community Engagement Officer works in community three days a week, supporting students and small business enterprise development, and promoting awareness of the project. A key outcome will be a model for developing community-driven and designed hubs. Key milestones in stakeholder engagement include organising the *BHP Partners' Symposium* event and developing the *First Nations Community Engagement: Industry Guide Phase I*.

Phase II involves gaining community perspectives on community engagement.

What we do to engage for research:

- Build strong relationships and trust through honest conversations and knowledge sharing
- Understand the local history, the impact of colonisation and ongoing trauma in community
- Maintain regular communication
- Embed First Nations research ethics within projects

What we have learnt:

- It's about having connections
- To stay focused during the project because change happens (e.g., change of leadership in community and the university)
- It's about learning patience and continuing to evolve with the project
- Building trust increases awareness
- Incrementally foundations are laid, not in a linear way, but as pathways emerge



Conclusion

While no case studies had self-determination outcomes, they provide impetus for industry to plan, design and implement projects that aim for First Nations communities' self-determination outcomes.

We have compiled this *Guide* and developed the *First Nations Community Engagement Scale* (Figure 3) mindful that there is an urgent need for the next stage of this process to be completed through First Nations community consultation and input (Phase II).

It is anticipated the significant reforms required to improve First Nations community engagement will be accelerated when Phase II is completed (as a follow-on to this *Phase I Guide*). The addition of First Nations protocols and culturally appropriate First Nations engagement methodologies in Phase II will assist industry and organisations to better plan and engage effectively with community.

It is evident the structural and systemic reforms required to advance First Nations community engagement practices are interwoven with the need for truth-telling, treaty and self-determination. Information emerging from the *BHP Partners Symposium* and current research highlights the need for whole-of-organisation engagement, cultural competency training across organisations, and truth-telling for effective community engagement. Effective organisational cultural capability²³ will progress inclusive workplace cultures, ultimately providing pathways to improved engagement processes.

Effective First Nations community engagement practices are evolving. Ongoing work with industry and First Nations communities is required in this dynamic and important space.

23 Please refer to: <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/html-resources/aboriginal-cultural-capability-toolkit>

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Appendix A BHP Partners Working Group



BHP has partnered with CQUniversity since 2012 to promote healthy, strong and connected communities that are resilient to change. The partnership has provided opportunities for Indigenous students to access and succeed in tertiary education and to further engage with Indigenous communities. This has been supported through BHP's investment in Community and Indigenous undergraduate scholarships, financial support for a BHP Chair in Indigenous Engagement and, since 2018, funding for the delivery of the AIME program in Central and Far North Queensland.



CQUniversity is proud to be recognised as Australia's most inclusive university with some of the highest ratios of students from disadvantaged, mature age, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and first-in-family backgrounds. CQUniversity's unique vision for diversity, outreach, engagement, research, learning and teaching, and inclusiveness, combined with its growth aspirations and continued expansion of student success, research excellence, social innovation and community engagement, has led to it being recognised within the top 600 universities in the world by the prestigious *Times Higher Education World Rankings*, and among the world's best 'young universities' by both the *Times Higher Education* and *QS World University Rankings*.



AIME Mentoring has a Partnership with BHP and CQUniversity to run a mentoring program with Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students in high school. AIME is a mentoring program that walks alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to create equality with education. Five university engagements across the year allow us to walk alongside 1,500 high school students in the Central and Far North Queensland regions. We often see significant behavioural change due to a shift in the mindset of mentees and this then leads to engagement in the education system.



Greening Australia is Australia's largest environmental NGO and has been operating in landscape restoration works on a national basis since 1982. We operate an integrated supply chain from native seedbanks, seed production areas, seed trading businesses and native production nurseries, plus revegetation/restoration programs. Our core business is landscape restoration, tackling Australia's greatest environmental challenges, guided by the latest science to determine what is best for our landscapes and the people and wildlife that live within them. Greening Australia is working with BHP on a range of projects through engaging and working with Traditional Owner groups. The current partnership project includes the Queensland Indigenous Land Conservation Project (QILCP), a 5-year project focused on working with identified traditional owner groups in the Fitzroy and Mackay region.



Earthwatch is global environmental charity that creates knowledge and inspires action through experiential learning. Central to our approach is citizen science – using people to gather scientific data, help generate environmental insights, inform future policy and motivate long-term behaviour change.



Earthwatch engages with BHP through the **Bush Blitz** project, with the Australian government as a third partner in the program. Bush Blitz is Australia's largest nature discovery project, aiming to document Australia's biodiversity and build resilience in our landscapes through the collection and sharing of scientific knowledge. Bush Blitz connects specialist taxonomists, Indigenous communities, rangers, landholders, teachers, students and BHP employees. The BHP employees are selected to attend Bush Blitz expeditions through an application process, to work as research assistants alongside some of Australia's top taxonomists and learn about the importance of biodiversity.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment

Bush Blitz is a unique cross-sector partnership between the Australian Government through the **Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water (AWE)** and Parks Australia. AWE co-funds Bush Blitz 50/50 with BHP to document plants and animals across Australia.



Great Barrier
Reef Foundation

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) exists to save the Great Barrier Reef and all its living diversity for future generations. As the lead charity for the reef, the Foundation uses independent science to better understand the true condition of the reef and the challenges it faces. We inform and educate people on what needs to be done to address the causes of the problem, including advising governments and industry. Since 2007, BHP and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation have worked together to fund scientific discoveries, high-tech advances and ecosystem restoration. BHP's investment in the Reef Resilience Fund has supported the development of a global framework for resilience and the Raine Island Recovery Project, which is protecting and restoring the world's largest remaining green turtle rookery to ensure the future of endangered green turtles and seabirds. Throughout our longstanding partnership, BHP has contributed leadership, expertise and financial support to enable projects with large-scale impact – helping protect coral reefs and the animals that depend on them.



clontarf
foundation

Clontarf Foundation exists to improve the education discipline, life skills, self-esteem, and employment prospect of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and by doing so equips them to participate more meaningfully in society. In 2020, the Clontarf Foundation operated in 129 schools across Western Australia, Northern Territory, wVictoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia with over 9,000 boys involved in the program. It is early days for the Clontarf/ BHP partnership, however, the intention is to work collaboratively to provide employment pathways for the Clontarf boys while providing opportunities for BHP employee to actively engage in our program.



Queensland Music Festival's purpose is to evolve Queensland's places and connect them to the world. The Queensland Government established QMF in 1999, inspired by an ambitious vision of how a state-wide biennial music festival might help address the geographical and social disadvantage experienced by our regional and remote populations. Over its 20-year history, QMF has incubated a unique and artistically ambitious programming model that brings leading artists and communities together to create music experiences that celebrate the cultural identity of people and place. QMF's events are designed to help isolated and marginalised communities build bridges to the rest of the nation, create unity and pride within those communities, and facilitate the capacity of local people to tell their unique stories.

Queensland Museum Network is a museum of natural history, cultural heritage, science and human achievement that tells the changing story of Queensland. The Museum houses permanent and changing exhibitions and provides in-depth education experiences, innovative public programs, early childhood activities and holiday activities. The Museum aims to connect visitors to Queensland, its people and Queensland's place in the world (past, present and future) through exhibitions, displays and public programs. The Museum houses millions of objects, specimens and artefacts that tell the changing story of Queensland, welcoming over 10 million visitors since it was established at its current site at South Bank over 20 years ago. Services are delivered across the state, through a network of public museums: Queensland Museum, Brisbane; The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich; Cobb+Co Museum, Toowoomba; Museum of Tropical Queensland, Townsville; and QM Loans Facility, Hendra.

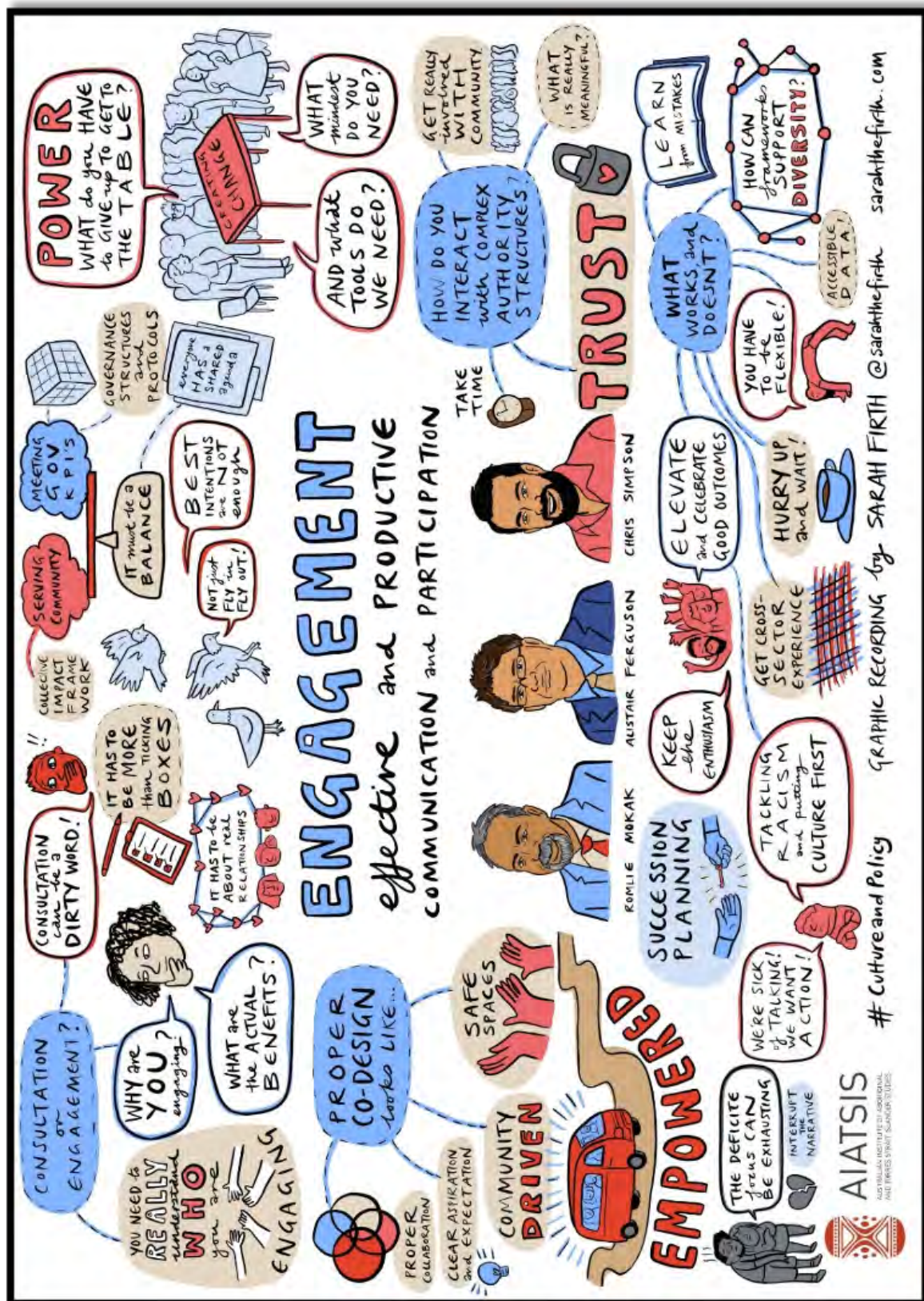


Since inception in 1994, **The Polly Farmer Foundation** has been committed to a strengths-based approach, supporting students who have the potential to succeed and who have the support of their family/carers. The Foundation's academic enrichment programs empowers Aboriginal students to complete school and move into successful post-school pathways, including university, direct employment, apprenticeships, traineeships and technical training. Academic enrichment is at the heart of all the Foundation's primary and secondary programs, with mentoring, specialist tuition, leadership, resilience, cultural celebrations and career pathway planning provided to each and every student. The programs are voluntary and held after school, with students choosing to focus on their education and pursue their goals.



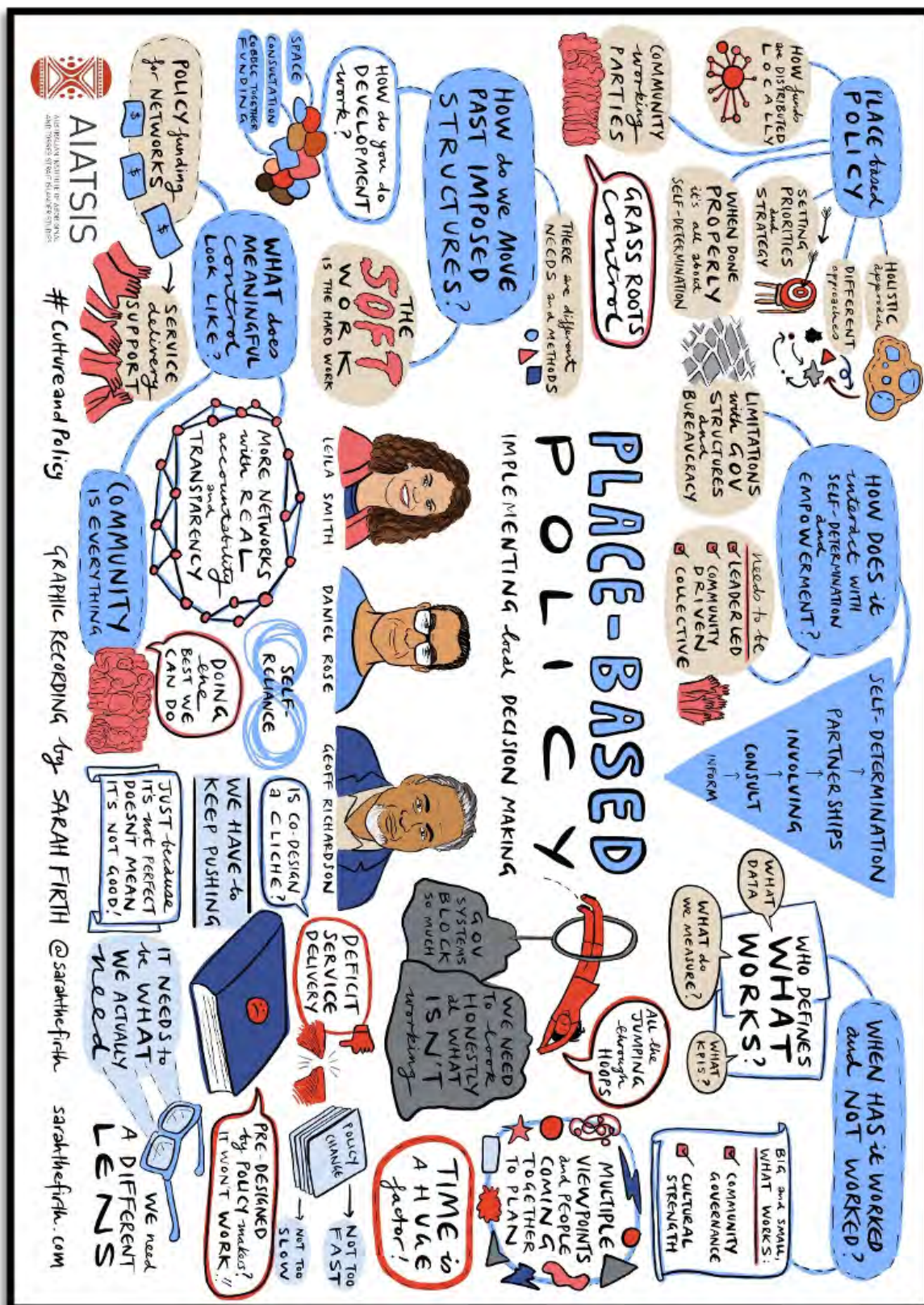
Books in Homes[®] was originally founded by New Zealand author, Alan Duff, who wrote the widely acclaimed book *Once Were Warriors* (1990), which was later made into an award-winning film. Alan was inspired to create the program in 1993, after a visit to a New Zealand primary school where he discovered most children came from bookless homes and showed little interest in reading. Alan saw this as having a major negative impact on their educational, social, personal and professional development later in life. As a consequence, Alan created Duffy Books in Homes on the premise that book ownership would prompt a love of books and reading, and that having a home library would create the opportunity to share books with siblings and strengthen family bonds. Alan Duff visited Australia in 2001 and helped create Books in Homes Australia, which provides books-of-choice to children living in remote, disadvantaged and low socio-economic circumstances, ensuring crucial early literacy engagement and the development of reading skills needed for lifelong achievement. A major aim of Books in Homes Australia is to overcome the inequality of educational opportunities in communities where access to books for families is limited or non-existent and resources are often scarce. In doing so, we are looking to help overcome generational poverty by enhancing the chances of success in early education, thereby opening up options, choices and potential in later life. As of 2020, and through the generous support of sponsors, donors and funding bodies, the tally stands at over 2.7 million books distributed across Australia through the Books in Homes Program! Books in Homes Australia's vision is to create an Australia where every child and family has access to books in the home.

Appendix B Image of Effective Indigenous Community Engagement



AIATSIS 2020, *Let's work together on Indigenous terms*, 20 February 2020, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], viewed 21 July 2020, <https://aiatsis.gov.au/news-and-events/news/nyiyang-wuunggalu-lets-work-together-indigenous-terms>

Appendix C Image of Implementing Local Decision Making: Place-based Policy



AIATSIS 2020, Let's work together on Indigenous terms, 20 February 2020, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], viewed 21 July 2020, <https://aiatsis.gov.au/news-and-events/news/nyiyang-wuunggalu-lets-work-together-indigenous-terms>



