



NINTI ONE: CRC REMOTE ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

CRC for Remote Economic Participation

Program 2 – Enterprise Development

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies Project

CRC for Remote Economic Participation
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Notes for workshop on 22nd February 2011

The Vines Room, National Wine Centre of Australia, cnr Botanic and Hackney Roads, Adelaide

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Background to CRC-REP

The CRC for Remote Economic Participation (www.crc-rep.com.au) is a public good research centre established to deliver solutions to economic disadvantage in remote Australia. It started in July 2010 and will run for seven years. Three research programs encompassing 13 projects will systematically investigate regional economic systems, developing enterprises industries and education and employment systems. The CRC-REP is supported by the Commonwealth government and has 54 partner organisations that contribute \$110M in cash and in-kind resources to achieve the goals.

The CRC-REP is governed by Ninti One Limited and its Board of ten people. Jan Ferguson is the CRC-REP Managing Director. Other members of the Board are Paul Wand (Chair), Tom Calma (Deputy Chair), Glenise Coulthard (Adnyamathanha woman and Manager Aboriginal Health for the Port Augusta Hospital Cluster), Ian Davey (Emeritus Professor, University of South Australia), Harold Furber (Arrernte man, and Chair of the Desert Peoples Centre), Tanya Hosch (Social Policy Consultant), Alison Page (Tharawal woman and designer, artist and cultural planner), David Ritchie (CEO NT Department of Lands and Planning) and Tony Tate (Director, Research and Development, Curtin University).

The CRC-REP research Programs are outlined below.

Research Program 1 – Regional Economies: This Program aims to build robust and strong regional economies throughout remote Australia through our partners in government, industry and communities. Remote regions have unique characteristics that affect their economies. The projects comprising Program 1 are:

- Population Mobility and Labour Markets
- Enduring Community Value from Mining
- Climate Adaptation and Energy Futures

Research Program 2 – Enterprise Development: This Program will create models for successful medium and small enterprises that best suit remote locations, Aboriginal culture and industry opportunities. It will explore barriers to growth, such as distance from markets, fragile or faulty supply chains and ways to overcome high production costs. The Projects in this Program are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Product
- Aboriginal Cultural Enterprise
- Carbon Economies in Remote Australia
- Bush Tomato Improvement
- Precision Pastoral Management Tools

Research Program 3 – Investing in People: This Program is about finding and getting the very best from all the talent, ability, skills and potential of two thirds of a million people who live in remote parts of Australia. The current education and training pathways have largely failed to deliver what is needed by remote people, which in turn limits their later ability to participate in local, national and world economies. Our aim in this Program is to find ways to overcome this and deliver the employment, livelihoods, education and training most needed in remote communities and enterprises. The Projects in the Program are:

- Interplay Between Health, Wellbeing, Education and Employment
- Pathways to Employment
- Remote Education Systems

Over 20 workshops with a wide range of stakeholders were conducted in 2008 and 2009 to determine the topics to be researched in the CRC-REP. Since these workshops were held, an application for the CRC was submitted; it was successful in December 2009 and the legal and administrative start-up procedures have been completed (Jan–Nov 2010). The time has finally come when stakeholders and researchers can reconvene to plan and commence the projects of the CRC-REP.

Short summary of the ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies’ project

The ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies’ project is a long-term national ‘participatory action’ research and development initiative being conducted through CRC-REP. The project will measure and document the value chains for different sectors of the remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and crafts market and map their social impacts.

Project researchers will work collaboratively with art-making communities, peak bodies, public and commercial galleries, auction houses, arts policy units and other key locations in the industry to identify and strengthen the vulnerable links in the value chain and to cooperatively develop new initiatives to ensure the growth and future sustainability of the industry.

The CRC-REP Commonwealth Government Agreement contracts the Aboriginal Art Economies project to deliver outcomes, through and beyond the life of the CRC. These include:

- A comprehensive overview of the size and structure of the Aboriginal art industry and value chain analysis with a quantification of their contribution to the broader industry
- A report on art enterprise attributes that enable art enterprises to flourish within fluctuating market and policy environments
- Report on art product diversification within geographic regions and potential for creating new allied enterprise opportunities in remote areas
- Identification of innovative market opportunities, both domestically and internationally and (with industry) development of appropriate value chains
- Suggested new business and industry-wide governance models (linked to the recently established industry code of practice and the resale royalty scheme)

- Training materials for the Aboriginal art value chain with the objective of providing long-term employment pathways for Aboriginal people
- Identification of critical success factors and enterprise models that build stronger individual and community outcomes
- At least one new market opportunity that collectively will transform the industry by an estimated additional \$20.7 million of value over 15 years, i.e. 'an expectation that half of the existing artists at 45 art centres will earn more than double their 2005 average per artist (from \$3,392–\$7,169/artist/p.a.)' (Research outputs to be available to all remote artists and industry groups)
- Training at least 10 Aboriginal people as paid field researchers, 3 post-graduate students, 2 Honours, VET or vocation students.

Workshop objectives

This workshop is open to CRC-REP partner organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts sector stakeholders. The workshop continues consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts sector that began in 2008. In 2011, these consultations will extend through other workshops, regional meetings and other communications towards the establishment of a strong and coherent network to direct the proposed research.

The objectives of this workshop are:

- To reanimate discussions undertaken in 2008 and 2009 that framed the project in the CRC-REP bid
- To hear from arts sector stakeholders regarding:
 - Current programs and projects
 - Current and predicted future opportunities, challenges and aspirations
 - Research needs and priorities: how could research assist productive developments in the arts and crafts industry? (these will be further developed in subsequent workshops that will involve more research partners and produce research questions and plans.)
 - Recommended best-practice models of community research engagement over 3–5 years.
- To discuss the processes by which research activities will be developed and initiated including:
 - Consultation with additional relevant stakeholders
 - Formulation and confirmation of research questions with stakeholders and partners
 - CRC-REP's obligations.

Project leadership group and research team

Kevin Williams is General Manager Research, Evaluation and Impact responsible for Program-level management in the CRC-REP. Kevin manages all projects in Program 2 including the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies' project. *Craig James* is the outgoing CRC-REP General Manager Research, Evaluation and Impact and will have a small ongoing connection to the project until 2013.

Tim Acker is the Principal Research Leader for the project. Tim has over 12 years' experience in the remote art sector as an art centre manager, consultant, policy advisor and project manager. His most recent major work was on *Ngurra Kuju Walyja – One Country, One People* (The Canning Stock Route project).



Lisa Stefanoff is a core researcher on the project, employed by the University of South Australia (based in Alice Springs). Before joining the CRC-REP, Lisa worked at IAD Press National Indigenous Publishing (2007–2010), at CAAMA Productions (2002–2006) and freelance on numerous NT community media and art projects and boards. She completed her PhD in 2009 (New York University) under the supervision of anthropologist/art-writer Fred Myers.

The majority of the research team will be confirmed over the next few weeks. As the workshop process confirms the research questions, the research methods and skills required will become clearer.

Several CRC-REP partners have a particular interest in the Art project: DesArt, Tangentyere Council, Titjikala Social Club, Iga Warta, Pila Nguru Aboriginal Corporation, and the Australian Government Office for the Arts (in Prime Minister and Cabinet). We will invite many other organisations to become collaborative partners to this project as it unfolds.

Research approach

This project has been conceived as Participatory Action Research (PAR). No single research question or methodology will be appropriate across the board.

Methodologies and emerging activities will be conceived, evaluated and modified by all participants as the project progresses to maximise benefits to the arts communities engaged in the project.

All research associated with the project will be approved by the Central Australian Human Ethics Research Committee or partner organisation/university equivalent.

The project will have an advisory committee made up people from different representative organisations, cultures-language zones and regions. The make-up of this committee will be discussed during the workshop.

Value chains and value networks: foundational research concepts for the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies' project

'Value chain' analysis was used in the Desert Knowledge CRC's research projects investigating traditional bush foods products. In her report on this research, Bryceson (2008) drew on Michael Porter's (1985) widely influential study of competitive advantage to understand a value chain to be 'a group of companies working together to satisfy market demands' (p.4). 'It involves a chain of activities that are associated with adding value to a product through the production and distribution process of each activity. An organisation's competitive advantage is based on their product's value chain' (ibid).

The concept of a value chain is quite straightforward. Characterising and mapping the value chain in specific terms is important for performance measurement and comparison. Value chains are threaded through complex value networks. To understand dynamic relationships and interdependencies – the formal and informal exchanges – within and through which value chains operate, value network analysis is also necessary (Allee 2004). Different cultural frameworks will map value networks in different ways. Understanding how these frameworks translate and map each other is essential if value-chain analysis is to have meanings across social and cultural frames.

The value chains that might be identified for the remote arts and crafts industry do not exist outside of value networks – webs of relationships – that link art and craft production to other social

institutions and cultural practices including kinship, traditional and non-Aboriginal education systems, traditional Law and non-Aboriginal law (and policing), traditional and non-Aboriginal languages, land (and Land Rights) management, health services, religion, media, market engagement (consumption, investment, saving, marketing and selling), government (local, state and federal) and welfare support. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies project will engage people located across these networks to work with project researchers to document the social impact and cultural meanings of art and craft production for art-making communities. It will also seek to better understand the dynamics of the relationship between artists and art centres and art dealers, art resellers and art collectors/investors.

Additional reading: Project background and context

The 2007 Senate Committee inquiry and report *Indigenous Art – Securing the Future* were landmark processes in the history of the remote arts industry: seven public hearings involving over 70 participants from across the sector and 89 submissions generated 29 recommendations including:

- the introduction of a Resale Royalty scheme
- an Indigenous Art Commercial Code of Conduct
- increased scrutiny of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art industry
- expansion of the National Arts and Crafts Industry Support (NACIS) program
- an additional \$25M infrastructure fund over five years to complement NACIS program funding
- revised legislation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communal moral rights
- increased Commonwealth efforts to showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual arts and crafts internationally.

Although substantial in its vision, reach and achievements, the report was not able to match the strength of the testimonials received with quantitative data on the size and value of the industry, points of value creation, rates of participation (men, women, elders, emerging), quantities or rate of production of different art forms, market size and characteristics. A landscape of different and oftentimes intersecting models of art production, acquisition and selling, and an industry of formal and informal exchanges makes it difficult to quantify different 'value chains'. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies project aims to document the value chains and produce knowledge that will assist communities, managers, traders, collecting institutions and policy makers to understand and build a more robust and valuable industry into the future.

There have been a number of significant developments in the industry since the 2007 Senate inquiry. Several recommendations have been taken up including the creation of the Indigenous Australian Art Commercial Code of Conduct and the Resale Royalty.

The Code of Conduct was developed to address unethical behaviour in the art industry. It aims to 'promote fair trade and practice' and to 'contribute to the wellbeing of Indigenous Australians more generally'. The Code operates in tandem with a raft of existing legislation and regulations. There are 500 potential signatories to the code (Oster 2009). At present there are 50 members including 1 international signatory.

The Resale Royalty scheme, established under the *Resale Royalty Right for Visual Artists Act 2009*, commenced on 9 June 2010. In the 2008–09 Commonwealth Budget, \$1.5M was allocated over three years to establish the scheme. Strong criticism of the Resale Royalty (Droit de Suite) has

been articulated by some art centres, commercial gallerists and economists since its implementation (www.aiam100.com).¹ In late January 2011 the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that planning was underway by a new alliance of fine arts dealers, auction houses and gallery owners wanting to fight for changes to the scheme. Ian Plunkett (Australian Indigenous Art Trade Association) said that most dealers were not opposed to a resale royalty in principle, but were 'strongly opposed to this model which was imposed on the industry without any consultation'. John Oster (DesArt) is reported to have said he had seen no opposition to the scheme from Aboriginal artists.² On the ground, anecdotal evidence suggests that since the introduction of the Resale Royalty there is increased interest from painters and their families in the writing of wills.³

The years 2004–2007 are widely seen to have been 'boom' years for high-end Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art sales.⁴ The secondary market for Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art plummeted by around 40% at the end of 2010 compared with the end of 2007. Dealers and curators variously attribute this slump to the Global Financial Crisis and the growing value of the Australian dollar. Others cite 'increased taxes, overpricing, bad publicity and overcrowding in the market'.⁵ In early 2010 investors holding high-value artworks in their superannuation portfolios were frightened by the prospect of these assets being disallowed. Art dealers and some major art centres report a correlative drop-off in new sales to this market segment. Sotheby's Australia closed 2010 with relatively weak sales (clearance of 32% by lot, 37% by value). These dynamics notwithstanding, a longer-term view (1994–2010) of the high-end fine art market indicates an 'incrementally increasing trajectory' (\$617K– \$11M).⁶

The NT Emergency Response (The Intervention) is considered by some people to have had impacts on the machinations of remote art production.

In mid-2008, ABC TV *Four Corners* program broadcast Quentin McDermott's investigative story 'Art for Art's Sake'. The program examined private painting operations, high-end secondary sales dynamics and market inflation (see also 'The Great Contemporary Art Bubble'⁷). Non-Aboriginal controlled painting places continue to operate and expand. Privately owned painting places in and around Alice Springs draw painters from the far western desert and elsewhere. Publications (based on auction sales data) challenging existing culturalist sales and promotional approaches within the market (rather than contemporary art framings) and questioning the possibility for future economic benefits for artists and their communities (Meaghan Wilson-Anastasios 2010⁸) have been challenged by long-term high-end gallerists and art academics, the latter suggesting a need for greater state investment in developing art centre-dealer relationships ('Aboriginal art dying with desert masters', *The Weekend Australian*, September 18–19, 2010).

¹Dr Jon Stanford (School of Economics, University of Queensland) argued in 2002 that the idea of Droit de Suite for the Australian art market was 'based on an inadequate analysis of the art market and the distribution returns to participants in the art market' (p. 20) and that costs of Droit de Suite would be borne by the collector or owner of art works, to the eventual detriment of artists.

² <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/art-alliance-to-fight-complex-resale-royalty-20110130-1a9q0.html>. accessed 8 Feb 2011.

³ http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2010/10/lrt_20101026.mp3 accessed 27 Oct 2010.

⁴ Some estimates put the world contemporary art inflation figure at 800% in the 2003–2008 period.

⁵ www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/12/02/3082639.htm accessed 01 Feb 2011

⁶ www.aiam100.com/#/articles/349 accessed 5 Dec 2010

⁷ www.abc.net.au/tv/guide/abc2/200910/programs/ZY9814A001D2009-10-18T203000.htm accessed 08Feb11

⁸ <http://wilsonianastasios.com/2010/07/08/joining-the-dots-the-sustainability-of-the-aboriginal-art-market/#more-461>

Complementing the precepts of the Code of Conduct, the Australia Council for the Arts published a new series of protocols for producing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian visual arts (and performing arts, writing, music, and media-arts) in 2008.⁹ In 2010 IP Australia (Commonwealth Government) released *Nanga Mai Arung – Dream Shield: A guide to protecting designs, brands and inventions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders*.¹⁰

The desert region has seen a strong growth of Desert Mob (34 art centres) and Desert Mob marketplace sales and exhibition visits. In 2010 Desert Mob sales passed \$400K (10% increase on 2009), Desert Mob Marketplace sales \$317K, and 3500 visitors attended the exhibition over a six-week period. The Desert Mob symposium has consolidated its status as a premiere forum for desert artists and invited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from elsewhere in Australia to exchange stories about their art practice and projects. The Desert Mob program has also proved a key platform for the launch of art books from IAD Press. In Qld the second Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (2010 – 11 art galleries and 12 art centres) – featured by BBC World films – drew 10,500 visitors and sold \$700K, an increase of \$200K on 2009 figures and the driver of an estimated \$1M injection into the local economy.

Since 2007 the overall number of art centres across the country has grown to around 100. The central desert region has seen three entirely new centres start up, one revive, one emerge from another service organisation and five close or significantly reduce their operations. In SA two new centres – both projects of AnanguKU Arts – have incorporated and no art centres have closed down. WA has a dynamic landscape including the closure of two centres, the emergence of two completely new centres, the restitution of two centres, the amalgamation of 4–5 previous projects into one new centre, the remaking of one art centre with renewed energy, and the transformation of another one centre into a new kind of private community enterprise. One WA centre is struggling hard. There is strong art centre growth in Qld: two new centres were established in 2010, three art organisations are emerging as functional art centres and two centres are picking up speed after some dormancy. New operations are commencing in two new inland Qld regions.

New art centre support organisations have been established. Aboriginal Art Centre Hub WA (AACHWA – www.aachwa.com.au) was formed in 2009, hosted within Country Arts WA. The Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (IACA – www.indigenousartcentres.com.au) is currently forming in north Qld.

In 2008 DesArt instituted an Aboriginal Artworker Program that aims to train and employ 60 Aboriginal Artworkers over three years towards Certificate III in Arts Administration and ongoing employment. Prior to the commencement of this program there were 13 Aboriginal people working as Artworkers in a region of 47 art centres and up to 3000 artists. Artworkers are predominantly on the National Jobs Package with DEWHA funding. Conditions under this package are P/T 20 hours/week, \$15.25 p/h + 9% superannuation, 6 weeks leave + 10 days sick leave. There is no Artworkers award and hence no recognition of different skill levels. Highly skilled Artworkers continue to receive the same wages as their low-skilled trainee colleagues. There are only low financial incentives for people to remain in these positions (DesArt personal communication, Feb 2011).

Two important new art-centre resources have been produced/revised to support Art Centre Managers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artworkers: *Go Hunting* (www.gohunting.com.au) and *Art Centre Way* (www.artcentreway.com).

⁹ www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_arts/reports_and_publications/visual_arts_protocols_for_producing_indigenous_australian_visual_arts

¹⁰ www.ipaustralia.gov.au/resources/dream_shield.shtml

New community investment projects are emerging out of art centres. Following on from their investment in local renal dialysis and the building of a community pool in Kintore, Papunya Tula Artists instigated an Aged Care Program *Nyakula Kanyini Piintapalyapayi Kamu Walytja Tjanampa Lurrju* (Caring for painters and their families) in late 2010 to improve older painters' quality of life.

In WA the remarkable *Ngurra Kuju Walja – Canning Stock Route Project*, instigated by FORM, provided art-making, history-telling and new-media training opportunities for nine art centres and communities with cultural relationships to 1800 km of desert country. The project's multi-media exhibition *Yiwarra Kuju – The Canning Stock Route* opened at the National Museum of Australia in 2010 to high acclaim.

New Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural festivals are key nodes for art enterprise. *The Dreaming Festival* in south-east Qld draws together hundreds of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and overseas First Peoples in an annual four-day program of performances, forums, talks, workshops and marketplace activity. In north-east Arnhemland *Garma* – an annual Yolngu cultural festival – has been steadily building its national and international networks and moving through culturally structured stages of learning and engagement. The 2011 *Garma* festival is themed 'Academic Excellence vs. Cultural Integrity' and will provide platforms for discussions of these key criteria for best practice research.

Major traditional artists have passed away across remote regions. Young artists have received important attention in solo and group shows. Media-art has garnered attention and an award in the Telstra NATSIA Awards. New forms of art/design work are being developed for the high-end market, e.g. Yolngu Gumatj furniture¹¹. New research projects seek to investigate the potential of virtual gallery/art centre experiences for distant clients (CDU School of Creative Arts and Humanities).

Major award-winning art publications have appeared including *Yiwarra Kuju: The Canning Stock Route* (National Museum of Australia 2010), *Art and Soul: a journey into the world of Aboriginal art* (Miegunyah Press 2010), *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists* (IAD Press 2008), *Listen Deeply Let These Stories In* and *Iwenhe Tyerrtye What it means to be an Aboriginal person* (IAD Press 2009 part of a series dedicated to artists, their art, language, culture, law and stories), and *One Sun One Moon: Aboriginal art in Australia* (AGNSW 2007). *Billy Benn* (IAD Press 2011) will be launched at Tandanya National Cultural Institute 23 Feb 6 pm (RSVP marketing@iad.edu.au).

Desert art production received major international exposure through the Cannes award-winning Australian feature film *Samson and Delilah* featuring Pintupi painter M. Napanangka Gibson (d. 2011). Australian audiences were provided with a window into art production in several remote locations and introduced to the meaning of these arts as local and national culture through ABC-TV's *Art & Soul* series (H.Perkins/W.Thornton). International viewers will soon also be able to view the program, starting in Thailand. Sales to other territories are expected in 2011.

In October 2010 the ABS *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* report (Cat #4704.0) summarised that 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language and culture is being maintained' and that 'Socioeconomic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians continue to improve but remain below those for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians'.¹² Given the role of art-making as a key cultural maintenance activity, these findings (their abstractions notwithstanding) provide good reason to approach the challenges of economic development through the strength base of culture and language. Djambawa Marawili's (Chair ANKAAA) recent remarks are apposite here: 'It is culture, not money, that people

¹¹ http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2010/10/bth_20101028_1106.mp3 accessed 28 Oct 2010

¹² <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4704.0/>

most want to speak about when they attend ANKAAA gatherings ... When you hear them talking, they always want to talk about their arts. They want to always talk about their language. They want to always talk about initiation ceremonies. And of course we have to survive through money, but the main importance is to keep culture strong.'¹³

Edith Cowan University researchers Trudy Cooper and Suzanne Bahn (Centre for Social Research) commenced pilot research at the new WA art centre *Wirnda Barna* (Badimaya and other groups), funded by the Department of Indigenous Affairs WA, and looked at health and wellbeing impacts of art and art centres, using economic data analysis plus qualitative methods. The project aims to link thinking about benefits of art practice to practitioners (i.e. intrinsic benefit arguments) with work on social capital (using indicators developed by the Victorian Department of Communities). Flinders University researchers Associate Professor Eileen Willis, Claire Drummond, Siva R Vemuri and Simone Tur, through the University of South Australia and in collaboration with AnanguKU Arts and Culture Aboriginal Corporation and The Palya Fund were awarded a 2010 ARC Linkage grant 'Mapping the health promoting capacity of art centres on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands'.

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¹³ www.indigenous.gov.au/Pages/72_leading_artists.aspx, accessed 29 Oct 2010

