

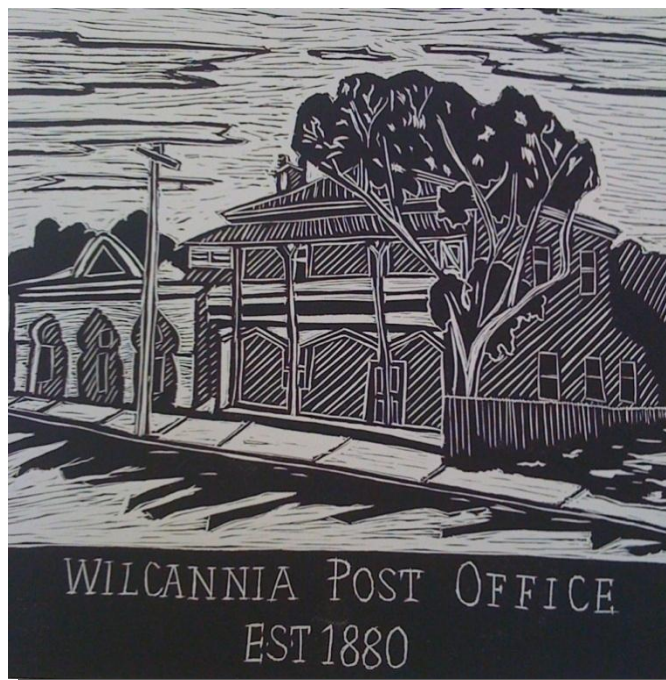


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TRAINING AND EDUCATION NEEDS IN THE NSW ABORIGINAL VISUAL ARTS SECTOR



Artwork by Roz Johnson (Wilcannia)

March 2010

A research project on the training and professional development needs of Aboriginal artists in New South Wales

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Elizabeth Rogers
Chief Executive Officer
Regional Arts NSW

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1. Executive Summary

The aim of this research project was primarily to identify the training and professional development needs of Aboriginal artists in NSW. It was conducted over a six-month period, between July 2009 and January 2010, and included field visits to nine Regional Arts Board regions, more than 34 regional towns or cities and interviews with over 150 respondents representing more than 30 organisations and agencies and including over 70 Aboriginal artists. It included artists who were self-taught, influenced by family members, attended institutions such as TAFE or University, or were involved in community initiatives or government programs. It included artists of varying skill levels and motivations for practising art across a range of arts practices - established practising artists who derive their primary income from the sale of their artwork, emerging artists trained through various institutions and programs and seeking to earn an income from their work and those who meet at arts and crafts groups as a cultural sharing and healing activity. It also considered those involved in the 'creative chain' – not just the creators of art but those involved in its presentation, production and distribution.

One of the more significant findings of this research was the highly developed education and training infrastructure across the state and the breadth of its training providers. With over 100 TAFE campuses, 10 major Universities (including one regional university with 8 campuses) and over 50 community colleges, NSW is well set to deliver accredited arts training to even the most isolated areas of the state and across many competency levels. In addition to the training delivered through these institutions, an increasing number of opportunities are being provided through regional arts programs, Regional Galleries, Correctional Institutions and other community initiatives and programs that respond to the needs of their local area. Often, this covers professional development beyond the basic artistic and technical skills and includes workplace experience and invaluable business, entrepreneurial and marketing skills. It includes partnerships that are emerging in the quest to develop training that is more relevant to Aboriginal students and which utilises the different strengths of its partners. Partnerships between TAFE and Universities, community arts organisations and Regional Galleries have all resulted in highly relevant innovative and creative initiatives that attract positive response.

As this research progressed, its complexities became increasingly apparent. These complexities related not only to the ongoing issues and debates around Aboriginal art and the value of the arts generally but also its context in a time of change and the strong focus of federal and state governments policies towards 'closing the gap' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. The NSW government's *Two Ways Together* ten year plan and the Council of Australian Governments Group's (COAG) recently released *Indigenous Education Action Plan Draft* establish the commitments, the benchmarks and the framework of policies and strategies that inform the government's direction and are now in various stages of implementation through government and state departments. On a policy level, this ensures that Indigenous education and engagement are high on the agenda of training providers and that their strategies and outcomes are aligned with the priorities of state and federal government.

A major focus within current government policy is the focus on education and employment outcomes and the attainment of qualifications that make an individual more 'employable'. This research was interested in the impact of these policies to arts training 'on the ground' and whether they were truly 'closing the gap' in regards to Aboriginal arts. It found that, particularly for TAFE, attracting students to arts courses is becoming more difficult as students opt for courses which make them more 'employable' and arts courses are discontinued due to insufficient enrolments. In terms of employability, making a living out of art is difficult for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians alike and yet, ironically, it is the Aboriginal visual arts sector that offers the most potential to contribute to regional economies and the overall social and economic amelioration of Aboriginal communities in NSW. This features strongly in research and literature including the Australian government's *Securing the Future* report which recognises and acknowledges the significant economic, social and cultural benefits of the Indigenous visual arts sector.

It is also the arts that has the most potential to attract Aboriginal people to training and education and the means by which numeracy and literacy skills can be developed. TAFE has an infrastructure that can potentially reach out to even the most remote of regional communities and make education highly accessible and it is hoped that, in the delivery of training, flexibility to the specific situations and needs of Aboriginal students is not lost.

Aside from the institutions which deliver arts training, this research explored the range of skills most relevant to artists in today's world. Artistic skills appear to be well covered in school, TAFE and university courses but it is recognised that additional technical, technological, business and marketing skills are required for artists who derive their primary income from their work. Awareness of other career options in the arts also needs to be addressed.

Significant also is a knowledge of cultural tradition and iconographies which maintain connection to culture, heritage and identity. Potentially it is the regional differences of Aboriginal groups and the inspiration for artwork derived from regional iconographies and contemporary stories and issues that will provide a point of difference for NSW in the national art industry and establish their recognition.

With a six month timeframe, this research could only provide a descriptive study of the type of training and professional development available for the Aboriginal arts sector and its complexities precluded it from attempting an in-depth analysis. Its limitations are recognised and acknowledged. It does however provide useful groundwork for future research and highlights some issues and trends that will be useful in the assessment of current and future initiatives aimed at improving the lives of Aboriginal people, both within the arts and other sectors.

2. Description and background to current project

This is a report on research conducted by Regional Arts NSW (RANSW) from July 2009 to January 2010 on the training needs of Aboriginal artists and arts organisations in NSW. It immediately follows research conducted by Regional Arts NSW in the first six months of 2009 which involved the mapping of Aboriginal Arts activity and identification of potential business hubs in NSW.

Regional Arts NSW

In its role as the peak body for arts and cultural activity in regional NSW over the past ten years, RANSW has developed knowledge of and experience with Aboriginal arts across the state on a number of different levels and in a number of different contexts. A growing awareness of the successes and challenges faced in developing Aboriginal Arts in this state has developed through:

- the history of employment of Regional Indigenous Cultural Officers both at Regional Arts NSW and within its network of Regional Arts Boards (RABs) across the state;
- the history of Aboriginal groups and individuals applying for grants through RANSW's funding programs and the outcomes of projects approved funding;
- the outcomes of various initiatives undertaken by RANSW working with regional partners including a mentoring program in the Northern Rivers and working with a south coast organisation to develop more culturally appropriate grants processes for Aboriginal individuals and communities;
- stories of successful arts and cultural projects, initiatives and strategies shared through the network of RABs across the state; and
- stories and observations from the extensive travel by RANSW across the state.

Regional Arts Network

Within the **Regional Arts Network** (see Maps), the status of Regional Arts Boards as independent bodies allows them to apply for funding for specific projects and initiatives that supplement the core funding assistance received from Arts NSW and local councils to deliver an arts program in their region. These projects and initiatives are in response to regional needs, priorities and resources and hence the approach to, level of and degree of awareness of Aboriginal arts activity varies considerably across the state. Whilst all regional arts programs support all arts activity, there are several Regional Arts Boards that have secured funding from different sources to develop an infrastructure that supports Aboriginal arts activity through a more strategic and sustainable approach.

From 2003 to 2005 a full-time Regional Indigenous Development Cultural Officer (RICDO) was employed to work across the councils in the **Far West** Region, managed by Outback Arts through funding assistance from Arts NSW. In late 2005 consultations were held across the region and a comprehensive Regional Indigenous Cultural Strategy and implementation plan was completed. The RICDO position was re-instated in 2009 but re-structured with a different RICDO appointed for one day a week in each of the following towns: Warren, Cobar, Bourke, Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Coonamble.

In the **Northern Rivers** in 2005, a regional Indigenous Artists Advisory Group (IAAG) was established at a meeting of 30 Indigenous artists from across the region. Since that time this group has met regularly and worked closely with Arts Northern Rivers to oversee the development of the Indigenous Arts Business Centre (IABC) project which, in 2010, comprises two positions dedicated to Indigenous arts in the region and, since March 2009, the establishment of the 3 Rivers Aboriginal Art Space in Lismore which offers artists' workshop space and a focal point for connecting artists and arts business training.

In early 2008 Arts Northern Rivers employed an Indigenous Arts Development Officer (IADO) through matched funding from the Department of Communications Information and Technology (DCITA, now Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts, DEHWA) and the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). This position assists artists to develop their professional art practice and

provides outreach support for artists in remote communities. From 2009 the IADO was fully funded by DEWHA for a further period of three years.

At the end of 2009 a second position, the Indigenous Arts Business Manager (IABM) was filled with funding assistance from DEEWR to provide business support, marketing and sales services to artists and arts enterprises in the region as well as manage and build a sustainable business model. The members of the IAAG are working towards status as an incorporated not-for-profit organisation but with continuing support from Arts Northern Rivers.

(Arts Northern Rivers Indigenous Arts Business Centre, Business Plan 2009/10 – 2011/2012)

In the **Mid North Coast**, the *Foundations of our Future* Strategy emerged from Arts Mid North Coast's extensive consultation with 300 artists and cultural practitioners across the region in 2007 / 2008. The consultation was funded by DCITA (now DEWHA) and resulted in the development of a five-year Strategic Plan to 'overcome the barriers to individual and community development by establishing regional and community structures around arts and cultural practices. Cultural activities will be implemented for the whole of the community and between communities so that they reinforce the other dimensions of community life such as school, work, recreation, sport, health, nutrition, language and social history.'

This project has resulted in the establishment of an Alliance of nine Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the region to monitor the delivery of strategies aimed at broadening the income generation possibilities for Indigenous arts and cultural practitioners with an emphasis on maintaining 'core cultural ideals whilst encouraging sustainability in the modern world'. The Alliance is working towards becoming incorporated, using the Saltwater Freshwater brand name to reflect the cultural identity and uniqueness of the area, and becoming a key Aboriginal organisation in the region.



Saltwater Freshwater logo:
with permission from Arts Mid North Coast

Through funding from DEWHA's Indigenous Cultural Support (ICS) program, a Regional Aboriginal Cultural Development Officer was employed in December 2008 and a Project Officer in February 2009. The Strategy also involves nurturing the development of Arts Centres in Kempsey, Forster and Coffs Harbour and has been instrumental in developing the Aboriginal Design Courses through North Coast TAFE.

(Arts Mid North Coast Foundations of our Future Strategic Business Plan, 2011 – 2013, Feb 2010)

Mapping of Aboriginal arts activity in NSW

In 2008, the success of the Arts Northern Rivers model, initially funded jointly by the National Arts and Crafts Indigenous Scheme (NACIS) of the Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) and the Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Initiative (EIEI) of the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), prompted the latter to seek assistance from Regional Arts NSW as to other regions in the state that may benefit from a similar model and have the potential to further the government's aim of assisting the transition towards the economic independence of arts centres.

At the time RANSW was mindful that more research on the extent and status of Aboriginal arts activity across the state and the readiness of potential areas to benefit from this assistance was required to ensure that any funding directed was not 'set up to fail'. EIEI provided the funding assistance to conduct this research in the first six months of 2009 and, at the time, it was intended that it would be the first stage of and the basis for a statewide strategy supported by the EIEI program. This subsequent stage did not eventuate due to the absorption of EIEI into another program.

The research did, however, lay the groundwork for subsequent and future proposals towards a more sustainable and viable future for the Aboriginal arts sector in NSW. Conducted between January and July 2009, it mapped Aboriginal artists and arts organisations across NSW, researched government programs and services for the Aboriginal arts community, explored pockets of activity and identified potential arts hubs and areas that could 'take off' pending funding assistance towards infrastructure and resources.

Current project

As a follow up to this research, in July 2009 Arts NSW provided RANSW with funding assistance to continue this work with a particular focus on the training needs of Aboriginal arts and arts organisations in NSW.

Together, the two research projects represent a solid base from which to inform Federal, state, regional and local policies and practices related to Aboriginal creative arts and pro-actively working towards a viable and vibrant sector in NSW. It is intended that this research be constantly reviewed and kept up-to-date with the rapidly expanding and changing nature of the sector.

Why focus on Aboriginal art and training of aboriginal arts sector?

Economic impact of the creative industries and Aboriginal art

While it is not possible to disaggregate visual arts – much less so Aboriginal visual arts – from the cultural and creative industries and accurately measure its significance, industry statistics indicate that the creative arts industry contributes significantly to the Australian economy. In 2004 – 2005, the creative industries contributed \$31.8 billion (4%) to the total Gross Domestic Product which is greater than agriculture, electricity and the communication services sectors. It employed 276,000 across Australia with disproportionately high rates of employment in NSW (36%) and Victoria (26%) to the other states. It comprises 8,791 enterprises in the creation process, 21,611 in the reproduction process and 23,898 in the distribution of products and services. (Innovation and Business Skills Australia (2008), Cultural and Creative Industries: Key Economic Metrics 2006 Census data update. IBSA: Hawthorn, Victoria)

The Aboriginal visual arts sector is a significant contributor to the cultural and creative industries and hence to regional, state and national economies. The ABS Household Expenditure Survey 2003-2004 estimated the total annual domestic expenditure on visual arts and crafts at \$668 million. Commercial art galleries' income for 2006-2007 was \$131.8 million and, using the statistic from 1999-2000 apportioning 20.8% of total income from the artwork to Aboriginal artists, it can be deduced that their contribution is sizeable. A large proportion of trading is from central and northern Australia and occurs in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. According to the ABS 2006 census, there were 2,930 Aboriginal people employed in cultural occupations as their main source of income representing 2.5% of all employed Indigenous Australians. (ABS 2008 Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview).

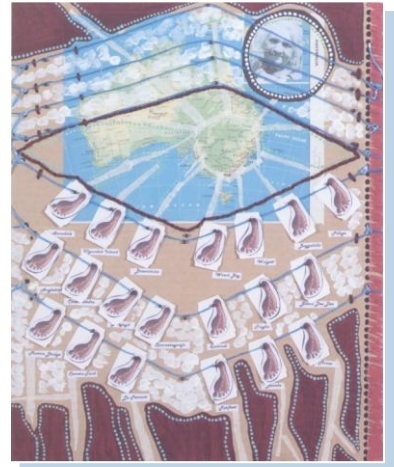
The role of the arts in Aboriginal communities

In Aboriginal communities life and art are intrinsically interwoven, a fact recognised in the most significant reports on Indigenous Arts, the Myer Report (2002), Securing the Future (2008) and Open for Business (2008). The Myer Report (2002) comments that "*The arts . . . are much more prevalent in Indigenous communities than in other parts of Australian society*" whilst the Open for Business report (2008) states "*Indigenous commercial or competitive advantage is in culture-based industries.*"

The Aboriginal visual arts sector has great potential to contribute further to regional economies and the overall social and economic amelioration of Aboriginal communities in NSW. As a purveyor of economic opportunities the significance of the arts becomes even more critical in communities where most people do not have the skills and opportunities to compete in the labour market for jobs. In towns such as Wilcannia with a high unemployment rate (all Indigenous) but an inordinate number of people practising art, investment in the sector can have a significant impact.

A Growing Sector

Research undertaken by RANSW in 2009 indicated that Aboriginal cultural and creative arts in NSW is an under-resourced but very active sector. It is also an area that is rapidly developing and continuing to grow and prosper as the value of investment in the sector and its significant social, economic and cultural benefits in Aboriginal communities are realised. In all Aboriginal communities and areas of high Aboriginal population it is the arts that are integral to the success of educational, economic, social, health and community programs. This is evident throughout the state and, although the activity has always existed through the goodwill and resourcefulness of regional communities, there is a definite growing recognition of the value of establishing more resources, support and infrastructure to support and nurture this activity. The work in the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast is testament to the value of this framework to a sustainable and viable Indigenous arts sector which in turn bring about positive health and well being outcomes for individuals and communities.



“Dispersion of the old girls 3”
by Penny Evans,
Winner of CoFA Professional Development Award,
2009 NSW Indigenous Art Prize

Current Literature / Research

The reports and literature most relevant to this research are those informing the Federal government’s direction in addressing issues of Indigenous arts and current trends in Indigenous education.

For issues of Indigenous arts the key reports are the *Myer Report* (2002), *Indigenous Art: Securing the Future* (2008), *Open for Business* (October 2008) and *Making Solid Ground* (November 2008).

In 2001, the Federal Minister for the Arts appointed Mr Rupert Myer to conduct an independent Inquiry into the contemporary visual arts and crafts sector. The Inquiry found that contemporary visual arts and crafts practitioners generally have incomes lower than that of the general workplace, and of artists in other fields, and that many have to support their practice with other employment. However, it becomes clear that financial reward is often not the prime motivator, the demand for places in tertiary institutions has not diminished and there were strong arguments about the cultural and economic value of tertiary education in the arts. The *Report of the Contemporary Visual Arts and Crafts Industry (the Myer Report)* included a section on Indigenous art and craft acknowledging its cultural and economic contribution and significance and the need for the sector to be adequately supported particularly through art and craft centres that facilitate the production and marketing of Indigenous art and craft. In relation to Indigenous Arts, the Report recommended that Indigenous copyright and intellectual property issues be addressed and that the role of art and craft centres be strengthened through professional development opportunities for art and craft staff.

Securing the Future: Australia’s Indigenous visual arts and craft sector is the report of the Senate Standing Committee on the Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Inquiry into the Indigenous Visual Arts sector. It highlights the economic, social and cultural benefits of the Indigenous visual arts sector to local communities and its wider impact on other sectors and the nation generally and outlines the basis of a ‘vibrant and sustainable Indigenous arts sector’. The report details 29 recommendations including level and certainty of resources, code of conduct for the sector, realignment of government policies and systems for providing support to the sector and skills development for managers and practitioners in the industry. In its Response to these recommendations, the Australian Government agreed to initiate discussion with tertiary institutions on the feasibility of introducing courses on art centre management and cross-cultural issues, to implement triennial operational funding, to review funding guidelines to ensure governance and business management training activities are supported and to develop programs to deliver education and

training particularly governance, artists' rights, artistic development for artists and responsibilities and marketing.

Open for Business: Developing Indigenous enterprises in Australia is the report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs' inquiry into developing Indigenous enterprises. It considered the support available for Indigenous businesses and explored ways in which Indigenous people could be encouraged to embark upon or expand a business. The report contains 15 recommendations within which it recognises the vital contribution of Indigenous business development to the economic and social sustainability of Indigenous communities and support for remote area enterprises especially in the arts sector. It does not specifically cover training and professional development of artists but identifies skill gaps in financial literacy and money management and supports development of business skills through mentoring programs and advice on government, industry and community funding programs. The challenges of managing business alongside kin and cultural obligations were acknowledged but there was also recognition that Indigenous community connections can underpin successful enterprise development.

The report *Making Solid Ground: Infrastructure and Key Organisations Review (2008)* was prepared for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (Australia Council for the Arts) to inform the review of Key Organisations Funding program on the basis of consultations held with artists, organisations and community members across the country. It addressed many of the governance issues that relate to the Indigenous creative arts sector including priority protection and enforcement of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights, increased employment and professional development and brokering partnerships for business development.

Regional Arts NSW's earlier Indigenous research project *Identification of Engagement Opportunities in the Indigenous Arts Industry in NSW (2009)* mapped Aboriginal arts activity throughout NSW and identified potential business hubs. This research highlighted significant issues that impact on the sustainability and viability of NSW's Aboriginal visual arts sector and recommended that a strong foundation be built on significant investments in infrastructure, technical and artistic skills and appropriate corporate governance. One of the major issues highlighted in this report was that government investment is not commensurate with the widely acknowledged potential of Indigenous arts.

Consistent in all of these reports is an awareness and acknowledgement of the significance of the visual arts and crafts to the economic, cultural and social development of Aboriginal communities. Development of skills underpins many of the reports' recommendations but, due to the focus of the Inquiries and priority of the Inquiries, the focus is on the development of governance and business skills rather than artistic skills.

The most significant reports commissioned to inform the Federal government's direction in addressing issues of Indigenous education have emerged in recent years in response to the Rudd Government's commitment to urgent action in closing the gap between the life outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The Council of Australia Governments (COAG) identified six ambitious targets including life expectancy, mortality rates, early childhood education, reading, writing and numeracy skills, attainment of Year 12 or equivalent and employment outcomes. The *Indigenous Education Action Plan Draft, 2010 – 2014* closed for public comment in February 2010 and whilst focusing primarily on outcomes from schooling, considers transitions to post-school options. The Plan highlights the significant gaps between the educational outcomes of Indigenous students and other students and the ways in which this limits their career prospects and life choices.

In NSW, *Two Ways Together* is the state Government's 10 year plan (2003 – 2012) to improve the lives of Aboriginal people and their communities in the seven major areas of health, housing, education, culture and heritage, justice, economic development and families and young people. The plan involves federal and state government agencies and Aboriginal communities working together to ensure services are accessible and culturally appropriate. In November 2006, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) published ten regional reports which brought together data for each of the Regional Coordination Management Group (RCMG) regions of NSW and provided a 'snapshot' of demographic and service information of Aboriginal communities from which to inform the development of regional action plans which are regularly monitored.

Neither the *Indigenous Education Action Plan Draft* nor the *Two Ways Together* plan specifically address arts education and training although both influence the Indigenous education policies and strategies developed and adopted by training institutions and providers.

Scope of the project - parameters and definitions

From the outset it must be realised that this research is primarily a **qualitative and descriptive study** of the type and effectiveness of training and professional development available for the Aboriginal arts sector at this point in time and is not intended to be a comprehensive critique of training courses or the institutions in which they operate. Due to the numerous constraints including the timeframe in which the project was to be conducted, difficulties in accessing information, changeability and reliability of information and lack of resources to cover the broad scope of training options across geographic area and types of respondents, it is recognised that this is a work in progress and that the ever-changing and fast-evolving nature of the sector will soon shift and outdate much of the data collected.

This research should therefore be considered in the context of the framework and parameters presented below and with the understanding that the views of Aboriginal people across NSW have been the primary source of information. Strong local relationships of the regionally-based Regional Arts Development Officers, together with the experience, cultural knowledge, connections and interview style of RANSW researcher Ruben Allas 'in the field', mean this research has elicited information that would, under most circumstances, be difficult to obtain.

Target group

- The scope of the target group for this research is broad. It primarily focuses on the needs of Aboriginal artists, although also takes the needs of creative workers and community arts organisations into consideration. The inseparability of art from ordinary life in many remote Aboriginal areas, especially artworks that make use of traditional iconographies, and the communal nature of much of the art creation in these communities make it imperative that the needs of the community as well as the individual artist be considered in determining training and education needs. It also allows the research to cover many Aboriginal artists who have developed their art through involvement in community programs designed to address social and community issues.
- The definition of 'artist' is broad and does not assume a rigid or exclusive definition. It includes arts students, emerging artists, established and accomplished practising artists at various levels of technical and artistic skill and does not differentiate between those that make a living out of their art as their primary source of income and others engaged in art creation. It includes artisans, craft practitioners and producers of cultural items in community arts and crafts groups as well as those participating in government employment and rehabilitation programs.
- This research also acknowledges, but does not examine in detail, other professions auxiliary to the primary function of art creation but still important in the creative chain. It includes occupations in the production, reproduction and distribution of art that provide support to the primary function of art creation and acknowledges that many artists engage in more than just art creation. It also considers arts and cultural workers who have significant influence in promoting Aboriginal arts and culture and the employment of Aboriginal artists. This is consistent with the view that art creation in Aboriginal communities is essentially collective and participatory.
- This research has a regional focus due to the unique difficulties associated with living in regional, rural and remote areas and the premise that the social, economic, cultural and health well being of Aboriginal communities in regional NSW is inextricably linked with opportunities to engage and develop skills in art.

Artform

- The research focuses on visual arts in its broadest sense and includes painting, drawing, prints, photography, digital art, art installations, sculpture, ceramics, pottery, jewellery, woven or printed textiles and clothing, carving, furniture, glass craft, metalwork, leatherwork, weaving and basketry.
- Integral to any training and professional development of Aboriginal art making is knowledge of cultural tradition, collective and personal history and access to relevant iconographies. The cultural component of art teaching and learning is as important as art creation and was included in this research.
- Although the focus is on visual arts there is an acknowledgement that many Aboriginal artists work across different artforms and that, in various regions of NSW, other artforms are flourishing.
- Web technologies are not covered in great detail in this report but their importance and impact on art creation, marketing, sales and consumption is acknowledged. While there is no available information on the demand for these technologies from Aboriginal artists, relevant online skills will become increasingly important to artists, particularly those in isolated regional areas.

Training and Professional Development

The broad scope of this research both in target group and artform dictated that a wide range of training and professional development needs and opportunities be explored. It includes research on a wide range of providers of training and professional development through

- Institutions that deliver formal arts training such as TAFE and Universities with a focus on arts-specific programs for Aboriginal students,
- Community education facilities such as Regional Colleges and Adult and Community Education (ACE),
- Informal and ad hoc training and professional development provided by Regional Arts Boards, community mentors, community organisations, Regional Art Galleries,
- Professional development opportunities through grants, residencies, Fellowships, Prizes and Awards,
- Cultural Centres, Land Councils and state cultural institutions key to the imparting of cultural knowledge and iconographies.

Research considerations

- Because of the adoption of broad definitions of the arts sector and training needs and the data collection method of interviews at face-to-face meetings, this research has engaged a small sample of possible respondents. It was bound by a limited timeframe and resources as well as the logistics of scheduling visits to suit the availability of respondents in sometimes remote and isolated locations.
- Collection of reliable data relating to attendance, attrition and retention rates of Aboriginal students in arts courses was difficult to ascertain for a number of reasons. Although the intention of this research was to scope predominantly ATSI-specific arts courses at TAFE, it was found that many Aboriginal students undertake mainstream courses due either to their own preference or lack of enrolments causing individual TAFE campuses to combine Aboriginal with mainstream courses. This occurs particularly at the smaller and more isolated campuses which do not have the population from which to attract large numbers in individual classes. There is also considerable variability in attendance of Aboriginal students over the duration of courses, and changes in course and class structures may be deemed necessary by individual TAFE campuses to address specific situations and issues if and when they arise.
- There are many external factors, especially government policies and programs, that impact on attendance, attrition and retention rates from year to year but their complexities preclude them from being analysed in detail. They are however important to this research and are included, where relevant.
- The main method of data collection for this research was an informal interview technique at face-to-face meetings. They were conducted in a non-threatening and trusting environment in which considerable

care and diplomacy were constantly exercised and simple and direct questions pitched to the comfort level of the respondent. Although there was a framework for questioning, the actual questions varied according to the level of rapport with the respondent and a judgement of their willingness to divulge information. Respondents understood that the meetings were covered by anonymity and this research respects the sensitivity of some of the information provided. As anecdotal data it is also subject to respondent bias, should it exist.

- Regional classifications in this report are based on the Regional Arts Boards' boundaries throughout NSW (see Maps). It is acknowledged that these boundaries vary slightly from regional classifications used by ABS and government agencies, making application of their statistics and drawing conclusions for a particular area difficult. The classifications are not consistent with the spread of aboriginal clans and language groups across the state so, where possible and available, figures for individual local government areas have been used for statistical purposes.

3. The Research

Project Aims

The aim of this research is to determine the training and professional development needs of Aboriginal artists, cultural workers and arts organisations in NSW. Specifically it explores

- Current art program delivery models and their outcomes,
- Factors that effect variability of outcomes and,
- Best practice paradigms.

Outline of Methodology

- The first step in any training needs analysis is to explore the current context and determine where the needs actually exist. In the context of this research this included collecting ABS data on the concentration of Aboriginal population across NSW, revenues from art and employment in the creative and cultural industries as well as data from RANSW's previous research project highlighting the degree of aboriginal arts infrastructure and level of Aboriginal arts activity across the state.
- Desktop research was conducted on the availability of arts courses and programs for Aboriginal people at the two major formal tertiary training institutions: TAFE and Universities with regional campuses. Content of these courses was reviewed.
- A scoping survey was conducted of other training available through
 - community colleges and Adult and Community Education (ACE),
 - community organisations and centres, including Regional Arts Boards
 - Correctional institutions,
 - Training /employment programs such as the Community Development Employment Programs (CDEP) and government programs offering professional mentoring and business advice
 - Mentors
 - Professional development opportunities through fellowships, conferences, residencies
 - Schools
 - Regional Art Galleries
 - Small private galleries
- Over a period of approximately four months, nine separate field trips to ten regions and 36 communities were organised in consultation with the Regional Arts Development Officers and according to availability of respondents. Regions and towns visited are as follows (also see Maps):
 - Illawarra-Shoalhaven - Wollongong and Gerringong
 - South East - Moruya and Bega
 - Orana - Dubbo
 - Far West - Bourke, Brewarrina and Walgett
 - Central West - Bathurst, Condobolin, Cowra and Blayney (first visit) then Parkes, Lake Cargelligo, Murrin Bridge, Condobolin and Forbes (second visit)
 - Eastern Riverina (Wagga Wagga and Junee)
 - Griffith
 - Albury Wodonga
 - Northern Rivers –Alstonville, Brunswick Heads, Byron Bay, Brunswick Heads, Cabbage Tree Island, Casino, Evans Head, Grafton, Lismore, Maclean, Ocean Shores, Tweed Valley
 - Hunter – Singleton, Muswellbrook and Cessnock
- A wide range of respondents were interviewed as follows:
 - **art teachers, arts program coordinators and staff at the 'formal' training institutions of TAFE and universities** were asked:
 - how many Aboriginal students are /were in their art classes
 - what are / were the attendance, completion and attrition rates

- how do / did they rate student's chances of making art a career.

Variations or follow up questions included causes of low attendance, attrition and completion rates. For respondents of newly developed or designed courses, the reason for developing these courses / programs and the attraction to these courses was explored. Face-to-face and phone interviews were conducted with staff (art teachers and course or program coordinators) from 14 TAFE campuses – Bathurst, Bega / Moruya, Boggabilla, Cowra, Deniliquin, Dubbo, Griffith, Lake Cargelligo, Moree, North Coast, Singleton, Tamworth, Wodonga and Wagga Wagga – and three Universities – University of Wollongong, Charles Sturt University (Bathurst and Wagga Wagga) and Southern Cross University in Lismore.

- **directors and staff at regional art galleries** – were asked similar questions to the formal institutions but replacing apprentice / trainee / artist for 'student' and training programs for 'courses'. Regional galleries were also asked whether they have apprentice or mentorship programs and whether they have an active or articulated policy promoting Aboriginal art or artists.
- **Regional Arts Development Officers and managers and staff at community arts organisations** were interviewed regarding their knowledge of resources available for creative skills development for Indigenous artists.
- 'Others' included art teachers at **correctional institutions**, Elders at Land Councils, local council staff, government agencies such as Centacare and the Aboriginal Economic Development Program and private commercial galleries.
- **Aboriginal artists**
Over 70 Aboriginal artists of varying skill levels were interviewed. Interviews were semi-structured and informal with simple and direct questions. Care and diplomacy were exercised and dependent on comfort level with the respondent and place (home or elsewhere, group or one-on-one). Questions to artists covered:
 - Where did they learn their art. This question varied according to rapport and initial impression of a respondent's willingness to divulge certain information and prior knowledge of the artist. Follow up questions focussed on the use of certain iconographic images
 - What do they do with their art (sell, donate, exhibit)
 - Are there other things they are wanting to learn (not asked of senior and accomplished artists)

Interviews were conducted one-on-one or, if possible, in groups – this being the most economic use of time, particularly in remote areas. Workshops or group meetings were also conducted with 18 Aboriginal inmates in two adult prisons and 16 juvenile residents at two juvenile justice centres.

4. Aboriginal Education and Training in NSW

“Education plays a major role in the socialisation of children and young adults and is one of the means by which the cultural norms and values of a society are transmitted from one generation to the next. Thus, education reinforces and naturalises societal concepts and expectations, while teaching a child to conform to the roles and status society deems acceptable for that individual or group. The Western education system also serves the function of equipping children and young adults with the knowledge and skills considered valuable and necessary for employment in a progressive and competitive capitalist society such as Australia. However, the types of skills and depth of knowledge taught have been largely determined by dominant societal attitudes and expectations in relation to class, race, age and gender.

The history of Aboriginal education since colonisation has been one of marginalisation and limited access, largely based on the ideologies of Social Darwinism and the twin European policies of ‘civilising’ and ‘Christianising’. Western education was used, and at times is still used, to negate the cultures, languages and identity of Indigenous children. Access to education for Indigenous students prior to the 1960s was restricted by the institutional racism embedded in government policies such as the Aborigines Protection Acts, operational in all Australian States and Territories from 1909. Under these policies the education of Indigenous Australians was limited to the development of rudimentary skills and knowledge deemed by the dominant society as appropriate for positions of domestic and rural servitude.

Educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians showed improvement after the 1967 Referendum, with a significant increase in Indigenous tertiary enrolments from the 1980s to late 1990s following the dismantling of policies deemed contrary to the Racial Discrimination Act (1975). However, the past decade has witnessed a marked decline in improvement in educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians across all educational sectors, particularly in rural and remote Australia. Many Indigenous students are leaving school poorly prepared relative to their non-Indigenous counterparts. An increased number of Indigenous students are disengaging with school prior to reaching or completing Year 10. Relatively few Indigenous students are remaining at school to complete Year 11 and Year 12 or its vocational equivalent and even less obtain the educational outcomes necessary to gain entry into University programs.

Educational outcomes such as this perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of social and economic disadvantage experienced by many Indigenous Australians by limiting the post-school options and life choices of Indigenous students.” (Charles Sturt University – Indigenous Education Strategy, page 3)

In recognition of their role and responsibility in enhancing educational and socio-economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians and to align with government policies and accountability requirements, universities have developed their own Education Strategies. These are covered in the relevant sections below and are considered important to this research in that they provide the framework in which future training will be delivered and demonstrate recognition of the cultural issues involved as well as a commitment to addressing the issues.

The context

Aboriginal Population across NSW

In 2006 there were an estimated 148,178 Aboriginal people living in NSW comprising just over 2% of the total NSW population and around 29% of the total Aboriginal population in Australia. NSW has the largest number of Aboriginal people of any Australian state or territory (ABS, 2008).

At the Local Government Area (LGA) level, the largest number of Aboriginal people resided in Blacktown (279,759) and the smallest number in Mosman (24), both in metropolitan Sydney. Within the LGAs classified as ‘regional’, the largest number of Aboriginal people resided in Dubbo (4,321), followed by Tamworth Regional (3,935) and Moree Plains (3,024). In comparison to the total population of the LGA, the highest proportion of Aboriginal people resided in Brewarrina (62.7%), followed by Central Darling (37.7%), Bourke (31.2%), Walgett (29.5%), Coonamble (25.9%) and Moree Plains (20.7%).

In terms of the Regional Arts Network (see Maps) and regional boundaries of the Regional Arts Boards, the largest number of Aboriginal people resided in the North West region, followed by Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers. The largest percentage of Aboriginal people reside in the Far West (28.75%) followed by West Darling (14.4%) and Orana (10.04%). For further details, refer Table.

Aboriginal Arts Activity across NSW

Through comprehensive research commencing January 2009, Regional Arts NSW has been developing a statewide picture of Aboriginal arts in regional NSW in an effort to identify areas of activity and demand, gaps in services and resources and ways in which links could be made between the two. This research is valuable groundwork for proposals both from RANSW and the individual RABs relating to funding allocations and assistance. It is constantly a 'work in progress' as an increasing number of artists and arts organisations and initiatives are forthcoming and as more of the state is covered. It is also a function of the availability of information. RABs with more developed infrastructure and resources to generate activity and raise the profile of Aboriginal art in their region, facilitate the 'visibility' of aboriginal artists and arts organisations and, whilst the field trips in 2009 attempted to identify the more isolated and remote artists, there are still many areas not covered and hence where this information still remains 'hidden'.

At the time of this report, the following picture of Aboriginal Arts in NSW has emerged:

- Both the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast regions have the most developed infrastructure, highest government investment and creative activity for Aboriginal arts across NSW. Both regions have long term and detailed Strategic and Operational Plans with cross-regional activities including exhibitions, networking opportunities, events and training workshops and programs. Over 200 artists have participated in projects delivered or supported by the Indigenous Arts Business Centre (IABC) project of Arts Northern Rivers and 170 artists have been identified through Arts Mid North Coast's Visual Arts Living Cultural Map project. Both of these RABs have adopted a strategic approach and developed a more sustainable and supportive model over a long period, guided predominantly by Aboriginal artists in the Northern Rivers and Aboriginal Land Councils in the Mid North Coast. North Coast TAFE's Aboriginal Learning Partnerships Unit has worked closely with Arts Mid North Coast to develop courses in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Design and licensing, a first in Australia. The Certificate IV in Design is being offered in 2010 at both the Great Lakes campus in mid north coast and, in partnership with Arts Northern Rivers, at the Lismore TAFE campus.
- Other areas also currently supported through government funding for aboriginal arts infrastructure and delivery of programs are Outback Arts covering the Far West region of the state and Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art and Culture studio in Gerringong in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region. The Outback Arts' Regional Indigenous Cultural Officer role has recently been re-instated with a one day a week position in six regions, but only two of these positions currently filled. Strategies in this area are generally community-focussed rather than regional and the geographic spread and complex issues in this region make it difficult to adopt a regional strategic approach. At this stage, there are few artists identified in this area. Boolarng Nangamai Studio is a thriving independent organisation developed initially as an enterprise but now also with a not-for-profit 'arm' with infrastructure funding through the Federal government. Boolarng Nangamai is not in an area serviced by a Regional Arts Board, although, through its online facilities and outreach approach, it has developed a broad network through visits and exchanges with groups in the Central West, West Darling, Mid North Coast, Arnhem Land and Central Desert in the Northern Territory and, in the process, established a strong state, national and international profile. The core group of artists at Boolarng Nangamai conduct a range of arts workshops and have completed relevant qualifications beyond arts training.
- There is considerable activity in Wilcannia (West Darling), in the Lachlan Valley towns of Lake Cargelligo, Peak Hill, Murrin Bridge, Condobolin, Parkes and Forbes (Central West) and in the South East regions around Bega and Moruya but these areas have been predominantly supported by project, rather than infrastructure funding. In Wilcannia, West Darling Arts has managed the funding of an artists-in-residence program over a three-year period followed by a two-year mentorship program. This has led to the development of the Wilcannia Arts Centre which was the social hub of the town but now requires a permanent building to continue its growth. It also has produced excellent artwork which was recently

exhibited at a gallery in Sydney. In the south east, funding supported the employment of two Project Officers for a six month period in 2009, and the area is home to many emerging and established artists.

- Regions such as Central West and Albury are currently adopting strategies to generate Aboriginal Arts activity within more sustainable frameworks. Arts OutWest is working towards a coordinated regional approach encompassing the Lachlan Valley area, Dubbo and entire Central West area and in Albury, Murray Arts assisted in Albury City Council's proposal for an Indigenous Needs Assessment aimed at identifying strategies to address the sustainability of Indigenous arts practice in the region.
- Other areas are currently supported and resourced through their broad regional arts program and the role of the Regional Arts Development Officer. The level of activity fluctuates between regions according to a number of different factors relating to need and demand but is generally fragmented and community and project-based. All are working towards a more coordinated approach and increased knowledge of Aboriginal Arts in their region.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE)

The **Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, 2009 - 2012** developed by the NSW Department of Education and Training sets the framework within which schools, TAFE NSW Institutes and community education colleges can develop their own plans appropriate to their local needs. The Department works closely with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and its local and regional AECGs throughout NSW to ensure that, through the active engagement and participation of Aboriginal people in schools, TAFE Institutes and Adult and Community Education Colleges, their education and training needs are being met. The intended outcomes of the Strategy are to increase the number of Aboriginal students enrolling in and completing TAFE and Adult and Community Education courses with 4 main focus areas:

1. Leadership, planning and accountability stipulating collaboration with Aboriginal people in decision-making on all levels and ensuring Aboriginal education is core business for all staff;
2. Ongoing learning for staff and students including increasing competencies in Aboriginal cultures for all staff, valuing and developing capabilities of Aboriginal staff and students and educating all staff about Aboriginal Australia;
3. Relationships and pathways that encourage a 'whole of government' approach and partnerships that make a difference;
4. Teaching and Training with the intention of bridging the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and strengthening learning opportunities through research, innovation and collaboration.

TAFE is the largest vocational education and training provider in NSW and comprises campuses grouped by geographic area into ten Institutes. Six of these Institutes service regional NSW as follows:

1. The **Hunter Institute** services Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and Central Coast regions with campuses in Belmont, Cessnock, Glendale, Gosford, Hamilton, Kurri Kurri, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle (2), Ourimbah, Scone, Singleton, Tomaree and Wyong;
2. The **Illawarra Institute** has 14 campuses located throughout the south-east in Bega, Cooma, Dapto, Goulburn, Moruya, Moss Vale, Nowra, Queanbeyan, Shellharbour, Ulladulla, Wollongong (2), Yallah and Yass;
3. The **New England Institute** services the north east of the state with campuses in Armidale, Boggabilla, Coonabarabran, Glen Innes, Gunnedah, Inverell, Moree, Narrabri, Quirindi, Tamworth and Tenterfield;
4. The **North Coast Institute** services the north coast region from Tuncurry / Forster in the south to Kingscliff on the Queensland border with campuses in Ballina, Casino, Coffs Harbour (2), Grafton, Great Lakes, Kempsey, Kingscliff, Lismore, Macksville, Maclean, Murwillumbah, Port Macquarie, Taree, Trenayr, Wauchope and Wollongbar.

5. The **Riverina Institute** supports the communities of the Riverina and Murray regions of southern NSW with campuses in Albury, Coomealla, Cootamundra, Corowa, Deniliquin, Finley, Griffith, Lake Cargelligo, Leeton, Narrandera, Temora, Tumut, Wagga Wagga, West Wyalong and Young.
6. The **Western Institute** services more than half the area of NSW, including some of Australia's most isolated and remote communities with 24 campuses at Bathurst, Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Cobar, Condobolin, Coonamble, Cowra, Dubbo, Dunedoo, Forbes, Gilgandra, Grenfell, Lightning Ridge, Lithgow, Menindee, Mudgee, Nyngan, Orange, Parkes, Walgett, Warren, Wellington and Wilcannia.

There are four Institutes in the Sydney metropolitan area:

1. **Sydney Institute** with campuses in Enmore, Eora, Petersham, Randwick, St George, Sutherland (2) and Ultimo. Eora College offers courses 'designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal students seeking access to higher education. It provides a dynamic starting point for students wishing to pursue a career in visual and performing arts.'
2. **Northern Sydney Institute** with campuses at Bradfield, Crows Nest, Hornsby, Meadowbank, North Sydney, Northern Beaches and Ryde.
3. **South Western Institute** with campuses in Bankstown, Campbelltown, Chullora, Granville, Lidcombe, Liverpool, Macquarie Fields, Miller, Padstow, Wetherill Park
4. **Western Sydney Institute** with campuses at Blacktown, The Hills, Blue Mountains, Mt Druitt, Nepean, Nirimba (Quakers Hill), Richmond and OTEN (Open Training and Education Network)

TAFE Aboriginal Programs

The TAFE website states that 'TAFE NSW has the largest Aboriginal enrolment of any training and education provider in Australia. We develop courses to improve educational outcomes and employment opportunities for Aboriginal communities'. It also states that 'All TAFE Institutes have an Aboriginal Development Manager and most campuses have an Aboriginal Coordinator. Both encourage Aboriginal involvement and assist Aboriginal students. Many campuses also have Aboriginal Support Officers'. The courses are described as 'culturally, vocationally and educationally appropriate for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal teachers will teach some of the course, where possible, especially the cultural content. If there isn't an Aboriginal teacher available, Aboriginal Team teachers or guest lecturers will teach the cultural material'.

To carry out this function and to address the goals of the DET Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, each TAFE Institute has a specific **Aboriginal Education and Training Unit** to provide advice and guidance on TAFE programs to Aboriginal students, work in partnership with government and non-government organisations and industry to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and develop and implement programs designed to meet their needs. Beyond the general support services, each Institute therefore develops a particular focus and organisational structure to suit its region. For instance, the **Purrimaibahn Aboriginal Education and Training Unit** at the Hunter Institute has developed partnerships with industry and offers scholarships, on-the-job training opportunities and industry contact networking for apprentices. The Unit at the **Riverina Institute** is part of a broader Social Inclusion Team. **The North Coast Institute** launched their three year Reconciliation Action Plan in 2009 with 'a new team of Aboriginal education leaders – the North Coast Aboriginal Learning Partnerships (NCALP) Coordination Team – recruited to guide, lead and support the whole organisation to work in partnership with Aboriginal learners, communities and organisations' (Reconciliation Action Plan, 2009 – 2012 Foreword by Institute Director) representing their commitment to working with Aboriginal learners and communities 'to provide positive education and training experiences'.

TAFE Aboriginal Arts programs

The focus of this current research is specifically on Aboriginal arts programs rather than mainstream arts courses based on the assumption that this would be the most appropriate training for Aboriginal arts students, as per the philosophy of TAFE that courses are designed to be 'culturally, vocationally and educationally appropriate' and developed 'to improve educational outcomes and employment opportunities for Aboriginal communities'.

Current courses

The TAFE website provides the following details on current nationally recognised specific arts courses for Aboriginal people:

Certificate I in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts (replacing Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practice) is an introduction to the visual arts / crafts, providing 'basic knowledge and practical skills in visual arts and crafts, in a form suitable to your culture and community'. The core of the course covers health, safety and security procedures, sourcing concepts for own work, using drawing techniques to represent the object or idea and developing an understanding of Aboriginal identity. Participants can choose from a range of electives including drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics. In 2010 Certificate I was advertised as being offered through the Riverina Institute (Lake Cargelligo, Coomealla, Wagga Wagga) and Sydney Institute Campbelltown campus.

Certificate II in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts (replacing Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practice) provides basic training in a number of visual arts/crafts areas and does not require Certificate I as a pre-requisite. The course is an introduction to practical, conceptual aspects of arts and crafts and an awareness of local resources, facilities and local cultural practices. The core of the course includes the same elements as Certificate I plus sourcing information on history and theory and their application to the participant's own area of work. Participants can choose from a range of electives including drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, crafts and textiles. This course was offered at the New England Institute (Armidale, Boggabilla and Moree campuses) in 2009. In semester 1, 2010 it is promoted as being offered at the New England Institute (Boggabilla and Moree campuses), the Riverina Institute (Coomealla, Lake Cargelligo and Wauchope campuses), the North Coast Institute (Wauchope campus) and Sydney Institute campus of Campbelltown campus.

This is the most widely offered course of all ATSI arts courses. (7 campuses)

Certificate III in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts (replacing Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practice) is for those wanting to understand and make traditional or contemporary Aboriginal art and provides basic training in the visual / arts area with Aboriginal culture as the context for the artwork. Completion of Certificate II (or equivalent) is a requirement for entry and participants develop a portfolio useful for gaining entry into further education and training and representing images explored under the direction of Aboriginal artists and individuals from local community groups. This course can be part of a traineeship. In 2009, this course was offered by North Coast Institute (Wauchope campus) and at the New England Institute (Boggabilla campus). In 2010 it was promoted as being offered by Boggabilla, Dubbo, Corowa and Campbelltown.

Certificate IV in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts (replacing Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practice) is for those who want to acquire knowledge and skills to work in the visual arts industry and /or the Aboriginal arts and crafts community. Certificate III (or equivalent) is a requirement for entry and this course prepares the student for Diploma level. Students acquire knowledge, develop technical skills and apply creativity and understanding in a studio-based visual arts and contemporary crafts setting and within the context of their Aboriginal culture. Images will be created and explored under the direction of Aboriginal artists and individuals from local Aboriginal community and arts groups. Participants will also learn about professional practices used by Aboriginal artists in the visual arts industry. Art areas include painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, art photography, ceramics, creative technology (digital arts), Aboriginal contextual studies (project based work) with core study areas of contemporary Aboriginal arts, drawing, global art history/theory, exhibition and presentation skills. This course was offered by North Coast Institute (Wauchope campus) in semesters 2, 2009 and promoted as being offered by Western Institute (Dubbo campus) in 2010.

Previous courses

The above courses have replaced previous TAFE arts courses for Aboriginal students and are narrower in artform focus than the following previous courses:

Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices (Aboriginal Visual and Performing Arts, now ATSI Cultural Arts) was for Aboriginal people who want to gain basic training in a variety of visual arts, music or performance areas. It provided an introduction to practical, conceptual and theoretical aspects of traditional arts, fine arts and

crafts, traditional music and performance as well as contemporary expressions. It also provided an awareness of local resources, facilities and local cultural practices. The course promoted Aboriginal culture as the context for the student's creative expression and skills and practices and abilities developed reflected an awareness of cultural identity and pride in Aboriginal heritage. Modules covered a range of strands: painting, printmaking, sculpture, arts management, textiles, Aboriginal culture and history, business enterprise, picture framing, traditional arts and decoration and music in a number of mediums and performance. This course was offered at North Coast Institute (Port Macquarie campus) in semesters 1 and 2, 2009.

The **Aboriginal Visual and Performing Arts Certificates I, II, III and IV** are no longer offered. Certificate I was replaced by Certificate I in Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices (description above) but Certificates II, III and IV do not appear to have replacement courses. Certificate I has now become ATSI Cultural Arts.

Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Tourism Certificate III is also no longer offered. This provided training in the tourism industry (as Indigenous site guides, tour guides) and provided complementary knowledge and skills for Aboriginal cultural protocols, practice, heritage and visual arts in an Aboriginal context.

Of the 96 campuses in regional NSW and 33 in metropolitan Sydney, there are currently (2010) nine indicated on the website offering Aboriginal arts programs for Semester 1 (January to June), 2010:

1. Boggabilla (New England) offering Certificate II and III in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts as full time courses in semester 1.
2. Moree (New England) offering Certificate II in ATSI Cultural Arts and full time course in semester 1.
3. Dubbo (Western) offering Certificate II, III and IV in ATSI Cultural Arts as part time day courses in semester 1.
4. Lake Cargelligo (Riverina) offering Certificate I and II in ATSI Cultural Arts as part time day course in semester 1
5. Coomealla (Riverina) offering Certificate I and II in ATSI Cultural Arts as full time course
6. Wagga Wagga (Riverina) offering Certificate I in ATSI Cultural Arts in semester 1 through part time day course and flexible delivery (on and off campus, distance and online learning or combination of all).
7. Corowa (Riverina) offering Certificate III in ATSI Cultural Arts as full time course.
8. Wauchope (North Coast) offering Certificate II in ATSI Cultural Arts as part time day course in semester 1.
9. Campbelltown (Sydney Institute) offering Certificate I, II and III in ATSI Cultural Arts as part time day course in semester 1.

Summary is as follows:

Name of campus	Cert I ATSI Arts	Cert II ATSI Arts	Cert III ATSI Arts	Cert IV ATSI Arts
Boggabilla (New England)		√	√	
Moree (New England)		√		
Dubbo (Western)		√	√	√
Lake Cargelligo (Riverina)	√	√		
Coomealla (Riverina)	√	√		
Wagga Wagga (Riverina)	√			
Corowa (Riverina)			√	
Wauchope (North Coast)		√		
Campbelltown (Sydney)	√	√	√	

Note: it is stipulated on the website that courses offered will run only if there is sufficient resources and demand.

RANSW Findings

General findings

Research on TAFE Aboriginal arts courses was conducted in Semester Two of 2009 and Semester One of 2010. In this relatively short period of time it became evident that a meaningful evaluation of TAFE Aboriginal arts training would not be easy for the following reasons:

- Specific Aboriginal programs at TAFE are in a time of change and a state of flux with the Federal Government's priority on employability and educational outcomes and the 'market' now open to a wider range of training providers.
- The arts-specific Certificate courses for ATSI students are not consistently offered from one year to the next and are often discontinued or their content changed. Currently it appears that there are fewer ATSI arts specific Certificate courses on offer than previous years and that the content has become narrower. In 2010 only nine regional campuses were advertised as offering Aboriginal arts-specific courses and not always in communities with a high aboriginal population. This does not, however, project an accurate picture of training and the options available for Aboriginal students at TAFE. Depending on the need, demand and resources in the area, Aboriginal arts students are often absorbed into other courses and undertake a field of study that may be a composite of other courses.
- There is no guarantee that courses advertised are definitely available. This occurred at some of the campuses in the table above but, once again, does not reflect a lack of activity or the availability of other options to Aboriginal arts students.
- There is no guarantee that courses offered actually go ahead. This was consistent across campuses and depends on enrolments, availability of teachers and capacity of the TAFE campus to absorb students into other courses where course content can still be relevant and accredited.
- On the other hand, some courses (or parts of them) are running, despite not appearing on the website as being offered. As above, flexibility in programming allows Institutes to instigate ways of covering course content through other means, whether they are part of a mainstream arts course, other courses with an arts component or, in the field, through community projects.
- Aboriginal courses are often absorbed into mainstream courses and students may 'shift' between Aboriginal and mainstream courses. This was also consistent across campuses. In Moree, Certificate II in ATSI Arts was offered but not taken up. Nevertheless there are a large number of Aboriginal students enrolled in the Certificate in Visual Arts, the Certificate IV and in the Diploma of Fine Arts.
- The transience of teachers in regional and remote areas creates difficulties in collecting information from respondents with a longitudinal perspective of courses at their campus.
- There is considerable variation between campuses regarding
 - Flexibility in delivery of courses
 - Availability and quality of teaching
 - Sensitivity to cultural issues and relevance of material
- Student enrolment, attendance and completion rates vary considerably between campuses and from one year to the next and are a function of many interrelated factors both internal and external to TAFE as well as the nature of the 'arts' as a field of study.
- The reasons for attendance at TAFE are many and varied – some are intrinsically motivated ('love their art') and serious about a qualification and career in art, for others it is a social outlet, and for many it is to comply with requirements of government programs.

In view of the difficulties in and the complexity of obtaining reliable and consistent quantitative data on TAFE training for Aboriginal students over time and communities, this research opted to collect anecdotal data on the effectiveness of TAFE training from a sample of Aboriginal artists, both current and previous students of TAFE, as well as TAFE program coordinators and teachers. This occurred at interviews during field trips across a large proportion of regional NSW (see Maps) between August and December 2009 and included established and emerging Aboriginal artists of varying levels of ability and experience working alone or in a group in a range of different areas from isolated and remote to rural urban and metropolitan areas. Ages ranged from 16 to 70 and included an equal proportion of men and women.

The main issues arising from these interviews across TAFE campuses were

- **Discontinued classes** - even for those courses that were attracting large numbers of aboriginal students. In Semester 2 2009, the Lake Cargelligo campus had eleven students attending an art class at the time of the field visit but the course ceased at the end of 2009 and only re-instated after student protest and representation to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. As above, TAFE courses do not appear to be consistently offered at the same campus from one year to the next and Institutes vary in the degree to which they respond to the fluid and flexible nature of attendance.
- **Irrelevant course material** despite course content descriptions which focus on Aboriginal culture and the importance of cultural context. TAFE teachers vary in their teaching style with some adhering strictly to course content and a particular style of aboriginal art and others providing more leeway and encouraging freedom in artistic cultural expression. For some respondents, obtaining a Certificate was either secondary or irrelevant and they were more interested in advancing skills in their chosen artform or medium rather than completing prescribed material.
- **Inflexible delivery of training** in some campuses regarding course content (as above) and adherence to strict timetables and schedules which do not fit within the work and family responsibilities and obligations of Aboriginal people. This excludes many potential students and ultimately leads to a decline in numbers which in turn impacts on the capacity of the TAFE to continue a course.
- Compliance with the requirements and application of the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) which applies the 20:1 student-teacher ratio to determine financial returns from a course. Courses that do not meet this ratio are deemed unprofitable and hence discontinued. This method disadvantages many from Aboriginal communities who may be interested in undertaking courses but have difficulties attending classes due to lack of access to transport (public or private), seasonal or part-time work, are full-time home partners or carers looking after family member. Some campuses appear to adhere to this Model more rigidly than others. Many absorb these students into mainstream courses (which may or may not cover the Aboriginal cultural component) whilst others, such as the Wodonga TAFE which accepts Albury students, have combined Aboriginal courses, offer more individual supervision, provide a small bus to transport students to and from the campus and allowed home studies with home visits by art teachers. It is acknowledged however that all TAFE campuses may be set up to provide this service especially those that draw on a wide geographic area and cover isolated areas of the state and do not have sufficient resources and teaching staff.
- **Quality of teachers and sensitivity of administrators and teaching staff to cultural issues.** As per all education, teachers are instrumental to students' motivation and learning. The most effective teachers for Aboriginal students are preferably Aboriginal teachers or at least culturally-sensitive teachers with a flexible approach but this may not always occur.

Success stories

There are many examples of TAFE's involvement in projects and initiatives that respond to the local community and engage students in alternative and creative options towards vocational outcomes and accreditation. These generally involve partnerships with community organisations and just a sample of these success stories is as follows:

- In the north of the state, **North Coast Institute of TAFE** through the North Coast Aboriginal Learning Partnerships Program partnered with two Regional Arts Boards in their area, Arts Northern Rivers and Arts Mid North Coast, to run workshops in Great Lakes and Lismore in November 2009 and Taree, Forster and Lismore in February 2010 to gauge interest in running a full time course **Certificate IV in Design**. The course covers Koori Designs at the Great Lakes campus and Goori Designs at the Lismore campus and focuses on Aboriginal Design and Licensing requirements for potential markets such as jewellery, industrial design, landscape art, screen printing, ceramics and graphic design. The workshops attracted a good response from the Aboriginal community with 20 signed up for the Certificate at the Great Lakes campus and 23 at the Lismore campus. In 2010, TAFE has contributed financial assistance and secured additional funding to send five of the best students from each campus on a ten day study tour to Thailand to explore the combination of traditional and contemporary designs.
- The TAFE Outreach Program Coordinators exist within each TAFE Institute and are always responsive to new and innovative ways to engage students and provide valuable 'on the job' experience which is accredited towards their qualification. Slippry Sirkus, a non-profit organisation based in the mid north coast, conducts a range of youth projects and its partnership with Kempsey TAFE provides opportunities for TAFE students to be mentored on projects that give depth to their arts practice and creates pathways to engage in community.
- For the past six years, Riverina TAFE Institute and CSU have collaborated to offer students a pathway to Visual Arts practice through concurrent study towards CSU's Bachelor of Arts (Fine Arts) at both the university and TAFE studio. This combined award is currently available through CSU's Wagga Wagga campus but is being negotiated across other campuses. The University of Wollongong is proposing a similar collaboration with the Illawarra TAFE Institute offering alternative pathways for students that draw on the strength of both institutions.
- TAFE also provides resources for programs to Aboriginals in **corrective institutions and juvenile justice** centres, such as the Lincoln Education and Training Unit in the Orana Juvenile Justice Centre in Dubbo. Individual TAFE teachers also teach arts programs in these institutions as part of either an individual or TAFE contractual arrangement.
- In some communities, TAFE has established strong connections with the local art gallery to promote the work of TAFE arts students. In Moree, a group of Aboriginal students from the TAFE campus have set up the Mehi Murri Art Studio behind the Moree Plains Gallery where visitors can watch as students paint, hear the story behind the artwork and purchase art directly from the artist. In 2009, Wodonga TAFE opened the Eddie 'Kookaburra' Kneebone gallery which was purpose built to display the Koori art students' work for sale to the public and provide them with an opportunity to develop their business skills.
- In consultation with the Griffith Aboriginal community, the Koori Outreach Options for Learning (KOOL) Program was initiated by the Riverina Institute (Griffith campus) to address the needs of 'at risk' Aboriginal youth who struggled to access mainstream educational programs. This program has been running since 2000 and, as well as working towards the attainment of a Certificate I in Access to Work and Training, offers additional support in developing individual life plans, referrals to appropriate agencies, accommodation options and advocacy. The program reports outstanding retention rates and pathways to further education and employment strengthened.
- In the North West, the TAFE New England Institute is one of the partners in a pilot program entitled 'Our Culture Our Place' which involves the development of a cultural education program that can form a central component of the national schools curriculum. The program includes an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and history and an understanding of the relationship between environment and culture.

Challenges for TAFE

One of the main challenges facing TAFE is reconciling the requirements of a large and highly structured bureaucratic training institution with the needs of Aboriginal people across every corner of the state and across a multitude of different professions. As a vocational training institution, TAFE's primary function is to provide training that increases employability, rather than a socialisation venue, meeting place for hobbyists or 'a place to pass the time'. With the current priority of the Federal Government being employment and education outcomes and funding dependent on these being met, TAFE, more than ever before, needs to make economic policy decisions and rationalise its courses to compete with independent training organisations in a more fluid 'market'. This accountability to government may not always reconcile with accountability to community especially for an institution such as TAFE about which long and lingering perceptions exist.

Arguably TAFE is the training institution that is most effected by changes in the external environment but is expected to adapt accordingly and to cater for the needs of students that do not 'fit' elsewhere. **When government regulations change, it impacts on TAFE. In 2010 the government legislation and requirement that youth remain at school, attend TAFE or be employed has led to an increase in numbers enrolling in TAFE courses. When industry increases in a particular region or community and training for employment is required, TAFE adapts and offers courses and apprenticeships that develop relevant skills.**

Maintaining consistency and relevance across courses and over time is an ongoing problem for TAFE, particularly in regional areas where consistently attracting enrolments in arts courses is more difficult. The Head of Aboriginal Programs at one TAFE Institute commented that there are either 'big numbers or no numbers' and that 'art is a funny thing' in that it is integral to the culture of Aboriginal people yet is not perceived as a career out of which they can make a living and preferring to opt for courses that increase employability.

This, however, may prove counterproductive. Attendance at TAFE arts courses is motivated not only by the desire to pursue art as a career but for its healing powers and its importance in social and emotional well-being. Arts courses can be the avenue in which Aboriginal students enter tertiary education and build the confidence to embark on more advanced courses and alternative streams.

Generally it appears that specific Aboriginal art TAFE courses are declining and being replaced, in varying degrees, with more creative and innovative initiatives designed to attract greater participation of Aboriginal students. Within the framework of the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, there appears to be a shift in thinking with Institutes adopting a more creative approach and developing initiatives often in partnership with other organisations and agencies in the region.

The considerable variation between individual campuses is a function of capacity to adapt to local needs which, in turn, is a function of the ability to attract and retain teachers and administrators, who are culturally-sensitive and creative and lateral thinkers in their approach to attracting and retaining Aboriginal students. Some Institutes have discontinued Aboriginal courses completely but instigated alternative initiatives. Others are outcome-focused towards careers including health, police and education but still maintain a strong cultural component. Many are battling to meet the demands of community yet still be competitive for funding and able to rationalise resources without compromising the quality of teaching.

As a large bureaucracy TAFE has systems and regulations that facilitate its operations across the state but, in small, isolated regional areas, rigid systems and upholding of strict regulations can be counter productive and, ironically, impact on areas of most need. The value of TAFE as a meeting place and socialisation venue, particularly for the transfer of cultural knowledge, is acknowledged but this may often compete with its focus on strong vocational education outcomes and the reality that decisions based on economic viability often need to be made. It also should be noted that in many of the more remote regions, Aboriginal students have attained TAFE qualifications but there are no employment opportunities in their communities. Development of Aboriginal arts businesses may offer a pathway to employment for these artists.

Community Education Colleges

Community Education Colleges also work within the framework provided through DET's **Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, 2009 - 2012** to develop their own plans appropriate to their local needs.

The Community Colleges sector delivers accredited vocational education training to hundreds of thousands of people each year. As well as operating in the vocational education sphere the colleges also offer non-accredited training, lifestyle and leisure courses. Delivery of community education is undertaken at the grass roots local level and the colleges in the past have mainly operated within state based organisations. The establishment of Community Colleges Australia recognises the need for an integrated national delivery system.

The nation's Community Colleges, from a position embedded in their local community, share a commitment to the support of the people as well as other not-for-profit organisations where they are located. The vision for Community Colleges Australia includes the enhancement and strengthening of delivery of quality community education throughout the nation.

In NSW, there are eight main regions with colleges located in each region:

1. Northern Rivers – Byron Region (Mullumbimby) and Grafton Regional Colleges and Byron ACE (Lismore)
2. Mid North Coast – Camden Haven, Coffs Coast, Forster Tuncurry, Macleay Valley, Nambucca Valley, Port Macquarie, Taree and Wauchope ACE.
3. Northern Inland – Bingara Adult Learning Association, Community College – Northern Inland (Barraba), Gunnedah ACE, Guyra Adult Learning Association, Tamworth Community College and Tenterfield ACE.
4. Hunter and Central Coast – Central Coast Community College (Ourimah), Hunter Community College (Broadmeadow), Singleton Community College, Tomaraee Community College (Nelson Bay), Tuggerah Lakes Community College and WEA (Workers Education Association) Hunter (Newcastle)
5. South East – Eurobodalla Adult Education Centre (Batemans Bay), Far South Coast Community College (Bega), Kiama Community College, Southern Region Community College (Goulburn) and WEA Illawarra (Wollongong).
6. Inner West – Albury Wodonga Continuing Education Centre, Central West Community College (Bathurst), Riverina Community College (Wagga Wagga), South East Community College (Bomaderry) and Western College of Adult Education (Dubbo).
7. Greater South West – Griffith Adult Learning Association and Robinson College (Broken Hill)
8. Sydney – 14 colleges spread across the Sydney metropolitan area.

Community Colleges are less bound by the constraints associated with large bureaucratic institutions and provide a combination of vocational training and other 'hobbyist' courses that are strongly community-based and responsive to community needs. Although TAFE will always be the major provider of vocational training, the flexibility and capacity for Community Colleges to respond quickly to community needs puts them in a sound position in which to offer customised courses to Aboriginal groups and individuals.

Community Colleges were not researched in detail but they are providing an alternative option to TAFE which is worth fostering. They have been contracted by Correctional Institutions and Juvenile Justice Centres to provide art classes. In Kiama, the Community College worked closely with Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art and Culture studio in Gerringong on the NSW south coast to develop courses that suited the needs of the more advanced artists. These artists had already completed arts and teaching qualifications through TAFE and required skills development in online teleconferencing in order to progress the online training program offered as a service through the Studio. The Kiama College was able to develop a customised course for the group and is an example of the possibilities available through this channel.

Universities

The Federal Government is committed to administering programs that are aimed at increasing Indigenous participation in higher education, encouraging greater Indigenous involvement in higher education policy development and providing additional financial assistance to higher education institutions to improve

outcomes for Indigenous people. All major universities in NSW have developed Indigenous Education Strategies and established Indigenous Units to implement these strategies.

Statistics available on the DEEWR website relating to the commencement and completion of courses for Indigenous students between 2001 and 2008 do not indicate any significant growth in any field of University study, except for Education. Most Award Course completions are for Society and Culture, followed by Education then Health with Creative Arts comprising 7.2% of the total course completions.

In 2008, the highest number of enrolments of Indigenous students at NSW universities was at the University of Newcastle (16.3% of total NSW enrolments), followed by Charles Sturt University (12.1%), University of Sydney (11.7%), University of Western Sydney (10.2%) and University of Technology Sydney (9.7%). Of the remaining regional universities, the University of New England comprised 9.7% of the total enrolments, Southern Cross University 8.5% and the University of Wollongong 4.7%.

In terms of completion of courses for Indigenous students, the highest number was at the University of Sydney ((17% of total NSW), followed by the University of Newcastle (13.2%), Charles Sturt University (11.6%), the University of Technology Sydney (10.9%) and University of Western Sydney (9.3%). The University of Wollongong comprised 6.8% and both Southern Cross University and University of New England 5.5%.

There are ten major universities in NSW as follows:

1. **Charles Sturt University** (CSU) has eight campuses based in Albury, Bathurst, Canberra, Dubbo, Goulburn, Orange, Parramatta and Wagga Wagga. CSU offers degree programs on campus and by distance education, for domestic and international students, at undergraduate, honours, postgraduate (coursework) and postgraduate (research) levels.
 - a. The **School of Visual and Performing Arts** is based at Wagga Wagga and offers Bachelor of Arts Degrees specialising in Acting for Screen and Stage, Design for Theatre and Television, Television Production, Graphic Design, Animation and Visual Effects, Multimedia arts, Photography and Jewellery. The Bachelor of Arts (Fine Arts) is offered as a combined award with Riverina Institute of TAFE and the prerequisite is completion of the TAFE Certificate IV in Visual Arts or the Diploma of Fine Art or Advanced Diploma. Fine Art is about making artworks to communicate ideas, thoughts or feelings. Artists' works may be realistic, stylized, or abstract and may depict objects, people, the natural world or events. Students study Drawing, Painting, Printmaking, Illustration, Multimedia, Photography, Graphic Design, Jewellery or Set and Costume Design subjects for Theatre and TV as well as Art History and visual culture subjects to relate their studio work to the wider world of visual arts practice. Aboriginal students can study on-campus or by distance Education.
 - b. The **School of Communication** is based at Bathurst and offers Bachelor of Communication Degrees in Advertising, Commercial Radio, Public Relations, Organisational Communication, Journalism, Theatre /Media
 - c. CSU has developed a comprehensive **Indigenous Education Strategy** aimed at aligning with national Indigenous Education policies and with attention to the recruitment and support of Indigenous students, the recruitment, support and promotion of Indigenous staff and the building and strengthening of Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Research .
 - i. The **Centre for Indigenous Studies** has been established at the Dubbo campus, an area which has one of the highest populations of Indigenous people outside the Northern Territory, to develop and monitor the implementation of the Indigenous Education Strategy. Within the 2009 – 2010 Operational Plan for the Centre are the delivery of a range of subjects including Aboriginal culture, spirituality and contemporary issues and realities, curriculum guidelines to support the inclusion of Indigenous content in undergraduate programs, development and delivery of a road show on the application of a culturally competent pedagogical framework, an outreach and marketing program, ongoing research and exploration of articulation pathways between the Vocational Education sector (VET) and CSU.

- ii. CSU also has **Indigenous Students Services** providing support services and student facilities for Aboriginal students – *Ngungilanna* in Wagga Wagga, *Winan Gidyal* in Albury, *Wammarra* in Bathurst and *Barramielinga* in Dubbo.
 - iii. The **Koori Admissions Program (KAP)** also offers an alternative Admission program for ATSI people interested in going to university whereby potential students are offered the opportunity to stay at the University for a few days as the basis for a possible offer of enrolment. Costs are covered by the Department of Education, Science and Training.
 - d. Other initiatives
 - i. CSU has supported Aboriginal artists from Junee Correctional Facility by exhibiting their works at the Wagga Wagga campus gallery. The first was held in 2008 and the University have made a request for a second exhibition.
 - ii. The Wagga Wagga campus is pursuing an active program to promote visual and performing arts as another pathway to professional development for Aboriginal artists.
 - iii. The Agreement between CSU and the Riverina Institute of TAFE whereby students can study concurrently at the University and at TAFE towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts is currently only offered through the Wagga Wagga campus but being negotiated across other campuses.
2. **Southern Cross University (SCU)** has campuses in Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Gold Coast / Tweed Heads and Sydney.
- a. The Lismore campus offers a Bachelor of Visual Arts, Bachelor of Media, Bachelor of Contemporary Music and Associate Degree of Creative Writing. The **Bachelor of Visual Arts** focuses on contemporary art practice, offering theory and studio based study in Arts Industry/Technology and Arts Industry/Media Arts, with specialisations in painting, printmaking and 3 dimensional studies, supported by minor strand studies in digital art and design, drawing, photography, and art theory. Core studies in first semester provide experience in the broad range of studio options for all students followed by a selection of specialisations in continuing semesters, while providing substantial flexibility to move between studio areas. The university's 'Next Art Gallery' complements the studio studies with an art industry interface, offering gallery and curatorial experience to participating students.
 - b. SCU has developed a comprehensive **Indigenous Education Statement** which outlines its objectives and commitments to improving higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians. It adopts a broad based, flexible and highly consultative approach and includes “supportive alternative entry pathways into higher education, student scholarship opportunities, student mentoring and involvement and input from the local, national and Indigenous community” (SCU Indigenous Education Statement, part 4). It has embedded Indigenous perspectives into strategic plans and equity and diversity documents with the intention of building the numbers and prospects of Indigenous staff and students. The College’s 2009 – 2013 Plan is the foundation of SCU’s efforts to improve higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians.
 - c. At SCU, Aboriginal students are supported by the **Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples**. The College is a multifaceted educational and research institution established in 2003 with separate and interrelated functions –
 - i. a Keeping Place for the safe protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property including the custodian responsibility of a collection from the former North Coast Aboriginal Institute for Aboriginal Community Education
 - ii. an Indigenous Student Support Centre offering a Tutorial Assistance Scheme, Academic and IT Support, pastoral care, counselling, student facilities, promotional visits to Aboriginal communities, high schools, TAFEs and the wider community, involvement in NAIDOC week and other Aboriginal cultural events
 - iii. a School of Indigenous Studies delivering both undergraduate and postgraduate courses and a focus on trauma and healing. Gnibi has the reputation of delivering some of the best Indigenous study programs in Australia.

- iv. a Community and Professional Multiskilling program in partnership with relevant government departments, agencies and community organisations to develop and deliver a variety of accredited community based educational training packages to meet critical needs within Indigenous communities.
 - v. A Collaborative Indigenous Research Centre for Learning and Educare (CIRCLE) in partnership with a number of Cooperative Research Centres and other universities.
 - vi. Indigenous applicants are invited to attend a Testing and Assessment program at Southern Cross University. A 12 week Foundation Program is also available to Indigenous students to help them acquire the skills necessary for tertiary study.
3. **University of New England (UNE)** was the first Australian university established outside a capital city and is based in Armidale in the north of the state.
- a. **Arts courses** at UNE include the Bachelor of Theatre Studies and Master of Applied Business Studies, Bachelor of Music and Master of Arts (writing major)
 - b. The **Ooralá Aboriginal Centre** is a study support and advisory centre for internal and external ATSI students studying through UNE. They offer academic advice, tutorial assistance, a computer room, a resource library, tutorial rooms and a student common room. The Centre also runs the multi-award-winning tertiary preparation program, TRACKS, and the Alternative Entry Program, ISP. The TRACKS tertiary preparation program offers flexible learning, first hand experience in university study and entry to UNE undergraduate awards on successful completion of the program. The TRACKS program has been developed to provide an opportunity for ATSI students to access and explore tertiary education and to make informed choices about the direction of their education. So far over 400 students have accessed the program many of whom have gone on to undergraduate studies at UNE, other tertiary institutions or have chosen to pursue careers through the TAFE system. ISP is an alternative entry program for ATSI students wishing to access higher education at the UNE. During the two-day testing and assessment workshop held on-campus in Armidale, candidates research and prepare an essay, answering a question from an area of study related to their proposed undergraduate enrolment and complete a number of short tests. Candidates also attend an interview conducted by Ooralá representatives.
4. The **University of Wollongong (UOW)** is an international, research intense university with a campus in Wollongong and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.
- a. UOW offers graduate and postgraduate courses across nine faculties in Arts and the Humanities, Business and Commerce, Creative Arts / Performance, Engineering, Health Sciences, Indigenous Studies, Information Technology, Law, Mathematics, Nursing, Science and Education.
 - b. **Woolyungah Indigenous Centre** sits within UOW's Academic Services Division. It was established in 1982 and adopted its current name in 2005. Besides its core business of supporting Indigenous students to undertake high quality education, including the development of curriculum for Indigenous programs, the unit's broad objectives are to forge partnerships with ATSI communities and organisations, become a regional, national and international focal point for research and provide consultancy services and specialist advice in all areas of ATSI expertise. Woolyungah has a close relationship with the Wollongong City Gallery.
 - c. **Indigenous Studies (INDS)** is an interdisciplinary major which links together a number of INDS subjects as well as subjects offered by the Faculties of Arts, Creative Arts, Education, Law, Science and Health and Behavioural Sciences, to provide Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students with a coherent program in the study of Aboriginal Australia.
 - d. Woolyungah Indigenous Centre was a 2010 grant recipient for a project entitled '**Art for Country: contemporary Aboriginal arts from the NSW South Coast**' to assist with the engagement of a regionally based Indigenous research assistant and up to 3 senior artists to facilitate consultations

with South Coast Aboriginal communities towards the production of a book highlighting contemporary Aboriginal art in the NSW South Coast.

- e. The Woolyungah Indigenous Centre is also partnering with TAFE to develop a degree course that combines the more academic slant of University with the studio space of TAFE. This proposal is currently on hold until the appointment of the University's new Director of Indigenous Programs.
5. The **University of Newcastle** has a Faculty of Education and Arts incorporating School of Drama, Fine Art and Music, School of Education, School of Humanities and Social Science and the Wollotuka School of Aboriginal Studies.
- a. The **Wollotuka School of Aboriginal Studies** is designed to consolidate all Indigenous activities of Newcastle University into one operational and strategic body in order to serve the University's strategic priority and commitment to Indigenous Collaboration. The four functions of the Institute incorporate *Academic, Research, Indigenous Student Support and Development* and *Indigenous Staff Employment and Development*. The Institute supports the most comprehensive range of Indigenous programs in Australia through the influence of the complete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching, research and administrative staff who manage all the programs through the Institute. On the Callaghan campus the Institute is housed in a uniquely designed learning space, the Birabahn building, which was developed to incorporate aspects of Indigenous practices and culture to present staff, students and community with a warm familiar environment. The design of the building incorporates the motifs of the Eaglehawk, a primary totem of the Awabakal nation. Wollotuka offers Indigenous Cultural Studies, Indigenous Education, Indigenous History, Indigenous Health and the Yapug ATSI Enabling Program which assists ATSI students to gain skills for entry into undergraduate degrees at Newcastle University. Fine Art and Design (Architecture) are a small component of the Education, Arts, Social Sciences and Design pathway.
 - b. On the Central Coast campus at Ourimbah the Institute is housed in the **Gibalee Aboriginal Learning Centre** which was established in July 1999 but merged with the University's Wollotuka School of Aboriginal Studies to extend its capacity to provide a quality service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Central Coast campus is multisectoral offering programs from the Central Coast Community College, TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute and the University of Newcastle.
 - c. The University of Newcastle has a commitment to encourage and support ATSI students across a variety of programs including:
 - i. **Yapug** (as above) - a program designed to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gain skills for entry into University degrees.
 - ii. **Indigenous Health and Education Unit** - dedicated to Aboriginal health research. Approximately 50 percent of Australia's Indigenous medical students currently enrolled are studying at the University of Newcastle.
 - iii. **Umulliko Indigenous Higher Education Centre** - supporting Indigenous research higher degree students across a broad range of disciplines.

The University of Western Sydney, University of NSW, University of Technology Sydney, University of Sydney and Macquarie University are the major universities in Sydney all of which have extensive programs at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Through specialised Units / Schools / Centres, they offer support services to Aboriginal students enrolled at the university, facilitate an alternative entry program aimed at providing access for Indigenous people to undergraduate courses across the University, promote Indigenous Studies within the University and commit to improving ATSI education (recruitment, retention and graduation) outcomes and undertaking high quality research and advocacy of issues of concern to the Indigenous community. The College of Fine Arts (CoFA) of the University of NSW currently provides arts advisors and leases printmaking equipment to the Papunya artists in the Central Desert and is exploring a similar option in Wilcannia through its facility at Fowlers Gap, north east of Wilcannia. Printmaking is one of CoFA's speciality artforms as well as one of the most prevalent artforms at the Wilcannia Arts Centre.

Other training and professional development

Aside from the formal training institutions, training and professional development opportunities abound through a diverse range of other avenues which are community-initiated and developed in response to community need. Although these initiatives are generally not accredited courses, they are a very powerful and effective means of skills development in that they are locally-determined and not 'top down' imposed initiatives. This ensures their relevance and increases their sustainability due to the community's sense of ownership and associated commitment to 'making it work'.

These additional training and professional development options play a significant role and offer invaluable support on a number of different levels after the attainment of arts qualifications at TAFE and / or University.

Regional Arts Boards

Regional Arts Boards are independent arts organisations which deliver regional arts programs with funding assistance from the state government through Arts NSW and contributions from local government areas in their region (see Maps). There are thirteen Regional Arts Boards across New South Wales each with its own Strategic Plan relating to the delivery of a service and arts program that responds to the needs and issues of the region. Part of this service is the development of training programs and professional development opportunities for artists and arts organisations in the region and these generally have the added benefit of providing individuals and organisations with invaluable networking and peer and professional support.

Some examples of the initiatives instigated by Regional Arts Boards are as follows:

- Arts Northern Rivers and Arts Mid North Coast have partnered with the North Coast TAFE (see TAFE Success Stories on page 25) to present the Certificate IV in Design, offered in 2010, at the Lismore and Great Lakes campuses.
- Through Arts Northern Rivers' Indigenous Arts Business Centre '3 Rivers Aboriginal Art Space' Project, a program of workshops, forums and activities are offered (and will continue to be offered) to assist artists with their professional and business development. Current workshops include 'Using the right materials', 'Pricing', 'Working with Galleries and retail outlets' and 'How the Indigenous art market works'. Through this project, artists in the Northern Rivers also receive professional development through participation in art exhibitions, organisation of their own exhibitions and brokering for marketing of Aboriginal art in private commercial galleries. Our recent initiative is the Aboriginal Creative Visual Arts Cluster whereby representatives from the arts and manufacturing industries and distribution will identify potential networks and products for market development. The cluster will play an important role in mentoring emerging Aboriginal 'inspirationists', assisting them to become 'market ready' and lead to the establishment of business networks to achieve competitive advantage in national and international markets. (ANR News, April 2010)
- Arts Mid North Coast *Foundations of Our Future* Strategy also has a strong commitment to ongoing training. Aside from the considerable input of Arts Mid North Coast's Regional Aboriginal Cultural Development Officer to the development of the TAFE Certificate in Design course, the Strategy contains a number of training opportunities for artists in the region, including weaving classes that were held over nine communities in 2009 and, in 2010, the continuation of these workshops but with a focus on 'train-the-trainer' workshops. Arts Mid North Coast's also developed and implemented *The BuildingBlox : Developing the Mid North Coast Visual Arts and Crafts Industry Project* which involved forums and workshops to assist visual artists and craftspeople in the region to develop their professional practice and improve opportunities in getting their work into the marketplace.
- Over the past five years, West Darling Arts established the Wilcannia Arts Centre as the cultural hub of the town. Through its program of three residencies per year in 2006, 2007 and 2008, nine artists lived in Wilcannia and worked in the Arts Centre, almost 800 individual participants were taught painting, sculpture, lino prints, printmaking, weaving and working with textiles and the Centre was used on a daily basis for art production. In 2007 West Darling Arts negotiated a partnership with the Western Institute of

TAFE (Broken Hill campus) to run their Aboriginal Cultural Studies Certificate course at the Arts Centre with the course commencing in August 2007 for four days a week with 18 students enrolled. An exhibition was held in Broken Hill each year of the three year program and, in 2009, at Hazelhurst Gallery in Sydney. The residency program was followed up with a two year mentorship program with many of the artists involved in the artist-in-residency program currently being mentored by renowned artists Badger Bates and working towards the creation of a 'Wilcannia style' that embodies the Paakantji culture and land. Currently, however, the building that was used as the Arts Centre is no longer habitable and there is a need for a new purpose-built building.

- Outback Arts' *Connecting Marks and Country* project involves a month long workshop program in the communities and schools of each of six local government areas in the Far West region in the latter half of 2009 and beginning of 2010. All the participants work with an artist using research on traditional and local Aboriginal designs and patterns collected from the Powerhouse and the Australian Museum. The aim of the project is to facilitate the transformation of local traditional Indigenous art making practices, whether they be painting, mark making or ritual, into contemporary images. At the end of 2009, the program had taken place in Warren, Cobar and Coonamble / Gulargabone and involved 82 workshops, approximately 300 participants and the creation of over 1700 artworks.
- Murray Arts in Albury Wodonga has conducted Business Skills Workshops for Aboriginal artists and assisted the Albury City Council in developing a proposal for an Indigenous Needs Assessment whereby a consultant will be engaged to address the needs of Indigenous people in relation to sustaining arts practice within the region. The Assessment will identify the barriers to the development of arts practice as well as broader participation in arts and cultural programs.
- Arts OutWest in the Central West is currently developing a strategic approach towards supporting the vibrant, yet fragmented, Aboriginal arts activity in the region. Various organisations, agencies and individuals have instigated successful arts programs, especially in the Lachlan Valley area of Lake Cargelligo, Murrin Bridge and Peak Hill but this work is not sustainable without ongoing support and resources.

Regional Galleries

Regional Galleries provide invaluable opportunities for artists to gain experience in exhibiting their work, be mentored by professional gallery staff and gain practical skills in curatorship and the various operations of galleries. There are approximately 40 art galleries in NSW with three regional galleries located in the Northern Rivers (Murwillumbah, Lismore and Grafton), three in Mid North Coast (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Taree), three in the North West (Moree, Armidale and Tamworth), three in the Central West (Bathurst, Orange and Cowra) and galleries in Albury, Bega, Broken Hill, Cessnock, Dubbo, Goulburn, Griffith, Maitland, Muswellbrook and Wagga Wagga. Many have developed strategies aimed at encouraging Aboriginal artists to access and be involved in the gallery and all are interested in exhibiting Aboriginal art including the touring of the NSW Parliament Indigenous Arts Prize.

Some examples of initiatives undertaken by Regional Galleries are as follows:

- The Manning Regional Art Gallery in Taree has an ongoing strategy to engage Indigenous communities and artists. In 2006, as part of this strategy, they facilitated a project involving aboriginal and non-aboriginal artists working together to creating sculptures depicting 3 brothers (mountains) in the area. The sculptures were installed in the main street of Taree and the project was continually overseen by the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.
- The Griffith Regional Art Gallery, guided by the Griffith Community Action Plan, is actively promoting Aboriginal art through exhibitions and workshops and, during the field trip of this research project, was supporting an Aboriginal artist's curatorial training in Sydney.

- Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery has a twelve month internship program for an Aboriginal trainee which is supported by Council, TAFE and West State training and is now into its third year of operation, with two trainees already completing the program. The program involves three days a week at the Gallery, one day at the Mineral Museum and one day at TAFE and has resulted in, amongst many other positive outcomes, the development of the Emerging Artists Aboriginal Art Prize.
- Through funding assistance from Housing NSW, the Western Plains Cultural Centre has recently appointed an Aboriginal intern for a six month period with the possibility of continuing the program for one year through matched funding from a job placement agency. The main part of the internship program involves intensive training in all aspects of the Centre's functions including front of house, collections, and the curatorial and education arm of operations.
- The Moree Plains Gallery has one of the most extensive Aboriginal art collections in regional NSW. The Gallery's education program includes art classes for Kamilaroi children and students at the Moree TAFE campus, especially local aboriginal students, use the Gallery workshops daily and have formed the Mehi Murri Art Studio where they can practice and sell their artwork.
- The Cessnock Regional Art Gallery is currently engaged in a project involving the development of artworks which, through oral history, archeological research and anecdotal evidence, explore the culture, stories and lives of the original Hunter Valley inhabitants. Local Indigenous artists Les Elvin and Lesley Sale will meet with local artists and elders to inform the works, to be exhibited at the Gallery in 2010, followed by a community forum, story-telling and outreach program.

Community Mentors

Community mentoring has always played a significant role in developing the arts skills of young Aboriginals and, more importantly, in imparting cultural knowledge of creation stories, laws, traditions and spirituality – all of which make Aboriginal art unique.

There is no doubt of the value of mentoring in developing a range of different skills but research into its effectiveness is difficult due to the language around and varying interpretations of its practice. Mentoring can be informal or formal, organised and managed or ad hoc and on a 'needs' basis. Many individuals artists such as Les Elvin from Cessnock and Milton Budge in Kempsey have mentored emerging artists and, across the board, mentoring is regarded as a highly effective mechanism of professional development.

- In 2009 and 2010, West Darling Arts is running a mentoring program at Wilcannia Arts Centre with well-known artist and Wilcannia resident Badger Bates mentoring emerging Aboriginal artists in printmaking, painting, drawing and sculpture with works exhibited at Hazelhurst Gallery in Sydney in late 2009.
- Mentoring was also part of Arts Northern Rivers 'Mens Business', an exhibition representing the interpretation of land, culture and Aboriginal spirituality through the eyes of local male artists, young and old, established and emerging. In the lead-up to the exhibition at Ballina Gallery in December 2009, Fingal Heads sculptor Garth Lena – winner of numerous awards including the 2006 NSW Indigenous Art Prize – worked closely with fellow Tweed shire artist Lenny Noteo. Evans Head-based artist Oral Laurie was mentored by his father Oral Roberts and said the experience has taught him about the 'clever and healthy' traditional side to his father's life. Oral said that he believes his father's paintings 'gather it all up and turn it into art' with individual works reflecting what he has been told by his dad and uncles. 'Men's Business' was also curated by a panel of first-time Indigenous curators working with Arts Northern Rivers' Indigenous Arts Development Officer, Frances Belle Parker.
- In 2008, Regional Arts NSW and Arts Northern Rivers worked together to develop a strategy aimed at increasing the capacity of a Casino-based arts organisation, Jambama Artists to be more competitive in applying for grants, increasing its profile and generally becoming more 'savvy' in its approach to promoting and marketing its work. A mentoring arrangement was considered the most effective strategy whereby the Visual Arts Network Coordinator at Arts Northern Rivers and then the Indigenous Arts Development Officer worked closely with the Jambama Artists over almost a twelve month period in 2008

– with some outstanding results. In a short period of time the group had their own exhibition at the Northern Rivers Community Gallery and participated in the Year of the Apology Exhibition, were successful in their applications for two grants and were connected into the network of gallery directors. A Jambama artist was one of only 12 artists selected from across Australia to have work featured in the Oxfam calendar with cards to be sold across Australia and all Oxfam outlets and the work of two Jambama artists were selected to be part of a coffee table book *Special Kind of Vision* compiled by Arts Northern Rivers.

Correctional Institutions / Juvenile Justice Centres

There are over 30 Correctional Centres across NSW and nine community care Juvenile Justice Centres (Wagga Wagga, Grafton, Dubbo, Wollongong, two in Gosford, Penrith, Campbelltown and Parramatta). Each Centre caters for a different clientele with inmates from different regions, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and varying terms of detention. This research included visits to the Bathurst and Junee Correctional Centres and the Wagga Wagga and Dubbo Juvenile Justice Centres. Most of the centres have arts classes but depended on resources and number of willing participants with participation voluntary. There was considerable variation between centres in regard to skill level and style of artwork with much depending on the tutors available, whether TAFE or a Community College or individual artists, and the opportunities and outlet for their work.

The Girrawaa Creative Work Centre at Bathurst Correctional Centre is a purpose built centre with a framing business and outlets for its work through painting dots on boomerangs and paintings exhibited at the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery.

The Lincoln Education and Training Unit in the Orana Juvenile Justice Centre in Dubbo caters for 30 students but averages new enrolments of up to 279 students each year with 95% Aboriginal drawn from a large area from Walgett to Bourke. It offers a positive learning environment with individualised education and training plans and the opportunity to achieve positive educational and vocational outcomes, including in various artforms. Art is perceived as ‘a way to pass the time’ and suffers from a lack of outlets and support after leaving detention.

Not-for-profit organisations

There are many community not-for-profit organisations that conduct arts classes in response to community need and demand. They include church organisations, land councils, charitable organisations, community health services, family support services, Community and Neighbourhood Centres and arts organisations. In many cases, these programs complement core businesses and reflect the significance of the arts as a tool in addressing many community, economic, social and health issues.

- The Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art and Culture Studio conducts a workshop program both in-house, at schools and in the wider community and has an online cultural menu whereby visitors can have a unique online internet experience with an artist or cultural worker in areas such as cultural awareness, weaving, painting, drawing, bush foods, toolmaking, dance, storytelling. The group has toured to many other regions (Mid North Coast, West Darling, Central West, Arnhem Land, Papunya in Central Desert) to teach and exchange skills, particularly in weaving and has a strong focus cross generational programs and cultural apprenticeships. This organisation developed from the vision and dream of Kelli Ryan and nine Aboriginal arts students in her TAFE course and is now considered a key Aboriginal organisation with a high state, national and international profile, strong commitment to the passing on of cultural knowledge and an active outreach program.
- In the Central West, Centacare Wilcannia-Forbes primary mission is to provide support for disadvantaged families. It commenced the Three Rivers Art Project in Lake Cargelligo as part of its work with women suffering mental health problems and used art “.. to help facilitate the building of capacity for social and emotional well being in Aboriginal families and communities”. Whilst art was used as a therapeutic tool, the quality of art was such that several of the participants were invited to exhibit at a Sydney art gallery

and much of the work sold at the exhibition launch in Lake Cargelligo. The program has contributed to an evolving Aboriginal art hub in the Lachlan Valley, connecting artists in Lake Cargelligo, Peak Hill and Murrin Bridge. The coordinator's position has discontinued in 2010.



Untitled artwork by Monica Johnson (Lake Cargelligo)

- Slippry Sirkus is based in the Mid North Coast and is an incorporated, not-for-profit community based and youth focussed organisation that integrates visual arts, dance, theatre, circus, film, music, digital technology, and celebration to promote arts and engage with community. It offers mentoring and training to emerging artists, community workers, service providers and youth services and provides opportunities to work at a grass roots level alongside Slippry Sirkus artists in a skill exchange that provides practical 'hands on' experience in community cultural development and arts engagement practices. The group's partnerships with TAFE have provided training for TAFE students, enriched by the support of TAFE with 'on the ground' mentoring. Slippry Sirkus is currently working with TAFE to build an enterprise program around graphic design and screen printing based on the successful 'Kooris in the Hood' project which works with young people to design and screenprint 'Hoodies' and other fashionable items. Kempsey TAFE are also accrediting the mentoring of a young emerging Dunghutti artist is working with Slippry Sirkus on a current project in Bellbrook and Bellbrook mission.

Government Programs

Research conducted by Regional Arts NSW in early 2009 highlighted a number of state and federal government programs that provide business skills development opportunities for Aboriginal artists and arts organisations.

Through its Aboriginal Business Development program, NSW Industry and Development provides a range of services to meet the needs of Aboriginal enterprises, including seminars and workshops as well as opportunities to work with a business consultant to implement and develop growth strategies, achieve business goals, develop a marketing plan or design a website. Indigenous Business Australia also brokers access to commercial sources of funds, skills and other business support for new and existing businesses.

The NSW Department of Education and Training administers a number of programs to assist Aboriginal people with career choices. This includes the New Careers for Aboriginal People (NCAP) service which matches individuals with potential employers, business groups and training providers and the Aboriginal Enterprise Development Officer program with officers in a number of centres offering direct assistance and broker business support.

The Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) which ceased operation in non-remote areas in July 2009 and will cease in remote areas as from June 2011, has been the training ground for many Aboriginal artists and the catalyst for many successful Indigenous enterprises including arts and tourism ventures. At this stage it is too early to assess the impact of the reforms to this program and the Indigenous Employment Program although mentoring and training are a significant component of the new programs.

Grants, Fellowships, Prizes, Residencies

There are a number of other opportunities for emerging and accomplished artists to advance their careers and develop their skills through various grants, fellowships, Art Prizes and Residencies available through different funding sources.

The Australia Council for the Arts' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board offers the following opportunities:

- Skills and Arts Development grants for artists and organisations supporting mentorship programs, arts workshops, professional development opportunities , conferences, seminars or planning and development programs;
- A two or three-month residency at the Albers Foundation studios in Connecticut, USA offered to an Indigenous artist each year;
- Fellowships which provide recognised ATSI artists with financial support to develop a major creative project or program;
- the Red Ochre Award which honours an eminent artist who has made an outstanding lifelong contribution to the recognition of Indigenous arts in Australia and around the world;
- Artists in Work initiative that aims to develop a sustainable Indigenous workforce in the arts through a series of traineeships, cadetships, secondments and general placements;
- The ArtStart program which provides support to recent creative arts graduates to fund services, resources, skills development and equipment that help them build an income-generating career in their arts practice.

Funding for grants and initiatives through the Australia Council is competitive with few going to NSW visual artists over the past two years.

Skills development is a strong component of projects funded through the Regional Arts Fund, a grants program administered in NSW by Regional Arts NSW with funding from the Australian Government Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts. Grants for individual artists to take up professional development opportunities that arise at short notice are available through the Quick Response grant program. This is a small grant but has enabled Aboriginal artists from Wilcannia to attend the BLACK2BLAK Conference in Campbelltown, artists from Euraba Paper in Boggabilla to attend an International Papermaking Conference in Tasmania and weavers from the Northern Rivers to attend the Garma Festival in Northern Territory.

The NSW Parliament Indigenous Arts Prize was established in 2005 and is a partnership between Campbelltown Arts Centre and the Parliament of NSW and support from Arts NSW. \$20,000 is awarded annually and three out of the five previous winners – Esme Timbery, Milton Budge and Danny Eastwood – were self-taught and inspired by cultural traditions handed down by their ancestors.

A second award, the College of Fine Art’s Professional Development Award provides opportunities for the successful Aboriginal artist to develop their profession through a short intensive two-week artist-in-residence with a recognised artist in any artform and solo exhibition at CoFA’s Gallery.



“The vein of our existence” by Frances Belle-Parker, winner of CoFA Professional Development Award, 2007 NSW Indigenous Art Prize

The Indigenous Arts Prizes, both statewide and regional, attract a good response from Aboriginal artists but this is not the case for grants which is obviously more unfamiliar territory and accompanied with requirements and conditions which can be overwhelming and time-consuming.

5. Discussion of Findings

This research set out to scope the range of training and professional development opportunities available to Aboriginal artists and to explore their effectiveness. It covered a range of artists including those self-taught with no training, TAFE and University graduates and a few with post-graduate qualifications. It explored the courses available through TAFE, Community Colleges, University and programs offered through Regional Arts Boards, Regional Art Galleries, community organisations, Correctional Institutions and government programs.

The following represents an overview of findings and issues arising. A summary of the findings and recommendations is included in Section 6 of this report.

- There is certainly no shortage of policies and strategies, frameworks and benchmarks that ensure Aboriginal education is high on the agenda, that courses are culturally, vocationally and educationally appropriate, that Aboriginal people are engaged in the development of courses and that Aboriginal students are supported and assisted. This is a concerted and concentrated effort by federal and state governments to 'close the gap' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians and is creating the criteria by which funding is directed and accountability established. Whilst supporting the intention, there is a danger that too much bureaucracy and too little flexibility may create undue pressure to comply with unrealistic expectations, particularly in smaller regional communities. It is also important that the implementation of strategies includes a realistic allocation of financial and human resources.
- With over 100 campuses in NSW, TAFE is well set up to offer training and support to almost every corner of the state and, through its remote campuses and outreach services, to reach the most isolated of students. This, in itself, goes a long way towards 'closing the gap' and, through an already-existing infrastructure, makes education accessible to all Aboriginal students who may wish to remain in their own communities.
- The emphasis on employability and education outcomes will ultimately lead to a shift in the way TAFE is perceived and valued by Aboriginal people, particularly in relation to arts courses. It will exclude those who may attend TAFE as a way to connect with others in the community and for Elders to interact with younger generations. It will also exclude students who may only enrol in a tertiary institution through an arts course. Attendance at TAFE arts courses is motivated not only by the desire to pursue art as a career but for its healing powers and its importance in social and emotional well-being. Arts courses can be the avenue in which Aboriginal students enter tertiary education and build the confidence to embark on other courses and alternative streams.
- The emphasis on employability and education outcomes is also creating a shift in courses chosen by Aboriginal students and, because of the difficulty in earning a living from art, does not augur well for enrolment in arts courses. This impacts more on the smaller TAFE campuses that often cannot attract the required numbers to run courses and continually have to justify courses that they run.
- Generally it appears that Aboriginal-specific courses at TAFE are slowly diminishing. If this is to occur, it is imperative that the cultural content and connection to culture, heritage and identity is not lost. Unfortunately in regional NSW, there is a lack of permanent displays and collections showcasing Aboriginal heritage and culture preventing vocational institutions from accessing this valuable resource and Aboriginal artists floundering for cultural inspiration. Inadvertently this has sometimes led to the adaptation and appropriation of 'popular' designs and styles from other Aboriginal communities, predominantly a commercial tourist style 'dot work'. Whilst this tourist-oriented style has a place in the market and provides an important source of income, it does little to promote the regional difference of Aboriginal groups. Potentially, bodies of artwork based on traditional mark-making will provide a positive point of difference in the national art industry, shift artists into a realm of fine contemporary art, improve business opportunities in NSW and national Aboriginal arts industries and gain state and national recognition.
- It must also be acknowledged, however, that many artists may not be interested or not feel a connection to traditional mark-making, stories and designs but prefer to express a more contemporary interpretation

of Aboriginal history and personal issues and subjects. These contemporary stories are valuable, as a social history or political statement even though it may be depicting confrontational or controversial issues.

- Arts training in today's world must be more than developing artistic skills and courses need to address the range of skills required in the 'creative chain'. This could include technical skills related to the production of work (framing, presentation, pricing) as well as the distribution of work (industry knowledge, marketing skills, website and technology skills, working with galleries and retail outlets) and entrepreneurial skills (business, financial management).
- Awareness of career options in the arts also needs to be addressed. So many Aboriginal people are directed towards painting as a stereotypical career or a means to earn an income. Career options in the arts are extensive across all artforms and other professions such as curators, marketing, cultural officers, cultural planners and events coordinators.
- Skills development and training is important, however, their value is diminished if there is no follow-up and ongoing meaningful activities. Expectations of artists and educationalists before and after training need to be realistic and support needs to be directed to ongoing professional development opportunities offered through projects, partnerships, traineeships and mentorships with businesses and industry. It is also important that the standards and work expectations of artists and students remain realistic so that they are equipped to deal with challenges in the real world and to strive to their full potential.

6. Summary of findings and recommendations regarding Aboriginal art in NSW

GENERAL

- Art in NSW is viewed by Aboriginal people and arts/cultural workers as addressing community needs and numeracy and literacy development amongst Aboriginal students.
- The Aboriginal visual arts sector is a significant contributor to the cultural and creative industries and hence to regional, state and national economies.
- The Aboriginal visual arts sector has great potential to contribute further to regional economies and the overall social and economic amelioration of Aboriginal communities in NSW. As a purveyor of economic opportunities the significance of the arts becomes even more critical in communities where most people do not have the skills to compete in the labour market for jobs. In towns such as Wilcannia with a high employment rate (all Indigenous) but an inordinate number of people practising art, investment in the sector can have a significant impact.
- Aboriginal cultural and creative arts in NSW is an under-resourced but very active sector. It is also an area that is rapidly developing and continuing to grow and prosper as the value of investment in the sector and its significant social, economic and cultural benefits in Aboriginal communities are recognised. In all Aboriginal communities and areas of high Aboriginal population it is the arts that is integral to the success of educational, economic, social, health and community programs. This is evident throughout the state and, although the activity has always existed through the goodwill and resourcefulness of regional communities, there is a definite growing recognition of the value of establishing more resources, support and infrastructure to support and nurture this activity.

Recommendations

- A holistic, strategic and statewide approach that utilises existing strong arts infrastructure such as the already funded network of Regional Arts Boards throughout NSW and similar organisations in the metro areas. The most successful and sustainable Aboriginal arts and cultural activity is at Arts Northern Rivers and Arts Mid North Coast both of which have significantly involved Aboriginal representatives working within an established infrastructure that provides ongoing support, skills and resources. Both Arts Northern Rivers and Arts Mid North Coast have nurtured this development towards a point where an independent incorporated Aboriginal organisation is now viable. West Darling Arts has also developed the Wilcannia Arts Centre to a point where it requires a building and a Coordinator based in Wilcannia to manage the next stage of development. The alternative is that the progress made to date will come to a halt, even decline.
- An infrastructure that combines realistic and sufficient support for buildings, facilities, organisations and specialist staff – that organisations are not set up to fail and that any infrastructure is viable on all levels and receives ongoing support.
- A peak body for an Aboriginal arts network – a coordinated approach to the future sustainability of Aboriginal art, artists and arts organisations in NSW including identifying artists and showcasing work through a statewide Aboriginal Arts Network, coordinating networking opportunities, regional initiatives and training and professional development programs.
- Arts NSW addresses the gaps in services in areas without Aboriginal Arts Development Officers and investigates the funding of positions that cover the following regions – North West, Far West, Central West, Orana, Upper Hunter, Eastern Riverina, Albury-Wodonga, Southern Tablelands, and Griffith-Leeton - with the role of developing arts programs that address social and cultural well-being of Aboriginal people.
- Arts NSW and RANSW advocate on behalf of these regions with DEEWR and DEWHA for infrastructure and program funding.

- RANSW considers a focused or targeted approach in its grants programs to support the organic development of Aboriginal regional art hubs.
- RANSW advocate to RADOs and with Arts NSW for its funded organisations to have written or documented Aboriginal art strategies that develop and promote Aboriginal art in the regions. Arts Northern Rivers and Arts Mid North Coast have specific Indigenous Art Strategies. Outback Arts developed a comprehensive Indigenous Strategy in 2006 but with limited implementation.

TRAINING

TAFE

- TAFE is the largest vocational education and training provider in NSW and comprises over 100 campuses grouped by geographic area into ten Institutes.
- TAFE NSW has the largest Aboriginal enrolment of any training and education provider in Australia.
- The Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, 2009 - 2012 developed by the NSW Department of Education and Training sets the framework within which TAFE NSW Institutes can develop their own plans appropriate to their local needs. The intended outcomes of the Strategy are to increase the number of Aboriginal students enrolling in and completing TAFE and Adult and Community Education courses. To address the goals of the DET Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, each TAFE Institute has a specific Aboriginal Education and Training Unit to provide advice and guidance on TAFE programs to Aboriginal students, work in partnership with government and non-government organisations and industry to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and develop and implement programs designed to meet their needs.
- Despite this framework, the current reality is that there are difficulties in fulfilling its goals due to requirements of a large bureaucracy, drained resources and a shortage of Aboriginal staff, particularly in the smaller and more isolated campuses.
- Specific Aboriginal arts TAFE courses are declining and being replaced, in varying degrees, with more creative and innovative initiatives to attract greater participation of Aboriginal students. Some are adopting a more flexible, outreach approach and others are developing initiatives more in tune with local demands.
- Generally TAFE is a good provider of basic art training for Aboriginal students especially from those with a long positive history with Aboriginal people, from Aboriginal teachers and coordinators and from culturally sensitive senior staff.
- In regions where TAFE was unable to meet the needs of Aboriginal artists and Aboriginal art organisations, the reason was generally attributed to the function of a large training institution with a bureaucratic structure and the focus on immediate vocational, educational and employment outcomes, the application of the Resource Allocation Model, and inflexibility in delivery of arts courses/classes.
- As a highly structured bureaucracy it is difficult for TAFE to reconcile its requirements with barriers associated with cultural norms and unique issues relating to small and isolated regional communities.

Universities

There are ten major universities in NSW and all have Indigenous Education Strategies and Centres for Indigenous Studies dedicated to implementing the Strategy. They are committed to recruitment and support of Indigenous students, the recruitment, support and promotion of Indigenous staff and the building and strengthening of Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Research. Many have undertaken additional initiatives as well as developed strong partnerships with TAFE and local galleries.

Recommendations (TAFE)

- Arts NSW work with TAFE to address gaps and issues in their delivery of arts courses to Aboriginal students especially regarding flexibility in the delivery of programs and courses that is cognizant of the specific situations and needs of Aboriginal students.
- Arts NSW and RANSW hold high level policy discussions with TAFE to give teachers and coordinators of arts courses, particularly in areas of high ATSI populations, some freedom to formulate creative approaches to address low attendance rates.
- TAFE provide financial and other forms of support for art teachers and coordinators to undertake the extra responsibility of “outreach” work and/or strengthen the existing outreach programs.
- Consideration be given to support for artists after leaving TAFE and providing opportunities to apply skills and develop professionally.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Post training support and opportunities are vitally important to retaining and consolidating skills gained through ‘formal’ training.

- Regional Arts Boards, Aboriginal mentors, regional art galleries, community organisations and community colleges are increasingly performing a significant role in providing advanced professional development to Aboriginal artists.
- Aboriginal mentors undertake the important role of cultural knowledge transfer to new and emerging artists. Knowledge of creation stories, myths and legends, and regional community and personal histories make Aboriginal art unique.
- Regional galleries have active strategies aimed at providing Aboriginal artists access to professional development programs and mentoring by professional gallery staff. They are not focussed on earning a qualification but the development of practical skills in curatorship and operations of galleries. During the field visit in early 2009, the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery has a young Aboriginal trainee undertaking gallery work and in March 2010, the Western Plains Cultural Centre is in the throes of appointing an Aboriginal intern.
- Valuable professional development is available through grants, Fellowships, Awards and Prizes but excludes Aboriginal artists and arts organisations that lack skills, resources and / or the confidence to apply.
- There are many effective programs managed and administered by community organisations. Examples include The 3 Rivers Aboriginal Art Space in Lismore which is managed by Arts Northern Rivers with the Indigenous Business Development Manager (IABM) coordinating training and professional development opportunities for local artists. This training includes business and marketing skills for artists and arts enterprises in the region. In the Central West, Centacare had an artist in place over the past two years who has been working with Aboriginal communities to develop arts skills and to showcase work through an annual exhibition. This position discontinued in December 2009. In Wilcannia, the Wilcannia Arts Centre’s artist-in-residencies have been managed and supported by West Darling Arts though the funding assistance of the Regional Arts Fund over the past five years.
- Arts courses are conducted at Correctional Institutions and Juvenile Justice Centres, four of which were visited during this research. Both TAFE and Regional Community Colleges have been engaged to undertake the teaching contracts which are put out to tender and our research discovered that, amongst

many have strong technical skills and creating excellent artwork. Detention in these institutions varies in length and there is limited support on release.

Recommendations

- Grant processes and requirements that are more culturally appropriate and sensitive, less alienating for Aboriginal people and more likely to attract applications for locally-determined arts and cultural activity from Aboriginal communities. New grant processes have been developed by RANSW as the 'first step' for Aboriginal individuals and groups applying for grants, and it is recommended that a new Aboriginal Funding program be instigated to trial this new model.
- Arts NSW provide incentives through purpose-specific grants or fellowships to support and recognise the role of community mentors in improving arts-specific technical skills, and cultural knowledge of emerging artists and in promoting the use of regional Aboriginal iconographies in their art work.
- Art NSW set up an award for recognition of the contribution of Aboriginal senior artist-mentor in the promotion of NSW Aboriginal art and the development of NSW Aboriginal artists.
- Arts NSW and RANSW work in partnership with Museum and Galleries NSW (MGNSW) to develop and strategic plan to mentorship, apprenticeship and training for Aboriginal people in various aspects of gallery and museum work.
- Arts NSW, RANSW and MGNSW make representations with DEEWR and DEWHA for funding to developing this plan, and the necessary funding for several positions, identified through research.

REGIONAL ABORIGINAL ICONOGRAPHY

The perception of Australian Central desert traditional iconographies as 'authentic' Aboriginal art has worked against Aboriginal art in other regions of Australia. Many NSW Aboriginal artists are producing derivative art (Central or desert Aboriginal art) because it sells well and because they are dissociated from their own creation stories, myths, legends and iconographic symbols;

Recommendations

- Nurture and promote the NSW 'brand' of Aboriginal Art and encourage regional specific iconographies – through Arts NSW Indigenous Arts Strategy, policies, Art Prizes, funding programs.
- Advocate through Arts NSW and major peak bodies for inclusion of research on regional iconographies as part of funded agencies' Aboriginal Arts Strategies.
- Arts NSW formulate a policy to encourage and recognise NSW-specific Aboriginal art, i.e. the use of regional iconographies, creation stories, myths and legends;
- Funding sources such as Arts NSW, Australia Council for the Arts and Regional Art NSW make provisions in their funding guidelines to actively promote regional Aboriginal iconographies.
- That the NSW State cultural institutions digitise their Aboriginal collections that relate to NSW and make them accessible via their website, safeguarded by appropriate protocols (as per National Film and Sound Archive). It is known that the Australian Museum contains 'nearly 25,000 ethnographic artefacts collected from hundreds of different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures'. Access to images of these artefacts will better inform regional Aboriginal artists in reclaiming their traditional iconographies.

- RANSW advocate to RADOs and with Arts NSW for its funded organisations to have written or documented Aboriginal art strategies that incorporate research on regional iconographies as major component in developing and promoting Aboriginal art in the regions.
- Arts NSW provides specific grants for the study and research on regional creation stories, myths and legends, history and culture, (e.g. regional specific artefacts) that provide inspiration or ideas for Aboriginal art.

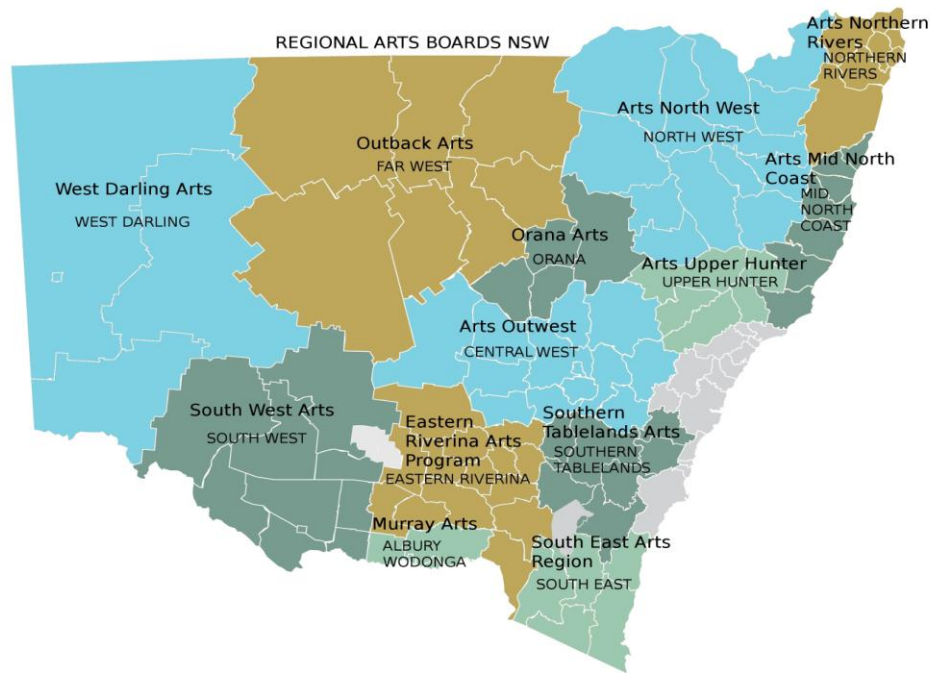
DATA COLLECTION

The future direction and development of policies and strategies relating to Aboriginal art needs to be based on empirical data which currently is fragmented and difficult to access.

Recommendations

- Arts NSW investigates the establishment of a central repository of quantitative data and information on Aboriginal visual arts, e.g. funding allocation, funded programs effectiveness, geographic distribution of programs, artist/art organisations database, art sales.
- Arts NSW negotiates with the Australia Council for the Arts for sharing information on Council funded programs in NSW for the purposes of the preceding recommendation.
- Arts NSW investigate the Canadian Arts Data, a common financial and statistical database managed by the Canada Council for the Arts for arts organisations which receive funding from all sources, that provides essential information on the financial and statistical situation of arts organisations that is reliable and consistent across jurisdictions for the purposes of the above two recommendations.

MAPS



Towns visited:

- Casino
- Lismore
- Tweed Heads
- Evans Head
- Grafton
- Coffs Harbour
- Kempsey
- Wollongong
- Gerringong
- Moruya
- Bega
- Albury
- Wagga Wagga
- Junee
- Bathurst
- Condobolin
- Cowra
- Blayney
- Lake Cargelligo, Murrin Bridge
- Forbes
- Parkes
- Dubbo
- Cessnock
- Singleton
- Muswellbrook
- Tamworth
- Glen Innes
- Armidale
- Bourke
- Walgett
- Brewarrina
- Griffith
- Broken Hill
- Wilcannia

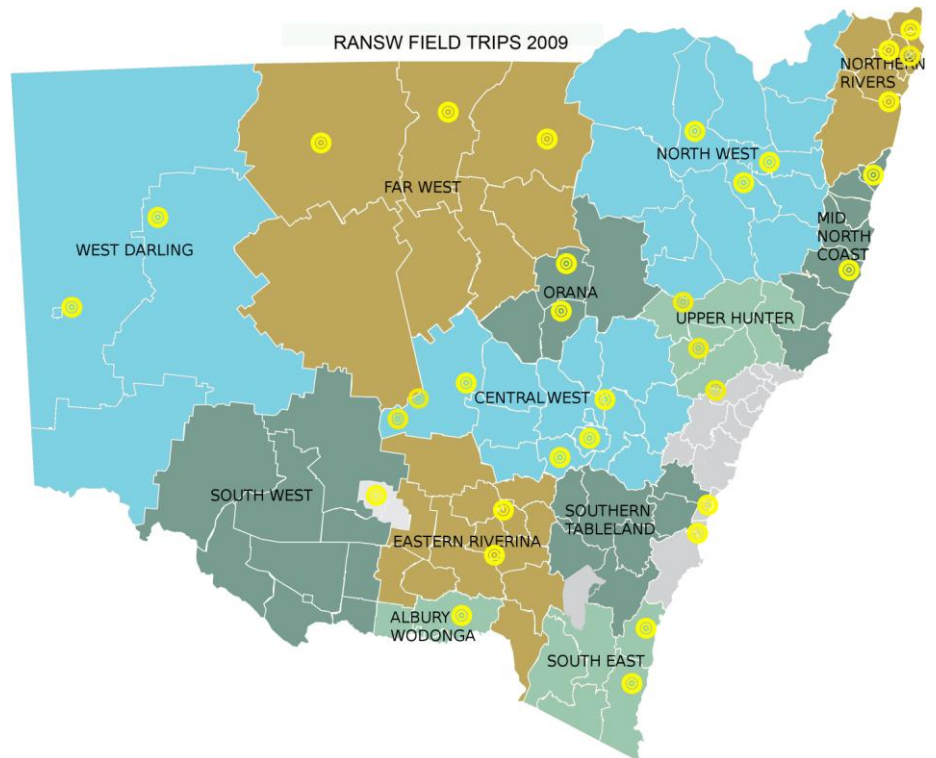


Table: Aboriginal Population by local government area in NSW

Local Government Area	Estimated total pop 2008	Aboriginal Pop	Aboriginal Pop %
	3218.0 Regional Population Growth Australia 2008 (23/4/09)	Estimated residential populations based on the 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing	
Source: ABS			
Arts Northern Rivers			
Ballina Shire	41,677	1108	2.8
Byron Shire	31,503	500	1.6
Clarence Valley Shire	51,007	2426	4.8
Richmond Valley Shire	22,672	1289	5.8
Kyogle Shire	9,683	561	5.8
Lismore City	44,993	1668	3.8
Tweed Shire	86,833	2533	3.1
Total	288,368	10085	3.9
Arts Mid North Coast			
Coffs Harbour,	70,371	2473	4.5
Bellingen	13,153	338	2.6
Great Lakes	34,853	1055	3.1
Kempsey	28,856	2719	9.5
Nambucca	18,921	1096	5.9
Greater Taree	47,781	2028	4.3
Port Macquarie-Hastings	73,870	1873	2.6
Total	287,805	11582	4.6
Arts North West			
Armidale-Dumaresq	25,228	1357	5.5
Glen Innes Severn	9,145	494	5.4
Gunnedah	11,985	1228	10.3
Gwydir	5,328	137	2.5
Inverell	16,375	867	5.4
Liverpool Plains	7,880	769	9.8
Moree Plains	14,338	3024	20.7
Narrabri	13,507	1274	9.3
Tamworth Regional	57,182	3935	7
Tenterfield	6,907	476	7
Uralla	6,081	350	5.8
Walcha	3,276	191	5.7
Guyra	4,435	456	10.4
Total	181,667	14558	8.1
Arts Upper Hunter			
Upper Hunter Shire	13,785	421	3.1
Gloucester Shire	5,001	179	3.6
Muswellbrook Shire	16,116	775	4.9
Singleton Shire	23,458	619	2.7
Dungog Shire	8,447	186	2.2
Total	66,807	2180	3.3

	Cessnock	49,888	1700	3.5
	Maitland	67,621	1715	2.6
	Port Stephens	65,464	1866	2.9
	Total	182,973	5281	3
Eastern Riverina Arts				
	Coolamon Shire	4,177	49	1.2
	Cootamundra Shire	7,530	269	3.5
	Harden Shire	3,636	123	3.3
	Lockhart Shire	3,275	37	1.1
	Temora Shire	6,022	87	1.4
	Urana Shire	1,270	42	3.2
	Wagga Wagga City	61,656	2472	4.1
	Total	87,566	3079	2.5
	Young	12,547	321	2.6
	Tumut	11,236	372	3.3
	Junee	6,107	337	5.6
	Bland	6,289	165	2.6
	Tumbarumba	3,672	93	2.5
	Gundagai	3,827	69	1.8
	Total	43,678	1357	3.1
Arts OutWest				
	Bathurst Region	38,326	1319	3.5
	Blayney	6,985	161	2.3
	Cabonne	12,994	295	2.3
	Cowra	12,835	791	6.1
	Forbes	9,649	667	6.8
	Lachlan	6,838	1050	15.2
	Lithgow City	20,620	646	3.1
	Oberon	5,291	113	2.1
	Orange	37,991	1656	4.5
	Parkes	14,956	1070	7.2
	Weddin	3,752	62	1.6
	Wellington	8,711	1320	15.7
	Total	178,948	9150	5.9
Orana Arts				
	Dubbo City	40,306	4321	10.9
	Gilgandra Shire	4,564	605	12.9
	Mid-Western Regional	22,359	612	2.8
	Narromine Shire	6,785	1087	16
	Warrumbungle Shire	10,197	779	7.6
	Total	84,211	7404	10.04
Out Back Arts				
	Bourke	3,091	1004	31.2
	Brewarrina	1,983	1252	62.7
	Cobar	5,120	556	10.9
	Coonamble	4,287	1124	25.9

Walgett		7,093	2122	29.5
Warren		2,799	353	12.3
Total		24,373	6411	28.75
	Bogan	2,989	351	11.7
Murray Arts				
Albury City		49,779	1036	2.1
Corowa		11,481	128	1.1
Greater Hume		10,273	164	1.6
		71,533	1328	1.6
Indigo (Vic)		15,710		
Towong (Vic)		6,273		
City of Wodonga (Vic)		35,064		
Total		200,113		
Southern Tablelands				
Boorowa		2,390	44	1.8
Palerang		13,852	113	0.9
Goulburn Mulwaree		27,706	611	2.2
Queanbeyan City		39,603	1006	2.7
Upper Lachlan		7,392	106	1.4
Wingecarribee		45,418	558	1.3
Wollondilly		42,397	789	1.9
Yass Valley		14,395	247	1.8
Total		193,153	3474	1.75
South East Arts				
Bega Valley		32,956	861	2.7
Bombala		2,601	40	1.5
Cooma-Monaro		10,202	172	1.7
Eurobodalla		37,064	1687	4.6
Snowy River		7,894	74	1
Total		90,717	2834	2.3
South West Arts				
Balranald		2,488	174	6.8
Berrigan		8,494	106	1.3
Carrathool		2,916	178	6.1
Conargo		1,710	31	1.8
Deniliquin		7,635	219	2.8
Hay		3,389	150	4.2
Murray		7,076	192	2.9
Murrumbidgee		2,547	242	9.3
Wakool		4,414	100	2.2
Total		40,669	1392	4.2
	Jerilderie	1,657	28	1.6
West Darling Arts				
Broken Hill		20,001	1300	6.5
Central Darling		1,984	757	37.7
Wentworth		7,159	643	9.1

Unincorporated	1,116	33	4.4
Total	30,260	2733	14.4
Western Riverina			
Narrandera	6,181	592	9.5
Leeton	11,727	531	4.5
Griffith	25,278	955	3.8
Total	43,186	2078	5.9
Illawarra / Shoalhaven			
Shoalhaven	92,880	3555	2.5
Shellharbour	64,296	1493	2.4
Kiama	20,095	228	1.1
	177,271	5276	2.5

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Definitions

Regional Arts NSW (RANSW): The peak body for regional arts activity in NSW, based in Sydney.

Regional Arts Board (RAB): The local constituted body for regional arts development, based in 13 regions across the state.

Regional Arts Development Officer (RADO): The person employed by the RAB in each region who facilitates a regional program of arts development initiatives and services.

The Network: The staff and board members of the 13 regions and RANSW.

Region means an area with common geographic, economic, statistical, social or cultural identifiers. It may include a regional centre, town or rural area crossing one or more local government area(s). The term **regional** excludes areas that are part of the dormitory catchment of major capital cities, high density coastal developments and major industrial cities close to the capital and population centres of greater than 100,000.

Aboriginal / Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)/ Indigenous are used interchangeably in this report. 'Aboriginal' is used in favour of 'ATSI' and 'Indigenous' except where used in a title / name for a document or person.

Infrastructure is used broadly in this report and refers to the basic physical and organisational structures of an organisation or community. It includes 'hard' infrastructure (physical capital) and 'soft' infrastructure (human capital). In terms of funding, 'infrastructure' refers to assistance to fund ongoing annual programs and core business (salaries and operational costs) and 'project funding' refers to costs associated with 'one-off' projects.

Acronyms

ABS – Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACE – Adult and Community Education

AECG – Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

ATSI – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

CDEP – Community Development Employment Program

COAG – Council of Australian Governments

CSU – Charles Sturt University

DAA – Department of Aboriginal Affairs (NSW government)

DCITA – Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts (now DEWHA, Federal government)

DEEWR – Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (Federal Government)

DET – Department of Education and Training (NSW Government)

DEWHA - Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts (Federal government)

EIEI – Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Initiative (program of DEEWR)

IAAG - Indigenous Artists Advisory Group

IABC – Indigenous Arts Business Centre

IABM – Indigenous Arts Business Manager

IADO – Indigenous Arts Development Officer

ICS – Indigenous Cultural Support Program

LGA – Local Government Area

NACIS – National Arts and Crafts Indigenous Scheme (program of DEWHA)

RAB – Regional Arts Board

RADO – Regional Arts Development Officer

RANSW – Regional Arts NSW

RICDO – Regional Indigenous Cultural Development Officer

SCU – Southern Cross University

TAFE - Technical and Further Education

UOW – University of Wollongong

UTS – University of Technology Sydney

VET – Vocational Education and Training