

Enhancing Indigenous content in arts curricula through service learning with Indigenous communities

Final Report 2014

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to the lives of our collaborators who passed away during this OLT project: Kumanjayi Davey, Kumanjayi Johnson and Mrs Nixon. Your wisdom, generosity and influence will be felt for many years to come.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our warmest thanks to our community partners in this project: Barkly Regional Arts (Tennant Creek, NT); Winanjikari Music Centre (Tennant Creek, NT); Papulu Apparr-Kari (Tennant Creek, NT), Tennant Creek High School, Mungkarta School (Tennant Creek, NT), the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Indigenous Community Education and Awareness (Perth, WA), Kart Koort Wieren (Perth, WA), Langford Aboriginal Association (Perth, WA) and Noongar Radio (Perth, WA). Likewise, we would like to thank the students who participated in each of the service learning projects, as well as staff and colleagues at who helped facilitate this work: Gavin Carfoot (Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University QCGU, and Queensland University of Technology); Michelle Johnston, Bonita Mason and Chris Thompson (Curtin); and Shirley Gilbert (University of Western Sydney UWS). We would also like to acknowledge the support and encouragement of our various Heads of School and Directors, and the guidance given by our various university learning and teaching support staff and management.

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Lastly, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we worked for this project, and pay our respect to Elders, past and present.

List of acronyms used

ABSL	Arts-based service learning
ALNF	Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council (now OLT)
ARC	Australian Research Council
BRA	Barkly Regional Arts
FTV	Film and Television
GU	Griffith University
LAA	Langford Aboriginal Association
NAISDA	National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association
OLT	Australian Government's Office for Learning and Teaching
PAK	Papulu Apparr-Kari Language Centre
QCGU	Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
UQ	University of Queensland
UWS	University of Western Sydney
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
WMC	Winanjikari Music Centre

Notes on terminology

“Indigenous”

In the original proposal (and hence the title for this report) we used the term “Indigenous” to refer to both Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This was the terminology commonly used by our pilot program partners in Central Australia, along with everyday Aboriginal English terms such as “Blackfella” and “Whitefella” to describe broad aspects of Indigenous and non-Indigenous life and culture. “Indigenous” was also the term most commonly used in the literature we consulted for our original project proposal.

At our first Advisory Group meeting in February 2012 we re-visited the discussion about terminology, and while we recognised that the term “Indigenous” was commonly used across Australia and internationally, it also evoked a problematic “Pan-Indigenising” space. Soon after our Advisory Group meeting, the National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples also recommended new terminology for referring to Indigenous peoples in Australia. In particular the Congress recommended that organisations abandon the use of the terms “Indigenous” and “ATSI” in favour of “First Peoples”, “First Nations”, and “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander”.

The Congress’s recommendation sparked further discussion amongst our Advisory Group and Project Team. In the end, members of our Advisory Group recommended that in our publications we should use the terms “Aboriginal” or “Torres Strait Islander” wherever possible and “First Peoples” when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples together or Indigenous people internationally. All of the communities involved in this project were Aboriginal communities (the rather pragmatic reasons for this are detailed in the report). Likewise when referring to non-Aboriginal and non-Torres Strait Islander participants, we would use the term “non-Indigenous.”

We have tried to be consistent with our Advisory Group’s recommendation, but at times some slippage has inevitably occurred. Readers will notice that in many of the quotes from participants in this report, the term “Indigenous” is very commonly used. After all, this terminology still seems to evoke a contested space, where many still use the term “Indigenous.” As our Griffith University colleague Adrian Miller (Professor of Indigenous Research) also confessed in a recent workshop, he is still trying to figure out what term to use and finds he slips between terminologies depending on the context.

Engaging in this discussion was a fruitful process, because it challenged us to think about deeply philosophical and ethical questions about how we both conceptualise and communicate this work. It also reinforced for us the intense importance of having an active Advisory Group and consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues before making significant decisions about representing communities and our project outcomes.

“Community”

The term “community” has been equally contested. When using this term people are often grouped together as “a community” for different reasons, whether it be a geographical community, a cultural community, a community of interest, and so on. The way in which this term is commonly used can also tend to denote that a community is a homogenous whole, which is certainly not the case. A further challenge with the term “community” is that it is made up of many different constituents, and people weight the presence or absence of these differently, hence leading to very different definitions and understandings of what community *is* or *does*. This can create confusion when conceptualising and communicating work about “Aboriginal communities”, for example. In reality, in the contexts we’ve worked in, defining the concept of an “Aboriginal community” is highly problematic given that it lumps people into a uniform whole. Rather, what we’re referring to here is a dynamic and fluid space that includes a number of different Aboriginal language groups, with great diversity in terms of culture and protocols, along with non-Indigenous people who also represent tremendous diversity in terms of culture and ways of seeing and engaging with the world.

For guidance on this matter, we have referred to how our partners negotiate the use of this terminology. “Community” is still the most frequently used term to refer to our Aboriginal colleagues and the land upon which they live. For all its foibles, this all-encompassing term does evoke a sense of togetherness and a strong connection to place and country. For these reasons the team follows the lead of our partners and uses the term “community” frequently in this report, at the same time acknowledging its complexities and nuances.

Executive summary

At the heart of this project has been the desire to enhance the way in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content is embedded in higher education arts curricula. It comes at a time when higher education institutions are facing growing pressure to make curriculum content more representative of and responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. In response, many Australian universities have established formal initiatives to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and intercultural competency across the curriculum. This has taken the form of policies and reconciliation action plans, community engagement initiatives, networks and councils of Elders. Despite the proliferation of such initiatives, the incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into higher education curricula and cultures remains a challenging political, social and practical task. This project has sought to address this challenging task by positioning arts-based service learning (ABSL) as a strategy through which Australian higher education institutions can promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content for students in ways that also directly support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Approach and methodology

Building on three years of pilot work in Central Australia, this project involved running ABSL projects with three Australian universities (Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Curtin University and the University of Western Sydney). These sub-projects were undertaken in collaboration with communities in regional and metropolitan areas in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and largely involved students working alongside Aboriginal artists and Elders on community-led projects.

The team employed a meta-ethnographic data collection and analysis approach to document and interpret outcomes across the three sub-projects. The team collected data using shared semi-structured interview protocols, student assessment and reflection tasks, and researcher reflective diary/observations templates that were adapted to suit each university's sub-project. The team used additional unstructured diary writing and video and photo observation techniques to document the different contexts within which the three sub-projects occurred. The team conducted four waves of collaborative and systematic qualitative data analysis over a period of 18 months between June 2012 and November 2013. This included: 1) a pilot analysis; 2) the development of a national coding schema; 3) collaborative interdisciplinary interpretation; and 4) feedback and final decision-making.

Key findings

The data collected for this project provides an extremely rich, multilayered, and complex picture of the intercultural processes and outcomes associated with each of the sub-projects. Most importantly, the data collected provides a *gathering* of viewpoints and experiences from all participants in the projects including Aboriginal artists, Elders and arts workers, partner representatives including school teachers and administrators, community arts organisation representatives, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students, and ABSL facilitators from the partner universities.

When distilling the key findings, the team identified that three interconnected ways of learning were occurring in this work. They were framed around Ways of Knowing, Ways of Being, and Ways of Doing. In fleshing out how these three ways of learning can occur in ABSL, the team found great inspiration in Aboriginal scholar Karen *Booran Mirraboopa* Martin's (2003) descriptions of a Quandamooka worldview that encapsulates these three elements. Within these three ways of learning the team observed a further nine ways that engagement was occurring. These can be summarised as follows: **Ways of Knowing:** 1) sitting down on country; 2) respecting culture and First Peoples' worldviews; 3) transforming understandings and worldviews through critical reflection. **Ways of Being:** 4) building and deepening relationships; 5) learning and sharing in reciprocal ways; 6) responding to contextual dynamics and politics with sensitivity. **Ways of Doing:** 7) using the arts as a medium for connection and collaboration; 8) designing and implementing ABSL projects to meet both community and institutional needs; 9) building sustainability into ABSL projects.

At any given point in the sub-projects these ways of learning and engaging were taking place, and our community collaborators often subtly controlled the depths to which the team members travelled into, through and out of them. These ways of learning and engaging were also deeply interconnected and often contingent on one another, but not always the focus of attention at the same time. Once again, our community collaborators often guided what people came to know, how they related to others, and where and when this was done. Of course, the complex and interrelated ways in which this learning and engaging occurred were certainly not as neat and organised as this framework suggests. However, this framework resonates with our practice, and has provided a way of organising and representing a substantial amount of rich data in a way that takes inspiration from an Aboriginal worldview. In the following report, detailed testimonials and examples of practice are given under the headings of this framework. It is hoped this will be a useful starting point for those interested in developing new projects; a valuable reflective prompt for those in the thick of these projects; and a beneficial reference point for those evaluating these projects.

Project outcomes and impact

In addition to implementing these three sub-projects as part of the OLT project, the team was delivering three substantial outcomes: 1) a brochure with guidelines, strategies and resources that focus specifically on the processes, benefits and challenges of developing ABSL partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; 2) a media-rich website <www.firstpeopleservicelearning.edu.au>, that shares the results of this project, alongside a range of resources for universities, colleges and communities and a Facebook page <www.facebook.com/CommunityServiceLearning?ref=tn_tnmn>; and 3) an edited book to be published by Springer in 2014/2015, entitled: *Arts-Based Service Learning with First Peoples: Stories, experiences, and methods to support respectful and mutually beneficial relationships and practice*. In addition to delivering these projected outputs the team has also delivered a range of creative outputs (including a documentary, a multi-media installation, co-written songs, performances, news stories, and more), international and national conference presentations, peer-reviewed journal articles, and cultural awareness training resources. At the time of writing this report, these outputs have had a significant impact already through the development of curriculum materials, community projects, university-community partnerships, graduate employment outcomes, community training,

and teaching awards.

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Chapter 1. Background

This report presents the key learnings and outcomes from the *Enhancing Indigenous content in arts curricula through service learning with Indigenous communities* project (known publicly as the *First Peoples Arts-Based Service Learning Project*). In many ways this report is an attempt to capture a richness of experience and intercultural connection and learning that many Australians do not commonly get to experience. It is no exaggeration to say that for many of those involved, the project has been life changing. In some cases it has thus been difficult to put these experiences into words on a page. As UWS student Lisa so aptly described: “I don’t know whether it’s possible to capture a lot of it as so much of it is interpersonal” (Lisa, UWS, 2012). To address this issue, and supplement this report, the team has prepared rich media resources including a project website: <www.firstpeopleservicelearning.edu.au>, a facebook site <www.facebook.com/communityservicelearning>, and several mini documentaries depicting work at the partner universities involved in this project. The team have also prepared an informational brochure that summarises the key content of these resources and invites people to explore the stories contained therein in more detail. Academic discussions and analyses of this work have been presented in a number of international and national conference presentations, peer reviewed journal articles, a forthcoming edited volume, and a range of creative outputs.

While team members offer the above resources in the spirit of attempting to more fully capture the richness of relationships, country, and experiences in this project, the team acknowledge that much of what was learned and experienced through partnerships and friendships with our community partners needs to be experienced directly in relationships with others and their home environments to truly be appreciated, felt, and understood. This in itself speaks to the value of and need for approaches such as ABSL in building relationships and understanding among non-Indigenous people of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and communities, in addition to other ways of learning about these cultures. The team hence hope that this report can provide a foundation for other universities and colleges across Australia and internationally to build mutually beneficial and strong bonds with First Peoples communities through ABSL partnerships and projects.

As was discussed with the Advisory Group, this work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities must be handled with great care and restraint on the part of higher education institutions: Those institutions must not take this report as encouragement to “flood” Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with either requests for ABSL projects or students. In this regard, ABSL must be but one part of a broader ongoing move toward bringing Indigenous content into the curriculum in Australian higher education and must be supported by many other institutional, interpersonal, and personal changes.

Context for the project

The interface between Australian higher education institutions and Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities has gained increasing attention since former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s historic 2008 apology to members of the “Stolen Generations” of Australians who were forcibly removed from their families by government officials from the late 1800s through to the 1970s. There is growing pressure on higher education

institutions to support reconciliation by making higher education more representative of and responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. The National Indigenous Higher Education Network, for example, recommended in its report to the United Nations (2009, p. 7) that higher education institutions should “systemically embed Indigenous perspectives in curriculum and acknowledge the scholarly contributions of Indigenous communities in developing a culturally ethical framework to underpin research and learning”. Likewise, the authors of the 2008 Review of Australian Higher Education (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, p. 32) recommended that:

higher education providers must not only address [Indigenous students’] learning needs but also recognise and act on issues such as the culture of the institution, the cultural competence of all staff – academic and professional – and the nature of the curriculum.

The most comprehensive move toward embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in Australian higher education was Universities Australia’s 2012 National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities. This provided “a framework for embedding Indigenous cultural competencies within and across the institution in sustainable ways which engender reconciliation and social justice by enabling the factors that contribute to social, economic and political change” (Universities Australia, 2012). The Framework centres around five guiding principles, namely that:

1. Indigenous people should be actively involved in university governance and management;
2. All graduates of Australian universities will have the knowledge and skills necessary to interact in a culturally competent way with Indigenous communities;
3. University research will be conducted in a culturally competent way in partnership with Indigenous participants;
4. Indigenous staffing will be increased at all appointment levels and, for academic staff, across a wider variety of academic fields; and
5. Universities will operate in partnership with their Indigenous communities and will help disseminate culturally competent practices to the wider community. (Universities Australia, 2012)

In response, many Australian universities have established formal initiatives to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and intercultural competency across the curriculum. Recent initiatives include policies and reconciliation action plans which seek to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency for staff and students; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community engagement, service learning and partnership programs; committees, networks and councils of Elders who advise on or oversee activities related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and engagement; and incentives and grants schemes for recruiting and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

Despite the proliferation of such initiatives, the incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into higher education curricula and cultures remains a challenging political, social and practical task, which has even prompted negative media coverage (Trounson, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c). In many cases the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander curriculum, cultural awareness and content has been presented in an abstract manner that is removed from the lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols for sharing knowledge (Newsome, 1999). Mackinlay and Dunbar-Hall (2003) have suggested that in-class learning experiences can lack the intercultural relationships required to promote reconciliation and deeper understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing.

Our project sought to position arts-based service learning (ABSL) as a strategy through which Australian higher education institutions can promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content for all students in ways that potentially overcome the above limitations and directly support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Consonant with Molnar (2010) and others (see Lawton, 2010; Russell & Hutzler, 2007; Russell-Bowie, 2007; Thomas & Mulvey, 2008), it can be argued that ABSL can provide a culturally sensitive and enabling process for embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content. The team makes this claim on the basis that the arts foster interpersonal expression and empathy, individual control over personal expression and identity, and non- or extra-linguistic intercultural communication.

Service learning

Service learning has the dual aim of enriching learning and strengthening communities. The core concept is the combination of service and learning objectives, with activities designed to positively affect both service recipient and provider (Furco & Billig, 2002; Furco, 1996). Higher education students who have engaged in service learning have been found to demonstrate greater complexities of understanding than non-service learning comparison groups (Eyler & Giles, 1999), and for this reason (among others), service learning has emerged as an effective pedagogical strategy with benefits beyond the integration of community service into the academic curriculum (Cho, 2006; Robinson & Meyer, 2012). A key feature of service learning is that it is an organised activity wherein community service is integrated with classroom instruction or structured assessment (Cho, 2006; Robinson & Meyer, 2012). Furco (1996) emphasised that service-learning programs were distinguished from other forms of experiential education by “their intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring” (p. 5). For many authors, service learning is also defined by shared control over projects between educators and community participants (see Boyle-Baise et al., 2001); by the mutual learning between students and community participants and not just the exchange of service; by the pursuit of concrete outcomes for participating communities; and by student contributions to broader civil society (Kraft, 1996; Soska et al., 2010; Stoecker & Tryon, 2009).

In Australia the phrase “service learning” is often used interchangeably with “community engagement”; however a number of authors have identified core aspects of service learning that separate it from other community engagement activities. Purmensky (2009, pp. 4-5), for example, lists five critical aspects of service learning:

1. Reciprocity: benefits for both students and the community;

2. Meaningful service: activity that meets the curriculum standards and objectives of the subjects taught;
3. Reflection: Learning and feelings contemplated through formal and informal discussions and writing;
4. Development: for example, a continuum from observation to experience and leadership; and
5. Diversity: students working in a diverse setting with a diverse population that they would not normally experience.

The contemporary literature on service learning offers numerous iterations of the above-mentioned criteria, but authors almost uniformly agree that the core aspects of service learning include reflection, structured activity, and reciprocity between students and community participants (see Cho, 2006; McCarthy, 2003; Russell-Bowie, 2007; Siebenaler, 2005). Butin (2003, pp. 1676-1677) identifies that “[i]rrespective of the definitional emphasis, service-learning advocates put forward a consistent articulation of the criteria for service learning to be legitimate, ethical, and useful. These may be glossed as the four Rs Respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection”. Hironimus-Wendt and Lovell-Troy (1999) further emphasise that service learning’s structure and “deliberate integration of service delivery and course content” (p. 361) differentiates it from volunteerism and internships, which are less structured and often more indirectly related to course content.

While Australian universities have explored service learning for well over a decade (Kenworthy-U’Ren, 2008; Print, 2001; Sunderland et al., 2004), it is now the object of renewed attention across the fields of management education and business ethics (Hrivnak & Sherman, 2010; Kenworthy, 2010); literacy education and teacher education (Naidoo, 2011; Power, 2012); computer and information science (Evans & Sawyer, 2009); women’s health (Parker et al., 2009); and law (Blissenden, 2006). However, other than in music education (Russell-Bowie, 2007; 2009) there is little evidence of Australian service learning projects for creative and performing arts students.

First Peoples’ perspectives on service learning

First Peoples service learning is a subset of service learning in which First Peoples and non-Indigenous students work directly in First Peoples’, community-led projects. Research on service learning with Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities has primarily focussed on literacy support and teacher education in remote schools with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and our own previous work on collaborative music programs (see Bartleet & Carfoot, 2013; Jay et al., 2009; Naidoo, 2011). Elsewhere, literature on First Peoples service learning has drawn on the perspectives and experiences of law, environment and education students working with Native American, Hawaiian, Mayan, Andean, and South African First Peoples communities and cultures (see Feinstein, 2005; Guffey, 2008; Porter & Monard, 2000; Tirado & Rivera, 2002). Indeed, Litlepage, Gazley and Bennett (2012, p. 306) maintain that most research in the USA has examined service learning’s impact “from the limited perspective of a student’s pedagogical experience and the campus’s ability to support service learning”. While not typically tailored to First Peoples experiences and contexts, broader discussions of service learning for social justice and change (see Mitchell & Humphries, 2007; Lewis, 2004), multicultural service learning (see

Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Clark, 2007; Boyle-Baise, Epler, McCoy, & Paulk, 2001), and ‘interracial’ service learning (see Murphy & Rasch, 2008) offer important insights on the socio-political and intercultural dimensions of First Peoples service learning.

While there is relatively little existing literature dedicated to First Peoples service learning, there is even less literature that conceptualises service learning from First Peoples’ perspectives. Notable exceptions to this include Guffey’s (2008) Keynote Address to the 2008 Northwest Indian College Second Summit on Indigenous Service-Learning in Washington State, in which he described building a “strong link” from First Peoples ways, the earth and nature into the larger society.

... I ask the question: how do people learn to find and know themselves in this world? The answer that I have come to is two-fold: first, by encountering and establishing spiritual connections with the earth through the senses, the intellect and the emotional body. Second, through the inter-relationship of storytelling and service-learning. Think of storytelling as a needle and service-learning as the thread. The story makes an impression and creates an opening, then service-learning follows. Together they draw the fabric of life: people, places and nature together in new experiences. Connecting the power of storytelling with each generation takes more than repetition and reflection on the stories. It also takes real-life encounters in the form of service-learning.

In addition to the deep formulation of intercultural reconciliation and reciprocity in the First Peoples’ perspectives of service learning, authors also invoke distinct “asset based” approaches. These approaches uphold “a commitment to appreciating the assets of and serving the needs of a community partner while enhancing student learning and academic practice through intentional reflection and responsible civic action” (Guffey, 2008, p. 9). As Hutzler (2007, p. 306 in Molnar, 2010, p. 11) has discussed, focusing on the “social, physical, environmental and human” assets of a community promotes respect for community members as capable agents and partners, rather than “people in need of being saved”.

Arts-based service learning (ABSL)

Educators in the USA have explored ABSL as a way of connecting students and community members and promoting community arts practice, placing “art in a community context as both a creative practice and a teaching method to fulfill arts-based educational objectives ranging from creative self-expression to competency with discipline-specific standards” (Krensky & Steffen, 2008, p. 15). ABSL is distinguished from general service learning by the fact that the arts are “central to the experience as both a means to meeting community-identified needs and an end in and of themselves” (Krensky & Steffen, 2008, p. 15).

The literature on ABSL lists the benefits as: facilitating expression, communication and connections between diverse participants; evoking participants’ strengths and abilities (Thomas & Mulvey, 2008); developing empathy and compassion between participants and for other groups (Molnar, 2010); building community through “empathetic social interaction” (Jeffers, 2009, p. 19); providing opportunities to inquire into and affirm “personal, cultural, or spiritual values” (Jeffers, 2009, p. 18); and providing the ability to

“mirror” society in the form of artworks and “subsequently invoke social change” (Molnar, 2010, p. 19). It can be argued that many of these benefits are highly compatible with First Peoples’ perspectives of service learning. These perspectives have been identified in the existing literature and in our own ABSL work with Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Yet, while some attention has been paid to using ABSL with culturally and linguistically diverse communities (see Southcott & Joseph, 2010), little attention has been given to specific applications with First Peoples communities in Australia or elsewhere.

Service learning for social change

The potential for academic work to achieve social change has long been emphasised (see for example Somerville & Perkins, 2003); however, “emancipatory” research projects working in intercultural contexts are often prescriptive in terms of how power should be shared between researcher and researched. In response to these concerns, the team sought to work beyond the emancipatory paradigm that has characterised much critical intercultural research (Somerville & Perkins, 2003). Team members situated our understanding of culture (and thus intercultural teaching and learning experiences) in critical theories of difference and diversity (cf. Carrington & Saggars, 2008; DePalma, 2008). These approaches build on socio-cultural understandings of “whiteness” and other critical constructions of race to arrive at a position that aspires towards decolonisation. Such a decolonising approach enables the project to explore “alternative possibilities to the forces of colonisation” (Somerville & Perkins, 2003, p. 255), by:

- Recognising and reconceptualising categories that maintain borders (e.g. First Peoples/non-Indigenous) (Giroux, 1992);
- Acknowledging hybrid subject-positions e.g. “temporal and contextual coalitions” (Haig-Brown, 2001) or the “third space” (Soja, 2000);
- Redrawing boundaries between constructions of experience and power (Giroux, 1992); and
- Questioning who has a right to speak and what is appropriate in particular contexts at particular times (Mackinlay, 2008).

The team have adopted service learning as a pedagogical approach that steps outside the traditional classroom to enable such intercultural experiences to occur. Within this paradigm the team embrace a critical service learning orientation, which means that the focus was on relationships, social change and power redistribution. As Mitchell (2008, p. 65) explains, in this way the project is able to develop and analyse initiatives with “greater attention to equality and shared power between all participants in the service experience and [opportunities for students] to analyse the interplay of power, privilege, and oppression at the service placement and in their experience in that placement”.

Such service learning projects have been integrated into curricular and community development projects as diverse as public health, teacher training and local economic transformation. These type of service learning projects are also applied in learning and teaching activities that focus on cross-cultural collaborations and often occur in “space[s] no longer controlled by ... conventions of Western academic discourse” (Mackinlay, 2008, p. 258), enabling students to critically question the positioning of the academy and of academic discourse in society more broadly.

Benefits of intercultural service learning

Facilitators of intercultural service learning have identified a number of benefits that make it more effective than classroom based learning for exposing students to social marginalisation and cultural difference. Examples of identified benefits for students include: putting “a face” to diverse others and their experiences; having experiences of being a minority “other” within a culture that is different to their own; opportunities to develop enduring friendships with diverse others; new awareness of one’s own cultural identity; opportunities for formal and informal community-led learning; transformation of personal and professional sense of self; and opportunities for profound “encounters” or epiphanies that lead to lifelong journeys of intercultural development (Bamber & Hankin, 2011; Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Clark, 2007; Boyle-Baise & Sleeter, 2000).

Despite broad agreement on these potential benefits of intercultural service learning, some authors have advocated for more in-depth and critical approaches. It is clear, for example, that the bulk of existing research on service learning focuses on student rather than community outcomes and perspectives. This is despite pervasive claims that service learning is about deriving mutual student and community benefit (Boyle-Baise et al., 2001; Furco, 1996). Some studies asked students to indicate what they thought were the benefits for their community partners (see for example Caldwell et al., 2008), however there is little direct record of community experiences, perspectives, or “voice” in the current empirical literature.

Murphy and Rasch (2008) argue that there has also been little philosophical or theoretical development of service learning that attends to intercultural relationship building. In place of detailed philosophical or theoretical development, these authors argue that there has been a general assumption that

as students began to enter communities, exchange insights with local persons, and work on relevant social projects, rapport would begin to develop between the two groups. Students would begin to bond with these communities and exhibit a sense of social commitment. (2008, pp. 64-65)

Similarly, Boyle-Baise (1999, p. 310) found that delineation of the “philosophical intentions” of intercultural service learning was rare, with “assumptions about citizenship, community, and service usually remain[ing] unquestioned.” Boyle-Baise (1999, p. 310) found that many of her participating students – who were primarily white middle class Americans – were subject to complex “systemic philosophic screens” that encouraged them to view and relate to diverse community partners in a deficit way: that is, as “less than” themselves. She argued that common functionalist student conceptions of service learning as “charity work” further exacerbated this deficit view by stimulating student “giving” without producing significant change in their world views or understandings of inequality (Boyle-Baise, 1999, pp. 310-312).

Murphy and Rasch (2008) applied Allport’s (1954) “contact theory” to intercultural service learning to describe the conditions that are required to produce positive intercultural outcomes between culturally diverse students and community members. Contact theory emerged in the United States at a time when black African American and non-African

American children were first united in public schools following the abandonment of segregation. Significantly, Allport argued that authorities should not assume that interracial “contact” alone would produce positive outcomes (1954 in Murphy & Rasch, 2008, p. 69). He suggested, rather, that certain “conditions” must be met if interracial contact is to produce positive outcomes, including “equal status, cooperation, common goals, and support from authorities” (Allport, 1954 in Murphy & Rasch, 2008, p. 69).

Our experience of ABSL projects over the years indicates that collaborative music-making can fulfil Allport’s conditions for interracial contact to produce positive outcomes. Further research by Antonio (2001) however reemphasises that not all forms of intercultural contact will produce positive outcomes. In a study of interracial contact between students on a university campus, Antonio (2001, p. 593) found that

... casual interracial interaction is particularly beneficial among students with more racially homogeneous friendship circles, especially with regard to developing leadership skills. In addition, findings indicate that frequent interracial interaction among students may be more important in developing cultural knowledge than involvement in formal activities such as cultural awareness workshops.

Antonio’s findings reaffirmed Allport’s original thesis that ‘negative results such as the reinforcement of racial stereotypes’ are likely to occur if the contact is casual: that is, if contact only involves incidental interactions such as attending the same venues or courses separately (Allport, 1954 in Antonio, 2001, p. 596). This is echoed in Mary Louise Pratt’s (1992) description of contact zones – that is, where peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other – and the reality that these zones are full of both “possibilities and perils” (as cited in Somerville & Perkins, 2003, p. 255).

Broader literature on “interracial” communication in the United States and Canada indicates that arts activities can offer a positive medium for reducing “stereotype threat” and associated anxiety around intercultural engagements. For example, in their study of interracial communication between white and Canadian First Peoples, Vorauer, Main, and O’Connell (1998) found that when white Canadians were concerned about being stereotyped as “racist” they generally performed less well in interracial verbal communication (for example, stuttering) and relationship building. Tatum and Sekaquaptewa (2009) also found that “whites” who were concerned about appearing racist spoke less and adopted a submissive “learner” role when discussing race with African Americans. Data collected throughout our project indicates that problems associated with intercultural anxiety may be overcome or at least mitigated through informal collaborative arts-based and creative processes involved in ABSL.

Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University Pilot Program 2009-2011

Prior to the current OLT project, in 2009 the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU) commenced a pilot ABSL program in collaboration with Barkly Regional Arts and the Winanjjikari Music Centre, located in Tennant Creek, NT. Each year from 2009 to 2011, students and staff travelled to Tennant Creek for two-week programs during which they

worked alongside Aboriginal artists and Elders on a range of community-led programs. These included recording and writing albums, documenting cultural activities, managing community festivals, staging and recording performances, building community arts infrastructure, and running school holiday programs. The aims of the ABSL pilot program were two-fold: first, to enhance the way in which Aboriginal content was embedded in arts-based curricula at Griffith University; and second, to develop Griffith's relationships and connections with Aboriginal communities in Australia. The pilot project directly involved approximately 20 students across seven undergraduate arts programs. The pilot also hosted students from The University of Queensland's (UQ) School of Music and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit. Within Tennant Creek itself, the program involved work with over 30 Aboriginal artists and Elders and over 50 youth.

To put Tennant Creek into context, it is a township of approximately 3,500 people, located 500 kilometres north of Alice Springs and 1,000 kilometres south of Darwin. Approximately 70% of the current population is Aboriginal, and sixteen Aboriginal language groups are spoken in the region. Barkly Regional Arts (BRA) provides an interface between Aboriginal and non-Indigenous cultures and delivers around 50 annual programs and projects to over 800 artists. Given the region's high levels of unemployment, social disadvantage and cultural erosion, BRA's programs focus on building social and community well-being, cultural maintenance, career pathways, and financial and health support. BRA auspices the Winanjikari Music Centre (WMC), which operates as a music production house and training centre for Aboriginal musicians and music production technicians in Tennant Creek. WMC projects promote social cohesion and community building by generating and fostering complementary income streams, positive lifestyle choices and intergenerational activities that transmit and celebrate traditional and contemporary music.

Like many Australian universities, Griffith University had expressed commitment "to the creation of a curriculum that is informed by and respects the knowledge systems of our first peoples—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders" (Griffith University, 2011). However, participation and retention rates within the Conservatorium are variable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and there has been concern about lack of alignment between the formal curriculum and the prior learning experiences of these students (QCGU Review Document, 2012). Given that service learning relationships may prove to be the most effective means by which QCGU can interact positively with Indigenous communities (QCGU Review Document, 2012), the ABSL program was strongly positioned to form part of a solution.

The pilot ABSL approach in Tennant Creek

In contrast to the functionalist "charity" view of service learning, QCGU's overarching philosophical approach to designing the ABSL pilot project could be described as "postmodern" (Boyle-Baise, 1999). Postmodern approaches to service learning encourage: empathising with others as equals; demystifying cultural differences; fostering dialogue and trusting relationships across differences (i.e. border crossing); and developing caring and responsive students and staff who work alongside diverse others on community-led projects (Boyle-Baise, 1999, p. 317). The QCGU facilitators have enacted this approach through a strong partnership with the regional arts organisation Barkly Regional Arts and local

Aboriginal musicians and sound engineers at the Winanjjikari Music Centre in Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, in central Australia.

As documented elsewhere (see for example Bartleet & Carfoot, 2013; Bartleet, 2012, 2011), QCGU service learning project facilitators and partners sought to create opportunities for Aboriginal Winanjjikari staff members and local Elders to lead informal activities with students on a day-to-day basis during service learning trips. In many cases this has involved students simply “turning up” at the Winanjjikari Music Centre shed and “hanging around” in the open jamming area and recording studio. This largely informal approach to service learning activities provided an organic context for intercultural engagement, which was largely unstructured on a day-to-day basis. As a result music students typically fell in with whatever activities were taking place at the Centre, such as setting up sound and lighting for local events, recording local musicians, or jamming with musicians who were present each day.

The program was offered in second semester to accommodate community events, requirements and seasons, and to allow sufficient time for student recruitment, gaining community permissions and establishing cultural protocols. Each year the same two people have facilitated the program, and this continuity has had a positive effect on the relationships formed with Aboriginal Elders and artists. The program activities have differed each year in response to community needs. The first year involved setting up a recording studio, the second year aligned with the Desert Harmony Festival, and in the third year of the pilot project students worked on song writing and recording projects.

Despite the varied activities, each iteration of the project incorporated three key phases. First, students received intercultural training. Where possible, this commenced prior to the program and included a brief cross-cultural orientation session. Once in the community, students attended classes on language and culture with respected Warumungu Elders. Second, students collaborated with Aboriginal artists at Winanjjikari Music Centre in artistic tasks, and on everyday errands that form part of working in a remote community. All students engaged in three reflective activities, which formed their assessment and provide important data for the program’s ongoing research (Swords & Kiely, 2010). Students: (a) produced field diaries, documenting their learning processes as well as reflecting on the intercultural competencies developed through this work; (b) participated in an interview with the facilitators about the learning process and the implications of this for Aboriginal content in the curriculum; and (c) created a five-minute digital story about the experience using footage from their trip. Lastly, students communicated their experience to the university and broader Brisbane community, via digital stories, workshops and presentations.



Figure 1. Members of the QCGU Pilot Project outside the Winanjjikari Music Centre (2009)¹

The QCGU processes and experiences from 2009 to 2011 informed the development of this broader OLT project, as well as a new service-learning program at Curtin University. Experienced ABSL facilitators in the UWS School of Secondary Education have also conducted ABSL programs in Tennant Creek since 2009 in partnership with the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation. Long-term experiences from both this UWS work and the QCGU pilot project have significantly informed the shape and approaches taken in the current OLT project.

¹ As a sign of cultural respect, we have covered the face of one of the Winanjjikari Music Centre members who has recently passed away.

Positioning ourselves



Project Leader Brydie-Leigh Bartleet is a Senior Lecturer at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Deputy Director of the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, convenor of the Music and Communities Strand and convenor of the Bachelor of Music Honours Program. She is a non-Indigenous woman who grew up between South Africa and Australia. This bi-cultural upbringing has led her to become fascinated with the role that music plays in bringing cultures together. She has been involved in research alongside Australian Aboriginal colleagues and communities for the past 8 years. As described in the aforementioned pilot description,

Brydie has been collaborating with the Tennant Creek community for the past 5 years, and is known locally by her skin name *Nungarrayi*. She works closely with her husband Gavin Carfoot on this project, and their close relationship has been a defining influence on their shared work in Tennant Creek. Brydie has also worked on projects closer to home alongside Griffith's Council of Elders and facilitated the recent production of a CD of songs called *Cungelella* (2013) with William *Dura Danje* Leisha, Shem *Curan Danje* Leisha and Aunty Anne *Birrabin Barndha* Leisha. She has also worked to include Aunty Anne and Uncle Bill on the teaching staff for her large first-year class at the Conservatorium. Brydie is also working on the Australian Research Council (ARC) funded project *Captive Audiences* (2012-2013), which explores performing arts rehabilitation programs in prisons. Prior to this she worked on the Australian Research Council funded project *Sound Links* (2007-2008), which was one of the largest studies into community music in Australia and featured two Aboriginal case studies (one remote community – Borroloola and one metropolitan community – Inala). Her research focuses broadly on intercultural community arts practices, and during the final stages of the OLT project she undertook a Visiting Fellowship at the University of Cambridge to work on a new international intercultural arts network. For her personally, the most defining moment in this work to-date was taking her two-year old twins Caitlin and Claire (known in Tennant Creek by their Warumungu skin name, *Nampin*) on the project in 2013. Watching the community warmly embrace her girls reiterated what she has always known: the most fundamentally important element in this life and work is relationships.



Project Team Member Dawn Bennett is a Senior Research Fellow, Australian Learning and Teaching Fellow, and Director of the Creative Workforce initiative at Curtin University. Her research and teaching focuses on the education, working lives and economic circumstances of creative artists. Her research incorporates studies on learning and engagement amongst undergraduate and graduate students; academic work; practising artists; identity development; and research frameworks. Dawn holds postgraduate degrees in education and performance (viola) and has worked as a musician and academic in the UK, Australia and Canada. She has authored over 50 publications in the areas of education, careers and the creative

workforce, including four monographs and edited collections. Dawn is on the editorial

boards of the International Journal of Music Education and the Australian Journal of Music Education. She is a member of the Music Council of Australia and a commissioner for the International Society of Music Education's Teaching and Learning Forum. Dawn has taught in the higher education sector since 1997 and has been a consistent contributor to the development of higher education curriculum. This has included membership of the Curriculum Services Support Network and authorship of a degree program for regional students. From 2000 until 2002 she was responsible for the management and leadership of a regional academic team delivering programs in the visual and performing arts, textiles, graphic design and information technology. Within this role she established a community arts program that won the Curtin Vice Chancellor's Community Service Award (2000). Many of the arts programs were delivered in Aboriginal communities such as that in Lake Grace, WA. In the year 2000 she co-facilitated a National Learnscope project that identified and delivered professional development for lecturers in regional locations, and in 2003 she completed a National Fellowship in Flexible Learning with the Australian National Training Authority. Dawn was an Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Fellow with a project that concluded in 2011. Recently she was awarded the Curtin Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence for her inspirational leadership.



Project Team Member Anne Power is an Associate Professor in Music Education in the School of Education and the Centre for Education Research at the University of Western Sydney. Her international connections have led her to investigate and publish on the relational learning that happens through music and the arts. As Course Adviser for the Master of Teaching Secondary Program and co-Convenor of the service learning unit, she has strongly linked schools with community programs. Her years in Tennant Creek have brought together her arts-based learning with her service learning passion and she rejoices in her skin name, *Nangali*. Anne is a 2010 winner of the ALTC Award for University Teaching for *Beyond Institutional Walls: Community engagement in secondary teacher education* for programs that enhance learning. She is the author of a chapter in *Opera Indigene: Re/presenting First Nations and Indigenous Cultures* (2010). Related projects are in global education. Anne is editor of *Musicworks*, the journal of the Australian National Council of Orff Schulwerk. She is on several editorial boards of journals. Her co-authoring of national reports includes *School Music Education Provision in Australia* and *Boys' Education: Motivation and Engagement*. Anne's commitment to social justice issues emerges in her work on the report *Positive Behaviour for Learning* and the ensuing ARC project *Enabling schooling success* (2014). This commitment underpins her work on *Teaching for a Fair Go: Exemplary teachers of students in poverty*.



Project Team Member Kathryn Marsh is a member of the Music Education Unit at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, where she was formerly Chair of Music Education (2005-2010) and Associate Dean, Research (2008-2009). She teaches subjects relating to primary music education, cultural diversity in music education, Aboriginal music education and music education research methods. With a PhD in ethnomusicology and a professional teaching background in

school music education and English as a Second Language education, her research interests include children's musical play, children's creativity, music in the lives of refugee children and multicultural and Aboriginal music education. She has written numerous scholarly and professional publications, including her book, *The Musical Playground: Global Tradition and Change in Children's Songs and Games*, published by Oxford University Press and winner of the UK Folklore Society's Katherine Briggs Award. In conjunction with the NSW Department of Education and Training, and the NSW Board of Studies, she has been actively involved in curriculum development and teacher training for many years and has presented internationally on a regular basis. She has been the recipient of national research grants from the ARC and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies which have involved large-scale international cross-cultural collaborative research into children's musical play in Europe, the UK, Korea, USA and with Aboriginal communities in and around Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory. On the basis of her broad knowledge of primary music education, she was invited to be a member of an interdisciplinary research team that conducted the National Review of School Music Education in Australia in 2004-2005, and was also invited to be editor of the primary music section in the *Oxford Handbook of Music Education* (OUP). Due to serious health issues Kathy had to withdraw from the project, but the team acknowledges her here for her contributions to the early parts of the project and the tremendous work and effort she put into trying to make her University of Sydney project work despite all odds.



Project Manager / Research Fellow Naomi Sunderland

is Senior Lecturer in First Australians and Social Justice in the School of Human Services and Social Work at Griffith University. She was Project Manager for the OLT project reported on here. Naomi is an active musician and songwriter and has a background in applied ethics and human rights, music, and social research for happiness, health, and wellbeing. Naomi travelled to Tennant Creek to co-facilitate the Queensland Conservatorium ABSL trips during 2012 and 2013. Here

she was able to collaborate on song writing and performance activities with members of the WMC and Barkly Regional Arts and visiting musicians including Warren H. Williams and Coloured Stone. Naomi is photographed here with Terrance Limerick in Tennant Creek.

Our Advisory Group consisted of three Aboriginal scholars and artists, two non-Indigenous scholars, and a past student from QCGU's pilot project.

Associate Professor Simon Forrest is Director for the Centre for Aboriginal Studies. A recognised Elder in the Noongar group of people, Simon is also related to the Yamatji and Wongi people. Simon has a Master of Education (UWA) and has had considerable experience working in the field of Aboriginal education and reconciliation. In 2005 Simon was awarded the National Scholar of the Year, NAIDOC National Awards, the WA Aboriginal Education and Training Award and the Aboriginal Education Award of Excellence, Perth. Simon has a particularly strong background in Aboriginal cultural issues and over the years, has contributed extensively to the provision of cultural awareness training to the wider West Australian community.

Dr Sandy O’Sullivan is a member of the Wiradjuri Nation. She is currently an ARC Indigenous Research Fellow and was previously an ALTC Teaching Fellow (2008-2009). She lives in Brisbane and works in the Research Division of Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, located in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Kim Walker is Executive Director and Head of Dance at the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association Dance College (NAISDA) Dance College. For more than 30 years NAISDA Dance College has been building long lasting links with traditional communities. It is through these links that NAISDA has been able to contribute so greatly and uniquely to the development of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance throughout Australia.

Professor Anna Haebich joined Curtin in 2011 as a Senior Research Fellow to research Aboriginal performance and festivals in Western Australia. Her research is informed by her background in university teaching and research, centre directorship, museum curatorship, visual arts practice, work with Aboriginal communities and her personal experiences of living in migrant and Aboriginal communities.

Dr Juliana McLaughlin was a recipient of an ALTC grant in 2010 for her project “Supporting future curriculum leaders with embedding Indigenous knowledge on teaching practicum.” She is from Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. Her research interests are driven by a commitment and responsibility to First Peoples’ knowledge systems, decolonising methodologies and embedding First Peoples’ ways of knowing in university programs.

James Winwood attended the first QCGU pilot program in Tennant Creek in 2009 and has been working in the Barkly region since graduating, was technical manager at the Desert Harmony Festival in 2013, and has been appointed co-manager of the Winanjikari Music Centre for 2014.

The project was evaluated independently by **Dr Jan Strom**, who comes to the project with significant experience in the field of community engagement and working alongside Australian Aboriginal colleagues in university settings, local council and community. In the early stages of the project Canadian-Australian scholar **Professor Barbara Holland** played an evaluative role, and brought to the early planning stages significant expertise in designing service learning projects with First Peoples. The team has also relied strongly on the ongoing guidance and support from Griffith’s Council of Elders and its co-Chair **Aunty Anne Leisha**.

The multiple positions, viewpoints and experiences this collaborative team of both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous colleagues has contributed has been crucial to our intercultural work in this space. As our colleagues Mackinlay and Barney (2012) noted in their own OLT report, such an intercultural team responds to a call for dialogue and reconciliation:

While we recognise that there are multiple perspectives and opinions in relation to the issue of whether non-Indigenous people should engage in acts of representation about, with and for Indigenous Australian peoples, knowledges and cultures, the project team consists of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members and represents in many ways

the call from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for non-Indigenous people to enter into meaningful dialogues with one another so as to bring about a reconciled Australia. (p. 10)

Figure 2. Advisory Group Meeting at Griffith University in Brisbane (November 2013)



Chapter 2. Approach and Methodology

Building on the aforementioned pilot work in Central Australia, this project involved running ABSL projects in three Australian universities (QCGU, Curtin University and UWS). Project Team members were responsible for coordinating the ABSL programs at their individual institutions, and worked collaboratively with colleagues (detailed below) to deliver these sub-projects. These programs were run in collaboration with communities and partners in regional and metropolitan areas in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and largely involved students working alongside Aboriginal artists and Elders on *community-led* projects. The team underscores the words *community-led*, as all sub-projects were determined by the community, rather than being imposed by a university.

Project scope

While the project originally planned to look at performing arts (as was detailed on our proposal), in the early planning stages the team saw significant benefits in expanding this to encompass a broader conceptualisation of the arts, for instance to include film and television, journalism, industrial design, and visual arts in addition to music, dance, drama and education. This choice was also in response to the student cohorts, which the team had access to and the nature of the community projects that were requested.

The choice of where to undertake the QCGU and UWS projects was made for us. Both institutions had previously been invited to work in the Tennant Creek community, and the team underscores the word *invited*, as a community invitation is so crucial in this work (still to this day, after working in Tennant Creek for 5 years, the team begins our consultations every year by asking if that invitation still stands). Having this previous relationship and three years of pilot work in this community meant that the QCGU and UWS sub-projects would naturally occur in Tennant Creek and continue to deepen our relationships, partnerships and work there.

The Curtin sub-project's location and focus was chosen differently as there was no pre-existing ABSL project to work from. Initially plans were for Curtin students to travel far north in WA to work with communities that the Advisory Group members had relationships with. While this was an exciting thought, the team decided for a number of reasons that it would be more sustainable and sensible to work closer to home. As is detailed in Chapter 5, one of the facilitators Michelle also already had a relationship with the Perth Aboriginal community on which the project could build the project. She also felt that Curtin is located in Noongar country and should therefore prioritise the Noongar community. Hence the team utilised existing networks to ask local organisations whether there was anything to which Film and Television, journalism and writing students might be able to make a contribution. This led to a number of potential projects, some of which were enacted once the team was able to match community needs with the timeline of the project and the skillsets and capabilities of students and their lecturers.

The team had originally planned a fourth ABSL with students from the University of Sydney under the facilitation of Kathryn Marsh. Initially the team talked about the possibility of

working with a Torres Strait Islander community, as one of Kathy's previous students was working at a local school there. After considering this in-depth, the team decided it was not going to be achievable due to various possible restrictions, as well as the expenses that would be associated with travelling to the Torres Strait. The team decided to rather re-focus on Central Australia where Kathy had previously worked with communities in Mungkarta and Tennant Creek. Unfortunately, due to serious ongoing health issues for Kathy, the team had to reassess the viability to traveling to Central Australia. The project explored a range of different options and plans (including sending someone else in her place). Following extended consultation with local partners in Central Australia and team discussions, Kathy and the team resolved to relinquish the OLT project funds set aside for this trip due to her ongoing ill health. The team then successfully proposed to the OLT to redirect the University of Sydney project funds toward community engagement activities and creative outputs, which were agreed upon at the March 2013 Advisory Group meeting. Contingency planning for the University of Sydney project consumed significant time for the team. This was due to the complex range of factors that impacted upon the decision-making process, but ultimately the team believes the most sensitive decision was made in order to retain the integrity of Kathy's relationship with the community, and ensure the appropriate duty of care and guidance was given to potential students participating in these sub-projects.

Project limitations

As with any project of this magnitude and complexity there are always limitations. While community partners and our Aboriginal colleagues have been front and centre in the planning and implementation of all these projects, in the research accompanying this work, ensuring a widespread representation of community voices in interviews was not always possible or appropriate. A number of colleagues were interviewed for the research, and transcript excerpts of these are included throughout the report, but oftentimes this formalised, Western way of capturing impressions was entirely unsatisfactory. Likewise, the Project Team felt self-conscious about imposing too much on community members. So much of their time had already been given to the projects they were involved in without adding the imposition of a further formalised interview to the mix.

The Project Team grappled with ways to ameliorate this, and also sought the advice of the Evaluator about finding ways to ensure the community's voice was heard in this work. While the team went some way to addressing this in 2013 with return trips explicitly designed to seek feedback on what the project has accomplished (and Project Leader Brydie was told repeatedly that Tennant Creek has a very efficient filtering out process, if the team was not wanted there the team wouldn't have been welcomed with such open arms); however, the team still felt uneasy about the proportion of reflections from the students in comparison to those of community members in the reporting. While the team acknowledged that gathering this data from students was a much more straightforward process given that they were required to complete reflections as part of their assessment, team members still felt that this reporting didn't accurately represent the strong involvement of the community members in each project.

Through closer reflection, the team came to realise that the Westernised ways of gathering research and quotes on tape were not always appropriate, and so much more could be

gleaned from actions and observations. The deep connections that were visible on stage as the QCGU students performed with the WMC musicians, the way local Aboriginal children jumped into the laps of UWS pre-service teachers unprompted, the proud looks on the Elders' faces as they watched the footage shown at the Curtin showcase. These significant moments, and there are many that come to mind, give us confidence that the work involved has been valued by the community. Likewise, sharing insights from this research and seeking community feedback as well as input from our Aboriginal colleagues on the project's Advisory Group adds to our assurance in its focus.

Description of the ABSL sub-projects

Curtin University, Indigenous Community Education and Awareness, Kart Koort Wieren, Langford Aboriginal Association and Noongar Radio

Curtin team members: Dawn Bennett (Music); Michelle Johnston (Film and television); Bonita Mason and Chris Thompson (Journalism)

Community team members: Indigenous Community Education and Awareness (ICEA); Kart Koort Wieren; Langford Aboriginal Association; and Noongar Radio

Student team members: Kimberley Benjamin, Michael Clark, Jessica Cummins, Matilda Cunningham, Louise Dryburgh, Jess Keily, Esther Kim, Jesse McCarthy Price, Rebecca Metcalf, Gabiso Ndiweni, Louise Rennie

The team at Curtin University in Perth focused on creating relationships with the local community so that students might begin to see Australia's First Peoples as part of their own communities. It was also felt that working in Perth would allow the participating students to have the opportunity of building relationships within their own community and therefore continue to build on those relationships even after they had completed the Curtin project. This prerogative led the Perth team away from initial plans to work with a community almost 3,000km from the capital city, and to focus instead on projects that might be undertaken closer to home.

With the objective of building more culturally appropriate relationships between students, communities and universities, the Curtin team employed participatory and democratic processes by working *with* rather than *for* community participants. Specifically, the project team adopted a 'critical service learning' framework to acknowledge the multi-directional relationships involved in service-learning projects. The team positioned its work as action research (sometimes known as participatory research or participatory action research), which creates change *through* action and change that results in action (Johnston, 2013, p. 76). Action researchers, more accurately described as facilitators (Stringer 1996), work with a community group who participate not as subjects but as co-researchers or co-facilitators "in the production of knowledge through rigorous, well-planned, structured and self-aware methods. All participants in a project can contribute to the research, feeding back their thoughts and observations and actively engaging with the research process" (Tacchi, Slater & Hearn, 2003, p. 13). In this case the students, community and educators worked together as participant researchers to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice.

The Curtin University community service-learning project involved 13 students from film and

television (FTV), journalism and feature writing. Most were in their second year of study, and one student was undertaking her honours year. A call for expressions of interest was sent to all students in the faculty during the previous semester, and in this call the team noted pre-requisites that would ensure the students had sufficient skills to meet the anticipated needs of community partners (camera skills, interview and writing skills for example). This was followed with an information session, which had the added incentive of free food, and which only one student attended. Hoping that the poor attendance related to end-of-year pressure rather than lack of interest, the team followed up with a second email and encouraged colleagues to also relay information about the project. At the same time, the team utilised existing networks to ask local organisations whether there was anything to which FTV, journalism and writing students might be able to make a contribution. This led to a number of potential projects, some of which were enacted once the team was able to match community needs with the timeline of the project and the skillsets and capabilities of students and their lecturers.

At the time of the project there was no generic service learning or work integrated learning unit at Curtin University; and yet the team wanted to ensure that students received course credit for their work. As a result, the Curtin project was run within a 'special projects' unit. FTV students were able to enrol directly; however, other students such as those in journalism were unable to enrol because of the lack of elective space within their double degree programs. These students participated in the project as part of other units, and to enable this they agreed on an alternative assessment schedule with lecturers. The situation was far from ideal, but it enabled the project to begin.

The students undertook a semester-long course that allowed them to work with local Aboriginal communities on community-led projects. In terms of the formal learning context, action research allowed a focus on the *process* of creating media projects rather than the video or journalistic *product* that each student must submit for assessment. There was an emphasis on taking the time, early in semester, to observe, to listen, to talk, and to establish relationships with community partners. During this time students participated in a range of preparation activities such as Aboriginal culture and language training, and they worked in inter-disciplinary teams with their local organisations for most of the semester. The team also visited the site of the 1834 Pinjarra Massacre, under the leadership of Yamatji Noongar Elder and Advisory Group member Simon Forrest. Over the course of a day the team traced the steps of Governor James Stirling and his men from metropolitan Perth to the township of Pinjarra, 86km from the city, where Binjareb people of the Whadjuk Tribe were attacked and killed². At the massacre site, Simon Forrest led the team in a ceremony that paid respect for lives lost and called for a shared understanding of Australian history (see Figure 3).

² <www.aboriginalmassacres.blogspot.com.au/2011/03/battle-of-pinjarra.html>

Figure 3. Simon Forrest leading the ceremony at the Pinjarra Massacre site (2013)



Guided reflections were undertaken at regular points throughout the Curtin project, which concluded with a showcase and celebration for all participants and the wider community. Over the ensuing three months, each student and academic responded to a series of reflective questions and attended an interview with the facilitators of the project. These post-project activities enabled the findings of earlier data to be validated, refined and extended.

Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University (QCGU), Barkly Regional Arts and Winanjikari Music Centre

QCGU team members (2012-2013): Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Gavin Carfoot (now Queensland University of Technology – QUT), Naomi Sunderland

Community team members (2012-2013): Barkly Regional Arts (BRA) – Alan Murn, Kathy Burns, James Winwood, Lincoln McKinnon, Corinne Berry, Shayne Teece-Johnson; Winanjikari Music Centre – Brian Morton, Brenden Hines, Leslie Thomson, Kumanjayi Johnson, Marcus Finlay, Reggie O’Riley, Dirk Dickenson, Joseph Shannon, Jordan Newcastle, Terrance Limerick, and Adrian McNamarra; as well as Elders such as Rosemary Plummer and Rose Graham, touring musicians such as Warren H. Williams and Frank Yamma, and local musicians such as Jeff McLaughlin, and teachers such as Paul Tighe

Student team members (2012): Bure Godwin, Carey Ryan, Jeff Tanerii, Sophie Gleeson

Student team members (2013): Abby Gardner, Euan Cumming, Joel Wiggins, Josh Lovegrove, and Rohin Power (QUT)

As is detailed above, the QCGU sub-project has involved students travelling to Tennant Creek to work alongside Aboriginal artists and Elders at the Winanjikari Music Centre on a range of community-led projects, such as recording and writing albums, documenting cultural activities, managing community festivals, staging performances, building community arts infrastructure, and running school programs. With both the pilot and OLT phases of the project combined, this project has directly benefitted over 30 students across 7 undergraduate programs; 30 Aboriginal artists and Elders; and 50 children/youth in Tennant Creek. During the OLT phase of the project in 2012-2013, team members also developed a partnership with QUT (as one of the facilitators Gavin took up a new position there) and hosted a guest student from this institution. As the team mentioned above, while the QCGU sub-project demonstrates a systematic approach to both coordination and implementation, it is also designed to be flexible and responsive to community needs. The project is offered in second semester each year, to accommodate the varied timing of different community events, needs, and seasons, and to allow sufficient time for student recruitment, gaining community permissions and ensuring cultural protocols are in place. In order to maintain a continuity of relationships with our Aboriginal colleagues, each year the project is facilitated by the same two staff, Brydie and Gavin.

During this OLT project in 2012 to 2013, the students were working at the Desert Harmony Festival – an annual 10-day multi-arts and cultural community festival that features music, visual arts, theatre, music, food, cultural activities, parades, film and dance from the Barkly Region as well as artists from across Australia. In 2013, the highlight of the festival was a special performance the team gave in collaboration with musicians from the Winanjikari Music Centre.³ After a week of sharing and learning each other's songs, team members presented an intimate evening of intercultural stories and songs under the stars at the celebrated cultural centre Nyinkka Nyunyu. Well over 100 attended (mostly Aboriginal community members from Tennant Creek and surrounding communities, including important Elders) and around 300 people tuned in from around the world to watch the live streaming. It was hosted by QCGU alumnus James Winwood who has been working in the Tennant Creek region since he was part of the first trip in 2009 (see Figure 4).

³ <www.desertharmonyfestival.com/#!circle-stories/c1vpp>



Figure 4. Circle Stories Cast after the performance at the Desert Harmony Festival (2013)

The students also performed as featured acts, as well as backing bands for a number of touring artists in the festival, including renowned Aboriginal artist and Red Ochre Award winner Warren H. Williams. As is the case with many community arts projects, they were asked to do a range of creative and technical tasks, from acting as the film crew for live streaming around to the world to painting backdrops for performances.

The aforementioned three steps used in the pilot 2009-2011 were used in 2012-2013, although students were given more flexibility in how they chose to communicate the experience. Rather than requiring a digital story, students were asked to produce a creative output in response to the experience (these included original songs, improvisatory performances and short stories). During 2012-2013 the team also worked more concertedly to integrate the students' learning into the QCGU curriculum. For instance, in 2013 the students gave a Project Week Workshop via live hook-up when the team were in Tennant Creek, and they've given presentations in Jazz workshop, the Bachelor of Popular Music Major Study class, and Music Industry Internship Class Presentations, and this work has featured in the Popular World Music class. The students also recently gave a highly successful presentation to the University of the Third Age with Naomi Sunderland.

University of Western Sydney (UWS), Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Papulu Aparr-Kari, Tennant Creek High School and the Mungkarta School

UWS team members (2012-2013): Anne Power (in Tennant Creek schools); Shirley Gilbert (in

Elliott School).

Community team members (2012-2013): Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (especially Eric Brace), Papulu Apparr-Kari (especially Karan Hayward), Tennant Creek High School staff (especially Pauline Davenport and Maisie Floyd executive) and students, Tennant Creek Primary School and Mungkarta School, Barkly Arts (especially Alan Murn and Adrian McNamarra).

Student team members (2012): Corinne Berry (visual arts); Lisa Judge (English); Sharni Potts, Melissa Silva (dance) Blake Roberts, Nicholas Woodford (music); and five science and primary school pre-service students.

Student team members (2013): Stacey Coates, Kylie O'Brien (Mungkarta and Tennant Creek Primary schools), Ian Hooper (music); Victoria Ryan (visual arts); and two other primary school pre-service teachers.

The University of Western Sydney sub-project involves participants from the Master of Teaching postgraduate degree. For the pre-service teachers, part of their experience in Tennant Creek is the completion of a four-week professional experience block in schools. The other part comes from responding to community requests in small projects. Our partner is the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, working closely with the language and cultural centre, Papula Apparr-Kari. The professional experience block is the culmination of the teaching qualification. It is prepared by cultural training that takes place in a focus week in June. During this week, the community members are invited to suggest projects on which the future teachers can work. The project decision-making is shared with the community members. Our OLT project uses a critical service-learning framework, positioning the pre-service teachers as actively involved in reflecting on their practice. This happens naturally through debriefs at the end of the day and through reflective evaluations. Before selection, the pre-service participants undertake an interview and then engage in three data gathering stages: after the focus week in June, during the block in October and after the experience is complete. The pre-service teachers re-think and re-configure their experiences as they reflect on them in an action research cycle that is designed to have ongoing resonance as they complete their pre-service status and step out into their professional careers.

This report highlights those students who have an arts focus in their teaching: on dance, music and visual arts. Each of their community projects derives from an artistic process. For example, Sharni collaborated with her dance class to create a flash mob performance for an outdoor event. Corinne engaged her younger visual arts students in creating passport stamps that were part of a display on virtual travel (see Figure 5).

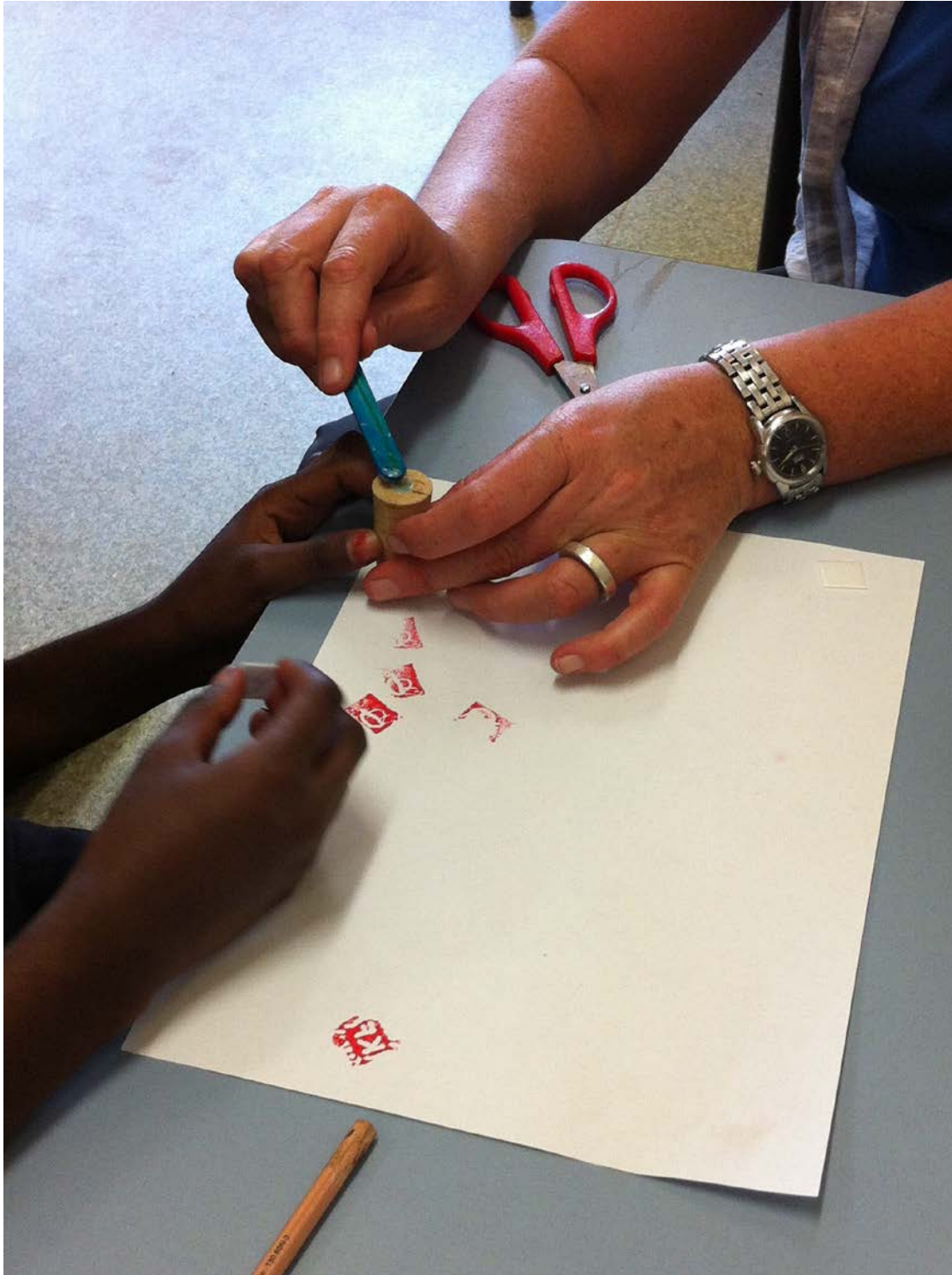


Figure 5. UWS student Corinne creating “passport stamps” (2012)

She also engaged her older students in tie-dying football jerseys. Victoria engaged her younger visual arts students with creating soft toys from football socks, with the intention of selling through community markets. Her older students she engaged with the drawing of illustrations based on Shaun Tan’s book, *The Lost Thing*. Paul and Genesa worked on song-writing with their classes. For their project, they connected with the Winanjikari Music Centre and provided the students with an opportunity to record their songs. Following their

trail, Nick and Blake continued the opportunity of recording songs and initiated a community open mic night. Ian engaged students and community members on a multicultural night. Powerful reflections on these projects reveal the impact of the experience in the community on their personal and professional lives.

Project aims

In running these three ABSL sub-projects, the team sought to achieve the following two aims:

1. **Enhance the way in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is embedded in arts curricula through community service learning.** This curriculum design and delivery goal aimed to (a) incorporate intercultural collaborations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into learning and assessment activities in ways that prepared students for work in diverse local and international contexts; (b) contribute to the quality of students' learning experiences, intercultural competencies, and career preparation, while supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in their cultural learning endeavours; and (c) inform the expansion of future service learning projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the arts. This goal was designed to directly address the OLT objective: to promote and support strategic change in higher education institutions for the enhancement of learning and teaching, including curriculum development and assessment.
2. **Demonstrate how Australian universities can integrate community service learning with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into their arts curricula.** This dissemination goal aimed to (a) model respectful and culturally appropriate ways of building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning and teaching; (b) exhibit the creation of culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in arts curricula through service learning partnerships; and (c) demonstrate the ways in which students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and tertiary institutions can learn together in innovative, mutually beneficial service learning partnerships in the arts. This goal was designed to address the OLT objective: to develop effective mechanisms for the identification, development, dissemination and embedding of good individual and institutional practice in learning and teaching in Australian higher education.

Research questions

In order to meet these aims, research data collection and analysis underpinned the implementation of the sub-projects. Through this research the project sought to answer the following questions and sub-questions:

1. **In what ways can service learning in the arts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enhance the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content within university curricula?**
 - a. How can cross-cultural collaborations in the arts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enhance both learning and assessment activities?

- b. How can service-learning projects contribute towards the quality of students' learning experiences, intercultural competencies, and career preparation, while supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through actions that also have a direct benefit to them?
- c. How can service-learning partnerships in the arts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities inform the expansion of future partnerships in other disciplines?

2. What steps and strategies are required in order for Australian universities to successfully integrate community service learning with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into their arts curricula?

- a. What measures are necessary for universities to build respectful and culturally appropriate interactions with communities and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning and teaching?
- b. What steps and protocols need to be followed in the development of culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content through service learning partnerships?
- c. How can universities ensure students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities learn together in innovative, mutually beneficial service learning partnerships, and how can the arts experience inform these actions?

These research questions were designed to be closely aligned with the aforementioned project aims, and through the answers to these questions the team sought to meet our ultimate goals of enhancing the way in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is embedded in arts curricula through ABSL, and demonstrating *how* this can be done. These questions and aims also guided the development of the project's conceptual framework, which is detailed below.

Methodology

Data collection

The team employed a qualitative meta-ethnographic data collection and analysis approach to document and interpret outcomes across the three sub-projects. The team collected data using shared semi-structured interview protocols, student assessment and reflection tasks, and researcher reflective diary/observations templates that were adapted to suit each university's ABSL project. Examples of these data collection tools are given in Appendix B. The team used additional unstructured diary writing and video and photo observation techniques to document the different contexts within which the three sub-projects occurred. The resulting data collected provides a rich picture with viewpoints and experiences from all participants in the projects including participating Aboriginal artists and community workers and partners, community partner representatives including school teachers and administrators, community arts organisation representatives, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous students, and ABSL facilitators from the partner universities.

Full ethical clearance was given for this data collection to occur. After the Project Leader secured ethical clearance for the project from Griffith University, team members at partner

organisations then obtained ethical approval for their specific service learning projects through their institutions' ethics review committees. Anne Power obtained additional approval from NT Department of Education Research Review Committee to conduct the UWS project and associated research in NT schools. The project used standard informed consent mechanisms, with information sheets in "plain English." Where participants were not able to read these documents, they were read aloud by a team member. Team members are also in regular contact with the communities they've been working with to ensure this consent remains, and appropriate cultural protocols are adhered to; for example, removing all public images and music featuring deceased participants (QCGU has temporarily removed their entire digital stories channel from YouTube as many of the digital stories feature images of two recently deceased colleagues). Where participants are unnamed throughout the report, this has been done in some cases to protect their identity due to the inclusion of sensitive material, and in other cases at the request of the participant.

Data analysis

The team conducted four waves of collaborative and systematic qualitative data analysis over a period of 18 months between June 2012 and November 2013, as described below. The outcomes of these waves of analysis have informed the project's conceptual framework and the content and insights given in the following chapters.

1. **Pilot analysis:** A preliminary inductive thematic coding schema was developed using pilot data from the QCGU's annual ABSL student trips to Tennant Creek 2009-2011. Codes were developed to reflect themes and sub-themes in the data alongside particular concepts or processes that were directly relevant to the project research questions. All 2009-2011 data was coded during this process using NVIVO software. The pilot coding schema and selections of coded material (e.g. quotations from community, student, and staff interviews and diaries) were presented to the project Advisory Group in March 2013 for feedback. The Advisory Group did not request any revision to the coding schema at this point.
2. **National coding schema:** The team collated additional data from the 2012-2013 QCGU trips and the 2012-2013 Curtin University and University of Western Sydney ABSL projects using NVIVO software and revised the pilot thematic coding schema developed in wave 1 analysis to reflect the full national collection of data. This included incorporating preliminary themes developed by the Curtin University team who had conducted their own thematic analysis of the Curtin data. All team members provided input and feedback on the resulting national thematic codes (see Appendix C) and conducted inter-rater checking of selections of coded material. The Project Manager then coded the full data collection using the agreed coding schema and presented the final collection of coded material, including matrix query analyses developed through NVIVO, to the team.
3. **Collaborative interdisciplinary interpretation and refinement:** The third wave of analysis involved team engagement with and refinement of the entire coded data during a concentrated series of face-to-face meetings in late November 2013. The focus of this analysis was to streamline the coding schema developed in previous waves of analysis, and to develop interdisciplinary interpretations of the *significance* of the coded experiences and outcomes in the national data collection.

4. **Feedback and final decision-making:** The final draft analysis outcomes were then presented to the project evaluator and national Advisory Group during a one-day face-to-face meeting held in Brisbane on 21 November 2013. The team presented their key findings and interpretations as stimulus for discussion and decision-making about the project’s conceptual framework, key findings, and what shape the final outputs would take to reach a range of different audiences. The project team then met again to distil the recommendations from the Advisory Group and finalise the key content to be communicated in project outcomes.

During these waves of analysis the team found that there were strong similarities in experiences and outcomes across the three projects; however, there were also some differences between them that related to how, where, and with whom they were conducted. The disciplines of the students involved in each project appeared to have some impact on the kinds of things they reflected on during data collection. For example, some education student teachers involved in the UWS ABSL trip to Tennant Creek appeared to have more awareness of the broader socio-cultural, economic, and social inequalities that surround the children and families they were working with. Likewise, and perhaps not unexpectedly, Curtin University student journalists were more critically aware of the role of the media in producing and reproducing racist stereotypes and cultural ignorance around Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. While these differences may be instructive for other universities, colleges, and communities seeking to implement ABSL projects, our purpose in this report is not to compare and contrast the three projects in a competitive or evaluative way. Rather, the team seek to explore and draw cumulative wisdom from across all three projects in order to lay a foundation for diverse future work.

Key insights: The implementation of three very different ABSL sub-projects – all at different stages of development, in different universities in QLD, NSW and WA, in metropolitan and remote settings, and within diverse arts disciplines – allowed the team to meet the project’s aims. This was certainly not desktop research, and the hands-on approach privileged the interpersonal nature of this work, and enabled the team to refine the tools and strategies utilised on the ground, and foster deeper community and institutional engagement. The qualitative meta-ethnographic data collection and analysis approach then allowed the team to delve into the complexities, subtleties and “lived experience” of each project, and appreciate their similarities as well as their specificities. It is hoped that the resulting broader conceptual framework as well as the uniquely individual testimonies and quotes included in this report will be instructive for other universities, colleges, and communities seeking to implement ABSL projects. The approach, including the research design, and provisions for ongoing stakeholder input via data collection and analysis, is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Research design - Summary of data collection and analysis plan

	Research questions	Data collection and analysis process/methods used to answer research questions	Data types and sources
1.	In what ways can service learning in the arts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enhance the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content within university curricula?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include reflective questions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and learning processes in student reflective diaries i.e. what did they learn and how did they learn it?; • Include reflective questions on observed learning process and content in researcher diaries; • Include questions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in community interviews; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question; • Qualitative matrix analysis including some of the questions included in the next column (allows comparison between different sources of content). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student diaries; 2. Student digital stories; 3. Researcher diaries; 4. Community interviews;
	How can cross-cultural collaborations in the arts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enhance both learning and assessment activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Independent Evaluator, students, and community participants to agree on criteria that will show that learning and assessment have been “enhanced” (interviews? yarning circles?); • Identify whether criteria for enhancement <u>shifted</u> for any participants throughout the project; • Assess individual student evaluations and reported experiences against the <u>agreed</u> criteria and any subsequent unexpected criteria; • Critical incident technique? Turning points? Vignettes? • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent evaluation; 2. Student evaluations of the learning experience; 3. Researcher and student observations and diaries; 4. Participating school and organisation interviews;
	How can service-learning projects contribute towards the quality of students’ learning experiences, intercultural competencies, and career preparation, while supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through actions that also have a direct benefit to them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include questions on <u>quality</u> of learning experiences in student assessment and reflective materials and evaluations; • Include questions on students’ cultural competency in community informant interviews; • Ask community informants and advisory group members to identify exemplars of cultural competency in student diaries and digital stories – use these as the basis for coding all student data; • Include questions in community informant interviews and casual conversations with community members that elicit evaluations of whether SL projects have been of direct benefit to communities; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student diaries; 2. Community informant interviews; 3. Community informant feedback on student diaries; 4. Advisory Group feedback on student diaries (?); 5. Participating school and organisation interviews;

	How can service-learning partnerships in the arts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities inform the expansion of future partnerships in other disciplines?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include questions on SL partnerships learnings in researcher reflective diaries template? • Collaborative discussion and reflection between researchers at the conclusion of the projects using reflective diaries as stimulus; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question arising from researcher observations and collaborative discussion (frequency and intensity of findings); • Presentation of draft recommendations for SL partnerships (brochure) to Advisory Group and student and community informants for feedback. Thematise and incorporate feedback into final recommendations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researcher diaries and reflections; 2. Participating school and organisation interviews;
2.	What steps and strategies are required in order for Australian universities to successfully integrate community service learning with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into their arts curricula?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include reflection questions on project processes (steps and strategies) in researcher reflective diaries template? • Collaborative discussion and reflection between researchers at the conclusion of the projects using reflective diaries as stimulus; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question arising from researcher observations and collaborative discussion (frequency and intensity of findings); • Present the draft recommendations for steps and strategies (brochure) to Advisory Group and student and community informants for feedback. Thematise and incorporate feedback into final recommendations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researcher reflective diaries;
	What measures are necessary for universities to build respectful and culturally appropriate interactions with communities and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning and teaching?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers engage in casual conversations (unstructured interview) with students and community participants throughout project and record relevant insights in reflective diaries or notes; • Include questions relating to this research question in student reflective diaries; • Collaborative discussion and reflection between researchers at the conclusion of the projects using researcher diaries, community interviews, and student diaries as stimulus; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question arising from collaborative discussion (frequency and intensity of findings); • Present the draft recommendations for measures (brochure) to Advisory Group for feedback. Thematise and incorporate feedback into final recommendations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community interviews; 2. Researcher reflective diaries;
	What steps and protocols need to be followed in the development of culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content through service learning partnerships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers engage in casual conversations (unstructured interview) with community participants throughout project and record relevant insights in diaries; • Collaborative discussion and reflection between researchers at the conclusion of the projects using researcher diaries and community interviews as stimulus; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question arising from collaborative discussion; • Present the draft recommendations for steps and protocols (brochure) to Advisory Group for feedback. Thematise and incorporate feedback into final recommendations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community interviews; 2. Researcher reflective diaries; 3. Participating school and organisation interviews;

	<p>How can universities ensure students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities learn together in innovative, mutually beneficial service learning partnerships, and how can the arts experience inform these actions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include reflective question relating to mutual learning in assessment criteria for student digital stories; • Include reflective question relating to mutual learning in community interview protocol; • Collaborative discussion and reflection between researchers at the conclusion of the projects using researcher diaries and community interviews as stimulus; • Thematic analysis: develop and code themes relating to the research question arising from collaborative discussion; • Present the draft recommendations for measures (brochure) to students, advisory group members, and partners for feedback. Thematise and incorporate feedback into final recommendations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community interviews; 2. Researcher reflective diaries; 3. Student reflective diaries; 4. Student digital stories.
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Conceptual framework

When distilling the key findings, the team identified that three interconnected ways of learning were occurring in this work. The project framed these as Ways of Knowing, Ways of Being, and Ways of Doing. When fleshing out how these three ways of learning can occur in ABSL, the team found great inspiration in Aboriginal scholar Karen *Booran Mirraboopa* Martin's (2003) descriptions of a Quandamooka worldview that encapsulates these three elements. Within these three ways of learning it was observed a further nine ways that engagement was occurring. These can be summarised as follows: **Ways of Knowing:** 1) sitting down on country⁴; 2) respecting culture and First Peoples' worldviews; 3) transforming understandings and worldviews through critical reflection. **Ways of Being:** 4) building and deepening relationships; 5) learning and sharing in reciprocal ways; 6) responding to contextual politics with sensitivity. **Ways of Doing:** 7) using the arts as a medium for connection and collaboration; 8) designing and implementing ABSL projects to meet both community and institutional needs; 9) building sustainability into ABSL projects. For a summary of how the team conceptualised these ways of learning and engaging see Table 2. These insights not only reflect the experiences of our sub-projects (see also Bartleet, Bennett, Marsh, Power & Sunderland, in press) and resonate with our Advisory Group, and themes identified in external evaluator Jan Strom's report (see Appendix A), but also reflect those outlined in the literature mentioned earlier (for instance, see Purmensky, 2009; Butin, 2003; and Guffey 2008).

At any given point in the sub-projects these ways of learning and engaging were taking place, and our community collaborators often subtly controlled the depths to which the team travelled into, through and out of them. These ways of learning and engaging were also deeply interconnected and often contingent on one another, but not always the focus of attention at the same time. Once again, our community collaborators often guided what people came to know, how they related to others, and where and when this was done. Of course, the complex and interrelated ways in which this learning and engaging occurred were certainly not as neat and organised as this framework suggests. However, this framework resonates with our practice, and has provided a way of organising and representing a substantial amount of rich data in a way that takes inspiration from an Aboriginal worldview. In Chapters 4 to 6 of this report, detailed testimonials from participants and examples of practice are given under the headings of this framework.

4 For international readers who are not familiar with the use of the terminology "country," this is a term used by Aboriginal people to refer to the land to which they belong and their place of Dreaming. Aboriginal language usage of the word country is much broader than standard English (see <www.australianmuseum.net.au/Glossary-Indigenous-Australia-terms#sthash.aIFR1VnQ.dpuf>)

Table 2. Conceptual framework

Ways of learning	Project aim	Ways of engaging	Key insights derived from the project
Knowing	2 (b) exhibit the creation of culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in arts curricula through service learning partnerships.	Sitting down on country	Whether the ABSL program involves travelling to a remote, far away country or rediscovering the country that one regularly lives on, a very necessary step is to slow down, observe and connect with the country and its people. This will most likely ensure a much deeper engagement for all concerned.
		Respecting culture & First Peoples' worldviews	When value is placed on respecting and learning about Aboriginal culture and worldviews from Elders and the artists themselves, we begin to take a vital step towards embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum content in a way that privileges the holders of that content.
		Transforming understandings & worldviews through critical reflection	When critical reflection accompanies the embodied and emplaced learning experiences in ABSL programs, participants have the potential to experience deep and long-lasting lessons that radically transform their understandings of themselves, their arts-practice, and the world around them.
Being	2 (a) model respectful and culturally appropriate ways of building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning and teaching; 2 (c) demonstrate the ways in which students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and tertiary institutions can learn together in innovative, mutually beneficial service learning partnerships in the arts.	Building and deepening relationships	Taking the time to develop trusting relationships with people and partners is the most fundamentally important part of this work. These relationships underpin everything that is learned and experienced on these ABSL programs, and without them any kind of meaningful engagement is not possible.
		Learning & sharing in reciprocal ways	Embracing an asset-based approach to ABSL programs allows us to become attuned to the reciprocal and mutually beneficial ways in which participants learn from one another in these contexts. When viewed this way <i>all</i> participants are active learners with something valuable to share.
		Responding to contextual politics & dynamics with sensitivity	These ABSL programs are often set amidst deeply complex contexts with politics and dynamics that are difficult to grapple with, to say the least. While this might result in a degree of apprehension from all participants, this can be mitigated to a degree with sensitivity, humanity and a good dose of humour.

Ways of learning	Project aim	Ways of engaging	Key insights derived from the project
Doing	1 (a) incorporate intercultural collaborations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into learning and assessment activities in ways which prepared students for work in diverse local and international contexts; 1 (b) contribute towards the quality of students' learning experiences, intercultural competencies, and career preparation, while supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in their cultural learning endeavours; and 1 (c) inform the expansion of future service learning projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the arts.	Using the arts as a medium for connection & collaboration	In service learning with First Peoples, arts-based processes commonly provide culturally appropriate ways of expression, communication and connection with one another, and provide an opportunity to creatively share life experiences and appreciate one another's strengths.
		Designing & implementing ABSL projects to meet both community & institutional needs	When designing ABSL programs with First Peoples, a delicate balance needs to be achieved between meeting the community needs and meeting the institution's requirements in terms of resourcing, recruitment, assessment, curriculum design, and policy compliance. A sense of shared ownership is vital for ongoing, mutual engagement.
		Building sustainability into ABSL projects	Building sustainability into ABSL programs with First Peoples involves making a commitment to developing ongoing relationships, developing community assets and strengths, and supporting participant morale amid frequently challenging circumstances.

Key insights: When thinking about ABSL in this way, the team move towards creatively and collaboratively sharing (doing), what team members have come to know (knowing), in a way that is respectful, reciprocal and culturally sensitive (being). This shows the deeply interconnected nature of these ways of learning and engaging in ABSL with First Peoples communities.

Evaluation

This project was continually evaluated. This evaluation covered the project's processes, as well as its outcomes and completion. The evaluation of the project consisted of two major methods:

- 1. External evaluator:** Our external evaluator Dr Jan Strom carefully evaluated the project results via a desktop review, 12 reflective interviews between September and November 2013, and attending and the final Advisory Group meeting held in Brisbane on 21 November 2013. See Appendix A for the full report.
- 2. Peer review from Project Team and Advisory Group:** Three Reference Group meetings were built into the research design to ensure that formal assessment took place. The Advisory Group Meeting 1 in Brisbane in February 2012 allowed the team and Advisory Group to discuss and clarify the project objectives and outcomes to ensure they were logically connected and could be practically implemented. Advisory Group meeting 2 in May 2013 was conducted online via Skype and provided an opportunity to establish whether the project design was working well or needed to be changed, to monitor the progress of the project overall and to discuss the ABSL projects that had occurred. At Advisory Group meeting 3 in Brisbane in November 2013, the Advisory Group members, Team members and the External Evaluator assessed the project results to ascertain whether the objectives and outcomes were achieved, and discussed modifications and improvements. Informal "coffee chats" with Advisory Group members also proved to be highly beneficial in the evaluative process.

The evaluation revealed the rich learning dynamics that underpinned the project. This is graphically represented in Project Evaluator Jan Strom's diagram below (see Figure 6):

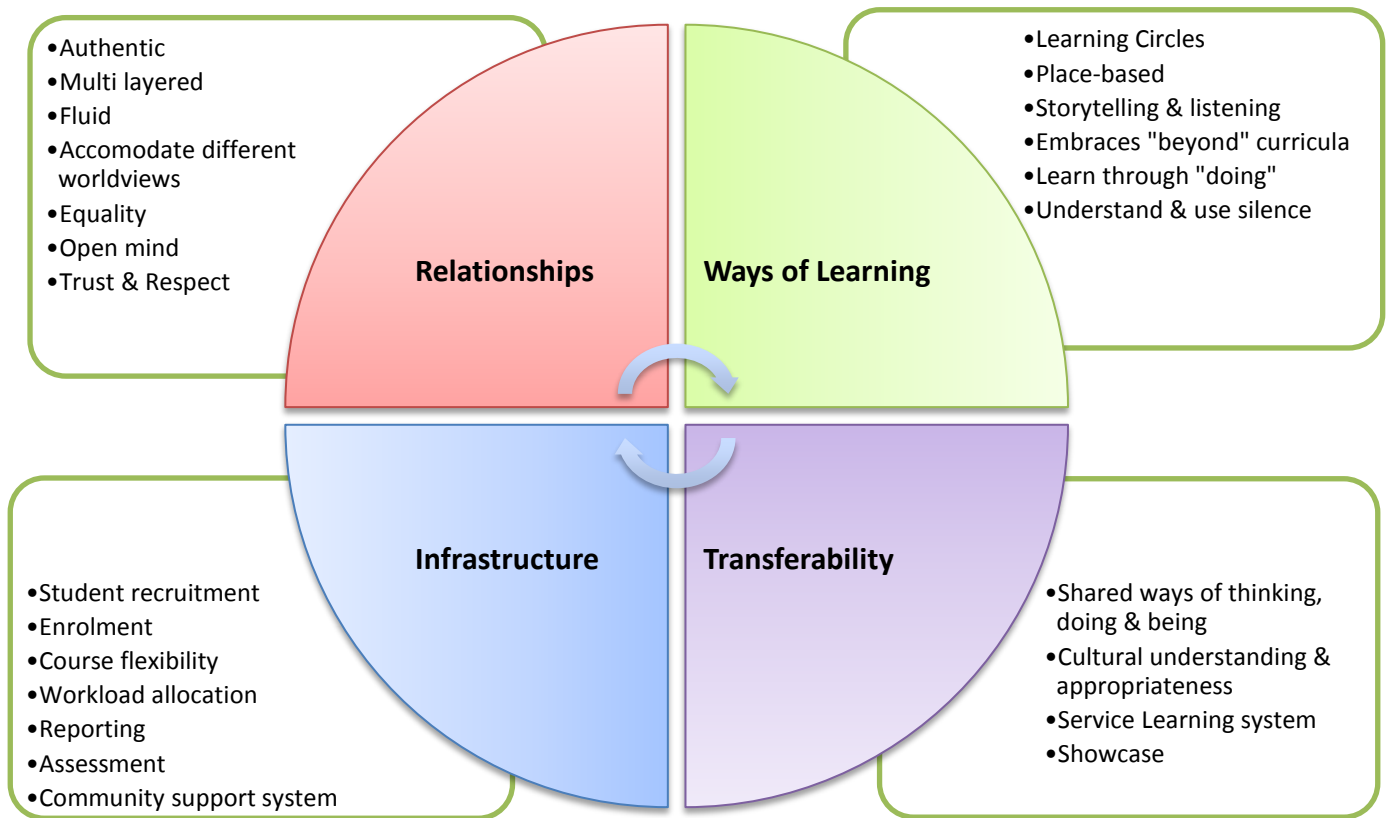


Figure 6. Learning dynamics revealed by the project's evaluation

Chapter 3. Dissemination of Project Outcomes and Impact

In reality, the most significant outcome of this project is the implementation of the three sub-projects. Designing, implementing and facilitating these sub-projects has taken a considerable amount of time, energy and resources from the Project Team and their university colleagues, the institutions themselves, and our partners and community members. That said, in addition to implementing these sub-projects, team members are also delivering and disseminating three substantial outcomes, detailed below. The project outcomes have both research and practical dimensions, and the team hope the practical dimensions will play a key role in making sure that the findings are disseminated to a broad audience.

In addition to delivering these outputs the project has also delivered a range of additional creative outputs (including a documentary; an installation at the World Music Forum in November 2013; and co-written songs, to name a few). Details of these will all be on the project website. In addition, the team have disseminated the findings through international and national conference presentations, and produced peer-reviewed journal articles, and cultural awareness training resources. At the time of writing this report, these outputs have had a significant impact already through the development of curriculum materials, community projects, university-community partnerships, graduate employment outcomes, community training, and teaching awards for the sub-projects.

Project Outcome 1: A set of guidelines, strategies and resources for the higher education sector

This brochure focuses specifically on how to develop ABSL partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and incorporate these within existing curricula, with examples from the three sub-projects. It also includes the project's conceptual framework, as well as cameo stories of some of the people who have been involved and how the project has changed their lives. This brochure is being designed by a local Brisbane "Indigenous creative agency" and will be distributed to higher education institutions in Australia, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts centres and organisations throughout the country.

A free downloadable PDF copy of the brochure will be available on the project's website soon after this final report has received OLT approval for publishing. To order a hard copy of the brochure, please email Project Leader Brydie-Leigh Bartleet: b.bartleet@griffith.edu.au

Project Outcome 2: A media-rich website that shares the progress and results of this project

This website can be found at: www.firstpeopleservicelearning.edu.au/ This website provides a forum for the dissemination of information. It includes the following resources:

- Models of ABSL projects with examples from the project's three sub-projects (including information on how they were conceptualised and implemented, first-hand accounts of the experience from the staff, students and Aboriginal community members involved, video footage of the tasks performed, and summaries of Key insights, teaching and assessment strategies used);
- A summary of the aforementioned guidelines, strategies and resources for the tertiary sector;
- Digital stories made by the students, in collaboration with their Aboriginal colleagues, that demonstrate how these ABSL partnerships work in practice;
- An online database of literature, resources and useful web-links on service learning, as well as links to relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and resources on intercultural interactions.

It is complemented by a project Facebook page <www.facebook.com/CommunityServiceLearning?ref=hl> which promotes discussion with other colleagues, institutions and community partners interested in engaging in service learning partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. At the time of writing, the page has 81 subscribers from around the world.

Project Outcome 3: An edited collection on ABSL with First Peoples

Following the successful review of a proposal and sample chapters, Springer have offered the team a contract to publish an edited collection entitled "Arts-Based Service Learning with First Peoples: Stories, experiences, and methods to support respectful and mutually beneficial relationships and practice," as part of their *Landscapes: The Arts, Aesthetics, and Education* book series (edited by Liora Bresler). The team have signed the contract and work is underway, with a completion date of the end of 2014. The invited authors have strong track records in service learning, First Peoples studies, and arts-based education and work in Australia (both Aboriginal and Torres Strait), Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada and the UK. A number of the authors are also First Peoples.

The edited collection will provide a rare and insightful window into the processes and practices involved in creating and sustaining respectful and transformative ABSL projects with First Peoples. In partnership with communities around Australia and internationally, contributors will reflect on a range of existing projects and activities that have striven to transform student understandings of First Peoples, culture, and communities and directly support community-led arts and cultural activities.

The edited volume will provide readers with rich and engaging first-hand accounts of student, community and staff experiences of, and recommendations for, ABSL projects. The book is therefore highly practical and draws on multiple perspectives to formulate pathways for relationship building and projects. Contributors from multiple disciplines will offer challenging theoretical and methodological interpretations of reported experiences to critically evaluate the transformative potential of ABSL processes for participating communities, students, and higher education institutions. Readers will also be offered a number of resources and examples of creative ways to research and evaluate the outcomes

of these service-learning projects for multiple participants.

The volume will also provide a range of resources for higher education institutions and communities and organisations that wish to establish their own ABSL projects. In particular, the book will offer a concrete exploration of ways that ABSL and related practices can be used to enhance the quality and suitability of First Peoples' cultural content across multiple higher education disciplines and degrees.

Project artwork

The team has worked with Barkly Regional Arts to commission original artwork to be included on the website and final project outputs. Louise *Nangala* Rankine from Mungkarta (a community close to Tennant Creek where team members have worked) undertook this project, and her work *Napa (Water) Dreaming* is featured below.



Figure 7. Louise Rankine with the Napa Dreaming painting

The Napa Dreaming story as told by Louise Rankine at Mungkarta on November 11th 2013 is given below:

The white 'C' shapes represent the clouds

The straight lines are lightning travelling around country.

The white circles are the karrlanji (chicken hawks). The karrlanji picks up a piece of rock as he travels. He picks up the rock in the dreamtime and by taking the top piece in his

claw makes a rock hole.

The karrlanji travelled west and then he travelled north. He came back from somewhere and travelled through Purapunpa (Renner Springs).

The coloured undulations are the rainbow serpent. He had travelled a long way in the dreamtime giving people land, knowledge and food. Then got tired there at Purapunpa (Renner Springs). He got very tired so he died and got buried there. His spirit went right back to Walapunpa north west of Anningie Station.

Project impact and linkages

At the time of writing this report, this work has begun to have an impact on university curricula, learning and teaching practices, and community needs. It has also led to a number of deep and significant partnerships that will continue beyond the life of this OLT project. A brief selection of examples illustrating this is listed below, and the impact will no doubt continue to grow after the current project's completion.

- ABSL with Aboriginal communities have been successfully **embedded in the curriculum** at the three partner universities.
- A wide range of **learning and teaching resources** have been developed that are being used in the three partner universities with the potential for take-up in other institutions.
- Community-led projects have been completed that are having an **impact on the lives of community members**, for example in the area of nutrition and health eating (following the Curtin sub-project), cultural maintenance (QCGU sub-project), school-based curriculum and program (UWS sub-project).
- **Cultural awareness resources** have been developed that are being used in other contexts; for example, Advisory Group member Simon Forrest has recently used the same cultural awareness training approach he developed for this project with the senior management of Curtin University.
- Participation in the sub-projects has led to **graduate employment** for a small handful of students.
- The Partnership with BRA has now extended to a **Griffith University Industry Collaborative Scheme grant** and a **Partnerships Plus grant** to further this work with a research dimension.
- The team are continually being **invited to speak** at Learning and Teaching events, workshops and seminars on the project and its sub-projects.
- Team members Bartleet and Power (and their respective teams) have both been awarded **teaching awards** for their work on their sub-projects. Bennett was also awarded the Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence for her inspirational leadership, and she reported that the Curtin sub-project contributed to this success.

Chapter 4. Findings: Ways of Knowing

In the three ABSL sub-projects, Ways of Knowing were learned and reproduced through processes of: sitting, watching, waiting, listening, sensing, viewing, reviewing, responding, exchanging, sharing, conceptualising, creating, assessing, modelling, engaging and applying (Martin, 2003, p. 209). These Ways of Knowing also entailed processes that expanded and contracted in response to various contextual factors, whether this involved responding to significant community events, such as Sorry Business⁵, or entailed the negotiation of gender-related dynamics or particular kinship relationships, such as Avoidance⁶, for example. As such, this way of framing ABSL incorporates sensitivity towards contexts as well as processes.

These Ways of Knowing were often subtly controlled by our community collaborators who would decide what participants came to know, how they came to know it and when the timing was right. In response, students and university facilitators also had to learn to slow down and be attuned to these processes at play. Rather than rushing into each project with pre-conceived agendas, this meant sitting down and talking with collaborators regularly, handing over some of the control team members are so accustomed to having in a university classroom, being sensitive to things that were going on in the community, respecting this relational way of working, and appreciating the transformative effect it could have on learning. To illustrate how the team has engaged with this way of learning, in this chapter team members weave a commentary between insights and quotes from the project's participants that focus on the following three ways of engaging with people, culture and communities in this work:

- Sitting down on country
- Respecting culture and First Peoples' worldviews
- Transforming understandings and worldviews through critical reflection

Sitting down on country

A recurring theme in our sub-projects and the advice given by our Advisory Group has been to *sit down*! One of QCGU's collaborators Terrance Limerick (TL) summed it up perfectly when he said the best way to approach this work is to "*sit down* and have a coffee, have a joke, play some music" (TL, QCGU, 2012). The very act of sitting down allowed us to appropriately connect with the country which the team was entering, acknowledge its Elders both past and present, and to be mindful of its presence in all that the team did. Sitting down forced us to relax a little, to not stand tall above others and block their view, and to be present in the moment without rushing from one place to the next. It allowed important

⁵ "Sorry Business" is a term used by Indigenous Australians to refer to the death of a family or community member and the mourning process.

⁶ "Avoidance practices" refers to those relationships in traditional Aboriginal society where certain people are required to avoid others in their family or clan.

conversations to begin. In many cases very few words were exchanged, but the very act of sitting together on country was an important way of building relationships. As the team discuss in this section, sitting down and engaging in the processes that then naturally followed led to significant **embodied and emplaced learning experiences** and important lessons in **sharing knowledge through watching, listening and telling**.

This didn't always come naturally to the students, who were accustomed to working according to different rhythms and paces. This required a substantial shift from the self-directed, fast-paced, task-driven, assessment-focused way students are so accustomed to operating in their university programs. As Curtin student Jessica confessed:

*I had self-doubt at times and I think at times I probably rushed writing my article. I didn't probably take enough time to actually **sit down** [emphasis added]. I just felt like the amount of time that I had last semester with writing - I found I didn't really have enough time to do - it was hard to manage my time, so I felt like maybe my articles probably weren't as good as what they could have been the first time round. I know that my first drafts of the articles weren't very good, but ... I really liked the final product more. (Jessica, Curtin, 2012)*

QCGU student Amie made a similar observation. She also recognised how unaccustomed she was to the different pace, but ultimately how crucial this process of sitting down, slowing down was to this work:

*I guess, as frustrating as it was at the start, to lose that city life schedule, I think it's just been - it's really good just to sort of **sit back** [emphasis added] and let things progress the way they did, because if they didn't, it wouldn't have worked at all. (Amie, QCGU, 2009)*

As the students came to realise, this was the most desirable way to work and meant that things progressed on the community's terms. As QCGU student James reflected:

You've sort of got to sit back and gauge their response to you, rather than trying to assert yourself. That's just how I do in any situation. I would rather sit back and let them - get to know them on their terms. So just having - and being relaxed and there is not really - not being afraid of sitting around and having silence with these guys and not trying to get to know them, but just settling for a nod maybe. The next day following through a bit further and just - yeah, I guess working with people on their terms, rather than expecting them to work on your terms. (James, QCGU, 2009)

As James recognises, when working this way, it allows people to get to know one another first before diving into a project. By sitting down or sitting back, it allows people to relax and places primacy on relationship-building *first*, before any project work begins. A similar process of focusing on relationship-building, and relaxing in one another's company, has also been described as a necessary process by local arts workers in the communities the team has collaborated with. For example, Ktima Heathcote from BRA described:

I can just sit on the chair or ground, just like you do with your friends, and just have a

joke. That doesn't come from sitting in the classroom. By sharing stories, rather than trying to make everybody the same, we realise our differences, but then we share a common humanity. That's what happens. It's because they go, oh, I didn't know that about that person. That's a rough life. Or, gee, how would I have reacted if that had happened to me? (Ktima, QCGU, 2012)

This focus on sitting down and connecting to both people and country, has led to a strongly embodied and emplaced learning experiences across all three ABSL projects. Experiential “hands on” learning and the significant parallel acts of learning through listening and telling were also prominent in people’s reflections across all three sub-projects.

Embodied and emplaced learning on country

The university students reflected on place-based sensory learning experiences that included the quietness of historic sites, the silence and space, the beauty of the night sky in remote areas, the colours of the desert landscape. Sometimes they made sense of the difference by relating to some other location they knew. Learning through the body is an arts-based approach, evident in music making, dance and in the sweep of gestures in visual arts. The community members knew and valued these same approaches so they provided a sense of common ground.

Embodied and emplaced learning relates to the way that participants engaged with others and their ABSL experiences through the medium of their own sensory bodies and the places and country where interactions took place. In many cases, participants reported that the environments or places alone (for example a visit to Karlu Karlu, the Devil’s Marbles, in the Northern Territory near the regional desert town of Tennant Creek) produced new insights and respect for Aboriginal peoples. Students seemed attuned to this and came to rely on this newly developed sensory awareness. When speaking about working in a Tennant Creek classroom, UWS student Victoria also remarked on her newly developed reliance on the senses:

I think the changes are more sensory. I’m using different senses. It’s listening, looking around you. It’s almost like you’re in a different sensory mode. That’s what it feels like. It’s not like a big intellectual shift. Again I think that comes back to silence and space. Sensory spatial things. (Victoria, UWS, 2012)

This embodied and emplaced approach to learning and engagement was deliberately “built in” to several activities across the three ABSL projects. For example, during a site visit to the site of the Pinjarra Massacre outside of Perth city, Curtin University students were asked to consciously reflect on their sensory experiences of place, which produced the following profound description of the Pinjarra site from an unnamed Curtin student:

Quiet – as if nothing happened. That’s the thing – without records, like castle ruins!! There is no ‘evidence’ of Aboriginal culture. Maybe makes it easier to ignore. [Facilitator name] mentioned that Europeans seek history in buildings. I hadn’t ever thought of it like that. If Aboriginal people had built in stone, like the Ancient Greeks,

would we have more respect for their culture? (Unnamed student, Curtin, 2013)

This embodied and emplaced experiential learning however also reflects the very deep connections that many participants experienced in an unprompted manner during their ABSL trips. For example, Sarah, a Torres Strait Islander “salt water” UQ [QCGU guest] student, spoke at length about her journey to firestick country (the desert).

My first thought was we're not in Kansas anymore, Toto. That was my first thought. Even coming in over the land, and - I guess every time you go to a country or a different person's country, the physical environment is always going to impact on you in a very different way. That's - I knew it - I expected that. It's the desert... It's a really harsh environment out here, and even from the moment that we arrived - just for me, as soon as we were driving towards Tennant Creek. Just going through this smoking landscape that had recently had a bushfire, and everything was vibrant red and black and charred and burnt, and just rocks - red rocks, Spinifex grass... Then realising how much of life and bush medicine and food is actually available, if you know the right things to do. It's just every country has its different character, and it will do strange and different crazy things to you. So I was prepared for that, but it's the shock, and that's why I said to you before, about that quote of fire stick country is no place for a saltwater person. Everywhere seems to have fire, and that's just what the landscape gives back to you, because that's what it looks like. That's what it feels like.

Then when I went to the centre today and did the walk, and found out that the basis of ceremony here is all fire and smoking things out. Then when somebody lit that fire last night, just randomly, it just - that summed it up for me. I was like yes, this is fire country.

There were fires everywhere, and then it's also - because even seeing how it had the effect on - like that harsh environment affects a group of people as well, and this is why, particularly out here, simply because there is a sense of isolation, it's really harsh country. It's kind of unforgiving in the sense if you get lost, you probably will die. That anything else that's gone on previously before you leave here is going to be amplified ten times. Because when you are alone in the desert, you only have yourself, and that can be pretty confronting.

Then if you are confronting that along with a bunch of other people as well - it's just something to do with heat. Tempers fray, people get tired, people get worn out. I think the key word - especially after talking to the other arts workers here, to get their perspectives. It's like a resonating theme seems to be burn out. I just - there's all these fire analogies, there's all these things associated. You can get that everywhere, in most communities. But in terms of how, like the problems that each different community or country has, they're so individual. One is never like the other. (Sarah, QCGU, 2011)

Sarah’s reflections show not only a deep sensitivity towards the harshness and unforgiving nature of this country, being a saltwater person, but also the ways in which the nature of this firestick country pervades *everything*. It influences how people relate to one another, how they relate to their own inner worlds, and the endurance they have for their work.

Carey, a Griffith University film and television student, also remarked on the different ways that people learn during ABSL immersion trips. In her words, Carey “absorbed” the culture

through “absorbing the environment”:

...you know, I think everybody absorbs things differently and a lot of those guys I think absorb a culture through their interaction with people. But I tend to get it through absorbing the environment. So I have to feel like I know where I am before I can look at the people and go, yeah, that sort of connects... that's what I'm talking about, absorbing the environment and learning about people through that. Because you're experiencing it, therefore you can understand how other people experience things in a way. (Carey, Griffith University, 2012)

When reflecting on embodied and emplaced learning, participants also referred to pervasive comparisons with other times and places, using these to make sense of their experiences of country and place during the ABSL projects. For instance, QCGU student Buré drew numerous comparisons between his family experiences of small tribal villages in Papua New Guinea and his experiences in Tennant Creek. Buré was particularly aware of the effect of the local environment on his experience during his two-week immersion.

Tennant Creek itself kind of reminded me of Port Moresby, which is - so I'm kind of used to - I've kind of been around that kind of environment before. And the town - well, visually the town looked like somewhere in the Sunny Coast hinterland. So I liked the - visually I kind of liked the town - well, even the size of the town and the landscape... And the red dirt really grows on you. Just having your - you know, coming home, your clothes covered, your feet covered, where it's - I guess when you're in the city and you're going out, Valley or West End [trendy areas of Brisbane city], you get a little speck of dirt on your clothes and you chuck - you know, people chuck a fuss. But out there it's - I guess that's part of being out there. (Buré, QCGU 2012)

For some students, such as QCGU student Andrew, this experience of comparing different places and country allowed them to develop deeper understandings of Aboriginal community-connections and develop new awareness of the ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics have been absorbed into popular music scenes in other parts of Australia.

It was everything I hope for really in a guitar rock band. I guess, oh, okay, here's a similarity between The Stormriders and what I experienced in Willowra. I'm completely, I completely believe that both those miles apart musically and culturally, those two acts, Indigenous art forms of expression, can completely be absorbed and accepted in our, I guess what you could call the East Coast arts and cultural scene. Or arts and cultural scene, yes, I can't think of anything else. (Andrew, QCGU, 2009)

Participants also frequently compared city and rural and remote life generally, and urban Aboriginal communities to remote Aboriginal communities and towns to a lesser degree. The Curtin team in particular spent significant time during the planning phases of their project discussing the potential benefits and limitations of conducting ABSL projects with urban versus remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. A central tension here was the common assumption that remote communities would be more culturally “authentic” and “traditional” than urban Aboriginal communities.

To experience a community first hand and see the land and people in a more 'authentic traditional' light. I am interested in the tour of the killing/massacre fields as I don't know anything about it. I expect to very much enjoy myself and learn a lot of different perspectives. (unnamed student, Curtin, 2013)

Some also remarked on the spiritual experiences they and others had in relation to experiencing country. For instance, Naomi, a QCGU facilitator observed,

I felt like I was in the middle of something very old and magical at Karlu Karlu (the Devil's Marbles) when we got there at sunset. I felt a stillness in the others and in me and in the place we were standing. I think that might be why Brydie [facilitator] and Gav [facilitator] are so keen that students go there at the beginning of the visit? To have that experience of country and place to prepare them and open them to the experiences they are going to have? I didn't notice any smells it was more a general air pressure and temperature that was relaxing. And a sense of space. And the colours... oh my how I loved the colours. (Naomi, QCGU, 2012)

Similarly, an unnamed Curtin student remarked of the Pinjarra site visit:

It's nice to be outside amongst the sounds of the birds – just a reminder that it's not just human land, but land we share with other animals. (unnamed student, Curtin, 2013)



Figure 8. Simon Forrest and Curtin students sitting down during their fieldtrip (2013)

These insights and quotes point towards the deeply profound and complex learning that can occur in the act of sitting down on country, and the embodied awareness this can bring through a sensitivity towards a place. This then flows on to the processes of communicating, engaging and learning which naturally follow on.

Sharing knowledge through watching, listening and telling

Storytelling and sitting on country go hand-in-hand, whether it's a metropolitan place or a remote outback location. Story is a very important way of communicating. It actively involves the listener and is connected with the removal of pre-conceived ideas. It is part of the slow-paced building of relationships between community members and university students. Insights from participants about this process related to learning through listening, telling, and watching and captured the many diverse, incidental, and informal ways that participants learned from one another and developed relationships during these ABSL projects.

When students described their learning in this way through “telling”, there was an emphasis on capturing participant stories about how they taught or learned from others during their involvement in the sub-projects. The focus on “listening” often coalesced with themes regarding community power and agency, the slowness of relationship development, not bringing in preconceived ideas, and the aforementioned beneficial ABSL processes such as just sitting down with one another to talk and have a laugh. Listening was also related strongly to respect and intercultural practice for some participants. As Curtin student Kimberley described:

With journalism, you ring someone up or you go out to visit them. You do the interview and you get what you need and you get out of there straightaway so you can get it done. Whereas it's [this ABSL work] more like sitting there and actually listening. That's the sort of thing that I love to do. I found it really interesting, because you get to actually learn about the person more. It's hard, when you're trying to do a story on them and you don't know much about them. It's really important to implement those kind of actions. (Kimberley, Curtin, 2013)

Like Kimberley, fellow Curtin student Michael also reflected on the fact that rushing in to a story or a project was inappropriate and disrespectful. He too recognised the importance of listening and being responsive to the community's needs and desires for this work:

I think one that stood out - or one time that stood out was when we first - well one of the first meetings, when we first went into Langford. I was very aware that we did not want to come in and just say this is what we've got. This is what we want to do. But I made sure that we listened very carefully to what they wanted. So we derived what we could do, based on what their initial needs were. (Michael, Curtin, 2013)

The students seemed sensitive to the fact that listening and sharing takes time, and might only evolve over a number of different interactions. As UWS student Nick observed when speaking about an interaction with one of his students:

He was playing and I came and sat down and played with him. He didn't talk a whole bunch that first week, even though we played quite a bit together. In the second week, he's really opened up to me about some things. He was teaching me about some bush tucker on our way to the Open Mic night. He was telling me he's going out bush this weekend, what he does when he goes there, where he gets water from, what they hunt, how they kill it, why they go bush. (Nick, UWS, 2012)

Likewise, UWS student Corinne recognised that this important process of listening models a respectful way of working. In a school setting, this meant recognising the importance of acknowledging the student's interests and desires:

It [respect] means listening. There's a lot of listening that comes in. There's a lot of observing – observing how students respond and what they're interested in, what grabs them and utilising that as much as I can in my lessons. Following up on what I see as meaningful. I think that's a way of showing respect to my learners, following their cues. (Corinne, UWS, 2012)

A fellow UWS student, Victoria, described a similar process to Corinne, as “active listening”, where she doesn't try and impose her own ideas on others, but rather *listens* to what they are trying to say to her:

I've got this idea of active listening and picking up verbal cues. Trying to understand a little about the context as well as getting what someone is trying to say to me which might not be the manifest content of the words. These are just estimations. Going slow, not rushing people, trying not to impose too many ideas on them. Not assuming I know what's going on. (Victoria, UWS, 2012)

Similarly when a local arts worker from Tennant Creek was reflecting on the lessons learned by the QCGU students during their time in Tennant Creek, he suggested that learning to listen, and the connections that brings, will be one of the most important things they take away from the experience:

I think they've [QCGU students] gained a lot of things, a lot of understanding. Apart from all receiving a [skin name] and language, they've also received the ability to listen even more and just slowly build relationships. I think they've set up some amazing relationships with the young kids and I think it will probably be when they get on that plane to fly home, that will be when they really feel how much connection was there with those young people. (Arts worker, QCGU, 2009)

When students took the time to listen, they found community members were incredibly generous with the knowledge that they shared with them. Knowledge about country, culture and customs were exchanged, as described by QCGU student Jeff:

He [local elder] was telling us [QCGU students] about different ways to hunt and going through how he goes out to get kangaroos and he was explaining the two sets of boomerangs that we got from him, which he'd had for over a year and a half and he

used them in traditional ceremonies. So he used them in one of the songs that we performed in the - the song when the elders, they played them as clap sticks. How he's use to playing different play - different time he use to hunt with them, and that they were one of his most precious things and he was giving them away as a symbol to us, which was really something. (Jeff, QCGU, 2012)

These lessons would be very hard to communicate in the formalised walls of a university classroom, where a connection to country is so often not communicated appropriately. These insights point towards the importance of acknowledging country, whether in a remote location or one's own metropolitan city, and the tremendously rich and important lessons that come from sitting on it with Elders and Aboriginal artists, and respectfully listening to the stories that flow from it and then sharing stories in response.

Key insights: Whether the ABSL program involves travelling to a remote, far away country or rediscovering the country that one regularly lives on, a very necessary step is to slow down, observe and connect with the country and its people. This will most likely ensure a much deeper engagement for all concerned.

Respecting culture and First Peoples' worldviews

A key part of these projects has been placing control in the hands of local community Elders and artists. Driven by an effort to move towards decolonising our classrooms, this process has actively entailed privileging the culture bearers as key facilitators of learning in this process. In particular, this has involved "questioning, critiquing, and moving aside the pedagogical script of colonialism in order to allow Indigenous ways of understanding music and dance to be presented, privileged and empowered" (Mackinlay, 2005, p. 113). In this section the team focuses specifically on the ways in which this engenders **different ways of seeing, thinking and working**, and places **importance on developing understanding and respect**, resulting in very **privileged access to some aspects of cultural knowledge**.

Different ways of seeing, thinking, and working

Pedagogically, it was very significant that experiences and recognition of different ways of seeing, thinking, and working emerged as major themes in participants' reflections on this project. This recognition of different ways of thinking, seeing, and working had clear implications both for students' and staff *understandings* of Aboriginal culture and the resulting adjustments in their own ways of seeing, thinking, and acting. In many cases such experiences were shaped by the environments in which ABSL projects were conducted; for example, if this was a local school or a music centre. Alan Murn, a key community partner in the QCGU project since 2009, reflected on the profound significance of the land and experiences of remoteness in understanding different ways of seeing, thinking, and working associated with Aboriginal culture and communities:

I think experiencing on a daily basis in intense situations, the way another culture thinks, the way other communities think, another way of thinking is really, really interesting. It could be particularly good for music students with their wonderful,

abstract but organised way of thinking, and I think I would say that's an observable benefit. It's really important to all of us who work in this region, Aboriginal people in particular, that the word spreads as well about Aboriginal people and our nature culture, the strength of it, the depth of it, the richness of it, and the incredible talent of it, and its many, many layers.

We understand here, by working here for a long time, that there are parallel universes going on here, there's several and ... Aboriginal people do a wonderful job at even stepping into mainstream ways of doing things, considering that the massive overriding cultural rules and protocols and law are what counts to them, first and foremost. I think the students are getting a little sense of that, and understand just how clever and talented and amazing that culture is and taking that back again to mainstream culture and there would be a ripple effect from that. (Alan Murn, Barkly Regional Arts, 2009)

Other experiences and outcomes that emerged from the data in relation to different ways of seeing, thinking, and working were multifaceted. They ranged from simple recognition of difference to profound adjustments in participants' micro daily practices and broader reflections and intentions regarding social institutions and prejudice. For example, UWS student Kylie reflected that:

I think it means not trying to push my ways, trying to understand why things are the way they are. The root of the problem is bigger than me coming in for a time to educate the children. I should be ready to stand up with them. But you hear people say, and I was one of them 'Yes, the government's giving them more money and they don't need it.' But having seen it, it's certainly not the picture that we've had painted for us. Not everyone can have this opportunity. So I want to inform others. (Kylie, UWS, 2012)

The implications for changed ways of acting in relation to changed ways of seeing and thinking is clear in Kylie's comment above. In this case Kylie is talking about working from within education institutions to effect intercultural recognition, awareness, and change. Jesse, a Curtin University journalism student, had a similarly profound experience and "call to action" regarding mainstream media institutions central to her profession:

All journalist [unclear] students should have to do it [first peoples service learning]. I honestly believe that. Like if B Ed students have to do a - I don't know what they call it, Indigenous culture understanding or something, I just think it's - if we're teaching our kids and don't teach them, you know there's kids that are going to go into mainstream media, there just needs to be some sort of cultural understanding. Because it's not just about Aboriginal Australians, it makes you rethink your attitudes towards every other race that you have prejudice against. It's not always like blatant racism usually; it's the assumptions that you've made. So I think it's really important. (Jesse, Curtin, 2013)

In many cases, seeing new or different ways of seeing, thinking and working resulted in participants questioning and reaffirming their personal and professional standpoints. As a participating UWS student teacher Corinne reflected:

I've been surprised and did have a fairly strong reaction early on about the

authoritarian nature of one of my classrooms and the way the teacher authority was demonstrated. I found that quite challenging. I found some of the ways the students were spoken to was challenging. That's taken some reflection from me. As more time goes on I see that it's a difficult job, a difficult environment. I think these teachers do a lot on their own. What underpins all that for me is that I would like to see gentle communication in the classroom, because I find conflict if you're teaching virtues and values and not demonstrating those for a significant part of the time. If you're teaching a value of respect and you're shutting the classroom door and not showing respect and speaking with harsh tone and volume and language and physicality in the classroom, I think that's a conflict. (Corrine, UWS, 2012)

Recognition of their own and others' ways of seeing also led students to change their micro daily practices of their professions. Gabiso, a Curtin film and television student, described an almost immediate adjustment in her way of approaching Aboriginal subjects involved in her filming activities following orientation activities and a site visit to the site of the Pinjarra massacre:

Yeah, definitely. It definitely did help because before any of that, if we had just been thrown into the deep end and just gone into the communities, we, probably, would not have known what to do or how to interact, how to go about entering the community because, obviously, it's got its complications and stuff and we know that Indigenous people are a bit - keep to themselves in a way. The fact that we did all the actual research, it really helped because we were able to just go in and establish ourselves in a way that was welcoming for them. They were able to take us in, in a sense. (Gabiso, Curtin, 2013)

Two QCGU music technology students, Sophie and Jeff, also described being significantly impacted by ways of communicating and working they experienced and developed during their work with the WMC musicians and sound engineers in Tennant Creek:

Possibly learning how - like a new way of communicating with people. It wasn't necessarily hard, it was just really different. But I liked that. It was a good change; just a different approach to talking to people, and working with them which was nice. (Sophie, QCGU, 2012)

I think we got mixing in the studio of maybe half an hour this morning ... Yeah, I really like it here, and I like working with the indigenous [people] because it's such an interesting, different way to approaching recording and just going about everything that you do here. It would just be nice to do it a little bit more. (Jeff QCGU, 2012)

The importance of developing understanding and respect

Underpinning many of these aforementioned comments and indeed the broader data collection was a sense of a developing understanding of and respect for Aboriginal peoples and culture. For university students, for example, this has meant knowing when young adolescent Aboriginal people have been through ceremony, knowing what significance

certain sites have for the community, making an effort to use some words in language. For the community, it has meant giving time for the students to become familiar with them and to share stories. For many non-Indigenous students and staff this was an extremely profound experience that relieved many years of almost utter ignorance and lack of connection to Australian Aboriginal culture and peoples. For example, James, a student participant in the first QCGU trip to Tenant Creek in 2009, summarises his relief from ignorance and resulting respect and appreciation for Aboriginal people that resulted from his ABSL experience:

It's pretty intense environment, it really opened my eyes to a culture and a part of Australia which I certainly was previously quite ignorant about. Learning about the history and customs of indigenous culture changed my whole outlook on these communities and gave me a much greater understanding, appreciation and respect for these people. (James, QCGU, 2009)

Gabiso from Curtin University also emphasised that her learning about Aboriginal culture through ABSL was multifaceted, incorporating elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history alongside understandings of contemporary community activities:

For me, it's more about learning culture and just understanding the reason behind circumstances and just having a bit more feel and understanding like history and just - yeah, I think that's, probably, one of the most attractions for me would be getting to know a different group of people and finding out their stories in a way and reflecting on that in a sense. (Gabiso, Curtin, 2013)

Lester Peterson, an Aboriginal musician and former staff member at the Winanjikari Music Centre in Tennant Creek, commented on students' learning about local Aboriginal culture through relationships and friendships with the local musicians and staff members at the centre:

Yeah, pretty good and learning about our culture with everybody else. Friendship and ... pretty close like you fellas have been to us. (Lester Peterson, WMC, 2009)

Similarly, Dirk Dickenson, an Aboriginal sound engineer at WMC, emphasised that a strong bond was being developed between the WMC musicians and students. He said that this bond should be nurtured into the future to continue to build *mutual two-way* understandings and benefits between community members and students.

Facilitator: So what do you think the students are learning about Aboriginal culture and music by being around here with you fellas?

Dirk: Yeah, it's good to come out here. Of course we don't get - like I see Aboriginal people. There's lots working around town but they don't see people like what we get here at the Winanjikari Music Centre. We get to meet new people, to ask them what it's like to be down here and what city life is. One of them told me that - wanted me to go down to Brisbane to check the University out. I wouldn't mind going down there...

...they [the students] should keep coming back just to soak up this strong bond, to see maybe sometime - maybe next year or maybe two years from now - we might start travelling down there and working with them. They're good at singing the song in language too, backing up [Brendan]. It took them what? One day, I think. (Dirk Dickenson, WMC, 2013)

Jess, a Curtin University Journalism student, also reflected on the value of directly connecting with Elders and other Noongar community members to develop understandings of Aboriginal culture. She noted that this kind of learning was preferable to the book “research” she had done prior to directly meeting the Noongar Elders and community members, which reaffirms the value of the ABSL approach:

So we got given a lot of the research when we were coming along to some of the seminars and stuff at the start which were really good. But I think that research wasn't as relevant to the stories that we were doing, so I guess it would be more beneficial if the research was - if I spent those three weeks talking to different members, elders or whatever, at Langford and talking to them - because that's where I had to find the story. I found out a lot of great research about Aboriginal people and Noongar people in general but it wasn't like - I had to do more when I went into Langford and start all over again almost. (Jess, Curtin, 2013)

Louise, another Curtin journalism student, remarked that she not only learned about Aboriginal culture from her community partners, but also where to look and who to ask to discover culturally appropriate information.

Definitely being able to research. I did feel my research skills went up a little bit because I had to research a little bit more on what was out there. They [community partners] did give me pointers and I did go to the Aboriginal Centre here for some. They gave me some pointers on where to look so it has improved my research skills, I hope. Maybe that's why the second story was stronger, because I knew where to look. (Louise, Curtin, 2013)

Kylie, a UWS student teacher, expressed profound insights regarding her own and others' understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and peoples. Notably, Kylie's experiences, like many other student and staff participants, led her to deeply re-evaluate past experiences and “white” Australian society.

I think I used to be one of those people who was blinded by what the media chose to tell. I'd question why Indigenous people should have a lower ATAR than me. After seeing this, I realise they deserve the opportunity – they've not had the benefits we've had. I'm a great believer that team sport develops kids and they have limited sports here. So it's changed my thinking. It's not pity. It's opening eyes. Maybe white society would have more respect if they had an understanding. I've heard the term 'gone walkabout' when I worked in Medicare. We had one worker there and when they would go off without explanation, we didn't know anything about sorry business. We just expect that if you're going somewhere you tell someone where you're going. But today the ladies at PAK were serious when they said 'we can't talk about that.' It's sad

that the world can't respect that. It doesn't have to be right or wrong. Their way is their way. (Kylie, UWS, 2012)

As indicated in several of the student quotations above, many students experienced a new sense of respect and appreciation for Aboriginal culture and peoples as a result of their ABSL experiences. For many this experience also made them question their ignorance and prejudice toward other cultural groups other than their own. As Gavin Carfoot [Facilitator], noted though, there are many facets and sites within which respect for Aboriginal ways and peoples can be enacted, and participants do not automatically emerge from these trips as fully aware or sensitive intercultural operators.

So I think that there are many layers of this respect for Indigenous culture and it's very possible that at some layers there are enactments of respect and in other places that's contradicted. Showing that, you know, maybe things are more complicated in that person's understanding of Indigenous culture than we thought. (Gavin, QCGU, 2012)

Similarly Brydie [Facilitator] revealed her own feelings of inadequacy about cultural awareness and the time it takes to develop this:

I think for me, when you think about respect and what it means to be respectful, I'm still learning. I think it's a very long and incredibly deep and complex process to learn to be properly respectful. Because you need knowledge to know how to respond and to be respectful and to behave properly with Indigenous people in an appropriate manner. That knowledge I'm slowly acquiring, but it's not for me to determine when I get that knowledge and how I get that knowledge.

That knowledge is coming very, very slowly when Indigenous people feel it's the right time for me to learn more about that knowledge and how best to show that respect. From how to deal with special places of landscape and country to language to song to interactions between me and women and men. How my skin relationships with people mean I should be behaving with them. There are people I should be and shouldn't be interacting with. If I'm acting in a respectful manner to them.

So I would never stand up right now and say I know how to act respectfully to an Indigenous community. I don't have a fricking clue, I don't know. So yes I can be compassionate and all of those things, which I try to be to everybody. I try to be that to you, Naomi, I try to be that to you Gavin and to everybody I interact with and be compassionate, loving, open, blah, blah, blah, all of those clichés. But to really be respectful to Indigenous people is a very, very long and, well, life experience that I think I'm only really at the beginning of. So that's how I think about it. (Brydie, QCGU, 2012)

Hence, while both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous participants may experience life changing insights, turning points, and relationships during their ABSL projects, this in many ways is just the beginning a lifetime journey of building understanding, respect, and personal and interpersonal sensibilities that can shape ways of working together (Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Clark, 2007). As will be discussed later in the report, this lifetime journey is central to our team's resulting understandings of respect and sustainability as outcomes from ABSL projects (see Sunderland et al., forthcoming).

Privileged access to cultural knowledge

Participants, who have shared these rich experiences with local Elders, with mentors, with artists and with teachers, have reported feeling a real sense of privilege. They know that their being welcomed into communities is special and not something that many people have access to. University participants also spoke of an intense feeling of privilege at the opportunity to visit places like Tennant Creek and work with local Elders, artists, community workers, and teachers and principals at local schools. Many recognised it was an opportunity few were able to experience in their university degrees. As a Curtin student reflected:

It is a real life professional and practical experience working with Indigenous community members. So far in my course I've only been taught in theory how to report on Indigenous people in the media, but to have the opportunity to experience actually working alongside an Indigenous community is something not every journalist has the opportunity to do, especially when still at university. (unnamed student, Curtin, 2013)

QCGU student Andrew also reflected on the opportunity this project had given him to experience a culture so unique and special:

Because the cultural cringe that Australia is feeling towards Indigenous culture is quite sickening and only really over this trip have I realised to what degree that is actually occurring. That I've come and almost all of us have come into something that is so unique and so special and so almost off the radar, that we probably would have never known it would happen unless we came out on this trip. (Andrew, QCGU, 2009)

Students also recognised the special opportunity they were given when community members asked them to assist with tasks like writing songs about their family and their history. For instance, on one occasion a local man, Anthony 'Junkyard Dog', approached two QCGU students to assist him in writing a song. After telling them about his life as a painter and bush mechanic, and sharing stories of his life on the highway, his homelessness, and playing for Port Power, Anthony asked them if they could help him set some lyrics he had written to music. The lyrics were about a white settler who came to his father's land. For the next couple of days, the three worked together on this song. In his fieldwork diary, Ryan describes the exchange and what it meant to him:

When the three of us sang the song Anthony was very moved and ended up in tears, it was a special moment. I felt extremely privileged to be welcomed by him and invited to collaborate on something extremely personal and important. He wanted us to record these songs so he could give them to his father and his sons. I felt proud that I had the skills to work with him and produce a song that we were really happy with (Ryan, QCGU, 2009).

In a similar vein, Amie described the experience from her perspective:

It [song by local WMC musician] was about his - a white explorer that had come to his grandfather's land and that he had become a legend, basically for doing what he had done and just to sort of see the affect that it had on him by us - he got teary and then I

got teary and - but that was pretty special, just to see how much of an impact something like that was to him and I suppose in a slightly metaphorical way, it's similar to what we were doing and the effect that he felt that we were having on them. So, yeah, it was very special. (Amie, QCGU, 2009)

UWS student, Stacey's experience was also an intensely emotional one. As someone whose own Aboriginal traditions are unknown to her she reflected: *"I think that makes it even more special that they are willing to share theirs with me"* (Stacey, UWS, 2013). As Stacey's comment alludes, the gravity of what was being shared with them, and the immense privilege these students had to learn about Aboriginal culture and knowledge from Elders and community members themselves was certainly not lost on the students. This echoes with the experiences of Mackinlay (2008), who explained that

... one of the most powerfully transformative teaching and learning resources about Indigenous Australian performance practice that we all have at our fingertips is not something we will find in a book on the library shelf, in an article published by a "white expert" (such as myself), or on an internet website. Rather, it rests in the multi-faceted potential of "relationship" as a teaching and learning approach to Indigenous Australian musics. (Mackinlay 2008, p. 4)



Figure 9. QCGU students learning about bush tucker with Elder Rose Graham, Old Telegraph Station, Tennant Creek (2013).

Key insights: When value is placed on respecting and learning about Aboriginal culture and worldviews from Elders and the artists themselves, the project begin to take a vital step towards embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum content in a way that privileges the holders of that content.

Transforming understandings and worldviews through critical reflection

It is no exaggeration to say these experiences have had a profound, and sometimes transformative, effect on participants. The embodied experience of participating in these projects has prompted them to engage in deeply reflective examinations of their selves, subjectivities, as well as their perceptions of the world around them. A key element in guiding this process in each sub-project has been the use of guided critical reflection (through field diaries, focus group interviews, informal group de-briefs, and so on). These aspects of critical reflection are crucial not only for the learning experiences of the students, but also provide valuable insights about the depth of the learning experiences, as detailed below. As Swords and Kiely (2010) contend, “the most powerful transformative learning experiences stem from intentionally structuring service-learning program activities before, during, and after the program to engage students in critically reflective learning and contextual, emotional, visceral, and connected forms of learning” (p. 151). To illustrate some of the ways in which this occurred, in this section the team focus on insights relating to **difference and sameness**, and resulting **reflections on Australian culture and identity**, the students’ **personal transformations and changes in worldview**, as well as **personal epiphanies**, and a **loss of personal agency**.

Difference and sameness

Reflecting on the relationships that they were developing and the contexts in which they were engaging prompted the students to think critically about difference and sameness. In their reflections on this, some students spoke of a sort of “culture shock”, meaning an intense experience of cultural difference that is somewhat unnerving initially for outsiders to that culture; or if not shock, an intense awareness that they were in a place they’ve never experienced before. As QCGU student Sophie reflected:

At the beginning it was - not a shock but it was just eye opening to see an Indigenous community, because I hadn't really experienced that, because you don't really have that traditional-type in Brisbane. So at first it was just something really different to see... before I would have no idea where - what exactly - how it [working with Aboriginal musicians] was different. Now, I feel like I could really do it. I'd love to just work recording them. Some of the things like what Warren's recording - something like that. Yeah, it's helped a lot in terms of all that. (Sophie, QCGU, 2012)

A UWS student spoke about the importance of respecting cultural difference, and recognising that not everyone has the same cultural upbringing:

Respecting their culture. I realise I have a lot to learn about their culture. In class today,

they were talking about the word 'deadly' and they had another word for it in language. At another time, I asked a girl a question and she replied with two clicks of the tongue. And Paul explained that meant 'yes'. Just realizing that not everybody has the same upbringing. (Ian, UWS, 2012)

One QCGU facilitator also observed that many non-Indigenous students look for things that are familiar in the environment and the people they work with during ABSL projects as a way of grounding themselves and making sense of often entirely new settings. The dialogic descriptions of difference and sameness were implicit in many non-Indigenous participant descriptions of their experience and broader reflections on Australian identity and intercultural relations. As GU [QCGU guest] student Carey observed:

They're people like you and me, they get angry, they fuck up, they are joyful, they love their family, they don't love their - you know, they're just like us, so don't try to treat them very differently. I understand that there are cultural differences that you should be aware of, but I think most of the people that we would've been dealing with like, say, at the master chef night, the little girls that were working and the guy that was working, they're not - they weren't worried about people looking at them straight in the eye. (Carey, QCGU, 2012)

Reflections on difference and sameness were further intensified by students' reflections on their own cultural backgrounds and racial subjectivities. Interestingly, many students from diverse cultural backgrounds have been drawn to participate in these projects, and include those from Philippine, South African, Laotian, Papua New Guinean, Tahitian, North American, Canadian, Scottish, Indonesian, and Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage. Reflections on the students' own race, their "whiter skin" and "token whiteness" point towards the significant realisations that non-Indigenous participants came to regarding their own culture. These reflections on race also records references to stereotypes regarding "white" ways of thinking, seeing, and working. "White" became a relatively common adjective to describe different people students encountered and worked with during their ABSL projects alongside Aboriginal colleagues and partners. By way of example Curtin Jess described the "white people" as the busy bees:

Because I went there for three days in a row but the first two weekends at the busy bees were all just white people who were part of Relationships Australia or different volunteer groups and stuff. (Jess, Curtin, 2013)

In a similar vein, community partner Jeff McLaughlin (former Manager of WMC), described the difference in the "white fella" fast pace, and how this was not always appropriate:

You come out here as a white fella and you do too much; you're too fast, you want to get things done, but you've got to drop back a few gears and it's a whole thing about understanding you know. If we sit down and understand more, the better things can happen, rather than - I mean I'm not getting political, I'm talking about the intervention ... It's all been like they thought they were going to save the Indigenous culture in 6 months when the intervention came in. (Jeff, QCGU, 2009)

Reflections on Australian culture and identity

For many of the university students, these reflections on difference and sameness have prompted a re-evaluation of 'Australia' and how different the interior is from the coastline, and how different that makes life in regional remote places. Some participants reported intense reflection on how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians "fit together" under the banner of an Australian identity. For some students this meant adopting a position of "sameness" across cultures in Australia. For others this meant acknowledging and respecting "difference" and an acknowledgement of "white fella", "black fella" and "East Coast" ways. Hence, many students and staff revised their understandings of what "Australian" meant following their ABSL work. Some non-Indigenous students appeared to regard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as a truer and more authentic Australian culture and hence felt that they would become closer to their "Australianness" by engaging in the work. Other participating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students felt closer to their own culture and experienced what our Advisory Group member Professor Simon Forrest referred to as "cultural affirmation" through participating. Community Elders and partners in ABSL projects were vital in helping students to develop understandings of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and nations, which in turn led some students to utterly reformulate how they viewed the Australian continent. For many, during these ABSL projects was the first time they had ever seen a map of Australia that showed the traditional territories of Australia's First Peoples instead of the colonial states and territories (see Figure 9).

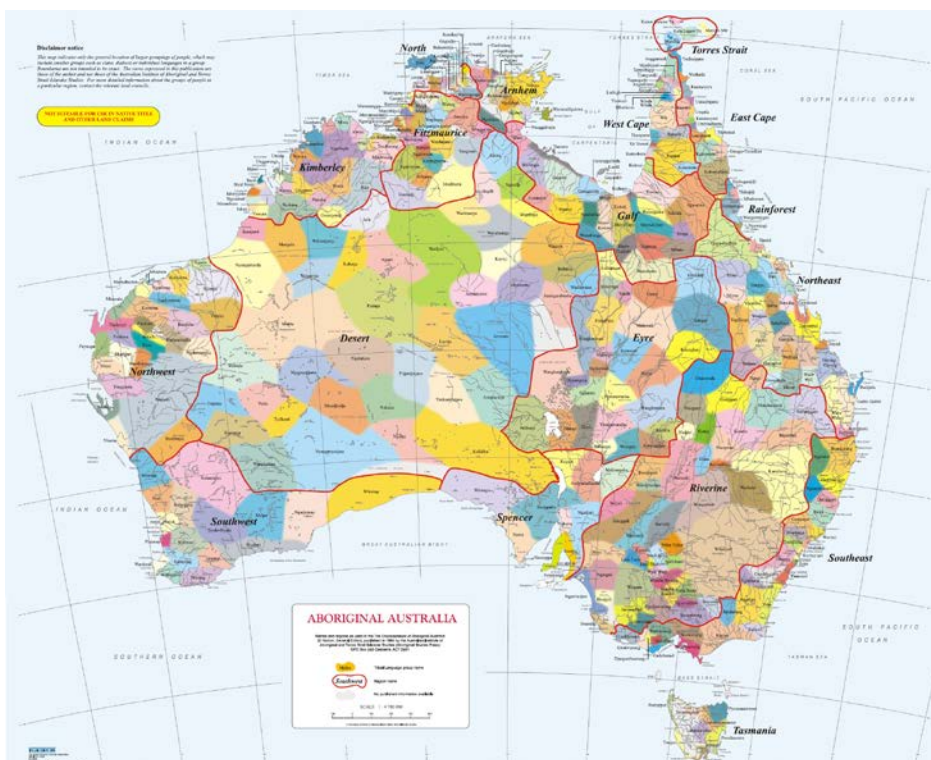


Figure 10. Map of Aboriginal Australia used in the ABSL sub-project resources⁷

⁷ <www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/>

Some students and staff experienced a deep sense of shame, realisation and guilt regarding their Australian identity and history in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples during and after their ABSL experience. The students' comments allude to guilt about their ignorance, guilt about this country's past and guilt over their complicity in this situation. As James explained:

As we developed a stronger appreciation for just how complex and detailed the indigenous culture is I felt an increasing sense of shame for what has been inflicted on these communities and the ongoing difficulties they encounter as a result. What we learnt in only two weeks broadened my understanding and appreciation for indigenous culture immeasurably. Even though this was only enough time to touch the surface of one of the oldest and proudest histories on earth, it saddens me to know it is still well and truly so much more than the vast majority of white Australians have or will ever be exposed to. I can't help but feel that it is simply ignorance and lack of understanding on behalf of white Australia that has led to such a divide between two cultures. (James, QCGU, 2009)

Likewise, Ryan explained, "It's very interesting learning about the local laws and customs and a bit worrying that we didn't already know these kind of things" (Ryan, QCGU, 2009). The students' responses seem to echo Jane Selby's words (2004): "non-indigenous peoples with a colonial heritage are challenged by political and social problems associated with the guilt of centuries of systematic oppression of indigenous cultures" (p. 144). Students often found themselves grappling with the political and social devastation of Australia's colonial past. This past that was now all of sudden very much in the present, and before their own eyes with young generations of Aboriginal people. As UWS student Ian described:

I was asking one of the teachers why we have such a long break at the end of the first block. She explained that a lot of the children don't get the opportunity to eat before they come. They often can't afford it. So the kids only eat at school. It kind of really hit home for me that's how they live. That wasn't really happening at JJ even though it's low SES. They've got a lot more to deal with here. Just trying to come to school and learn, with family issues outside. I'm sure over the next week I'll see a lot more of that sort of thing happening. Different challenges. (Ian, UWS, 2012)

The students could see the devastation colonisation had caused, and was continuing to cause, their new Indigenous friends, collaborators and students in the school. They seemed genuinely saddened by this. As a Curtin student confessed:

I feel sad, have done ever since we started this project. I knew I had lots to learn but the more I learn the more I realise how very wrong it all is. I now see the news, signs, law, all sorts of issues, differences. The worst thing is that I don't see it changing – students/children are unaware of our history. I feel uncomfortable, it's so shameful, unnecessary. Why are we in denial. Pinjarra warriors – 'soldier men'. (unnamed student reflection, Curtin, 2013)

Similarly, a QCGU student Joel confessed his sadness at this situation, which so many Australians, particularly those living on the East Coast, are unaware of:

I think living in somewhere like Brisbane or the Gold Coast, where I've always been, I didn't really even know a place like this existed with such cultural diversity and such a high indigenous population. So I think that's sad that we didn't even know that and were aware of the dynamics in a place like this. I think I would never consider myself a racist, nor any of my friends or family but there are constant undertones towards indigenous people that just seem to be the norm in urban Australia, I guess. That's also really sad. (Joel, QCGU, 2013)

This sense of guilt was often coupled with a realisation of the immense ignorance and prejudice that they and other non-Indigenous Australians have regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and culture. This was often expressed using phrases such as “there’s a whole other culture just sitting here that I never knew of” and “I didn’t realise you could have such a profound intercultural experience within Australia”. As indicated previously, music students also reflected critically on the broader Australian music industry and the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music within that industry. Film and television, journalism, and education students also reflected critically on Australian institutions such as education and the media in particular, as previously mentioned. Underlying these reflections, though, was the importance of acknowledging the past and present realities. As Curtin student Kimberley explained:

So it's - I think it's just great. I think that that - this unit will - those - both of them together just going to put us in such a better position when we leave university. Have to go out to - one day, we might be a journalist and have to go to Balga. Or might go to Armadale and there'll be kids on the train - or like how we, as just an Australian, going to react to these kids, Aboriginal kids who are running amok? Or like - it's not about judging. It's about acknowledging what's happened and that they're just a normal person. (Kimberley, Curtin, 2013)

Personal transformation and changes in worldview

These experiences led to complex and multifaceted changes and transformations in many participants across the three ABSL projects. There were changes to students’ and community collaborators’ ways of viewing their professions, there were changes in attitudes, in ways of reacting to attitudes, in engaging with the community. In some cases participants reflected on things they couldn’t change (such as ways of working in a partner organisation) or the need for social and institutional change (for example in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through schools nationally). Other examples referred to participants’ sense that things had changed in them or others through the course of the ABSL projects and in the time following the projects. As QCGU Facilitator Brydie reflected:

This [ABSL project] has had a massive influence on me personally, on my husband, and what we devote our time to as a couple. It has lead us to other projects, to the most incredibly interesting dinner time conversations, and a deep belief that bringing people

together in this way can bring about change in people's hearts and minds. When I think about that desert country where we visit, something very deep stirs inside me. In terms of its costs – these have been huge. The time and energy we have poured into this project isn't worth thinking about. It's too exhausting to even contemplate, but I would do it in a second if I had to start from scratch again. (QCGU facilitator reflection, 2013)

As is evident in the previously discussed themes and participant quotations, change was often an accompanying concept to other topics discussed by participants. For example, the themes of ways of thinking, seeing, and working were often discussed in relation to change and transformation. As UWS student Ian commented, "It makes you think about going into experiences with an open mind. It does change your perception" (Ian, UWS, 2012). Likewise, Curtin student Louise said:

Definitely made me more culturally aware, not even just with Indigenous people, just with everyone. I've always been accepting of other people, I'm sure my friends would say the same thing. I'm never one to turn away from someone just because they're of a different culture. But it's definitely made me more aware of the things that you don't see right in front of you in terms of culture. (Louise, Curtin, 2013)

This sense of change has also been seen in our community collaborators. As Jeff (former manager of WMC) reflected:

The first week was a bit of adaption. It doesn't matter who, what, where or where you're from; they always take a little while. I think they're really - you know as I said, they're family now. The men [WMC staff] don't describe a lot how they feel because it's just not the way they are, but I know, I can see a big change in all of them because it [ABSL project at the WMC centre] has just all come together. (Jeff McLaughlin, former WMC manager, 2009)

This change in worldview was also empowering for the students and facilitators themselves. As a Curtin facilitator reflected:

Perhaps the most powerful message for all of us was one [Aboriginal cultural advisor name] gave to the students: "You will be at the forefront of shaping people's views". This was incredibly empowering, because he told us that change can (has to) happen at the individual level. (Unnamed facilitator, Curtin, 2013)

Likewise, it empowered students to think about new horizons in terms of their workplace:

I think that it [ABSL trip] has dramatically changed my view on working in a remote location. I would consider a placement based in a remote community if it was the right type of work for me. (Amie, QCGU, 2009)

As such, these references to change were diverse and far-reaching, ranging from change in *micro* daily practices such as microphone choice and ways of engaging with students in a classroom or interviewees in journalistic interviews through to participant aspirations to change macro level societal understandings and institutions, as well as themselves.



Figure 11. UWS students at the Mugkarta school (2013)

Personal epiphanies

These aforementioned changes were often triggered by epiphanies. There were strong epiphanies for students and community members, moments when there was a radical shift in their world view, when cultural interactions came together in a way that opened a different way of thinking, being and doing. Epiphanies and strong experiences were a central component of the intercultural learning, recognition, and respect that developed during the ABSL projects. The following small selection of the many reported epiphanies, strong experiences, and turning points speak for themselves in terms of their impact on participants. These descriptions may be instructive for community and higher education facilitators who wish to design and implement transformative ABSL projects in the future.

The reality for me is that my [Aboriginal] family traditions have been lost and that's horrible. When we were at the language centre I could feel myself getting upset. I was

in awe and so excited to be learning about skin names. So, as Wiradjuri, not knowing if our skin names were like this, not knowing if our systems were like this. For me, it was a reality check that it's gone. I think that makes it even more special that they are willing to share theirs with me... It's validated my feelings. I can feel comfortable going back home and saying 'this is who I am'. That's been almost life changing for me. The community in which I live realise that I'm Aboriginal. (Stacey, UWS, 2013)

That's when it really hit me - it's because Indigenous - Indigenous people were doing it for indigenous people, and that's where the pride and the respect for their culture really came in. That was just such a big, such a big contrast to the drama. It was like the drama was a really great night and it was a big success and a big night in terms of the fact that they've been working on it and they pulled it off, but that atmosphere and sense of pride was so different and looking around it was predominantly a white audience. I just - it was indigenous people doing something that - and as much as like saying it - it's indigenous people doing something for the white community ... (Cody, QCGU, 2010)

When we went to the cultural centre, I suppose seeing those two ladies - they just - that was one moment that I think really impacted me because they just seemed so sad. I think it was like we were forcing them out of their culture, just giving them a job so they could fit into Western, white society. They just didn't seem to want to - I don't know but I sensed a longing there for the old times, when they spoke about their grandparents and their ancestors. It was like we'd taken that away. (Joel, QCGU, 2013)

Probably just the [culture orientation] classes that we had the first - what was it - four or five weeks that we had when [intercultural instructor] and everything were talking about the struggles that they went through and then the trip to Pinjarra was really eye-opening for me. It wasn't what I thought the trip was going to be but it was good. It wasn't until the very end and you sat and you thought about it and you realised what they actually go through, what they actually went through. (Louise, Curtin, 2013)

I didn't know that Indigenous people were categorised as flora and fauna until the 1970s. This stems from the comments that "there are no people here" – amazing. (Facilitator reflections, Curtin, 2012)

Question: Were there any critical incidents or relationships that contributed to the change? Answer: Holding hands at the massacre site. (Unnamed student reflection, Curtin University, 2013)

Loss of personal agency

A small number of university students experienced a loss of personal agency, resulting from not always being able to decide where they would go in the community environs or how they would act; in other words, a loss of control. As Curtin student Jessica explained:

I might be hesitant to do it [ABSL journalism project] again just because I know how

much pressure I was under at the time and I just found it - I didn't like the - I actually questioned journalism as a whole, because I hate not having control. I thought that - I didn't like to think that I would get a bad mark because I had no control over the source and having no chance to go out and find another source because it wasn't that simple. I do question journalism as a whole. I was just like maybe I shouldn't even be doing this. (Jessica, Curtin, 2013)

Likewise, QCGU student Carey commented on the way she felt that her own ability to handle this situation was overlooked when a community partner explained to the group about cultural and community protocols:

... it [ABSL trip to Tennant Creek] was difficult and the thing that made it most difficult for me was that I felt a little bit condescended to. When we sat at the table with [name omitted] and he was saying, this is how we treat Aboriginal people, it made it kind of scary. Like, don't approach people, don't ask - don't look at people directly and don't ask people a question and expect an answer straight away, was making me think that they're fragile or something. I have a friend that works a lot with Aboriginal people in land rights and stuff and one of the best things that she said about it is that people seem to think that Aboriginal people are in some way special, but they're not, they're just people ... So think that it's almost as though we weren't considered intelligent enough to figure out how to deal with the cultural interchange. I don't blame [name omitted] for doing that because you know, it's better to just say, these are the guidelines. But at the same time I thought, well, I think that we were all selected because they think that we can pretty much handle that kind of stuff, and it's better to figure things out by yourself in some ways... (Carey, QCGU, 2012)

Conversely, this sense provided a lens into the lived experiences of community members, including the lack of voice, the police surveillance and legal restrictions. Ultimately, the students who did report feeling a loss of personal agency during their ABSL projects also saw this as a rewarding aspect of the experience. This linked significantly to the facilitators' attempts to promote community-led work across all projects, and also for one participant the experience of being part of a team rather than an independent worker. For some it also related to being thrown into a group situation with shared living areas and resources such as cars and computers. Ultimately the team might regard it as a positive experience that students experienced a loss of personal agency in that this experience alone may give them some insight into the daily lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia. Loss of personal agency and independence is however something to consider when involving adult learners in ABSL projects, particularly when there is a diversity of ages and backgrounds in the student group.

Key insights: When critical reflection accompanies the embodied and emplaced learning experiences in ABSL programs, participants have the potential to experience deep and long-lasting lessons that radically transform their understandings of themselves, their arts-practice, and the world around them.

Chapter 5. Findings: Ways of Being

As the insights and stories which were shared so far suggest, participants in the three ABSL sub-projects became involved in a network of relations that were reciprocal and deeply contextual (Martin, 2003, p. 209). These relations determined and defined for everyone how the team then connected to the country where members were working on, how team members interacted with those who collaborated in the project, and ultimately how the team related to ourselves – in other words, our Ways of Being (Martin, 2003, pp. 209-210). Our community collaborators guided this relational way of learning and engaging. Whether it was explaining how the team connected to our collaborators in the kinship system after receiving a skin name, or evoking the expected reciprocity in relationships by asking for favours, our collaborators steered the process of how the students related to others, and modelled to them how they should behave and respond as a result. To illustrate how the team engaged with this interpersonal way of learning and engaging in the three ABSL sub-projects, in this chapter team members share insights and quotes from the project's participants that focus on the following:

- Building and deepening relationships
- Learning and sharing in reciprocal ways
- Responding to contextual politics and dynamics with sensitivity

Relationship building and deepening

The strongest message that came from each sub-project was the importance of relationships. This is also a key theme that is graphically represented in external evaluator Jan Strom's report (see Appendix A). In fact, in our analysis of the data it became difficult to isolate it in a section of its own, given how inextricably linked it is to so many of the topics outlined in this report. That said, there are some important considerations that the team would like to underscore in this discussion, and these relate to the **continuity of relationships**, lessons that come from **family and kinship** and the dynamics of **relationships with partners and intermediaries**.

As discussed in the previous chapter, building these relationships takes time, and some students found it hard to reconcile the highly structured and goal-oriented nature of their university learning experiences with the need for developing relationships within a new environment. However, over time these students, and indeed all participants, came to realise the importance of showing respect, developing trust, and taking the time to build relationships. UWS student Corinne reflected on the importance of these relationships, and how they differ from what is focused on in a university setting:

I'm definitely learning stuff about having relationships to teachers, and that's been great because it's something you don't have a lot of experience in, coming out of university. It's a whole other country, working out how to balance and nurture those relationships, to share information and to make every program richer. (Corinne, UWS, 2012)

In many cases students built their relationships through arts-based processes, and these experiences emerged as important pathways for intercultural learning. QCGU student Michael described the shared music experience that foregrounded a friendship with local musician Angus: “I’ve talked to Angus probably the most out of all of them. We both share a love for Zakk Wylde and his guitar playing, and so we had common grounds there” (Michael, QCGU, 2010). Likewise, informal jam sessions often provided initial introductions that become important over the course of an entire ABSL sub-project. As QCGU student Jeffrey described, these processes facilitated a way of communicating that was much more efficient and meaningful than talking: “Sometimes, I felt while playing that there was no need for talking. We could all understand each other very clearly” (Fieldwork diary, 2011).

The importance of relationships building is not limited to arts-based processes, but also extends across all contexts from out in the community into the classroom, as UWS student Lisa explained:

I’m building my best relationships in the classroom. It didn’t look like that in focus week but that’s what’s happening. It’s actually building trust in the classroom. That’s taken time and more so, with low attenders. It’s happening. When we went to collect a couple of boys in the troopie from their houses, that was a perspective. Really getting on students’ level here works so well, both in terms of the way that I speak, just occasionally letting it slide to make a point in a way they understand, and physically getting on their level. I stopped giving instruction standing up. I also give kids an opportunity to sit on tables, to remove any kind of barrier. (Lisa, UWS, 2012)

Continuity of relationships

Porter and Monard (2000) have suggested that relationships in the context of First Peoples service learning must be habitually tended to maintain their integrity. This is why both QCGU and UWS have worked hard to maintain their relationships with the community in an ongoing manner. As QCGU Facilitator Brydie explained, returning year after year so that her and her husband Gavin’s relationships can deepen with the community has been one of the most important aspects of this work:

I think this is the most feasible and sustainable way of integrating Indigenous perspectives and wisdom into our curriculum and the lives and future careers of our students. It has such an influence on them, and I think that influence will sustain them for a very long time. As for community members, I’d like to think it does the same thing. When they see us coming back year after year, a little older (and now this year with our own kids), I’d like to think that shows we’re in this for the long haul. (Brydie, QCGU, 2013).

This is also why Curtin chose to work closer to home to facilitate this long-term commitment. As Curtin Facilitator Michelle explained:

Their personal contact with Aboriginal people and the time spent in the community [was] an important part of the students’ learning experience. To achieve this I wanted

to make sure their creative productions were kept small and manageable so that students could spend time establishing relationships with their community partners ... I believed that all these elements mentioned above would be most successfully achieved by working in our own local community. Students often have romantic and essentialist ideas about Aboriginal culture and people that causes them to believe that they must travel to a remote community to have an 'authentic' experience of Indigenous culture. Working with an urban Aboriginal community allows students to experience and understand contemporary Aboriginal people and culture, and the social justice issues experienced by an urban-living community such as the one in Perth. Students work within their own community to form potentially long-term relationships, and to understand that 'real' Aborigines don't just live in the bush. The time and processes that I wanted to emphasise in the project would be hard to achieve if students were visiting a remote or regional community for a week or two and then leaving, possibly never to return. (Michelle, Curtin, 2012)

The importance of continuity in these relationships and returning, has also extended to the students involved in the ABSL sub-projects. In 2012 and 2013 the QCGU sub-project took one student from a previous year to enable them to continue building their relationships with the community and also to act as a peer mentor to the students who were there for the first time. Other students have returned on their own steam, and now work for our partner BRA (Corinne from UWS and James from QCGU). Others have made a commitment to music education in the broader Northern Territory and taken up teaching positions in the NT (Rhiannon from QCGU). The community has welcomed this ongoing commitment, as Alan (BRA Executive Officer) explained:

People who do take that extra leap to come back, without any expectations even; there will be a place somewhere in the region for them to land, especially if they have come through this program. It carries a little bit of a badge now, of acceptance. They're the folk who become friends of the region forever. That's a badge of honour itself because that's not an easy thing to happen. (Alan, QCGU, 2011)

Lessons in family and kinship

An important way in which students are initiated into thinking about relationships in this context is by being given a skin name. The family and kinship focus was more prominent in the two Tennant Creek ABSL sub-projects (UWS and QCGU). UWS and QCGU students who attended language and culture classes at the Papulu Apparr-Kari language centre in Tennant Creek were frequently given skin names as part of their welcome to the community. QCGU students and staff were also spontaneously given skin names during ABSL trips by WMC Elder men at the conclusion of significant performances and activities together. Other times local Elders, such as Rosemary Plummer, gave students skin names during Warumungu language lessons. Through this gesture of giving students and facilitators skin names, community members were not only teaching us about our relationships towards one another, but also the culturally appropriate behaviour that accompanies these relationships. This was not a theoretical learning exercise, but an eminently practical lesson that students

engaged with in all their daily interactions with people.

Many reported feeling at once unsure and intensely privileged to have been given a skin name and to be welcomed into the local kinship system. Many students and staff reported that they felt a true and enduring sense of family connection to their friends and colleagues in Tennant Creek. As QCGU student Jeff reflected:

This time when I went back, because I came last year, I had this connection with the guys which makes stuff a lot easier, like you feel like you're part of a big family out there because of skin name and culture, so you just - like for me I felt like I'm going back home, nice. (Jeff, QCGU, 2012)

This notion of kinship and family also extended to the ties between the university students who worked closely together on the ABSL sub-projects. For example, QCGU student Rhiannon described her peers as “a little family”:

I would let them know about the reservations I had prior to going and then tell them about how it felt as though we were a little family by the time we left, how the language and culture classes were really interesting and helped us understand the way Indigenous people act and just how different the scenery is up there, how it feels as though you're in a different country when you're just seeing a different side of Australia. (Rhiannon, QCGU, 2009)

Similarly, Sharni described the Tennant Creek community in a comparable way: “I love the remote community. It’s like a little family” (Sharni, UWS, 2012). As such, family and kinship were strong elements of participants’ experiences across all three ABSL projects. This referred to prior relationships and experiences they had had with their own biological families as well as potentially new understandings of Aboriginal kinship systems and skin names and the importance of family and ancestors.

Community stories about how they learnt to practice in their chosen art forms emphasised the extent to which the arts is a deeply valued and shared family and cultural activity in Tennant Creek. Many community participants shared stories about how they learnt their craft from Elders and family members from very early ages. For many local musicians this resulted in them playing multiple instruments. Community members frequently included students in this open form of teaching and learning and practising in the arts during student visits. As former WMC musician explained:

I've played with the Tableland Drifters. I haven't played drums since I was a kid back in the bush when my mother used to go to church and I used to go to church every Sunday and Wednesdays and that's where I saw the drum for the first time and reckon I - see if I can give it a go. (Lester Peterson, WMC musician, 2009)

Many further stories about family connections in music making were told over cups of coffee when the tape recorders weren’t rolling, and this family connection was also very apparent in how the line-up of local bands were organised.

Developing relationships with partners and intermediaries

The importance of developing and deepening relationships is not only on an interpersonal level but also on an institutional level. The dynamics of working with a community partner are complex and multifaceted and require significant investments of time. As Alan Murn from BRA explained:

We are the grass roots organisation with strong pathways, with a lot of trust who have done a lot of work for many years and have addressed many, many issues, and have learned how to relate, and also how to consult properly, with remote Indigenous communities here - that in fact partnering with outside orgs, those orgs have to understand - and it's a bit of a philosophical thing that we aren't working together on an equal - on a level playing field - that in fact we have home ground advantage - is sometimes difficult for institutions and organisations to understand that, but it won't work properly, working with Barkly Arts or the music centre unless that is understood and we will - we don't partner up easily with people. That's a long slow process that will develop more and more, because we can't jump into bed with everyone and introduce them to a community that trusts us, to make the right decisions for them about who they'll engage with. It sounds slightly autocratic, but it's not. It's a reality. It means that organisations or institutions can actually keep - they can actually piggy back on what we do, and it's a short cut into - deeply into communities, but we don't take any - well, we don't piggy back anyone unless that process is understood. So the partnerships between the organisations and between the individuals involved then - really important that they have a sense of trust that goes through those two levels, and a sense of continuity I guess. (Alan Murn, QCGU, 2011)

Alan's comment highlights the importance of working with a local, respected community partner with already-strong ties and relationships with the community the ABSL project is occurring in. Just like at the interpersonal level, developing a trusting relationship between a community partner and a university organisation takes time, and ongoing commitment, and a respect for the partners' experience and ways of working. Just as the interpersonal relationships need regular tending to, so does this institutional relationship. This is why BRA chooses its partners carefully. When reflecting on this process of finding an appropriate partner, and developing relationships with them, Curtin facilitator Michelle explained:

I believed it would be easier to work with a community organisation than with an independent business or an individual. Having a physical location for the students to attend and to have personal contact with as many people as possible was a priority for me. I looked for a not-for-profit Aboriginal community organisation that was interested in a collaboration. With advice from Aboriginal people that I knew I approached Noongar Radio and LAA [Langford Aboriginal Association]. I believe it was important to visit and meet with representatives of each organisation to explain to them, in person, what I was proposing. LAA were eager to be involved as they had a project clearly in mind. The staff who work at LAA are trained social/health workers who had a good understanding of the participatory practices I was proposing, as well as the need for students to have a first hand experience of Aboriginal people and culture. Noongar Radio were keen to be involved in principle, but it was harder for

them to imagine in these early days how the collaboration would work – what, exactly, could the students do for them. I suggested that we would have time to allow ideas to evolve over the first few weeks of the project, and the station manager chose to trust that advice and agreed to be involved with the project. The most difficult thing for Noongar radio is that they work with a small budget and limited staff. The prospect of having to give time and energy to a group of Wadjella students probably did not seem that appealing to them in the beginning. (Michelle, Curtin, 2013)

Key insights: Taking the time to develop trusting relationships with people and partners is the most fundamentally important part of this work. These relationships underpin everything that is learned and experienced on these ABSL programs, and without them any kind of meaningful engagement is not possible.

Learning and sharing in reciprocal ways

For this project, two-way learning meant mutual benefits for community and university students. This relates to the relational concept of reciprocity. The project draws on the work of Dostilio et al. (2012, p. 18) to describe this term reciprocity, as something active, as distinct from passively receiving a service offered by others (cf. Dorado & Giles 2004; Puma, Bennett, Cutforth, Tombari & Stein 2009). In other words there is:

- Exchange, from which both parties benefit;
- Influence, within which both parties impact the work. Here, reciprocity is expressed as a relational connection that is informed by personal, social and environmental contexts; and
- Generativity, also called *thick* reciprocity (Jameson, Clayton & Jaeger 2011). In this orientation the parties produce systemic change, create new value, and/or undergo transformation in their way of being. (Dostilio et al., 2012, p. 21)

Given that the term reciprocity refers to both processes as well as outcomes, it can be interpreted at individual or collective levels and has a potential role as a tool to realise Ways of Being as well as Ways of Doing.

When thinking about the exchange of ideas and mutual learning that can take place, Kovach (2009, p. 57) has noted that, within First Peoples' epistemologies, exchange is the minimum form of reciprocity "within a relational web ... all aspects ... must be understood from that vantage point". Harris and Wasilewski (2004, p. 492) have similarly brought to the fore First Peoples' Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being, drawing as an example on the process "by which North American tribes identified four core values which cross generation, geography and tribe ... [namely] relationship, responsibility, reciprocity and redistribution". Of particular relevance here is the concept of generative reciprocity, which refers to the interrelatedness of people, the world around them, and the potential synergies that emerge from these relationships (Dostilio et al. 2012). In the following section the team reflects on this concept of reciprocal learning by discussing the ways in which participants have directly and indirectly described the **mutual learning** that takes place, and the **two-way professional development** that often occurs.

Mutual learning

While participants rarely used the parlance of “two-way” or “mutual” learning that is common in service learning literature, there was much evidence of two-way mutual learning occurring across all three ABSL projects. While it is a somewhat artificial distinction to identify “two-way” learning outcomes, given that people often learn from their social experiences in some way, this focus attempts to respond to the particular requirement that community service learning must produce two-way benefits for both community and student participants. As one of QCGU’s collaborators in Tennant Creek (who is now a resident in Darwin), Lynette Lewis explained: “Everything that the students I hope have learned and the people here have learned - it's a two-way process” (Lynette, QCGU, 2009). Similarly, as QCGU community partner Alan wrote:

by this time you were all honorary Tennantites (there is no higher honour) ... I can still see you [QCGU students] sitting at front-of-house, helping those old lady singers into position, holding the front-line and being utterly immersed in what was truly a beautiful, important and very, very spiritual event. Your immersion here has had many dimensions, as does our work here, as does each day, and as each day played out with a new major drama you infused it into your experience and gave back to us an energy and understanding of immeasurable importance. (Alan Murn letter to students, QCGU, 2010)

As Alan’s comment alludes, by acknowledging, valuing and being attuned to the knowledge and wisdom that can be found in the communities these projects are occurring in, allows us to become attuned to the reciprocal and mutually beneficial ways in which participants learn from one another in these contexts. When viewed this way *all* participants are active learners with something valuable to share. As Aboriginal songwriter and musician Warren H. Williams (pictured in Figure 11) explained:

Well, the thing is, always respect the community where you're going to, whichever community you're going to, and always ask. I mean, there's no harm in asking. You know, just because you're in a university doesn't mean you know more than the people in the community so always ask. (Warren H. Williams, QCGU, 2012)



Figure 12. Warren H Williams, Jeffrey Bure and Gavin performing at the Desert Harmony Festival, Tennant Creek (2012)

In a similar vein, UWS Victoria told the story of working with a student and realising the depth of cultural knowledge she had to share:

I think one of the things that was interesting to me in the first day of observation happened when I was working with Shania. Initially she appeared to be sleeping on the desk. When we started talking about the animals that she had to put in this eco systems poster, she got very excited and then she started looking in the field guide and pointing out animals to me: 'this one, that one.' Initially she was just writing down 'ducks' and I was prompting her 'what kind; let's have a look in the field guide.' Two minutes earlier she gave every appearance of being asleep on the desk. When she sprang into action to look for a fish, she seemed to know a lot about them. I started to do an internet search and she's going: 'No, no, if I see it I'll know what it is.' She searched for a good few minutes till she found a picture of a carp. She seemed to know a lot about plants and animals, fish and things like that. She was really quite focused. I got the sense that it was cultural knowledge. That's what I understood. She also knew their language names. She was pointing things out to me, when I said I came from the Blue Mountains and that I lived in the bush. All of a sudden we were like best buddies, because I lived somewhere there were animals, I wasn't just a person from the city. It was interesting the way she seemed to be operating within a taxonomy. I don't know how to explain it or what to call it yet. There was some equivalent 'thing' she was drawing on. So that's interesting to me. If I've got Indigenous kids in the class, they're not going to have the same kind of knowledge because it's a different context. But if I can know something about how to connect with them and what sort of things they're

interested in, then it makes their life easier and my life easier. Everything goes in a way that's much more productive. It hit a trigger with her. I don't yet know how to operate that trigger in another context but I saw what happened when it worked. (Victoria, UWS, 2012)

The sense of respect and co-ownership of the process through this mutual and reciprocal way of working places value on everyone's contribution towards these ABSL projects. As Torres Strait Islander student Sarah observed:

I just think - I guess final words, the last thing that I would want to express is the amazing potential for places like the Queensland Conservatorium of Music to come out to indigenous communities, and people can get that experience of working with the community. Also the ways in which it helps the community in a variety of different ways, not just the music development stuff. But just in terms of people feeling that they own something, such as the Winanjjikari Centre, and having a say in the process. Feeling like something is theirs, and just the universal healing power of music, yet again, demonstrates itself. (Sarah, QCGU, 2011)

Two-way professional development

This reciprocal way of learning and engaging also extends to professional development. This reciprocal and generative way of working is demonstrated when both students and community members consciously think of future actions, future goals and imagine success with those actions and goals. As is evident in many of the quotations and insights discussed so far in the report, two-way professional development for students and community partners was a major outcome of the ABSL sub-projects. This occurred in many ways across many different contexts, as discussed above in relation to change. Students and some community participants experienced professional development in their micro practices associated with their professional work, their ways of seeing, being, and acting, and often significant transformation in their visions for their future. As QCGU community collaborator Lynette Lewis explained:

[the students have bought] Really fresh ideas, really new ways of looking at things, new exercises, stuff that I haven't even heard of before. Just fresh ideas, fresh way of looking at things. Sometimes you can get into a groove of just the same old, same old, and kids see that and they get sick of it. So it's nice to have new ideas ... It can only be for the positive. (Lynette Lewis, Tennant Creek, 2009)

This freshness of ideas was something that was commonly reported by both students and community collaborators. Many community members and students also reported benefits in terms of technical skills, performance and rehearsal approaches, new ideas, strong bonds and connections with people and organisations and confidence in working with people and across cultures. As QCGU student Sophie explained:

Probably a new work ethic and you just don't worry about things so much... you don't worry about the little details or things that can become really important in the studio

when you're recording, because really, it doesn't matter that much. Working with Caravan Burlesque [touring act at Desert Harmony Festival 2012] and Warren [H. Williams] and stuff, feels like a new level of professionalism. (Sophie, QCGU, 2012)

Likewise, QCGU community partner Alan Murn described the benefits and flow on effect on this reciprocal way of thinking about professional development:

The men here [at WMC] were able to see a work ethic from your side of things and a way of doing things and a way of working as a team in your mainstream style, and at the same time I think the students would have understood after a while that things get done in another way but they get done and there's perhaps a lot of stuff that they would have got from that, because they - the way those Aboriginal men work together is completely different. Less structured, cut through the - cut straight to the chase a little bit ... the benefits of that level I think are really - have been really wonderful. (Alan Murn, QCGU, 2009)

QCGU collaborator and WMC musician Dirk Dickenson concurred with Alan's observations:

Every time they [QCGU students] come - I met a few of them, I think, in 2011. They were teaching me things that I never knew. I got a little bit of skills out of them too. The other ones that came this year, now they're working there, they're happy every time I see them. Every time I see them, they're ... we talked. They ask me for help, for any job that's available here. (Dirk, QCGU, 2013)



Figure 13. Performing Brian Morton's song "Paradise" at Circle Stories (2013)

These shared professional development experiences also influenced the ways in with the

students thought about their roles, such as teachers, in their future careers. As Ian explained:

I learned to expect the unexpected. And one girl was really upset about something. And I realised that it's my job as a teacher to calm that upset. Not only follow my lesson plan but do it with all these unexpected things that happen. Show empathy towards the students. (Ian, UWS, 2012)

For others, the ABSL projects reaffirmed intentions and values people already held. For example, students who travelled to Tennant Creek as part of the UWS and QCGU immersion trips frequently reported that they could easily see themselves working in regional and remote areas where they hadn't before. As mentioned above, two ABSL alumni from UWS and QCGU are currently working in Tennant Creek as a direct result of their participation in these projects and many have either returned already or plan to return in the future. In terms of professional development and imagining future work in ways they hadn't before, Curtin University students, who worked primarily in and around Perth city during this project, also expressed a strong desire to work with regional and remote communities in Western Australia in the future. As Jessica explained:

Well, I know that I know a lot more about Indigenous culture and history than I did prior to this unit and it - while I was doing it I was quite inspired by meeting Lockie Cook and that sort of stuff and it - I have gone up to Broome and Kununurra and it just made me really think about my future and where I could end up and maybe going up to Kununurra and working with Indigenous people and stuff more. That's what I got out of it. It's made me realise that that's where I want to end up maybe. (Jessica, Curtin, 2013)

Key insights: Embracing an asset-based approach to ABSL programs allows us to become attuned to the reciprocal and mutually beneficial ways in which participants learn from one another in these contexts. When viewed this way *all* participants are active learners with something valuable to share.

Responding to contextual politics and dynamics with sensitivity

ABSL of this kind often occurs in contexts that are highly complex in nature. Students find themselves walking into a web of relationships and dynamics that they need to be sensitive towards, even if they don't fully understand how and why they operate the way they do. In this section, the realities of this pervaded each of the sub-projects are discussed. In particular, the focus is on **facing the lingering devastation of colonisation**. The section also talk about how this led students to feel **apprehensive** at times, but also how they were able to turn this apprehension into **being confident**. The team also looks at the ways in which participants found ways to respond to this by **being responsive, flexible and open**.

Facing the lingering devastation of colonisation

In this work the stark realities of the devastation colonisation has caused Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cannot be glossed over. The disadvantage of regional remote

communities as well as local urban communities is demonstrated in such matters as inferior health service access and scarce employment opportunities for young people who finish school. At the same time, community members face further concerns that affect each of their communities, such as the impact on the environment of a proposed uranium waste in Muckaty Station (near Tennant Creek), and ways to confront obesity with healthy diet. A number of participants experienced new understandings of poverty and disadvantage in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Student teachers involved in the UWS ABSL trip to Tennant Creek, for example, became aware of realities and stereotypes relating to poverty and disadvantage in the town through their interactions with students in the school. It was notable that some students also spoke about broader socio-political institutionalisation and stereotyping of disadvantage, and conveyed a broader awareness of social inequities in Australia. As Curtin student Kimberley observed:

So he - we were talking about - I think he was - someone brought up the fact that reporting on Aboriginal disadvantage and what's happening in communities. When people keep reporting on those issues, it's - it kind of perpetuates that stereotype. (Kimberley, Curtin, 2013)

Students and staff were also exposed to harsh statistics regarding the communities they were working with. For example, over the years of partnership Alan Murn from BRA often exposed QCGU staff to statements such as:

[t]he Barkly's health status is worse than in developing countries, for example, it has the highest level of kidney disease in the world. Domestic violence in Tennant Creek is 120 times more than the national average. (Alan, QCGU, 2012)

Other students reported that their ABSL experiences challenged previously held stereotypes regarding disadvantage and supplanted them with more culturally appropriate asset-based ways of seeing these communities. For example,

There's still definitely a scar left there, but it had a different appearance in that they're still very content, at least the people I came in contact with, are very content, satisfied people in their lives. Even, and it challenged my perceptions I guess of poverty and the economic system, which I suppose poverty is judged by. (Andrew, QCGU, 2009)

Andrew's comment and critique on poverty and the economic system affirms existing work by Aboriginal authors such as Scott Gorringe (2010) who argue that white Australians tend to think about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributions to society in neoliberal, economic terms that are characteristic of a dominant colonial mindset. Gorringe (2010) emphasised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on making a contribution are not typically based on concepts of financial independence or sustainability as required in neo-liberal evaluations; rather, these are centred on a deep appreciation and understanding of environmental sustainability and the mutuality of environmental and human wellbeing.

Participants in the two projects that were conducted in Tennant Creek also spoke about "grog" (alcohol) related experiences and insights. For some non-Indigenous students, the ABSL project dispelled negative stereotypes about drug and alcohol abuse within Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander communities. For others, the ABSL projects shone a stark light on the extent of the “grog problem” in some Aboriginal communities and evoked a very strong emotive reaction regarding the depth of the problem for these communities. As one of the QCGU facilitators reflected: “This is the first time I’ve ever seen and felt the tip of the reality of drinking for Aboriginal people” (QCGU facilitator field diary, 2012). Other participants appeared to maintain a paternalistic judgemental attitude toward the drinking they witnessed during their ABSL projects, while attempting to make sense of the reality they were experiencing. As UWS student Sharni describes:

I gave Year 10s the choice of issues. They all agreed on the issue of ‘You don’t need grog to have fun.’ There’s a song as part of that. I’ve encouraged them to include language words... As an Indigenous student, you get told of the problems in our community in Central and Northern Australia. But you don’t see it. I’m seeing it now. It’s opening my eyes. I’m learning about that. I knew the stories were true but there’s a difference in hearing them and actually seeing yourself the issues with alcohol and the times when cheques arrive. (Sharni, UWS, 2012)

The resulting sadness and anger that some of the university students and staff experienced lies in the loss of Aboriginal culture and language, the racism and the tragedies that are part of Aboriginal history since settlement. This was prominent in the Curtin data, which described a field trip to the site of the Pinjarra Massacre.

[Name of Aboriginal orientation worker] was the source of my strongest experiences and realisations. The cultural awareness training was so genuine and so very sad. He said “the racism in Australia is insidious because we don’t see it”. It just seems so hopeless – it’s such a mess and I don’t see any way of making it right... So, I feel terribly sad and slightly empowered, and angry, all at the same time. (Facilitator reflections, Curtin University, 2012)

Like this comment from one of the Curtin facilitators, participants across all three projects reported significant feelings of sadness in relation to their experiences and newly found understandings of Aboriginal history, culture, and communities. They also expressed anger towards the way in which “mainstream Australia” continues to ignore this. As QCGU student Andrew graphically described:

The cultural cringe that Australia is experiencing with regard to Indigenous art forms is like the equivalent of Australia throwing up on itself. (Andrew, QCGU, 2009)

An awareness and sensitivity to the devastation that can still be seen in such communities led a number of students to feel apprehensive and concerned about being culturally inappropriate in their actions and words.

Being apprehensive and being confident

Given the complex dynamics which have been described, a number of the university students felt tremendous pressure to ‘get it right’ because they felt the historical weight and

wanted to work in a friendly and open way. Their wariness was largely about offending without meaning to do so. Moreover, these were students who were still learning – to be musicians, to be teachers, to be journalists – and it took time for them to grow in confidence about cultural interactions and about their music-making, journalism and educational work. In addition to the many positive, transformative intercultural learning experiences reported across the sub-projects, this sense of apprehension about cultural ignorance was very common amongst students, and indeed facilitators.

There was a sense that intercultural relationships were “high stakes” for the non-Indigenous participants in the sense that they were highly motivated to act in a culturally respectful way but were generally quite unsure of what that might entail. In some cases participant anxiety was related to “warnings” and “instructions” these participants had experienced prior to the sub-projects that appeared to reinforce a distancing between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants. Curtin journalism student Louise, for example, felt pressure not to “mess up” writing about Aboriginal issues because she felt it was a lot harder to be “forgiven” for that kind of misrepresentation:

Maybe because it's such a delicate issue when you talk about indigenous people in the news, you want to get it right. You don't want to stuff it up. Because I think with Indigenous issues, it's a lot harder to be forgiven if you mess it up, especially just learning about it as well. (Louise, Curtin, 2013)

An ABSL facilitator who had experienced quite significant political interactions around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work in universities described her apprehension prior to beginning the ABSL work.

The night before I left for Tennant I said to [husband] several times “I feel scared”. I'm not sure still what I was scared of. I said “it's the same feeling of being scared I had when I even thought of applying for this job. I almost didn't apply because my interactions with academics and partners in the past few years have been really hard and I've had my share of reprimands and bruises. Challenging because I think that I'm above that, i.e. that I'm sensitive to other people and I really try to be that way all of the time. When I'm not I feel really bad and try to fix it in whatever way I can. I had said to [colleague] that I wasn't going to do any more multicultural work because it was just too hard. She had agreed with me and said she wouldn't be doing any more multicultural work either. Yet here I was. I think I was scared of being attacked, not physically but socially for doing or being the wrong thing. (Unnamed facilitator, QCGU, 2012)

Another facilitator similarly remarked:

I don't feel at all confident. I think I have enough common sense not to be offensive, but it would rely on my intuition. I feel an outsider because I didn't learn anything as a child (not being from Australia). (Unnamed facilitator, Curtin, 2012)

Blake, a UWS student teacher, adopted a broader view and reported that growing up in the country made him feel more confident working in regional Aboriginal communities, a

sentiment that was repeated by several other students and staff across the three ABSL projects.

I feel quite confident mainly because I'm originally from the country and have lived in places where the Indigenous population is around the same number as the non-Indigenous. I know some people are 'scared', for want of a better word, but it's only because of the discourse of the other. They're unsure of what they don't know, but it doesn't worry me in the slightest. (Blake, UWS, 2012)

Participants who described feeling apprehensive almost uniformly found that their sense of trepidation dissipated as they developed relationships with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues through their ABSL work. Some described this process as a “journey”. This resulted in many student and staff participants feeling more confident in working respectfully with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues by the end of their ABSL work. As UWS student Corinne described:

I feel like I'm at the beginning of a journey. I feel confident at times. I'm feeling more confident with each passing day. I am also a person who reflects on things quite deeply. Confidence is something that's formed and informed continually. In the first few days I had really high expectations of myself and I needed to relax those a little bit. Not relax what I want to do but relax the immediacy of that. Keep working with my ideas but understand that it was going to take some time. Once I let myself make that adjustment I was able to be more confident. (Corinne, UWS, 2012)

Likewise, fellow UWS student Kylie spoke about this progression from apprehension moving towards confidence:

I was not confident before. I wouldn't say it's moved to confident yet. After this morning at PAK [Papulu Apparr-Kari Language Centre], I thought that was brilliant. I think we could have done that on day one. So it's moved from unconfident to more relaxed. Still nervous in not wanting to offend. But I'm in a more informed position. And I've heard it direct from the people and from the heart. Actually I'd hate to be the confident that leads to blasé. I think [name] (at Mungkarta) summed it up yesterday when he said 'the community invites me and invites you to come into the community.' That really resonated with me. So that keeps me on my toes. Wanting to learn some of the language – a big step. (Kylie, UWS, 2012)

QCGU music technology student Jeff who participated in ABSL trips to Tennant Creek over two consecutive years (the second year as a peer mentor) felt extremely welcomed and confident returning to the community a second time.

Oh yeah, they taught me that. When I came last year, I was not that confident in what I do or what I was trying to do. But when I went back from here, I was like, ah, don't have to be that great to do stuff, as long as you really want it and you try hard enough, might get somewhere. (Jeff, QCGU, 2012)

This provides another compelling reason for why it is important to take students back as

mentors. This confidence that Jeff felt could then be relayed to his fellow peers who were feeling much more apprehensive. As the benefit of experience has shown Jeff and others, the best way to approach this apprehension is to be responsive, flexible and open when working alongside community collaborators.

Being responsive, flexible and open

In response to the challenging contextual politics and dynamics, participants emphasised the value of being responsive, flexible and open when engaging in intercultural relationships and experiences. In particular, participants described a need for non-Indigenous participants to become more flexible and practice a sense of personal, interpersonal, and professional “openness” during ABSL projects and when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues more generally. This theme emerged across all major participant groups including community partner representatives, ABSL facilitators from participating universities, and students. Lynette Lewis, an Aboriginal music teacher and artist involved in the QCGU ABSL projects in Tennant Creek, remarked that the students’ “openness to new ideas” (alongside their musical skill) was a key factor in the success of intercultural relationship building with WMC musicians:

I think that the musicians here have engaged with conservatorium students in a way that they've never engaged with other people before, other musicians, because they're so - the conservatorium students are so open to new ideas and very good at what they do. (Lynette, QCGU, 2009)

Throughout the project the emphasis is on the importance of this openness as well as flexibility in designing and implementing ABSL projects with community organisations, Elders, and other community members. Kathy Burns, festival manager for the BRA Desert Harmony Festival in Tennant Creek, emphasised the importance of this, re-iterating that universities should not come into communities with a set agenda but should, rather, listen to and work with local organisations and community representatives to develop shared projects:

...try not to come with a pre-planned idea about what you would like to bring out here. It's really great to be able to communicate with the organisations, particularly about the Barkly Regional Arts. We're really embedded within the community, we know what works, what's really appropriate, what's relevant for our audiences and for our communities. It's great to be able to start a conversation before trying to pre-plan ideas and thoughts and start working together with us, because we are the people on the ground who then communicate that to the rest of the community and then also get sign-offs and say if that's okay, if this is something that the community wants. (Kathy, QCGU, 2013)

Many students also noted the importance of flexibility and openness in interpersonal relationships and ways of working during ABSL projects. For example, Louise, a Curtin University journalism student, described being invited to attend one of her Aboriginal colleagues’ netball matches during the course of writing a story about the woman. For

Louise this was not a “normal” way of interacting with people she was writing stories about, but through practicing flexibility and openness Louise was able to develop new understandings both about her colleague’s life and her own ways of working as a journalist.

With [name of Aboriginal colleague] I went to watch one of her netball practice things down at [netball venue]. They had an open night for the netball team and I went down and watched that and took a few photographs. I probably might not do that in certain cases but it was a good experience. I got to see her in her own environment. (Louise, Curtin, 2013)

Likewise, when reflecting on moving to Tennant Creek the year after he was involved in the QCGU project, James recalled:

I think it's actually a lot simpler than everyone thinks. Everyone makes it - can tend to make a big deal of some of the things we've been doing. I think the biggest thing we've had is an open mind and a respect for the place and the people that are there and a sense of fun. It's not as crazy, as gnarly, as scary, as troubled as it's probably made out to be. I think certainly there are issues and dramas and problems, but that's everywhere and I haven't felt like I'm in an alien environment or somewhere that's too weird. (James, QCGU, 2010)

In the early stages of his work, UWS student Ian found that students at the Tennant Creek school he was working with were very shy or distant, which affected his ability to connect with them: “I’m confident in the fact that I can teach. Where the challenge comes for me is trying to connect with the kids. ... Today I was trying to connect with the students here but I can see that it’s challenging to get them involved, to get over their shyness” (Ian, UWS, 2012). In connection to this discussion about responsiveness, feelings of shyness, in general, were remarked upon by several community, student, and university staff participants as something that affected their ability to connect across cultures. Most of these participants however reported that their shyness subsided over time as they developed relationships. Another UWS student teacher Nick remarked that he needed to be more open to different student behaviours in recognition of the social and cultural contexts he was working in that were different from urban environments he had worked in previously. For example, he stated, “I’m also open to kids showing up later than normal. It’s good that they’re there.” (Nick, UWS, 2012).

Key insights: These ABSL programs are often set amidst deeply complex contexts with politics and dynamics that are difficult to grapple with, to say the least. While this might result in a degree of apprehension from all participants, this can be ameliorated to a degree with sensitivity, flexibility, openness, humanity and a good dose of humour.

Chapter 6. Findings: Ways of Doing

In these ABSL sub-projects, our Ways of Doing became a synthesis and articulation of our Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being. These Ways of Doing could be seen in the arts practices the team engaged with, in the cultural customs and events team members participated in, in the ways in which the team followed protocols, and in the ways team members engaged with one another (Martin, 2003, p. 210). Once again, it was our community collaborators who guided the depths to which the team travelled into, through and out of these learning experiences. Likewise, the team always deferred to our community collaborators about the shape our projects and their outcomes, whether this was in the form of a co-written song, stage set-up, lesson plan, or the focus of a journalistic story, for example. To illustrate how the team engaged with this way of learning and engaging, in this chapter insights and quotes from the project's participants are shared with a focus on the following:

- Using the arts as a medium for connection and collaboration
- Designing and implementing ABSL projects to meet both community and institutional needs
- Building sustainability into ABSL projects.

Using the arts as a medium for connection and collaboration

What has distinguished this service learning work has been the focus on the arts (broadly defined) as both a means to meeting community-identified needs and an end in and of itself. As the report detailed earlier there are many benefits to this focus, such as facilitating expression, communication and connection between diverse participants in a way that simply talking might not. As the team have found in this work, these benefits are also highly compatible with First Peoples' perspectives of service learning.

The power of songs to connect cultures and people

Many of the participants talked about songs as a form conducive to storytelling and sharing lives. As QCGU student Ryan observed:

Most of the songs they're not just songs because they're funny or they're songs because they're sad. They're songs that actually really mean something. They're songs about a place they've been to or about their family. Yeah they write songs that are about something important in their life. Yeah it obviously - it's [a] really good thing because it's not just art for art's sake; it has a real purpose. That's what I like about the music centre as well. It's not just a place for people to play music. It obviously has really significant benefits. (Ryan, QCGU, 2009)

Likewise, community collaborator and BRA staff member Lincoln McKinnon explained:

Musically, they get exposed first and foremost to song-writing that comes from a very deep place. The stuff that our fellows are singing about is really real. I can sing songs about bad things happening to me but it's nothing compared to what's happened to a

lot of these guys and the struggles that they've overcome. So even from a song-writing and lyrics aspect, that's fantastic. (Lincoln, QCGU, 2013)

One of the facilitators of QCGU's pilot project, Myfany Turpin, adds context to this discussion about the powerful role that songwriting can play in intercultural connections and collaborations:

If you look at the first encounters between Indigenous and non-Indigenous, a positive thing is when everyone gets together and plays music. It's documented throughout, because obviously, when you can't talk, you can't hold discussions, but playing music is a way to show understanding. It doesn't matter if you can't speak the same language. It's also a positive experience generally. It's an art form, and it's an art form that calls for collaboration. You need that cause to be with other musicians, unlike, say, a painting, where you might just be on your own. (Myfany, QCGU, 2009)

The following quotes from three QCGU students concurred that the simple act of jamming and co-writing songs was a powerful way to build connections with their Aboriginal collaborators, in a way that the spoken word might not:

As a musician I was blown away by the realisation that the simple act of jamming along with some of the members of the Tennant Creek community was all it took to begin to build a really strong rapport, sense of mutual respect and ultimately life-long friendships. Without music acting as that medium I don't think we would have ever been able to break down some of the cultural barriers that existed between the two groups as successfully and genuinely as we did. ... Music is a perfect medium for that, because we can sit there with our instruments and possibly not even making eye contact. But we're communicating and you can have these amazing experiences and they can be summed up as simply as one of them turning around and giving a nod and you know you've done the right thing and you are on the right track with them. (James, QCGU, 2009)

I've sort of reflected on the fact that music is just that common language that's sort of being able to bridge a lot of the boundaries between us. That very first thing we all kind of got in and had a listen to each other's music and had a jam and it sort of started to flow from there. Whereas if you were stuck in a room and were just chatting to each other for a few hours, you could still be going out and you'd still be sitting in the room next time you come in. So I think it was good to have that common link from the get go. (Amie, QCGU, 2009)

Music is a really, really great way to communicate and relate to people, particularly these fellows. With all these issues aside, the relationship we've had with these people has been amazing. We wouldn't have had that if we didn't play music, if we didn't sit down and learn their songs and play their songs. We've all been so appreciative of that. So as musicians we've got the skill that we can relate to people. (Euan, QCGU, 2013)

UWS students also had similar experiences when organising an Open Mic night. As one of

the organisers of this event Nick observed:

I see it giving performers and songwriters encouragement. I think it was great to see the Stronger Sisters get up and do a song. I'm thinking of Joseph (in Year 10) [see Figure 9 below]. If he just did another bunch of different songs, he's got a set that he could support someone coming through town. He could follow them on the road and tour with them a bit. The kids in the class were all really nervous and they felt awesome when they did their songs. (Nick, UWS, 2012)

Figure 14. Joseph and UWS student Nick playing together (2012)



The benefits of arts-based approaches

As this discussion on songwriting has suggested, an arts-based approach showcases participants' strengths and abilities, and in the act of jamming or playing together people come to know and appreciate one another's creative abilities and interests. The arts can also facilitate a sense of empathy and compassion between participants and for other groups and a non-invasive way of learning about one another's stories and lives (Molnar, 2010, p. 19). This is illustrated in Warumungu Elder Rosemary Plummer's reflections on QCGU and WMC's *Circle Stories* concert at the Desert Harmony Festival in 2013:

Well I saw old [Jagamarra] there, [Pinjama], [Tjapaltjarri], [Leslie Thompson]. I think because with me looking at these two, they - not improved but - I don't know how to put it - they performed well by writing their own songs and singing their own songs. I think Griffith University gave them ideas and I think self-confidence too and self-awareness to make them - to show who they are. ... It was very good. It was part of sharing with both, with the students and with the men. Because some of the men sang in language so it taught the students that they can write songs in Aboriginal language as well as writing in English. (Rosemary, QCGU, 2013)

Rosemary's comment touches on the importance of showing and sharing lives and stories with one another through the arts. Community collaborator Shayne Teece-Johnson (a Kamilaroi man from Northern NSW), who led the Media Mob with the QCGU students at the Desert Harmony Festival, reflected:

I think for me, one thing I'm really passionate about with being a filmmaker is Indigenous culture, Indigenous language has always been told orally, you know what I mean? Stories are told through song, through dance and through stories. So I think modern culture now is young people are still writing songs, you know what I mean? They may be writing hip hop, they may be writing rock. Whatever they're writing, they're writing their stories and sharing their stories, so that's just more modern traditional culture. So for these guys to get to work with them and get to play their songs and share their stories with them is something - for me, I'm proud to be a part of it with filming them. (Shayne, QCGU, 2013)

As Shayne's comment alludes, it is not only music that facilitates these connections, but also dance, which plays such a crucially important role in both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture. UWS student Sharni's experiences echoed this:

I'm not sure what I was expecting. I had spoken to Melanie over the phone and she had said she was happy to add dance to her program. She said it was completely adjustable and that she thought the kids would love dance. I wasn't expecting them to love it as much but they all have responded really well to it. They've all decided they want to make a video clip. I gave them the options to do a performance with a slide show in the background or make a video clip and they all chose the latter. The Year 7s have decided, as they're studying mental health, that theirs will be about dancing being a good way to keep fit, keeping your mind strong. Their video clip will promote 'keep strong, keep fit by dancing'. (Sharni, UWS, 2012)

In all of these discussions, the importance of the inherent arts-based *processes* of engaging, sharing and creating can be seen. As community collaborator Adam from the Australian Theatre for Young People described:

To watch the con [QCGU] students engage with these young kids at such a level of just listening and not pushing their art form on young people is amazing. To just slowly implement little things like: oh maybe we can put an accompaniment to that, maybe I could go away and write a little bit of that for you if you want, and it was the way that it was done that was - you can't teach that. People either possess that or they don't and it was fantastic. It's also a credit to the way the troupe's been set up in that it was fluent and it was okay to stay for an extra half an hour if it was moving in the right direction. Things like that, and I really wanted to see a collaboration continue, I hope this is the first trip of many. (Adam, QCGU, 2009)

Key insights: In service learning with First Peoples, arts-based processes commonly provide culturally appropriate ways of expression, communication and connection with one another, and provide an opportunity to creatively share life experiences and appreciate one another's strengths.

Designing and implementing ABSL projects to meet both community and institutional needs

In light of the complex dynamics and learning processes that were described so far, team members found the process of designing and implementing the three ABSL sub-projects was a challenging and varied task. This has been guided by our community collaborators and the ways of learning and engaging which were outlined above, but also informed by the growing international literature dealing with institutionalising service learning. In particular the team drew from studies that have examined critical “multicultural” and “social justice” service-learning projects, and the role of action and community-based research approaches in institutionalising service learning. These are literatures that the team have explored in detail elsewhere (Bartleet, Bennett, Marsh, Power & Sunderland, 2014) and that drawn upon.

In the following discussion the report begins to zoom out from personal reflections and insights of the sub-projects which were shared in the earlier chapters, and draw on some of this literature to discuss how the team has approached designing ABSL projects in collaboration with community partners. In this discussion the team looks at the importance of **champions, zealots and a groundswell of interest** and a **grant opportunity**. The team also poses the question of whether **institutionalisation is the answer** and briefly touch upon practical issues such as **recruiting students, assessment and course credit**, as well as issues surrounding a **duty of care, peer support, and staff training, motivation and continuity**.

Designing ABSL projects

Service learning in higher education involves formally integrating community service with the academic curriculum (Furco, 2001). Service learning's theoretical and practical foundations stem from experiential education and constructivism, which frame service

learning as an opportunity for students to apply knowledge they learn in the classroom in community contexts. As described in the previous chapter, the key aspect of service learning that differentiates it from other approaches to experiential learning is its focus on supporting mutual learning and benefit between student and community participants (Boyle-Baise, 2001).

In a study of 12 universities in the United States, Young et al. (2007, p. 353) identified four main prompts for starting a service-learning program. These include:

- A faculty or administrative champion/zealot;
- A groundswell of interest from various parties (faculty, administrators, students, and community agencies);
- A grant opportunity ... (usually combined with a zealot); or
- A group of student zealots.

From our experiences in the project's three ABSL sub-projects, the team would also add: an invitation from a community as a major prompt for starting an ABSL project. As mentioned above, both QCGU and UWS were invited by the community to undertake this work, and that invitation is critically important in the context of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. But let us return to that list of reasons for starting an ABSL project, as it is certainly worthy of discussion.

Champions, zealots and a groundswell of interest

In a sense, the "champions" of our service-learning projects were the members of the project team; however, Young et al.'s notion of a "groundswell of interest" also featured strongly. As can be seen below, this support came from senior managers, schools and the community, colleagues, and from students. The team notes that the support for such initiatives was rarely apparent until a champion suggested action or brought to light a potential project. As a Curtin facilitator noted: "After I began, other champions were identified. I realise now that these people are often hidden – they're often not very noisy about their passions and interests" (Unnamed facilitator, Curtin, 2013).

The following reflections on Young's four main tactics or prompts, also highlight the presence of champions/zealots as well as groundswell:

[My director] knew I was crazy enough to be interested in this and had a small amount of funding available... (Brydie, QCGU, 2013)

People would contact us and ask whether our service learning unit might accommodate helping adolescents to prepare for the workforce... (Anne, UWS, 2013)

Staff were eager to engage with and support Indigenous projects such as this. (Unnamed facilitator, Curtin, 2013)

Students were not the prompt for the project; however, they were quick to respond to

our call for expressions of interest. Almost all if not all the students participated because they had an interest in and/or a passion to find out more about Indigenous culture and ways of knowing. (Unnamed facilitator, Curtin, 2013)

A grant opportunity

The grant opportunity came in the form of the OLT grant that is reported upon in this document. A significant portion of the existing literature on implementing service learning in higher education focuses on “institutionalising” service learning within higher education institutions. This requires “a high level of institutional commitment to service-learning” (Young et al., 2007, p. 347). Academics have similarly argued that implementing (and sustaining) community service learning in higher education requires significant institutional support and transformation (Butin, 2003; Chrisman, 2007). Specifically, effective support and transformation is reported across multiple areas:

1. Subject and course design, student assessment, and evaluation (Fletcher & Cambre, 2009; Polin & Keene, 2010);
2. Institutional culture change (Holland, 1997);
3. Staff training, reward structures and incentives that acknowledge service learning and community engagement as key areas of staff performance (Bender, 2007);
4. Creating a dedicated office and support staff for service learning within the administration (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000); and
5. Comprehensive institution-wide planning and goal setting (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Holland, 1997).

In addition to the financial support provided by this OLT project grant, our respective institutions provided varying degrees of the support featured in the list above. The need for both hard and soft infrastructure, as discussed both here and elsewhere in report, signals the significant commitment that both institutions and communities are required to contribute towards this work.

Institutionalisation: is it the answer?

Our ABSL sub-projects experienced various levels of institutional support. Whilst institutionalisation holds significant advantages, at times this has constrained some of the more fluid and personal approaches adopted by our team. Despite the various challenges which were faced, the team asserts that it is entirely possible for individuals and small teams to establish informed, effective and sustainable programs, and that the expertise and support required to ensure their sensitivity and an ethic of care exist within the broader pool of Young et al.’s champions and zealots. In line with this, Bender (2007) has argued for a broader perspective on “institutionalising” community service learning that takes into account the higher education institution’s environment and communities. Based on a study of a ‘paradigm shift’ toward service learning in South African higher education institutions, Bender (2007) argued for a ‘socio-systemic’ approach to institutional change that incorporates ‘external’, ‘internal’ and ‘personal’ change (Bender, 2007, p. 127).

There is an important lesson here in relation to external, internal and personal change. Bender observed that *external* educational change was 'mandated in a top-down manner' such as in higher education policies and national initiatives. *Internal* education change in turn dealt with 'internal educational change within higher education institutions that initiates and promotes change within the framework of strategies, support and enabling mechanisms for curricular community engagement' (Bender, 2007, p. 129). Finally, personal change relates to changes in the way individual academics view and practice community service learning 'as an educational approach and philosophy' (Bender, 2007, p. 129).

Across all of these domains, Bender (2007, p. 138) emphasised that change must be supported by strong and dynamic relationships with communities:

The institutionalisation of CSL [Community Service Learning] depends on an accepted internal and personal mission, characterised by passion, purpose, investment and ownership. Change should be embedded in new institutionalised practices and in the wider community. To change education is to change academics' work and their relationship with communities

Team members agree with Shrader et al. (2008) that community based networks for engagement and research can facilitate and inform institutional activities in community service learning and research. This suggests a much more fluid model than is suggested by much of the existing literature on implementing service learning in higher education.

Recruiting students: Mandate or choice?

Another issue relating to institutionalisation with which the team has grappled is that of recruitment and student motivations to participate in the ABSL sub-projects. Our concern is that whilst there are numerous benefits associated with service learning, and that in theory there is understandable support for every student to engage, the impact on and benefit for communities is much less obvious. This sentiment was commonly expressed by the team members and was also voiced by community partners, such as Alan Murn:

I think another thing that worked really, really, really well ... is that you handpicked people. So what we were gifted with was a group of brilliant young people who were - really wanted to do this and were really prepared to put in. They also proved themselves to be good at selecting themselves to do that because they were very, very open and ready to adapt. I think that's a very good process to go through as well, so I think careful planning and knowing that once we're in situ in the remote region working with indigenous people that some wondrous things are going happen beyond the timetable. (Alan, QCGU, 2009)

This feedback from Alan has been echoed in reflections from all the sub-project facilitators. As Curtin facilitator Michelle described:

It comes back a little bit to recruitment, wanting to recruit students who are likely to gain

the most from that experience. But even so, you're not guaranteed of what they'll learn on the ground of what they'll learn on the ground or as a result of other personal factors you haven't taken into account. At its best the learning experience is, I think, when the learning experience is best it feels, at least for me, it feels slow. I think when I'm learning the most I'm only learning little bits at a time. (Michelle, Curtin, 2013)

There has been some debate amongst team members about whether these ABSL should be mandate or choice. For instance, in some universities service learning is a compulsory unit for all pre-service teachers. In other programs where there is more flexibility and service learning can be taken as a elective, team members saw the benefit of being highly selective with who they allowed to participate (for example, at QCGU the facilitators call for expressions of interest and interview potential candidates to ensure they have the necessary mix of skill as required by the community, have an appropriate attitude towards this work, and have the means to take two weeks away from their university class schedule. Of course, this selective approach is not always possible in larger, compulsory programs and units).

Assessment and course credit

When finding an institutional “home” for the ABSL sub-projects, some of the team members found that a school-specific Work Integrated Learning (WIL) unit was hugely beneficial. While some of the partner universities did have institution-wide service learning initiatives, there was some concern about whether a very large and generic program could attend to the interpersonal and culturally specific aspects of this work. As such, the various ABSL sub-project's approaches to assessment and course credit were mixed.

Curtin students all received credit. Issues included insurance, recognition of student time, and staff workload (hard to get when not a credit-awarding course). Assessments were problematic for Curtin because of the difficulty in students being able to enrol in a single unit. With service learning a core unit of the pre-service program Master of Teaching at UWS, the students receive course credit. It is not a graded unit and mastery is shown by the completion of self-reflection, organised keeping of a time log, and the submission of a report written by the pre-service teacher, which is designed to show other facets of what it is to be a teacher.

At QCGU most students enrolled in a school-based WIL unit, where the ABSL sub-project facilitator acted as the Industry Partner representative, and then consulted the community partners on their performance. Students were assessed on their performance in the field (by the facilitator and community partners) as well as a reflective essay and oral presentation (which is assessed by the WIL convenor). In some cases where students were not able to enrol in this WIL unit, for instance if they were a postgraduate student, they participated in an entirely voluntary capacity. Where students were taken as guests of the QCGU program from other local institutions including UQ and QUT, these students enrolled in industry placement electives similar to the WIL unit; in these cases, assessment was negotiated between the QCGU Facilitators and staff at the other universities. Each university considered the grade versus competency issue, but the current norm seemed to favour acknowledgement of the skills and acquisition of values over the awarding of a grade.

Duration of the ABSL sub-projects and immersion trips

Students from all three sub-projects commented on the duration of their projects and the need for relationships to develop slowly. For UWS and QCGU students trip duration ranged between 7-14 days and four weeks at a time. Curtin University students developed their relationships with community partners over the period of a university semester within Perth and surrounding areas, which allowed more flexibility in how and where students and community partners could meet and work together. Some non-Indigenous students reported feeling “guilty” that they were only working with community partners for a short amount of time and didn’t want to “be like other white people” before who just came and got something from the community and left again. According to existing literature on interracial service learning from the United States and Canada, this kind of “guilt” and “not wanting to be like others before me” can result in both productive and unproductive experiences that may affect relational outcomes of ABSL projects. As discussed previously under the heading “Benefits of intercultural service learning” in relation to apprehension and confidence, experiential data collected during this project indicates that problems associated with intercultural anxiety may be mitigated or overcome through informal collaborative arts processes.

Students involved in immersion trips to Tennant Creek often reported that they had just begun to feel comfortable in the environment toward the end of their trip. Many reported that they could have stayed a lot longer and that they felt inclined to visit again as a result. For example, Carey, a film and television student from Griffith University said:

By the end, I was really starting to get into it where I could've stayed another six months. I really was settling in and I was starting to get my bearings where the town was and what to expect from it maybe. So by the end I was really settling. (Carey, QCGU, 2012)

Jeff, a QCGU student who returned to Tennant Creek twice, remarked several times on his and other students’ status as a visitor in the community, and related this to how students and others should conduct themselves while visiting communities and working with local organisations and individuals. In particular, he remarked on the ability for students to “have an impact” in the community during the relatively short time of their visits:

Yeah, where you can actually see what - the impact of - the impact that you're having on the community, like in two weeks you can't really change things. Going to go, oh yeah, but they still tourists so they're going to be nice for two weeks and might be different if you stay a bit longer. (Jeff, QCGU, 2012)

Incorporating site visits into the design of ABSL projects

Where appropriate and advised by community partners, facilitated site visits can be a transformative addition to both immersive and other ABSL projects. Site visits may include places of cultural and historical significance or more daily routine activities such as the WMC

Drover's Hall jamming and recording space. This is reflected in previously-cited Curtin University student statements regarding their facilitated visit to the Pinjarra Massacre site outside of Perth with respected Yamatji Noongar Elder Simon Forrest. The team concluded that site visits are a constructive element of promoting embodied and emplaced learning, particularly for ABSL projects conducted in students "home" communities. Similarly, many Curtin students remarked that visiting community partner organisations to "sit down" and talk was an important part of the success of their project. The OLT national team noted that having a shared common physical space or site for students and community members to connect and spend time with one another was a vital element of successful ABSL projects with Aboriginal community partners.

When designing these sub-projects a range of measures to look after and care for those involved in this work was taken into account. In this discussion the team flags the importance of a duty of care toward students, the benefits of peer and group work for those involved in this work, and the importance of supporting and nurturing the facilitators of these projects.

Facilitator duty of care toward students

The topic of facilitators' duty of care toward students emerged in several debriefing conversations between co-facilitators across the three participating universities. This related to both the practical dimensions of immersion trips such as accommodation and safety and broader issues related to the moral distress students and staff may feel when confronted with information on Australian history and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage during and after trips. The discussion of care reaches into the heart of pedagogical design and approach of ABSL projects: that is, the role of comfort and discomfort in provoking transformative learning during these projects. It can also reach into the role of students as volunteers in partner organisations where working hours may be substantially different to those in the students' normal daily lives.

In short, the team found that ABSL facilitators are asked to monitor and respond dynamically to multiple dimensions of care in ABSL projects in this area. Team members found the support of co-facilitators and staff from partner organisations to be two of the most effective means of dealing with potentially distressing outcomes for both students and staff. The QCGU project also employed regular "debriefs" between staff members and between students in the field to monitor where students were at and provide support where needed. Warumungu Elder Rosemary Plummer also advocated arts practice itself as a way of processing and dealing with daily traumatic events that people may come across in disadvantaged communities. This use of reflection and arts practice was incorporated into the assessment used across all three sub-projects in the form of reflective diaries, digital stories, and other major creative works.

Peer support, mentoring, and group work

Processes of peer support, mentoring, and group work were closely related to the discussion of duty of care and support in the field. Facilitators involved in the national OLT project remarked on the value of team work in supporting design and implementation of ABSL projects both national across different institutions and within the one institution. For example, team members at Curtin University drew on prior experience of implementing ABSL projects from team members at UWS and QCGU, both in designing and evaluating ABSL projects during the course of this OLT project. Students can also act as formal and informal peer facilitators and mentors both to other students and new staff facilitators. As Chesler et al. (2006) have reported, peer facilitators can function as “border crossers” and experience heightened personal transformation in ABSL contexts, particularly when the peer facilitator has prior relationships with community partners and contexts. The QCGU project has used this approach for the past two years by inviting a student who had visited Tennant Creek previously to return with the group as a “peer mentor”. As previously discussed this has the dual benefit of maintaining relationships, respect, and connections and providing another supportive person for students new to the ABSL context. Curtin University student Gabiso similarly remarked on the value of students working in groups during ABSL projects:

...for us, FTV [film and television] it was a group... able to bounce ideas off each other, I think that really helped quite a bit. I'd also say, probably, maybe a bit of a mixture so having journos and FTV students coming together to form a group instead of just isolating them apart, having that difference. If we had to combine, I think, could have been something different. There's like we're doing for Noongar Danjoo⁸ in a way. I think that would have pretty - helped quite a bit, I think. I feel they, probably, felt that they [other students who worked outside of a team] were put in the deep end in that sense.

⁸ *Noongar Dandjoo* is a television series produced by Curtin students in collaboration with the Perth Aboriginal community, and broadcast on NITV. It was produced in second semester of 2013 and two of the Curtin ABSL sub-project students Gabs and Kimba, participated in the program's production.



Figure 15. Curtin students presenting their reflections on the sub-project to peers and community members (2013)

Staff training, motivation, and continuity

As reflected internationally in the service learning literature, staff who facilitated service learning projects were highly committed to this work in both a personal and professional sense. O'Meara and Niehaus (2009) found in their discourse analysis of exemplary staff descriptions of their own service learning practice in the United States, facilitators typically use four dominant discourses regarding the purposes and significance of service-learning including: '(a) a model of teaching and learning; (b) an expression of personal identity; (c) an expression of institutional context and mission; or (d) or embedded in a specific community partnership'. Facilitators involved in this OLT project indicated aspects of all four of these discourses, however were far less likely to talk about their work as an 'expression of institutional context and mission'. All facilitators included in this project found the work to be extremely 'rewarding' and 'enjoyable'. Some indicated it had significantly shaped the evolution of their own family relationships over many years. Two facilitators involved in this project who were new to this context of work indicated significant personal transformation similar to that experienced by many students as a result of their involvement in the project.

The QCGU project facilitators and partner representatives independently emphasised the importance of maintaining staff continuity in creating and maintaining long-term ABSL partnerships and projects. This related not only to developing relationships with community members but also to facilitators' own "on the ground" know-how when working in the Tennant Creek context. To this end, QCGU partner representatives Alan Murn and Ktima Heathcote from BRA recommended that facilitators should visit the contexts of ABSL work prior to bringing students into that context. They also recommended that facilitators should undergo specialist briefings and training – potentially to be provided by community

members and partners themselves – prior to undertaking ABSL projects and immersion trips.

Key insights: When designing ABSL programs with First Peoples a delicate balance needs to be achieved between meeting community and student needs and ways of operating and meeting the institution's requirements in terms of resourcing, recruitment, assessment, curriculum design, and policy compliance. Community partners should be instrumental in devising and implementing institutional approaches to ABSL and, where possible, paid training for staff who facilitate these projects.

Building sustainability into ABSL projects

The focus returns now to the earlier concerns about the tension between service learning and the commercial and economic focus of higher education, considering these concerns in relation to the sustainability of university ABSL programs. In a critical review of their projects with pre-service teachers, Doyle et al. (2004) caution that service learning projects need to be rigorously planned and evaluated. Whilst this is unsurprising in terms of their ability to be financially sustainable and to achieve their desired outcomes, Doyle et al. also emphasise the role of planning in relation to maintaining participant morale. Noting the need for professional development to support service learning, the researchers found that teachers who had invested significant time in reforming teacher education through activities such as service learning were “predisposed to despair and cynicism” when their efforts in teacher reform were not successful (Adelman & Walking-Eagle, in Doyle et al. 2004, p. 38). This despair evidences the potentially damaging impact of unsustainable initiatives, which may have far-reaching negative consequences.

The notion of “institutionalising” service learning as a key strategy for ensuring sustainability has strong support in the literature. Researchers such as Schramm (2007) and others (cf. Bringle & Hatcher 1996; Butin 2010; Vogel et al. 2010) have observed that institutionalising service learning promotes both sustainability and efficiency. This is achieved in several ways, for example,

- Long-term commitment to community partnerships and trust building;
- Staff development and training;
- Reduced duplication of effort;
- Incentives and recognition such as financial assistance and rewards for staff; and
- Centralised services that relieve individual staff members of time consuming tasks in service learning: for example, student recruitment and service-learning placement.

The most intense expressions of institutionalisation argue for cultural change at the organisational level in order to promote service as a core aspect of the curriculum and as central to a university's mission. This commitment would be actualised in dedicated funding and organisational activities (Butin 2003; Chrisman 2007; Gelman et al. 1998; Holland 1997; Vogel et al. 2010; Young et al. 2007). Vogel et al.'s (2010) review of institutions which had sustained service-learning programs over a ten-year period identified four factors that impacted on sustainability: whether the service learning was integrated into the curriculum;

the extent of institutional resource support; the location of these resources at the level of course, department, school, college or university; and the presence of institutional policies supporting service learning. They also commented on challenges to sustaining service learning, including turnover among faculty members who had fostered service learning in their programs and competing educational priorities (Vogel et al. 2010). In this section the discussion is framed around the **sustainability of service learning partnerships, establishing relationships within localised service learning, sustaining relationships with people, and finally sustaining working relationships outside the university.**

Sustainability of service learning partnerships

In contrast to the pragmatic aspects of sustaining community service-learning partnerships, it is clear that the sustainability of service learning relates to more complex concepts of developing community assets and strengths, and supporting participant morale amid challenging social circumstances. Turning to Vogel et al.'s 2010 study of what influences the long-term sustainability of institutionalised service-learning programs, it should be noted that the authors' position on sustainability as being central to the "efficiency, quality and impact of service-learning" (p. 59). As they suggest:

... long-term commitment and participation may be required to achieve some of the most ambitious goals of service-learning, such as shifting the culture of academic institutions toward greater civic engagement, generating community-engaged scholarship, enhancing mutual understanding among academic institutions and communities, and building the capacity of academic and community partners to address community needs and work for social justice. (Vogel et al. 2010, p. 59)

Establishing relationships within localised service learning

The team has brought to each of our sub-projects existing, long-term partnerships with communities of Australian Aboriginal people. Despite our overarching aim of encouraging students to develop cultural competence and rethink their ethnocentricities by working with communities within their own city, much of the literature emphasises projects that take students far away from their familiar lives and locales. Indeed, many researchers have argued that an immersion experience is a more effective approach: "living in a community different from one's own increases awareness of the experience of being 'other'" (Walsh & De Joseph, 2003, p. 269). However, whilst immersion experiences can undoubtedly be transformative (Kiely, 2004), a smaller body of literature has voiced the benefits of local projects and stresses the value of *all* community-based learning projects, "whether placement is on a reservation, adjacent to campus, overseas, or in one's hometown" (Stachowski & Mahan, 1998, p. 160).

In the Curtin sub-project the team wanted to create relationships with the local community so that students might begin to see Australia's First Peoples as part of their own communities. These two prerogatives led the Perth team away from initial plans to work with a community almost 3,000km from the capital city, and to focus instead on a project that might be undertaken closer to home. In this sense, sustainability was defined as

establishing the parameters for long-term service learning with local Aboriginal communities rather than an involvement with a single community group. An associated concern for the Perth-based team was recognition that Australian Aboriginal peoples are often viewed as being “‘other’, neglected, different and, indeed, deviant from the market rhythms and aspirations of ‘normal’ Australians” (Atkinson, Taylor & Walter, 2010, p. 328).

By working within students’ local communities the team hoped to challenge this perception head-on. The localised project yielded several notable benefits, which are outlined here. The first benefit relates to potential complications such as developing trust and balancing competing schedules, both factors that can impede the success of university-community partnerships (Ferman & Hill, 2004) when undertaken as a short-term residency or internship. Locating multiple projects within local communities and over a 15-week project period enabled the team to meet the needs of each community-based project with a flexible timeline. The 15-week engagement enabled students to develop and refine each project with their community partners, and to accommodate changes to pre-agreed schedules. It also enabled students to visit their community partners after the official end of their project, to discuss outcomes and outputs, or simply to visit and learn.

Whilst the criteria for community service-learning projects (namely that they are realistic, reflective, reciprocal and relational) were important, the fourth R – relationships – was at the core of the project and was enhanced by the longer time period and the ability to “pop in” for regular visits. This enhanced the relationships between staff and students, who worked together as participant researchers within an action research framework, and also between students and communities. The longer time period also presented opportunities to develop deeper understandings of a First Peoples’ worldview, and to enact Regan’s (2010) notion of making space by “being with” each community to build rapport, familiarity and trust before formal project activities occurred. Students were observed as they began to deconstruct their own colonised understandings of self and other – developing a “sense of belonging within their host communities” (Stachowski & Mahan, 1998, p. 159) that would lead to critical self-reflection and to greater understanding and appreciation of Australia’s First Peoples.

Not surprisingly, the localised projects also had pragmatic benefits. The first of these was the relatively low cost of the service-learning initiative, which enabled it to continue beyond its initial funding. It also was possible to match students’ skill sets with the needs expressed by each community, and to take some time to establish each student team. The small distances enabled lecturers and students from other teams to visit each community project both formally and informally. This included helping students negotiate projects that could be accomplished, ensuring that each team had adequate support, and attending events to which team members were all invited.



Figure 16. Some of Curtin's sub-project participants from Langford Aboriginal Association at the final showcase (2013)

Finally, the team returns to the claim that an immersion experience is a more effective service-learning approach. The geographical “space” in which each of the Perth projects took place was familiar to both the students and the communities with whom they worked and learned; yet the meanings and connections of each space were vastly different for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants. Far from the dominant, westernised construction of space, for Australian Aboriginal people

... country is sentient, country has agency. Country assumes the social form of persons. Indeed, country is inhabited by various other-than-human persons, and it is these beings, and their traces (which are consubstantial with the beings), that vest the country with such sentience. (Glaskin 2012, p. 305)

To our surprise, reinterpreting their relationship with familiar spaces represented one of the greatest challenges for the students. It was also the source of far deeper and more sustainable cultural understandings and friendships between students, lecturers and community participants.

Sustaining relationships with people

For the QCGU sub-project, a number of the pragmatic concerns regarding financial sustainability and long-term institutional commitment continue to be pervasive. The issue of financial sustainability is substantial, given the expenses associated with both travel (the

distance between Brisbane and Tennant Creek is approximately 2,500 kilometres, or 1,500 miles) and sustenance in remote Australia. Likewise, in an institution still predominantly focused on Western musical traditions (such as classical, jazz, pop and musical theatre), integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into both the curriculum and broader institutional consciousness presents a constant challenge. That said, over the past five years our work in Tennant Creek has led us to look at the concept of sustainability in much more relational and personalised terms.

For the project, the central focus has always been on relationship building. Relationships have driven our agenda, determined our community activities, influenced whether or not team members return, and underscored our interactions and behaviours in the community on every level. The importance of this was emphasised during our first service-learning experience with the community in 2009. During this visit, when Warumungu Elder Rosemary Plummer gave us “skin names”, she not only taught us about our relationships towards one another, but also the culturally appropriate behaviour that accompanies these relationships.

As was discussed earlier in the report, having a skin name immediately changed the ways in which team members connected with our collaborators. Within this kinship system community members became our brothers, sisters, daughters, and so on. As facilitators this made team members realise that they not only had responsibilities and obligations towards the university and their students, but now had responsibilities and obligations to the community. This sense of responsibility and connection has been deeply felt by students. One student returned to Tennant Creek with his band to record an album and continue collaborations, and has also continued to work on and off in the area on community development projects with school students. Another student returned to Central Australia to work on field recordings, and one of the students involved in the 2011 project was inspired to return with a different cohort of students in 2012, and a student from 2011 returned in 2013. Such gestures have not gone unnoticed by the community, who are all but accustomed to “fly-in, fly-out” arts workers who visit the town for a short time to do their project and are never seen again.

Relationships have been nurtured in a number of pragmatic ways: for example, through a consultation process that begins each year with the team asking the community if the collaborative work together will still be of use; through handing over control of the project to the community, so that team members work together on things that are of direct use; and through shared experiences in the creative work that deepen the connections to one another. These actions may appear simple on the surface; however, when the nature of the relationships is unpacked and their impact critically examined, it becomes apparent that they are highly complex, messy, and sometimes unruly. The relationships were shared with the collaborators form part of much bigger webs of relationships that connect team members to people, spirits and country; to cultural traditions we do not always understand; and to histories of colonial devastation and loss. These complex relationships provide a path for us to enter into this service-learning context. They also present a mutual way of learning and collaborating, a guide for negotiating the complicated intercultural dynamics of this work, and ultimately, a way of sustaining this work.

Sustaining working relationships outside the university

In Australian Aboriginal communities there are likely to be invisible networks such as cultural systems and traditions that researchers and communities need to collaboratively bring to the surface. The UWS sub-project, working alongside the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF), has managed to sustain service-learning projects for five years in Tennant Creek. It is useful then to consider all the “workers” who are involved in these projects outside of the university. These include the school-age student community, university students (in this case pre-service teachers), workers at sites such as the Language Centre and the Music Centre, and families and communities in the town itself.

A strong goal of the project is the development of cultural competency in the pre-service teachers, who participate in projects generated by the community in which they work. A mid-year focus week enables the group to find what the community requires of them in the four-week experience later in the year. The nature of the work is determined and the pre-service teachers are inducted into the community through cultural learning at the Language Centre and discussions with the schools in which they will teach. Nonetheless there is a strong sense of “being with” the community at this time.

One of the ways in which pre-service teachers participate is through a visual approach, using video film and digital storytelling methods suited for “making visible what is typically less tangible” (Kahn, 2011, p. 114). One example of the visual approach is a “flash mob” project, which came about in 2012 when the student community in the school made a connection between local issues of mental health and the creative self-expression of dance. When the Australian Aboriginal students performed, they had friends and family capture their dance on video. This video artefact demonstrated the reciprocity and respect that emerged in rehearsal and performance. Cameras (as symbols of authorities) were shared among many individuals. Cultural insights were included because the observing eyes were both Australian Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. As a consequence of the relationship between the dance pre-service teacher and the school students, one boy auditioned the following year for the NAISDA Dance College in Sydney. He was symbolic of the students who had learned to value their own talents and expertise.

In a community context, video has the potential to convey powerful messages. As Wickett (2007) has observed, remote communities have difficulty reacting to messages from government sources, but are more open to messages that have been generated within the community. One student community, a Year 10 class, came to understand the power of what they were creating by watching and reflecting on what they had expressed artistically. Their dance was about the need to build self-esteem and pride in their traditions and abilities, and their song about “not needing grog (alcohol) to have fun”.

Ferro and Watts (2012) employed oral history and ethnography within a larger conservation-focussed partnership that aimed to provide the raw material for the creation of dance works as service learning. In their case the community wanted to demonstrate its values by devising a performance-based voice for their stories, and the university responded with performance and creative opportunities as service learning for students. The primary community members were the leaders of the conservation movement and the older

generation of storytellers. Ferro and Watts prioritised community participation by drawing the narrative material about building community through the stories of the older generation. The researchers explained that their project could develop students' critical awareness of ethnic and social differentiation, as well as emphasising the unifying potential of the arts in communicating positive community values. Buckland (2006, in Ferro & Watts 2012) suggests that dance movement can be the performance of identity. Expanding this suggestion to encompass other art forms, team members argue that arts-based service learning with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities allows for the identities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians and students to have their own privileged value alongside those of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians, writers and artists.

A vital aspect of the sustainable collaboration was the input of the Pupula Aparr-Kari Language and Cultural Centre (one of only six Language Centres mentioned in the House of Representatives Standing Committee, 2012). The ladies at the Centre translated the song words created by the student community into Warumungu language, and the pre-service teachers working with the student community presented the video to the local Council of Elders. In this way, the Elders and the workers at the Language Centre could also reflect on the message in the song and dance, and could consider how they might transmit this among the communities. At every stage of creation, this dance project aligned with a key goal of service learning: building the capacity of academic and community partners to sustainably address community needs and work for social justice (Vogel, Seifer & Gelmon, 2010). Hence our own goal of building sustainable community partnerships and relationships became intertwined with and dependent upon the community's aims for sustainable community development. This reciprocity is generative, bringing about transformation in ways of being for community members and university partners.

A significant part of the pre-service teachers' work is to reflect on their learning, and as Boud (2001) has argued, the most important aspect is how individuals use reflection to enhance their own and others' learning. Research confirms, however, that repeated exposure to reflection without some assistance with prompts does not guarantee that beginner teachers will develop critical levels of reflective thinking (Bean & Stevens, 2002). Consequently, the project established a series of guiding questions for students to consider and also facilitated the creation of digital stories as part of the reflective process.

These reflections were key to the sustainability of the service-learning impact in university student populations because they were also shared with graduates who did not have the service-learning experience: that is, team members wanted to broaden the beneficial outcomes of service learning to those who were not necessarily directly involved in community activities. This is related to the Aboriginal way of "story travelling" discussed by Aboriginal educator Mick Dobson:

Whichever country the Story passes through, that was the Story that was related for those particular people ... When the Story continues over their boundary and stops for a while at another place, those original people aren't the boss of it then, and they can't tell the new chapter. No, the people from the next country take the Story over. ... That's how Story travels. (in Turner 2010, p. 57)

The visual approach of video and digital storytelling had the further advantage of enabling people who did not experience community service learning work with Australian Aboriginal communities to experience some elements of the project and to consider these elements in their own work in relation to social justice.

Key insights: Building sustainability into ABSL programs with First Peoples involves making a commitment to developing ongoing relationships, developing community assets and strengths, and supporting participant morale amid frequently challenging circumstances.

Chapter 7. Key Insights Derived From the Project and Suggestions for Practice

To conclude, the team contemplates the ways in which all the activities and insights in this report demolish previously dominant ways of seeing in favour of new social realities. This view of ABSL derives from border pedagogy and critical race theory, in a challenge to uncontested power relations that subjugate some individuals and privilege others.

When viewed and practiced from this perspective, service learning is positioned as a pedagogical strategy that can instigate personal and broader societal change. This in turn ruptures dominant ways of seeing. Following Freire, Janmohamed (1993) has observed that

... the dominant society ... manages to sustain its coherence and power only by repressing the peasants who threaten it. Thus for Freire to encourage [the peasants] to study the conditions of their existence is implicitly to persuade them to study the power relations that define their current and future identity. (Janmohamed, 1993, p. 110)

Distinctions between the “oppressed” and “oppressors” are obviously complex and dynamic: for instance, a student or community participant may easily be simultaneously privileged and marginalised in any number of ways. However, the distinctions add a new depth to understanding the *fundamental* dimensions of socio-cultural and politico-economic sustainability at play in community service learning.

In our contexts, team members have found that ABSL projects with Aboriginal communities have not been designed to introduce critical self-awareness of one’s own oppression to the “peasants”, as was the case in Freire’s work; rather, to provide the circumstances that reposition those people who will be privileged colleagues, peers and educators of future generations. This situation can be easily related to the potential role of undergraduate students and pre-service teachers. Whether in immersion or localised settings, the service-learning experiences create opportunities for defining “moments” or epiphanies that can break through pre-established ways of seeing to introduce new social realities for all participants (Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Clark, 2007). As Janmohamed (1993) has argued, the

... “inaugural moment” that announces, however vaguely, a new social reality opens up the future as pure possibility, and it is this pure possibility, when linked with a sense of agential control, that becomes crucial for sustaining radical hope, which in turn becomes essential for sustaining the work required to achieve a new reality. (Janmohamed 1993, p. 116)

In line with Janmohamed, the team has observed that “moments” of connection, while ephemeral and fleeting, can instigate new social realities and lifelong journeys of reflection and reorientation around issues of race and power for participants (cf. Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Clark 2007).

The following quote from a community volunteer who worked side-by-side with students during the QCGU sub-project emphasises the lifelong transformations that can be activated

or reinforced via these projects:

It's not something where you go, alright I'm coming here once and then I'll go back and, you know, live my life as normal. It's life changing and it's always part of you and it's with you and I think anyone that comes into a community, in Tennant Creek or any other part of the world, these are the experiences that make up our memories and who we are and change us as people and hopefully for the better. (Unnamed community volunteer, 2012)

This is reinforced by a QCGU student participant, who reported:

I never thought - I didn't think I would make an effort to work in real community work or with Indigenous artists - or not even Indigenous but any kind of community - well I've done a little bit but I was always thinking I'll go to uni and chase the bigger artists. But I think it's more rewarding getting involved with your community ... I think now, after going to Tennant Creek, I'm going to make the call or just rock in there and just see what's going on and if there's some volunteering stuff or work experience that would be fine too. (Unnamed student, QCGU, 2010)

Community members who were involved in a local music centre also reported experiencing significant change in the way they viewed university students. As former Winanjjikari Manager Jeff McLaughlin explained:

Let's be honest, normally when you get people who've never come out, you get a thing called a white snowstorm, where you get all these people imposing stuff, but I don't know what you've been telling them [because] they've come in just absolutely the right way. The right 'steps'. Where you're not imposing, 'I'm from the East Coast ... and they've just got it (Jeff, QCGU, 2010).

Likewise, another member of the music centre commented:

Some people go, oh we've got to get the conservatorium students, they're all up themselves. And it's completely the opposite end of the scale. Everyone's humble, everyone's just so wanting to be a part of it. They've all become a part of the Winanjjikari tribe. (Unnamed community collaborator, QCGU, 2012)

Finally, a university staff member who facilitated trips to Tennant Creek in 2012 included the following entry in her personal research journal four months after returning from the trip:

I'm starting to feel like I'm seeing and understanding Aboriginal Australians' point of view in a completely different way. Once again it's a very slow process but I feel like the stark "otherness" and unknown is starting to go away a little bit. It's coming from things starting to settle in my body, heart, and mind after the Tennant trip four months ago. It's really like a salve for me. It's relieving a sheer ignorance, a black curtain, and black box ... I have lived with re[garding] Aboriginal culture. (Unnamed facilitator, QCGU, 2012)

Through these multifaceted and ongoing processes, participants on all sides of service-

learning collaborations are transported from their everyday reality to a space of abstraction from which they can discern, question and rupture previously invisible dominant power relations that shaped their interactions with others (Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Clark 2007). The team hence argues that these ruptures, and the resulting reorientation of our personal and collective visions and hope for the future, are at the centre of sustaining positive outcomes for community service learning. This notion of sustainability is about deepening curricula in higher education institutions, but it also concerns sustaining the engagement of those who are involved in the project-based work from the community, from external partners, and from university students.

The team closes with a powerful image of sustainability in the form of the wurley-house, which is a traditional Aboriginal shelter. Aboriginal language interpreter and artist Margaret Kemarre Turner (2010, p. 5) describes the construction process:

They built them really well. They'd put the posts in so that they would stand strongly for a long time, for generations. They would dig a hole and put the post in, and then they'd get rocks and pack them into the hole around the post to keep it standing strong. They didn't fill the soil back into the hole until after they'd put the stones and rocks in, so that these would squeeze the bark tightly and stop beetles and white ants getting in and eating these posts. That way the framework that was in the ground would stand firm and secure, the posts all in a row, stretching straight over generations, a lasting structure for whatever branches and leaves people might lay over the top of that wurley in the future.

To draw a metaphor, the team believe that the support posts are the deeper concepts of sustainability – establishing relationships; sustaining those relationships; sustaining workers outside the university; and sustaining transformation and radical hope within students and community members. Team members work towards the situation where economic rationalisation and privileged discourse cannot “white ant” the value of the generative reciprocity of the service learning projects. It can be argued, and have evidenced in the work, that these deeper concepts of sustainability have the potential to reconceptualise ABSL in higher education. To this end, we close with a summation of the key insights derived from the project, and make some humble suggestions about the ways in which these can be embodied in practice (see Table 3).

Table 3. Conceptual Framework with suggestions for practice

Ways of learning	Ways of engaging	Key insights derived from the project	Suggestions for practice
Knowing	Sitting down on country	Whether the ABSL program involves travelling to a remote, far away country or rediscovering the country that one regularly lives on, a very necessary step is to slow down, observe and connect with the country and its people. This will most likely ensure a much deeper engagement for all concerned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow cultural protocols and sit down with Elders before commencing an ABSL program. This is an appropriate way to connect with country and people. • Ask an Elder whether they would be prepared to take the students on a site visit, to learn about places of significance and busk tucker, for example. • Take students on a sensory walk at the beginning of the ABSL.
	Respecting culture & First Peoples' worldviews	When value is placed on respecting and learning about Aboriginal culture and worldviews from Elders and the artists themselves, we begin to take a vital step towards embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum content in a way that privileges the holders of that content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise cultural awareness classes as part of your ABSL orientation project to prioritise the learning of First Peoples' culture and worldviews. • Arrange for culture and language lessons during the ABSL project so that students can seek advice about cultural protocols from Elders as they come to hand. • Provide students with readings about Aboriginal cultural and following cultural protocols (see this project's website for resources) ahead of the ABSL project
	Transforming understandings & worldviews through critical reflection	When critical reflection accompanies the embodied and emplaced learning experiences in ABSL programs, participants have the potential to experience deep and long-lasting lessons that radically transform their understandings of themselves, their arts-practice, and the world around them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use guided reflection tools such as reflective diaries with prompts & questions about the experience. • Incorporate regular informal de-briefs for the group to off-load and speak frankly about their thoughts and experiences. • Undertake semi-structured interviews with students to prompt reflection and discussion on a one-to-one basis.

Ways of learning	Ways of engaging	Key insights derived from the project	Suggestions for practice
Being	Building and deepening relationships	Taking the time to develop trusting relationships with people and partners is the most fundamentally important part of this work. These relationships underpin everything that is learned and experienced on these ABSL programs, and without them any kind of meaningful engagement is not possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise building trusting relationships with participants instead of focusing on your own agenda and the tasks at hand. • Arrange for community consultations to occur, where you discuss process, aims, and ways of working, long before a student group is introduced to the community. • Realise that relationships take time to build, and this may take a number of years. Be patient!
	Learning & sharing in reciprocal ways	Embracing an asset-based approach to ABSL programs allows us to become attuned to the reciprocal and mutually beneficial ways in which participants learn from one another in these contexts. When viewed this way <i>all</i> participants are active learners with something valuable to share.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give participants time to jam and collaborate with one another. This quite often will organically lead to sharing, reciprocity and mutual leaning. • Reflect on the ABSL project using an asset-based approach, where you view all participants as active learners with something to contribute.
	Responding to contextual politics & dynamics with sensitivity	These ABSL programs are often set amidst deeply complex contexts with politics and dynamics that are difficult to grapple with, to say the least. While this might result in a degree of apprehension from all participants, this can be mitigated to a degree with sensitivity, humanity and a good dose of humour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have regular de-briefs with program teams, or Advisory Groups, to discuss appropriate and sensitive responses to topics as they come to hand.

Ways of learning	Ways of engaging	Key insights derived from the project	Suggestions for practice
Doing	Using the arts as a medium for connection & collaboration	In service learning with First Peoples, arts-based processes commonly provide culturally appropriate ways of expression, communication and connection with one another, and provide an opportunity to creatively share life experiences and appreciate one another's strengths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look out for ways to respond to community needs with a creative solution that everyone can work on collaboratively. • Draw on local musicians and artists (they will always be there, seek them out) to be part of your work, so that the ABSL project becomes part of the community and continues even if you are not there.
	Designing & implementing ABSL projects to meet both community & institutional needs	When designing ABSL programs with First Peoples, a delicate balance needs to be achieved between meeting the community needs and meeting the institution's requirements in terms of resourcing, recruitment, assessment, curriculum design, and policy compliance. A sense of shared ownership is vital for ongoing, mutual engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the channels of communication open with community leaders to ensure that community ownership of the project occurs, and the community guide the processes you're following. • Report up to institutional management to ensure that the project meets the requirements of the university, but also shares its innovative approaches to learning and teaching with others. • Build in peer support for facilitators and participants of these projects to ensure necessary support is given.
	Building sustainability into ABSL projects	Building sustainability into ABSL programs with First Peoples involves making a commitment to developing ongoing relationships, developing community assets and strengths, and supporting participant morale amid frequently challenging circumstances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When designing these projects, factor in the significant hard and soft infrastructure that is needed, and realise that starting small is often a wise move. • Be in it for the long haul and be prepared to put in a significant investment of time and energy. Be prepared to have your life and worldview changed, possibly for the better.

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Appendix A

External evaluation report

Introduction

An external evaluation of the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) project *Enhancing First Peoples content in arts curricula through service learning with First Peoples communities* has been undertaken as part of the project review and evaluation process.

The OLT project comprised two evaluation approaches:

1. Project Team Review and Reference Group:

- a. The **Project Team** undertook continuous peer review throughout the project and making adaptations where required.
- b. The **Reference Group** reviewed the project at three meetings, held in January 2012, May 2013 and November 2013;

2. External Evaluator:

As Professor Barbara Holland was unable to undertake the evaluation as originally planned, I agreed to take on the role of External Evaluator and to undertake a desktop review, conduct reflective interviews (12 x face2face or via Skype) between September and November 2013, and attend the final Reference Group meeting held in Brisbane on 21 November 2013.

This External Evaluation Report provides key observations and details the findings in relation to the OLT Projects elements, goals, and outcomes.



Dr Jan Strom

Project context

The Office for Learning & Teaching (OLT) project ***Enhancing First Peoples content in arts curricula through service learning with First Peoples communities*** seeks to enhance the ways in which First Peoples (i.e. Indigenous or Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) content is embedded in *tertiary arts curricula*.

In developing the project rationale there was strong recognition that while each participant University has a growing consciousness and commitment towards developing First Peoples content, the incorporation of these perspectives into curricula is still minimal. As a consequence this project embraces the need for innovation and effective inclusion strategies and uses community service learning as the pedagogy and the performing arts as the disciplinary base to grow the incorporation First Peoples content and perspectives in curricula. While using this pedagogical and disciplinary approach the focus of the Sub-Projects was on meeting needs specifically identified by First Peoples communities and/or organisations.

Three universities from three Australian states participated in the OLT project:

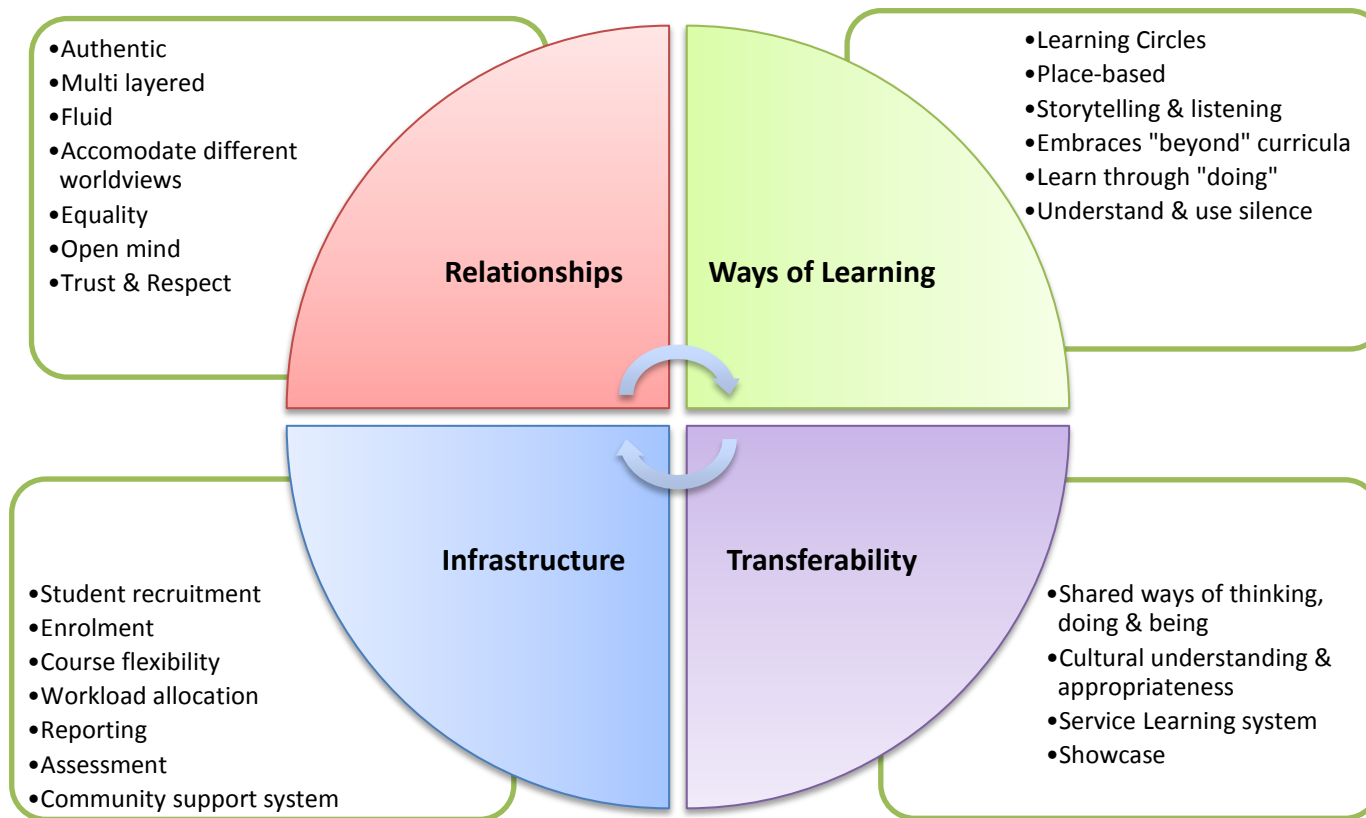
- Queensland Conservatorium/Griffith University (QLD),
- The University of Western Sydney (NSW) and
- Curtin University (WA).

Each university was responsible for their Sub-Project and they used Action Learning to encourage collaboration and reflection; to focus on the processes and not just the outcomes; to enable participants to learn; to help build community capacity and create change.

It should be noted that initially four universities were going to participate but for a variety of reasons The University of Sydney/Sydney Conservatorium had to withdraw from the project.

Evaluation outcomes

The key elements of the rich learning revealed in the evaluation are captured in the diagram below and detailed in the table provided at the end of this section.



However the diagram does not depict the personal experiences of the university students and staff or those of the Elders, students, workers, volunteers and others from the Aboriginal communities and organisations that “hosted” the Service Learning projects.

It was relatively easy for me to connect with some of the university students and staff to garner their thoughts, feelings and experiences. The following extracts are drawn from the evaluation table.

There was unanimous agreement from all students interviewed that their participation in the project had expanded their understanding of Aboriginal culture and exposed them to many of the issues and challenges faced by Aboriginal communities. Most want to continue working in this area. This is a typical student comment "I learnt more in this unit than all my other units put together", "After getting my skin name I was a bit self conscious about who I could speak to and who I couldn't [speak to]".

One student noted that while the project could have an impact on students from a personal perspective he suggested it is unlikely to have an impact on a larger scale. (I suggested to him that each student could be likened to a "rock in the broader community pond" creating a ripple effects that may impact upon others they meet through family, work, social and community circles).

The OLT project sought to "deepen students' intercultural understanding" and while it was expected that student knowledge would be expanded by their real-world experience, intercultural training preceded their work in the field to assist their journey. All students interviewed reflected on their own prior lack of knowledge about Aboriginal culture and the shame and embarrassment they felt about this. Students said they often experienced a degree of self-consciousness or uncertainty around what to say/do so as not cause offence. "When you don't know what to say ... say nothing".

In contrast it was not easy for me to access the "other voices" as I thought it culturally inappropriate to ring people out of the blue to ask them what they thought of the project. Having access to resources such as UWS music and photos, and the GU/QC Facebook page and student video clips went some way to ameliorating this lack of direct voice from Aboriginal participants. But, the opportunity to learn from Aboriginal Elder Associate Professor Simon Forrest at the final Reference Group meeting and to hear him voice an Aboriginal perspective provided another dimension for this evaluation. The following extracts are drawn from the evaluation table.

The Pinjarra Massacre field trip was transformative for all staff and students. Aboriginal Elder and OLT Project Reference Group member Associate Professor Simon Forrest led the trip and shared Aboriginal perspectives on this tragic event.

Aboriginal Elder Simon Forrest says "it's not only about relationships between people but a whole lot of things, relationships encapsulate a worldview, it's transforming for people ... how you do it and make it ongoing prove their success".

Aboriginal Elder Simon Forrest emphasised that "the arts way of thinking, doing and being is culturally appropriate and acceptable for us mob" for engagement activity with Aboriginal communities.

While the scale and diversity of this project was ambitious, two of the three specified outcomes and deliverables were achieved and the revised third outcome will also be achieved before the end of 2014.

Outcome	Detail	Progress
1	A set of guidelines, strategies and resources for the tertiary sector that focus on how to develop Service Learning partnerships with Indigenous communities.	✓ A simple brochure is being produced and this material will also be available on a web-site
2	A media-rich website that shares the progress and the results of the project, and provides a forum for both dissemination and discussion	✓ Facebook was used as the forum for dissemination and discussion during the project, and the media-rich website is currently being completed.
3	Special Issue of The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education (AJIE) on service learning in Indigenous communities, with a focus on the creative arts. In early 2013 Outcome 3 was changed to seek a publication contract for an edited book	✓ Springer will publish a book about the OLT Project in their <i>Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education</i> book series due for release late in 2014.

Acknowledgments:

The OLT Project has been extremely well managed community engaged service learning project and I acknowledge the exemplary work of Project Leader Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, and Project Manager Naomi Sunderland.

“This is the best run project I’ve ever been involved in, Brydie’s management and Naomi’s great administration has enabled it”. Professor Dawn Bennet, Curtin University.

I would also like to acknowledge the significant contributions made the Sub-Project Leaders, Professor Dawn Bennett, Anne Power and Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, members of the Reference Group and all staff and all students who participated in the OLT Project.

The contributions of those who shared their stories, learning and understanding with me is also much appreciated.

And finally, I wish acknowledge the generosity of the Tennant Creek (NT) and Noongar (WA) Aboriginal communities and organisations that hosted and enabled the OLT Projects through their support and goodwill.

Dr Jan Strom
Project Evaluator

Evaluation tools

1. Desktop review
 - a. Progress Reports
 - b. Each universities SL activity
 - c. Reference Group input
 - d. Electronic materials - Websites, Facebook

2. Personal interviews x 12
 - a. Queensland Conservatorium/Griffith University
 - i. Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartlett (Overall Project Leader & Sub-Project Leader)
 - ii. Gavin Carfoot (Lecturer)
 - iii. Naomi Sunderland (OLT Project Manager)
 - iv. Euan Cumming (Music student 2012)
 - v. Rohin Power (2013 QUT student)

 - b. Curtin University
 - i. Professor Dawn Bennett (Sub-Project Leader)
 - ii. Bonita Mason (Journalism Lecturer)
 - iii. Michelle Johnston (Film & TV Lecturer)
 - iv. Louise Rennie (Journalism student)
 - v. Jessica Keily (Post Grad Journalism student)

 - c. University of Western Sydney
 - i. Dr Anne Power (Sub-Project Leader)
 - ii. Nicholas Woodforde (Master of Music Education student 2012)

3. Final Reference Group meeting – 21 November 2013

Evaluation Findings in relation to Project Elements, Project Goals, and Project Outcomes:

	Element being evaluated	Sub-elements	Finding
PROJECT ELEMENTS	Relationships	Built on existing relationships with Aboriginal community and/or organisation	Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium (GU/QC) Sub-Project Leader Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet was invited to visit the Winanjikari Music Centre (WMC) in Tennant Creek in 2009 and since then she has worked with the Centre annually and established a strong relationship with staff at the WMC. The high level of trust and mutual respect attached to this pre-existing relationship was seamlessly transferred to the OLT project.
			University of Western Sydney Sub-Project Leader Anne Power has been taking pre-service teachers to Tennant Creek since 2009 and this Sub-Project was able to leverage off the strength of this mature relationship.
			Curtin University While Sub-Project Leader Professor Dawn Bennett did not have any pre-existing relationships with the participating Aboriginal organisations, the Curtin staff that supervised the students did have pre-existing relationships and this enabled the Sub- Project to progress. Aboriginal Elder Simon Forrest says “it’s not only about relationships between people but a whole lot of things, relationships encapsulate a worldview, it’s transforming for people ... how you do it and make it ongoing prove their success”.
		Community-University partners are equal and power is shared	Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium GU/QC staff report increased levels of confidence being evident in WMC staff – as demonstrated in 2013 with one “fella” providing strong direction during the 2013 face-to-face activities. The focus and selection of activities to be undertaken by students each year rests with the WMC.
			University of Western Sydney The importance of the local input was key to the UWS sub-project. We always ask: “What would you like us to do? How shall we do this together?”
			Curtin University

			All projects were identified and led by the Aboriginal organisations involved.
	Builds long-term collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal community and/or organisation	Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium	It is apparent that the collaborative relationship between GU/QC and WMC enabled collaborative partnerships to emerge and initial feedback from the Aboriginal organisations/communities involved indicates that this is likely to continue. The primary focus on the 2013 project was on the Desert Harmony Festival.
		University of Western Sydney	The OLT project built upon the long-term “service learning” collaboration between UWS and Tennant Creek High School and appears set to continue.
		Curtin University	The goodwill associated with the pre-existing relationships between CU staff and the Noongar Radio and the other Aboriginal organisations that were involved in the OLT project were built upon during the course of the project.
<p>COMMENT:</p> <p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium and the University of Western Sydney both worked with remote Aboriginal communities in Tennant Creek, while the Curtin University sub-project was urban-based in Noongar country where the CU campus is located.</p> <p>It is clear that the OLT project was significantly enhanced and enabled by strong pre-existing relationships between staff from each university and the Aboriginal communities involved. However Aboriginal Elder Simon Forrest noted that the sustainability of long-term activities are “influenced by all sorts of things, their ongoing nature, capacity, resources, so it just doesn’t stop because someone moves on”.</p> <p>To some extent the maintenance of these partnerships into the future is dependent upon the recruitment of the ‘right’ students to work on the projects. All Sub-Project leaders noted the importance of matching individual students and/or groups of students with appropriate community partners and/or projects and the need for community-led and community-focussed projects rather than student-focused projects is essential for building long-term collaborative partnerships.</p>			
Culture	Provides appropriate cultural awareness training	Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium	<p>While not referring directly to their cultural awareness training GU/QC students noted that the cultural differences between their own communities and the Tennant Creek community were “quite confronting and intense”.</p> <p>In order to reduce the impact of “cultural shock” on students the cultural awareness training focused on dealing with uncertainty, being flexible and open, and the importance of understanding and using silence.</p>

			<p>University of Western Sydney Pre-service teachers involved in the Sub-Project are enrolled in a Master of Teaching and UWS emphasis the importance of being “mindful of cultural differences” and respectful listening.</p>
			<p>Curtin University CU recognises the importance of “supporting students strategically and emotionally” and this was necessary as part of their field trip to site of Pinjarra Massacre held in week five of the project. One student suggested that some intercultural re-capping throughout the project would have been useful as she often felt “out of my depth”.</p>
		Integrates Aboriginal perspectives in culturally appropriate ways	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium The importance of “just sitting and listening” was emphasised.</p>
			<p>University of Western Sydney UWS emphasises to their Service Learning students that Aboriginal musicians and visual artists realise their “future selves” through community learning and cultural identity.</p>
			<p>Curtin University The Pinjarra Massacre field trip was transformative for all staff and students. Aboriginal Elder and OLT Project Reference Group member Associate Professor Simon Forrest led the trip and shared Aboriginal perspectives on this tragic event. It was reported that some CU students felt they were not working in “country” because they were urban-based rather than in a remote community. However they also realised that they were more aware of many of the features of Noongar country from both physical and metaphysical perspectives.</p>
	<p>COMMENT: The OLT project sought to “deepen students’ intercultural understanding” and while it was expected that student knowledge would be expanded by their real-world experience, intercultural training preceded their work in the field to assist their journey. All students interviewed reflected on their own prior lack of knowledge about Aboriginal culture and the shame and embarrassment they also felt about this. Students said they often experienced a degree of self-consciousness or uncertainty around what to say/do so as not cause offence. “When you don’t know what to say ... say nothing”. The CU field trip to the Pinjarra Massacre site was the most powerful preliminary intercultural training tool used.</p>		

	<p>It should also be noted that CU students worked with urban-based Aboriginals therefore they did not have to deal with some of the more confronting issues that GU/QC and UWS students working with remote Aboriginal communities in Tennant Creek experienced.</p>	
	<p>Service Learning</p>	<p>Utilises existing or develops Service Learning infrastructure</p> <p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium GU/QC offers Service Learning opportunities across the university, although this project was managed by QC rather than by GU’s Service Learning co-ordinator.</p> <p>University of Western Sydney UWS has a strong culture of Service Learning, particularly in teacher education.</p> <p>Curtin University CU had no pre-existing Service Learning units or activity, so they have been developed before the CU Sub-Project could commence. This delayed the start of the project by some nine months, which resulted in only one cohort of students being able to undertake Service Learning projects in the second year of the OLT project.</p>
	<p>Transferability from arts to other disciplines</p>	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium As other disciplines at GU/QC are already active in this area, transferability of Service Learning infrastructure being used is not required. However, reporting on the processes and outcomes of the OLT Project to the Service Learning Co-ordinator could add value to GU/QC’s approach to Service Learning.</p> <p>University of Western Sydney Other disciplines at UWS are already active in this area through Work Integrated Learning. Internal reporting on the processes and outcomes of the OLT Project to the UWS Service Learning community may enrich their SL approaches and activities.</p> <p>Curtin University The infrastructure framework developed to enable the CU Sub-Project could be transferred to other discipline areas. However, it appears that issues such as institutional resistance, workload allocation – particularly in relation to supervision and relationship development, and student enrolment still need to be resolved. In relation to transferability Aboriginal Elder Simon Forrest emphasised that “the arts way of thinking, doing and being is culturally appropriate and acceptable for us mob” for engagement activity with Aboriginal communities should be considered.</p>

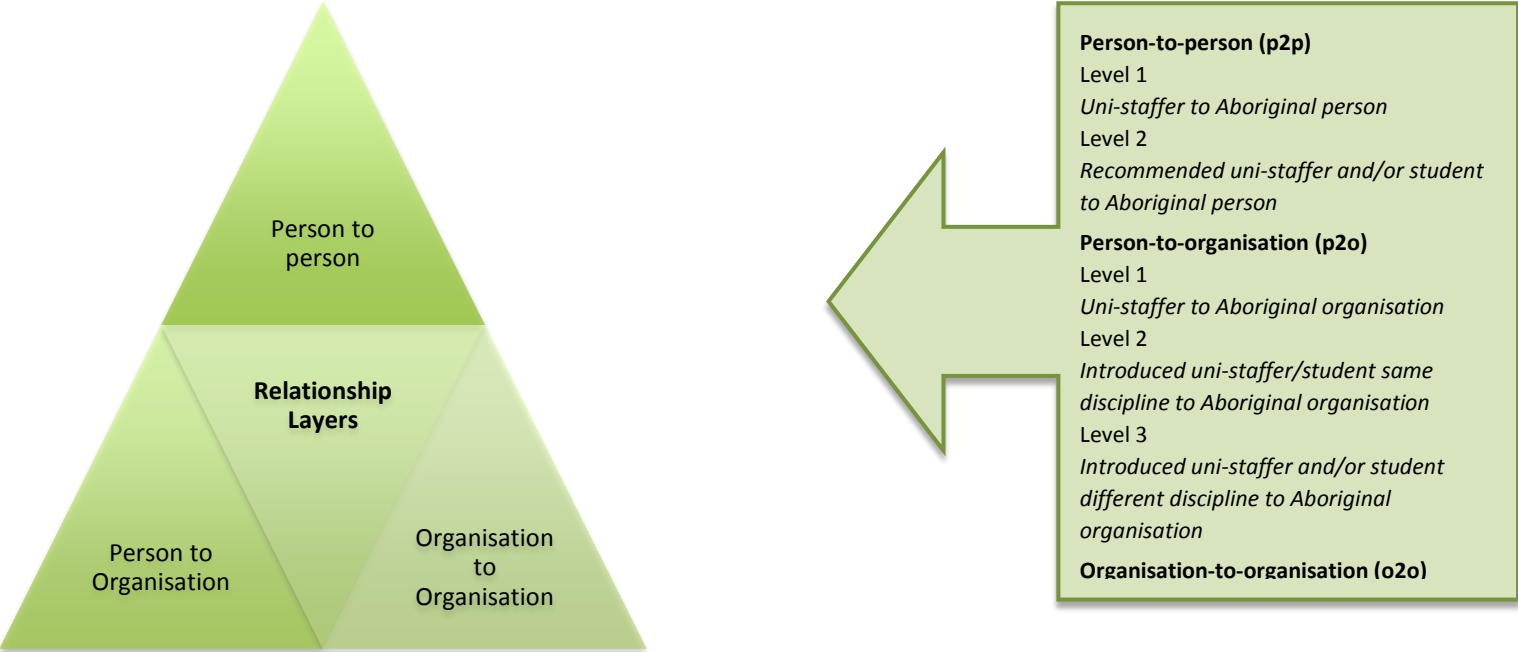
	<p>COMMENT:</p> <p>The OLT Project recognises the importance of mutual benefit and reciprocity when developing and undertaking Service Learning projects. GU/QC and UWS were previously active in Service Learning and had existing “infrastructure” upon which to draw, whereas CU had to develop it. CU still have issues to resolve to ensure the viability and sustainability of a Service Learning program.</p> <p>There is clearly great value in establishing and transferring SL infrastructure and systems and the key outcomes of this project – the website, brochure and book will demonstrate this. However, the wholesale transfer of a SL system from one discipline to another may be problematic if the other disciplines do not share the arts ways of thinking, doing and being that is culturally appropriate for engaging with Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>I would also caution against assuming that the trust and respect that accompanies strong relationships is transferrable. My research indicates that much of the success of SL and community engagement projects is dependent upon the trust that has been built through long-term inter-personal relationships. This is clearly a risk to long-term viability of SL and community engagement activity so it is vital that strategies be put in place to broaden the interpersonal relationships and to assist the development of organisation-to-organisation relationships over time.</p>		
	Primary goals	Sub-goals	Finding
PROJECT GOALS	Embedding indigenous content in arts curricula through community service learning	Cross-cultural collaboration	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium</p> <p>Cross-cultural collaboration was evident when GU/QC staff, students and WMC staff and community members worked together on the Desert Harmony Festival.</p> <p>University of Western Sydney</p> <p>UWS students collaborated with Tennant Creek High School staff, community members and students used song writing, art making and performance as the tools of engagement.</p> <p>Curtin University</p> <p>CU journalism students faced some challenges in relation to their reporting. While collaborating with the Aboriginal organisation to prepare articles the students had to ensure that their reporting was journalistic, and not public relations in approach and content.</p> <p>CU film-making students collaborated with Noongar Radio to produce a corporate video about the importance of Aboriginal people have a “voice” that showcases Aboriginal content and supports Aboriginal identity.</p>
		Enhance student learning and cultural competency	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium</p> <p>WMC staff and Tennant Creek Aboriginal community members enhanced student learning by sharing some of their cultural practices. Examples include the allocation</p>

			<p>of a “skin name” for each student, and the sharing of knowledge about bush tucker and the landscape.</p> <p>Students noted that while the WMC is regarded as a “men’s space” female GU/QC students were welcome to participate in activities at the centre.</p> <p>Students also commented that building songs in “learning circles” had assisted them to better understand Aboriginal culture and that this facilitated approach was very conducive to creative activity. One student suggested he would incorporate this technique into his own teaching.</p> <p>University of Western Sydney</p> <p>A Master of Teaching student said that much of his learning was through “doing” (primarily through playing guitar). Because English is often the second, third or fourth language for many of the Aboriginal school students – music becomes the shared language.</p> <p>The importance of building trust, as well as the need for flexibility, of limiting expectations and maintaining an open mind was emphasised and one student has applied these principles to his teaching in Western Sydney to good effect.</p> <p>When UWS students were given their skin names the Elders explained the importance of kinship in Aboriginal society, the origin of their name and how then name determines how people relate to each other and their roles, responsibilities and obligations in relation to one another.</p> <p>Curtin University</p> <p>Some of the CU undergraduate students found the Action Research/Action Learning approach a little confronting while the post-graduate student found it <i>real world</i> and empowering.</p> <p>A need for “cultural competency” was also identified within the field on journalism, as one student faced some issues in getting her work published. Apparently a magazine editor was not sympathetic to Aboriginal stories, and viewed her article through a traditional “white-fella” lens. CU staff stated that this was a good lesson for the student as this attitude prevails in mainstream media.</p> <p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium</p> <p>The GU/QC Service Learning program has been embedded within the school/university’s Work Integrated Learning elective. It has also led to spin-off activities with the Griffith Elders Council.</p>
		Expand Service Learning with Indigenous communities to other disciplines	

			<p>University of Western Sydney There has been some discussion about linking the Service Learning unit that is part of the Master of Teaching Secondary Program with Workplace Integrated Learning across the UWS.</p> <p>Curtin University As Service Learning is still in its infancy at CU the required infrastructure is still being established. When this has been achieved SL could be expanded to incorporate other disciplines. It was reported that the post-project “showcase” attracted positive attention from CU executive and the Sub-Project Leader hopes this will secure Service Learning as an on-going feature of CU’s arts curricula.</p>
			<p>COMMENT:</p> <p>There was unanimous agreement from all students interviewed that their participation in the project had expanded their understanding of Aboriginal culture and exposed them to many of the issues and challenges faced by Aboriginal communities. Most want to continue working in this area. This is a typical student comment “I learnt more in this unit than all my other units put together”, “After getting my skin name I was a bit self conscious about who I could speak to and who I couldn’t [speak to]”.</p> <p>However one student noted that while the project could have an impact on students from a personal perspective he suggested it is unlikely to have an impact on a larger scale. I suggested that each student could be likened to a “rock in the broader community pond” creating a ripple effects that may impact upon others they meet through family, work, social and community circles.</p> <p>The Service Learning activity undertaken by GU/QC and UWS that preceded the OLT project and the sub-projects have assisted in embedding community based SL into QC/GU and UWS curriculum. Further to this a broader implementation of similar Service Learning projects within the three participating universities, as well as with other Australian universities provides a much more significant the potential impact.</p> <p>Capacity is a significant issue affecting the on-going sustainability and viability of Service Learning. Broadening SL activity requires significant university capacity and community capacity.</p> <p>Universities require the appropriate infrastructure (such as staff workload allocation, student selection, enrolment and support systems, community training and support, assessment guidelines for staff and community partners etcetera) to support its delivery. It is also vital to ensure that there is a good match between students and community partners.</p> <p>Partner organisations in the community need to be able to identify appropriate and meaningful projects, and have people – staff or volunteers with the skills and the capacity to take on a student or students. SL can also affect workload and time management, while supervision and assessment training and other support mechanisms may also be required.</p>

<p>Demonstrate integration of Service Learning with Indigenous communities in arts curricula</p>	<p>Respectful and culturally appropriate relationships</p>	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium</p> <p>When engaging with Aboriginal communities GU/QC recognise that all relationships are built on trust and person-to-person linkages and they can become precarious if a key person is unable to continue their involvement in a project. To ameliorate this risk from a GU/QC perspective an additional staff member was included on the OLT Sub-Project.</p>
		<p>University of Western Sydney</p> <p>One student teacher learned that not all good teachers have formal qualifications – as was the case with the Tennant Creek High School (TCHS) music teacher who is a musician (teacher) rather than a teacher per se. It is culturally appropriate for TCHS to employ this teacher because he has the respect of all of the school students and enables their learning. When UWS students were teaching he provided a valuable link with the Aboriginal school students.</p> <p>Sub-Project Leader Anne Power emphasised that from an Aboriginal perspective authenticity is imperative, “Tennant Creek is a “hot spot” and people there have a strong authenticity filter”.</p>
		<p>Curtin University</p> <p>As a consequence of participating in the SL project CU journalism and filmmaking students said they are interested in working with, and reporting and documenting Aboriginal people and issues in the future because they now have a deeper level of respect for and understanding of Aboriginal culture. “Doing this project I felt a bit like I was thrown in at the deep end ... it was about learning in context”.</p>
	<p>Creation of culturally appropriate curricula</p>	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium</p> <p>GU/QC recognise that institutionalised western approaches to teaching/learning music are not culturally appropriate. Most learning is place-based and storytelling and learning to listen are key “teaching” tools that need to be incorporated into curricula.</p>
		<p>University of Western Sydney</p> <p>UWS is mindful that the “learning community” goes way beyond the school curriculum and teaching experience to incorporate school students and teachers, community members, Barclay Regional Arts, Elders, the Music Centre and others.</p> <p>UWS place an emphasis on: Respect – Listening – Asking questions</p>

			<p>Curtin University Through its SL Sub-Projects CU sought to develop a shared history and build mutual respect to avoid paternalism. The importance of working collaboratively and supporting cultural protocols has also been taken into account.</p>
		<p>Building mutually beneficial relationships</p>	<p>Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium Important to have community-led slow conversations in order to establish and develop mutually beneficial relationships.</p>
			<p>University of Western Sydney The selection of appropriate students and projects is vital to ensure that mutually beneficial relationships are built and/or maintained.</p>
			<p>Curtin University The Sub-Project built upon the existing relationships and the importance of working locally and building capacity – university and community – was highlighted and in turn this provides mutual benefit.</p>
<p>COMMENT: All universities are integrating SL into their arts curricula in culturally appropriate ways. From a relationship perspective it is important to recognise that there are “relationship layers” as depicted in the diagram on the following page. The person-to-person (p2p) relationship is the primary or foundational relationship upon which the other secondary relationships are built. In relation to the OLT Sub-Projects all primary relationships were Level 1 p2p being: Uni-staffer to Aboriginal person in nature. During the course of the project they led to p2p Level 2 relationships being: Recommended Uni-staffer and/or student to Aboriginal person. If people Uni-staffers and/or students from other disciplines are recommended the relationships would be p2o Level 3.</p>			

			
	Outcomes	Sub-outcomes	Finding
PROJECT OUTCOMES	Guidelines, strategies & resources	Embedding Service Learning at school, faculty and/or university level	Griffith University/Queensland Conservatorium: The Service Learning program has been embedded within the school/university's Work Integrated Learning elective. It has also been embedded in the school curriculum via various workshops and talks that the participating students have given to their various Conservatorium cohorts upon returning from their SL projects (popular music, music technology, jazz and education) and in lectures given by the facilitators. It has also led to spin-off collaborations with the Griffith Council of Elders and Griffith's Equity Office, to mention a few. I image this will all continue to develop in the years to come.

			<p>University of Western Sydney:</p> <p>The Service Learning unit has been a strand of the core unit Professional Experience 3 in the Master of Teaching Secondary Program. It has involved about ten pre-service teachers since 2009. It has led to conversations about relationships with Workplace Integrated Learning. It has also led to collaborations with the Papulu Aparr-Kari Language Centre.</p>
			<p>Curtin University</p> <p>The OLT Sub-Projects have provided a basis on which to build elective Service Learning units into arts and creative industries courses. Faculty-based Work Integrated Learning/Service Learning units may be used to simplify the enrolment process.</p>
		Development of brochure	While the brochure is still in development Project Leader Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet emphasises that the brochure will act as a “digestible” by providing an accessible summary of the key findings and conceptual framework featured in the final report. Gilimbaa Design has been approached to design the brochure and it will be released soon after the OLT final report has received approval.
	Media-rich website	Models of Service Learning – Case Studies	Service Learning case studies from each of the three Sub-Projects will be available on the website. The website has been developed and will be further populated in the next two months as the final report is released.
		Summary of guidelines	A summary of the guidelines as per outcome (a) will be available on the website.
		Strategies for funding sustainable Service Learning programme	This is an area where we haven’t come up with specific strategies – the project developed to focus more on sustainability beyond simply the finances (as important as they are). That said, references to issues surrounding funding remote trips and decisions to work closer to home for financial and other cultural reasons are detailed in the final report.
		Digital stories – student developed	These (along with other short interviews) will be available on the website.
		Online database	A list of resources will be available on the website.
		Blog	Rather than using individual blogs as originally planned a Facebook page was established to provide an opportunity for a broader community of practitioners and researchers interested in this line of work for sharing knowledge, insights, and project information.

	Edited book	Disciplinary insights	Springer will publish a book about the OLT Project in their <i>Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education</i> book series due for release late in 2014. Disciplinary insights will be included in the content.
		Case studies	Case studies will be an intrinsic feature of the book.
	Other	Conference presentations	The OLT Project has been reported at conferences both in Australia and overseas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>International Society for Music Education Conference (2012)</i> • <i>Asia Pacific Community Music Network (APCMN) Seminar (2013)</i> • <i>8th International Conference for Research in Music Education (2013)</i>, • <i>8th International Congress of Voice Teachers (2013)</i> • <i>International Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE)</i> • <i>Asia Pacific Educational Research Association (APERA) (2012)</i>, • <i>Creative Communities III: Risks and Possibilities Conference (2012)</i>, • <i>Expanding Conversations: Social Innovation, Arts and Anti-Racism Forum, (2012)</i> • <i>Australian Society for Music Education Conference (2011 and 2013)</i>.
		Award nominations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013, Bennett was awarded the Vice Chancellor’s Award for Excellence for her inspirational leadership. She has reported that the Curtin sub-project contributed to this success. • 2012 Bartleet and Carfoot were awarded a Griffith University Excellence on Teaching Award for ‘Programs that Enhance Learning’ • 2010 Power, with colleagues Gannon and Naidoo was awarded an OLT Award for ‘Programs that Enhance Learning’; this followed the Vice Chancellor’s award for community engagement in 2007

Appendix

Post Project Reflection:

The following questions could be considered by each sub-project leader to assist the long-term sustainability of this type of Service Learning activity within the context of their own institutions.

Impact within your school/faculty

1. How has this project assisted in development of innovative curricula that utilises Service Learning with First Peoples within your school/faculty?
2. How has this project strengthened intercultural relations between your university and a First Peoples (Aboriginal/Indigenous) community, or communities?

Impact within your university

1. How has this project assisted in development of innovative curricula that utilises Service Learning with First Peoples within your university?
2. How has this project strengthened intercultural relations between your university and a First Peoples (Aboriginal/Indigenous) community, or communities?
3. How does Service Learning provide a valuable tool for building partnerships with First Peoples communities and/or organisations?

Impact on students

1. How has participation in this project impacted on student/s academic assessment tasks and/or other outputs?
2. Did you observe any changes in the student/s intercultural competency?

Value to First Peoples communities, organisations, and/or individuals

1. How did this Service Learning activity benefit the First Peoples communities and/or organisations involved?
2. What key strategies would you recommend in order to facilitate successful outcomes from future Service Learning activities from the following two perspectives:
 - a. University stakeholders – i.e. for students, schools/faculties, universities; and/or
 - b. Community stakeholders – i.e. for First Peoples communities, organisations and individuals?

Pre Project Consideration:

Schools/Faculties could also rephrase the questions above when considering whether to undertake a prospective Service Learning project with a First Peoples community/organisation. For example:

1. How could this project assist in development of innovative curricula within your school/faculty?
2. How will this project benefit the First People communities/organisations involved?.

Appendix B

Topics for semi-structured data collection across sub-projects

The following topics, questions and templates for semi-structured data collection were adapted for individual university sub-projects to answer the national project research questions.

Student reflective diaries/assessment:

1. What are my expectations about this experience?
2. How confident or unconfident do I feel today about working with Aboriginal communities?
3. What does working respectfully with Aboriginal communities really mean?
4. What are the strongest experiences and realisations I have had today?
5. What is changing in me and others?
6. What am I learning here?
7. What am I teaching?
8. Are there any noticeable steps or phases that I have gone through in developing relationships with local community members while I have been here?
9. How might I share the experiences I am having here with others at my university?
10. How has this experience shaped how I think about myself and my future?
11. How has this experience shaped how I think about other people, places, or things?

Additional or substitute reflective questions for pre-service teacher student participants:

1. What has this professional experience meant to you, working alongside Aboriginal community members?
2. What do you think you have learned? What are the shared experiences of the school community and you as pre-service teachers?
3. What kinds of effective learning have there been for the students in the high school?
4. Has technology awareness and usage increased as a result of these experiences?
5. What have you noticed about cultural interaction and both ways learning?

Other assessment:

1. How has your understanding of Aboriginal arts and culture developed during this project?
2. One aim of this project is for students and community members to learn from each other. What do you think different participants in this project have learned? How did they learn it?
3. How does this experience compare to other learning you have undertaken at university or college?
4. What are your recommendations to other students who want to learn about

- Aboriginal culture?
5. What is one thing you commit to do after this project to enhance understanding of Aboriginal arts and culture in your home institution, future profession, or society at large?
 6. What has this experience taught you about your artistic or teaching practice?

Researcher reflective diaries:

The topics below were covered through a combination of written free form narrative and structured answers using observation templates. Different topics were [ir]relevant at different phases of the project, hence researchers did not need to answer every question or topic every time they make a diary entry. Answering these questions allowed us to directly answer the project research questions and analyse results across the sub-projects.

Additional unstructured diary entries and video and photo observation outside the scope of these questions provided a basis for a more holistic and contextualised analysis.

Examples of semi-structured observation questions:

1. What steps or phases have I gone through to develop this project with local community members?
2. What makes service-learning partnerships with Aboriginal communities work?
3. What contextual (environment) factors make life easier or harder when doing this kind of work?
4. What would I do the same next time?
5. What would I do differently?
6. What is helping us in this project?
7. What is hindering us?
8. Relationships and transformation:
9. Cultural competency: How are we all coping? How are we all changing?
10. What does working 'respectfully' with Aboriginal communities really mean and require?
11. Can we really make a significant impact on higher education curricula through service learning?
12. What might change in my organisation, profession, and society as a result of these kinds of projects?
13. Teaching and learning:
14. How would I describe the kind of learning that is happening in this project?
15. Is mutual learning occurring?
16. What learning outcomes am I observing?
17. What kinds of assessment might help students to get the most out of this experience?
18. What kinds of assessment might help us to share these experiences and learnings with others at our home institution?
19. How feasible and sustainable is this kind of teaching and learning?

Questions for community participants:

Below are examples of questions discussed with community participants in projects. Questions were often asked during casual conversation or other project related activities.

1. What are some of the ways that you have learned about music [or other art form] in the past?
2. What things have you done with universities or colleges [e.g. TAFE] in the past?
3. What did you like about the things you've done with [universities/colleges/students] in the past?
4. What are some of the ways that you've taught other people in your community about music [or other art form] in the past?
5. What are some examples of things that you taught the students during this project?
6. What are some examples of things you learned from the students during this project?
7. What kinds of things did the students do to teach you?
8. What kinds of things did you do to teach the students?
9. What did you like about working with the students?
10. How did the students change while they were here?
11. How did you change?
12. What are some examples of things that students did that showed respect for your culture?
13. How might these kinds of projects support Aboriginal culture and communities in the future?
14. What advice would you give to university and college students who want to learn about Aboriginal arts and culture?
15. What advice would you give to students as they go out to be professional musicians/artists/teachers?
16. Do you have anything else at all that you would like to share with us?

Questions for staff at participating schools:

1. What has having our students in the school meant to your school community?
2. What do you think our students have learned while they have been here?
3. What shared learning has occurred between your school community and our students?
4. What kinds of effective learning have there been for the students in your school?
5. Where might your students take this to in the future?

6. Have you noticed a change in your students' skills or knowledge in any area changing during this project?
7. Have you noticed any changes in yourself or other staff at the school?
8. Is there any measurable improvement in terms of attendance?
9. What have you noticed about cultural interaction and both ways learning?
10. What advice would you give to university and college students generally who want to learn about Aboriginal arts and culture?
11. What advice would you give to universities and colleges that want to develop service-learning partnerships with schools?
12. What advice would you give our students as they go out to be professional teachers?

Questions for staff at participating organisations:

1. What has having our students here meant for your organisation?
2. What do you think our students have learned while they have been here?
3. What have members of your organisation learned?
4. Where do you think this might go in the future?
5. What changes have occurred in yourself or other staff at your organisation?
6. Is there any noticeable improvement in the projects we have worked on together?
7. What have you noticed about cultural interaction and learning between our students and community members?
8. What advice would you give to university and college students generally who want to learn about Aboriginal arts and culture?
9. What advice would you give to universities and colleges that want to develop service-learning partnerships with local organisations?
10. What advice would you give our students as they go out to be professional musicians/artists/teachers?

Appendix C

Final list of thematic codes

Name	Sources	References
Facilitating and implementing service learning (SETTING OUT AND CONTINUING TOGETHER)	97	2944
asset vs needs based	11	40
beneficial processes (other - outside main steps)	87	934
action research	27	106
arts as medium	68	543
hanging around relaxing yarning having a joke being comfortable	33	110
peer support and mentoring, group work	50	155
site visits	7	9
challenging processes	34	173
community voice agency, not imposing	17	26
institutionalisation and policies	4	11
partners and partnerships, intermediaries	29	112
steps and phases of absl project	29	111
assessment and course credit	12	31
curriculum and program design	35	68
diffusion, flow on from trips and projects	15	16
establishing new projects	4	9
intercultural and language training	25	36
recruitment and student motivations to participate	13	35
relationships	34	97
slow, long term	21	30
trust	19	75
things to consider	0	0
care, caring, duty of care	11	16
duration of immersion trips	7	10
gender	27	89
moral conflict	1	1
recommendations - from all participants	44	97
staff motivation, continuity and reward	3	4
sustainability	13	21
Ways and nature of learning experienced and observed	81	1516
emplaced embodied learning	70	871
body and senses	33	155
here and there, then and now (comparison)	23	48
remoteness, desert, bush, regional and remote	49	250
sense of place and country (incl spiritual connected)	52	307
urban city	24	90
experiential learning	39	79
incidental unexpected passive unspoken learning	5	5
keeps me wanting to learn more	1	2
learning by doing	9	13
listening watching	36	112
raw, takes time to process	3	3
telling (oral transmission multi way learning)	35	151

things I, we learned	53	262
two-way mutual	2	3
ways that community members learn	5	10
Intercultural experiences and outcomes (OUTCOMES)	94	3340
Australian identity (awareness, change)	20	56
broader socio cultural context awareness e.g. media, history	14	20
change (in self and others)	66	246
child childhood experience (challenged, reflecting on, expanding)	33	142
confidence	32	101
connecting or connections, relationships, welcomed, familiar	41	199
difference, sameness (recognising incl culture shock)	22	49
empathy, emotion, sensitivity	12	47
epiphanies, strong exps, turning pts	38	315
family	38	169
flexibility openness	48	184
ignorance, lack of awareness, stereotype, prejudice, racism	20	71
intercultural reconciliation	3	4
judgements re cultural others (negative, deficit)	8	11
reconciliation	4	9
respect	45	200
understanding Aboriginal culture and experience (incl cultural protocol)	89	626
way of thinking, being, acting	69	781
whiteness	26	110
Other experiences (OTHER THINGS WE SHARED ALONG THE WAY)	73	759
Adjectives, similes, metaphors - notable	32	143
intense	12	20
anxious, concerned, uncertain, warnings, apprehension, shy, scary, not wanting to offend, vulnerable	44	129
booze issues	13	41
critical self-awareness in relation to others	12	16
expectations met or not met	50	244
personal agency (asserting or loss)	6	14
poverty and disadvantage	13	27
privilege, special	33	112
sad, sadness	14	33
Other outcomes (OUTCOMES)	39	96
student professional development and future	39	96