

**Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC)**

**Strengthening Indigenous Research Culture  
in Australian Universities and Higher Education**

**Report of the**

**2007 IHEAC Research Conference**

**20-21 February, 2007  
The Woodward Centre  
The University of Melbourne**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary and Recommendations	1
The IHEAC Strategic Agenda	3
The Seven Priority Areas	4
The context for the 2007 Conference: A focus on strengthening the Indigenous research culture	6
Introduction to the 2007 Conference	7
SESSION 1 – Indigenous Research	8
SESSION 2 – Training and Mentoring to Access Research Funds	9
SESSION 3 – National Indigenous Research Priorities	10
SESSION 4 – Training Supervisors for Indigenous postgraduate students and Coursework training in research and methodology across disciplines	11
Conference Discussion	14

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## **Executive Summary and Recommendations**

The 2007 IHEAC Research Conference focussed on ways in which Indigenous research culture might be strengthened in Australian higher education.

The conference built on the 2005 and 2006 annual IHEAC conferences and was informed in particular by The IHEAC Strategic Plan 2006-2008, *Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education*.

With regard to research and research training, the IHEAC seeks to encourage the development of a climate in Australian higher education where:

- the level of Indigenous postgraduate enrolment increases;
- the number of Indigenous researchers increases; and
- Indigenous research is strengthened and enhanced.

To achieve these objectives, as is the case for many of IHEAC's priority areas, universities and government must collaborate to implement new strategies.

The 2007 IHEAC Research Conference has led to the development of a set of recommendations for consideration by governments, University councils, Vice-Chancellors and other University leaders and education research centres and agencies.

In summary, IHEAC recommends the provision of long term planning and radical new funding models that will bring about systemic change and facilitate the preparation of new researchers, support the development of Indigenous scholars and produce leading Indigenous scholarship.

## **Specifically, IHEAC recommends:**

1. Ensuring continual Indigenous input into the Research Quality Framework processes and decisions, via membership of panels.
2. Developing a new prescriptive set of protocols for building Indigenous research capacity, based on identified best practice, to be implemented nationally.
3. Developing a national plan for enhancing Indigenous research and overseeing the implementation of strategies and protocols. The national plan will be coordinated by the AVCC in partnership with Indigenous academics and researchers and senior Indigenous leaders within institutions.
4. The funding of a feasibility study on the concept of an Indigenous Academy.
5. The provision of new funding arrangements for Indigenous research, including an *Indigenous Research Performance Fund* where targeted funding is awarded to universities with demonstrated achievements in:
  - appointing Indigenous teaching and research staff;
  - Indigenous research higher degree completions; and
  - Indigenous research assessed both on a bibliometric measure and research impact.
6. Inviting the ARC to implement targeted funding programs to foster Indigenous research capacity building.
7. Developing a national, funded *Indigenous Research Training Scheme* to provide summer schools, cadetships, mentoring programs, institution-based training and other strategies designed to directly enhance the research skills of Indigenous students and researchers.
8. Creating and promoting a national database of existing Indigenous researchers and research.

# The IHEAC Strategic Agenda

## The IHEAC Vision for Indigenous Higher Education

The inaugural Indigenous Higher Education Conference in 2005, *Education Led Recovery of Indigenous Capacity: reshaping the policy agenda*, 1-2 November 2005, led to the first strategic plan of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council.

The IHEAC identifies ongoing problems associated with:

- the poor recognition given to Indigenous studies and the lack of visibility of Indigenous culture and knowledge on campus;
- the uneven quality of Indigenous research programs and the limited number of active Indigenous researchers;
- the small number of Indigenous people working in Australian universities, especially in senior roles; and
- the low levels of participation of Indigenous people in university governance and management.

The under-representation of Indigenous people in many facets of university life is unacceptable in a society in which education is essential for successful community participation and national development.

Participation in higher education is pivotal to Indigenous people achieving a rightful place in Australian society. Australian universities must therefore play a national leadership role in recognise and valuing Indigenous people and Indigenous culture. The IHEAC believes that government and institutional policies for Indigenous higher education must reflect the goal of the social, cultural and economic development of the whole Indigenous community. The vision of the IHEAC is for a higher education system in which Indigenous Australians share equally in the life and career opportunities that a university education can provide. This means working cooperatively, persistently and strategically to create universities in which:

- Indigenous people and their culture and knowledge are visible and valued on campus;
- Indigenous research is of high quality and high status;
- Indigenous studies are a prominent and vibrant part of the curriculum;
- Indigenous knowledge and culture are developed and preserved;
- Indigenous leaders of the future are educated and trained; and
- Indigenous people are active in university governance, leadership and management.

## The Seven Priority Areas

The IHEAC Strategic Plan is based on five principles:

1. respect for Indigenous people, knowledge and culture;
2. mutual obligation for universities, government and Indigenous people;
3. integrated, cross-sectoral policies and programs;
4. high expectations; and
5. clear goals.

The Strategic Plan is a working document to assist to focus the priorities and activities of the IHEAC in fulfilling its Terms of Reference and in developing its advice to the Minister for Education, Science and Training. The plan is reviewed on an annual basis. The Strategic Plan presents seven areas as priorities for government and universities:

Priority 1: Encourage universities to work with schools and TAFE colleges and other registered training organisations to build pathways and raise the levels of aspiration and confidence of Indigenous students.

Priority 2: Develop a concerted strategy to improve the level of Indigenous undergraduate enrolment.

Priority 3: Improve the level of Indigenous postgraduate enrolment, enhance Indigenous research and increase the number of Indigenous researchers.

Priority 4: Improve the rates of success, retention and completion for Indigenous students.

Priority 5: Enhance the prominence and status of Indigenous culture, knowledge and studies on campus.

Priority 6: Increase the number of Indigenous people working in Australian universities.

Priority 7: Improve the participation of Indigenous people in university governance and management.

The IHEAC commends the federal government on its recent commitment to initiatives in Indigenous Higher Education that will assist with these seven priority areas. On 18 July 2006, the Minister launched the IHEAC report *Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education* and announced a \$1.73 million funding package of initiatives as an initial response to the IHEAC's policy advice contained in the report including:

- \$750,000 to develop partnership projects to encourage universities to increase the number of cross-sectoral partnerships and pathways for Indigenous students;
- \$600,000 to develop three lighthouse national projects of two years duration to develop cross-sectoral collaboration including guaranteed pathways, particularly for mature age students;
- \$310,000 to commission research including a study of the first year experience of Indigenous students; a study of strategic models of what works in the higher education sector to support Indigenous people; and an evaluation of the role of the Indigenous Education and Support centres;
- \$50,000 to award two International Scholarships under the Endeavour Programme. The Scholarships provides up to \$25,000 for each Indigenous Australian postgraduate student or postdoctoral fellow to undertake short-term research for 4-6 months during 2007 in any field of study in a participating country in Asia, Pacific and the Middle East; and
- \$20,000 to recognise and award cross sectoral partnerships.

## **The Context for the 2007 Conference: A focus on strengthening the Indigenous research culture**

*Enhanced Indigenous research training is desperately needed. There are numerous issues surrounding Indigenous research, including fears about the possible impact of the Research Quality Framework if it fails to appropriately recognise Indigenous research. The Research Quality Framework leans towards a 'science' model and there are known difficulties with the current approaches to research funding ... a distinctive policy framework must be developed if Indigenous research is to be appropriately recognised and developed. One aspect of such a framework might be a clearer definition of what constitutes good or excellent Indigenous research — this would assist in finding ways to value Indigenous research and discriminate good research from poorer or less significant research.*

*From Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education, The report of the Inaugural Indigenous Higher Education Conference, 2005.*

The 2007 Research Conference focussed on identifying strategies, policies and practices that will further enhance and strengthen Indigenous research culture in Australian higher education.

Conference participants discussed the possible ways in which Indigenous research can be built upon and expanded in ways that are in line with the priorities relevant to Indigenous communities and researchers.

The IHEAC seeks to encourage the development of a climate in Australian higher education where:

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- the number of Indigenous researchers increases; and
- Indigenous research is strengthened and enhanced.

To achieve these objectives, as is the case for many of IHEAC's priority areas, universities and government must collaborate to implement new strategies.

The 2007 conference continued and extended the discussion and planning that have taken place in 2005 at the inaugural IHEAC conference and in 2006 at the second annual IHEAC conference. The IHEAC Strategic Plan 2006-2008, *Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education* guided the 2007 themes and directions.

## **Introduction to the 2007 Conference**

Professor Ian Anderson and Simone Brotherton opened the conference with an acknowledgement of country and a welcome to Melbourne.

Professor Marcia Langton noted that this was the third conference that IHEAC had held. She also noted the publication of the report of the Second Annual Indigenous Higher Education Conference, 18-19 September 2006, and thanked workshop participants for their ongoing contribution to the important work of the IHEAC. Professor Langton noted that her period as Chair of the IHEAC was drawing to a close and she thanked the hard-working and diligent members of the Council for their contribution to the policy advice provided by the IHEAC to the Minister. Professor Langton noted that there had, to date, been a very positive response from the Minister to the advice offered and a strong response from the higher education community to the call for tenders for the three national projects.

## **SESSION 1 – Indigenous Research**

### **Research Quality Framework**

#### **Professor Ian Anderson, The University of Melbourne**

##### **The Research Quality Framework: The Preferred Model**

Professor Anderson reviewed the development of the RQF and the key issues for Indigenous Studies. He argued that a good outcome had been achieved during policy development of the preferred model and that institutions would now need to examine how they can best work within the model. Professor Anderson highlighted the RQF focus on impact, which is consistent with the objective of much research in Indigenous studies, and the opportunity for cross-disciplinary groupings of researchers, again of particular significance to Indigenous Studies. He noted that the Assessment Panels will be able to decide how to assess research that has a predominantly national focus and therefore might not be published in international journals, or high ranked journals, but would be published in national journals where the impact might be greatest.

He also noted that the assessment challenge for the quality of research in Indigenous Studies is now acknowledged within the policy framework. He flagged that there is now a significant challenge for institutions in determining how research in Indigenous Studies is organised for assessment purposes. How this is done within small institutions or where Indigenous Studies programs are small will be significant issues.

#### **Dr Evan Arthur, Group Manager, Innovation and Research Systems Group, DEST**

Dr Arthur provided an extensive and detailed update on RQF policy development. He agreed that a major issue is ensuring institution prominence of Indigenous studies. He believed there were opportunities to have input into the RQF development. He noted the directions that the RQF is likely to take and the areas that are yet to be resolved.

Dr Arthur discussed Research Fields, Courses and Disciplines Classifications (RFCD) codes for research areas, noting that Indigenous Studies is conducted across many of the codes. He indicated that the criteria for impact assessment will vary across the RCDF codes to take into account the diversity of measures of impact.

Dr Arthur acknowledged, as Professor Anderson had done, the challenges of assessing 'impact' accurately and noted the importance of being able to provide some analysis of the impact of research. He queried what the confidence levels might be around the results of the RQF process in relation to impact and suggested that ensuring an acceptable level of validity was essential.

## **Professor Martin Nakata, University of Technology, Sydney**

Building on reliable research to support Indigenous postgraduate and postdoctoral studies

In terms of background, Professor Nakata noted that Indigenous researchers are at the cross-roads of Western and Indigenous standpoints. He suggested that the limitations of current theoretical standpoints should be understood and that it should also be understood that Indigenous research is entangled within the binds of a Western order of things (including history, language, discourse and thinking).

He suggested that seasoned researchers should have solid research work/experience, be across disciplinary foundations and approaches and be focused on change and improvement to Indigenous futures. He suggested that major publications should focus on methodological approaches, should target disciplinary changes and should be aimed toward producing new treatises on Indigenous issues. More specifically, he suggested that publications need to challenge methodological approaches and produce new treatises on Indigenous Studies that place Indigenous Studies at the centre, rather than at the margins, and that define Indigenous Studies on its own terms, rather than on the terms of the dominant paradigm.

He suggested building capabilities and capacities to effect systemic change to improve Indigenous futures. Professor Nakata suggested this might be achieved through research agendas and strengthening Indigenous research culture in Australian higher education by building on reliable research.

## **SESSION 2 – Training and Mentoring to Access Research Funds**

### **Case Studies from a panel:**

**Ms Jill Milroy, Dr Maggie Walter, Professor Marcia Langton**

Ms Millroy discussed the issue of Indigenous representation on research teams with an illustrative example from her own experience of working as a researcher on the 2005-2006 NHMRC-funded *Healthy Start to Life* program. She noted that one of the factors that ensured the success of the project were that relationships between researchers were already well-established before the project. She pointed out that from non-Indigenous point of view, there was possibly some self-interest in inviting Indigenous people onto the team as it increased chance of winning grants. However from a more positive perspective, a critical element of the project was that the Indigenous researchers were able to provide 'cultural supervision' for the rest of the team.

On the *Healthy Start to Life* project, non-Indigenous researchers did not have deep knowledge of the issues, such as Indigenous researchers had, and some of the Indigenous researchers benefited from the research experience of the Indigenous members. The understanding among the team was that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people would be trained and benefit from the collaboration.

Dr Walter discussed ARC Discovery Projects and noted that becoming an assessor was a great learning experience for her. She argued that the 'track record' component of forty per cent was challenging for many Indigenous researchers, as was the criteria of 'capacity to undertake research'.

Professor Langton stressed that Indigenous people do have a distinctive research culture and discussed how the matters raised so far at the conference might be progressed. She suggested that there are Indigenous researchers involved in Western disciplines who are doing well and from whom other Indigenous researchers can learn. Professor Langton pointed to the necessity of rigour in Indigenous research and noted that many Indigenous researchers will be more easily able to demonstrate the impact of their research than researchers in other fields.

She also highlighted what she termed 'the burden of being Indigenous' and noted the myriad of competing expectations and commitments, including community work, teaching, student support and administration that Indigenous researchers must manage alongside their own research.

## **SESSION 3 – National Indigenous Research Priorities**

### **Ms Jill Millroy**

Ms Millroy discussed the nature of Indigenous knowledge and its standing in universities. She argued for consideration of the possibilities for an Academy of Indigenous Knowledge and Research. The discussion focussed on the issues and problems with trying to locate Indigenous knowledge within the epistemological framework of Australian higher education with its predominately Western knowledge systems.

There was discussion of the ways in which the research agenda can be 'radicalised' by Indigenous scholars and the influence that might be exerted on political systems. There was also concern that 'taking on' the university system is an ambitious agenda. Ms Millroy argued the need for a clear, focussed and agreed strategic agenda. Without this, it will be difficult to establish a sound, coherent basis for developing Indigenous knowledge and research.

Ms Millroy also discussed the issues associated with maintaining Indigenous knowledge within a Western higher education system. She discussed a project funded through the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching Grants scheme: *Tiddas Showin' Up, Talkin' Up and Puttin' Up - Indigenous Women and Educational Leadership* and raised a number of related issues. These included the ways in which the focus of grant schemes mesh with events within the Indigenous community and project agendas; the ways in which projects might have maximum effect and the extent to which Institutions support projects.

### **Associate Professor Tracey Bunda**

Associate Professor Bunda articulated what she termed 'Indigenous research principles':

1. Transparency: She suggested that research processes and results must be evidence based and clear to stakeholders;
2. Acceptability: She suggested there needs to be broad acceptance of the approach and measures;

3. Effectiveness: She suggested that RQF should achieve the purposes of valid and accurate assessment, within an appropriate resource base; and
4. Encouraging of Positive Behaviours: She also suggested that the RQF should improve the quality and impact of research and further develop and support a vibrant and collaborative research culture.

The discussion that followed touched on a number of issues, including those of epistemology, including, 'being, knowing and doing as an Indigenous researcher' and being strategic about proposals related to the way forward with the suggestion of a two-pronged approach – maintaining Indigenous knowledge while working within a Western system.

Associate Professor Bunda raised a number of questions, including whether the RQF principles are sufficient and transferable as the principles for Indigenous research and what the guiding principles for Indigenous Research might be.

## **SESSION 4 – Training Supervisors for indigenous postgraduate students and Coursework training in research and methodology across disciplines**

### **Dr Maggie Walter**

Dr Walter discussed Indigenous research methods/methodology. She suggested that Indigenous researchers, as a network, need a wide range of methods and a broad methodology. She proposed three major reasons for Indigenous researchers to have such skills:

1. The 'power of the data' has potent social and political credibility.
2. Indigenous people need to control how the discourse is framed. She suggested that at the moment it is often others who pose and answer Indigenous research questions and their interpretation that influences the findings and their representations.
3. Mastery of a full complement of research skills and techniques allows Indigenous people to Indigenise the research practice itself.

Dr Walter then posed a series of questions for consideration by the delegates:

- What are our current methods and methodology skills/knowledge base?
- What are our areas of strength and weakness? How do these boost or limit our current Indigenous research capacity?
- What skills/knowledge/infrastructure do we need to support and facilitate a connected cohort of Indigenous researchers?
- What strategies might we use to enhance the skill base and pass on our existing skills and knowledge to other Indigenous researchers?

Discussion points raised by the conference delegates in response to these and other questions and issues are recorded at the end of this report.

## **Associate Professor Mark Rose**

Associate Professor Rose talked broadly about supervisor training, drawing on his own experience as a postgraduate student. He suggested that Indigenous postgraduate students face specific challenges in finding a supervisor who can understand the particular challenges they may face in framing research questions, undertaking research and participating in a Western system. He suggested that when an Indigenous student does locate an appropriate supervisor, it is often a case of serendipity and that a more systematic process of matching students with supervisors would be helpful.

## **Dr Jeannie Herbert**

Dr Herbert examined the question of how to prepare students so they get what they want from their university experience. She suggested that the Indigenous research community needs to recognise and accept that there are many who do not have the knowledge, skills and experience to engage with university education. She queried how training occurs and made several recommendations about what the Indigenous research community might do:

- Teach people how to write an ethics proposal, recognising there may be a complete lack of knowledge/experience;
- Help students choose appropriate methodology that is respectful of informants but also provides the data they need;
- Put in place training for supervisors around publishing;
- Start from where students are, for example, by making 2 - 3 core units mandatory for all coursework and research masters students;
- Hold regular seminars and meetings for students;
- Consider students' commitments and consider running programs on the weekends.

Dr Herbert suggested that students, too, had responsibilities to organise their travel and time; to make a commitment to the study process, and to develop a capacity to listen. She suggested that supervisors needed to:

- ensure a balance between support and “mollycoddling”;
- make a commitment to sharing their knowledge and experience;
- ensure vigilant supervision of progress so strategic interventions can be made when necessary;
- make a commitment to keeping him/herself up to date; and
- make a commitment to listening so students can be guided sensitively and with honesty.

## **Dr Dennis Appo, North Queensland**

Dr Dennis Appo provided a personal view on the papers and sessions presented.

In relation to the presentations on the RQF, Dr Appo disagreed with the notion of it being difficult to measure impact and suggested there are numerous tools out there that can be used as starting points. Dr Appo noted that some people are not comfortable with the RQF criteria. However, he suggested that Indigenous researchers must learn to play the ‘main game’ of grant

writing, and acknowledged that “it’s a tough game”. Dr Appo suggested that measuring the impact of Indigenous research is not necessarily difficult.

In Dr Appo’s experience, many students have significant writing shortfalls. He suggested that undergraduate students need a very solid grounding in basic literacy and numeracy skills. He suggested that some students do need to ‘go back to basics’ and that to not advise them of this is to set them up for failure. In relation to training/mentoring to access funds he suggested that formal, structured programs on how to write grant applications should be provided to those students who want them. Dr Appo queried whether or not you can train supervisors and suggested that selecting supervisors might be the key to ensuring high quality supervisors for Indigenous research students.

Dr Appo suggested that in order for Indigenous research to survive, there must be a basic reason for it to exist. He suggested that what has not been focussed on is ‘who are we and who we are doing this research for?’ He asked Indigenous researchers to consider who is going to use their products and what the demand for these products is likely to be. Dr Appo suggested it was up to the Indigenous research community to create the demand for what they do and to market themselves.

Finally, he said that Indigenous researchers in Australia have much to learn from the experience and success of Maori higher education and suggested that invitations to more Maori to visit Australia for extended periods should be considered.

## Conference Discussion

Points made by delegates have been synthesised into 8 recommendations:

1. Ensuring continual Indigenous input into the Research Quality Framework processes and decisions, via membership of panels.
2. Developing a new prescriptive set of protocols for building Indigenous research capacity, based on identified best practice, to be implemented nationally.
3. Developing a national plan for enhancing Indigenous research and overseeing the implementation of strategies and protocols. The national plan will be coordinated by the AVCC in partnership with Indigenous academics and researchers and senior Indigenous leaders within institutions.
4. The funding of a feasibility study on the concept of an Indigenous Academy.
5. The provision of new funding arrangements for Indigenous research, including an *Indigenous Research Performance Fund* where targeted funding is awarded to universities with demonstrated achievements in:
  - appointing Indigenous teaching and research staff;
  - Indigenous research higher degree completions; and
  - Indigenous research assessed both on a bibliometric measure and research impact.
6. Inviting the ARC to implement targeted funding programs to foster Indigenous research capacity building.
7. Developing a national, funded *Indigenous Research Training Scheme* to provide summer schools, cadetships, mentoring programs, institution-based training and other strategies designed to directly enhance the research skills of Indigenous students and researchers.
8. Creating and promoting a national database of existing Indigenous researchers and research.

The discussion throughout the conference has been recorded below under subheadings. The issues and possibly inhibiting factors to building Indigenous research capacity, according to delegates, are followed by strategies to build such capacity. The latter have been grouped under national strategies, funding strategies, institutional strategies and individual strategies.

### ***Issues and possible inhibiting factors to building Indigenous research capacity***

- The challenges of accurately assessing the 'impact' of Indigenous research.
- The consequence of not having an RFCD code for Indigenous research is that narrowly Westernised-criteria are used to judge Indigenous research.
- The criteria for impact assessment will vary across the RCDF codes to take into account the diversity of measures of impact and how this will work is unclear.
- Funds are likely to shift from institutions with relatively lower research productivity as a result of the RQF.
- There is a risk that non-Indigenous researchers studying Indigenous issues might dominate a research grouping, having a negative effect on capacity building.
- The existence of poor institutional commitment to Indigenous Studies, in some cases.
- There are risks inherent in the desire to fast track students, which may leave them with shortages in key skill areas.
- There has been an absence of long term planning and funding for Indigenous research, to date.

### ***Strategies to build capacity for Indigenous research***

#### *National strategies*

- Recognise and acknowledge the enormity of the task of strengthening the Indigenous research culture and the fact that this is a long-term venture that must be adequately funded.
- Map all Indigenous researchers nationally and within universities, and create a national database of existing Indigenous researchers, which lists their areas of expertise to assist with networking and collaboration. These researchers will be a first point of reference for projects on Indigenous issues.
- Create a second national database of DEST tender documents relating to topics of Indigenous interest. It was recommended that all such projects should have essential criteria requiring a description of how the research team will have an Indigenous capacity development/knowledge exchange program incorporated into their project.

- Map and analyse what works in terms of building Indigenous capacity in different and diverse contexts, for example, in large metropolitan and regional universities.
- Identify good practice in strengthening Indigenous research culture in universities and consolidate the knowledge into a new, prescriptive set of protocols.
- Ask the AVCC to commit to leadership of, and a national strategy for, overseeing the implementation of these protocols, in partnership with Indigenous academics and researchers and senior Indigenous leaders in institutions.
- Determine ways in which the impact of Indigenous research can be evidenced and highlighted, and disseminate this information widely.
- Have Indigenous people in positions to influence research strategy assessment across all fields in the RQF.
- Develop seasoned researchers across Australia with solid research work/experience, who are across disciplinary foundations and approaches and are focused on change and improvement to Indigenous futures.
- Encourage publishing by Indigenous researchers in major publications focusing on methodological approaches, targeting disciplinary changes, and aiming toward producing new treatises on Indigenous issues.
- Develop seven-to-nine year plans, with funding levels similar to those of CRCs, which would be focused on the production of new scholarship.
- Lobby for the development of an RFCD for Indigenous knowledge and research.
- In terms of the RQF, decide whether to form network(s)/concentrations of Indigenous research expertise or spread expertise out over many areas; or do both.
- Seek funding to undertake a feasibility study/consideration of the concept of an Indigenous Academy, including vision and mission statements. Its possible form and structure need careful thought.
- Assess universities against performance criteria such as the number of Indigenous ECR achievements, the number of Indigenous researchers who are Chief Investigators on large grants, the number of high quality publications by Indigenous researchers, and the like.

#### *Funding strategies*

- Highlight and promote to Indigenous researchers the existing funding sources including IRDS, AIATSIS, internal university grants (small grants); National competitive grants, for example ARC, NHMRC (large grants); CRC grants (large, long-term grants); and DEST, for example, Centres of Excellence and HEIP.

- Develop an Indigenous funding model within the ARC that mirrors all programmes, in the same way that the Aboriginal Arts Board sits within the Australia Council and mirrors their funding programmes.
- Link Indigenous researchers with groups that have the capacity to undertake or fund research eg. HREOC (Public sector research).
- Provide HECS-free degrees for undergraduate Indigenous students and tax-free ABSTUDY to encourage progression to postgraduate study.
- Provide substantial top-ups (tax free) to APAs for Indigenous students.
- Provide targeted, specific funding for Indigenous research. Fund Chairs of Indigenous Studies for up to five years, fund Indigenous research fellowships for up to three years, fully fund Indigenous postdoctoral fellowships and fully fund Indigenous postgraduate scholarships.
- Develop an annual funding program for *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage in Higher Education* to which universities could apply for partial funding for each category (appointment of Chairs, Fellows, Postdoctoral Fellows, Scholarships, etc), the remainder to be sought from Industry partners.
- Provide targeted funding for universities with demonstrated achievements in appointing genuine Indigenous teaching and research staff, a good track record in Indigenous research assessed both on a bibliometric measure and research impact, and a good track record in Indigenous postgraduate candidate completions.

### *Institutional strategies*

- Each institution should develop an Indigenous Research Strategy that builds capacity and is funded for success.
- Each institution should develop priority settings mechanisms with community and industry partners.
- Indigenous researchers should develop clear arguments about how Indigenous Studies research 'value-adds' to the university and fits within the requirements of the RQF.
- Institutions should recognise the fact that Indigenous research is having an impact through consultancy work, community and voluntary work and appointments to government panels of Indigenous researchers.
- Indigenous researchers should lobby Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors, to raise and maintain the profile of Indigenous Studies research in the context of the RQF.
- Each university should appoint a person with responsibility for Indigenous Research co-ordination, such as PVC (Indigenous) appointments and this national process should be promoted and led by the AVCC.

- A 'critical mass' of Indigenous people, appropriately qualified and experienced in the university committee structure, should be encouraged to support and mentor Indigenous Studies researchers and help link them to research community networks.
- The pool of undergraduate Indigenous students should be increased to support future Indigenous Studies research in Universities.
- Regular get-togethers, such as fortnightly seminars, should be held, to which all Indigenous researchers and postgraduate students from all disciplines should be invited, with the aims of developing skills and building and strengthening networks.
- Collaboration between novice Indigenous researchers and more experienced Indigenous researchers should be facilitated and supported in order to give newer researchers experience, skills, and a track record contribution.
- Institutions should identify and train supervisors for Indigenous postgraduate students.
- Institutions should provide small grant programs such as Early Career Research (ECR) grants and ensure effective communication systems so that Indigenous researchers are aware of these and other similar opportunities.
- Programs and seminars, that promote the available sources of funds and assist Indigenous researchers with preparing grant applications, should be provided in each institution.

### *Training strategies*

- New Indigenous researchers should have access to research skills development and training in project proposal preparation, fund acquisition, writing ethics applications, data collection and data analysis, writing up results, and preparing final reports and publications.
- Cadetship models aimed at the long term development of individual Indigenous researchers should be considered, utilising support people both within the university and in the wider Indigenous research community.
- Mentoring support for young Indigenous researchers should be used to help them understand and deal effectively with structural and administrative process and issues within institutions, allowing them to concentrate on getting on with skills development.

### *Individual strategies*

Individual Indigenous researchers should:

- Develop a determination to succeed as an Indigenous researcher;

- Develop short and longer term strategies for furthering a research career as an Indigenous researcher;
- Prepare a clear articulation of their research-related record, avoiding the tendency among some Indigenous researchers to undersell themselves and neglect to report invitations to give keynote addresses, membership of professional bodies and authorship or co-authorship of government reports;
- Consider the benefits of joining a non-Indigenous project, including gaining experience and sometimes achieving joint publications and citations; and
- Seek and heed advice from more experienced researchers and take advantage of training, mentorship arrangements, programs and networks.