

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Young Aboriginal Men and Informal Learning

**Dr George Morgan from the Centre for Cultural Research is looking at whether informal training programs for young indigenous men can lead to the development of skills suitable for employment. This research was funded by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.**

'Many young indigenous men in the Redfern Waterloo area in Sydney lack formal job qualifications and have grown up in households characterised by long-term unemployment,' explains Dr Morgan. 'They have not developed the vocational ambitions and work habits required to build careers and they have little enthusiasm for post-school formal education, having often been alienated from the competitive world of work and education in the past. Their alienation is compounded by the complex requirements of the "new economy" and the decline in traditional male sources of employment. However, they are enthusiastic participants in informal learning and training and unpaid creative initiatives such as film-making and music production. By using cooperative training approaches, we can determine whether these initiatives help in developing skills and forming aspirations that may become foundations for future employment.'

Working with Aboriginal organisations in the area, including the Yaama Dhiyaan Hospitality Training College and the Tribal Warrior Cultural Tours, twelve young Aboriginal men will be involved in creative training projects. Semi-formal interviews will determine the formation of the men's aspirations, emerging identity and their valuation of skills through involvement in the program over several months. This analysis will be contextualised as part of a further statistical analysis of the demographics of the Redfern Waterloo area relating to education and employment.



Informal training schemes with young Aboriginal men show more promise than current formal training schemes have to date. These may help young Aboriginal men to develop, recognise and value skills that can be transferrable to work that they find fulfilling and their participation in employment is of benefit not only to themselves, but the whole Australian community.

**Project Title:** Young Aboriginal Men, Informal Learning and the 'New Economy' in Redfern Waterloo.

**Funding has been set at:** \$17,952

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