



**AIATSIS**

Australian Institute of Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

**AIATSIS  
Corporate Plan**

**2008-2010**

## **Our Act**

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) was established as a Statutory Authority in 1961 as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. AIATSIS is governed by the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989* (Cth) (our Act).

## **Our Functions**

The Institute has the following functions under our Act:

- (a) to undertake and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- (b) to publish the results of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and to assist in the publication of the results of such studies;
- (c) to conduct research in fields relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and to encourage other persons or bodies to conduct such research;
- (d) to assist in training persons, particularly Aboriginal persons and Torres Strait Islanders, as research workers in fields relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- (e) to establish and maintain a cultural resource collection consisting of materials relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- (f) to encourage understanding, in the general community, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies;
- (g) such other functions as are conferred on the Institute by this Act;
- (h) to do anything else that is incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the preceding functions.

## **Our Outcome**

Worldwide knowledge and understanding of Australian Indigenous cultures, past and present.

## **Our Outputs**

Output 1: Research

Output 2: Dissemination of Information

Output 3: Collection Development and Management

## **Our Vision**

To provide leadership and excellence in promoting, facilitating and undertaking high quality research, publishing, and ethical handling of collections and establishing best practice in Australian Indigenous Studies and cultural heritage management.

## **Our Identity**

Over the last 45 years, we have developed an impeccable reputation locally, nationally and internationally for the quality and rigour of our research, publishing and collection practices to acknowledge, affirm and raise awareness of Australian Indigenous cultures and histories

- We conduct research to inform policy development, implementation and evaluation, program delivery and the relationship between Indigenous peoples and governments;
- We provide a constructive setting for Indigenous researchers to think and write;
- We foster Indigenous authors and publish and promote Indigenous scholarship;
- We are committed to providing Indigenous peoples with lifelong learning opportunities;
- We recognise alternative pathways to research careers and value community research, and the importance of personal and community histories;
- We are a leader in research ethics and collection management protocols for the recognition and protection of Indigenous peoples' cultural property;
- We provide a secure keeping place and repository of cultural knowledge and materials;
- Our collections are the central resource for Indigenous peoples conducting research on their social history;
- AIATSIS is now the first point of call for general information and resources on Indigenous peoples in Australia as the only Commonwealth Indigenous agency;
- We are committed to facilitating access, and returning information to Indigenous communities and individuals; and
- Through our activities we aim to contribute directly to the wellbeing and sense of social inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## **Our Values**

- Respect for Australian Indigenous systems of knowledge, the richness and diversity of Australian Indigenous cultures and their centrality to all our activities;
- Independence, academic excellence, leadership and intellectual freedom;
- Ethical standards and practices;

- Efficiency, transparency and accountability;
- Effective and open communication;
- Integrity, trust and respect for each individual;
- Commitment to maximising the role of Australian Indigenous peoples in the activities and services of the Institute and Indigenous participation and leadership in decision-making at all levels within the Institute.

## **Goals and Strategies**

### ***Output 1 Research***

***Goal: To provide leadership and excellence in promoting, facilitating and undertaking high quality research in Australian Indigenous Studies***

Through strategies that include:

- Identifying, promoting, and conducting research in areas of relevance and priority to Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples, and contributing to scholarship in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- Maintaining independence and intellectual freedom in research and promulgating the highest ethical standards for research;
- Publishing and promoting research to the Indigenous and wider communities;
- Promoting community-based research projects and partnerships;
- Promoting evidence-based research on policy development, implementation and evaluation;
- Developing and maintaining local, national and international strategic alliances that are beneficial to our activities;
- Developing a strategic research plan and delivering quality research outcomes;
- Maintaining AIATSIS research consultancy activity;
- Supporting Indigenous researchers and Indigenous thought.

### ***Output 2: Dissemination of Information***

***Goal: To create, develop and disseminate a diverse range of publications and services about Australian Indigenous cultures and to promote and market the products, services and capacity of AIATSIS***

Through strategies that include:

- Producing a diverse range of quality publications;
- Identifying, encouraging, developing and publishing works by Indigenous authors;
- Being proactive in attracting new material for publications;

- Exploring opportunities for collaboration and new initiatives, including joint publications and the use of e-commerce;
- Promoting Aboriginal Studies Press to communities and organisations as a leading publisher of Indigenous works;
- Communicating the results of research and the content of our collections through seminars, conferences, online exhibitions, printed publications and other media;
- Developing appropriate dissemination and marketing strategies; and
- Increasing the profile of AIATSIS personnel, collections, research capacity, publications, events and community links.

**Output 3: Collection development and management**

**Goal: To develop, maintain and preserve well documented archives and collections and to maximise access to these, particularly by Indigenous peoples, in keeping with appropriate cultural and ethical practices**

Through strategies that include:

- Digitising, preserving and conserving materials in the collections;
- Developing the collections through on-going acquisition of material;
- Maintaining dynamic collections through recording and documenting of contemporary events;
- Working to achieve the best possible value-added documentation, integration and appropriately negotiated access to the collections through the development of programs of copyright clearance and community consultation;
- Providing accurate, relevant and informative material to Indigenous communities and the general public;
- Facilitating the development of Indigenous communities' capacity to collect and manage their own archives and collections;
- Enhancing Indigenous access to the Institute via community outreach; and
- Assessing and monitoring growing demand.