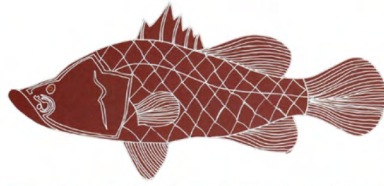


FISH



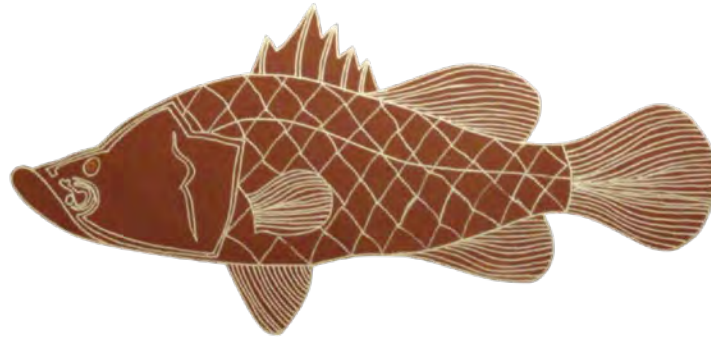
"Healthy spirit, heart, mind and body,
healthy families, community and land"

Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health

Annual Report
2020-2021



Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health



"Healthy spirit, heart, mind and body,
healthy families, community and land"



Annual Report

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-2021

Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health
PO Box 7741, Cloisters Square WA, 6850
info@fish.asn.au | 0484 081 329

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FISH acknowledges Aboriginal people as the first peoples of our nation and as the traditional owners of the land. FISH acknowledges that there were hundreds of different Aboriginal groups within Australia prior to European settlement, each with their own distinctive language, customs and lore. Under Aboriginal lore and custom, Aboriginal people have cultural responsibilities and rights in relation to the land of which they are the traditional owners. Aboriginal people have a living spiritual, cultural, familial and social connection with the land. Aboriginal people have made, are making, and will continue to make, a significant and unique contribution to the heritage, cultural identity, community and economy of Australia.





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ABOUT US

Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health Ltd. (FISH) is:

- A registered company limited by guarantee with ASIC
- A registered Income Tax Exempt Charity and Deductible Gift Recipient with the Australian Taxation Office
- A registered Public Benevolent Institution with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNC).

The abbreviation of our organisation's name FISH fits with the old proverb and the work we do:

"When you give someone a fish you only feed them for a day but if you teach someone to fish you feed them for a lifetime."

Our Story

FISH was established in 2010 to address the severe housing crisis in Indigenous communities throughout Australia. Our work has since expanded to include education, health, justice and cultural initiatives. Acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a living spiritual, cultural, familial and social connection with the land, FISH seeks to bring healing to the spirit, heart, mind, body and land to help create healthy people and communities.

FISH believes that change does not come through 'hand outs', but by giving people a 'hand up' where Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people work hand in hand through innovation and enterprise to bring sustainable change.

FISH provides opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their wisdom and insights to the broader community, to teach people how to connect and care for each other and for country, whilst closing the gap and breaking intergenerational cycles of trauma, poverty and engagement with the justice system. The focus of the organisation is:

"by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people".

Our Vision

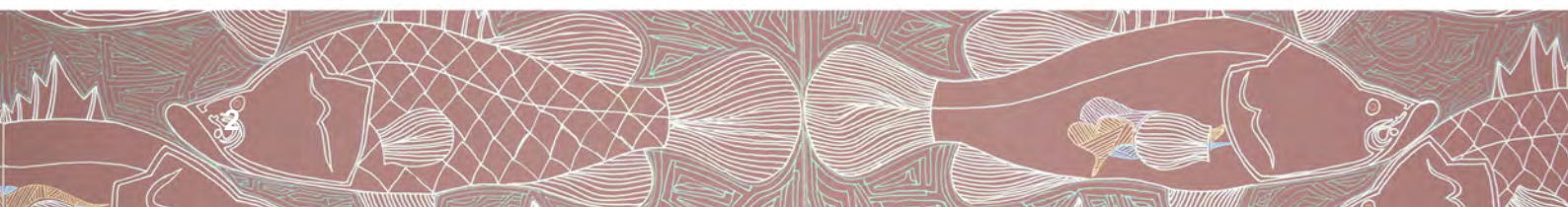
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are **confident, connected, healthy**, have equal opportunities with education, training, employment and life choices, and are valued as **positive and healing contributors** who lead others to **care for each other and for Country**.

Our Mission

To improve the **social and emotional wellbeing** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and **break intergenerational cycles of trauma, poverty and engagement in the justice system**.

Our Values

We are inspired to **act from Compassion** and strive for **Equality**. We approach our work with **Courage, Integrity, Perseverance and Resourcefulness**.



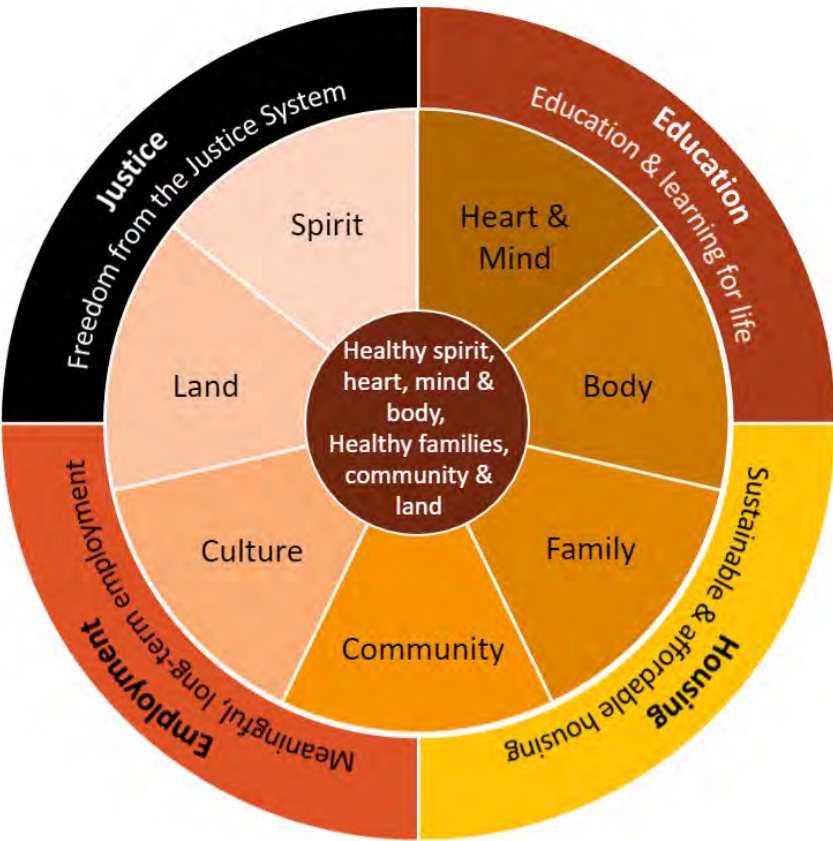


<p>COMPASSION</p> <p>We are driven by compassion, care and solidarity for those suffering trauma, poverty and oppression. With respect for human dignity we seek to empower individuals to claim and protect their human rights.</p>	<p>EQUALITY</p> <p>Conscious of our common humanity, we believe in equal rights for all where people are valued and able to positively contribute. We work to create fairer, more just societies, promoting tolerance, inclusiveness and understanding.</p>	<p>COURAGE</p> <p>We have the courage to act boldly with confidence and conviction, speaking truth to power, challenging unjust systems and harmful traditional practices, and promoting justice and peace.</p>
<p>INTEGRITY</p> <p>We uphold and promote the highest standards of integrity in leadership and service, including honesty, transparency and accountability.</p>	<p>PERSEVERANCE</p> <p>We aim to keep hope alive in addressing inter-generational disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and recognise the need for perseverance and determination. We take the long view and strive to ensure the sustainability and continuity of our work.</p>	<p>RESOURCEFULNESS</p> <p>Resources are finite, resourcefulness is not. We aim to use creativity and ingenuity get the best results possible. We aim to grow each other's knowledge, working smarter, not harder, trying new methods to overcome challenges through an attitude of innovation, creativity and partnership that inspires out-of-the-box thinking as we share resources, knowledge and expertise to bring about positive sustainable change.</p>



WHAT WE DO

The diagram below summarises where we focus our efforts and the outcomes we are working towards.



Social and emotional wellbeing from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldview encompasses a healthy spirit, heart, mind and body, plus healthy families, communities and land (central circle in diagram).

Our **Health** programs drive enduring improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s social and emotional wellbeing to promote **confidence, connectedness and health**.

To achieve our vision, we also work on breaking intergenerational cycles of trauma, poverty and engagement in the justice system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by addressing the **socio-economic determinants** of wellbeing: **Education, Housing, Employment & Justice** (outer circle in the diagram) in a culturally secure and sustainable way.

We create equal opportunities in education, training and employment that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to become **positive and healing contributors** who lead others **to care for each other and for Country**.



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



Scott Martyn is passionate about Indigenous knowledge that has sustained Australia for thousands of years. He believes that this knowledge is critical for the world in learning how to care for country and community. He has an interest in medicine, innovation and technology transfer, bringing a vision to foster research and development of sustainable technologies as a means for improving health, wellbeing and quality of living. He is a Founding Director of FISH, along with Nyikina man, Mr Victor Hunter.

Over the last year, the ongoing challenges of the global pandemic and disruption to global supply lines has highlighted to the world the importance of sustainable and local approaches in overcoming adversity. FISH has been privileged through its opportunities in continuing to work alongside Aboriginal people who have shown leadership through this crisis. We have seen these leaders step up to develop local and sustainable businesses whilst maintaining culture and building a story of hope and resilience at this time of need.

With the handover of the SuperAdobe (earth-bag) house to the Bawoorrooga Community, FISH saw improved physical and mental health of the community members, as well as improved community pride along with a commitment to ongoing enterprise and capacity building. Whilst the FISH team have now relocated south to Perth, there has been ongoing engagement with the community to plan future social enterprise developments and the strong relationship and rapport between FISH and the Bawoorrooga Community will endure. This is testimony to the strengths of the co-design approach taken by FISH with the community.

The FISH team has been able to build on their experience in the north as they expand south in their planning of an innovative justice initiative proposed for a site near Myalup. Once again, there has been strong focus on co-design principles that were first developed in the Kimberley. I thank the co-design group who have provided leadership in developing solutions for problems that directly affect Indigenous people. Our Deputy Chair, Liza McGuire, was very proud to inform the State Development Assessment Unit and representatives for the WA Planning Commission of this direct involvement during recent discussions.

I welcome incoming Board Member Karen Jacobs at this exciting time. Her deep understanding of issues affecting Aboriginal people as a bloodline descendant and a Traditional Owner of Whadjuk Country, as well as her experience in building Indigenous business and enterprise, brings additional strength to the Board of FISH at a strategic level. She has already shown significant leadership in assisting the co-design group with specific and detailed cultural knowledge in her contribution to the landscaping strategy for the Myalup development. I thank all the Board Members for their enthusiastic commitment and robust review of FISH's activities and the direction that they have set.

The expansion of FISH's social enterprises over the last year is now starting to provide a sustainable source of funding for FISH's activities. Our online shop and physical presence in Mount Lawley have provided FISH with an opportunity to engage with the community at large whilst also acting as a catalyst for microenterprise opportunities.



These support Indigenous people who seek to break out of cycles of trauma and disadvantage, and this underlies the FISH philosophy where we seek to provide opportunities for healing, therapy, and capacity building through a hand up and not a hand out.

The last year has also seen the successful commencement of a new model for housing as part of our Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative. It has been very distressing for many in the community to see the dire needs of those at risk of and experiencing homelessness. On top of years of underinvestment by government agencies, there was severe inaction during the global pandemic which has exacerbated an already broken and unsustainable social housing model.

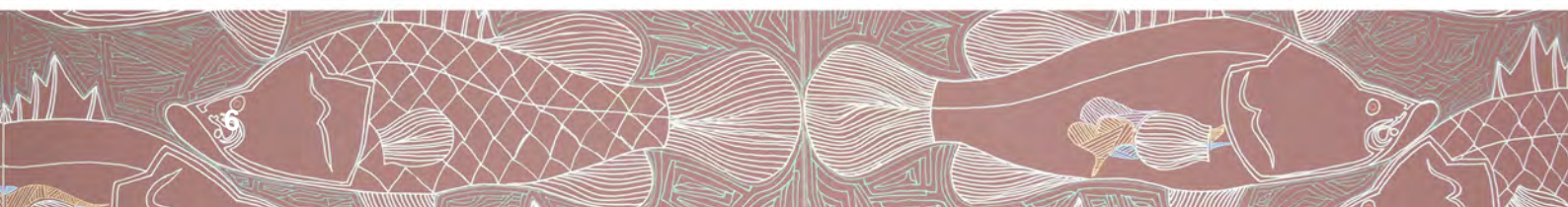
The severe housing crisis faced by many here in Western Australia at a time where this state has seen record surpluses is a disgrace to our current state government. Those most hard hit by this policy of underinvestment, underdevelopment and a focus on long term social housing (rather than home ownership) are those experiencing intergenerational trauma and more needs to be done to assist those in crisis. However, without sustainable models that actually help move people out of social housing, it will not be possible to ever address the underlying issues that cause people to experience homelessness. We have a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to make homelessness history and break inter-generational cycles of poverty. I remain hopeful that change will take place before this becomes an insurmountable task.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Scott Martyn (Board Chair)



FISH Board of Directors and employees in the FISH art gallery at Local & Aesthetic



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



Mark Anderson is a Wadjela (white fella) who has worked across Western Australia, 10 years in the north, and nationally in the community, corporate sectors and film industry for over 40 years. He has sat on many state and national Boards, funding bodies and judging panels and works in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to redress the balance in health, education, training employment, justice and life opportunities and to enable Aboriginal people to be healing and leading contributors to the whole community in connecting people to caring for each other and caring for country. Mark has been CEO and a Director of FISH since January 2017.

What an amazing journey 2020/2021 has been as we have built on the hard work and success of the last few years.

This would not have been possible without the ongoing support, passion, resilience, commitment, heart and spirit of our Board, staff, volunteers, partners, supporters and especially the amazing people we walk shoulder to shoulder with softly upon this land as together we work to make this country a better place for all.

Thank you for the inspiration you all are!

We have continued to deal with the challenges of COVID which has impacted on our ability of service provision on the east coast of Australia and has led to several lockdowns in Western Australia impacting on our revenue generation through our social enterprise. Thank you to the FISH team who have been flexible and adaptable as we have met those challenges.

One of the deep concerns we still have is the risk of opening up our borders too early without high rates of vaccination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We have seen that when the government get behind Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and leaders and community-controlled health services we are getting higher rates of vaccinations. FISH has been featuring what is working and why to share that learning across Australia to minimize the risk for communities and to maximise the benefit of effective strategies in increasing vaccination rates.

This year we were pleased to see the completion of the SuperAdobe Home at Bawoorrooga Community in the remote East Kimberley Region, hand it over to the community and have the family move in and see the positive impact it is having on the family and community. We were also excited to see our first housing development in the south of Western Australia commence as part of our Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative. The significance of this project is this will be the first generation of the Bindjareb family who will own their own home on their traditional land. Further, they are rewriting the history of the land, as just around the corner from the development is where Thomas Peel and others camped before they went and massacred their people. It was great to be involved in the smoking ceremony for the land just prior to the preparation of the housing slab going down which was done by the Uncle and the dance ceremony carried out by a cousin.



We are looking forward to continuing to expand the FISH Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative over the next few years as international research demonstrates that home ownership is instrumental in breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty whereas social housing can further in trench dependency on others and trap families in intergenerational cycles of poverty.

FISH has witnessed for many years the challenges in breaking the cycle of inter-generational poverty for families and it is almost impossible without being provided with a hand up. We were honoured to trial the FISH Microfinance project and to see how successful it was. We are now even more pleased to be building that initiative as an ongoing program for FISH and it has been great to see supporters being willing to assist in funding that initiative as together we give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a hand up.

FISH is very cognisant that government funding often does not meet community need therefore FISH needs to work to be independent of Government funding through innovation and partnerships. The work of Katrina Cox, FISH's Business Development Manager, has been critical in this space as she has successfully implemented the FISH Social Enterprise online shop and this year expanded that to include the development of the FISH Social Enterprise Retail Outlet and Gallery at Mount Lawley in Perth Western Australia. These initiatives not only assist in funding the work of FISH but also support the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Microenterprises we work with.

It has been great to see FISH's creative initiatives continue to expand with the FISH Poet each Monday, the monthly FISH Films@The Backlot, the auspicing of the development of an Aboriginal feature film, our first Artist in Residence Initiative being run and FISH now being the largest Indigenous book retailer in Australia.

This is such important work as through the process of sharing stories through a variety of mediums such as film, drama, writing, yarning, song, creative education, lectures and presentations we work to bring healing to the spirit, heart, mind, body and land to help create healthy people and communities.

FISH strives to use social media to share stories of success and inspiration to the Australian and world community and it has been great to see such major increase in engagement across all of our social media including Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and now most recently Instagram. With the website upgrade and linking of all of our social media we are finding the message is getting out there far more effectively and the responses from that work have been significant, both in terms of positive feedback on the benefits of the sharing of stories but also people becoming more aware of the work of FISH and how each one of us can play a part in bringing positive change to our world as we learn to walk shoulder to shoulder together softly upon this land.

We still have many challenges to face and each year the FISH team attend many funerals, visit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison and support those struggling with our state and federal health and government services. The Closing the Gap targets continue to be unresolved and in some areas we are seeing more challenges than improvements.



The most important strategy we believe that needs to occur is to stop and listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They have been walking this land for thousands of years and through that ancient wisdom and knowledge they know what needs to be done. What we need to do is turn our ear, speak less and learn to walk together. Each one of us has something to bring to the table and we believe that together we are stronger and only together can we bring the change needed in this country. May you take up your role in being part of that change or join with us and together we will do it!

Yours kindly,

Mark Anderson (CEO & Director)



FISH receiving the Myalup Karla Waangkiny message stick from Elder Koodah Cornwall

ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY

Governance

FISH's Board of Directors comprises 50% Aboriginal people. All our Board Members are highly qualified and passionate about giving a 'hand up' to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Victor Hunter
(Co-Founder)
Nyikina Aboriginal Elder,
retired educator in prisons &
community services



Dr Scott Martyn
(Co-Founder & Chair)
Medical practitioner,
engineer, innovator &
researcher



Liza McGuire
(Deputy Chair)
Bidjara, Ghangulu and Iman
Woman. Co-Founder of
Redspear Safety & Safespear,
Director of Spear Foundation
& Binar Futures



Tim Donisi
(Board Secretary)
Lawyer and Special Council
with Clayton Utz



Karen Jacobs
Whadjuk woman. Managing
Director / Chairperson of
Indigenous Economic
Solutions and Chairperson of
The Whadjuk Foundation.



Noel Prakash
Head of Indigenous Business
Banking at the Commonwealth
Bank



Jeremiah Riley
Yamatji and Nyoongar Man.
Native Title Lawyer working at
State and Federal level,
Economic Development Manager at
Many Rivers



Mark Anderson
Director & CEO – FISH



Ambassador

Barry McGuire is a Balladong, Wadjuk, Noongar who has worked as a consultant and cultural advisor for Local, State, and Federal Government. Managing Director of Redspear Safety and Safespear, Board Director of Reconciliation WA and is a Cultural Ambassador for St Catherine's

College. He is a Cultural Advisor for Woodside Energy and a Director of Aboriginal Choice.

FISH Team



Katrina Cox is a Wadjela woman who developed a passion for Aboriginal based projects in the late 1990s, through her involvement with family income support and management in Cape York, Far North Queensland. In her previous life Katrina worked for a major bank, managing a major portfolio of large NFP organisations helping them to achieve their financial goals and objectives. Katrina joined FISH in Nov 2017 as Business Development Manager and works with Aboriginal communities to develop financial independence.



Kristian Rodd is a former lawyer who worked in corporate law in Melbourne and China. He changed paths to focus on sustainable building and has worked throughout Europe, South America and Australia in building earth houses. He is committed to projects being by communities for communities to enable them to take their own power back to bring positive change. Kristian lived and worked for 3 years in the remote Bawoorrooga community in the Kimberley, and is now the Project Manager for the Myalup Karla Waangkiny Justice and Healing Initiative.



Jara Romero is a Spanish architect with a passion for sustainability, natural construction and working with communities. She has worked across Europe, South America and Australia, learning from traditional architecture about the use of local materials and the adaptation to local climates. Jara is FISH's Architect and Project Coordinator for all our construction projects. Jara lived and worked for 3 years in the remote Kimberley Region with the FISH-Bawoorrooga Self-Build Sustainable Housing & Education Program and now is focussed in the south on the Myalup Karla Waangkiny Justice and Healing Initiative.



Claude Carter is an Aboriginal leader from the Gooniyandi clan group in the Fitzroy Valley. He is the Founder of the Bawoorrooga Community in the remote East Kimberley. Claude is the Chairman of Gooniyandi Aboriginal Corporation and is committed to communities bringing and driving the change for themselves. He is also a recognised artist, traditional dancer and a leader in his culture. Claude is working on the Bawoorrooga Community Development, Arts and Cultural programs with FISH.



Kaisha Champion is a Noongar and Wongi Woman, who was born in Perth and grew up between and Whyalla, South Australia. She commenced a Bachelor of Applied Science in Indigenous Community Management and Development in 2017. Kaisha started working with FISH as a Programs Intern and Cultural Officer and went on to work as FISH's Cultural and Education Officer. FISH has also supported Kaisha to develop her cultural understanding and grounding and provide mentoring in professional development.



Judy Campion came to Australia from England 34 years ago. Her book-keeping journey started 26 years ago when she met her husband and together they started a small plumbing business. After her kids grew up she started working at a small accounting practice, where she first encountered the good work of FISH. Judy stepped forward to become the volunteer book-keeper because she believes in the ethos that FISH stands for.



Stephen Donnet-Jones has an extensive background in community development, employment and the disability sector. His work has always been about advocating for and mentoring people to build their dreams, strengths and abilities. He enjoys being out on country; particularly the deserts, fishing on the mighty Fitzroy River and generally enjoying the astounding beauty of the Kimberley.



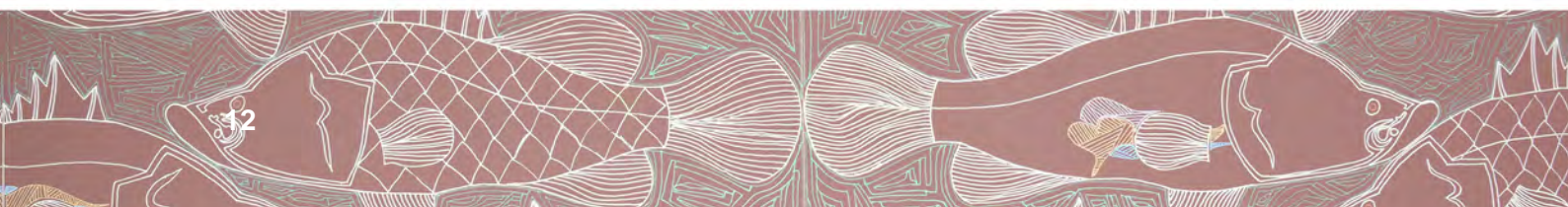
Polly Wilson is a proud Gamilaroi Weilwan Woman who grew up in Wee Waa NSW. Polly is an Artist, a mother of four beautiful children and moved her family to Perth in June 2021 to join the FISH team. She joins us as our Trainee Retail Store Manager and is undertaking a Certificate IV in Business. Polly's goal is to complete her studies, continue her journey with FISH and achieve her dreams of becoming a qualified Art Therapist working with families from a trauma background. Polly truly believes, and has experienced herself, the difference FISH can make in the lives of Indigenous peoples, families and communities. FISH is supporting Polly to reach her goals by walking beside her on her new journey.



Grant Oldfield spent a number of years as a management consultant with Bain & Company in Sydney, Johannesburg and Stockholm, working across the private equity, banking, mining and telecommunications sectors. Following this, he has worked in property investment management and development in Sydney, Adelaide and Perth. He is passionate about improving the integration of housing with the natural environment and the people who live in those homes, so that those people feel more connected to the land they inhabit and can lead more empowered and fulfilling lives.



Renna Gayde is a proud Walbunja woman from the Yuin nation on south coast of NSW. Living on Noongar Boodja for the past 26 years she is mother to four beautiful daughters. Renna studies social work full time at Curtin University and works as a lived experience advisor/advocate across various organisations and institutions. Renna sits on the Mayalup Karla Waankginy Co-Design Group and has recently joined FISH as the Cultural and Community Engagement Coordinator. Renna is passionate and committed to driving positive, self-determined change for her people and the community in which she lives.



Co-Design Group



Greg Little



May McGuire



Victor Hunter



Melba Wallam



Dennis Jetta



Liza McGuire



Koodah Cornwall



Karen Jacobs



Barry McGuire



Carol Innes



Frank Mitchell



Kaisha Champion



Kallan Nannup



Renna Gayde



Buddy Cornwall



Lesley Ugle



Jeff Amatto



Sharon Cooke



Corey Kahn



Delvene Cornwall



Troy Bennell



Karen Jetta



Adam Drake



Jara Romero
(Facilitator / Site Design)



Jo Kirker
(Facilitator/Program Design)



Mark Anderson
(Facilitator)



FISH Team on Country with the Bawoorrooga Community



FISH team at Myalup Kaarla Waangkiny site naming ceremony

Financial sustainability

Future Fund

FISH believes that Government policy cannot always adequately respond to community needs. We are committed to our mission of improving the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people and breaking intergenerational cycles of trauma, poverty and engagement in the justice system. We therefore believe that being **financially sustainable** in our own right is critical to implementing our long-term strategies to bring about positive sustainable change in the lives of Aboriginal people, their families and the community.

In light of this, FISH established a **Future Fund** in 2017/2018 to provide long-term financial security for the organisation. We are working to build up a capital asset, maintain the base capital of the fund and utilise the remaining income from the fund to carry out our mission. The Future Fund is embedded in the FISH constitution with an Investment Policy Statement signed off by the Board.

FISH adopted the Australian Ethical Charter flow chart (below) as a framework to assist us in ethical investment decisions that support such things as sustainable food production, endangered eco-systems and the alleviation of poverty, and avoids harms such as waste mismanagement, militarism and discrimination.

The Australian Ethical Charter

	   SUPPORT	    AVOID
SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• appropriate technological systems• high quality, properly presented products & services• ameliorate wasteful or polluting practices• locally based ventures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• misleading or deceitful marketing or advertising• promotion of unwanted products or services• speculation• financial over-commitment
ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sustainable land use and food production• appropriate human buildings and landscape• preserve endangered eco-systems• efficient use of human waste• workers' participation in organisational decision making and ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• destroy or waste non-recurring resources• products and services harmful to humans, non-human animals or the environment• pollute land, air or water
SOCIAL IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• alleviate poverty• dignity and well-being of animals• human happiness, dignity, and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• militarism or weapons• exploit through low wages or poor working conditions• discriminate• restrict human rights

Note: This is a summarised version of our Ethical Charter. To view the full, original version, see www.australianethical.com.au/australian-ethical-charter



In the last year the Board established two subset funds under the Future Fund, one being the Microfinance Loan Fund and the Aboriginal Home Ownership Fund.

Through the pro-bono support of Steve Andreazza, FISH completed a tender process to establish an Investment Portfolio Manager and have appointed Capital Partners to assist the organisation implement and asset-manage the Future Fund. Capital Partners have provided a significantly reduced fee and pro-bono advice in reviewing the Investment Policy and Framework.

250 Club

FISH established the 250 Club several years ago following requests from individuals and business who wanted to partner with us as we work to achieve our mission.

FISH believes that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to be confident, connected, healthy, have equal opportunities with education, training, employment and life choices and are valued as positive, healing and leading contributors to community in connecting people to caring for each other and caring for country.

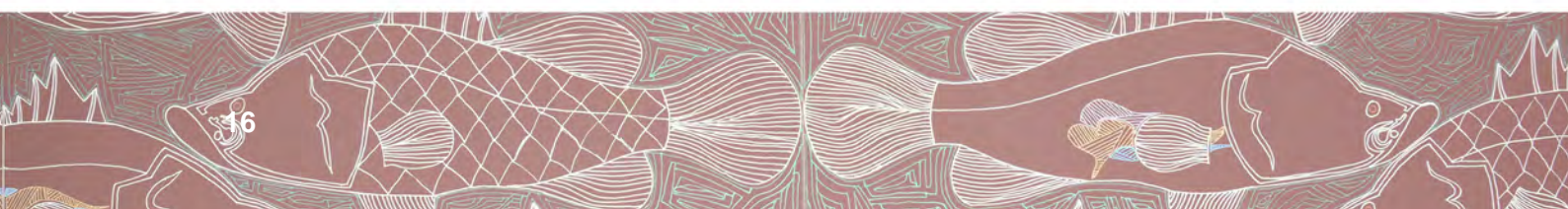
Individuals and organisations can become one of the limited 250 Members of the 250 Club and will be working in partnership with FISH to provide people with a hand up not a hand out. Members make an annual donation of \$250, which can be recurrent or once-off.

The revenue from the 250 Club covers the core organisational expenses, allowing other financial support and funding to be fully directed towards direct service provision.

By the end of June 2021, the FISH 250 Club numbered 79 proud members, and in the next year are working to reach our target of 250 Members. Will you join us?



Kardan Construction team receiving the FISH 250 Club key ring from FISH's CEO





250 CLUB

Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health (FISH)

Join in partnership with FISH to provide people
with a hand up not a hand out



EDUCATION

EDUCATION

Purpose

Education and learning for life

FISH works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create equal opportunities in education and learning for life to break intergenerational cycles of social disadvantage.

FISH also educates non-Indigenous people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and the relevance of their Culture to create better cultural, social and economic relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people.

Why these Programs

Attendance – Standards - Attainment - Relevance

According to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Report (2020) on improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians, some educational metrics are on track, but there is more to do.¹

Metric	Target	Tracking	Trend
Early Childhood Education	95% enrolment	✓	
School Attendance	Close the gap	✗	Not improving: around 82% Primary school: 9% below Secondary school: 17% below
Reading & Numeracy	Halve the gap	✗	Improving across all year levels Reading 70% of national minimum Numeracy 80% of national minimum
Year 12 Attainment	Halve the gap	✓	66% overall (85% in major cities; 38% in remote areas)

The 2016 Australian Census and Australian Bureau of Statistics Report 2018 indicated that for **Western Australia**²:

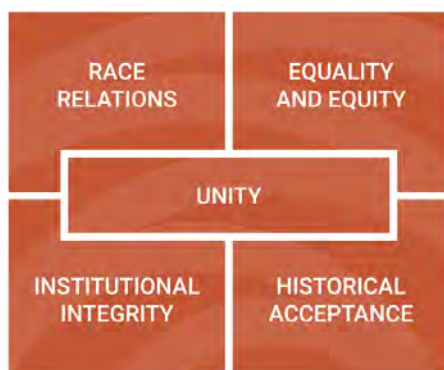
Percentage	Metric
69%	Year 5 students were at / above the minimum standard for reading
75%	Year 5 students were at / above the minimum standard for numeracy
55%	Completed Year 12
32%	Completed vocational or tertiary studies

¹ Commonwealth Government, Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Closing the Gap Report, 2020.

² Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status in Western Australia; Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet, 2019



There is an urgent need for equity in **educational outcomes** for Indigenous Australians to break intergenerational cycles of social disadvantage.



There is also a need for **mainstream education and professional development programs** that recognise Aboriginal history, the inherent strength and relevance of Aboriginal Culture, and acknowledge the inequality, inequity and racism Aboriginal people experience today. All non-Indigenous Australians need to be able to engage in reconciliation, which embraces the 5 inter-related dimensions (left, from Reconciliation Australia), to demonstrate respect, recognition, trust and for Indigenous Australians.

FISH is passionate about reconciliation, but we believe all Australians need to move past reconciliation to move to a point where Aboriginal Australians are valued as positive and healing contributors in our communities.

School Programs

Who's Involved

FISH has been working with primary and secondary schools in the Wadjuk (Perth), Bindjareb (Peel), Wadandi (Southwest) and Kimberley regions since 2017 to deliver Educational Programs.


What We Do

FISH has been supporting schools to develop their Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies National Curriculum. The work focusses on assisting to develop their **Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies Course** as a multidimensional educational program in line with Australian



Mandurah Baptist College (L) Dance ceremony Mandurah Baptist College (R)





Curriculum and Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) standards that meets the organising ideas of Country and Place, Culture and People. Students gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal histories and cultures, knowledge of traditions and holistic world views, creating an educational environment of acknowledgement, acceptance, understanding and respect.

In 2018, FISH established its **Aboriginal Scholarship Initiative** (called “**Mooditj Kaatajan**”, or “Deadly Learning”) to support Aboriginal young people to complete schooling to Year 12 and progress onto further training, university or employment. The young people come from families who continue to suffer from intergenerational trauma and poverty: the aim of the scholarship is to contribute to breaking the cycle. Recipients must maintain a good standing through:

- Minimum 90% attendance at school;
- Attending FISH and school cultural events;
- Apply for leadership positions in the school;
- Participates in school carnivals;
- Attend after school tutoring if available.

As part of this program, where possible, FISH provides supported accommodation for students to enable them to succeed as part of the scholarship. We also support recipients through mentoring by FISH staff.

Achievements

FISH has successfully continued its **Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies program** in 2019-20, building on past achievements with programs run in the south, metro and north of the state of Western Australia. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, some programs were paused in early 2020.

“It was amazing seeing the difference after FISH came to the school; the attitudes of both teachers and students... and the introduction of Indigenous culture into the way of teaching.”

To date FISH has in place formal partnerships with Cornerstone Christian College in Busselton, Kingsway Christian College in Perth, Mandurah Primary School, Mandurah Baptist College Primary School and Highschool, and Halls Head College to offer **Aboriginal Scholarships** to students.

We were able to enrol the first student on a scholarship at Mandurah Baptist College in 2019 and provide supported accommodation to enable that student reengage with education and to successfully complete Year 11.

Following feedback from educational staff, in 2020 the FISH team developed an educational resource pack for both primary schools and high schools that is now available to be purchased on line. The initial resource pack focusses on the Noongar area of Western Australia with the aim for it to be adaptable to other regions around Australia.

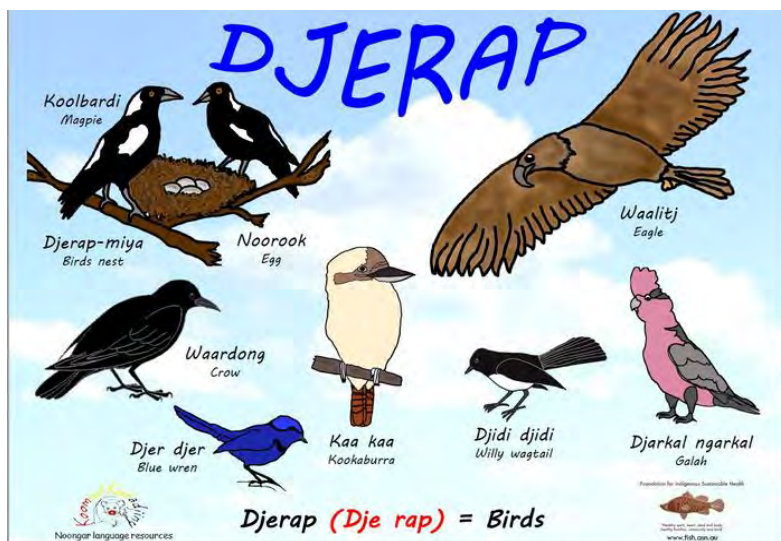
Professional Development & Cultural Competency Training

Who's Involved

FISH runs a range of programs in schools, including scholarship programs and the development of an Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies National Curriculum focussed on providing students and teachers with a deeper understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal histories and cultures, knowledge of traditions and holistic world views.

Educational Resources Programs

Adapting to the challenges of COVID-19, FISH has now broadened its education program to include a diverse range of educational resources which are available to schools and other education providers, such as books, audio, Noongar language flashcards and posters. At 30 June 2021 FISH has developed on stock over 300 titles of books from early childhood through to secondary and is one of the largest Indigenous book retailers in Australia through our Social Enterprise. FISH provides curated material packs to suit the recipients' needs, drawing from an extensive collection and network of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and cultural educators.



Wanslea Early Learning and Development Centre: As part of the Sorry Day commemorations on 26 May 2021, FISH designed and delivered an Indigenous resources program into the Wanslea Early Learning and Development Centre in the Perth region. This involved supplying a curated selection of Indigenous books and resources to all Wanslea centres as well as cultural presentations and reading sessions. The day included a multiple site book launch with an Aboriginal storytelling session across Wanslea's four sites from Perth to Rockingham in WA. Staff from FISH and members of the Wanslea Board, Executive and Management read Aboriginal stories to the children, including *"Finding our Heart"* and *"We All Sleep"*. The children discussed finding and listening to their own's hearts and the importance of finding the heart of Australia as we celebrate the oldest living culture in the world.

"Wanslea is thrilled to partner with FISH in this initiative. The simultaneous storytelling across our centres was amazing. We are Looking forward to embedding Aboriginal literature in our programs"



Perth College Books Program: FISH facilitated Perth College's selection of a comprehensive package of Indigenous books for students, parents, and teachers. As part of the program, the school received educational discounts on all products and an agreed percentage of all sales was put back into Indigenous programs within the school.

Resources for School Libraries: FISH has started work with a broad range of schools libraries to begin increasing their Indigenous book resources in their facilities and over the next twelve months that work will increase.



Professional Development & Cultural Competency Training

FISH has continued to run its Cultural Competency Professional Development (PD) Training for educators, government agencies, businesses and corporations, which commenced in 2016, to bring a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and history and move them past reconciliation.

The training is focussed on connecting people's head knowledge with their heart and spirit. As we do that, each participant's personal paradigm shifts to a point of understanding and a commitment to bring about positive change to create an environment of celebration, acknowledgement, acceptance, understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We achieve this by helping participants understand:

- The structure and cultural richness of Aboriginal society pre-European settlement and its relevance in today's context.
- International law, and laws and policies in Australia since settlement that have impacted on Aboriginal people.
- The intergenerational impact those laws and policies have had on Aboriginal people through intergenerational stories to connect our head knowledge with our hearts and spirits.
- Where we are today and why.
- How to create an inclusive work environment and work effectively with Aboriginal people from across the State and Australia.

Through FISH's partnerships with Schools, once all the staff, both educators and support staff, have been trained the schools have committed to ensure that all new staff go through the training within their first year of commencing at the school. In the last year the FISH team continued with the initial training at schools and at some school we are now training the new group of staff.



Placements & Internships

During the last year FISH has been able to continue to provide work placements and internships to students in various fields of study in both University and TAFE. This year, we were privileged to have hosted three students: Julia Netto, completing her Masters in Sustainable Development at Murdoch University, and Kayla Paige and Anita Gallucci, studying their Diploma of Community Services at South Metropolitan TAFE. Work placements are a fantastic way to directly immerse students in meaningful and tangible work, breaking cycles of intergenerational trauma, poverty and engagement with the justice system. We are grateful for their valuable contributions and we hope to follow them in their passion for building a fairer and more sustainable world.





HOUSING

HOUSING

Purpose

Sustainable, appropriate, secure and affordable housing

There is an urgent need for safe, secure, appropriate, and affordable housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a fundamental building block for families moving out of poverty. The rate of home ownership of Indigenous Australians is almost half that of non-Indigenous home ownership, reflecting a legacy of intergenerational disadvantage.

Why these Projects

FISH works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create equal opportunities for sustainable, appropriate, secure and affordable housing to break intergenerational cycles of poverty causing homelessness and housing insecurity.

Homelessness – Overcrowding – Home Ownership

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) revealed that homelessness, overcrowding and substandard housing are common issues for Indigenous Australians living in Western Australia.³ Indigenous Australians accounted for **over one-fifth of the homeless population nationally** (22% or an estimated 23,437 people).

1 in 3 Experienced homelessness in their lifetime	1 in 5 Living in overcrowded dwellings
1 in 5 Did not live in a house of acceptable standards	1 in 4 Reported structural issues in their house

Nationally, Indigenous Australians were 2.3 times more likely to be hospitalised for diseases related to environmental health and 1.7 times more likely to die from poor environmental health than non-Indigenous Australians.⁴

1 in 5 Indigenous Australians lived in **social housing**,⁵ which was 10 times more likely than non-Indigenous Australians. In remote areas, the social housing rate was a staggering 56%.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2014-15

⁴ Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status in Western Australia; Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet, 2019

⁵ Australia's welfare 2019 in brief: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019

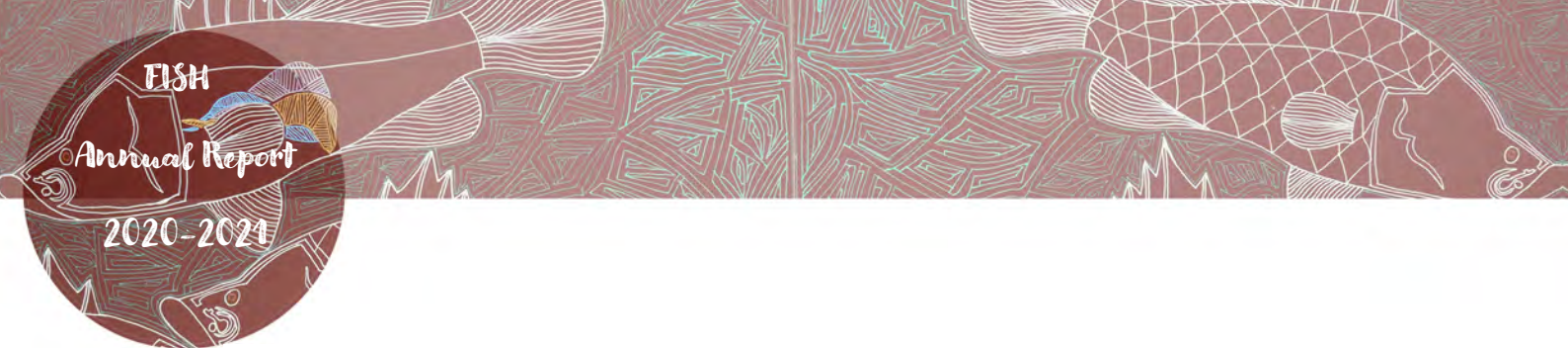


Figure 1: Tenure type, Indigenous Australians, 2012-13, 2014-15 and 2018-19

Filter by tenure type:

(All)




There is a heavy reliance on public and community housing, which is often of a low standard with poor maintenance. This position is worsening because of the housing affordability crisis and rising Indigenous population.

Millions of dollars have been spent and continues to be spent each year on social housing for Aboriginal people across Australia. For many years, the construction and maintenance of social housing for Aboriginal people in urban, regional and remote areas has been contracted out to builders and maintenance companies. Skilling up Aboriginal people in the local community to construct and maintain their own houses has been minimal, if not non-existent. When people are not involved in the design, construction and ongoing maintenance of a house, then there is no sense of ownership and connection to the house.

“Stable housing, either rental or home ownership, is fundamental building block for families moving out of poverty.”⁶

⁶ Mary Reynolds Badcock Foundation, Working Paper on Housing and Poverty, 1998.





FISH recognises the urgent need for safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing for Aboriginal people as a fundamental building block for families moving out of poverty. However, if the wrap around support and other needs for individuals and families are not addressed at the same time, then the housing will not be sustainable.

In 2019, the rate of **home ownership** of Aboriginal Australians was 31% which is less than half that of non-Aboriginal home ownership at around 70%, reflecting a legacy of intergenerational disadvantage.⁷ In remote areas, Indigenous home ownership rate was only 18%.

In Australia today, the challenge of achieving home ownership is faced by all Australians, with the significant growth in cost of housing, but this is felt more deeply by Indigenous Australians. Often the practicalities of repaying a loan and the associated costs of owning a home (maintenance, rates, insurance etc.) mean that home ownership is not a sustainable housing option for many Indigenous people, especially those on lower incomes.

FISH has developed an **Indigenous housing model** that is based on the principle of co-design and co-construction, i.e. directly engages the community in the design and construction of sustainable, affordable, and easily-replicated housing.

Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative

FISH's Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative is focussed on home ownership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in contrast with social housing. While there are cases where social housing is needed and appropriate, it can contribute to the ongoing cycle of poverty and reliance on government. International research shows that home ownership is a fundamental building block to breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty.

FISH's Home Ownership Project is creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to own culturally appropriate, sustainable, secure and affordable homes and break intergenerational cycles of poverty that cause homelessness and housing insecurity. The program is about offering a hand up, rather than a hand out.

FISH has developed a model to build secure, appropriate, and affordable houses, designed using sustainable principles, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have been through a selection process. Participant families are involved in the co-design process and will complete at least 200 hours of 'sweat equity' where they will work on appropriate elements of the construction of the house, under expert supervision. They will then purchase their homes at 75% of the market value. The core strategies of our model include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people co-design and co-build their homes.
- Community engagement through a local Commission of Elders and leaders.
- Open and transparent selection process.
- Sustainable, renewable and conservation design principles.
- Training and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and support of their businesses.
- Mentoring in financial literacy and management.
- Removing barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access home loans (through working with IBA, major banks and Department of Communities Housing).

⁷ Australia's Welfare in Brief 2021; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.



- Securing blocks of land at no cost or below commercial value.
- Tailoring design and build processes to reduce time and cost while preserving standards.

Each housing project will incorporate training for local Indigenous people in construction and landscaping trades and will employ people from local Indigenous businesses.

FISH is working with various stakeholders to secure an initial allocation of up to 50 blocks of land, at reduced or nominal prices, with the first six to eight blocks being donated. As FISH completes and sells each house to the client at 75% of the market value, the income generated from the sale will be utilised to purchase additional blocks of land at reduced rates. Clayton Utz provides conveyancing costs at no charge as part of their support with this project and FISH benefits from Stamp Duty exemption as a Registered Charity with the ATO and ACNC.

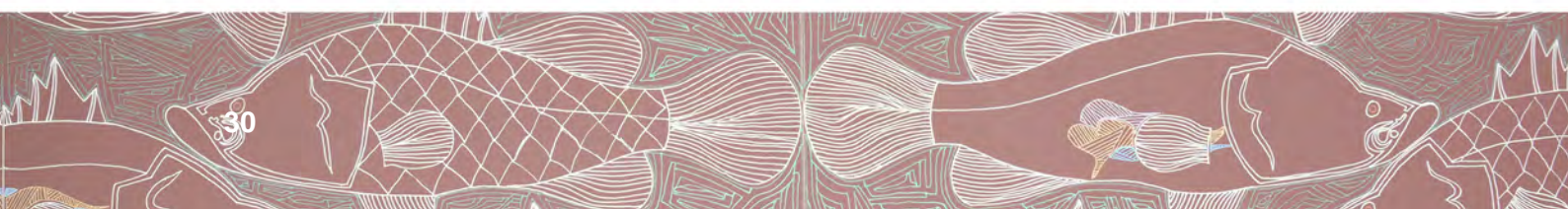
Bawoorrooga Community

FISH successfully piloted this concept in the remote Aboriginal Bawoorrooga community in the East Kimberley, with the co-design and co-build of their beautiful, culturally and climatically-designed earth house. The Bawoorrooga Project was recognised for its contributions toward sustainability, co-design, and Indigenous advancement, including:

- United Nations Human Rights Award 2019, for advancement of human rights and UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Finalist in Banksia Sustainability Awards 2019, for contributions to UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Publication in The Architect, 2020 Edition (Australian Institute of Architects), for excellence in Indigenous co-design and sustainable housing.



FISH and Bawoorrooga team in front of the Super Adobe House under construction



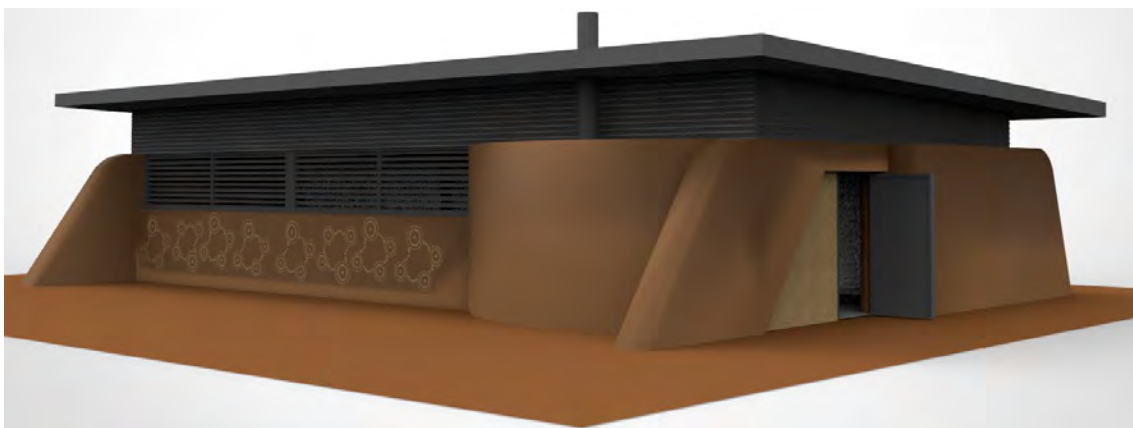


Finished Super Adobe House at Bawoorrooga Community

FISH formally handed the home over to Bawoorrooga Community in 2020. As part of this handover, FISH and Bawoorrooga established a 20-year rotational maintenance program which the community is now responsible for implementing.

For the second phase of the Bawoorrooga initiative, following a co-design process between Bawoorrooga Community, FISH architect Jara Romero, and Tjuart Architects, FISH is now working with partners and community members to construct the next accommodation stage. The community has called this 'Ive's Workers' Camp', deliberately using the term 'workers' camp' to emphasise that if people wish to live on community then they have to work for the benefit of the community. The accommodation will house 26 people.

Further to the expanding of the community accommodation, the next stage of development is to establish an Enterprise Centre, using repurposed buildings donated by Argyle Diamond Mine from their closed Wanderrie Workers' Camp. These buildings have been delivered to site and secured to footings.



3D image of repurposed buildings integrating outdoor kitchen and Super Adobe walls
(Image by Tjuart Architects)



The initiative is described in detail under the Employment section below. Ultimately, the Project will assist in breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty, trauma and engagement in the justice system through healing of the spirit, reconnecting with culture, training, employment and economic development enabling people to become self-sufficient.

Ravenswood Home

Following the success of the Bawoorrooga SuperAdobe earth house, FISH is now working with Jedda Salmon and her family to build her home in Ravenswood, in the Shire of Murray, South West WA. Jedda's family belongs to the Bindjareb people, whose ancestors for thousands of years have walked the land on which her home is now being built.

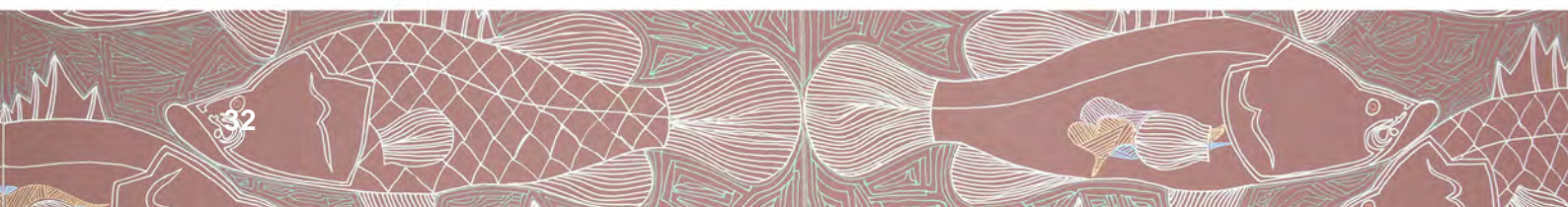
The FISH team have been working with Jedda and her family for over 18 months in yarning around budgeting, what it means to own a home, and understanding her needs and those of her family. Jedda has co-designed her home, initially working with FISH Architect Jara Romero to develop her design brief and then with our aboriginal-owned partners, Tjuart Architects, through the design and detail process.

Planning Approval and Building Permits have now been obtained, with construction due to begin in Q3 2021.

"I can't believe we are finally here with the earthworks about to start and where I will finally see my home that I designed rise up out of the ground. My Dad and I can't wait to be part of the build where we can help as we do our 200 hours of sweat equity to be actually part of building my home," said Jedda.



Jedda Salmon at her block



FISH is honoured to be partnering with Aboriginal owned Tjuart Architects, Kardan Construction, Wilco Electrical and SML Painting Solutions who will be working with FISH and Jedda in the construction of her home. By delivering the project through local Aboriginal business partnerships, this means that some of Jedda's relatives will actually be employed in building her home.

This is the first generation of Jedda's family that will not live in social housing and as Jedda's dad Mark says:

"This is a game changer for our family and we still can't believe it is happening."

FISH also provides financial literacy support prior to, and following, the purchase of the house and land. FISH's Business Manager Katrina Cox has been working with Jedda to increase her financial literacy, including weekly, monthly and yearly budgeting; understanding compound interest; understanding mortgages and costs associated with home ownership; building up a deposit; repayment schedules and benefits of reducing your core debt on interests payments etc.

This is the first home of 50 planned in the next five years as part of FISH's Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative.



Katrina Cox and Jedda Salmon during financial advice (L), Jedda during clearing of her site



EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Purpose

Meaningful, long-term employment

FISH works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create equal opportunities in training and culturally-appropriate, meaningful, sustainable and long-term employment to break intergenerational cycles of poverty.

Why these Programs

Employment Rates – Financial Pressures

According to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Report (2020) on improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians, the gap in employment rates has failed to improve, with 49% Indigenous employment compared with around 75% for non-Indigenous Australians.⁸

Metric	Target	Tracking	Trend
Employment rate	Halve the gap	✗	Rate is stable 59% in cities 35% in remote areas

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) revealed more of the employment issues for Indigenous Australians.⁹

49%	2 in 3	2 x	2 x
Employment	Full-time employment	Men employed compared to women	Women in part-time employment compared to men

Inequality in employment opportunities places a significant negative financial pressure on Aboriginal people and on the Australian government.¹⁰

Low income: in 2016, there were significant differences in median income for Indigenous Australians compared to non-Indigenous Australians regardless of location, but the disparity was most obvious in very remote areas. In 2019, the median income for Indigenous Australians was \$553, compared with \$915 for non-Indigenous Australians.

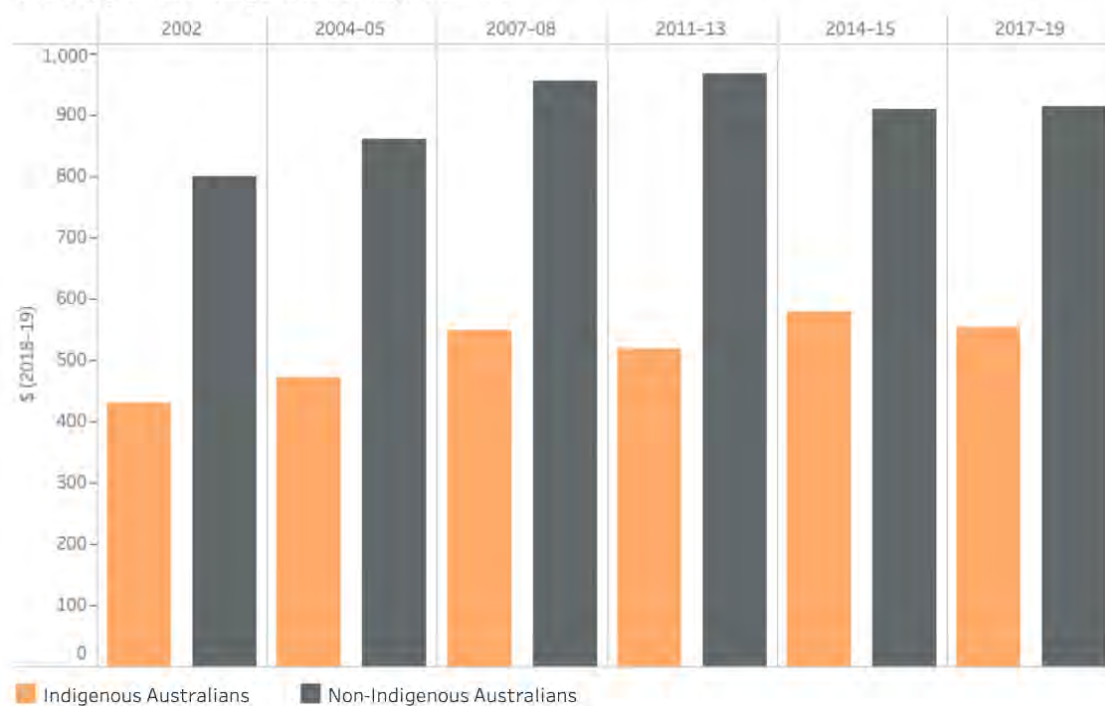
⁸ Commonwealth Government, Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Closing the Gap Report, 2020.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2014-15.

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australia's Welfare 2021 in Brief.



Figure 1: Median gross equivalised weekly household income (2018–19 dollars), persons aged 18 and over, by year and Indigenous status, 2002–19



Welfare dependence: due to the ongoing intergenerational impact of government policies, in 2019, 45% of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over were receiving some form of income support (compared to 23% for non-Indigenous Australians): this was most commonly Newstart, Disability Support Pension or Parenting Payment Single. Most people do not want to remain on income support long term, yet welfare dependence often becomes an intergenerational cycle due to the inability to access sustainable employment.

Financial stress: in 2019, Indigenous Australians were much more likely to experience financial stress - 53% could not raise emergency funds of \$2,000 in a week and 39% experienced cash-flow problems, in which they could not afford to meet basic living expenses (compared to 13% and 19%, respectively, for non-Indigenous Australians).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are an asset to Australia, already contributing greatly to the nation and with much more to offer. However, there is a need to create culturally safe work environments that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their wisdom, knowledge and skills with the broader community, including teaching people how to connect and care for each other and for Country. There is also an urgent need to create new pathways to employment for Aboriginal people through upskilling, training and education that is culturally appropriate and based on their natural talents, knowledge and skills.

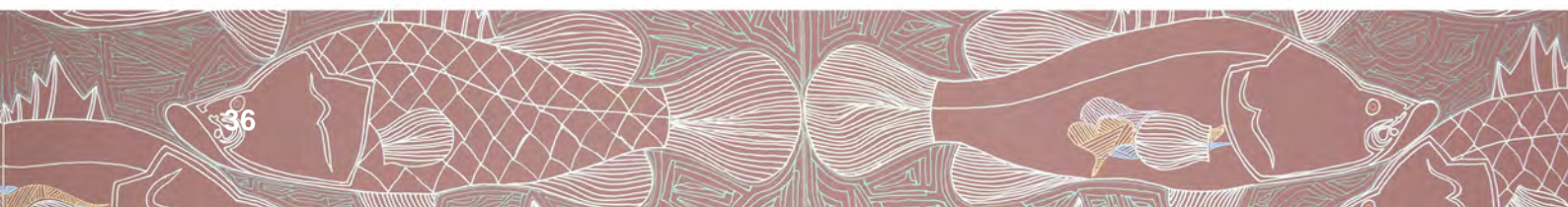
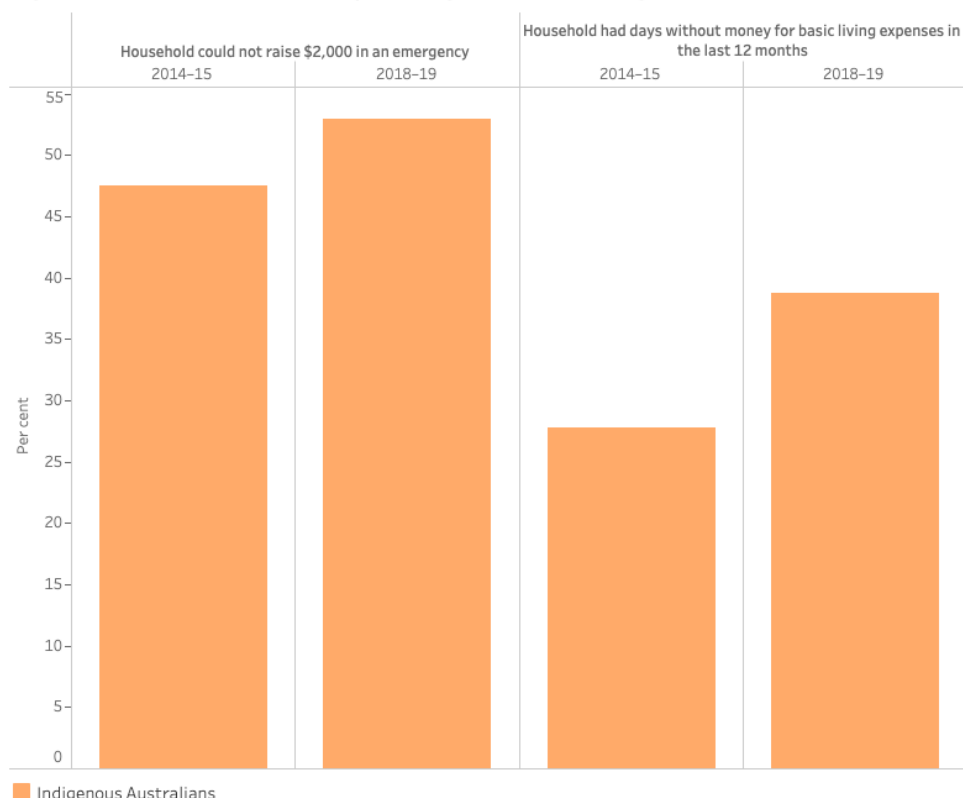


Figure 3: Financial stress indicators, persons aged 15 and over, Indigenous Australians, 2014–19



Website and Online Shop

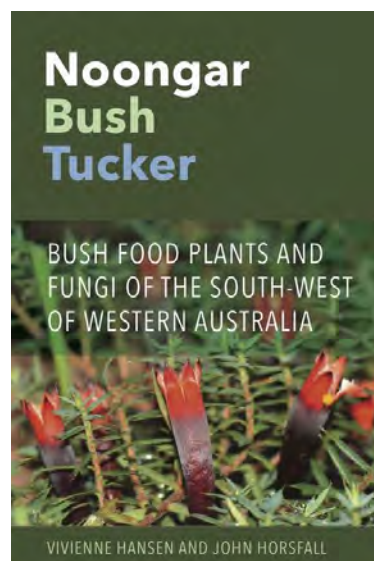
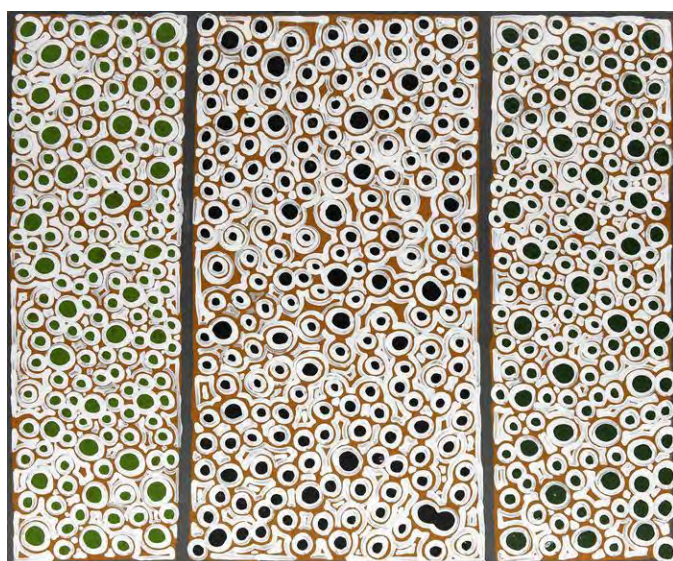
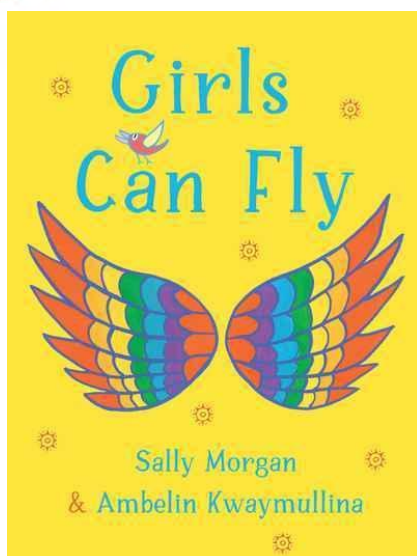
In November 2020, FISH launched its upgraded website and new social enterprise online shop (<https://shop.fish.asn.au/>). The website now includes:

- Comprehensive information about all of FISH's initiatives, team and supporters;
- Featured artworks of the month;
- Links to relevant news, publications and FISH's social media (Facebook, Youtube, Instagram and LinkedIn);
- Streamlined and automated system for managing donations, ticketing and event management.

Visitors to the website can purchase FISH artwork, merchandise, books, clothing, education resources, health and beauty products, food, and many other products which support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises and FISH's work in improving the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and breaking intergenerational cycles of trauma, poverty, and engagement in the justice system.

The site will also function as a dynamic platform allowing customers and supporters to interact with FISH and our artists. For example, customers will soon be able to commission artistic works, requesting that a particular theme or story be painted.

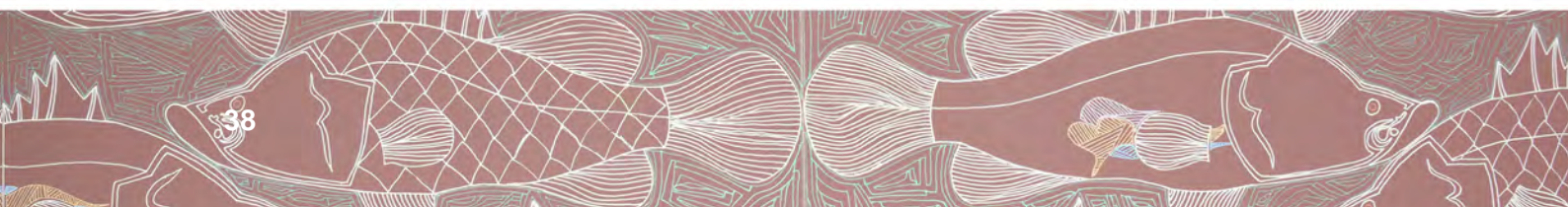
As the website further develops, our aim is for the site to also function as a more comprehensive educational tool in itself.



Products on FISH's online shop

Retail Space and Art Gallery

In February 2021, FISH officially opened its physical social enterprise gallery and retail shop in Mt Lawley, Perth. The shop and gallery are located inside the Local & Aesthetic café. Local & Aesthetic is a proud supporter of FISH's initiatives, donating a portion of their space to hosting FISH's social enterprise. As part of the formal launch, the venue was smoked by Whadjuk cultural man Vaughan (Josh) McGuire. The event was a special evening of culture and celebration as we honoured the Whadjuk people as the original custodians of the land on which the venue is based. At the event, Vaughan commented:



"This is a blessing for FISH and Local & Aesthetic as together they launch this new venture that supports Aboriginal people and celebrates our culture."



Smoking ceremony at Local & Aesthetic

The products in our shop are sourced from 100%-owned Indigenous businesses, authors, and artists. All purchases made through the social enterprise make a direct impact on an Indigenous person, family, or community. The FISH Social Enterprise has since become the largest exclusive retailer of Aboriginal books in WA, currently stocking close to 300 titles. Our range includes books for all ages, including novels, colourful children's books, biographies, dreamtime stories, bilingual texts, historical texts, poetry and verse, and many other valuable educational resources. Since opening, the space has already become a well-known hub for sourcing quality Indigenous products, as well as hosting a range of cultural events and other functions.



FISH's retail space at Local & Aesthetic

FISH officially launched its new **Instagram** page, [fishsocialenterprise](https://www.instagram.com/fishsocialenterprise), which follows the exciting growth of our gallery and retail space, as well as FISH's ongoing art and cultural events.

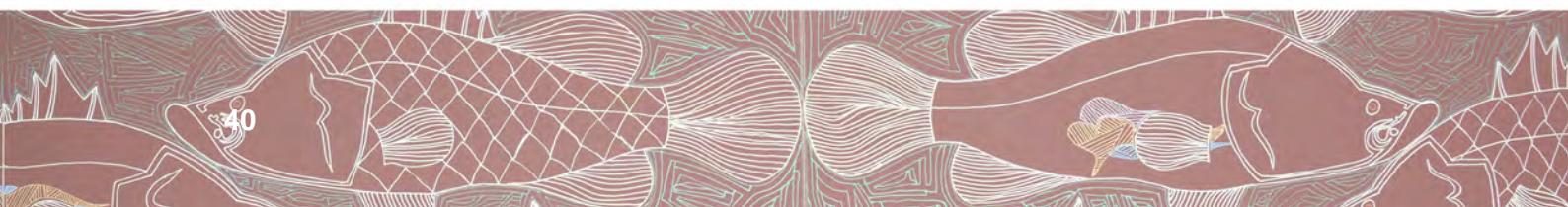


Author Sally Morgan signing her books (L) and Elders enjoying the FISH's retail space (R)

Artist Support

In line with the 2021 NAIDOC theme 'Heal Country' and with FISH's focus on sharing knowledge through art and culture, FISH commissioned three Indigenous artists; Sue Shilcock, Polly Wilson and Ang Bennett; to paint a series of three pieces that focus on caring for land, water and air. Each week FISH featured one of the artists and their artworks.

Since this initiative, FISH is excited to announce that one of these artists, Polly Wilson, has formally joined the FISH team as our Trainee Retail Manager at our social enterprise retail outlet and gallery space. Polly is a Ngemba Weilwan woman from the East Coast of Australia, born and raised on Gamilaroi country northwest NSW in the small town of Wee Waa. She is a single mother of four and moved to Perth in 2021 to take on this opportunity. Polly's cousin introduced her to painting as an outlet for dealing with life's tragedies and struggles. Since that day, Polly hasn't stopped. As the paint flows, Polly feels a magical release, and a connection to country. She paints using her contemporary take on traditional art, channelled from her ancestors, and using personal experiences and life lessons. Polly's dreams of being an art therapist were inspired by her own life's hardships. She wants to help single mothers and children heal through art and also wants to provide security for her children through this profession.





Artwork representing caring for land, air and water;
by artists Polly Wilson, Sue Shilcock and Ang Bennett

Prior to her taking on the role, FISH worked alongside Polly for over 12 months providing mentoring and business support. FISH's Business Development Manager Katrina Cox stated, *"I am so excited to have Polly join the FISH family. She is going to be a wonderful asset as we work to make a difference in the lives of many people."* Polly went on to say, *"If you told me 12 months ago that this is where I would be today I wouldn't have believed it. FISH has helped to change my life and believe in myself and I can't wait to work with FISH to make a difference in other's lives as FISH has made in mine"*. As part of her Traineeship, Polly is also completing her Cert IV in Business.



In June 2021, Polly also became FISH's first artist to participate in our Artist in Residence program, based at our gallery space at the Local & Aesthetic café in Mt Lawley. Visitors to the gallery had the opportunity to watch as Polly created two beautiful pieces of artwork over the course of a week, while she shared her story and the inspirations behind her art, depicting her recent journey across the Nullarbor Plain.



Polly painting *Colours of the Journey* at FISH's retail space at Local & Aesthetic

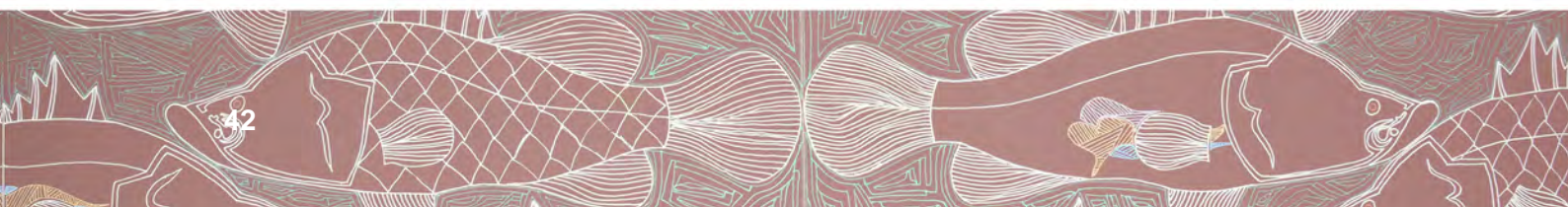
Microfinance

FISH artist Polly Wilson was one of the first recipients of the FISH pilot Microfinance Fund ("A Hand Up") to support her in breaking the cycle of poverty through her art business development. 'A Hand Up' offers short to medium-term, no-interest microfinance loans to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with the aim of removing barriers to their engagement in enterprise and employment.

Most microloans offered by banks and private lenders require regular repayments and attract interest, which is unmanageable for people living with poverty. FISH has been approached by many new and existing home-based local Aboriginal artists and microenterprises unable to obtain credit or loans to buy raw materials for their work.

FISH microloans enables clients to create and market their products. FISH then provides an outlet to sell their work through our online and physical social enterprise outlets. Over the last 12 months, FISH has trialled four microfinance loans with clients, including artists from Bawoorrooga Community in the Kimberley, artists from the east coast, and a cosmetics microenterprise from Broome to enable them to buy materials, create their products and bring them to market.

The microfinance program is managed by Katrina Cox – FISH's Business Development Manager. Katrina has more than 20 years' experience working in finance and was responsible for Not-for-Profit and Indigenous Business Banking at one of the major banks. She is knowledgeable in retail banking and financial counselling, and currently manages FISH's social enterprises. Katrina also provides business budgeting and support to FISH's clients.





Katrina Cox and Page Pryor yarning about the Microfinance program (L), Balu products in FISH shop (R)

Other Art Programs

This year FISH continued our “Bindigenous” bin art initiative – a project which arose out of the creative idea of a few Indigenous artists in NSW during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Guringai artist, Sue Shilcock, Kamilaroi artist, Ang Bennett, and Ngemba Weilwa/Gamilaoi artist Polly Wilson used their COVID-19 home isolation period to paint beautiful Aboriginal artwork on their wheelee bins. The bin stickers are now available in FISH’s retail outlet and online shop. FISH is also working in partnership with the artists to develop the concept as a national initiative to use Aboriginal art to educate the community of the importance of caring for land, air and waterways, while turning bin day into streets of beautiful Aboriginal art galleries. FISH is also working with its national partners on this initiative, exploring innovative technologies to help bring Indigenous art and culture to Australian communities, transform our cityscapes and spread the value of caring for country.

Aboriginal people are resourceful with all of mother nature’s gifts of life. The versatile use of the iconic “yonga” (Nyoongar, for kangaroo) is no exception. Traditionally the skin was tanned and used as a buka (cloak). FISH’s Culture & Education Officer Kaisha Champion used yonga skin heat branding to teach about the Nyoongar six seasons, the balga bush that provides the borna (sticks) used to make fire and the symbolism shows Maaman (Man) and Yorga (woman) coming together to fill their responsibility to look after the Boodja (country).



Decorated bins from Bindigenous, and Kaisha Champion’s six seasons yonga skin



Bawoorrooga Community Development and Social Enterprise

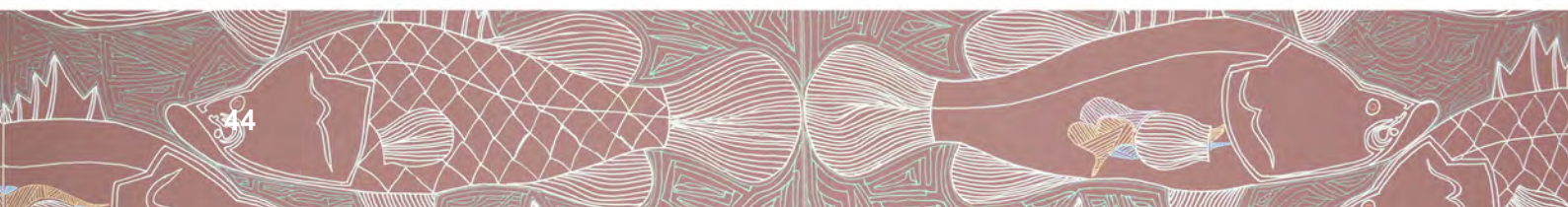
Since 2017, FISH and Bawoorrooga community have undertaken a comprehensive program of healing, reconnection to culture, community ownership, housing, education, employment, and enterprise development.

Bawoorrooga Community was established twenty years ago by the community founders, Claude Carter (Gooniyandi) and Andrea Pindan (Martu). It is situated on Gooniyandi traditional homeland, on the Great Northern Highway, 90km southeast of Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley. Bawoorrooga has established itself in the Fitzroy Valley as a small cultural hub – a well-known meeting place for traditional healing, indigenous art, and knowledge of country and homeland. Bawoorrooga regularly hosts Aboriginal youth groups (with a focus on support for juvenile offenders), where participants are taught traditional bush skills, spirituality and connection to land. Claude and Andrea are also both prominent indigenous artists, with Claude's works being nationally and internationally exhibited.



Claude Carter and Andrea Pindan at Bawoorrooga Community

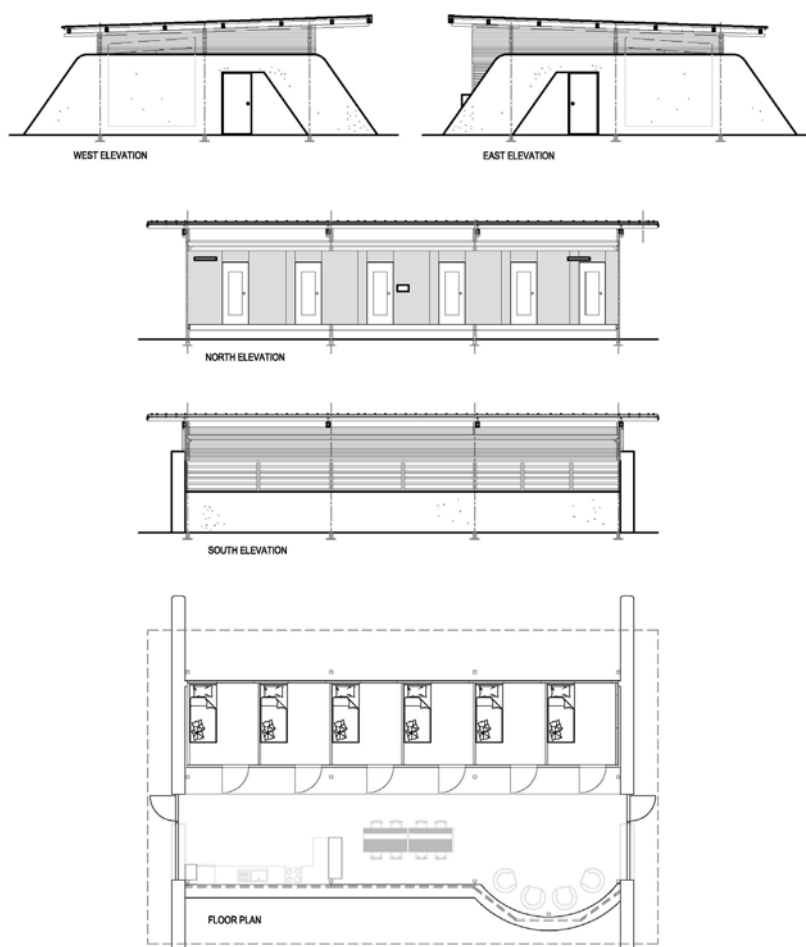
In early 2017, Claude and Andrea's home was destroyed by fire along with all of their possessions and artwork. Following the fire, FISH and Bawoorrooga constructed a SuperAdobe (earthbag) home, co-designed and co-built by the community members, which served as a prototype for sustainable Indigenous housing, reconnection to culture, healing and youth engagement. The home was officially handed over to the community in April 2020 and FISH worked with community to establish a 20 year rotational maintenance program empowering the community to take responsibility for their own asset management.



Following the tremendous success of this project, FISH and Bawoorrooga have subsequently continued to develop a range of initiatives at the community.

"A national prototype for sustainable Indigenous community ownership, training, employment, housing and enterprise development"

The current phase of Bawoorrooga's community development is the establishment of further accommodation. The community have decided to call the next accommodation phase 'Ive's Workers' Camp' so that people wanting to live on community know that they need to work. The next stage also includes the development of an Enterprise Centre, as well as an expansion of the existing community orchard and plant nursery. Argyle Diamond Mine donated seven transportable buildings to be re-purposed and re-used for the Bawoorrooga Workers Camp. These buildings will be adapted, integrating rammed earth elements, outdoor kitchens and roof structures. Both the Worker's Camp and the Enterprise Centre designs are the result of a co-design process between Bawoorrooga community, FISH's architect Jara Romero, and our partners, aboriginal owned firm, Tjuart Architects. Argyle have also donated a large transportable building that had been used as the gymnasium on the mining camp to be re-purposed and re-used at Bawoorrooga Community for the Enterprise and Education Centre.



Plans of one of the repurposed buildings donated for the Workers' Camp, Featuring rammed earth walls and outdoor kitchen.

To date the Worker’s Camp site has been cleared, the buildings have been delivered and secured to footings on site, and the sewerage system installed. FISH partner, Kardan Construction, oversaw the site works and provided supervision and training to community members in installing the buildings on their foundations. Additionally, in partnership with FISH, Alinga Energy Consulting has prepared an electrical systems feasibility study for the site, which includes technology recommendations, economic modelling, sustainability strategies and long-term operations and maintenance plans.



Kardan Construction team and Bawoorrooga community members installing footings



Claude Carter and Ruby Heard (Alinga Energy Consulting) with the solar system at Bawoorrooga

The Worker's Camp and Enterprise & Education Centre will support the following activities:

- Horticulture / market garden
- Plant nursery
- Enterprise centre:
- Cultural tourism
- Arts and crafts enterprise
- Orchard produce enterprise
- Education and training (including expansion of existing Bawoorrooga programs of hosting school and youth groups)
- Tourism accommodation (caravan park and tents)
- Ancillary employment (cleaning and maintenance)
- Stockman and on-country tourism.

“Project participants are being trained and involved in building these features for their community with their own hands, developing highly practical skills and confidence”

Ultimately, the Project will assist in breaking the generational cycle of poverty, trauma and engagement in the justice system for Aboriginal people through healing of the spirit, reconnecting with culture, training, employment and economic development enabling them to become self-sufficient economically and socially.



Buildings that will be transformed into the Enterprise and Education Centre at Bawoorrooga



JUSTICE

JUSTICE

Purpose

Freedom from the Justice System

FISH supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to avoid engagement and re-engagement with the justice system and thereby break intergenerational cycles of trauma and engagement in the Justice System.

Why these Programs

High Incarceration Rates – Significant Cost – High Rates of Recidivism

Across Australia, the over-representation of Indigenous people is an ongoing crisis. In 2019, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults were imprisoned at **twelve times** the rate of non-Indigenous adults.¹¹ There was an increase of 63% in the imprisonment rate for Indigenous adults (from 1,333 to 2,081 per 100,000) between 2006 and 2020.¹²

Western Australia has one of the highest imprisonment rates in Australia (and the world), with 382 people incarcerated per 10,000 adults (compared to the national average of 215 people). WA Department of Justice Statistics (2020-21) demonstrate how over-represented Aboriginal people are in the Adult Justice System, comprising 40% of the prison population while making up only 4% of the general population.¹³ Juvenile justice is even worse, with Aboriginal people comprising around 75% of detainees.

382 per 10,000	40%	75%	4%	12 times
Aboriginal Incarceration Rate	Aboriginal Adult Prisoners	Aboriginal Youth Prisoners	Aboriginal in general population	more likely to be incarcerated

The number of Aboriginal adults who are incarcerated in WA has climbed every year for the last five years (by 2021, 2,662 men and women). Half of adult prisoners are aged 18-35 years old.

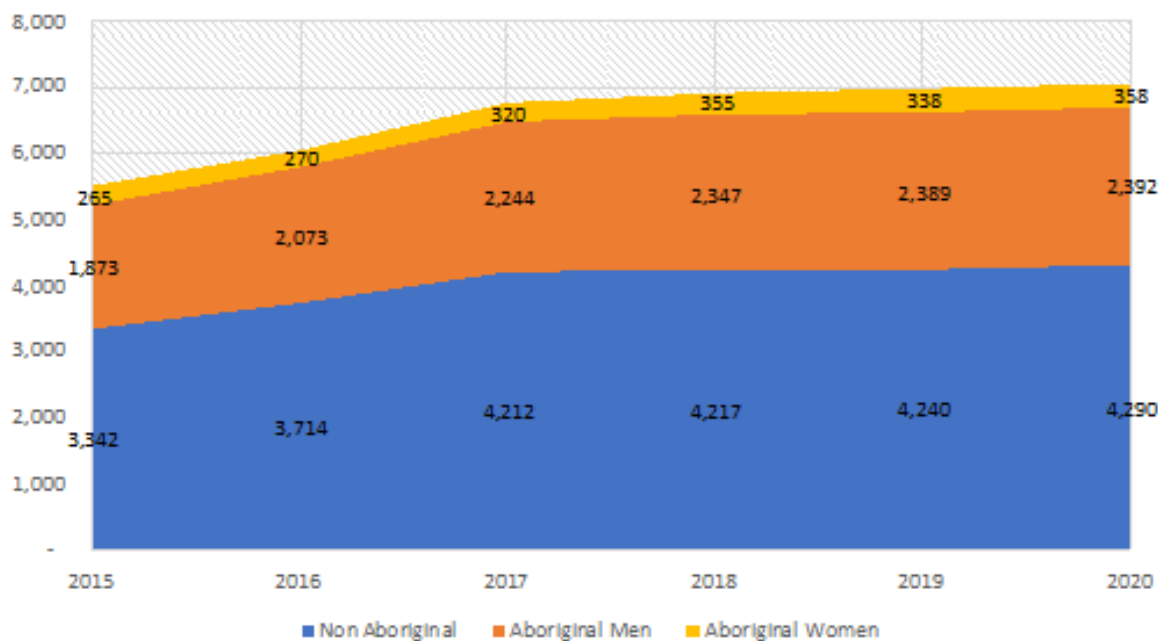
There is a pressing need for culturally appropriate diversion programs for Aboriginal people in WA.

¹¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2020 summary report.

¹² Australia's Welfare in Brief 2021; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

¹³ WA Department of Justice Annual Report 2020-21.

Adult Offenders in WA Prisons



\$108k p.a.	4,045 p.a.	40.8%	\$372k p.a.	1,079 p.a.	52.9%
Adult Prisoners	Aboriginal adults released	Return to prison within 2 years	Youth Prisoners	Aboriginal youth released	Return to prison within 2 years

Incarceration of Aboriginal people imposes a significant cost burden on Australian taxpayers.¹⁴ Furthermore, justice reintegration programs are failing to achieve their intended outcomes of reintegration into the community and prevention of recidivism, given that such a high percentage of Aboriginal people return to prison within two years. FISH believes this is because Aboriginal people are not supported in the right ways when they leave the justice system.

Government-funded justice programs designed by non-Aboriginal people have failed to bring about significant change, evidenced by the statistics presented above. There is therefore an urgent need for a different approach to rehabilitation and reintegration of Aboriginal offenders to break the cycle of engagement in the justice system.

Who's Involved

FISH works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Department of Justice (Corrective Services), Magistrates, and WA prisons.

¹⁴ Key Indicators: Government of WA Department of Justice Annual Report 2018/19



FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny

Healing – Education & Training – Employment – Housing – Research

Healing, Social Enterprise and Justice Reintegration Initiative

Since 2017, FISH has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and groups from across Australia along with individuals and local businesses in WA's South West Region through a co-design process to develop a detailed program that will give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16-35 a place to heal and receive holistic support to break intergenerational cycles of trauma, avoid (re)engagement in the justice system and contribute positively to society.

For this purpose, FISH has acquired an 11ha site at 6043 Forrest Highway in Myalup, South West WA, which is the vacant land surrounding the Settlers Roadhouse, formerly used for agricultural market garden cultivation. Prior to securing the site Aboriginal Elders and members of the FISH team camped in swags on the site to ensure it was culturally suitable. During the night the old people visited them in their dreams to let them know it was a good place.

The following month over 20 people came together camping on the land eating yonga (kangaroo) stew and damper, singing and yarning to decide on a name for the program and site. It was agreed to call it "FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny". Myalup is where neighbouring clans traditionally came together. Karla is the fire, the giver and taker of life, the place we sit around to Waangkiny. Learning to walk together shoulder to shoulder softly upon this land, sharing each other's journey and spirit to bring healing.

Twenty-six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women Elders, leaders and young people have been involved in the co-design process, both for the program and site design. Further to this, 36 incarcerated Aboriginal people have provided input into the program design and layout.

The site is being developed as a national prototype to bring change throughout Australia to how we deal with justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as past approaches have proven ineffective. FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny will include the following on-site industries:

- Agri-innovation through aquaponics, horticulture, traditional food & medicine;
- Agri-research;
- Education & training;
- Manufacturing utilising a downstream product of straw and/or hemp herd from the local industry to make straw-bale and/or hemp housing panels;
- Building construction & maintenance;
- Landscaping, grounds maintenance and nursery;
- Food & beverage hospitality;
- Cultural tourism;
- Rehabilitation, mentoring & healing for Aboriginal people engaged in the justice system.



Myalup Karla Waangkiny site perspective

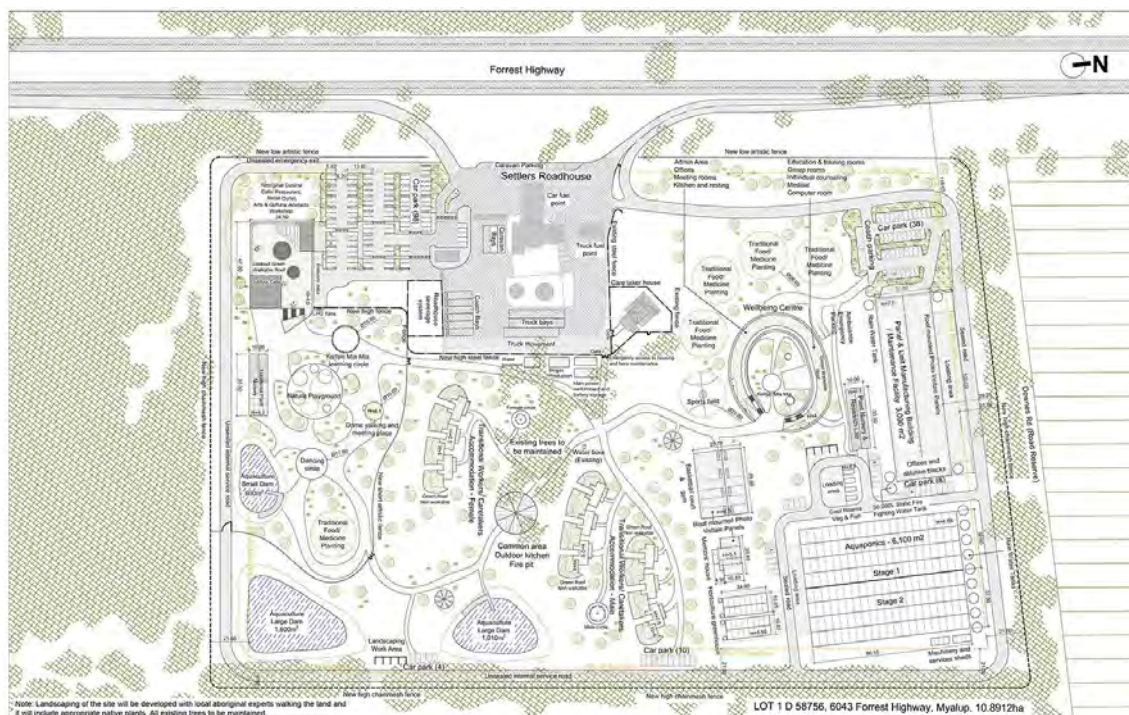
Once constructed, the site will accommodate approximately 45 residential program participants and up to 20 additional participants will come to site on daily work release from Karnet and Bunbury prisons, who are on minimal security and met the strict eligibility requirements. Further to this, there will be up to 20 participants on community service orders involved in the initiative. A range of program staff to support program participants will be based onsite and in the broader community, plus trainers and workers supervising program participants onsite who are involved in the social enterprises. Myalup will be an 18-month program, with an average of 148 participants in the program at all times (located on site or within the broader community).



Overview of 3-stage men's program



During the construction phase, it is estimated that the project will generate 24 x FTE positions, 6 x Aboriginal Trainees and 6 x Aboriginal Apprentices. The rehabilitation, mentoring & healing component of the project will see an annual employment of 29.5 FTE positions. Additionally, the annual Social Enterprise staffing requirements at full operation is estimated to create 10 x FTE positions, 36 x Aboriginal Trainees and 4 x Aboriginal Apprentices.



Myalup Karla Waangkiny Site Plan

Co-Design

For decades, governments have funded justice programs that have been designed by non-Indigenous people to bring about change for Indigenous people. However, significant change is yet to occur. FISH believes that co-designing a justice program with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will lead to positive change in breaking the cycle of intergenerational engagement in the justice system. FISH is committed to the true principles of co-design, which must allow time for yarning and deep listening. As we do that, we share and value each other’s hearts, spirits, knowledge, experience, and wisdom. After yarning and listening, we capture what has been heard, reflect, amend, agree, and only then act.



Co-design meetings on site

"If your spirit is broken, it does not matter if you are provided education, training, employment or even housing; it will not be sustainable. You need to first heal the spirit to enable people to deal with past trauma, and to know who they are and be culturally grounded. Then, and only then, do you have a solid base to move on from." Koodah Cornwall, Aboriginal Elder

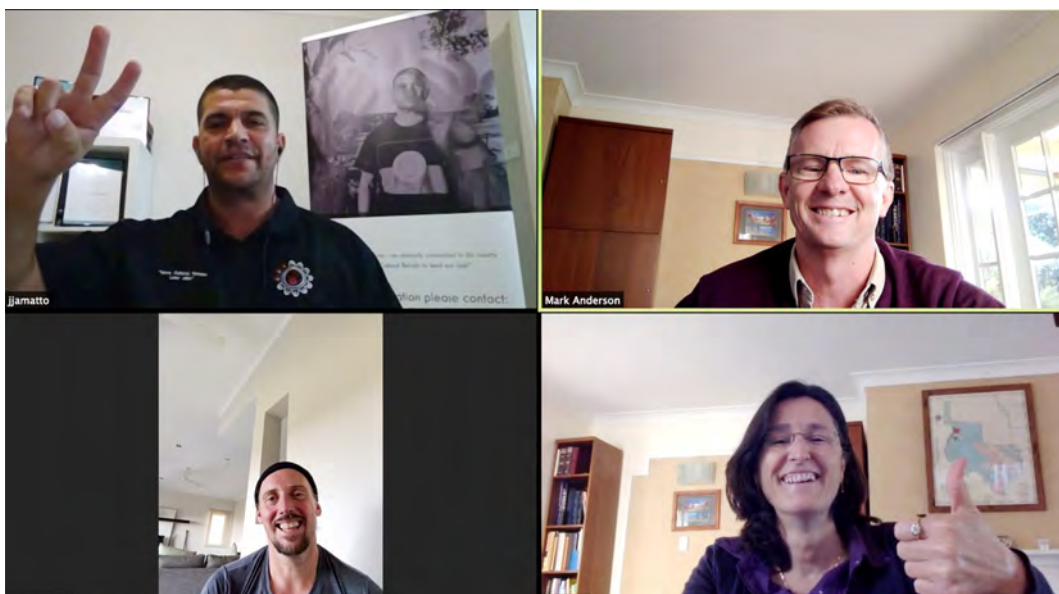
FISH began gathering design ideas for its justice program from Aboriginal people over four years ago, building upon experience spanning more than 30 years in the justice system. Formative ideas came from our conversations with Aboriginal Elders and community leaders. Men incarcerated at Casuarina Prison contributed their ideas when FISH ran two Cultural Healing pilot programs in 2018-2019. We also started growing our network of interested Aboriginal people from across Australia.

In July 2020, FISH created an Aboriginal Co-Design Group comprising 26 Aboriginal people to design the core programs and provide input on site design. Given the group size, diversity and geographic spread of the group, FISH worked with smaller groups of people – men and women separately, in person and via online technology. Each member of the co-design group contributed their unique knowledge and experiences to the design work. Most of the group have been involved with the justice system in one or more ways, including:

- lived experience of incarceration;
- a family member who was/is incarcerated;
- running programs or services in prison.

Group members discussed and agreed upon:

- the name and objectives of the program;
- program principles and participants' pathways into and through the program;
- core programs required for participants' healing;
- facilities and required level of support for participants;
- social enterprises for the site;
- site design, including architectural and landscaping feel of the site;
- how participants would live, work and heal at the Myalup site.



Co-design video call



Co-design meeting



Co-design meeting



Co-design meeting

Local and Regional Partnerships

Since 2017, FISH has worked closely with relevant local and regional stakeholders to ensure that the project is able to meet the broad needs of the community. In addition to the local Aboriginal organisations and the Aboriginal Co-design Group discussed above, the following key stakeholders have been extensively involved and have provided strategic support for the project:

- Department of Justice: Engaged since the initial concept inception in 2017 and through FISH's successful Cultural Healing & Awareness programs in Casuarina Prison.
- Local Government (Shire of Harvey): Actively working with FISH in site development and discussions with local stakeholders.
- South West Development Commission: Views the project as a high priority in line with regional objectives, in particular; fostering Aboriginal enterprise development and investing in key industries.
- Development WA: Providing professional advice and support to FISH, including by facilitating discussions with other key stakeholders.
- Neighbouring landowners: FISH is in discussions with neighbouring agricultural landholders to develop skills training and a tailored labour pool for FISH participants to work in local businesses.

Resourcing

To date, FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny has already secured the land in Myalup, thanks to the ongoing generous support of the Rae Group. Additionally, the project has already raised an initial cash investment of \$500,000 and approximately \$200,000 in pro-bono professional and support services for Stage 1 of the project – planning and implementation.

The Federal and WA State Government have both announced a commitment to funding infrastructure projects which are spade-ready and which lead to direct employment as part of COVID-19 recovery. Additionally, both Governments have renewed their Indigenous Closing the Gap targets, announcing priorities in justice, education and economic



participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Given the strong alignment with core priorities, we will also be working closely with State and Federal Governments to access funding for the initiatives.

FISH have major national and international corporate supporters and foundations already involved in the initiative. In addition to the initial \$500,000 in cash, land, legal and associated costs already contributed, FISH's key project supporters have committed to working with FISH to assist in securing full project funding.

Progress to date

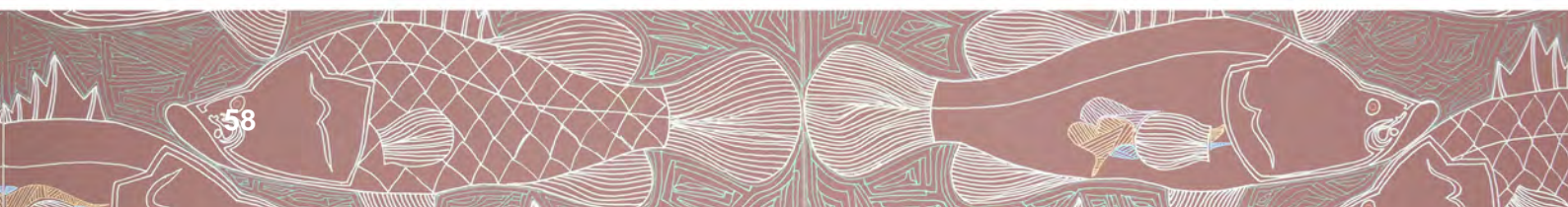
FISH has applied for Development Approval through the newly-established State Development Assessment Unit (SDAU), under the WA Planning Commission (WAPC). The SDAU is a special-purpose authority set up to streamline significant development proposals as part of the State Government's COVID-19 economic recovery plan. Most of this process has been completed, including:

- Formal advertising and public consultation process;
- Review and endorsement by State Design Review Panel;
- Submission of architectural site plans, floor plans, elevations, perspectives, and 3D models;
- Site feature surveys;
- COVID-19 Economic Recovery Report;
- Detailed Justice Program Summary;
- Specialist reports (including Site Hydrology, Traffic Management Plan, Environmental Management Plan, Electrical Systems Feasibility Study, Bushfire Management Plan, Emergency Evacuation Plan, Landscaping Plan, Acoustic Report, etc); and
- Construction Staging Plans.

In February 2021, FISH formally presented to the State Design Review Panel (SDRP), comprising the State Government Architect and specialists in architecture, landscape architecture, and environmental consultancy. The panel provided a written report supportive of the project which included invaluable technical feedback which FISH has incorporated into the overall project design.



FISH Team and State Design Review Panel



Prison Art Therapy Program

This year, FISH continued its prison art therapy program, using artwork to connect participants back to country and develop their sense of self-worth. Proceeds from the sale of artwork are used to support the participants on their release from prison, by providing access to transitional support and accommodation, mentoring and employment assistance.

The art that has been produced is sold with 50% supporting FISH's justice initiatives and 50% being put into trust to be used in the participant's rehabilitation process upon their release from prison to successfully transition back into community and re-establish themselves as positive contributing members of society.

The artists come from throughout WA and names are not noted on the artwork as they are currently engaged in the justice system.

"When I come into this program, I am free. I can be a proud black man. I am free because I can be me."



Artwork produced through the Art Therapy Program



HEALTH

HEALTH

Purpose

Healthy spirit, heart, mind and body; healthy families, community & land

FISH works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to drive enduring improvements in their social, emotional and physical wellbeing so they can become confident, connected and healthy.

Why these Programs

Poor Health – Life Expectancy – Social & Emotional Wellbeing

According to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Report (2020) on improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians, health metrics are not on track.

Metric	Target	Tracking	Trend
Child Mortality Rate	Halve the gap	✗	Declining: 141 per 100,000 births
Life expectancy	Close the gap	✗	Improving: 72 years for men, 76 years for women. Large gap in remote areas.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) also showed Indigenous health is was poor.¹⁵

65%	1 in 15	1 in 4
Long-term health condition	Profound or severe disability	Caring for a person with a disability, long-term health condition or old age

The following statistics specifically relate to Western Australia¹⁶.

¹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2014-15.

¹⁶ Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status in Western Australia; Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet, 2019



12 years less	<p>Life expectancy: Is 12 years less than the estimates for non-Indigenous. In 2017, the leading cause of death among Indigenous people was coronary heart disease, diabetes, intentional self-harm and lung and related cancers.</p> <p>For 2011-2015, the rate of avoidable deaths was 4.9 times higher than the rate for non-Indigenous people.</p>
20x higher	<p>Hospitalisation Rate: In 2013-15, the main cause of hospitalisation for Indigenous people was for 'care involving dialysis', with an age-adjusted rate 20 times higher than that for non-Indigenous people.</p>
1.8x higher	<p>Self-Harm: In 2017, the suicide rate for Indigenous people was 1.8 times the rate reported for non-Indigenous people and the third leading cause of death.</p> <p>In 2014-2015, Indigenous people were 3.3 times more likely as non-Indigenous people to feel high or very high levels of psychological distress.</p>
1.6x higher	<p>Disability: In the 2014-2015, Indigenous people were 1.6 times more likely to have a disability or restrictive long-term health condition; 90% were under 50 years old.</p>

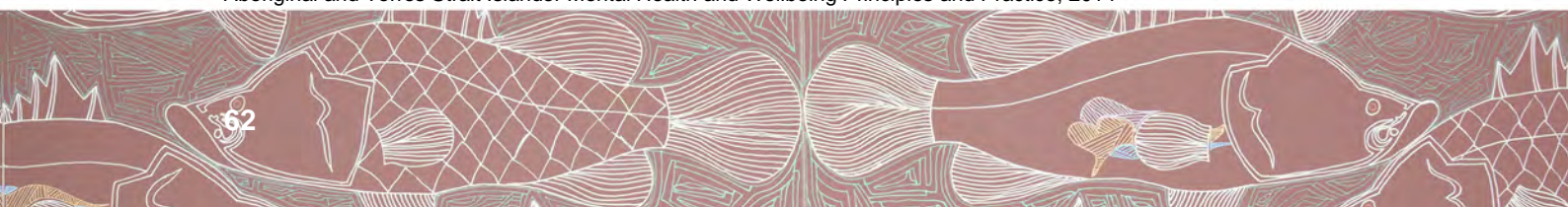
The mortality rate of **Indigenous young people** (10-24 years old) is concerning much higher than for non-Indigenous young people.¹⁷ The leading causes of death are suicide, road traffic accidents and assaults.

From an Aboriginal worldview, health compasses far more than physical health. Aboriginal people regard health from a broader perspective that is generally referred to as **social and emotional wellbeing**¹⁸. The social and emotional wellbeing of Indigenous people in Australia has been negatively impacted by the devastating effects of colonisation, the trauma of dispossession, their ongoing resistance and struggle for equality and recognition, social disadvantage, racism and other social and cultural issues, and detrimental governmental policies, particularly the separation of families that resulted in the Stolen Generations from 1905 to 1975 and the ongoing removals by the child protection system¹⁹.

¹⁷ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescent and youth health and wellbeing: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2018.

¹⁸ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing by Gee et al., in Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice, 2014

¹⁹ Aboriginal Social, Cultural and Historical Contexts by Dudgeon et. al, in Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice, 2014



Bawoorrooga Horticulture Projects

One of Bawoorrooga's passions is tree-planting and horticulture. Over the years the community have grown many fruit trees, including citrus, mulberry, mango and other fruits to eat and share with the surrounding communities. In the last year, this passion has continued, with community members devoting their energies to upgrading their plant nursery and planting an array of fruits and other native plants in the orchard.



Mango trees and orchard at Bawoorrooga community

When FISH was approached to assist Bawoorrooga Community in 2017, the community was suffering acutely from the trauma of losing their home to fire, along with their possessions, including clothing, photographs and artwork (their primary source of livelihood). This disaster occurred against a background of intergenerational trauma and mental illness that pervades much of the Fitzroy Valley and other regions of remote Indigenous Australia. Following the successes of the FISH-Bawoorrooga partnership, the community leaders proudly gave the following feedback:

"We'd like to thank everyone for helping us heal. All that is behind us now – we're moving forward. We hope for this sort of project to happen in other communities that are battling like us... We've always got a big smile now. Before, it was really a downfall. Now, we feel our 'lien' (spirit) is going up ... We feel 'wideo' (happy) – like your soul is really strong... It's really happening now – things are growing."



Disability Support – NDIS

The ongoing programs at Bawoorrooga also provide a framework for disability support activities. FISH is working in partnership with KEY Support Coordination (KSC) in providing support coordination services to a young man at Bawoorrooga with significant hearing loss.

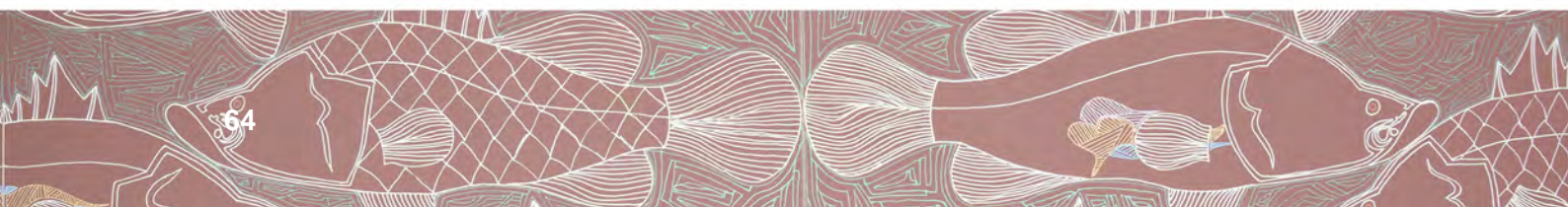
Stephen Donnet-Jones is coordinating these services through the framework of the National Disability Support Scheme (NDIS) to ensure this young man now has a future pathway to aim towards. With this support structure, he is now able to work within his own community and proudly contribute towards their future economic and community development.



Stephen Donnet-Jones at Bawoorrooga community

Mulan Community Emergency COVID Donations

The COVID-19 lockdowns – while being a vital measure in preventing the spread of COVID-19 to vulnerable remote communities – also had the effect of exacerbating some of the challenges already faced by extremely remote communities. For the remote desert WA community of Mulan, which is a 3,000km drive from Perth, isolation and lack of ready access to resources has always been a challenge. As cold desert winds blew across the community, Mulan residents struggled with a shortage of warm clothes, blankets and other essential items. FISH, working with the Mulan school Teacher's Assistant, Donna Rush-Harvey, organised and coordinated a campaign to collect and deliver much needed donations of clothing, blankets and other essential items to the Mulan Community. Donna and the community were thrilled with the outcome:



"I just love the work of FISH and their support for our kids and their community. We have more than tripled what we had hoped for the community. Thank you FISH and to everyone who has donated."



Donna and children in Mulan community (L) Clothes donated ready for transport to Mulan (R)



CREATIVE



CREATIVE

Purpose

FISH believes that creative programs are critical to bringing about positive social change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and creative thinkers have used song, painting and other visual and written forms of art to share wisdom, raise awareness of oppression, inequality and injustice and to promote positive stories to bring about social change.

Furthermore, creative cultural arts are well understood to contribute considerably to the wellbeing of communities and society, and are powerful tools with which to engage communities in various levels of change. Arts contribute to the development of a community's creative learning, create healthy communities and help build community capacity, sustainability and leadership.

Through our creative arm we use song, painting and other visual and written forms of art to share wisdom, raise awareness of oppression, inequality and injustice and to promote positive stories to bring about social change. FISH believes in the importance of storytelling and the process of sharing knowledge and experience through sharing stories to:

- develop an appreciation of each other's journeys;
- a deeper understanding of issues each other and the community face;
- celebrating achievements of people and provide positive roles models; and
- highlighting issues and effective ways to address those issues that work.

Through the process of sharing stories through a variety of mediums such as film, drama, writing, yarning, song, creative education, lectures and presentations we work to bring healing to the spirit, heart, mind, body and land to help create healthy people and communities.

Who's Involved

FISH works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in creative arts initiatives that provide opportunities for them to share their knowledge and skill, while enhancing their self-esteem and acquiring a sense of community belonging, where they are valued and able to positively contribute to their community.

Film Initiative

Film and television are a great avenue for sharing stories as it helps people move their head and heart as they journey with people on screen as their story unfolds. Film and television are also a great way to feature Aboriginal people enabling them to share their wisdom, humour and insights to the broader community to teach people how to connect and care for each other and for country.

Under the FISH Creative arm we are auspicing the development of the feature film script RUBBISH MOB which Melanie Hogan is producing and Victor Hunter, FISH Director and Co-founder, has been engaged in. The aim will be to shoot the film at



Bawoorrooga Community and in the Fitzroy Valley in regional Western Australia.

It has been great to have the Baxter Charitable Foundation, Macquarie Foundation, Macquarie Bank and Peter Joseph join with FISH on this initiative.

FISH Films@The Backlot Initiative

In 2021, FISH officially launched its monthly Indigenous-themed Australian film screenings at Perth's Backlot Theatre. Backlot Theatre is Perth's only purpose-built venue for private cinema screenings, functions and presentations. The theatre houses a 50-seat screening room and upmarket lounge.

Each monthly event commences with the serving of an amazing array of Indigenous themed cuisine prepared by FISH supporter, Local & Aesthetic, and infused with native foods and herbs from Aboriginal owned FISH partner, Mayi Harvests. Initially, guests mingle and meet the FISH team and film industry guests. Patrons then settle into their seats for a presentation and Q&A by film industry guests followed by an Indigenous short-film screening and then the night's feature-length film. Films to date have included the iconic Australian comedy *Three Summers*, as well multiple award winning films, like *Ten Canoes* and *The Crossing*.

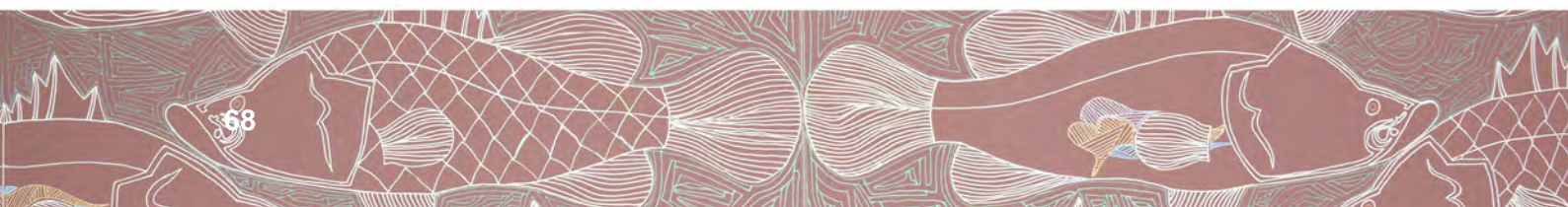
FISH believes in the importance of storytelling and the process of sharing knowledge and experience through sharing stories. By doing this, we gain an understanding of each other's journeys, challenges and values. Storytelling allows us to celebrate people's achievements, find positive role models, and explore effective ways to address issues we face as a society.

The aim of the FISH-Backlot initiative is to:

- Support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander film industry;
- Promote Indigenous and Indigenous themed films;
- Share Australian stories, history and culture; and
- Promote the work of FISH and raise funds for the FISH Creative Program.

The screenings are often accompanied by special events, including presentations by the film directors, actors or producers, fundraising auctions, and discussions about the films.

These events have been made possible thanks to the generous support of Ian Hale and his team at The Backlot Perth, as well as event sponsor ABLE Bus and Coach and its company Director Kevin de Bruin, and the wonderful work of Gail Humphreys who coordinates the events.





The Backlot Perth Cinema (L) Image from the movie Ten Canoes (R)

Poetry

At the start of each week, FISH is honoured to publish and share a poem written and recited by Justin Geange. Justin is a Maori man from Logan, Queensland, a devoted husband and father of two, plumber by trade, and works for the suicide prevention charity, Mates in Construction.

Supporting people in crisis is one of Justin's passions, stemming from his own personal battle with mental illness and suicidality. Justin has found that writing poetry improves his own wellbeing and he hopes his transparency may encourage or even help others experiencing similar challenges.

FISH uses the creative space to bring messages of reflection and hope, encouraging us all to walk shoulder to shoulder, softly on the land, to make this earth a better place. You can find Justin's poems on FISH's social media platforms, including our Youtube channel and Facebook page.

Excerpt from "This Day" by Justin Geange:



*"...But like diamonds are formed from coal under heat
And how stars are only noticed at night,
So too, I was stumbling round in the dark,
Finding hope from a tiny speck of light.*

*That speck helped me crawl, then to walk then to run
As slowly it lifted my gaze,
To the work I'm now doing; a passion I'm pursuing,
To help struggling mates through tough days.*

*So it seems eight years on, I have learned loved and grown,
And one thing I now realise;
That no matter how dark and stormy life gets,
In time the sun will always rise."*

Pro-bono support and volunteers

The work of FISH would not be possible without the ongoing dedication and generosity of our many supporters. In the past year, in addition to the support of our financial donors and 250 Club members, we have been privileged to receive pro-bono and volunteer support across a range of specialised areas. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed their expertise, including:

Pro-bono Services:

- AMG Pump Rentals - Mike Lane
- Avalon Surveys - Brad Reed
- Bushfire Prone Planning - Mike Scott
- Chrysalis Quantity Surveying - Daniel Thickbroom
- Clayton Utz - Legal Services
- Donald Veal Consultants (DVC) - Don Veil
- JDA Hydrology - Jim Davies
- Petro Min Engineers - Geoff Mitchell
- Urban Plan - Ian Brashaw

Volunteers and Champions:

- Steven Andreazza
- Sarah Brooke
- Judith Ehling
- Danny Fleming
- Gail Humphreys
- Holly Johnsen
- Giri Sitham
- Bianca Starceвич
- Kevin Stork
- Charlotte O'Shea

Foundation for Indigenous
Sustainable Health
2020-2021



CONTACT:

Foundation for Indigenous
Sustainable Health
PO Box 7741
Cloisters Square WA, 6850

Tel: 0484 081 329
Email: info@fish.asn.au

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National Partners



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ATCO



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COMMUNITY IMPACT
FOUNDATION



Laura
Olsson