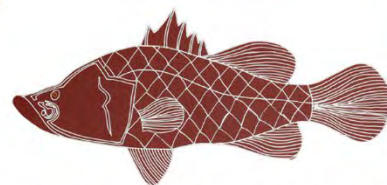


FISH



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

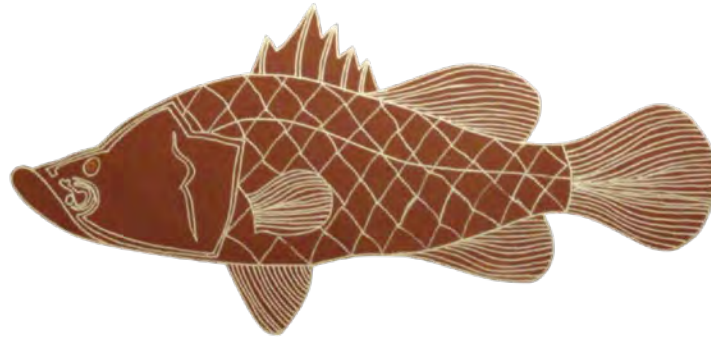


Foundation
for Indigenous
Sustainable Health

Annual Report
2021-2022



Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health



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



Annual Report

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2021-2022

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FISH acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first peoples of our nation and as the traditional owners of the land. FISH acknowledges that there were hundreds of different First Nations groups within Australia prior to European settlement, each with their own distinctive language, customs and lore. Under traditional lore and custom, First Nations people have cultural responsibilities and rights in relation to the land of which they are the traditional owners. First Nations people have a living spiritual, cultural, familial and social connection with the land. First Nations 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.





Table of Contents

About Us	2
What We Do	4
Chairperson's Report	5
Chief Executive Officer's Report	6
Organisational Capability	9
Governance	9
Ambassadors	10
FISH Team	11
Co-Design Group	14
Financial sustainability	16
Education	21
Bawoorrooga Horticulture Training Program.....	22
Halls Head College: Creation of a culturally safe school	23
FISH Books for All Program	25
Educational Resources Programs.....	26
Libraries.....	27
Professional Development and Cultural Competency Training	27
Housing	29
Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative	31
Bawoorrooga: Community Development Plan	36
Employment	39
FISH Retail Social Enterprise, Art Gallery, and Online Shop.....	41
Microfinance and Artist Support	44
Trainee and Internship Programs.....	47
Justice	51
FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Justice & Healing Initiative	53
Emergency Assistance in Justice System.....	59
Health	61
Disability Support	62
Bawoorrooga Horticulture.....	63
Remote Community Support Program	64
Creative	67
Artist in Residence	67
FISH Films @ The Backlot Initiative.....	69
FISH Publishing.....	70
Poetry.....	71



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 that 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

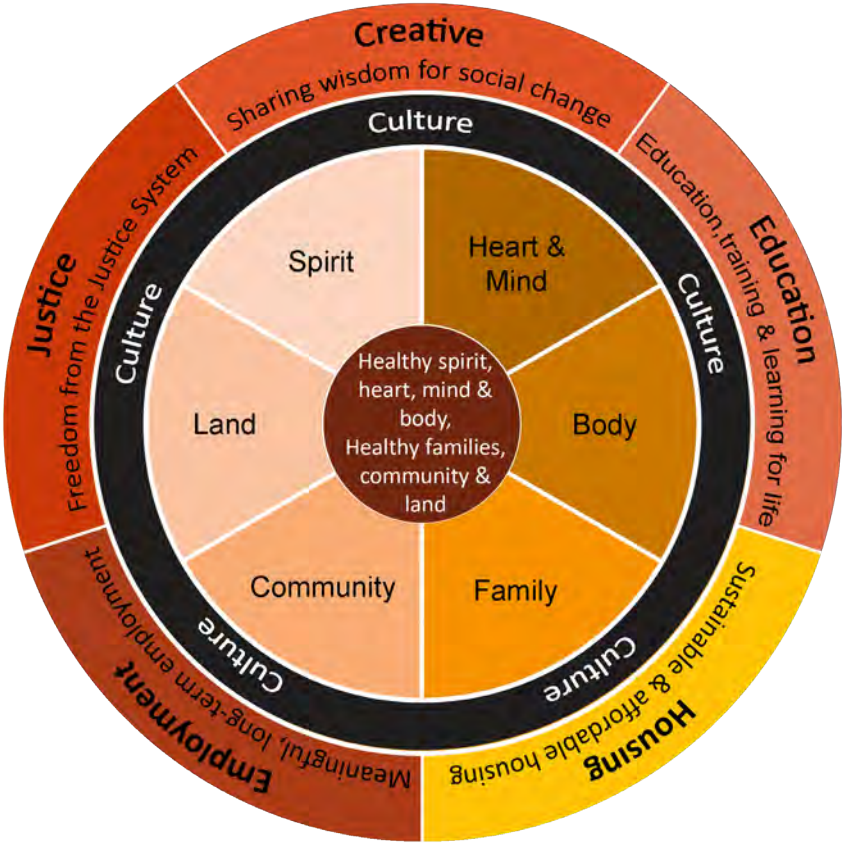
We are inspired to **act** from **Compassion** and strive for **Equality**. We approach our work with **Courage, Integrity, Perseverance, and Resourcefulness**.





<p>COMPASSION</p> <p>We are driven by compassion, care, and solidarity for those suffering from 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 to 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>

The diagram below summarises how we work, 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).¹

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: **Creative, 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**.

¹ SEWB is a community-owned concept, first formally referenced in the National Aboriginal Health Strategy, 1989. Diagram adapted from Gee, Dudgeon, Schultz, Hart, & Kelly, 2013.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



Last year we once again focused on establishing a strong platform from which future and ongoing activities of FISH can be based. The challenges of the global pandemic continued with significant impact when the state of Western Australia opened to the rest of Australia, creating some disruption to our nascent social enterprises.

Through these challenges we have continued to see innovation from adversity. We have seen FISH staff as well as Aboriginal leaders, communities, and businesses rise through these challenges to show resilience and strength to forces outside their control. The support for FISH has grown and this allowed us to deliver resources to remote communities and towns across Western Australia.

Despite the challenges, FISH's social enterprises have continued to mature online, in Mount Lawley, and with preliminary activities to establish a shop at Perth Airport. This has also allowed the Aboriginal Retail Traineeship initiative to expand. FISH has continued to grow its microfinance and artist support and we have seen the Artist in Residence program expand.

FISH continued to build on past successes with the Bawoorrooga Community with further development of the orchard and nursery. A building maintenance program was also implemented as a training initiative with community members. The co-design process, now recognised in peer-reviewed literature, continues as we look forward to developing a worker's camp and enterprise centre that would lead to making the community self-sustainable.

The strong focus on co-design also continued through our proposed Myalup Karla Waangkiny Healing and Justice Initiative. The co-design group was led passionately and strongly by Liza Fraser-Gooda (Board Deputy Chair). The co-design group continues to provide leadership in developing solutions to problems that directly affect Indigenous people. We now look forward to the final submission for planning approval of the 11 hectare site. Through co-design, FISH has continued to pilot its Aboriginal Home Ownership project, commencing a home build near Pinjarra.

FISH has seen a rapid expansion in numerous other projects and I commend Mark Anderson, FISH CEO, and the tireless team at FISH that have implemented significant outcomes. The Books For All program has flourished, providing Indigenous-authored books to those without access to reading material. Building on this success, FISH will soon become a publisher in its own right.

FISH continued its work with Halls Head College to develop a national prototype of a culturally safe built environment. This year we welcomed Rita Lusted to the Board and she has already played an integral role in supporting our education focus. Rita has ties to Wilmen and Koreng country and is currently working with WA's Education Department to drive "Two-way Science".

I thank all the Board as well as staff, volunteers, and supporters for their ongoing enthusiastic commitment as we work together with Aboriginal people to drive sustainable change to develop social and emotional well-being for all.

Dr Scott Martyn (Board Chair)



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



It is hard to imagine that at the end of 2016 that FISH only had \$600 in the bank, no offices, staff, insurance or infrastructure and the organisation had been mothballed for 18 months.

Here we are in 2021/2022 with a group of passionate, focussed, and skilled Board Members, staff, volunteers, partners and supporters who are all deeply committed to 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.

We are directed and led by, and for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, working across Western Australia and Australia, focussed on the principle of a 'hand up and not a hand out'. We work in partnership with others to learn to walk softly upon this land as together we bring about positive sustainable long-term change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and community.

FISH does not rely on government funding, as government policy does not always meet community need in bringing about positive long term sustainable change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This being the case, FISH cannot do what we do without your support and for that I personally thank you.


Throughout this report you will gain a deeper understanding of the work we do, why we do it, and the impact it is making. We are focussed on structural reform, to change the way we do things as we continue to see more children in care than the stolen generation; the highest number of incarcerated Indigenous people in the industrialised world; one of the highest suicide rates for Indigenous young people; chronic housing problems with homelessness and overcrowding; and ongoing challenges of racism and a lack of progress in closing the gap.

While saying all of this, FISH works from a strengths-based approach where 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.

We aim to keep hope alive in addressing generational disadvantage of First Nations 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 led by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

While this is a comprehensive report, there are several areas I want to highlight, the first is the expansion of our Social Enterprise and the impact it is having on the community. I want to acknowledge the work of FISH's Business Development Manager Katrina Cox in driving this initiative. 100% of our staff now working in our Social Enterprise are Aboriginal, led by Polly Wilson, our Trainee Social Enterprise Manager. Polly leads an amazing team of retail trainees, and we look forward to her graduating in the first quarter of next year and taking on the role of our Perth Metro Social Enterprise Manager.





This work is very important as it generates revenue to support the mission of FISH; it provides training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people; supports Aboriginal microenterprises, authors, and artists in becoming economically self-sustaining; and connects the community to great First Nations products, stories, and art to deepen Australian's cultural understanding and connection.

We are pleased to now be the largest Indigenous Book Retailer in Australia with over 430 titles, and this year FISH became a publishing house led by Blake Innes with our first children's book published by new author and Gooniyandi man, Scott Wilson. Another major step forward in the sharing of stories as we connect the head, heart, and spirit to bring positive change.

FISH's work in Microfinance has continued to expand with several projects now successfully completed. One of the exciting initiatives we funded through our interest free Microfinance loans was the very first Indigenous Superhero Comic Dark Heart, which is part of the new Indigiverse series. This is a major positive step forward using the tool of writing as a way of sharing cultural knowledge, stories and language connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to a passion of engaging with reading in a different format.

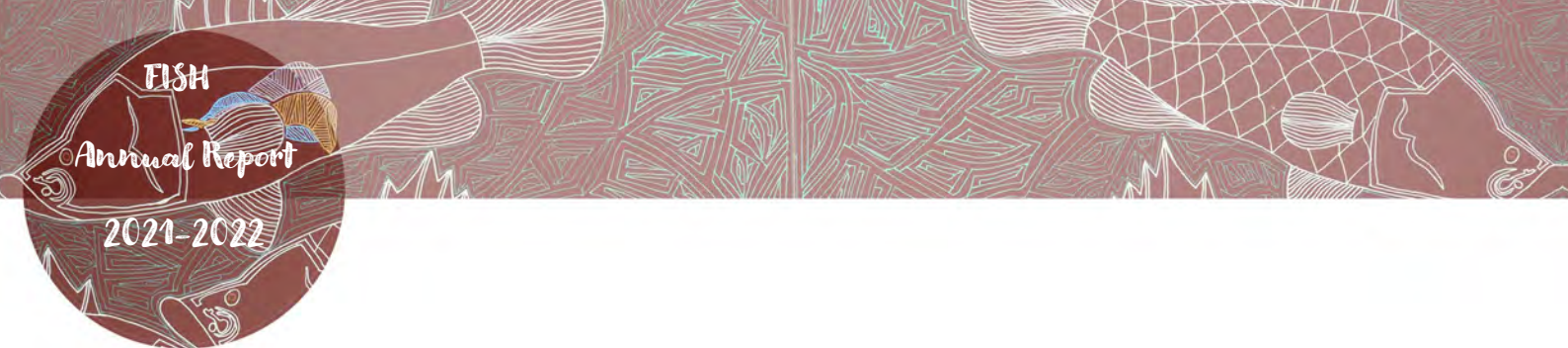
This year FISH has continued to solidify our work in our Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative as we have completed our first home in the northwest and now we are progressing strongly with our first home in the southwest of Western Australia. We are working to meet our commitment to complete the construction of a further 48 homes over the next 5-8 years which will make a significant impact on breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty, as shown by international research.

Maintenance of Aboriginal housing has for years continued to be a challenge in remote communities and one of the great outcomes with our first house constructed at Bawoorrooga Community is that the community now drive their own maintenance program with a 20 year rotational maintenance schedule that they can drive themselves, and in most cases carry out the maintenance work. As Claude says, "I walk out to my front door and Bunnings is all around me. To fix my walls all I need to do is mix up Pindan sand with lime and patch my own walls."

Justice and the high incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia continues to be a major issue in this country. I commend the amazing work of the FISH Co-design Group Members from all over Australia who have continued their passionate work in co-designing the FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Healing and Justice Initiative as a national prototype. In this project, First Nations people aged 16-35 can heal and receive holistic support to break intergenerational cycles of trauma, avoid (re)engagement in the justice system and contribute positively to society.

I look forward to this initiative receiving full Planning Approval for the whole 11 hectare site and to turning the first sod prior to the close of 2022. We also look forward to the next stage in the development of the justice work at Bawoorrooga Community in the remote Kimberley Region with securing of funding to complete the worker's camp.

I wanted to highlight the importance of the work of FISH in the justice space by sharing a particular story. This year we helped a young man who had been falsely accused and incarcerated on remand while waiting for their case to be heard. The incarceration led to him losing his well-paid mining job, which put his housing at risk and his partner and young children at risk of becoming homeless. He also almost had his car repossessed, as he could



not make the repayments which would have left his partner and children with no vehicle, therefore affecting his son's schooling and being able to shop and access support services for his family. The FISH team was able to provide the wrap around support for the young man and his family; ensure their housing and motor vehicle were secured; find a lawyer who would support the young man and work to prove his innocence; secure employment and support the young man to be released on parole so he could earn money to support his family while we worked on his case. We were also able to provide mentoring and support 7 days a week to the young man while incarcerated and his family to support their emotional, mental, and psychological wellbeing.

That young man was told by the prosecutor, his legal aid lawyer and even the judge to consider pleading guilty as the sentence would be lighter. His comment to FISH was "why would I plead guilty if I didn't do it?" He didn't plead guilty, and we secured a lawyer who was willing to do the heavy lifting and research the case to prove his innocence.

Through the work of FISH that young man and his family did not lose their home and become homeless; did not get their car repossessed; was proven not guilty and did not end up with a record or worse incarcerated for longer; he is now employed in a supportive well paid job with one of FISH's partners; and now part of FISH's Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative. A life changed and a family supported. This work has an intergenerational positive impact, and we could not do it without our many supporters and partners.

I want to finish by acknowledging the in-kind and financial support of so many individuals, families, trusts, foundations, businesses, and communities that enable us to do the impossible, with not much, for many people, to make a real, positive lasting difference.

We want to also acknowledge the honour we feel in being a recipient of a bequest from the Estate of the late Sonya Pamela Rodgers. We honour her by ensuring her legacy continues on in bringing intergenerational change to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities. We thank you Sonya and your family for your lasting legacy.

Mark Anderson (Chief Executive Officer/Director)



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
and community services



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



Liza Fraser-Gooda
(Deputy Chair)
Bidjara, Ghangulu and
Iman Woman. Co-Founder
of Redspire Safety and
Safespear, Director of
Spear Foundation and
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



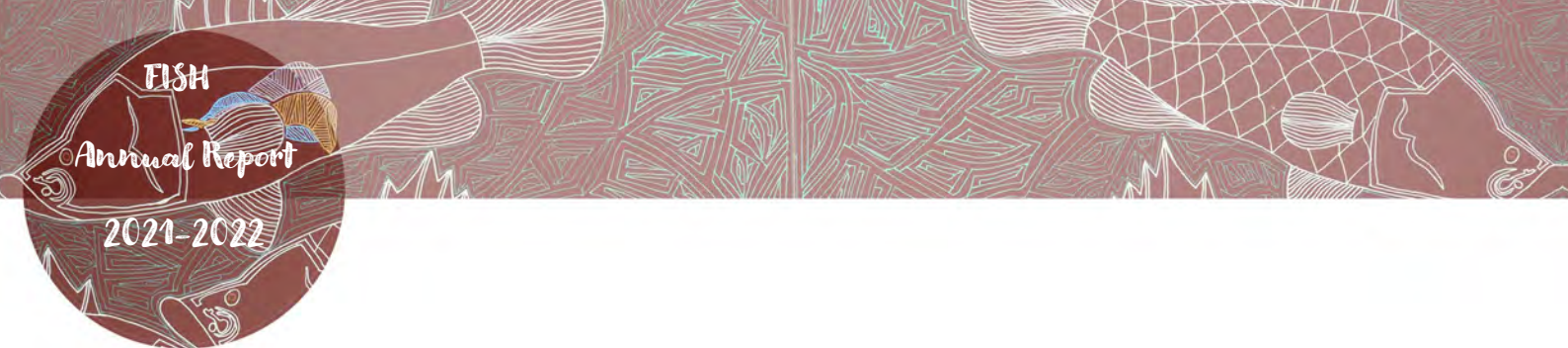
Jeremiah Riley
Yamatji and Nyoongar Man.
Native Title Lawyer working
at State and Federal level,
Economic Development
Manager at Many Rivers



Rita Lusted
Noongar nation, with ties to
Wilmen and Koreng boodja
(Country). Senior Consultant
WA Two-way Science.
Aboriginal Education
Manager at Baldvis
Secondary College.



Mark Anderson
Director & CEO – FISH



Ambassadors



Barry McGuire

Barry is a Balladong, Wadjuk, Noongar man 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 a Cultural Ambassador for St Catherine's College. He is a Cultural Advisor for Woodside Energy and a Director of Aboriginal Choice.



Tjiirdm McGuire

Tjiirdm is FISH's Creative Ambassador. He began his journey with FISH in 2017, starring in the feature film, *Three Summers* – an official FISH partner. Tjiirdm's success in film and television includes his roles in *Featherfoot*, *Firebite*, *Wirnitj*, and the upcoming adrenalin-fuelled ABC drama series, *MaveriX*.



David Rennie

David is an internationally recognised wildlife photographer, environmentalist, aboriginal advocate, and FISH ambassador.



Steven Streat

Steven works for Fortescue Metals Group (FMG) and has organised the collection of cans and bottles from FMG work sites with revenue supporting the ongoing work of FISH and other charities.



FISH Team



Katrina Cox – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Kat is a Wadjela (white) 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 – PROJECT MANAGER

Kristian 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 that are 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 FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Justice and Healing Initiative.



Jara Romero – ARCHITECT & PROJECT COORDINATOR

Jara 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 of structures 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 on the FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Justice and Healing Initiative.



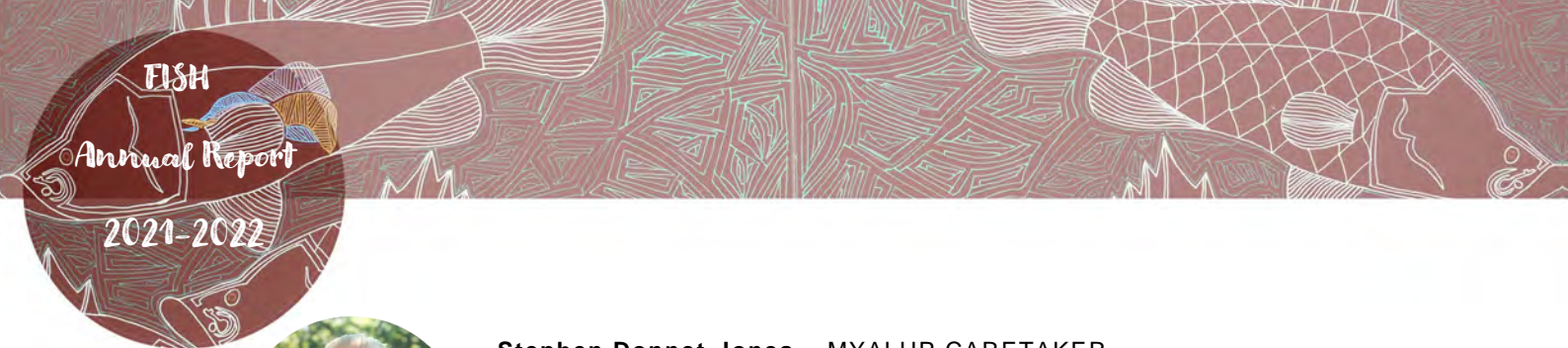
Claude Carter – BAWOORROOGA TEAM LEADER

Claude 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.



Judy Campion – BOOKKEEPER

Judy 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 bookkeeper because she believes in the ethos that FISH stands for.



Stephen Donnet-Jones – MYALUP CARETAKER

Stephen 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 – RETAIL STORE MANAGER

Polly is a proud Gamilaroi, Ngemba Weilwan Woman who grew up in Wee Waa, NSW. Polly is an Artist and mother of four beautiful children. In June 2021 Polly moved her family to Perth to join the FISH team as our Trainee Retail Store Manager and to undertake 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 – NORTHWEST PROJECT MANAGER

Grant spent several 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 - CULTURAL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CO-ORDINATOR
MYALUP KARLA WAANGKINY**

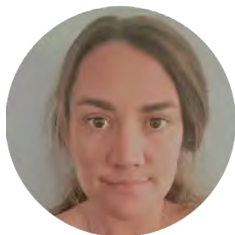
Renna is a proud Walbunja woman from the Yuin nation on south coast of NSW. Living on Noongar Boodja for the past 26 years she is mother to four beautiful daughters. Renna studies social work full time at Curtin University and works as a lived-experience advisor/advocate across various organisations and institutions. Renna sits on the Mayalup Karla Waangkiny 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.



Lisa Fieldhouse – EDUCATION MANAGER

Lisa was born and raised in Balga, Western Australia, however her family origins are as a proud Koori woman from Armidale and Redfern, NSW. Throughout her life Lisa has actively pursued a career working with young people and families and subsequently completed a degree in Youth Work at Edith Cowan University. Lisa's passion is to create meaningful opportunities for First Nation Peoples' voices to be heard and to build the capacity of all people to have a great appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.





Danica Scott - PROGRAMS MANAGER

Danica Scott is a qualified Social Worker. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work, a Diploma of Counselling, a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and is completing a master's degree in Community Development. Danica has held a variety of roles across the community services sector, responsible for service development, training provision, implementation and evaluation within a direct engagement, management, and consultancy capacity. Program areas have included youth training and employment, residential support services (24/7 care), education to work transition, dependent drug and alcohol use including residential rehabilitation, homelessness and housing, personal and family mentoring, life-skills development, severe and complex mental health, disability, and family crisis issues as well as a wide range of individual recreation and wellbeing programs.



Reanna Doolan - TRAINEE CUSTOMER SERVICE RETAIL

Reanna is a proud Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi woman from Pilliga, NSW. Reanna moved to Perth on May 2021 and is excited to be part of the important work that FISH does for her people. Reanna is dedicated to helping empower her mob and break generational cycles, and supporting young people through education and culture.



Kiahara Jacobs Hampton-TRAINEE CUSTOMER SERVICE RETAIL

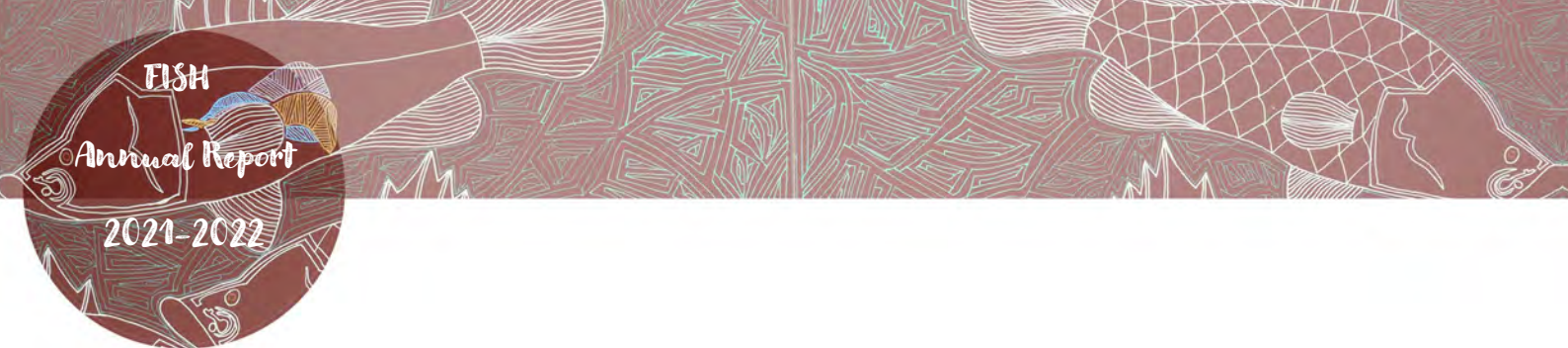
Kiahara is a 22 year old proud Noongar/Koori woman. Her mob is Ballardong, Geawegal, and Wanaruah. Kiahara is studying a Bachelor of Primary Education at Curtin University. The purpose of taking this path is to become the first Aboriginal teacher in her family. She believes that education, particularly around Aboriginal culture, will be the key driver for change in our communities and a fundamental component to the empowerment of our youth at a primary school level.



Shenae Graham - TRAINEE CUSTOMER SERVICE RETAIL

Shenae is a bloodline descendant of the Whadjuk Noongar and Ngardu nations and is a custodian to these lands. Born in the Goldfields region and raised on Noongar Boodjar. Shenae joins FISH's Social Enterprise retail team and will complete a Certificate 111 in Retail.





Co-Design Group



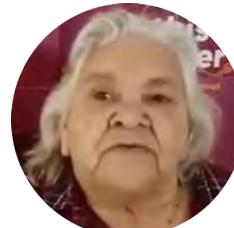
Greg Little



May McGuire



Victor Hunter



Melba Wallam



Dennis Jetta



Liza Fraser-Gooda



Koodah Cornwall



Karen Jacobs



Barry McGuire



Carol Innes



Troy Bennell



Sharon Cooke



Jeff Amatto



Lesley Ugle



Jeremiah Riley



Renna Gayde



Frank Mitchell



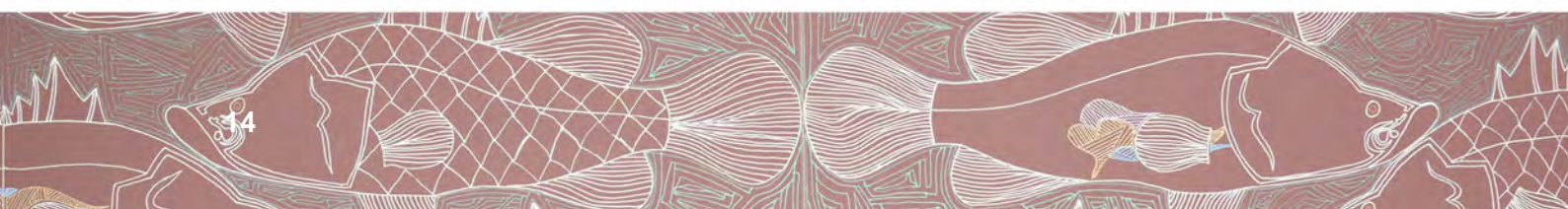
Rita Lusted



Buddy Cornwall



Karen Jetta





Kallan Nannup



Delvene Cornwall



Corey Kahn



Kaisha Champion



Adam Drake



Jara Romero
(Facilitator / Site
Design)



Jo Kirker
(Facilitator/Program
Design)



Mark Anderson
(Facilitator)



FISH team at Myalup Karla 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.

Considering this, in 2017/2018 FISH established a **Future Fund** 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 avoid 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

The Board has established two subset funds under the Future Fund, one being the Microfinance Loan Fund and the Aboriginal Home Ownership Fund, which we are working to grow.



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 First Nations 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.

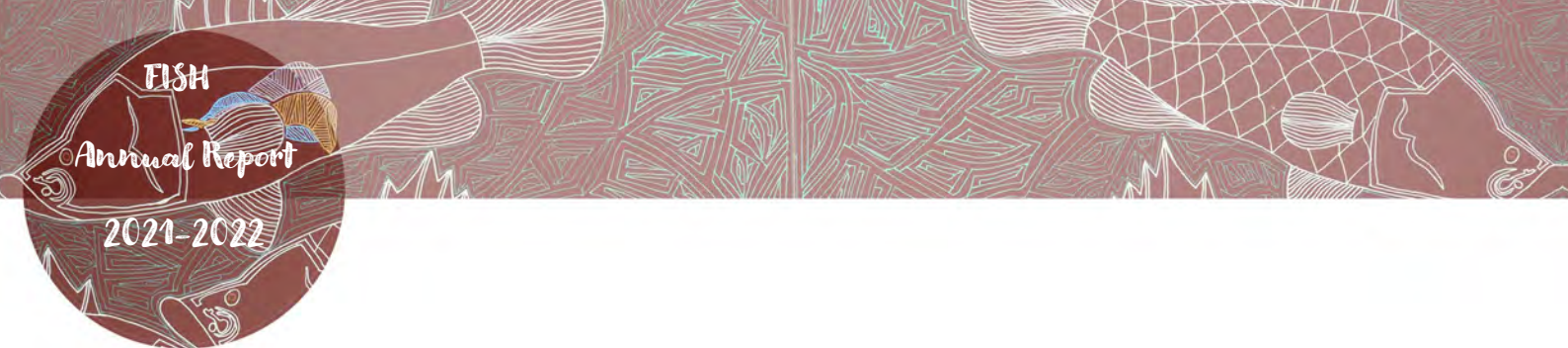
Individuals and organisations can become one of the limited 250 Members of the 250 Club and will be working in partnership with FISH to provide people with a hand up not a hand out. Members make an annual donation of \$250, which can be recurrent or once-off.

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 2022, the FISH 250 Club numbered 128 proud members, and in the next year are working to reach our target of 250 Members. Will you join us?



Gail (FISH volunteer) and 250 Club member Hazel



Bequests – A lasting change

One of the most effective ways of assisting FISH in achieving its mission to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations people and to break the cycle of inter-generational trauma, engagement in the justice system, and poverty, in the medium to long term, is by remembering us in your Will.

It is like planting a seed that grows into a majestic tree, providing shade for many years after we have moved on from this earth.

FISH does not rely on government funding for our work because we know that government policy does not always focus on positive long-term sustainable change for First Nations people.

In making a bequest to FISH, you are helping us break the cycle of inter-generational trauma, poverty, and engagement in the justice system for First Nations people, and enabling them to be valued by and able to positively contribute to our community.

Your lasting, caring gift will be responsibly managed and will continue to benefit many people long after you have gone. You also have the opportunity to nominate which area you would like your bequest to support, such as the Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative, our Justice, Health, Creative, Education, or Employment Initiatives.

To learn more and to access the bequest guide please access our website:
<https://fish.asn.au/make-a-difference/#bequest>.





Thank you

All of us at some point in our lives are going to leave this mortal coil and go off to the Dreaming. The question each one of us face is: what have we done to leave this world a better place than when we arrived?

One of the ways each one of us can leave a lasting legacy is through a bequest, and this year FISH were honoured to receive a bequest from the Estate of the late Sonya Pamela Rodgers as she wanted to leave a lasting legacy for the benefit of First Nations people.

The bequest is spread over a three-year period and will assist FISH in a range of areas to bring positive long term sustainable change in the lives of First Nations people, their families and communities. We took the time to explore which areas would make a lasting difference for both FISH and the communities in which we operate to ensure we were able to appropriately honour this generous gift from the late Sonya Pamela Rodgers.

Over the next three years the bequest will enable FISH to become a Group Training Organisation which will provide culturally appropriate and supported employment opportunities for First Nations people to assist in breaking the cycle of poverty and enable them to become economically independent.

The bequest will also enable FISH to become a Registered Training Organisation to provide certified training for First Nations people led by First Nations people. This will also tie into the work we are doing within the education system to support young Aboriginal people to transition from school into culturally supportive training and employment opportunities.

In the third year the bequest will assist FISH in becoming a registered Curriculum and Reengagement in Education (CARE) School. The purpose of the school is the education of secondary aged First Nations students who have been unable to access or have significant difficulty in accessing mainstream education. The school will provide culturally appropriate educational services to meet the needs of the students to enable them to succeed in education therefore leading to further training and employment opportunities.

Finally, the bequest will also contribute to the implementation work for the FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Justice and Healing Initiative and to FISH's Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative Capital Rotating Fund to support the construction of 50 codesigned homes over the next 5-8 years. This will assist in breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty through home ownership.

We thank and honour the late Sonya Pamela Rodgers and her family for this lasting gift that will truly bring positive intergenerational change for First Nations people over the ensuing years.



EDUCATION

EDUCATION

Purpose

Education and learning for life

FISH works with First Nations people to create equal opportunities in education to break intergenerational cycles of social disadvantage.

FISH also educates non-Indigenous people in First Nations history and the relevance of their Cultures to create better cultural, social, and economic relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians.

Why these Programs

Attendance – Standards - Attainment - Relevance

According to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Report (2022) on improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians, some educational metrics are on track, but there is more to do.²

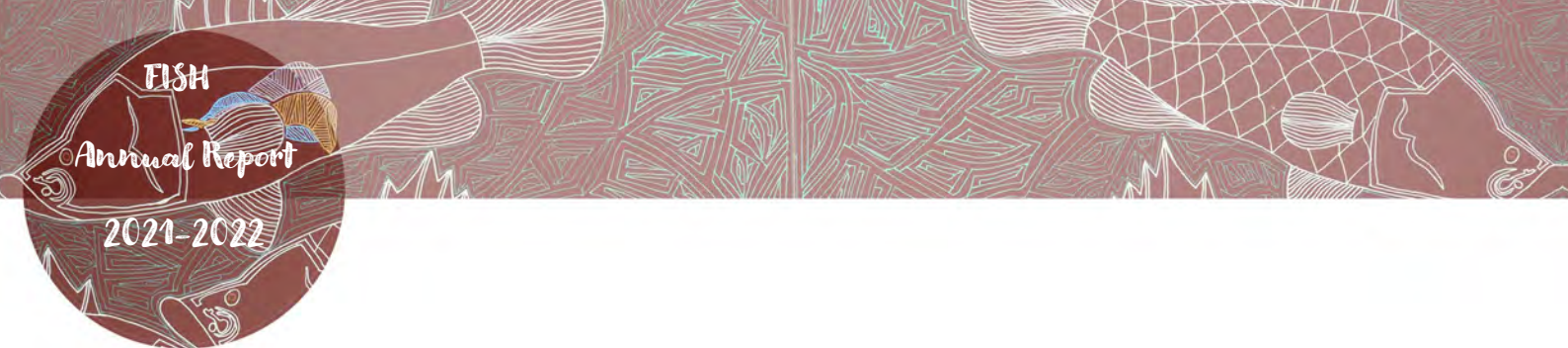
Metric	Target	Tracking	Trend
Early Childhood Education	96.7% enrolment	✓	
School Attendance	Close the gap	✗	Not improving: around 82% Primary school: 9% below Secondary school: 17% below
Reading & Numeracy	Halve the gap	✗	Improving across all year levels Reading 70% of national minimum Numeracy 80% of national minimum
Year 12 Attainment	Halve the gap	✓	66% overall (85% in major cities; 38% in remote areas)

Australian Census Data and research conducted by Australian Indigenous Health *Info Net* reveals the following:³

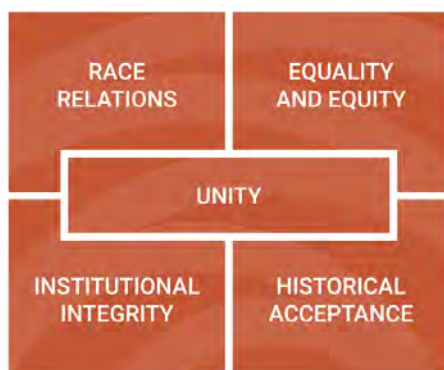
Percentage	Metric
48%	Year 9 students were below the minimum standard for writing
34%	Year 9 students were below the minimum standard for reading
47%	Completed Year 12
37%	Completed vocational or tertiary studies

² Commonwealth Government, Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Closing the Gap Annual Data Compilation Report, 2022.

³ Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status 2021 (2022), Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet.



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 First Nations history, the inherent strength and relevance of First Nations cultures, and acknowledge the inequality, inequity, and racism First Nations people experience today. All non-Indigenous Australians need to be able to engage in reconciliation, which embraces the five inter-related dimensions (left, from Reconciliation Australia), to demonstrate respect, recognition, and trust for Indigenous Australians.

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

Bawoorrooga Horticulture Training Program

Since 2017, FISH has worked with the remote Bawoorrooga Community in the East Kimberley on a comprehensive program of housing, horticulture, education, mentoring, employment, community development, and enterprise.

In 2022, FISH delivered a horticulture program at Bawoorrooga to directly engage young people in constructive outdoor activities within a community environment which is safe, healthy, and culturally-focused. The three-month program was delivered by a full-time a trainer and a cultural elder experienced in youth support. Participants successfully completed certified training towards a Certificate II in Workplace Skills.

FISH acknowledges the support of the Community Coordination Unit of the Police Department of WA for their assistance with funding through the Community Crime Prevention Fund which supports local community crime prevention initiatives, including youth support and engagement, early intervention, and opportunity creation.

The 15 program participants were members of Bawoorrooga and surrounding communities predominantly from the Kimberley and Western Desert language groups, including Gooniyandi, Martu, Wangkatjunka, and Walmajarri.

Participants learned to build and manage a nursery and orchard within the framework of the existing FISH program of sustainable Indigenous community housing, training, employment, and enterprise at Bawoorrooga Community. Activities included: nursery construction, fence installation, irrigation systems, planting, first aid, WHS training, and other workplace skills. As a direct result of the program, one of the participants (16-year-old male) obtained employment at neighboring Gogo Station.



This initiative added further to the strength of Bawoorrooga community as a safe place where people can heal, reconnect to culture, and work towards building their own positive futures. The expanded nursery and orchard will now continue to support the community's fresh produce needs.



Horticulture training program at Bawoorrooga Community

Halls Head College: Creation of a culturally safe school

FISH is honoured to work with so many amazing schools and educators who are passionate and focussed on creating the best educational programs possible for all young people to inspire students to be the best they can be in life. To create a lifelong love of learning.

FISH's partnership with Halls Head College in the south of Western Australia is a great example of this process in action.

FISH Architect Jara Romero and CEO Mark Anderson worked with the College through a co-design process spanning from the school entrance right throughout the whole campus. FISH and the College created a suite of architectural and landscaping designs to create a physical environment that inspires students, teachers, and community, connects to country, and learns from the old wisdom of the original custodians of the land on which the school is situated.

The overarching project, called *Creation of a Culturally Safe School*, consists of 41 smaller projects organised over three years, to be developed with the collaboration of students, teachers, artists, and other professionals. The projects range from murals painted on campus walls, to bush tucker and bush medicine gardens, to refurbishment of existing outdoor spaces.

This work has built on the leadership of Aboriginal Elder Koodah Cornwall, and the College's Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer (AIEO), Jo Bell.

"We are looking forward to the next stage of our journey through this co-design process as we recognise the school environment as the third teacher and work together to create a place where our students are connected to the oldest living culture in the world and inspired in their learning," Sean Wrigley, Deputy Principal.



FISH believes that the physical environment is the third teacher. If we do not create physical and social environments that actively engage children and young people in their learning, then we are failing them.

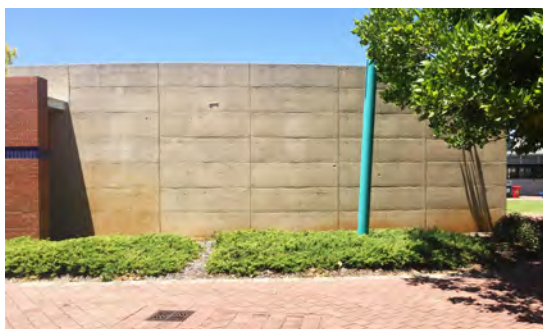
"There are three teachers of children: adults, other children, and their physical environment." Loris Malaguzzi, Reggio Emilia education

For thousands of years, First Nations people have understood the importance of the environment as a teacher. Everyday learnings were found in the environment around them as they connected to it. Many of our modern societies forgot this principle, instead creating school environments where students merely enter the classroom to receive force-fed knowledge. Fortunately, as we can see from Halls Head College and many other examples, our society is now beginning to rediscover some of the traditional wisdom.

FISH Education Manager Lisa Fieldhouse is now working with Halls Head College to implement the program over the next three years tied into the curriculum.



FISH team meeting with Halls Head educators and management team at the Wellbeing Centre in Halls Head Campus.



One of the project proposals which forms part of the *Creation of a Culturally Safe School*



FISH Books for All Program

FISH believes in celebrating language and culture as a pathway to lifting literacy levels in Indigenous communities and towns. Storytelling in community has the power to increase cultural understanding and arouse emotions that can lead to action and change.

Accessibility to appropriate literature that engages young people has proven to have major positive impacts in improving education, training, and employment outcomes as it increases literacy and positive engagement in learning.

Based on the success of FISH's previous educational programs and the increasing demand for culturally appropriate resources for Indigenous children, FISH has established the 'FISH Books for All' program.

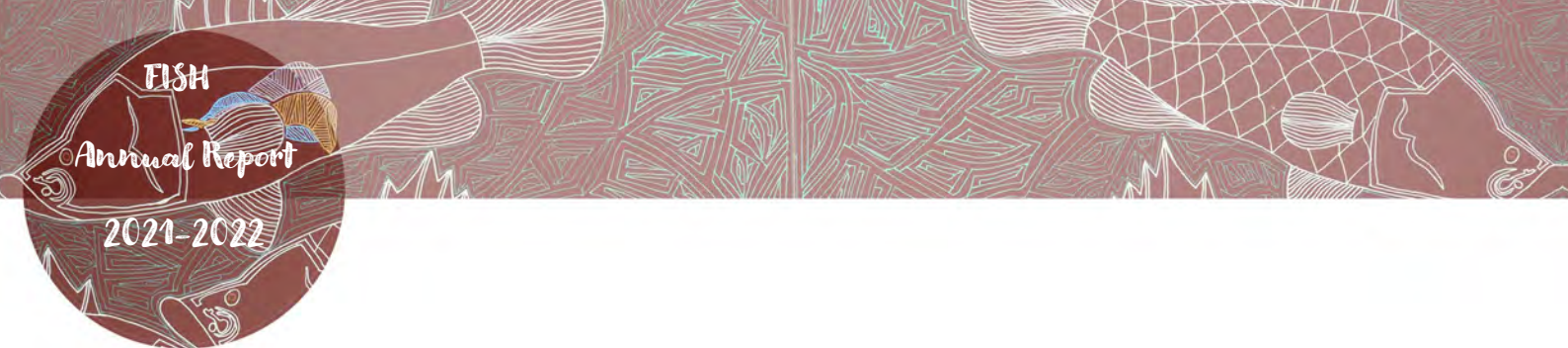
- Indigenous-authored books to young people most in need.
- Extensive range of titles from around Australia, selected for their value in being educational, culturally appropriate, accessible, and relevant to their audience.
- Recipients are from high-need categories: youth in remote communities, children in foster care or under guardianship, or low socio-economic childcare centres.

Access to appropriate educational resources and books fosters cultural pride, reignites spirit, and equips people to thrive in the modern world. Reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a child's future educational success – more than their family circumstances, their parents' educational background, or their income. We want to see more children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with a life-long habit of reading for pleasure and the improved life chances this brings them.

Since the commencement of the program, FISH Books For All has provided \$19,990 worth of books to 19 remote communities, care schools, foster groups, schools, and Not for Profits. We thank our supporters, including Future2 Foundation, EnScope, Aurizon, Jackson McDonald, Mandurah Baptist College, Pegasus Legacy Trust, Emma Alderson, and others for making this program possible.



Children in remote communities reading the books from Books for All



Recipient comments:

"Winjan are proud to be working with FISH. This addition of a culturally appropriate library for our centre will be a great inspiration to our children and youth that access our services. Having books written by our mob for our mob is a way of encouraging our young people to read" Winjan Manager, Trevor Stack.

"We are very remote here and it is not very often that we get people like FISH dropping in with such wonderful educational gifts for our students. They just love the books, educational games and resources and it will make such a difference in encouraging the students to read and be actively engaged in their learning." Wangkatjunga Remote Community School

"A heartfelt thanks to the FISH team for visiting our school and giving us a big box of beautiful books by Indigenous authors. The books will be incorporated into our literacy program and be very well read," Fitzroy Valley District High School team.

"Working with FISH has created pathways and provided resources through Aboriginal authors to connect our students with Cultural ways, embedding the knowledge authentically of our First Nations people. As a school we would like to extend out thank you to ENSCOPE for making the kind donation of Noongar/English books possible, which will benefit students for many years to come." Northam Primary School.

Educational Resources Programs

FISH has 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. FISH has developed a stock of over 420 book titles, 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 First Nations authors and cultural educators.



FISH Education Manager Lisa Fieldhouse at Northam Primary School



Libraries

FISH continues to work with local government libraries, and we are encouraged to see such a focus on building a comprehensive range of First Nations books to ensure children, parents, and teachers have access to culturally appropriate resources.

We acknowledge the great work of the librarians and library staff in building the representation of First Nations authors, poets, and historians, on their bookshelves. The brightly coloured children's picture books, full of artwork, relatable characters, and stories of the Dreaming, are becoming firm favourites for story time.

Professional Development and Cultural Competency Training

Since 2016, FISH has been running Cultural Competency Professional Development Training for educators, government agencies, businesses, and corporations to bring a deeper understanding of First Nations culture and history – moving them past reconciliation.

The training is focussed on connecting people's head knowledge with their heart and spirit. As we do that, each individual's personal paradigm is shifted 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 First Nations people. We help participants understand:

- The structure and cultural richness of First Nations 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 First Nations people.
- The intergenerational impact of those laws and policies on First Nations people through intergenerational stories that 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 First Nations people across Australia.



Professional Development at the Murray Districts Aboriginal Association's Cultural Centre, and at the Pinjarra Massacre Site.



HOUSING

HOUSING

Purpose

Sustainable, appropriate, secure, and affordable housing

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

Why these Projects

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

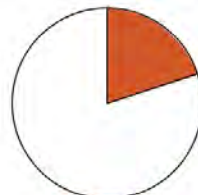
Homelessness – Overcrowding – Home Ownership

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) revealed that homelessness, overcrowding, and substandard housing, are common issues for First Nations people.⁴ Indigenous Australians accounted for **over one-fifth of the homeless population nationally** (22% or an estimated 23,437 people).



1 in 3

Experience **homelessness**
in their lifetime



1 in 5

Living in **overcrowded**
dwellings



1 in 5

Not living in a house of
acceptable standards



1 in 4

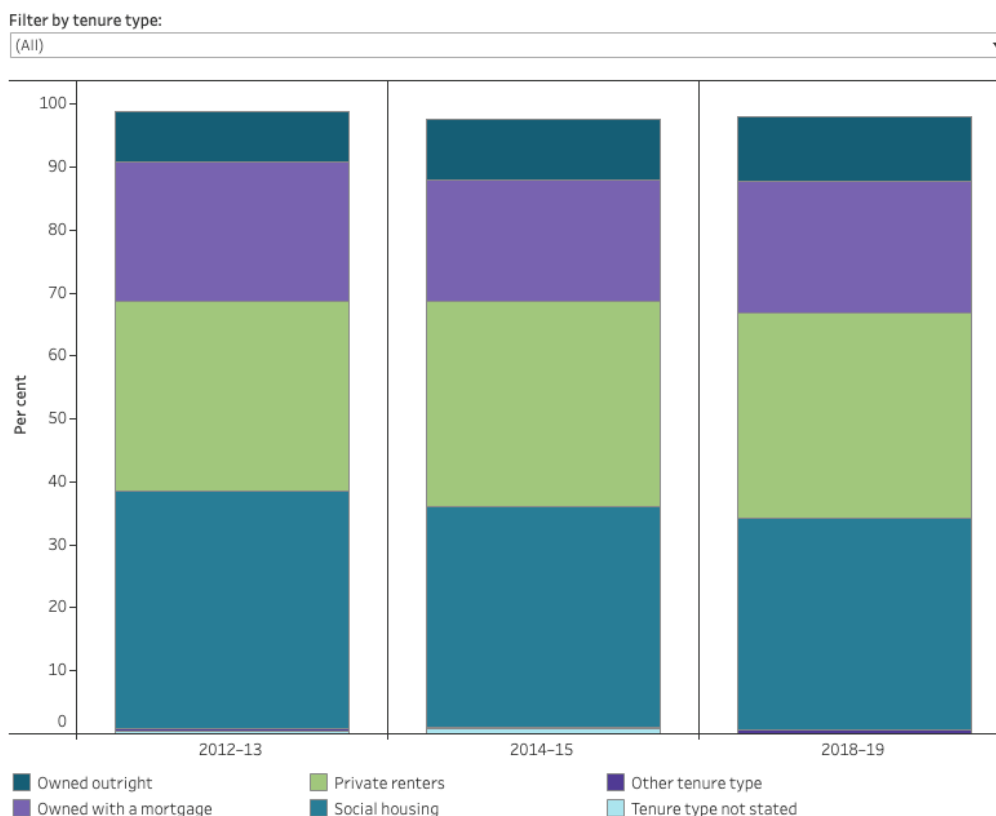
Reported **structural**
issues in their house

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)



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.⁵

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




1 in 5 Indigenous Australians lived in **social housing**,⁶ which was 10 times more likely than non-Indigenous Australians. In remote areas, the social housing rate was a staggering 56%.

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.

⁵ Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status in Western Australia; Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet, 2019

⁶ Australia's welfare 2019 in brief: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019





Millions of dollars have been spent and continues to be spent each year on social housing for First Nations people across Australia. For many years, the construction and maintenance of social housing for First Nations people in urban, regional, and remote areas has been contracted out to builders and maintenance companies. Up-skilling of First Nations people in the local community to construct and maintain their own houses has been minimal, or 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.”⁷

FISH recognises the urgent need for safe, secure, appropriate, and affordable housing for First Nations 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 First Nations Australians was 31% which is less than half that of non-Indigenous home ownership at around 70%, reflecting a legacy of intergenerational disadvantage.⁸ 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 First Nations people. 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.

Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative

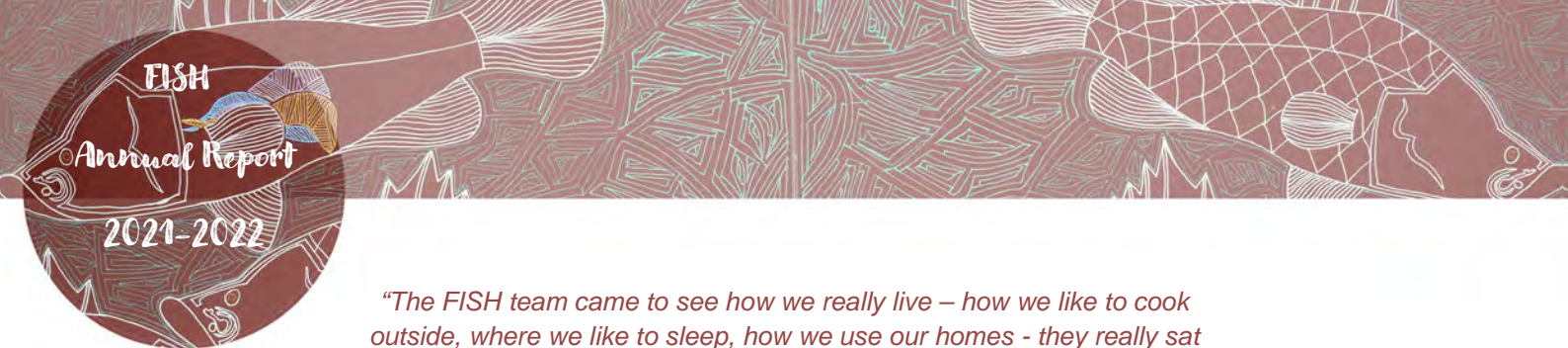
FISH has developed a model to build safe, secure, appropriate, and affordable houses, designed using sustainable principles, with First Nations people. Each family will be involved in the co-design process and complete 200 hours of ‘sweat equity’ working on appropriate elements of their home construction, under expert supervision. They will then purchase their homes at 75% of the market value.

Core strategies:

- First Nations people co-design and co-build their homes.
- Open and transparent selection process.
- Sustainable and renewable design principles.
- Training and employment of First Nations people and their businesses.
- Mentoring in financial literacy and management.
- Removing barriers to home loans (through working with IBA, major banks and Government).
- Securing blocks of land at no cost or below commercial value.

⁷ Mary Reynolds Badcock Foundation, Working Paper on Housing and Poverty, 1998.

⁸ Australia’s Welfare in Brief 2021; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.



"The FISH team came to see how we really live – how we like to cook outside, where we like to sleep, how we use our homes - they really sat down and designed it together with us. That design - it was the right one. It's like they've lived with us for ten years!" Claude Carter - Bawoorrooga Community Leader

FISH has successfully piloted this concept in the remote East Kimberley with Bawoorrooga community; through the co-design and co-build of their beautiful, culturally and climatically-designed earth house.



SuperAdobe house at Bawoorrooga Community

The FISH Team was honoured to announce the publication of the article "[*Aboriginal Community Co-Design and Co-Build—Far More than a House*](#)" by the international Sustainability Journal as part of the Special Issue Creating a Brighter Future for Life. FISH commends authors Kristian Rodd (FISH Project Manager), Jara Romero (FISH Architect), Victor Hunter (Nyikina Elder and Co-founder of FISH), and Dr Scott Vladimir Martyn (Chair and Co-founder of FISH), with input from Claude Carter and Andrea Pindan (Leaders of Bawoorrooga Community). The article articulates the philosophy, process and learning of FISH through the co-design and co-construction process used at Bawoorrooga Community.

Kristian also delivered a TEDx UWA talk "[*My house is alive - how earth building healed an Indigenous community*](#)", in which he talked about how we can all use our own hands to build a sustainable future.

"My house is alive, like a person - it's breathing. It's made from Mother Earth, Gooniyandi Country. In the daytime it keeps you cool, at night time it keeps you warm." Claude Carter - Bawoorrooga Community Leader



Awards and recognitions include:



Jedda Salmon's Home

FISH is now working with young Bindjareb woman Jedda Salmon and her family to build her home in the Bindjareb Region of South West WA. This has been Jedda's ancestral land for thousands of years. Jedda has co-designed her home with FISH architect and partners Tjuart Architects, and will be completing 200 hours of work in the construction as 'sweat equity'. This is the second of 50 homes planned for the next five to eight years as part of the FISH Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative.

"I am screaming inside with excitement. I can't believe my home has now started. My Grandmother, Great Grandmother, and so on for generations walked this land and now I am taking back my responsibility and living on this land. Thank you FISH. My Dad and I can't wait to start our 200 hours of sweat equity to help build my home"

Jedda Salmon - Young Bindjareb Woman

Jedda's house is located just around the corner from the site where Thomas Peel camped the night before he led the massacre of the Bindjareb people in 1834. Jedda recognises the importance of re-authoring the story of the land and taking back the sense of ownership over the site. Her Uncle smoked the land her home is being built on before construction started and her cousin has danced upon the site to put the rhythm back into the land.

At the time of writing, the timber frame was finished, brickwork was around 50% complete, and Jedda's family members were busy onsite helping the bricklayer



Smoking ceremony at Jemma's land, with Jemma's family and representation from Kardan Construction, Tjuart Architects, and FISH.



Jemma's family starting their 200 hours of sweat equity during the slab pour

Following a visit to Jemma's site, one of FISH's next aspiring homeowners, commented on how the project had inspired her:

"I would have never thought it would be possible that I would ever be able to own my own home. Today, after hearing Jedda's story, and being shown around this new co-designed home that's rising out of the ground, I can see that my dream is really possible." Polly Wilson



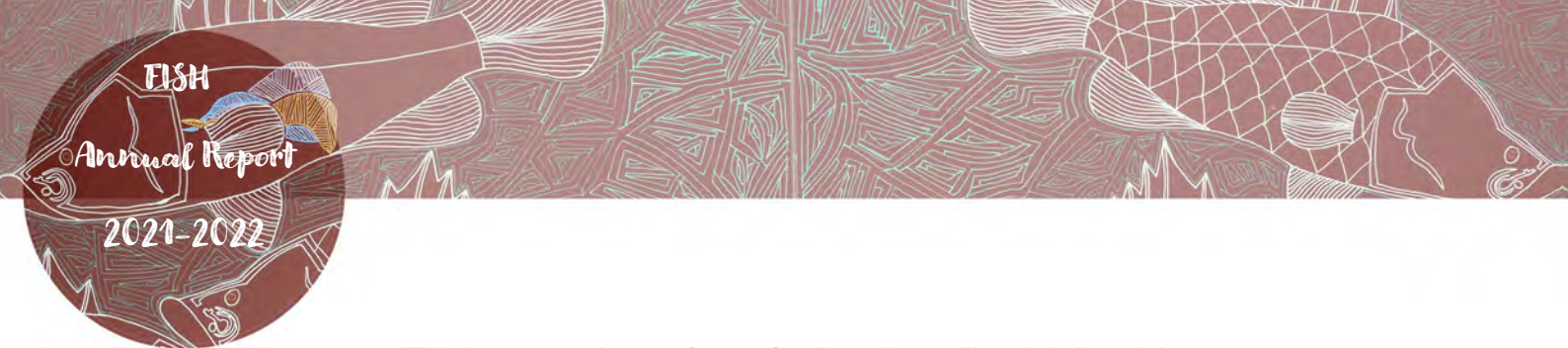
FISH is honoured to partner with multiple Aboriginal owned businesses on this project, including:

- Tjuart Architects.
- Kardan Construction.
- Wilco Electrical.
- SML Painting Solutions.

Some of Jedda's relatives have even been employed in building her home. This is the first generation of Jedda's family that will not live in social housing.



Some of Jedda's relatives have even been employed in building her home.



"This is a game changer for our family and we still can't believe it is happening." Mark Salmon - Jedda's father

FISH also provides FISH financial literacy support prior to, and following, the purchase of the house and land:

- Weekly, monthly, and yearly budgeting.
- Building up a deposit.
- Mortgages and costs of home ownership.
- Repayment schedules and interests.
- Understanding compound interest

Bawoorrooga: Community Development Plan

Following the earth house, the second phase of Bawoorrooga's Community Development includes:

- Further accommodation, which will house 26 people.
- Community orchard and nursery expansion.
- Enterprise Centre, for art, culture, and tourism.

Argyle Diamond Mine donated seven transportable buildings to be re-purposed for the Bawoorrooga Accommodation. These buildings will be adapted, integrating rammed earth elements, outdoor kitchens, and shade roofing, through community co-design.

Progress to date:

- Donated buildings have been delivered and secured to footings by Aboriginal-owned partner, Kardan Construction.
- Community members trained on the process.
- Sewerage system installed.
- Electrical systems designed by Aboriginal-owned partner, Alinga Energy Consulting.
- Community orchard and nursery have been expanded through a certified training program.
- Community art business established, with public exhibitions held.

"You get healed from homeland – it's a safe place. That's why we came back here – for our kids to be safe..." Claude Carter - Bawoorrooga Community Leader





Bawoorrooga Community Development Plan
Co-design by Community leaders, FISH, and Tjuart Architects



EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Purpose

Meaningful, long-term employment

FISH works with First Nations 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.⁹

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

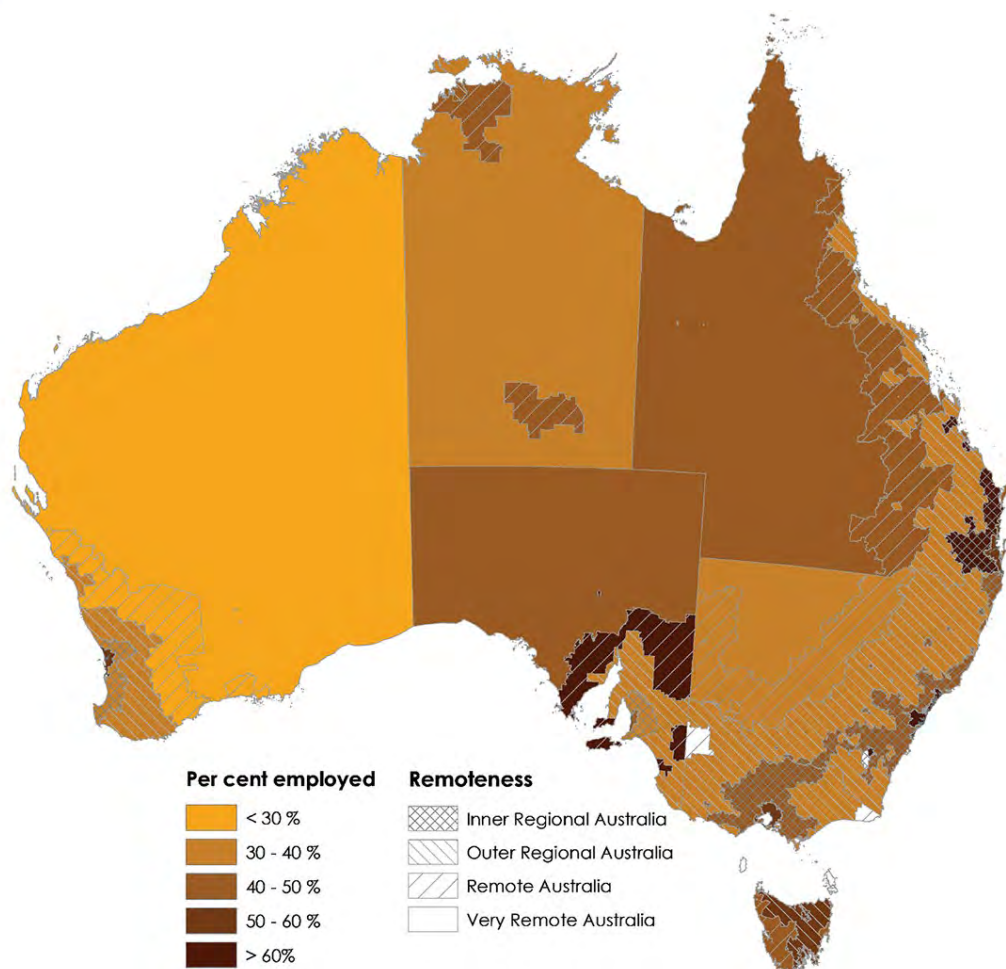
The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) revealed more of the employment issues for Indigenous Australians.¹⁰

49%	2 x	2 x	42%
Employment	Men employed compared to women	Women in part-time employment compared to men	Of unemployed report high/very high psychological distress.

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

⁹ Commonwealth Government, Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Closing the Gap Report, 2020.

¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)



Indigenous employment rates, 15- 64 year old, by jurisdiction, by remoteness, 2018-19

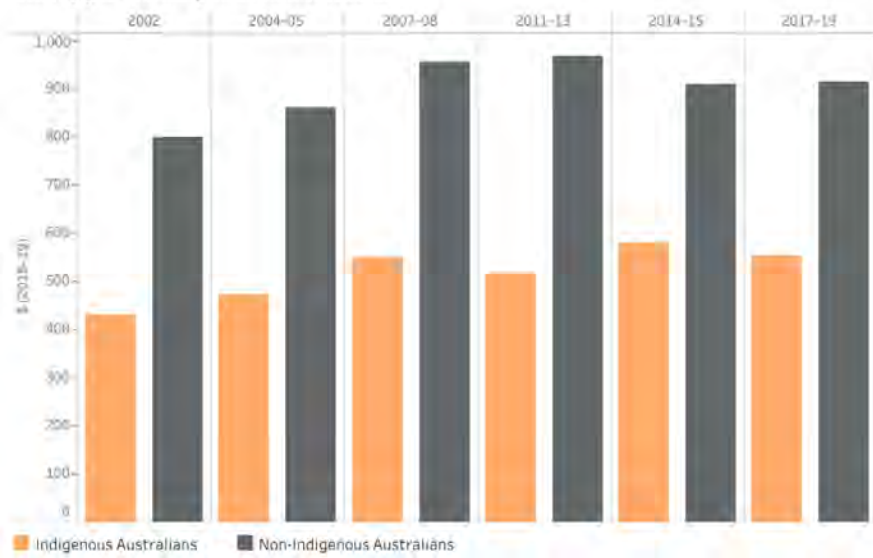
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2018-19. Cat. no. 47150. ABS: Canberra

Low income: There are significant differences in median income for Indigenous Australians compared to non-Indigenous Australians regardless of location, but the disparity is most obvious in very remote areas. In 2021, the median income for Indigenous Australians was \$848, compared with more than \$1,000 for non-Indigenous Australians.¹¹

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.

¹¹ 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



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, 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).

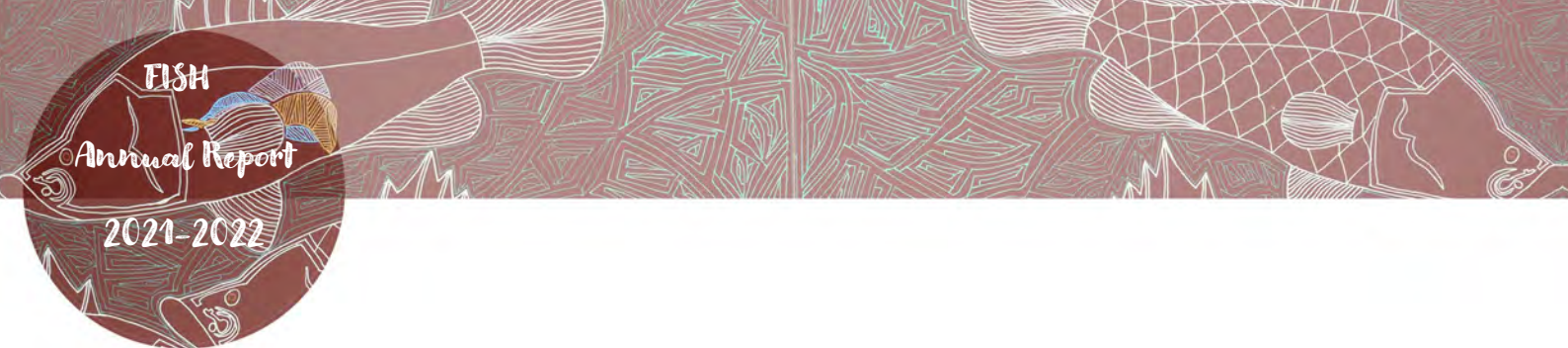
First Nations people are an asset to Australia, already contributing greatly to the nation and with much more to offer. However, there is a need to create culturally safe work environments that enable First Nations people to share their wisdom, knowledge, and skills, with the broader community, including 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 First Nations people through upskilling, training and education that is culturally appropriate and based on their natural talents, knowledge, and skills.

FISH Retail Social Enterprise, Art Gallery, and Online Shop

In 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 initiatives, donating a portion of their space to hosting FISH Social Enterprise.

The products in the FISH Social Enterprise are sourced from 100%-owned Indigenous businesses, authors, and artists. 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; celebration of language and culture; 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, the aim is to bring healing to the spirit, heart, mind, body, and land to help create healthy people and communities.



Income from FISH Social Enterprise supports our storytellers, their families and communities, and also supports FISH in achieving its mission of 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 retail space has been filled with local and interstate Indigenous business products including:

- Chocolates from Jala Jala Treats
- Tasty Bush Tucker from Indigiearth
- Tea and Coffee from Six Seasons Coffee
- Local WA honey from Furious Bee
- Beautiful jewellery from various artists
- Artisan products supporting First Nations artists through Better World Arts
- Gorgeous creative products from many First Nations artists and businesses.

Our products are also available at our online shop, at <https://shop.fish.asn.au/>



Our Bookshop

FISH works to support First Nations authors and illustrators from throughout Australia to share their stories.

Our Social Enterprise Retail Store is the largest Indigenous book retailer in Australia with over 420 titles from children's books, books for teenagers, fiction, and non-fiction, through to biographies.

We know that children are not born racist, and it is our job as parents and communities to create opportunities for our children to grow into human beings that value, honour and appreciate others, and learn to walk shoulder to shoulder with all people, softly upon this land.



The reconciliation journey starts from birth and FISH are excited to be part of that journey through providing an amazing range of culturally appropriate books from our First Nations authors sharing first custodians stories.

Teachers, parents, and carers alike have enjoyed the opportunity to expand their teaching resources with culturally appropriate reading material. Parents have access to books that have characters that look just like them, carers who are looking for ways to educate themselves, and carers who want to provide culturally appropriate resources to maintain a child's connection to culture.

We have a book for everyone to share in Indigenous culture and storytelling. FISH Social Enterprise is run by Polly Wilson, a Gamilaroi, Ngemba Weilwan woman, and supported by FISH retail trainees.

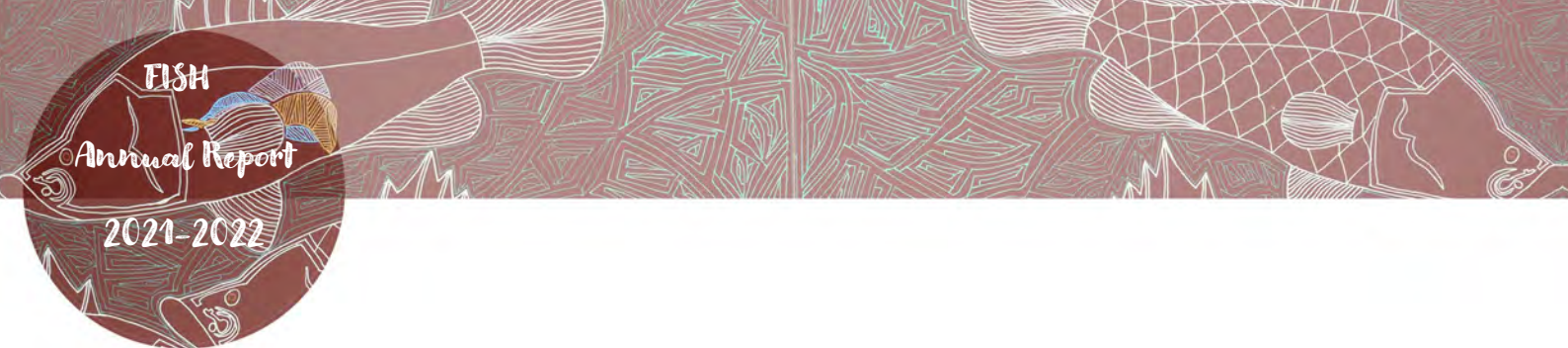
2023 will see the addition of many more local WA Indigenous products as our Social Enterprise continues to grow and new Social Enterprise Retail Outlets open in Western Australia.



FISH Retail Social Enterprise Manager Polly Wilson and book author Ezekiel Kwaymullina

Xmas Markets

It was an exciting time with our partners Local & Aesthetic when we held the inaugural L & A Xmas markets. With 15 local businesses over three days, there was something for everyone. Not only was the event an opportunity to pick up that special something, purchasers could see first-hand that their purchases were supporting First Nations businesses and the individuals behind them. There were great yarns all round with many stories shared by all.



FISH team at the Xmas Markets at Local & Aesthetic

Microfinance and Artist Support

The FISH Microfinance Fund and Loan Scheme is one of the tools FISH uses to support economic self-sustainability to assist in breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty for First Nations people.

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

If you live on the bread line, hand to mouth, it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to be able to get ahead and bring change to your life. FISH is focussed on building financial sustainability and one of the ways we have been doing that is through FISH Microfinance.

FISH provides small, interest free loans with wrap-around support, to First Nations people to assist in establishing their micro enterprises. Law firm Clayton Utz has provided pro-bono legal support in setting up the fund and the FISH Microfinance loan agreements.

This year FISH Microfinance enabled the creation of original artwork and limited-edition prints for Jack Macale's exhibition and supported Scott Wilson as he launched the first Indigenous superhero comic, Indigiverse.

Scott Wilson

Scott Wilson grew up on Yawuru country. He graduated from UWA majoring in Anthropology and Indigenous History and Heritage. Scott studied in South America, and after returning to Australia

he supported the implementation of an early childhood program in Broome called “Our Mob as First Educators.” His passion to connect and help people led him to become an Australian Advocate for Youth Mental Health supporting a national initiative to destigmatize the sharing of lived experiences.

Scott has used this knowledge of traditional culture to develop the concept for his superhero universe – *Indigiverse* – comic book series, which he was able to bring to fruition via a FISH Microfinance loan. The first in the series – *Dark Heart* – was finally launched during Supernova in Perth in June 2022. The comic is an epic and action-packed celebration of Aboriginal culture. *Dark Heart* is the central character in Scott’s first graphic-novel of the *Indigiverse* series. *Dark Heart* is a superhero Gooniyandi ancestor living in the modern world. The first book of the series reveals a 65,000 year old story of the Elder Protectors – those that stand between *us* and *them*. The Elder Protectors defend the Lore that protects the people from the evil that comes in the night.

The comic book not only celebrates First Nations people and the Gooniyandi culture but also traditional language in a way that is accessible for all, both nationally and internationally. The Limited-Edition print run sold out, however through the FISH Microfinance Loan, Scott had the funding to support his company, Ice Cream Productions, to produce a major print run of the comic book edition and make it available for all.

“The Indigiverse was always about passionate and driven people coming together to share, protect, and celebrate our rich Aboriginal culture and stories in Australia. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity and support of the micro finance loan provided by FISH. It will allow us to continue our mission and share the First Aboriginal Superhero Universe in Comics to empower and impact our people and readers. We are truly grateful for all the work FISH is doing to support First Nations dreams becoming a reality” Scott Wilson



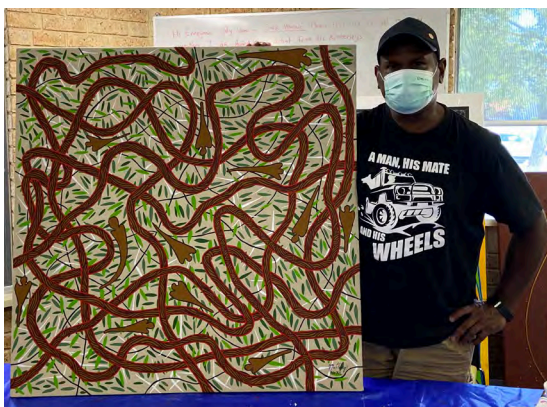
First Comic Book of Indigiverse published with a FISH Microfinance loan
Author Scott Wilson with FISH Business Development Manager Kat Cox
and FISH Creative Volunteer Blake Innes



Jack Macale

Jack (Loodgengarding/Loodgebuddunge) Macale spent most of his childhood in Fitzroy Crossing with his mother's family, the Bunuba and Walmajarri people. FISH has been journeying with Jack for many years, which started with Jack painting the FISH logo when the organisation was established. Jack's connection and love for this country and his home comes out with every brush stroke on the canvas. He is renowned for his metallic pen drawings and his depictions of Kimberley fauna and landscapes.

Jack was a FISH Microfinance recipient, as well as FISH Artist in Residence in 2022. Read more about Jack's journey with FISH in the Creative chapter of this report.



Jack during his Artist in Residence at FISH Social Enterprise





Trainee and Internship Programs

Our Trainees

FISH works with First Nations people to create equal opportunities in training and culturally-appropriate, meaningful, sustainable, and long-term employment to break intergenerational cycles of poverty. This year has been an exciting growth time for the FISH Social Enterprise Retail Store with three new Aboriginal Trainees joining the FISH team.

FISH Trainees are employed through the income generated through the FISH Social Enterprise Indigenous Store to provide employment and training opportunities and the wrap around support to enable our Trainees to become the best they can be.

While being trained, employed, and mentored, our Trainees take pride knowing that they are also able to support First Nations artists, micro-enterprises, and authors, become financially independent through selling their product.

Reanna Doolan is a proud Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi woman from Pilliga, NSW. Reanna is dedicated to helping empower her mob and break generational cycles, and to supporting young people through education and culture.

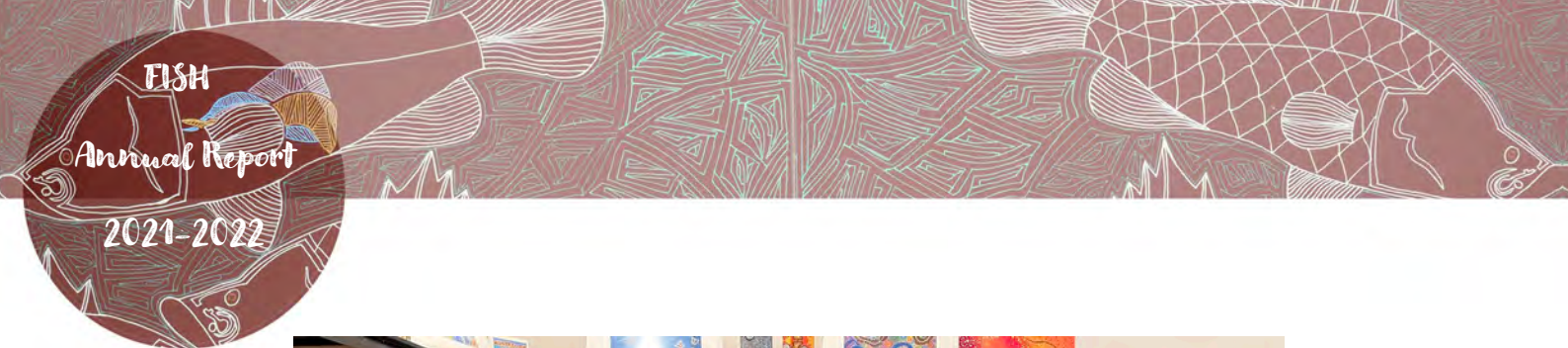
"I love my job in that FISH has given me an opportunity to earn money while I am being trained by Aboriginal people on the job. While I am learning I can't believe that my work is then also benefiting so many other Aboriginal people by me selling their products." Reanna, Cert III in Retail Services

Kiahara Jacobs Hampton, a proud Noongar/Koori woman, joined the FISH team and is passionate about making a difference. Kiahara's mob is Ballardong, Geawegal, and Wanaruah. Kiahara is studying a Certificate IV in Retail Management working towards managing her own FISH Social Enterprise store. FISH is also supporting Kiahara to complete her Bachelor of Primary Education at Curtin University part-time.

"I'm proud to be part of a passionate team who strive for greatness in making a difference in others' lives. I'm grateful to be on this journey and meet new knowledgeable people to support my future career not only with FISH but also as an educator. I can't wait to grow, learn, and create new memories with the FISH family." Kiahara, Cert IV in Retail Management

Shenae Graham is a bloodline descendant of the Whadjuk Noongar and Ngardu nations and is a custodian to these lands. Born in the Goldfields region and raised on Noongar Boodjar.

"It feels like I am part of a family. The support I have been given before my traineeship and now I am working for FISH really helps me believe in myself. It makes me want to come to work and strive to be the best I can be."
Shenae, Cert III in Retail Services



FISH Trainees from left to right:

Kiahara Jacobs Hampton, Shenae Graham and Reanna Doolan

Polly Wilson is working to complete her Traineeship and Certificate IV in Business. Polly continues to be inspirational as she traverses the challenges of being a mother, full time work, and study; with strength, resilience, and courage. The FISH Trainees have Polly as a role model in their lives. Polly is evidence that with the same opportunities that a lot of white Australians take for granted, Indigenous Australians will be seen as solid contributors to the community and role models in society for their successes. We are looking forward to watching the next stage of Polly's journey professionally and personally.



"I feel really honoured to be leading such a great group of young Aboriginal women in the FISH Social Enterprise as we continue to support and inspire each other to be the best we can be. Not only is FISH able to support our young trainees through our social enterprise but they then in turn are supporting First Nations authors, artists, and micro-enterprises, and FISH initiatives through items they sell." Polly Wilson, FISH Social Enterprise Manager



Internships

The exciting range of FISH projects provides the opportunity to offer work placements and internships to students in various fields of study. Each intern is supported to take on a project over which they feel ownership. This year, the FISH team were honoured to have two interns, Emer Lewis and Brendan Stallard, join us as part of their University degrees.

Brendan worked with Katrina Cox, Business Development Manager, in the finance area assisting with accounts, improving process, and implementing systems.

Emer assisted FISH in our remote communities work. She worked with FISH partner, AMG Pump Rentals, to establish a depot for FISH as a drop-off, sorting, and distribution centre, for the donations of clothing, toys, shoes, books, and other items to be sent to remote communities.

"I found my time at FISH inspiring and learnt so much. To see the depot come from nothing to what it is today was great. Also to be able to see the generosity of community as together we work to meet the needs of remote communities was exciting to see. Every young person should be given an experience like this where we can learn about the oldest living cultures in the world and know that each one of us can make a difference." Emer Lewis



FISH Volunteer Emer Lewis organising donations for remote communities

Nurturing the



Fire within

Maintaining the



Fire within

Lighting the



Fire within

Nurturing your



Seedling Self

Growing & Putting



down Roots

planting seeds



of Change

JUSTICE

JUSTICE

Purpose

Freedom from the Justice System

FISH supports First Nations people to break intergenerational cycles of trauma, avoid (re)engagement in the justice system and contribute positively to society.

Why these Programs

High Incarceration Rates – Significant Cost – High Rates of Recidivism

Across Australia, the over-representation of First Nations people is an ongoing crisis. In 2019, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults were imprisoned at **twelve times** the rate of non-Indigenous adults.¹² 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 2020.¹³

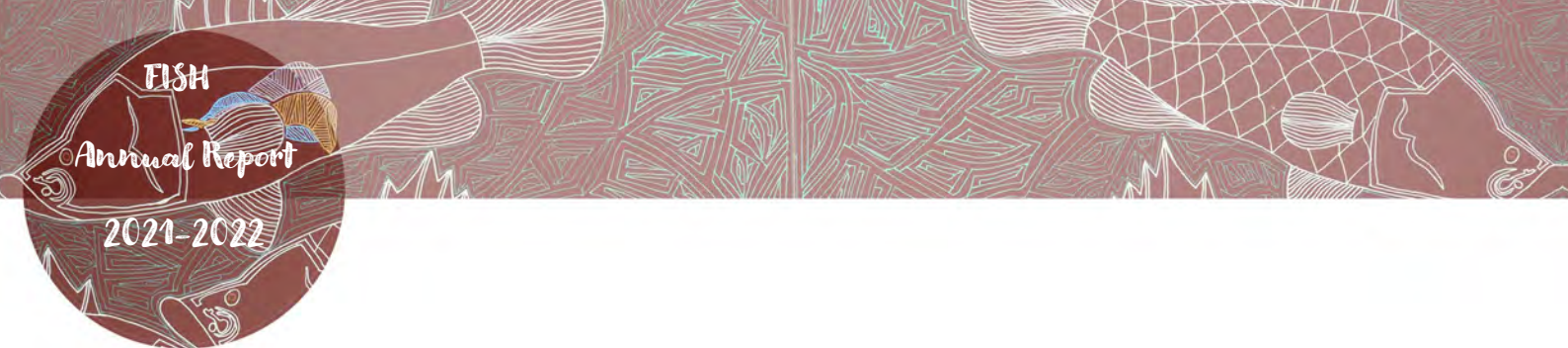
Western Australia has one of the highest imprisonment rates in Australia (and the world), with 382 people incarcerated per 10,000 adults (compared to the national average of 215 people). WA Department of Justice Statistics (2020-21) demonstrate how over-represented Aboriginal people are in the Adult Justice System, comprising 40% of the prison population while making up only 4% of the general population.¹⁴ Juvenile justice is even worse, with Aboriginal people comprising around 75% of detainees.



¹² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2020 summary report.

¹³ Australia's Welfare in Brief 2021; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

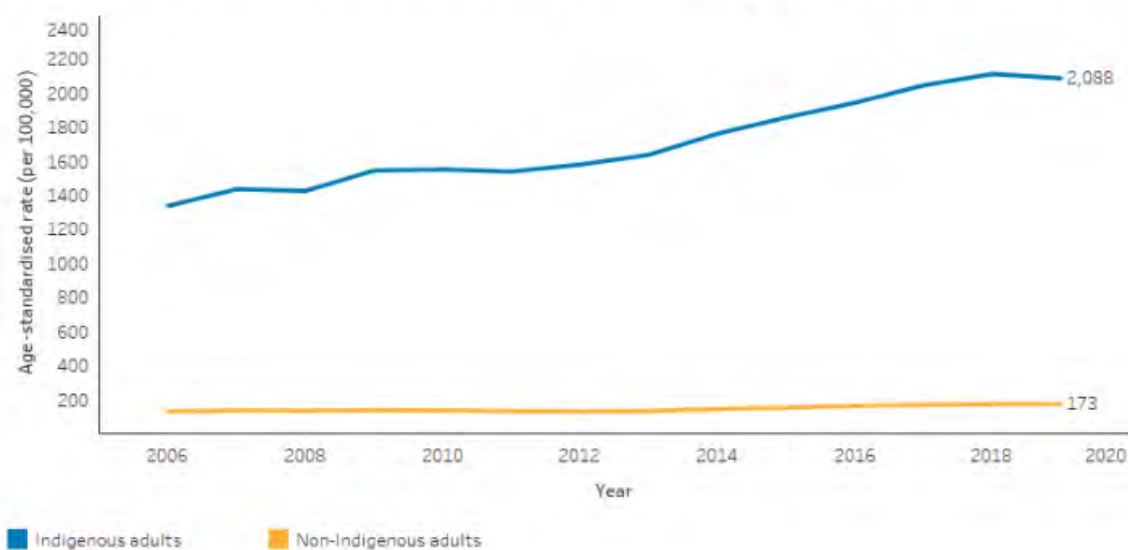
¹⁴ WA Department of Justice Annual Report 2020-21.



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.

Figure 2.11.5: Age-standardised national adult imprisonment rate, by Indigenous status, 2006 to 2019



Source: Table D2.11.11. AIHW and ABS analysis of ABS Prisoners in Australia 2019.

\$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 First Nations people imposes a significant cost burden on Australian taxpayers.¹⁵ 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 First Nations people return to prison within two years. FISH believes this is because First Nations people are not supported in the right ways when they leave the justice system.

Government-funded justice programs designed by non-Indigenous 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 First Nations offenders to break the cycle of engagement in the justice system.

¹⁵ Key Indicators: Government of WA Department of Justice Annual Report 2018/19.



FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Healing & Justice Initiative

A Place to Heal

FISH has worked with First Nations people from across Australia to co-design a place and program where First Nations people aged 16-35 can heal and receive holistic support to break intergenerational cycles of trauma, avoid (re)engagement in the justice system and contribute positively to society.

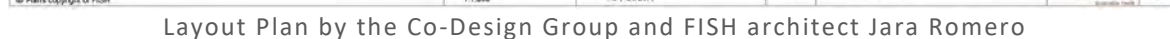


3D model of Myalup Karla Waangkiny

FISH has acquired an 11ha site in Myalup, South West WA. The site and program have been named "FISH Myalup Karla Waangkiny Healing and Justice Initiative". The site is being developed as a national prototype, and will include:

- Healing, rehabilitation & mentoring for First Nations people at risk or in justice system.
- Agri-innovation: aquaponics, horticulture, traditional food and medicine, and research.
- Education, training and employment.
- Manufacturing sustainable housing panels.
- Construction and maintenance.
- Landscaping, grounds maintenance, and nursery.
- Hospitality, retail, and tourism.
- 48 resident participants and 12 residential peer mentors.
- 20 low-risk participants on community work release.
- 20 participants on community service orders.
- Qualified staff team to support program participants (onsite and in the community).

The estimates for the creation of jobs and training positions are a total of 120.5 FTE positions, including 66 Aboriginal trainees and apprentices, divided as follows:



© 2011 Pearson Education, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Group members discussed and agreed upon:

- Site selection, program name and objectives.
- Program principles and participants' healing pathways.
- Site design, including architectural and landscaping features.
- Site social enterprises.
- Facilities and required level of support.



Co-Design meetings held during the first phase of the site design



Partnerships & Stakeholders

FISH has worked closely with local and regional stakeholders, with the following parties providing strategic support for the project:

- Aboriginal project construction delivery partners: Kardan Construction, Wilco Electrical, Tjuart Architecture, SML Painting Solutions.
- Rae Group, Hogan Family Foundation, Laura Olson, Clare Herschell, Community Impact Foundation.
- Pro bono support: Avalon Surveys, Bushfire Prone Planning, Chrysalis Quantity Surveying, Clayton Utz, Donald Veal Consultants, JDA Hydrology, Petro Min Engineers, Urban Plan.
- Neighbouring landowners and businesses.
- Local Government (Shire of Harvey).
- South West Development Commission.
- Development WA.
- WA Government Departments (including Justice, Communities, Education, Land and 7 others).



FISH CEO Mark Anderson meeting with Corey Kahn from Tjuart Architects





Progress to date

FISH has applied for Development Approval through the State Development Assessment Unit (SDAU); a special purpose authority set up to streamline significant projects under WA's COVID-19 economic recovery plan.

Steps completed to date include:

- 2017: National consultation to select the State.
- 2018-2019: Co-design program with 36 incarcerated Aboriginal men.
- 2019: Co-Design Group established.
- 2020: Land secured.
- Jan-Feb 2021: Public consultation.
- Dec 2020 to Feb 2021: Consultation with State and Local Government Departments.
- Feb 2021. Presentation to State Design Review Panel.
- Feb 2021-Aug 2022: Process meetings: FISH, SDAU, WAPC, and Office of Government Architect.
- Aug 2022: Full submission of Development Approval document suite to SDAU.

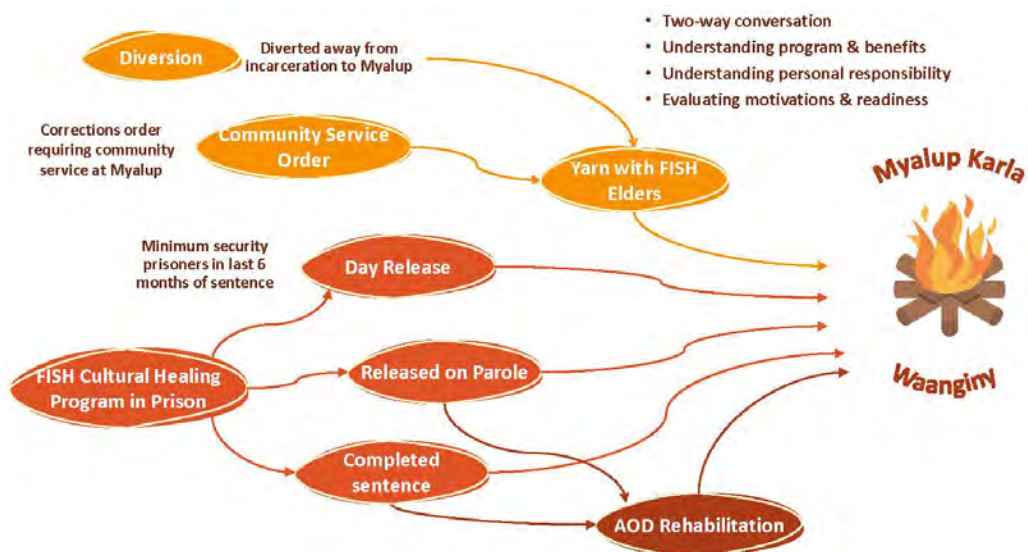
Key documents submitted:


- Site plan, floor plans, elevations and perspectives, 3D digital model.
- Context plans and streetscape elevations.
- Site feature survey and topography.
- Detailed Planning Report (legal and regulatory, architectural, and sustainability analysis).
- COVID-19 Economic Recovery Report.
- Co-Design Process Report.
- Detailed Justice and Healing Program Summary.
- Bushfire Management and Evacuation Plans.
- Site Hydrology Report.
- Traffic Management Plan.
- Environmental Management Plan.
- Electrical Systems Feasibility Study.
- Operation and Risk Management Plan.
- Landscape Masterplan.
- Construction Staging Plan.
- Acoustic Assessment.
- Water Management Plan.
- Forrest Hwy access and egress road design engineering.



From left to right: Kristian Rodd (Project Manager), Renna Gayde (Cultural & Community Engagement Co-ordinator and Co-Design member), Mark Anderson(CEO), Liza Fraser-Gooda (Deputy Chair and Co-Design member) and Jara Romero (FISH Architect) after the submission of Development Approval application.

Program Entry Pathways & Requirement





"When I was incarcerated, on remand, I was at the lowest point in my life. What I needed was compassion, connection, and a place to heal. Prison was not that place and only served to compound my trauma. Together we have designed a place of hope, cultural reconnection, and healing for people like me; to bring real, lasting change," Renna Gayde, Co-design Member

Emergency Assistance in Justice System

FISH works deeply in the justice space, and we continue to see major systemic and structural challenges in need of reform. We see First Nations people continually dealt with in a way that perpetuates intergenerational cycles of trauma and (re)engagement in the justice system, leading to ongoing poverty.

FISH spent 12 months supporting a client and his family through the ordeal of the WA justice system. This client had been encouraged, by the prosecution and by his initial lawyer, to plead guilty for a crime he had not committed, as it would have led to reduced prison time and avoided remand custody prior to sentencing. Our client continued to state, "why should I plead guilty for something I haven't done?"

Through dedicated work, the FISH team found a lawyer that had the time to listen and a willingness to work with our client. Having been incarcerated on remand prior to his trial, this young man was unable to continue supporting his partner and young children – which placed them at risk of losing their house and their car while awaiting the final verdict. During this lengthy process, FISH was able to support this young family – securing an order of home detention pending the trial outcome, as well as working with creditors to ensure that the family did not lose their house and car. Ultimately, this client was fully acquitted on all charges.

After his 12-month Court ordeal, the client had to begin reconstructing his life. FISH was able to support him back into full-time employment with one of our partners where he is now thriving.

First Nations people often do not have the knowledge and network to find a lawyer, or the finances to be able to pay for one who has the time to adequately look into the facts of the case and prepare a full submission before the Court. In this case, we were able to avoid a devastating outcome for this man and his family, however many other First Nations people have their lives destroyed through structural inequalities of our justice system.



HEALTH

HEALTH

Purpose

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

FISH works with First Nations people to drive enduring improvements in social, emotional, and physical wellbeing so they can become confident, connected, and healthy.

Why these Programs

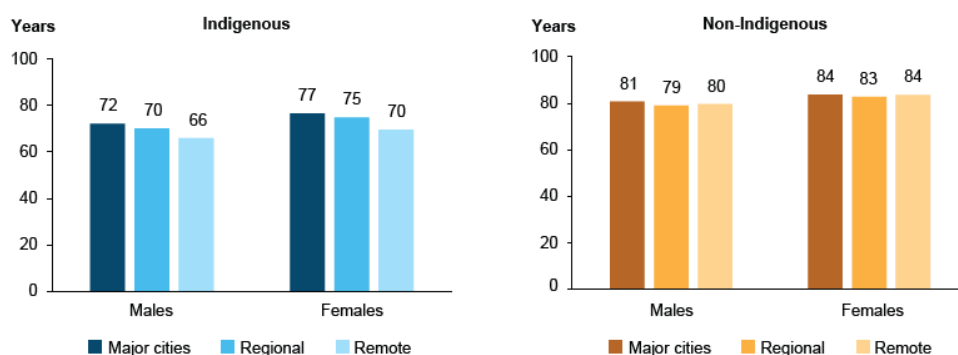
Poor Health – Life Expectancy – Social & Emotional Wellbeing

According to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Report (2020) on improving outcomes for First Nations people, 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.

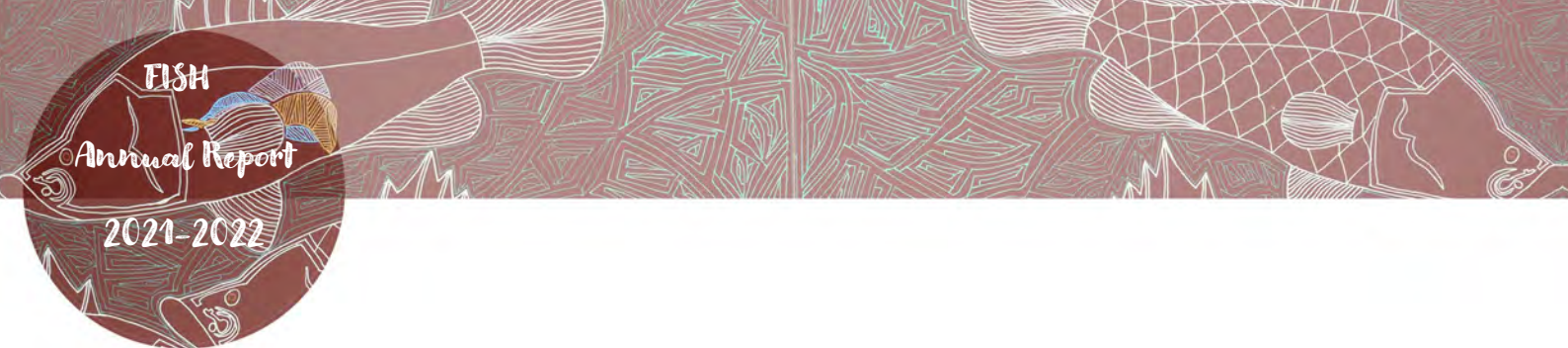
First Nations people, irrespective of gender or region, have a significantly lower life expectancy than non-Indigenous Australians.

Figure 4.1: Life expectancy at birth, by remoteness areas, 2015–2017

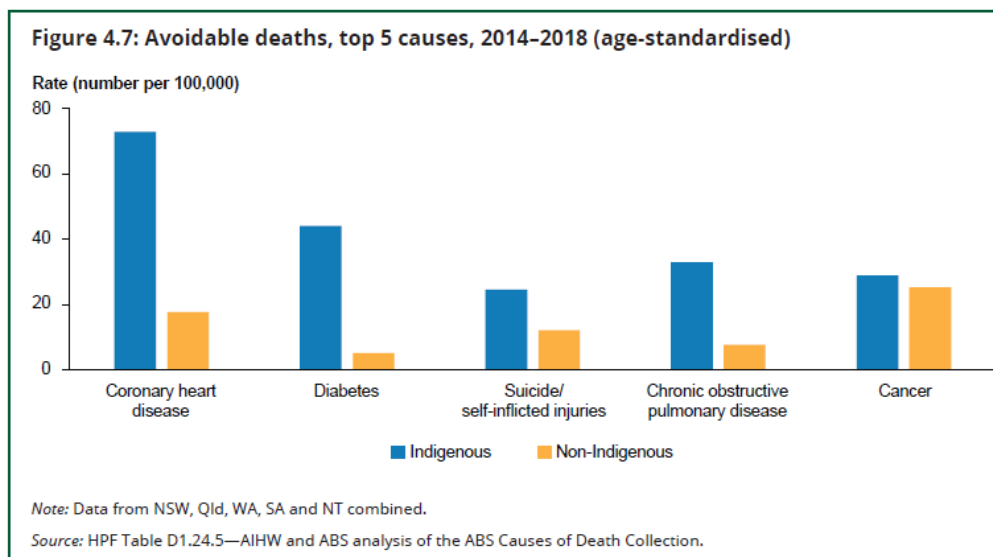


Note: 'Regional' includes *Inner regional* and *Outer regional* areas, 'Remote' includes *Remote* and *Very remote* areas.

Sources: HPF Table D1.19.3—ABS 2018b; ABS unpublished data.



Likewise, the rate of avoidable deaths is far higher among First Nations people.



The mortality rate of **Indigenous young people** (10-24 years old) is concerning much higher than for non-Indigenous young people.¹⁶ The leading causes of death are suicide, road traffic accidents, and assaults.

From a First Nations worldview, health encompasses far more than physical health. First Nations people regard health from a broader perspective that is generally referred to as **social and emotional wellbeing**¹⁷ (SEWB). The social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations 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 system¹⁸.

Disability Support

Living in remote communities has many benefits but also comes with many challenges, especially if you have a disability. The FISH Team is focused on ensuring that all people can be 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, no matter what ability.

¹⁶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescent and youth health and wellbeing: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2018.

¹⁷ 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

¹⁸ 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



In May 2022, Stephen Donnet-Jones, NDIS Support Coordinator (and FISH's Myalup Caretaker), took part in a FISH trip to the remote Kimberley Region. While in the Kimberley he was able to provide support and planning for several NDIS clients, including the Bawoorrooga Community, to ensure that FISH is inclusive of the needs of people with a disability in the next stage of development.



Stephen Donnet-Jones with Claude Carter at Bawoorrooga Community

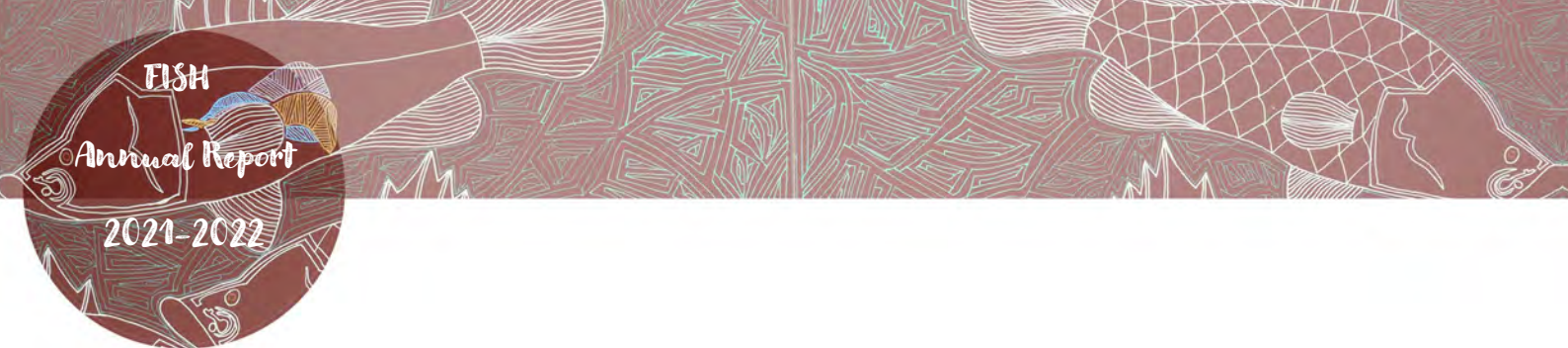
"It is great to be able to integrate my work with FISH as an NDIS Support Coordinator as we are able to ensure the needs of people with all abilities are included in the co-design process." Stephen Donnet-Jones

Bawoorrooga Horticulture

Bawoorrooga Community is a place of cultural leadership – a well-known meeting place for traditional healing, Indigenous art, and knowledge of country and homeland. In 2018, with support from FISH, the community planted a 'food forest' orchard of 400 plants of 30 species. Since then, Bawoorrooga has continued to expand their orchard and nursery.

"We want to be self-sufficient on our homeland – show the government we can do it, to be independent While we're up here on our homeland we can control things like diabetes. We go out fishing, hunting, eating bush food, cleaning up, always active." Claude Carter, Bawoorrooga

In 2022, FISH ran a formal horticulture program at Bawoorrooga, in which participants learned to build and manage a nursery and orchard. Activities included: nursery construction, fence installation, irrigation systems, planting, first aid, WHS training, and other workplace skills. Participants were supported through the program by a cultural elder experienced in youth support.



This initiative added further to the strength of Bawoorrooga community as a safe place where people can heal, reconnect to culture, and work towards building their own positive futures. The program expanded the community's existing nursery and orchard, which will now continue to support the community's fresh produce needs.



Nursery and mango tree at Bawoorrooga Community

Remote Community Support Program

Throughout 2021-22, these communities were disproportionately affected by COVID, by the illness itself, as well as by the isolating impact of remote community lockdowns. The FISH team, with the support of our donors and partners, have visited numerous remote communities this year delivering a range of donated items such as facemasks, hand and body wash, clothing, handmade blankets and beanies, books for children and young people written by Indigenous authors, educational books for remote schools, educational stationary, and educational games.

FISH trips to communities are long, sometimes covering over 6000km, with many of them on unsealed roads. Our trips would not be possible without the support of our partner, Able Bus and Coach, who provided the 4WD bus and also assisted with the cost of fuel. We also thank Chemform, Gogo Station, and other supporters for their assistance. It is wonderful to see the communities' smiling faces when the FISH bus comes filled with items that you either cannot access or are very expensive in remote communities.



With all the amazing items donated we needed a distribution warehouse. FISH welcomed on board AMG Pump Rentals who kindly donated warehouse space to enable us to have a sorting, distribution, and staging point, for our support of remote Aboriginal communities and First Nations families.

Remote towns and communities visited and delivered to include:

- Bawoorrooga Community
- Jarlmadangah Buru Community on Mt Anderson Station
- Muludja Community
- Fitzroy Crossing
- Wangkatjunga Community
- Bayulu Community
- Mulan Community
- Billilouna Community
- Balgo Community





CREATIVE



CREATIVE

Purpose

FISH believes that creative programs are critical to bringing about positive social change for First Nations people. Generations of First Nations 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 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 role models; and
- highlighting issues and effective ways to address those issues that work.

Who's Involved

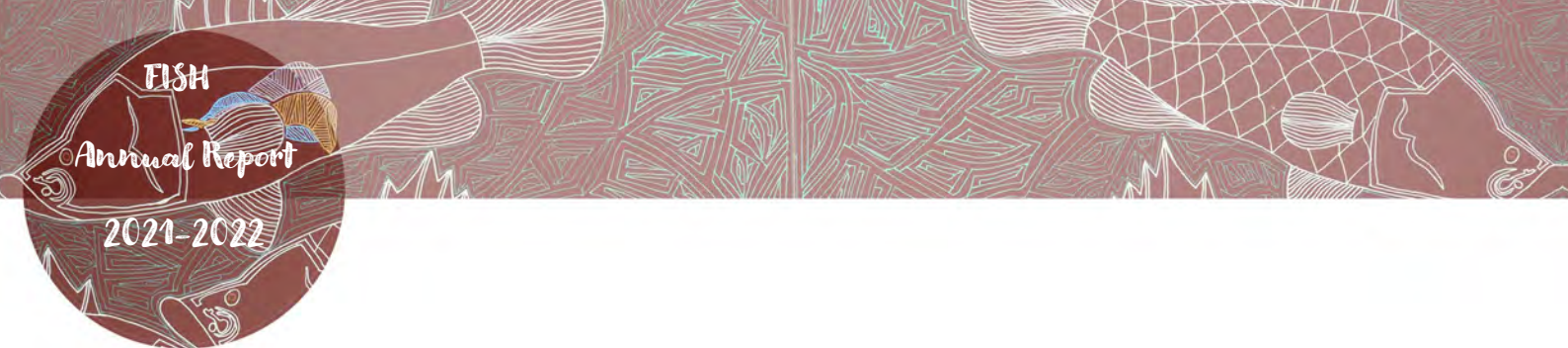
FISH works with First Nations artists in creative arts initiatives that provide opportunities to share their knowledge skills, and become financially independent, while enhancing their self-esteem and acquiring a sense of community belonging, where they are valued and able to positively contribute to their community.

Artist in Residence

FISH had the pleasure of hosting renowned artist Jack Jnr (Loodgebuddunge) Macale as our artist in residence. Jack undertook his 2-month residency at our Social Enterprise Store and gallery in Mt Lawley, WA. During his time with FISH, he produced a collection of more than 20 stunning pieces. Jack completed his stay with a grand exhibition of his works in March-April 2022 at the FISH Social Enterprise Art Gallery, thanks to the support of our partners Local & Aesthetic.

The exhibition was a remarkable success. 75% of funds raised from the income of each artwork went towards Jack's home deposit account, with the remainder supporting FISH with our Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative.

"I fell in love with this painting, the colours and story behind it. I also love supporting Jack and knowing that the money raised from the sale of the artwork will support him in owning his own home through FISH's Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative". Dee Buckland, District Governor of Rotary



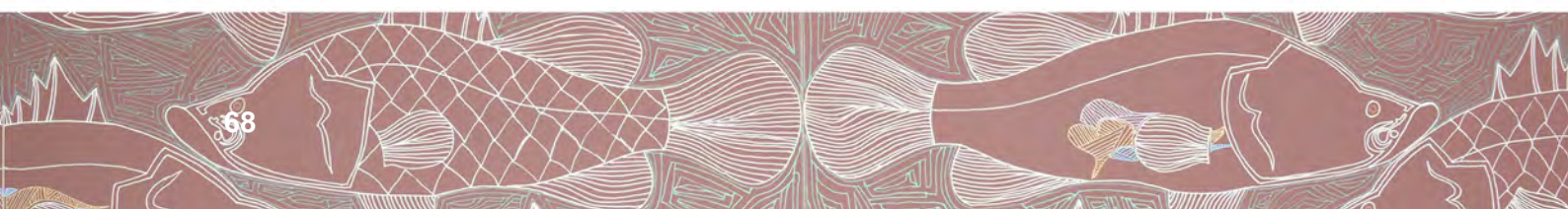
In Jack's brief career he has won several art awards including The Kimberley Art Award (2008), York Society Art and Crafts Awards (2006), Gidgeganup Agricultural Society – Landscape (2006), Gidgeganup Agricultural Society – Traditional Indigenous Art (2006), and the Town of Vincent and Julie Bishop Art Award (2006).

Jack is also the artist who designed the FISH logo. The barramundi is known in Dreaming as the giver of life for Jack's people. The image ties in with the honoured principle of "when you give someone a fish you feed them for a day, but when you teach them to fish you feed them for a lifetime".

"I have really enjoyed my residency and meeting so many different people. What I have most enjoyed is when each of us has been able to listen to each other about our stories of life. Each story is important and makes us realise we are different but in the end all the same in so many different ways." Jack Macale



Jack Macale's exhibition at Local & Aesthetic as FISH Artist in Residence



FISH Films @ The Backlot Initiative

Since its launch in early 2021, FISH has run 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 our Social Enterprise Shop. Initially, guests mingle and meet the FISH team, then settle into their seats for an Indigenous short-film screening followed by the night's feature-length film. Films to date have included films like *Samson and Delilah*, *In my blood it runs*, or *Bran Nue Dae*.

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 & 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.



Hannah Nancarrow and Jeremiah Riley from Black Milimili in a Q&A session around the importance of storytelling at The Backlot Cinema.



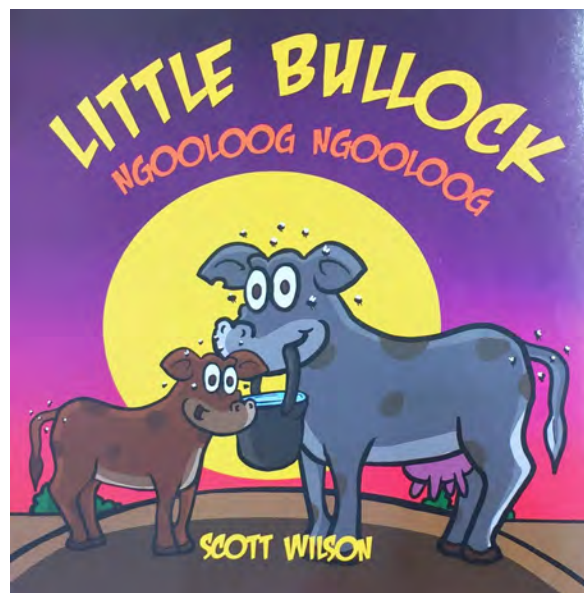
FISH Publishing

In 2022, FISH was extremely proud to announce an exciting milestone for the FISH creative division, FISH Publishing. The publication of our first book – *Little Bullock: Ngooloog Ngooloog* – by Scott Wilson, is a children's story about the importance of hydration, looking after yourself, and caring for those in your community. *Little Bullock: Ngooloog Ngooloog* has been a fantastic first project to assist with the development of the finer publishing policies and procedures.

This is a significant milestone in several ways as Scott's mother was the first author published by Magabala Books and now Scott is the first author published by FISH Publishing.

The need for creative development is essential to maintain the spirit of our mission – helping those people who need it most to share their voice. FISH will link our publications to curriculum, which will increase their commercialisation potential as well as tying in with our education arm. This will include delivery of workshops, development of licenced electronic resources, and a range of other creative initiatives.

Keep on the lookout for our other upcoming titles!





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, 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 social media platforms, including our FISH Youtube channel and FISH Facebook page.

Why (by Justin Geange)

Some people often look,
Some people often stare,
And ask me "what's the deal my bro?
Why is it that you care?"

I tell them plain and simple,
Cause it's all I've got to give,
I do this for the blokes
Who're struggling with life to live.

I'm doing this for the mate
Whose relationship gone bust,
I'm doing this for the champion
Whose bread's run out of crust.

I'm doing this for the legends
Who are struggling with a crutch,
I'm doing this for my mates
Who say that life's too much.

You see, we all from time to time
Fall down when life gets tough,
We smash our fists and stomp our feet
And say enough's enough.

But that's the time to notice,
Time to activate and take a stand,
That's the time to shine, my friend,
And lift your mate up by the hand.

Ten seconds of courage is all you need
To call your brother out,

To say you've noticed changes,
"Mate, what's that all about?"

Then listen with understanding,
Ain't no room for judgement here,
Then next encourage action,
Share that load and show you care.

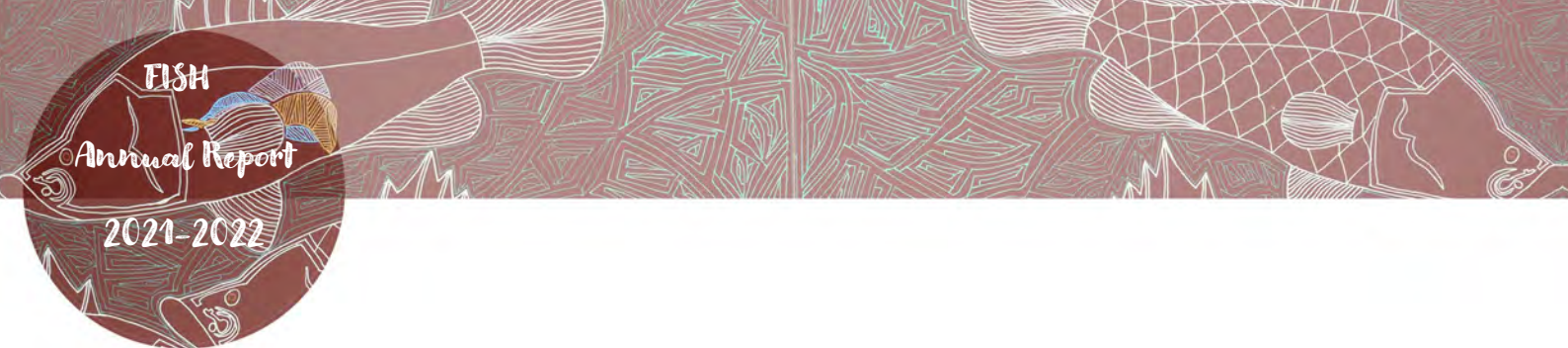
I know too well that darkness,
I've trod that rocky path,
I've lost too many mates and kin.
I know the aftermath.

So that is why I grow my hair,
That is why I talk;
To keep my brothers on the planet
I do my best to walk the walk.

I don't have a lot to offer,
No real smarts to make a mark,
But I got two flaming floppy ears,
And one large marshmallow heart.

To all who've been impacted,
To those with tear-stained eyes,
A virtual hug I send your way,
Please know the sun will rise.

So, to you; my mate, my friend, my pal,
Here's a challenge just for you;
Do what you can with your two hands -
You may just help a few!



How to make a difference

Every boab tree is unique. Each has character and personality, reflecting its silent passage through years, centuries, and millenia. Some individual trees are 1,500 years old which makes them some of the oldest living beings in Australia, and puts them among the oldest in the world.

FISH sees the significance of every single donation, no matter how small or large, to be as important as the single boab seed from which abundant things can grow.

For Aboriginal people in the north of Australia, the boab trees have, for centuries, been providers - giving shelter, food, water and medicine. Every part of the boab tree was important no matter what size, from the seeds, the nuts through to the roots.

From a little seed would grow this majestic tree full of hope, soul, and power for Aboriginal people, from which life, health, and ceremony would come.

Join with us on this great adventure by supporting the work of FISH. From your support and partnership, we can achieve great things together and make a positive, lasting, and sustainable difference in the lives of First Nations people.

Gifts of more than \$2 are tax deductible in Australia.



Image by David Rennie



Our Partners

National Partners



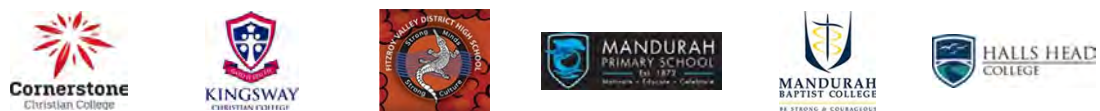
State Partners



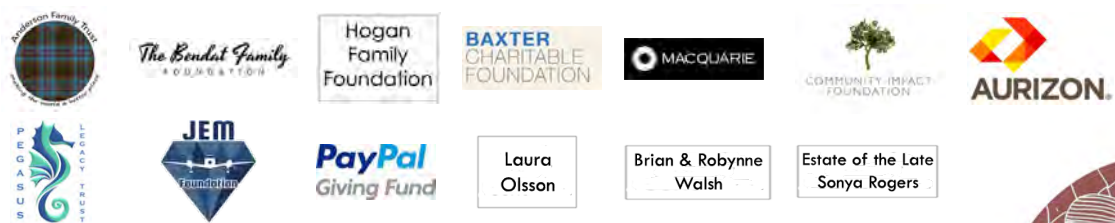
Aboriginal Partners



School Partners



Trusts, foundations, and individuals



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
- Aquaculture consultancy – Ben Roennfeldt
- Avalon Surveys - Brad Reed
- Chrysalis Quantity Surveying - Daniel Thickbroom
- Clayton Utz - Legal Services
- Donald Veal Consultants (DVC) - Don Veil
- Growing Green Australia - Martin Combrink
- Petro Min Engineers - Geoff Mitchell
- Project management consultancy - Graham Murdoch
- TPS Total Project Solutions - Chris Howlett
- Urban Plan - Ian Brashaw

Volunteers and Champions:

- Hazel Butorac
- Judy Campion
- Judith Ehling
- Olivia Gleeson
- Gail Humphreys
- Blake Innes
- Holly Johnsen
- Emer Lewis
- Brendan Stallard
- Charlotte O'Shea



Foundation for Indigenous
Sustainable Health
2021-2022



CONTACT:

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

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

WWW.FISH.ASN.AU

