

May 2019

NPY Empowered Communities News

So... what exactly is an 'empowered' community?

At Empowered Communities (EC), we believe empowerment means the ability to make choices, and the capacity to act upon them. In central Australia's Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Region, it also means Anangu having a say, making decisions, and taking responsibility for the issues and initiatives that affect our families and communities.



At Empowered Communities, we believe that empowerment is critical to reducing poverty and achieving sustainable community development. We are working to achieve this through transformative changes to the Government's approach to Indigenous affairs. Empowered Communities is not here to deliver 'just another program,' but rather to support a new a new way of working, to stimulate - from the ground up - new thinking and reform to the systems, structures and policies that impact Anangu. This will be achieved through:

Anangu-led: Our work is grounded in a fundamental commitment and respect for Anangu connections to 'Tjukurpa' (Culture), 'Manta' (Land), 'Walytja' (family) and 'Wangka Uti' (Language). We seek Anangu-led answers to Anangu-identified issues. All our work must support and enhance Anangu culture & empowerment, today and into the future.

Co-design: Our work aims to ensure all stakeholders are focussed on a common goal: Anangu empowerment. Co-design means collective planning of all projects – working together with Anangu, Governments and service providers to find the best approach and outcomes for Anangu.



Kulintja Kutju Group members, February 2019

Kulintja Kutju—One vision

One way EC is supporting Anangu empowerment is through the Kulintja Kutju group, where Anangu Leaders are reviewing programs funded under the Governments' 'Indigenous Advancement Strategy' (IAS). Before, all IAS decisions were made by the Government. Now Anangu assess and give their recommendations for some agreed programs. Now, Anangu have 75% influence on the Government's final decision for these programs.



Before 2018:
100% Government decision on all IAS programs



Now, under EC:
75% Anangu influence on select IAS programs



UWA - Good program, keep it going



TJINGURU - Good program, but needs some changes



WIYA - Program should finish, it doesn't help Anangu

*"The Kulintja Kutju group is where we have our input in terms of anything to do with the Lands, with the programs and services funded by Government. We want to use this as a tool to be heard and have our say. We want to be empowered and be able to achieve things in life ... We want the Government to understand and take that on board and hopefully we can continue on this path that we're on. It makes me feel proud and it's exciting for all of us."
(Chris Reid, Kulintja Kutju group member)*

School-to-work transitions for young people

In March, 2019 we held a big workshop for education leaders from across the tri-state region. Together we are making a plan to support young people as they transition from school into work or further study; this is co-design in action!

Anangu have spoken up about the lack of supports available for young people when they make this critical transition. Young people have told us that when they finish school they often feel lost and overwhelmed with what to do next. We believe that if families, schools and employers can work together, young people can be supported to build their skills, confidence and aspirations for the future.

“My vision is to see kids from here get qualifications and jobs. But to do this in the future we need to look at what is going on today”.

(Makinti Minutjukur, PYEC)

We are developing a transition support initiative involving individual support for young people and their families, classroom curriculum, work experience, exposure trips plus commitments from employers. We are looking forward to seeing this rolling out across the region soon!



Emerging Anangu Leaders going from strength to strength

In April 2019, ten emerging leaders from the NPY region came together for an exciting 3-day workshop to learn about mentoring, leadership goals and public speaking skill development. The workshop was supported by valuable contributions from two highly experienced senior Anangu leaders Margaret Smith and Robert Hoosen.

James Fa’Aso from the Cape York Leaders Program was an inspiring facilitator for the workshop and the group returned to their communities and workplaces with lots of ideas and looking forward to the next workshop in June 2019.

It was great to see the emerging leaders learning new skills, supporting each other and identifying their leadership goals. Thanks to all the employers who supported their staff to participate in the program.

With our Pilot Program wrapping up after a fourth workshop, we are also very excited to announce that newly secured funding from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet will allow us to continue to grow and develop the next stage of the EC NPY Emerging Leaders Program for 2020-2021.

This investment in the next generation of leaders will help ensure the NPY region’s future is looking bright!

