

better knowledge:

The importance of a 'two-way' learning process cannot be underestimated. Each partner has stressed the need for improved knowledge to build capacity and leverage better outcomes. **The Guide** provides case studies which demonstrate valuable partnerships.

changing the landscape:

Changing the way we think about Indigenous philanthropy is crucial for future success. In particular, there is a need to increase Indigenous involvement at the Board level, and improve accessibility and communication about available funding. Fundamental ways to change the landscape are suggested in **The Guide**.

self-evaluation:

Improving our own capacity to be able to assess in real and practical ways the effectiveness of our engagement is paramount. We provide a comprehensive tool kit and check list to assist philanthropists in being able to better judge the value of their investment.



two-way learning is crucial.



changing the way we think.



AIME is action, and AIME works.



emerging generation.

the research:

The research confirms what philanthropists have long believed – that real difference can be made if we work in partnership with Indigenous people.

It also tells us:

- Funding is only ever part of the exchange – knowledge transfer and access to wider networks is vital for both partners.
- Longer term investment, over 4 – 5 years, produces better results than funding 'one-off' style projects.
- Investing in leaders and organisations in untested areas can be a powerful motivator for success and change.
- By working together in longer term collaborative partnerships, we can build stronger foundations and multiply the planned and unplanned outcomes that go beyond the initial reason for funding a project.

the reality of funding:

More and more philanthropists are increasing their investments for Indigenous projects – we hope **The Guide** will accelerate that trend. We also want to encourage donors who have not yet worked with Indigenous people to consider doing so.

At present, grants made to Indigenous communities constitute a mere eight per cent of the total spend by philanthropists working with Indigenous people. We hope **The Guide** will encourage an increase in the levels of investment as well as inspire new donors to fund the many worthy projects in communities.

Philanthropy has an important role to play in funding what government cannot, in taking risks and in being daring and innovative in the quest for improved outcomes in the lives of Indigenous people.

philanthropy's success stories:

The most exciting aspect of this work has been about identifying the large numbers of success stories and recognising new and emerging trends.

Philanthropy has made a discernible difference in funding areas such as leadership, education, organisational capacity and improved health outcomes, but the real achievements in developing the next generation of leaders are crucial to lasting outcomes.

For example, below we provide a description of a case study showcasing the approach and successes of the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience. **The Guide** contains numerous other case studies all demonstrating positive experiences.

case study:

AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS MENTORING EXPERIENCE (AIME) INITIATIVE:

AIME partners university student volunteers in one-on-one weekly mentoring relationships with Indigenous high school students. The goal is to improve Year 10 and Year 12 completion and university admission rates.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS:

AIME was supported in its early years by the Ian Thorpe Fountain for Youth and long term investor, Social Ventures Australia (SVA), whose grant of \$1 million was critical in helping AIME grow its own capacity and generate results. AIME has now attracted new support from the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund and Google. This is an example of a range of grantmakers coming together in the early years of a project to back an untested concept: a one-on-one mentoring program of previously low-achieving Indigenous high-school students.

OUTCOME:

In 2009, 73 per cent of Year 12 students in the program completed school compared with the NSW-wide benchmark of 60 per cent, and 38 per cent were admitted into university compared with the 1.25 per cent of Indigenous university participation rate nationally.

For more information see: www.aimementoring.com



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changing the way we think.



together, we can do it.



emerging generation.

what works well in indigenous philanthropy:

Knowing what works well in Indigenous philanthropy is part of the solution, however, the strongest outcomes, as shown in **The Guide**, are those with the following attributes:

- Grants that fund organisations and support capacity building, not project funding.
- Projects that support and strengthen Indigenous leadership through programs such as those run by the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre (AILC).
- Projects with strong relationships between philanthropists and Indigenous people so that as issues arise they are dealt with proactively and positively.
- Projects where the documentation and other processes involved in providing funds have been simplified.
- Projects that fund Indigenous organisations, rather than non-Indigenous institutions.
- Projects where experienced philanthropists are moving away from piecemeal project funding toward longer term capacity building or community development funding, for example the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund and Telstra Foundation's support of the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre.
- Projects where grants for land management and return/connection to country, development programs for young people, traditional knowledge, bio-cultural diversity, political participation, innovation and supplementary funding to Government service provision are emerging as new areas for philanthropists.

“I don't think there's much understanding of [funders'] potential leverage. They have great scope to do far more work influencing others than they do in just providing their own funding.”

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH INTERVIEWEE



the guide contains:

- Information about philanthropy and Indigenous people
- Real life stories that demonstrate the enduring value of collaborations
- Practical how to tools while showcasing some of the leading projects in the country
- Research findings highlighting the philanthropic effort in Indigenous Australia
- The Top 10 Australian philanthropists working with Indigenous people
- How much money is being allocated to Indigenous projects
- What philanthropy can and does offer
- New thinking about how we might do things differently

introduction to indigenous philanthropy:

Welcome to A Worthwhile Exchange - a Guide to Indigenous Philanthropy.

This Guide is the result of collaboration and leadership between the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund, The Christensen Fund, and the Greenstone Group.

The purpose of The Guide is to inform, educate and inspire philanthropists to work more closely with Indigenous Australians to meet their needs and aspirations.

Drawing on years of combined experience and recent research, The Guide sets out to challenge the way we think about philanthropy in Australia, how we engage with Indigenous people, and to find practical, better and more effective ways to work with Indigenous people.

improving the ways we work with indigenous people:

THE GUIDE

The Guide is practical and contains information about philanthropy in Australia and Indigenous people. It is significant because we learn about who is doing what, and find out more about why some projects do better than others.

For the first time, we identify our Top 10 Australian philanthropists who are engaged with Indigenous people and communities.

We list how much money is being allocated to Indigenous projects and we use this information to make a better case for more effective spending so that the outcomes are successful and lasting.

The Guide is built upon three fundamental pillars:

- Having better knowledge and understanding of our partners
- Being empowered to change the landscape
- Giving people real tools for self-evaluation

what are the benefits and rewards?

- Increasing the effectiveness of investments
- Growing the funding 'pie' by encouraging collaboration and partnerships
- Driving change through longer term signature program investments
- Showing how philanthropy can make a difference and provide reasons to fund
- Encouraging greater philanthropic spending and getting new donors on board
- Creating a more satisfying and positive experience between philanthropists and Indigenous people and communities

more information:

If you are new to philanthropy, we recommend you read the entire guide. If you have some experience, this guide will no doubt add to the range of reference tools and knowledge already acquired.

We commend "A Worthwhile Exchange: a Guide to Indigenous Philanthropy" and trust that you will find it an informative learning experience.

indigenous philanthropy

For more information please visit our website at: www.indigenousphilanthropy.com.au

“Aboriginal organisations have to have status in the markets to alter the power dynamic. While the Government’s rhetoric about Closing the Gap is very powerful, there are no incentives in place to make it actually happen. We have a new slogan, and a new framework. But everything else is still the same.”

ADEN RIDGEWAY, DIRECTOR OF THE RIO TINTO ABORIGINAL FUND AND FORMER SENATOR



a worthwhile exchange: a guide to indigenous philanthropy

AN INTRODUCTION



RioTinto

Greenstone Group
Philanthropy Advisors

RioTinto Aboriginal Fund

