

Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place (ACCKP) Director Rose Lovelock engaged with Ignite in early 2021 during the development stage of the IgniteFirst project.

Together, we shared knowledge, learning about the Centre's strengths and challenges. The goal of the project was to develop positive outcomes for entrepreneurs and build capacity for the Centre.

This collaboration has successfully resulted in a dedicated space that supports Indigenous entrepreneurs, increased visitors and sales.

Rose supported the design of the IgniteFirst tailored program and was integral in ensuring the program was fit for purpose for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Milestones: Ignite & ACCKP

- **\$300,000+** funding received
- Renovated centre launched Nov 2023

2023- Aboriginal Affairs

- 15 Indigenous clients mentored
- 7 clients graduated
- 5 start-ups created
- 2 businesses strengthened
- 3 clients transitioned into other Ignite programs

2021 to 2023- All Time

- 32 Indigenous clients mentored
- 16 clients graduated
- 19 start-ups created
- 2 businesses strengthened

10 + capability building workshops

- social media, invoicing, marketing materials, tax preparation, grant application writing, business development, the business of large-scale art murals

- 100% understanding of company setups (up from 33%) - business registration, insurance, GST, and overall business operations
- 50% increase in invoicing, tax, and financial reporting skills

- 5 clients participated in University of New England SMART Region Incubator program

Entrepreneurship networking events

- Brought together service providers, including government agencies who support businesses
- Established connections for longer term relationships

NAIDOC Week For our Elders exhibition - 2 Sept 2023

- 150 people attended market day, exhibition opening, workshop, smoking ceremony, speeches and dance performance.

".. the event allowed artists to proudly display their work in a gallery space, it got the artists out of their comfort zone and allowed them to build skills that will help them with their work later down the track. The markets gave the artists an opportunity to sell artworks and merchandise and get their name recognised a little bit more, as well as gaining new artists for future exhibitions at the ACCKP. Building relationships with other artists has been one of the biggest achievements for the centre, allowing artists to see the space and decide whether they would like to come back and exhibit in the future." – Ignite client

Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre & Keeping Place

The ACCKP is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to preserving the cultural excellence of the original peoples of Australia.

It provides two art galleries specialising in Aboriginal art, a family history centre, conference and learning facilities, a gift shop, meeting rooms, a cafe, and an outdoor function and events pavilion.

The centre runs Aboriginal cultural activities and workshops including holiday programs for primary school students, art classes on Aboriginal arts and crafts, and organises services for functions and events including Welcome to Country, didgeridoo and dance performances.

www.acckp.com.au



Opened 26 Nov 1988

6 staff

7 Board members

Business challenges

- The centre did not have a strategy or business plan, which created challenges around having a clear path and purpose for decision making.
- Outdated graphics, branding and communications made it challenging to run campaigns to attract new customers to the centre.



*Ignite program lead with First Nations clients,
Nick Levy, Adam Spencer, Tyler Stackman Green.*

Ignite support and outcomes

- Ignite facilitated 180Degrees Consulting to research and co-design a strategic plan to guide the Centre's planning roadmap. The process helped to break down each step that the Centre could work on to increase income and visitors.
- Branding redevelopment with included logo redesign, a new website, videos and photography.
- Centre connected with integral volunteers and low cost resources to assist with marketing, grant writing, and business advisory.

Economic development

- Facilitated a tour of the centre by a Macdoch Foundation representative, resulting in a \$5,000 donation to purchase a digital donation machine for the Centre's entrance.
- Worked with National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and the Centre to facilitate a \$97,000 tourism grant application. Introduced the concept of a professional designer consultation to oversee the design of the shop/entrance makeover.
- Created plans with the Centre to develop a stronger retail business, including product branding, more local artists, a commercial space, and an online store.
- Application and delivery of a \$250,000 grant between Aboriginal Affairs NSW and the Centre.

Branding and promotion

- Ignite helped organise the design and printing of new, updated business cards for staff and brochures for the centre.
- A branding consultant delivered a branding plan for the Centre's next stage of growth. A branding roadmap is in the first stages of implementation.
- Ignite sought and provided multiple media opportunities for the Centre to further elevate its profile as a major tourism destination in Armidale.

Centre development

- Sourced Indigenous businesses and collated quotes for the building renovations component of the NIAA grant.
- Project managed the interior design planning meetings for the Centre's designs and initial interior plans.
- Worked with the Centre to create a safe space for local small businesses, including workshops, community gatherings, and 1:1 facilitation and consultation.
- Renovation support to create a new, modern, culturally appropriate makeover to the entrance, shop, conference room and kitchen.
- Hosted an opening event for the month-long art exhibition to celebrate NAIDOC.

The Ignite Journey

Jan 2021 – Sept 2023

Planning phase

- Strategic Plan
- Grants
- Business advice

Marketing phase

- Branding and promotion
- Merchandising
- Media opportunities

Centre renovation

- Design
- Construction
- Launch

Small business support

- Workshops

Interview with Rose Lovelock, ACCKP Director

What are you doing now that is different?

Over the last couple of months we've started to generate a lot of interest. Our Elders are constantly involved with us, not only as group workshop leaders, but as people in their own right with the kind of historical data we need to have on our files. That's going to help our digitisation project which has been modelled on the marketing ethos given to us through the consultants that Ignite exposed us to.

How has Ignite helped?

Ignite has made its way into this culturally safe space that I've always wanted to develop. They've fitted in naturally to encourage the artists to appreciate their own work and deliver it.

They have also looked at us from our perspective looking back at us. That has probably been the feature of all the involvement we've had with Ignite.

To see the number of artists grow in such a fundamental way certainly shows us the level of skill that our artists have, and those we keep in close contact with. You're always seeing their brilliance and independent way of thinking of art.

Key learnings

Our need is human resources. That means I have to spread the Centre's work across a lot of areas, but I've learnt how to do that through the Ignite process.

I've learned how to make sure we're targeting those people most in need, but also delivering our services for financial gain - that's how we know we are at a level of excellence in our community.

I believe that Ignite has regenerated the concept of pride. We have been fortunate in the way that it has developed our entrepreneurs to be more comfortable in their own skin and selling their business out there to the public.

Marketing probably stands out most to me when I look at Ignite's impact. They saw the level of skill that the artists had. Somehow that just impacted our artists to be more robust in the way that they attack their businesses.

Future plans

Where do I see this centre in five years? Hopefully with a new building that's called a convention centre. Hopefully we will be more productive in terms of spreading and making people more aware of the cultural validity of our communities by being looked at through the view of cultural excellence.



Rose Lovelock, ACCKP Director