

In Front of the Future

An Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Screen and New Media Arts Strategy
for South Australia
2020-2030





Australian Government

Indigenous Culture Support



Australian Government

**Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs**



Australian Government

**Department of Broadband,
Communications and the Digital Economy**

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Strategy Snapshot

In Front Of The Future – PART A

Introduction

The *In Front Of The Future* Strategy is based on the views of Aboriginal people from around South Australia.

Assisted by State and Commonwealth grants, iDreamingTV surveyed Aboriginal communities in remote, rural and city regions of the state in 2005-09. The survey produced quantitative and qualitative data in relation to Aboriginal people's interest and aspirations in film and new media. The information was interpreted by a reference group convened by iDreamingTV. The findings were summarised in a September 2010 information paper titled *Summary of 'Towards an Aboriginal Film and New Media Sector Strategy for South Australia'*.

The paper set out for the first time the elements of a strategy for a vital Aboriginal film and new media sector in SA based on community aspirations. The strategy dovetails with several major reports and policy documents (see section 5 of the 2010 Summary document). It seizes the opportunities offered by digital convergence and places Aboriginal creativity 'In Front of the Future'.

The Strategy offers artistic and economic benefits for the State and Australia, and will also achieve social inclusion and reconciliation goals through an empowerment model.

Professional consultations

The Reference Group is grateful for strategy development workshops and consultancy by the following:

- Wal Saunders – Film Producer
- Jenny Fraser – New Media Arts Practitioner
- David Channing – Film Production Trainer
- David Jowsey – Film Producer

Resource acknowledgements

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet – Office for the Arts
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Screen Australia Indigenous Department
- SA Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Office of the SA Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement
- The voluntary committee members of iDreamingTV Inc
- Members of the Strategic Reference Group convened by iDreamingTV

Purpose

To empower the South Australian Aboriginal Community to develop a vibrant and artistic screen and new media presence which reflects the Aboriginal cultural diversity of South Australia.

Vision

A highly skilled Aboriginal film and new media sector that creates unique screen art recognised throughout the world.

Definitions for this Strategy

Film

Traditional film is celluloid and represents moving images in a variety of formats such as super 8, 16, 35mm and 70mm. More recently film has come to be represented by digital devices and formats which make moving images and sound. Film was originally watched on a cinema screen then included television and today is also watched in an online environment. New forms of watching moving images have also evolved over time to include (but are not limited to) interactive media on websites, cd, dvd and installation media.

Screen culture

Screen culture is the environment in which film and other screen programs are made, seen and discussed. This includes publications, seminars, festivals, distribution, conferences, screening events, exhibitions, production and training. The screen culture sector aims to broaden the creative influences on Australian screen production, give audiences access to a diversity of local, national and international programs, and stimulate interest, debate, awareness and critical discourse about screen industries.

New media

New media describes a process where existing, new and emerging technology is used by individuals or communities to create works that explore new modes of cultural expression. New media projects use technologies such as information and communications technology, virtual or immersive environments, or audio technology to create work.

New media art practices can range from conceptual to virtual art, through performance to installation art, and involve new thinking processes in how the work is conceived and created as well as the way in which it is presented to an audience. Some artists combine new media with conventional artforms to produce what is termed 'hybrid art'. The term 'transmedia' refers to creative repurposing of an artwork across a diverse range of platforms or artforms.

An Aboriginal film or new media product

For this Strategy an 'Aboriginal film' or 'Aboriginal new media product' is one where the concept is created, written, produced and directed by Aboriginal people. The crew should be Aboriginal where possible. This Strategy places a strong emphasis on developing Aboriginal producers and crew and accordingly where Aboriginal producers and crew are not available, mentors will be assigned to Aboriginal people.

A unique Aboriginal film and new media identity can only be achieved through Aboriginal people expressing themselves from their own social and spiritual context, 'through their own eyes'. In contrast, works written, produced, directed and crewed mainly by non-Aboriginal people are not Aboriginal film or new media merely because they have significant Aboriginal content.

Principles

In accordance with the findings of the SA Aboriginal community film and new media survey, the issue of Aboriginal control is paramount in this Strategy.

The following principles guide the Strategy and implementation plans:

- (a) The distinctiveness and diversity of SA Aboriginal cultures and styles of imagination guarantee that Aboriginal people who become proficient in film and new media will make a unique contribution to Australian culture. They should not be forced into European-derived cultural moulds. Aboriginal control over the creative process is essential.
- (b) The strategy will empower the community in a way that mainstream film and new media cannot through a sovereign approach that will decolonise film and new media. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination. Refer United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People Article 16: 1. (<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html>)
- (c) It is crucial that early pathways into film and new media for Aboriginal people take account of:
 - unique SA Aboriginal cultures and ways of learning
 - the students' previous experiences in formal education and working life
 - the range of skills and cultural strengths they bring to the training program.
- (d) Partnerships between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal creators, agencies and industry bodies are important. Mentoring of new and developing Aboriginal filmmakers by film professionals is essential.
- (e) The Strategy should place high priority on professional development of SA Aboriginal individuals and creative teams who have demonstrated vision and commitment for their contribution to the film and new media sector.
- (f) The aspirations and needs of individuals and community groups in regional and remote areas must be central in all parts of the Strategy.
- (g) Innovative and experimental Aboriginal concepts in both film and new media should be given high priority.
- (h) Community stories that express SA Aboriginal cultural values have a significant place in the Aboriginal Film and New Media Sector.
- (i) In light of Principles (d)-(g) above, the strategy needs to take into account diverse objectives among Aboriginal filmmakers. National broadcast deals should not be the sole pre-requisite of financial support for initiatives.
- (j) The Aboriginal Film and New Media Sector is committed to a low ongoing carbon footprint in line with environmental trends.

Setting the digital convergence context

The following information is taken from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) website: http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_410070

'E-commerce, video content and social networking services are increasingly drawing Australians online, with some 7.4 million persons accessing retail and auction web sites, 8.4 million accessing social networking sites and 5.5 million accessing video streaming sites from home during December 2010. During December 2010, 3.1 million persons accessed the internet via their mobile phone handset, compared to 1.9 million during December 2009. It is also notable that digital convergence is transforming how consumers can access the internet, moving beyond the mobile phone and computer to encompass a wider range of consumer electronic devices - such as the TV set.'

During the past several years technology has moved at an extremely rapid pace. Artists from both the film and new media areas have ridden these waves of technological advancement to assist them in expressing their art and their communities. With the advent of digital convergence, the new 'national broadband network' and social networking a revolution has been created in which people can now communicate in ways they previously could not.

Television and video are now being viewed more and more on the internet as a valid outlet for entertainment. Sites such as Youtube, Vimeo and ExposureRoom have high definition video created by film and new media artists from across the world.

First Nations initiatives

The following are some examples of Aboriginal peoples around the world creating their own unique signature pathways into film and new media.

ISUMA TV (<http://www.isuma.tv/>)

Inuit people in Nunavut, Canada have created their own Inuit TV Channel as a way of expressing their stories and controlling their own artistic work. The Inuit are home to the ground breaking film 'Atanarjuat The Fast Runner' a film directed by Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk. Aboriginal people hail this film as real Aboriginal storytelling. IsumaTV is the world's first Northern Internet Distributor for Inuit and Aboriginal films, TV and new media. IsumaTV currently streams free over 2000 films in 41 languages.

imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival

(<http://www.imagenative.org/page.php?p=profile&y=2011>)

'The imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival is an international festival in Toronto that celebrates the latest works by Indigenous peoples on the forefront of innovation in film, video, radio, and new media. Each autumn, the festival presents a selection of the most compelling and distinctive Indigenous works from around the globe. The festival's screenings, parties, panel discussions, and cultural events attract and connect filmmakers, media artists, programmers, buyers, and industry professionals. The works accepted reflect the diversity of the world's Indigenous nations and illustrate the vitality and excellence of our art and culture in contemporary media.'

An Online Immersive Environment for SA Aboriginal film and new media

The South Australian Aboriginal film and new media Strategy recognises that Aboriginal film and new media products and activities would be best supported by an online immersive environment. This will put the SA Aboriginal community on the cutting edge and will empower it with a guaranteed high definition broadcast outlet accessible to the world.

The main plank of the Strategy is the establishment of an Online Immersive Hub featuring:

- A SA Aboriginal channel which will be the main broadcast outlet for SA Aboriginal film and new media initiatives
- A video channel for digital stories from communities
- A showcase for international First Nations cinema and new media
- SA Aboriginal film and new media artist profiles and works with a section for comments, discussion and feedback plus links
- Blogs
- Aboriginal film and new media news and reviews
- Training and professional development information section
- Film and new media festivals, exhibitions and online galleries
- An online shop of Aboriginal film and new media products
- Protocol for filmmakers and new media artists wishing to work with Aboriginal communities
- Conferencing
- Streaming to mobile phones, tablets and other new future devices
- Digital archive
- Technology forum.

In Front Of The Future – PART B

Strategy 2020-2030

The SA Aboriginal community has emphasised the importance of building the skills and capabilities of Aboriginal people and communities in film and new media. They also see the need for partnerships with mainstream media organisations and individuals in the context of Aboriginal control of Aboriginal initiatives.

The strategy therefore has two main drivers: **Community capacity building**, and relationships within and external to the Aboriginal community – summed up as **Interfaces**.

Community capacity building	Interfaces
1. Workforce development	6. Leadership
2. Production initiatives	7. Linking with the Aboriginal Community
3. Festivals and exhibitions	8. Cultural protocols
4. Cultural protocols	9. Research program
5. Infrastructure	10. International

Community Capacity Building

1. Workforce development

Objectives

1.1 Training

Build on the previous training initiatives and VET certificate curriculum developed by SA Aboriginal Media Broadcasting Service (SAAMBS) in partnership with TAFESA to provide a range of formal and informal courses tailored to the needs of SA Aboriginal people in urban and remote areas. The training will have an emphasis on digital convergence and online immersion.

1.2 Professional development

Establish enhancement programs for Aboriginal people which include mentoring programs, industry placements and intensive training workshops for new, emerging and experienced practitioners.

1.3 Employment

Link all forms of workforce development with employment opportunities, taking into account actual and potential film and new media activities in: community organisations; government projects and promotion; non-government organisations (NGOs); and private industries (e.g. mining, geo-survey, tourism).

Measurables

- Workforce development plan established
- Aboriginal Registered Training Organisation (RTO) established
- The number of Aboriginal people participating in introductory courses in film and new media
- The number of Aboriginal people in certificate courses, cadetships, traineeships, work placements and bridging programs
- The number of Aboriginal people with formal qualifications in a range of areas of film and new media
- The number of Aboriginal people gaining an income from the film and new media sector

Stakeholders

- SA Aboriginal community
- Strategy implementation partners including government agencies

Community Capacity Building

2. Production initiatives

Objectives

2.1 Create the Aboriginal Film and New Media Centre

Establish an Aboriginal film and new media centre for research, development, production, marketing, promotion, exhibition and cross fertilisation of Aboriginal creations. (Also see 5.1 and 5.2 on page 14.)

2.2 Establish an Aboriginal production entity

Establish the inaugural Aboriginal film and new media production company in SA.

2.3 Support SA Aboriginal producers

Foster Aboriginal leaders in the industry through intensive professional development of emerging and existing producers, including the employment of consultant/mentor producers.

2.4 Ten year film and new media production partnership plan

Devise a developmental package that incorporates all the elements of the production process to give optimal support to SA Aboriginal production initiatives.

2.5 Marketing, promotion and distribution

Develop relationships with major private and government film and new media sales agents and distributors, and hold regular marketing strategy seminars to promote Aboriginal product. Encourage comprehensive online marketing and promotion of SA Aboriginal film and new media content.

2.6 Investment fund

Establish an Aboriginal-governed trust to manage funds raised through sponsorship, donations, grants, community fundraising and other means for the purpose of investment in SA Aboriginal film and new media initiatives.

Measurables

- Aboriginal Film and New Media Centre operational
- The number of new Aboriginal film and new media initiatives and products per year
- Marketing, promotion and distribution plans developed

Stakeholders

- SA Aboriginal community
- Strategy implementation partners including government agencies
- Philanthropic bodies

Community Capacity Building

3. Festivals and exhibitions	Objectives
	3.1 Community cultural development Mount film and new media festivals and exhibitions, including online, featuring mainly SA Aboriginal productions as a powerful means of enthusing community members and linking them with training opportunities, profiling artistic works to the public, building markets and maintaining Aboriginal cultures using fresh forms of modern artistic media.
	3.2 Aboriginal curators Use Aboriginal film and new media festivals and exhibitions, placements of Aboriginal people with other arts/film festivals, and mentor arrangements as training avenues for aspiring and emerging Aboriginal curators and administrators.
	3.3 Active involvement of regional and remote communities Tour Aboriginal-curated film and new media festivals and exhibitions to regional and remote Aboriginal communities, and assist those communities to develop their own festivals and exhibitions.
	Measurables
	<input type="checkbox"/> Trained Aboriginal curators
	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of Aboriginal festivals and exhibitions per year
	Stakeholders
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SA Aboriginal Community	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy implementation partners	

Community Capacity Building

4. Cultural protocols	Objectives
	<p>4.1 SA Aboriginal protocol policy Use existing national and state based cultural protocol policies and the outcomes of the SA Aboriginal film and new media survey to develop a uniquely SA Aboriginal protocol policy, with an accompanying education program for the industry (refer section 8 of the Strategy).</p>
	<p>4.2 Community intellectual property rights Explore existing models of mainstream and Aboriginal based models of intellectual property rights to develop a unique SA Aboriginal framework for intellectual property protection.</p>
	<p>4.3 Protocol and rights workshops Develop workshops for communities to understand their rights in the industry.</p>
	Measurables
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ratification of policy by SA Aboriginal community
	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of workshops convened
	Stakeholders
	<p>✓ SA Aboriginal community</p> <p>✓ Film and new media industry</p>

Community Capacity Building

5. Infrastructure	Objectives
	5.1 The Aboriginal Film and New Media Centre Establish a cutting edge Aboriginal film and new media skills centre in Adelaide to provide Certificate courses under the Australian Quality Training Framework, facilitate professional-level work by students on real productions, and be a base for a range of professional development, production, promotion and advocacy activities. (See 2.1 on page 11)
	5.2 Online Immersive Hub Create an online immersive environment in which to publish Aboriginal film and new media products and professional development and advocacy resources. (see page 8)
	5.3 Remote, regional and outer metro infrastructure Encourage the provision of small scale mobile film and new media hardware kits in regional and remote and outer metro Aboriginal communities to enable courses both accredited and non accredited to be delivered in community and education sites so that communities can produce their own film and new media products.
	5.4 Aboriginal media archive Support the establishment of an Aboriginal digital archive for the digitisation and storage of old media products.
	Measurables
	<input type="checkbox"/> SAAMBS operational
	<input type="checkbox"/> Film and New Media Centre established
	<input type="checkbox"/> Online immersive hub in development
Stakeholders	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SA Aboriginal Community	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy implementation partners including government agencies	

Interfaces

6. Leadership	Objectives
	6.1 Strategy implementation group Coopt additional community and other expertise to the existing Reference Group, to consolidate a Strategy Implementation Group that will drive the implementation plan, and monitor and review the progress of the strategy.
	6.2 iDreamingTV Confer with the Aboriginal community about the best future role (if any) of iDreamingTV which has played a major advocacy role for Aboriginal film and new media in SA since 1999.
	Measurables
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staged implementation plans
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy Implementation Group successfully formed
	Stakeholders
	✓ SA Aboriginal community.
✓ Strategy implementation partners	

Interfaces

7. Linking with the Aboriginal Community

Objectives

7.1 Information flow

Develop and maintain physical and online communication links with the Aboriginal community to ensure a flow of information and ideas during the implementation of the strategy by:

- convening information forums in Aboriginal communities;
- an electronic promotion campaign to familiarise the SA Aboriginal community with film and new media;
- developing educational product which explains film and new media and a unique and exciting Aboriginal industry.

7.2 Community review

At key times through the implementation of the Strategy convene community based forums to review progress and to generate fresh ideas.

Measurables

- Number of Aboriginal people participating
- Number of information events and products

Stakeholders

- ✓ SA Aboriginal community
- ✓ Strategy Implementation Group

Interfaces

8. Cultural protocols

Objectives

8.1 Defining cultural protocols in South Australia

Address SA film industry observance of appropriate protocols concerning 'Aboriginal content' by publishing best practice protocols in consultation with the SA Aboriginal community.

8.2 Consultation and decision making

Educate film and new media practitioners and industry bodies about:

- the need for dialogue with the relevant Aboriginal communities if 'Aboriginal content' is proposed in a film script
- the fundamental importance of gaining informed consent from appropriate people before moving to production
- the best mechanisms for conducting dialogue and gaining consent.

Measurables

- Wide implementation of the SA protocol policy

Stakeholders

- ✓ SA Aboriginal Community
- ✓ Film and new media industry
- ✓ All other relevant individuals and institutions

Interfaces

9. Research program

Objectives

9.1 Research partnerships

Create opportunities for Aboriginal people to become involved in film and new media research in partnership with higher educational and research bodies.

Measurables

- Number of research positions in higher education institutions
- Number of higher degrees gained by Aboriginal people
- Number of academic papers published on Aboriginal film and new media innovation

Stakeholders

- Higher Education and Research bodies

Interfaces

10.International	Objectives
	10.1 Research Research successful examples of other First Nations production initiatives, festivals, storytelling, workforce development and infrastructure strategies.
	10.2 Alliances with First Nations peoples Form alliances with First Nations film and new media individuals and organisations around the world.
	10.3 Industry and sponsors Develop relationships with diverse film and new media industries around the world that would be interested in partnerships with the SA Aboriginal community.
	Measurables
	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of international relationships formed
	Stakeholders
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overseas First Nations film and new media organisations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SA Aboriginal community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other overseas partners

In Front Of The Future

Strategy 2020-2030 Snapshot

Community Capacity Building		Interfaces	
1. Workforce development		6. Leadership	
	1.1 Training		6.1 Strategy implementation group
	1.2 Professional development		6.2 iDreamingTV
	1.3 Employment	7. Linking with the Aboriginal Community	
2. Production initiatives			7.1 Information flow
	2.1 Create the Aboriginal Film and New Media Centre		7.2 Community review
	2.2 Establish an Aboriginal production entity	8. Cultural protocols	
	2.3 Support SA Aboriginal producers		8.1 Defining cultural protocols in South Australia
	2.4 Ten year film and new media production partnership plan		8.2 Consultation and decision making
	2.5 Marketing, promotion and distribution	9. Research program	
	2.6 Investment fund		9.1 Research partnerships
3. Festivals and exhibitions		10. International	
	3.1 Community cultural development		10.1 Research
	3.2 Aboriginal curators		10.2 Alliances with First Nations peoples
	3.3 Active involvement of regional and remote communities		10.3 Industry and sponsors
4. Cultural protocols			
	4.1 SA Aboriginal protocol policy		
	4.2 Community intellectual property rights		
	4.3 Protocol and rights workshops		
5. Infrastructure			
	5.1 The Aboriginal Film and New Media Centre		
	5.2 Online Immersive Hub		
	5.3 Remote, regional and outer metro infrastructure		
	5.4 Aboriginal media archive		