

Jobs Australia Foundation Indigenous Youth Leadership Program Evaluation Report

October 2011



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ABOUT JOBS AUSTRALIA

Jobs Australia Limited is the national peak body for non-profit organisations which help unemployed people find and keep jobs. The network helps members make the most effective use of their resources. It also promotes the needs of unemployed people to ensure they receive services and support to help them to participate fully in society.

Jobs Australia has established the **Jobs Australia Foundation** to help the most marginalised and seriously disadvantaged communities and people in Australia.

The Jobs Australia Foundation is committed to:

- providing direct relief to some of the most disadvantaged people in the community
- supporting projects which foster innovation and best practice to build effective collaborations and inclusive communities
- encouraging Jobs Australia members and the wider community to broaden their own commitment to disadvantaged people and communities, either through the Foundation or by establishing similar ventures.

A key stream of the Foundation's work focuses on Indigenous leadership. In the last five years Jobs Australia Foundation has made a significant investment in the *Stronger Smarter Institute* and the *Australian Indigenous Leadership Council* and in 2010 launched its own *Indigenous Youth Leadership Program*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As evaluators of the program we would like to acknowledge and express our sincere thanks to those who have participated in all aspects of the evaluation process which has taken place throughout the duration of the program. These include:

- Jodie Belyea, Manager Jobs Australia Foundation
- David Thompson, CEO Jobs Australia
- Program participants
- Jobs Australia Foundation Board members
- Maria Castles, Australian Indigenous Leadership Council
- Dion Taylor, Taste the Adventure
- Aileen Traynor, Australian Red Cross
- Simon Forrest, Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University
- Barry Winmar, Department of Justice, Western Australia

CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	5
1. Background	6
1.1 Program Overview	9
1.2 Evaluation.....	15
2. Participants	17
3. Evaluation Findings.....	18
3.1 Program Achievements	18
3.2 Outcome Measures	18
3.3 Participant Achievements.....	19
3.3.1 Leadership Skills	19
3.3.2 Resilience and Personal Growth	20
4. Suggestions for Improvement	22
4.1 Program Model.....	22
4.2 Program Content.....	25
4.2.1 Focus on Indigenous Leadership.....	25
4.2.2 Treks.....	26
4.2.3 Setting goals and plans of action.....	28
4.3 Program Management and Delivery	28
4.3.1 Program establishment, development and management.....	28
4.3.2 Participant Selection Process What Works?	29
4.3.3 The Role of Mentors	30
4.3.4 Role of Facilitators.....	31
4.4 Program Partnerships.....	34
4.5 Evaluation	35
5. What Next?.....	35
6. Conclusions.....	36
7. Summary of Suggestions	37
Appendices	39
References.....	45

Executive Summary

The Jobs Australia Foundation launched the inaugural Indigenous Youth Leadership Program (IYLP) in 2010. The aim of the program is to provide Indigenous young people with opportunities to participate in a leadership training program that increases their capacity to create and lead positive and lasting change within their communities.

In January, 2011, EMS Consultants completed a preliminary evaluation to monitor and review the thinking and behaviour of participants over the initial 10 month program which included a review of the program model, interventions, curriculum content and delivery strategies.

This Evaluation Report considers the recommendations from the January, 2011 report and details the key findings from January to August, 2011 including a compilation of all recommendations made throughout the evaluation of the two year IYLP.

The program provided an opportunity for a number of mentors and young people to participate over the 2 year period. Eight young people and seven mentors were able to complete the whole program.

The evaluation process has been multi-faceted using a range of quantitative and qualitative tools aimed at measuring improvement in participant leadership skills and resilience as well as capturing stakeholder views on the program and their suggestions for further program development.

Participants typically reported that they had increased their skills in:

- **Communication**
- **Knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and history**
- **Self-awareness and self-improvement.**
- **Team-work**

However, very few participants indicated they had increased their skills in relation to:

- **Initiating and leading change**
- **Delivering positive outcomes**
- **Conflict resolution and problem solving**

Over two-thirds of participants also indicated a positive increase in levels of resilience particularly in relation to cultural identity, ability to be a role model to others, and being able to make a positive difference in their communities.

Participating in this program *has made a difference* to participants with many commenting on personal growth, being more confident, learning to speak up honestly/ talking about feelings, being pushed out of “comfort zones” and coping well, building trust in others, connecting with and forming solid relationships/ friendships with other participants, establishing networks and successfully completing two difficult physical challenges.

Building connections with each other has also been a significant aspect of this program. While this is a normal outcome from an intensive group experience its importance in an Indigenous program cannot be underestimated. This aspect of the program is important in that it has reinforced a sense of Aboriginality and built pride.

The exposure to and connections to culture and country in the second year of the program made a significant difference to the way this program was viewed by participants. Several participants made comments indicated that their experience on Jarlmadangah country made them feel grounded, centred, and connected. Together with the pre-trek sessions on Indigenous culture and history the cultural trek has had a profound effect on the participants' sense of cultural identity and strength.

Despite very few participants indicating that the program had made them a better leader it is clear that it has been instrumental in building resilience, helping participants become clear about their own leadership and personal goals and giving them the confidence and tools to work towards and achieve them. In particular, participants commented that throughout the program they have become clearer about who they are and what they want to achieve for themselves and their communities as potential future leaders.

The program will need to consider continued development approaches to ensure participants can also:

- understand leadership skills, qualities, and behaviour in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous settings,
- reflect on their own skills and abilities as potential Indigenous leaders,
- access the tools and mechanisms to further develop and implement aspirational leadership goals that are supported by structured action plans to achieve these goals,
- be given practical opportunities to build their skills in leading change and delivering positive outcomes, and
- be supported by IYLP partners and the Jobs Australia Foundation to continue their leadership journey back in their communities once they finish their active participation in the program.

A summary of the suggestions and recommendations for the future of the program are outlined below.

Program Model

1. Undertake further work to integrate the experiential learning and adventure based program underpinnings with Indigenous leadership principles and values through “Indigenising the curriculum”, increasing the use of Indigenous facilitators and enhancing participant input into program development and delivery.
2. Review the session flow in response to the fact that future programs will be run over 2 years with the introduction of Indigenous culture, history and leadership being at the beginning of the program.
3. Build-in unstructured time during sessions and the treks for social and cultural connection of participants.

4. Consider support for participants in their leadership journey post their formal involvement in the IYLP.
5. Review the way debriefing sessions are conducted to ensure they are culturally appropriate.
6. Include a community project as an integral component of the IYLP.
7. Consider whether “accreditation” of the program is an appropriate method for both recognising participant achievement as well as a way of attracting both future participants as well as program partners.

Program Content

8. Use “real life” examples of leadership challenges and issues faced by Indigenous leaders in Indigenous and non-Indigenous settings throughout program sessions.
9. Ensure all participants and the facilitation team are adequately prepared for their trek experiences both physically and culturally.
10. Ensure trek/tour partners are fully briefed on the principles underpinning the IYLP, the expectations of participants and expected outcomes.
11. Consider ramifications of continuing the two treks as they are or changing them in terms of number of treks, location and length.
12. Source relevant speakers from across Australia including participants’ own communities.
13. Strengthen the role of goal setting and action planning throughout the program with a focus on building leadership competencies.

Program Development and Management

14. Increase Indigenous involvement in program development, management, facilitation and trek leadership.
15. Review the participant selection process to ensure selection criteria are clear and the successful young people who participate in future have both some experience or exposure to Indigenous leadership and their own leadership aspirations.
16. Review the role of mentors, particularly their involvement in all aspects of the program.
17. Clarify the roles of the Manager JAF and facilitators and ensure position descriptions for these roles are developed to assist in selection of appropriate people.

18. Ensure that all people involved in program management and delivery are either Indigenous or can demonstrate cultural competence, and key staff have a sound understanding of experiential learning and outdoor education.
19. Once the program model for 2012 and beyond is determined, review resourcing needs to ensure the program is adequately supported.
20. Expand the “view” of program partnerships to ensure a range of partners can become involved and make a positive contribution whether financial or otherwise.
21. Review the evaluation tools and process to ensure they are not too demanding of participants and are appropriate to “measuring” a range of leadership competencies including Indigenous leadership competencies.

1. Background

1.1 Program Overview

Program Aim

The aim of the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program is to provide Indigenous young people with the opportunity to participate in a leadership training and development program that increases their capacity to create and lead positive and lasting change within their communities.

The program is focused on the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge by Indigenous people as a means of building their ability as individuals and leaders who can effectively address issues and needs in their communities in the future.

Program Objectives

The program objectives are to support Indigenous young people and their mentors to:

- ▶ Understand leadership skills, qualities, and behaviour, using a variety of learning and teaching methodologies and activities.
- ▶ Strengthen their leadership skills and abilities such as; goal setting, problem solving, negotiation skills, time management, and communication.
- ▶ Improve their capacity to communicate with and engage adults, peers, community members and groups.
- ▶ Work within and understand the value of being part of a team with diverse abilities, interests, backgrounds and passion.
- ▶ Reflect on and understand their leadership skills, qualities and characteristics strengths and areas for development.
- ▶ Develop the confidence and self-esteem necessary to implement their leadership goals and engage in community issues.
- ▶ Understand the nuances of leading as an Indigenous person in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.
- ▶ Establish personal leadership goals to be achieved during and at the conclusion of the IYLP.
- ▶ Understand and become aware of another Indigenous culture and share with Indigenous Papuans experiences as Indigenous Australians.
- ▶ Become positive leaders and role models within their communities and lead positive change.

Target Group

The initial intention of the program was to provide 21 participants, 14 Indigenous young people (17-21 years) and 7 Indigenous mentors (25-55 years) with the opportunity to participate in a leadership training and development program over 10 months. Following the general success of the program, and the outcomes of the interim evaluation of Stage One of the program, the JAF Board committed to extending the program for another 12 months to ensure the continued success, sustainability and continuous improvement of the program.

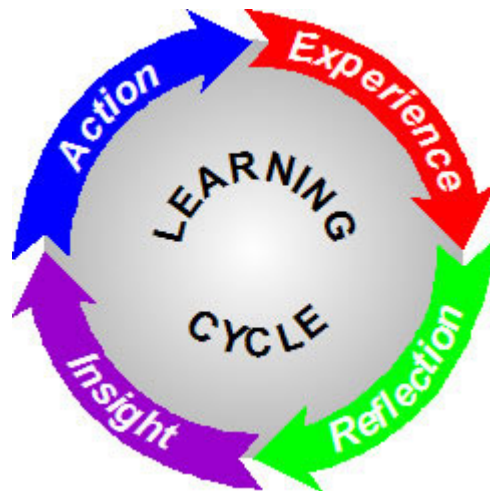
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all over Australia were invited to apply to participate in the program either as a young person or as a mentor. The second year of the IYLP provided opportunities for participants to increase and further develop their understanding of Indigenous

history and leadership principles and practices. With this further developed understanding, the program aimed to ensure that participants would be able to specifically develop and deliver a community project and to mentor effectively.

Program Model

The program model for the IYLP is grounded in aspects of adventure based therapy and experiential learning.

Experiential learning is a teaching and learning process that combines direct experience that is meaningful to the student / participant with guided reflection and analysis. It is challenging, active and immerses participants in opportunities for taking initiative, responsibility and decision making. Experiential education methods focus on the whole person (Kolb and Fry, 1975).



Adventure Therapy is rooted in the tradition of experiential education philosophies (Kraft & Sakofs, 1985), defined as learning by doing, with reflection (Gass, 1993).

Kraft and Sakofs (1985) outline several elements inherent to this experiential education process:

1. The learner is a participant rather than a spectator in learning.
2. The learning activities require personal motivation in the form of energy, involvement, and responsibility.
3. The learning activity is real and meaningful in terms of natural consequences for the learner.
4. Reflection is a critical element in the learning process.
5. Learning must have present as well as future relevance for the learner and the society in which he/she is a member (cited in Gass, 1993, p. 4).

Through Adventure Therapy clients/ participants can learn skills related to problem-solving, cooperation, communication, and facing challenge (Herbert, 1996). In wilderness therapy (a particular application of Adventure Therapy) programs utilise an expedition-oriented format in remote settings and treatment/ participation traditionally lasts anywhere from 7 to 31 days, although programs also

utilize alternative lengths. These programs typically follow an Outward Bound type model, and the teaching and practicing of wilderness skills is an important aspect. Not only is the learning of these skills necessary for the client/participant survival and comfort, but it is also believed that this learning provides an opportunity for clients to increase their skill base and thus their own individual level of perceived competence (i.e., self-efficacy theory). This format also provides experiences that may have more personal and concrete consequences for the participant, i.e., basic survival needs not being met properly, as well as allowing for full and extended immersion in the experience.

The learning of such skills is thought to combine with the interpersonal learning achieved through the group interaction. Activity outcomes are often related to patterns of behaving within the group and the reenactment of social roles seen in such a group situation. Change is seen to emerge from interpersonal and intrapersonal insight, increases in perceived self-efficacy, and the process of the group over time. Because of the nature of the intervention, groups remain intact, thereby potentially fostering an intensification of the group experience.

While there is lack of solid empirical evidence about the impacts of Adventure Therapy (e.g. lack of control group studies, small sample sizes, few studies measuring long term impacts) people participating in these types of programs are thought to:

- experience an increase in self-awareness, leading to an increased recognition of behavioral consequences and available choices,
- learn healthier coping strategies leading to increased environmental control,
- be provided tangible evidence of success, thereby disproving negative self-conceptions and leading to a more positive self-concept,
- learn creative problem-solving, communication, and cooperation skills, and
- develop the ability to realistically appraise individual strengths, weaknesses, and self-imposed limitations.

Ultimately, this increased awareness is thought to lead to increased resilience and better decision-making.

The IYLP Program Model (2010)

In its early stages the IYLP content and delivery was primarily developed on principles generally understood to be crucial to **youth practice** guidelines. The first stage of the program (2010) was underpinned by the principles of:

- active participation
- capacity building
- collaboration, connectedness and cooperation
- empowerment and support
- evaluation and advocacy
- experiential learning
- reflective practice relationships
- safety
- social inclusion

IYLP Program Model (second stage 2011)

The second stage of the program included a greater focus on leadership development, particularly in relation to Indigenous leadership. This involved providing specific sessions focussing on Indigenous leadership styles and practice and another trek, this time in the Kimberley region. These inclusions were underpinned by the principles of:

- strengthening identity
- understanding history and culture
- learning about Indigenous “leadership principles and practice”
- Aboriginal community connectedness
- valuing Aboriginal diversity

The learning methodologies used have included:

- experiential learning
- Gestalt Theory – working with the here and now, using real life experiences to practice skills, integrate learnings, and make sense of the world and the how and why they and others behave
- individual, small and large group work activities
- reflective practice – evening meetings, journaling and goal setting activities
- classroom and outdoor activities
- engagement of guest speakers to present on key topics
- use of colour and movement in the delivery of content
- observing Indigenous leadership in action

Program Development

Ms Jodie Belyea commenced as the JAF, IYLP Manager after the completion of the participant application and selection process and subsequently developed additional components of the program (personal development, mentoring and leadership) in conjunction with a range of providers and partners.

In the first year these partners included; the Australian Indigenous Leadership Council (AIRC), the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), Taste the Adventure, Kokoda Spirit/Wild Spirit (Kokoda trek organisers and leaders) Paul Vandenberg (JAF Board member), Kyle Vander Kuyp (Program Patron) and Aileen Traynor, documentary writer, facilitator and trainer. The IYLP was also captured on film by film makers, Scott Baskett and Amie Batalibasi from Legitimate Films.

A nine day trek on the Kokoda Trail in Papua New Guinea was established as the pinnacle learning activity of the program in 2010, with pre-trek and post-trek activities/ training developed to support participants to prepare for and successfully complete this gruelling challenge – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

The program has continued to evolve and improve based on continual reflection and review of content, delivery and outcomes. This was a result of the “urgency” to get the program off the ground, the decision to extend the program for a further year after the completion of the 2010 activities, and feedback from a range of stakeholders which indicated a need to increase the focus on Indigenous leadership.

Greater emphasis on leadership and Indigenous leadership was incorporated in the post-trek training workshop of the 2010 program and became the focus of the program in 2011 which culminated in a seven day cultural trek in the Kimberleys on Jarlmandangah country to reinforce and embed leadership learnings.

In 2011, Jobs Australia Foundation engaged Associate Professor, Simon Forrest, Director, Centre of Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University and Barry Winmar, Strategy and Coordination, Aboriginal Justice Program, WA Department of the Attorney General, and Kimberly Dreamtime Adventures to deliver key aspects of the program. In addition a formal team of facilitators was established to work together to ensure the program was delivered cohesively.

Program Content

The content of the two year program has covered:

- Expectations of participants, roles and responsibilities
- Building fitness/ preparation for the treks
- Familiarisation with the experience of the diggers on Kokoda
- Working Effectively with Others
- Motivation and Goal Setting
- Kokoda Track Trek, Papua New Guinea
- Reflection
- Mandala Painting
- Cultivating Indigenous Capacity Building through Leadership Development
- Leadership in Action – panel presentation and conversation with Indigenous leaders
- “Walking in Two Worlds”
- Leadership assessment, review and goal setting
- Media and presentation training
- Participation in presentations
- Indigenous history, culture and leadership
- Mentor training
- Seven day trek on Jarlmandangah country , situated east of Broome, WA

Greater emphasis on, and reinforcement of the leadership competencies occurred throughout 2011 and included developing activities to help transfer knowledge to participants and provide opportunities to demonstrate their skills in:

- **Initiating and leading change** - capacity to present a view of the future that sets direction and inspires and convinces others to make a commitment to change.
- **Teamwork** - commitment to involving others in setting plans and achieving goals through facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experiences and supporting others to learn.
- **Communication** - ability to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders in a range of appropriate forms.
- **Conflict resolution and problem solving** - ability to facilitate/ broker acceptable agreements with diverse groups whilst respecting community and/or other relevant protocols.

- **Delivering positive outcomes** - ability to create and/or support an environment that enables setting of clear goals and plans and facilitates others to help achieve them.
- **Self-awareness and improvement** - ability and commitment to set own development goals and initiate the actions necessary to improve own skills and performance.
- **Knowledge of Indigenous culture and history** – understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and the factors impacting Aboriginal people today in order to strengthen sense of identity and cultural connection.

The program has also been documented involving the production of a book on the trek experience – “For our people, for our future” and a film/ documentary on the whole program.

In addition, on 28th October, 2010 at the Jobs Australia National Conference, participants of IYLP participated in a workshop entitled, *Indigenous Leadership – past, present and future*. They were joined by story tellers from the Indigenous Training Network conference which took place earlier in June 2010.

Facilitated by Associate Professor Simon Forrest from Curtin University and Teena Benavides, members of the IYLP and the story tellers brainstormed “what is Indigenous leadership?” based on their own personal experiences both as leaders and members of Indigenous communities from across Australia. The workshop participants developed a list of guiding principles that they believed are fundamental to Indigenous leadership. These principles included:

- Inclusion of cultural identity and heritage
- Family and kinship
- Lead to empower
- Lead by example
- Listen and share
- Relationships and connections
- Recognition
- Respecting one another
- Working together

Women and men were divided into two groups to discuss and establish a statement that describes Indigenous Leadership.

For the women, Indigenous leadership is:

“Recognising, acknowledging and accepting our actions and values, where we come from and how we contribute to and empower our communities”.

For the men, Indigenous Leadership is:

“Empowering and inspiring our people and to realise our potential by respecting our people and our cultural heritage”.

At the conclusion of the workshop the group joined together and developed a governing statement that describes Indigenous Leadership.

To respect, value, acknowledge and embrace our cultural heritage; nurturing our communities through our actions for success.

1.2 Evaluation

In order to determine whether the IYLP program model and curriculum has been successful in teaching and developing the leadership thinking and behaviour of participants this evaluation project was established to:

- monitor and review the thinking and behaviour of participants over the course of program; and
- review the program model, interventions, curriculum content and delivery strategies.

Initially the evaluation focused on the first year (2010) of the program but has been broadened to take into account the effectiveness of the program over its entire duration.

The evaluation process was expected to deliver:

- An overview of similar programs offered by federal and state government and community organisations nationally and information related to existing social policy and program/projects for Indigenous young people and adults in Australia
- Refinement and development of tools relevant to measuring participant and program outcomes
- Collection and collation of data via interviews, focus groups and surveys from participants and key stakeholders
- Documentation of outcomes of the IYLP participants in terms of the acquisition of leadership thinking and behaviour by young people and mentors across a 12 month period
- A progress report in 2010 outlining high level and emerging issues
- A report at the end of 2010 documenting the key findings from the evaluation including:
 - Strategies and interventions necessary to deliver a leadership program that builds leadership capacity
 - Points of difference of the program
 - The extent to which the IYLP has met its stated aims and objectives to date
 - Recommendations for the planning and delivery of the IYLP in 2011
- An evaluation report at covering the entire 2 year program

In 2010, EMS Consultants in conjunction with Jacky Constanza from the Stronger Smarter Institute were engaged to undertake the evaluation. In 2011, the Stronger Smarter Institute was no longer available to make the commitment to the extended duration of the evaluation and Karen Milward, an Aboriginal consultant and respected member of, and leader within the Victorian Aboriginal community joined the EMS team.

The evaluation process has involved:

2010

- Mapping of Indigenous Leadership programs in Australia
- Development of a Leadership Assessment Tool
- Review of “Evaluation/ Feedback Forms” from participants regarding Pre-Trek training and the Trek itself
- Review of curriculum/ workshop outlines
- 360 degree Leadership Assessment with each participant given an individualised report on their strengths and areas for development which was used as a basis of a personal leadership goal setting exercise
- A workshop session with participants at the post-trek workshop – based on Appreciative Inquiry techniques
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Follow-up interviews with young people and mentors by phone to obtain further thoughts/ inputs on the program following the post-trek evaluation session
- A “resilience” questionnaire with a focus on participant changes since commencing the program
- The consultants attending and observing the post-trek workshop
- One of the consultants attending and observing the Jobs Australia Conference one day workshop on Indigenous Leadership

2011

- Leadership assessment questionnaire – self-assessment
- Resilience questionnaire – self-assessment
- Attendance at pre-trek workshop to facilitate sessions on evaluation including gathering information from participants on their expectations of the cultural trek in the Kimberleys
- Post-trek administration of leadership and resilience questionnaires to measure self-perceived change in leadership skills
- Post-trek debrief with all participants
- Post-trek evaluation session using an Appreciative Inquiry technique with a focus on participant experiences and views over the duration of the whole program
- Follow-up interviews with young people and mentors to obtain any further input/views on the program
- Interviews with facilitators and the

2. Participants

At the completion of the first 10 months of the program, 10 young people and 9 mentors actively participated in the IYLP. Unfortunately, two young people exited the program early and did not participate in the Kokoda Trek. One of these young people had been assigned a mentor which resulted in one group of participants consisting of only one mentor and one young person (mentee).

Overall there were 11 males and 8 females in the program consisting of 6 male mentors, 3 female mentors, 5 male mentees and 5 female mentees.

The average age of mentees was 20 years with the average age of mentors being 36 (range 23 to 57).

Participants came from a range of States and Territories with the exception of Tasmania and the ACT. New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland each had four participants, WA and SA had three participants and the Northern Territory one participant.

As the program was originally conceived as a 10 month program not all participants were in a position to continue the program into the second year in 2011. Four people, 2 young people and 2 mentors were unable to continue due to study and employment commitments. As a result, 8 young people and 7 mentors completed the 2011 program.

Currently the ratio of young people to mentors is almost 1:1 and this is understandable given how the program has evolved. The mix and ratio of participants– young people and mentors – is challenging given the geographic spread and the need to ensure there is an appropriate number of male and female mentors. At the end of the 2010 program, EMS advised that to effectively move forward there should be a ratio of 1 mentor to 2 young people as the program aim in order to ensure that the program provides as many places for young people as is practical. EMS continues to hold this view and believes this should be implemented for the next IYLP and beyond.

3. Evaluation Findings

3.1 Program Achievements

The program has successfully developed and evolved over the past 2 years and is now supported by:

- a fully documented curriculum with associated training materials
- partnerships with key organisations to deliver content and assist in facilitation
- a strong facilitation team
- a program development team
- sponsors contributing significant funding to support the sustainability of the program
- 2 treks with well-developed pre-trek preparation activities
- a wide range of teaching methodologies
- a holistic framework that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, cultural and spiritual aspects of Indigenous leadership
- a documentary and book capturing the leadership journeys and achievements of program participants during the first year of the program
- a strategic plan to support its future development and delivery

3.2 Outcome Measures

The Kokoda Trek was the pinnacle activity of the program in 2010. In 2011 a cultural trek through Jarlmadangah country in the Kimberleys was the main feature of the program. These types of outdoor/ experiential activities have been purported to lead to increased:

- Self confidence
- Communication skills
- Problem solving skills
- Self-awareness
- Teamwork and collaboration

The pre and post trek activities, particularly in 2011, also incorporated experiential activities focused on:

- Increasing knowledge of Indigenous culture and history
- Strengthening Indigenous identity
- Increasing understanding of Indigenous leadership

Outcomes for participants have been measured through the completion of resilience and leadership questionnaires at specific points in the program, evaluation sessions involving group reflection and discussion, participant interviews and data gathered through session/ program evaluation sheets.

For the purposes of this report, the findings presented below focus primarily on the results and feedback obtained at the end of the program. Information related to the situation at the end of the first phase of the program (2010) was the subject of an evaluation report submitted to JAF in early 2011.

3.3 Participant Achievements

3.3.1 Leadership Skills

Program participants were asked to rate whether their leadership skills had increased since the commencement of the IYLP in 2010. Ratings included “not at all”, “somewhat” or “a lot”. Participants typically reported that they had increased their skills in:

- **Communication** - ability to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders in a range of appropriate forms.
- **Knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and history** - understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and the factors impacting Aboriginal people today in order to strengthen sense of identity and cultural connection.
- **Self-awareness and self-improvement** - ability and commitment to set own development goals and initiate the actions necessary to improve own skills and performance.
- **Team-work** - commitment to involving others in setting plans and achieving goals through facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experiences and supporting others to learn.

The vast majority of mentors (6 of 7) also reported an increase in their *capacity to remain focused and determined even when change is long-term, continuous and difficult* (one component of **Initiating and leading change**).

Despite these very positive outcomes, no or few changes were reported by either young people or mentors in the following leadership competencies:

- **Initiating and leading change** - capacity to present a view of the future that sets direction and inspires and convinces others to make a commitment to change.
- **Delivering positive outcomes** - ability to create and/or support an environment that enables setting of clear goals and plans and facilitates others to help achieve them.
- **Conflict resolution and problem solving** - ability to facilitate/ broker acceptable agreements with diverse groups whilst respecting community and/or other relevant protocols.

Having said this, two of the eight mentees and two of the seven mentors did self-report significant increases in their skills across all leadership dimensions, but for others increases in leadership dimensions and competencies were generally more random in nature.

Members of the facilitation team provided feedback on leadership development amongst the participants which is consistent with the self-reported changes in leadership skills by participants. Feedback indicated that an enormous amount of personal growth was observed across the board but that most participants (mentors and mentees), when provided with leadership opportunities, particularly on the treks, did not “step up” despite encouragement and support.

3.3.2 Resilience and Personal Growth

Participants were also asked to indicate whether they had experienced a difference in how they felt about themselves on a range of statements related to resilience. It can be argued that resilience is a necessary precursor to developing leadership competencies particularly for disadvantaged or marginalized groups who are at more risk of psychological dysfunction as a result of experiencing major or acute stress related to incidents of grief, chronic illness, sexual, physical or emotional abuse, poverty, fear, or community violence. Individuals who are resilient tend to demonstrate effective adaptive coping skills regardless of the presence of risk factors and also appear to experience a strong sense of connectedness and support in their lives (from family, friends, community, school, work, etc). In Indigenous communities, a strong sense of identity and close connection to community are critical factors in building individual resilience.

More than two-thirds of participants indicated the following statements were more applicable to them at the end of the program than they were at program commencement:

	Mentors	Mentees	Total %
1. In my community I stand up for what I believe in, no matter what.	5/7	6/8	73%
2. I give my time to support community organisations and activities (e.g. Co-ops, church, clubs, NAIDOC, festivals).	5/7	6/8	73%
3. I am proud of being Aboriginal.*	6/7	6/8	80%
4. I feel good about my future.	6/7	7/8	87%
5. I am a role model to others.	6/7	8/8	93%
6. I can make a positive difference in my community.	6/7	8/8	93%
7. I (don't) find it hard to talk to the people who are closest to me about things that I think are important.	7/7	4/8	73%
8. I ask people for help when I need to.	6/7	5/8	73%
9. I take charge of situations I am in.	6/7	6/8	80%
10. I am able to think through and solve the problems that I face.	7/7	7/8	93%
11. I am able to balance obligations to family and community with work commitments and expectations.	4/7	6/8	67%
12. I think that what happens to me in the future is up to me.	7/7	4/8	73%

*At the commencement of the program 3 participants indicated that the statement "I am proud of being Aboriginal" "always" applied to them. Not surprisingly, these 3 participants did not note any change in how they felt about this statement at program completion.

Participating in this program **has made a difference** to participants with many commenting on personal growth, being more confident, learning to speak up honestly/ talking about feelings, being pushed out of "comfort zones" and coping well, building trust in others, connecting with and forming solid relationships/ friendships with other participants, establishing networks and successfully completing two difficult physical challenges.

Building connections with each other has also been a significant aspect of this program. While this is a normal outcome from an intensive group experience its importance in an Indigenous program cannot be underestimated. People commented on “how awesome” it was to meet and build friendships with other Aboriginal people from all over Australia with different backgrounds, life experiences and connections to culture. This aspect of the program is important in that it has reinforced a sense of Aboriginality and built pride.

The exposure to and connections to culture and country in the second year of the program made a significant difference to the way this program was viewed by participants. Several participants made comments indicating that their experience on Jarlmadangah country made them feel grounded, centred, and connected. Together with the pre-trek sessions on Indigenous culture and history the cultural trek has had a profound effect on the participants’ sense of cultural identity and strength.

Despite very few participants indicating that the program had made them a better leader it is clear that it has been instrumental in building resilience, helping participants become clear about their own leadership and personal goals and giving them the confidence and tools to work towards and achieve them. In particular, participants commented that throughout the program they have become clearer about who they are and what they want to achieve for themselves and their communities as potential future leaders.

“Throughout the duration of the program, my ability to lead has grown dramatically....Through the program I have gained a strong sense of confidence and belief that I can do anything I set my mind to, including creating change for the betterment of my people.” (Mentee)

“Every single phase of the IYLP gave me initiative to be a leader. Unlike many programs that only tell you how to be a leader you were able to physically and mentally walk through different aspects of leadership in many different contexts.” (Mentor)

“I still have a lot of things I would like to do to further myself in my leadership...this program has boosted my confidence and self-awareness and I can work on them [skills] in my community and teach others. I’m more motivated, I have goals now that I can achieve, I’m more confident and I am more likely to take risks because I believe in what I can do.” (Mentee)

“The experience I have had has been exceptional. I’ve grown personally. It has confirmed clear future directions by assisting me in re-assessing priorities and objectives.” (Mentor)

“This past 18 months has lit a fire in me to learn more about my culture.... I would like to one day be a leader in my community and be a significant part of taking my people forward..” (Mentor)

4. Suggestions for Improvement

4.1 Program Model

What works

The experiential learning focus including the outdoor challenges has resulted in considerable personal development and increased resilience for most participants with increases in self-confidence and self-awareness, and improved skills in teamwork, and communication being reported.

At the end of the second year participants were asked to reflect on the whole program and what they thought was the core contributing factor that 'gave it life'.

In contrast to what was learnt from the first phase of the program, this time around, participants were clearly able to view the program holistically when considering this question. As one participant noted it was *"the safe environment that allows soul searching and deep questioning of oneself. If the deep questioning wasn't there, it would only be a walk". (Mentor)*

Others noted the holistic nature of the program involving physical, emotional and spiritual aspects which are fundamental aspects of experiential learning

What could be strengthened?

An integrated model

There are two fundamental aspects of this program – adventure based challenges as part of personal and leadership development and developing Indigenous leadership. These two aspects of the program are not yet fully integrated. More work needs to be done in terms of further developing the curriculum and facilitation to ensure integration continues to evolve. (See sections below for more detail).

Session flow

With the addition of the second year of the program there are obvious changes that could be made in relation to the order of sessions in future programs. Sessions on Indigenous culture, history and leadership need to be positioned at the beginning of the program and delivered independently from the pre-trek preparation activities to enable participants to focus on and become immersed in the concepts of Indigenous leadership. Follow up sessions should also be integrated to ensure that participants have a continuous connection to, and involvement in their cultural development and sharing their stories and experiences in this cultural context. This will continue to empower individuals to work more effectively as an Aboriginal team and also implement these aspects back in their communities.

Following these sessions participants should then reflect on their current leadership skills, develop their leadership goals and begin action planning.

In order to reinforce these learnings the cultural trek to the Kimberleys needs to be positioned immediately after these sessions and before any other physical challenge.

Social and cultural connection of participants

The 2010 evaluation report noted that participant feedback reflected a strong desire to have time to socialise and connect with each other outside of the formal “classroom” sessions. This feedback was also received from several participants in the second stage of the program. While we understand the time pressures to deliver the content of the program, social connection is a critical part of Indigenous culture and allowance needs to be made for participants to spend time together in an unstructured way.

The participants are also very keen to keep connected with each other and the program and would support the development of some sort of “alumni” organisation. While some support should be provided by JAF to do this, past participants could also be provided with an opportunity to step-up and self-manage its establishment and maintenance.

Content delivery

The long and very structured days throughout the treks and residential sessions were not unanimously well received by all participants. This also made it challenging to keep to timeframes with some facilitators commenting that their sessions were cut short in order to make up time for subsequent sessions. Some thought could be given to providing less sessions with more in-depth coverage of topics. This might also provide more flexibility for facilitators by enabling sessions to run longer or shorter depending on levels of participant engagement.

The range of delivery modes could also be reviewed to ensure there is a good balance of classroom and non-classroom based activities as well as information based and action oriented/ participant led sessions.

We are confident that the current participants would have a number of suggestions about how these changes or something similar could be incorporated into the program.

Debriefing sessions

Many comments were made about participants feeling “pressured” during debrief sessions to disclose personal issues and information about their ‘feelings’. Pushing for and supporting open and honest communication is an integral part of the experiential learning model but in an Indigenous cultural context this method needs to be used with extreme caution because of the common experience of many Aboriginal people who can feel ‘shamed’ when asked to disclose information or express individual feelings and thoughts in front of other Aboriginal people and non Aboriginal people with whom they have not developed an open, honest and trusting relationship. The past historical practices and policies that were in place to manage the way Aboriginal lived and interacted has had a traumatic affect on the lives of many Aboriginal families and communities today. Although this is not the experience of all Aboriginal people, every Aboriginal person who identifies as such and actively participates in their Aboriginal communities will be affected by this in some way. The feeling of ‘shame’ can particularly be an issue for younger Aboriginal people when asked to provide their thoughts about how they feel when older more experienced Aboriginal people (in this case the mentors and Elders) and non-Aboriginal people are present who they don’t have a strong and trusting relationship with.

Consideration could be given to restructuring the “debrief” sessions. Some comments were made that the debrief process in Broome which involved splitting the group into two (mentors and mentees) was very effective. In addition, to providing the mentors and mentees with separate “space” to voice their views, splitting the groups meant they were then smaller and easier to manage and ensure full participant engagement. An example of how this could be done includes:

- The group being split into smaller groups.
- A “structured process” to self-manage the debrief session at the end of each day being introduced to participants.
- A program facilitator being assigned to each group to “sit beside” and guide the process as needed.
- Each group being asked to report back the next morning on the issues discussed, leadership lessons learned, the processes used to resolve any problems or conflicts, and the outcomes/ resolutions reached.

Inclusion of a Community Project

The program model is definitely delivering positive outcomes in terms of personal growth and development including increased resilience but it is not delivering the evidence of increased leadership skills. One idea suggested is the inclusion of a community project which would be undertaken by ‘teams’ of participants in-between residential and trek program components as a way of ensuring participants are able to apply all their learnings from participating in the program in an Aboriginal community context. An agreed Aboriginal community project would be in place where mentees are provided with support from their mentor to effectively demonstrate their ability to lead change and deliver positive outcomes through an appropriate learning opportunity.

Recognition of participant achievement

The IYLP has highlighted many achievements by all involved but one key issue that has arisen through feedback is that the IYLP is not currently an accredited program. Some feedback from participants and discussions between the Manager and facilitators has indicated that program accreditation maybe a useful mechanism to provide formal recognition of participant effort and achievements (rather than just providing a certificate of participation). Having said this, some participants felt that fulfilling study requirements would be an additional burden given concurrent work and sometimes study commitments. A formal accreditation process may also inhibit flexibility in program development and delivery. If the program were to be accredited, consideration should be given for inclusion of the Aboriginal community project as part of the qualification.

Cost effectiveness

The program is currently relatively expensive compared to other leadership programs given the inclusion of participants from all over Australia and the cost of both Treks. A number of suggestions are made in this report about program management, content, delivery and partnerships which will impact the overall costs associated with the program. It is suggested that as these are considered and taken up they be costed to ensure the program can operate as cost-effectively as possible.

4.2 Program Content

4.2.1 Focus on Indigenous Leadership

What works?

In response to participant feedback provided after the first year of the program the second year of the program included a much greater emphasis on Indigenous leadership as well as Indigenous culture and history. Participants had indicated that they felt they were an Indigenous group undertaking a leadership program but were not connecting to what this meant to them as Indigenous people and leaders.

The inclusion of the sessions on Indigenous culture and history were seen as “massively important” given that there continues to be a lack of attention to these issues within the school environment. As one of the mentors commented:

“As Aboriginal people it is really important to know Black history in Australia and why Aboriginal people face the issues they do today. Knowing some of the great Aboriginal leaders and what they have achieved for Aboriginal people is inspiring for everyone.”

In the session evaluation sheets, every participant noted that the sessions provided had increased their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous leadership. The sessions were particularly important in inspiring and helping participants clarify their own leadership aspirations and what they need to do to achieve their goals.

“The most valuable sessions were the Indigenous culture sessions. It has showed me that I have much more to learn about our history and culture and this learning gives me confidence and strength.”
(Mentee)

“Connecting with and increasing my Indigenous cultural knowledge reinforces a stronger sense of identity - creating confidence in my leadership journey.” (Mentor)

Hearing from Indigenous leaders in the first year of the program was also reported on positively, providing insight and inspiration. We believe this is a very important aspect of exposing participants to Indigenous leadership which was successfully demonstrated in both the post-Kokoda Trek workshop with the panel of leaders and the “Indigenous Leadership, Past, Present and Future” workshop both of which are good examples of how these should be incorporated in the future delivery of the IYLP.

“I really enjoyed listening to the panel of Indigenous speakers, you could feel the power coming off them, they were full of so much confidence and it was good for us to see that, it was easy to tell they were leaders.” (Mentor)

Some suggestions from participants (with which we as evaluators concur) also included that a broader range of Aboriginal leaders from around Australia (including leaders within participant communities) would enhance this aspect of the program.

What could be strengthened?

Indigenise the curriculum

There is an opportunity to review the curriculum of the program to ensure there is integration of Indigenous leadership content throughout. “Indigenising the Curriculum” by using real examples to demonstrate points/ issues of Indigenous leadership in community settings as well as in the “third space” should be considered.

Indigenous leadership competencies

Most of the current measures of leadership used in the program may be too stereotypical of western concepts of leadership and may be limiting participant thinking about, and acknowledgement of, what is important for Indigenous leadership. As one of the facilitators commented in his feedback:

“Being able to take others on a journey is the most important thing about leadership, whether this is in family, community or work is irrelevant”.

Discussion of leadership competencies particularly as Indigenous leaders by participants needs to be incorporated early in the program (after the delivery of Indigenous history, culture and leadership sessions). The inclusion of competencies that specifically apply to Indigenous leadership would be a positive development in determining how leadership development is measured throughout future programs, particularly after trek completion and at the conclusion of the entire program.

4.2.2 Treks

What works?

The experience of participants on the Treks was consistently reported as the major highlight of the program. For some participants it was the Kokoda Trek, but for others it was the Trek in the Kimberleys.

The Kokoda Trek was considered important by participants because of its historical significance for Australians, the many examples of courage and leadership, the exposure to another Indigenous culture and the challenges associated with the physical isolation and “being away from home”. The experiences of, and lessons learnt, by participants were consistently remarked upon as bringing new perspectives and appreciation of being an Indigenous Australian.

In the first year of the program, the significance of the Kokoda Trek as well as the physical and mental challenges faced and successfully overcome, the contact with porters (another Indigenous group) and the history (learning about the leadership and courage of the diggers) was overwhelmingly reported as being fundamental to the success of the program and for some the “single factor that gave the program life”.

“My mental health was good and I was doing it on my own which made me feel powerful. I was doing it every day and feeling stronger and stronger. I was really present and it felt great going through and conquering the physical, mental and emotional aspects of the trek.” (Mentee)

The cultural trek in the Kimberleys also had a significant impact on participants, with participant experiences being very different to those the Kokoda Trek. Participants spoke of cultural connection, and the value of witnessing different styles of leadership “from TJ and the boys’ which appeared effortless, unspoken, and seamless. This reinforced the importance of trust and teamwork to deliver positive outcomes.

“I felt most alive being on their land and seeing what they do” (Mentor)

“On the Jarlmadangah Trek I connected on a deeper level with others – it was a wake-up call to me about my own culture” (Mentee)

“On the Jarlmadangah Trek I was more at home. All the cultural values I valued a lot more [than Kokoda] and it clarified things for me. We may do things differently but we all share the same culture which made it all rich again.” (Mentee)

“Walking with TJ and the boys and seeing their contentment, resilience, compassion and lack of materialism – overall this sparked a fire in me” (Mentee)

What could be strengthened?

Improved preparation for both treks during this program should be considered and the learnings from the Kokoda and the Kimberleys need to be taken into account when planning future treks.

Of particular importance will be ensuring **trek/tour partners** understand the principles underpinning the program model and the expected outcomes for participants. Issues for discussion/ briefing include:

- Understanding the learning methodology and principles associated with adventure based learning
- Being clear and sure of the messages and learnings the program is trying to impart
- Understanding the physical and emotional limits of all participants
- Safety and duty of care (particularly in the Kimberleys)

In relation to Kokoda, trek preparation although seemingly comprehensive was not sufficient to provide participants with a basic level of cultural knowledge about the peoples of Papua New Guinea. Many were not prepared for the “culture shock” of being immersed in a third world environment and many commented that it would have been useful to have heard more about the people of PNG in addition to the information provided about the diggers and the “Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels” before they arrived in PNG.

In relation to the Kimberley trek, the facilitators and the Manager have noted the need for ensuring tour/trek operators are already familiar with the adventure based learning, or are supported more closely by a trained facilitator to ensure 1) physical safety issues are addressed and 2) guides and leaders are familiar with the model of learning being applied in the program.

The treks / adventure based challenges are an integral part of the experiential learning model. The two treks undertaken provided quite different learning experiences for participants. Participants unanimously connected with the cultural trek and feedback received after the Kimberleys indicated that some would gladly give up the Kokoda Trek in favour of more culturally based activities including cultural visits to communities outside of Australia.

More importantly, program developers will need to think about treks in future programs in relation to the overall cost and impact on leadership development. Issues such as number, length and location of treks should be considered. In addition, some thought needs to be given to what financial contribution potential participants should make to their participation, if any.

4.2.3 Setting goals and plans of action

What works?

Setting goals and plans of action were considered to be valuable sessions by participants. Leadership programs need to incorporate these types of sessions as setting goals and developing and seeing through plans are important leadership characteristics.

What could be strengthened?

The consultants noted that when setting goals, many participants focused on personal or general life goals rather than leadership goals linked to building their leadership competencies. It is suggested that in future programs participants are encouraged to reflect on how effective their skills are in relation to the agreed leadership competencies at the beginning of the program, what goals they could set themselves in relation to building those competencies, what actions they need to commit to achieve those goals and how much these competencies increase over the life of the program.

4.3 Program Management and Delivery

4.3.1 Program establishment, development and management

What works?

Overall the program has been well administered and participants have appreciated the hard work and dedication of the Manager JAF. This has been a hugely complex program to develop and manage logistically and the Manager is to be commended for her efforts and achievements to date. Credit needs to be given to Jodie Belyea for ensuring the program has been developed and delivered according to plan and has resulted in the high retention rates of participants and positive outcomes.

What could be strengthened?

Program support

Currently the program is under-resourced and its success to date is in the main attributable to the Manager's commitment to "do what it takes" to ensure it is delivered. Once the program model for 2012 and beyond is determined it is suggested that the JAF Board review resource requirements to ensure the program is adequately supported and continues to be delivered successfully.

Indigenous leadership of the program development and delivery could be strengthened. Participants were generally very positive about the current Manager's role in the program but also reported that the program would be further valued if there was greater Indigenous leadership included in future programs. Interestingly, the greater emphasis on Indigenous culture, history and leadership in the second year of the program appears to have increased participant expectations of program management and facilitation having more of an "Indigenous feel".

More Indigenous facilitators and speakers should also be included in the residential aspects of the program. Indigenous leadership on the treks themselves could also be added to the program. For example one Mentor commented:

"I saw some very valuable opportunities for Indigenous leaders with the knowledge to play a role in each step of the process in particular the trek itself. These leaders would have been able to provide similarities, differences, and/or history. There was a large amount of opportunity for reflection [on the trek] however having this in partnership with an Indigenous leader would have played an enormous role." (Mentor)

In order to model effective leadership, mentors and young people could also be given the opportunity to have a greater input into program content and delivery, particularly in relation to the second program that will be run post 2011.

4.3.2 Participant Selection Process

What Works?

The recruitment of participants from across Australia is seen as strength of the selection process. Bringing together a group of people from a diversity of backgrounds contributed to the richness of the program. For some participants this was particularly important as they felt "freer" to participate without the pressures of family and community which might have existed if the program was localized. Participants also commented on the value of forming relationships and networks with Indigenous people from all over the country.

What could be strengthened?

As previously reported in the evaluation of the 2010 stage of the program several aspects of the selection process could be strengthened.

The selection process for this program has resulted in:

- too many mentors in relation to the number of young people
- the selection of some mentors who had limited experience as leaders and/or mentors
- some mentors being geographically separated from their mentees presenting them with challenges about how to effectively provide support and guidance outside of program activities
- little consideration of matching mentors with mentees on the basis of gender (an important consideration in many Indigenous mentoring programs)
- a mix of leadership capabilities amongst the young people selected for the program, with some already in leadership roles while others came to the program with little experience and/or exposure to leadership opportunities in their own communities or workplaces

- a mix of ages and levels of maturity amongst participants providing challenges in terms of appropriately pitched program content and delivery
- the inclusion of a participant with physical challenges which required significant support from the Manager and facilitators

The selection process going forward needs to consider these issues, although how specifically these are addressed will be dependent on the program model decided. However, regardless of any modifications to the program model we do suggest that:

- the young people selected are aged between 18 and 25 with demonstrated experience and or exposure to some sort of leadership opportunity or role (whether at school, work, sport, arts or within their families and/or communities) and leadership aspirations
- mentees and mentors are selected from the same State and preferably from the same communities to both facilitate meetings outside of formal program sessions as well as undertaking the proposed community project
- matches with mentors take gender into consideration (males:males, females:females)
- given the emphasis on fitness and capability to challenge difficult physical challenges, if future participants with physical disabilities are selected to participate, allowance is provided to ensuring carers are engaged to support them on the trek/s
- program aims and objectives together with requirements and expectations of participants (both mentees and mentors) are clearly documented and explained
- past participants are involved in the selection process

4.3.3 The Role of Mentors

What works?

Some (but not all) mentors have provided great support to their mentees with some young people really valuing their contribution and guidance throughout the program.

What could be strengthened?

The role of mentors in the program needs to be clarified and strengthened. To date mentors have participated in the same program activities as young people and in many ways have done so as “equal participants”.

Mentors selected for the program are in quite a different place in their life and leadership journeys to young people. Their leadership development needs are likely to be different and developing their skills as mentors and coaches in this program and other aspects of their lives needs more emphasis if they are to be effective in their roles in the IYLP.

In the second year of the program a day of the pre-trek program was dedicated to “mentor training” and there were some opportunities for mentors to be participating in different activities to “mentees” during the pre-trek activities. However, this remained an issue for the Manager and facilitators who commented on mentors failing to step up into their roles and not “holding” the key messages of the program during program activities both on the trek and in the pre-trek workshop and post-trek

debriefing sessions. Some participants also questioned why some of the mentors were in the program, recognising that they were on the same journey as themselves.

The roles and responsibilities of the mentors also need to be clearer and a large part of the support and encouragement, planning and decision making to date handled by the Manager needs to be clearly delegated to them. This includes being accountable for the contribution they make to the successful participation of their mentees.

Selection of mentors in future programs will be critical to ensuring those selected have the skills, experience and leadership attributes required in this program.

However, a more critical question for the future of the program is: “if the program is to remain targeted at young Indigenous people with leadership potential or aspirations does it make sense for the mentors to be sitting alongside these young people as active participants in the program?” Of course, selected mentors will need to be involved in the program in terms of induction and training as mentors as well as being involved in support/ check-in sessions at certain points in the program but to ensure the program can cost-effectively maximise the participation of young people consideration needs to be given to the “value” and “cost” of having mentors involved to the extent they have been to date, including their participation in the treks.

4.3.4 Role of Facilitators

What works?

Having a range of presenters and facilitators clearly adds to the program’s richness. The establishment of a “facilitation team” in the second year of the program consisting of the Manager, Aileen Traynor (facilitator/ trainer), Dion Taylor (TT Adventures) and Simon Forrest and Barry Winmar (Indigenous presenters/facilitators) has assisted the Manager in the coordination of program sessions, activities and events.

What could be strengthened?

A greater **clarification of roles** amongst the facilitation team members and some consideration of who should be part of this team in future programs would be useful. Participants and facilitators did report in the evaluation process that there were conflicts and tensions within the team which were mainly attributable to the lack of clarification of roles and some blurring of boundaries. It is also our view that the Manager JAF currently has to “wear too many hats” and this role would need to be reviewed and further streamlined to ensure that clearly defined roles of the facilitation team are in place for future programs.

A suggested structure for supporting program development and review includes:

- Manager/Coordinator
- Lead Facilitator
- Assistant Facilitator
- Cultural Expert
- Fitness/ Health Advisor
- Past participant/s

At least one of the positions of Lead Facilitator and Assistant Facilitator should be held by an Indigenous person.

It is suggested that position descriptions outline clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Our initial suggestions around roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Position	Roles and responsibilities
Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - program development - maintain program integrity and quality - program promotion - program coordination and logistics - fundraising - partnership development and relations - selection of facilitators - selection of participants - program monitoring and review
Lead Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - program implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ coordination of facilitators and speakers ○ chair residential program ○ facilitate relevant residential program sessions ○ participant support ○ program session evaluation - support Assistant Facilitator development - participate in program development, monitoring and review - provide program leadership on treks

Assistant Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assist Lead Facilitator with all aspects of program implementation - participate in participant selection - participate in program development, monitoring and review - participate in treks and support Lead Facilitator (as required)
Cultural Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advise on cultural integrity of program development and delivery - deliver sessions on Aboriginal culture, history and leadership - provide cultural advice and support to program facilitators and speakers - participate in program development, monitoring and review
Fitness/health Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop and provide fitness programs for participants - advise on healthy lifestyles - brief and advise tour/trek operators on program requirements - participate in program development, monitoring and review
Indigenous Trek Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assist with program leadership on treks - provide one on one and team support to participants to assist them to successfully complete treks - liaise with tour/trek operators on treks to discuss issues, resolve issues etc - assist with debriefing and team meetings throughout the trek - contribute to program monitoring, review and evaluation
Past participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contribute to program monitoring, review and evaluation - participate in participant selection process

It is clear that this structure will have cost implications and these will need to be considered along with changes to the program model and delivery.

The level of ***cultural awareness/ competence*** varies amongst current members of the facilitation team and this will need to be addressed in future programs. All formal roles in this program should be either filled by Aboriginal people with relevant skills and/or qualifications, or by non-Aboriginal people who have participated in cultural awareness training and/or have appropriate levels of demonstrated cultural competence.

All key staff in the program, particularly those in facilitation roles also need to have adequate skills and experience in leadership and facilitation and have a sound understanding of experiential learning and outdoor education methodologies.

The extent to which each of the facilitation team members participates in the whole program also needs to be considered. It was noted that the ratio of facilitators to program participants is relatively

high in most aspects of the program and this is considered to be both unnecessary and potentially expensive.

It is suggested that in future programs that only the Lead Facilitator and Assistant Facilitator need to be in attendance at all residential aspects of the program and that participation in the treks is confined to the Lead Facilitator and the Indigenous Trek Leaders.

4.4 Program Partnerships

The IYLP is currently seeking other partners to contribute to the program. We suggest that all stakeholders that are approached to 'sign up' as partners in the future be invited to contribute in many ways rather than one approach being offered (usually just funding contributions). More value would be added to these partnerships if partners were offered a range of options to consider which are in line with their core values and objectives.

Some potential partners might like to consider the following options:

- senior executive and staff involvement in assisting in the coordination of and support to trek activities
- active participation and support to Aboriginal community leadership projects that support the work undertaken by IYLP successful participants
- supporting participants to actively raise funds within their communities, workplaces and place of study to support their participation in the program
- identify Aboriginal Leaders to participate in the cultural leadership aspects of the program (including sponsoring their involvement)
- identify individuals that have demonstrated cultural competency in the workplace or through other means to be mentors to participants when they have returned to their communities in between trek and program sessions
- actively promote case studies and stories of IYLP participants through different mediums on a local, regional and national level
- ongoing support to the continuing development of individual participants once they complete the program (ie. mentoring, education, training, employment and further career and professional development opportunities)

4.5 Evaluation

Like program development the program evaluation process has evolved to accommodate the second year of the program. The use of the leadership questionnaire and resilience questionnaire has as a result been somewhat excessive.

We would suggest paring back the formal evaluation process in future programs with a focus on:

- Self-assessment of leadership skills and resilience at the outset of the program and at the end of the program.
- Some modification to the leadership questionnaire to reduce its length and to ensure better alignment with whatever is agreed as “Indigenous leadership competencies” at the beginning of the program.
- A facilitated appreciative inquiry based discussions with participants at the completion of the program.
- Targeted focus group discussions and interviews with facilitators and program partners at the completion of the program.

5. What Next?

The development of the IYLP continues to be a “work in progress”. While we have seen some very positive outcomes for participants there are some critical issues that need to be addressed if the program is to continue as a two year program. These include:

- The inclusion of a “community project” to be completed by participants as a way of increasing their skills in leading change and delivering positive outcomes.
- Increasing the “cultural” focus of the program through “indigenizing” the curriculum, the addition of more Indigenous facilitators and speakers, and the engagement of Indigenous Trek Leaders.
- Reviewing the key positions that support this program including the Manager and facilitator roles and including a male and female Indigenous Trek leader.
- Reviewing the role of mentors and their inclusion in program activities and components.
- Securing funding and other program support through strategic partnerships.
- Facilitating and supporting existing participants to maintain their connection to the program and each other through supporting the establishment of an “alumni”/ network and providing opportunities for past participants to continue to have input to the program as:
 - ambassadors and/or advocates of the program
 - participants in program development
 - guest speakers
 - future mentors
 - leaders of the “alumni” program.

6. Conclusions

Overall the ILYP has been a very successful program. All participants believe they have grown and developed throughout the program. EMS is of the view that this program is unique, applicable and appropriate for young Indigenous people.

The program model is based on adventure based therapy and experiential learning and through the implementation of these types of interventions and activities, participants have been able to demonstrate improvements in the expected outcomes of the program. However, the program has not been able to fully demonstrate real gains in terms of 'leadership skills', despite the fact that the program has enabled participants to gain clarity around their leadership aspirations and goals.

The Kokoda trek experience and more importantly the cultural trek in the Kimberley's, together with residential leadership development sessions have provided appropriate levels of support to assist participants to develop self-confidence, self-awareness, teamwork and communication skills which have contributed to increased resilience.

The program will need to consider continued development approaches to ensure participants can also:

- understand leadership skills, qualities, and behaviour in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous settings,
- reflect on their own skills and abilities as potential Indigenous leaders,
- access the tools and mechanisms to further develop and implement aspirational leadership goals that are supported by structured action plans to achieve these goals,
- be given practical opportunities to build their skills in leading change and delivering positive outcomes, and
- be supported by IYLP partners and the Jobs Australia Foundation to continue their leadership journey back in their communities once they finish their active participation in the program.

This report has outlined a number of suggestions for consideration on how the program could be further developed and strengthened including:

- consolidating the program model by integrating the experiential and adventure-based approach with Indigenous leadership, and practical community-based application of learnings,
- reviewing and streamlining program management and delivery,
- ensuring program content is culturally relevant, and
- pursuing innovative partnerships to provide ongoing financial and other support for the program.

7. Summary of Suggestions

A summary of the suggestions and recommendations for the future of the program are outlined below.

Program Model

1. Undertake further work to integrate the experiential learning and adventure based program underpinnings with Indigenous leadership principles and values through “Indigenising the curriculum”, increasing the use of Indigenous facilitators and enhancing participant input into program development and delivery.
2. Review the session flow in response to the fact that future programs will be run over 2 years with the introduction of Indigenous culture, history and leadership being at the beginning of the program.
3. Build-in unstructured time during sessions and the treks for social and cultural connection of participants.
4. Consider support for participants in their leadership journey post their formal involvement in the IYLP.
5. Review the way debriefing sessions are conducted to ensure they are culturally appropriate.
6. Include a community project as an integral component of the IYLP.
7. Consider whether “accreditation” of the program is an appropriate method for both recognising participant achievement as well as a way of attracting both future participants as well as program partners.

Program Content

8. Use “real life” examples of leadership challenges and issues faced by Indigenous leaders in Indigenous and non-Indigenous settings throughout program sessions.
9. Ensure all participants and the facilitation team are adequately prepared for their trek experiences both physically and culturally.
10. Ensure trek/tour partners are fully briefed on the principles underpinning the IYLP, the expectations of participants and expected outcomes.
11. Consider ramifications of continuing the two treks as they are or changing them in terms of number of treks, location and length.

12. Source relevant speakers from across Australia including participants' own communities.
13. Strengthen the role of goal setting and action planning throughout the program with a focus on building leadership competencies.

Program Development and Management

14. Increase Indigenous involvement in program development, management, facilitation and trek leadership.
15. Review the participant selection process to ensure selection criteria are clear and the successful young people who participate in future have both some experience or exposure to Indigenous leadership and their own leadership aspirations.
16. Review the role of mentors, particularly their involvement in all aspects of the program.
17. Clarify the roles of the Manager and facilitators and ensure position descriptions for these roles are developed to assist in selection of appropriate people.
18. Ensure that all people involved in program management and delivery are either Indigenous or can demonstrate cultural competence, and key staff have a sound understanding of experiential learning and outdoor education.
19. Once the program model for 2012 and beyond is determined, review resourcing needs to ensure the program is adequately supported.
20. Expand the "view" of program partnerships to ensure a range of partners can become involved and make a positive contribution whether financial or otherwise.
21. Review the evaluation tools and process to ensure they are not too demanding of participants and are appropriate to "measuring" a range of leadership competencies including Indigenous leadership competencies.

Appendices

Jobs Australia Foundation Indigenous Youth Leadership Program - 2011 Participant Questionnaire

The following questions have been developed as a way of identifying your leadership strengths and track how they might change over the life of your participation in the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program. The IYLP has identified 7 key competencies that we believe are essential to good leadership. They are:

1. Initiating and leading change
2. Teamwork
3. Communication
4. Conflict resolution/ problem solving
5. Delivering positive outcomes
6. Self-awareness and self-improvement
7. Knowledge of Indigenous culture and history

You are not expected to “excel” in all areas of leadership right now, but we do expect that your participation in this program will contribute to developing these skills over time.

Thank you for participating!

How often do the following statements apply to you?
Please put an X through your answer.

1. I participate in sport, recreation, performing arts or hobbies.	Never	Some-times	Quite a Bit	A lot
2. I participate in cultural/community events.	Never	Some-times	Quite a Bit	A lot
3. In my community I stand up for what I believe in, no matter what.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
4. I give my time to support community organisations and activities (e.g. Co-ops, church, clubs, NAIDOC, festivals).	Never	Some-times	Quite a Bit	A lot
5. People in my community listen to what I say.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
6. I am proud of being Aboriginal.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
7. I feel good about my future.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
8. I am a role model to others.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
9. I can make a positive difference in my community.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
10. I find it hard to talk to the people who are closest to me about things that I think are important.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
11. I ask people for help when I need to.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
12. I take charge of situations I am in.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
13. I am able to think through and solve the problems that I face.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
14. People ask me for help when they need to.	Never	Some-times	Quite a Bit	A lot
15. I find it hard to learn new things.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
16. I enjoy working with other people.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
17. I find it hard to balance obligations to family and community with work commitments and expectations.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
18. When I make plans I see them through even if there are challenges and barriers.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
19. I think that what happens to me in the future is up to me.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always
20. I think the barriers that Aboriginal people face in life today, will still be there for my children as they grow up.	Never	Some-times	Most of the time	Always

In the following questions please circle the answer that most applies to you today. "5" indicates you have strong skills in relation to the attribute/ characteristic described while "1" indicates you still have a lot of room to develop.

Initiating and Leading Change

	<i>Weak</i>			<i>Strong</i>	
I have, and am able to communicate my vision for a positive future e.g. for my family, community, my workplace or society as a whole.	1	2	3	4	5
I am comfortable and confident about challenging the here and now and tackling the hard issues.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to develop a strong case that motivates and convinces others to get involved in creating change that will make a positive difference e.g. to my family, community, my workplace or the broader society.	1	2	3	4	5
I have the necessary skills to mobilize the resources needed to make the changes needed.	1	2	3	4	5
I have the capacity to remain focused and determined even when change is long term, continuous and difficult.	1	2	3	4	5

Teamwork

	<i>Never</i>			<i>Consistently</i>	
I involve others in the development of plans, strategies and goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I encourage others to take ownership of and responsibility for the achievement of goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
I support others to learn, contribute and achieve team/ shared goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I readily share my own knowledge and experience with others to help improve the way things are done.	1	2	3	4	5
I ensure I provide feedback that enables others to learn and grow.	1	2	3	4	5
I seek and act on feedback from others to ensure I can work effectively with them.	1	2	3	4	5

Communication

	Never			Consistently	
I write and speak clearly using appropriate style, format and grammar for a range of different audiences.	1	2	3	4	5
I “actively listen” to others, making sure that I hear and understand what they are saying to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to deliver effective presentations to individuals and groups.	1	2	3	4	5
I share positive and negative information with others while delivering my message sensitively and respectfully.	1	2	3	4	5
I respond to communication to me and provide information to others in a timely and accurate manner.	1	2	3	4	5

Conflict Resolution / Problem Solving

	Never			Consistently	
In problem situations I am able to develop agreements that are acceptable to all parties and contribute to sustainable relationships with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I know who the important “players” are around issues and I am able to work and manage relationships with them positively.	1	2	3	4	5
I address issues with individuals or groups using relevant, constructive and appropriate processes.	1	2	3	4	5
I actively seek the input of others to help identify and develop solutions to problems that arise.	1	2	3	4	5
I make sure that when making a decision others are aware of the reasons why and where relevant ensure community needs and protocols are taken into account.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to make decisions, judgements or commitments even if there are unpleasant consequences or others don't agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5

Delivering Positive Outcomes

	<i>Weak</i>				<i>Strong</i>
I understand and I am able to set SMART goals to achieve my goals and aspirations.	1	2	3	4	5
I support and coach others to learn and develop skills to achieve their goals and deliver results.	1	2	3	4	5
I have the skills to identify, negotiate and remove obstacles that get in the way of achieving agreed goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I accept responsibility for results and don't blame others when things get tough.	1	2	3	4	5
I involve others in reviewing how things are going and taking corrective action where needed.	1	2	3	4	5

Self-Awareness and Improvement

	<i>Never</i>				<i>Consistently</i>
While having my own leadership goals and commitments I make sure I take time out for myself and to spend time with my family and community.	1	2	3	4	5
I look for ways, and am open to doing things differently and better.	1	2	3	4	5
I seek out Elders, respected people in the community and /or other role models who can help me learn and build my leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5
I identify and participate in programs that will develop my skills and expand my networks.	1	2	3	4	5
I take time out to reflect on where I am, where I am going, and what I need to learn and do to continue to develop my leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5
I use journaling and discussions with other community leaders to help me reflect on and review my goals.	1	2	3	4	5

Knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture and history

	<i>Weak</i>				<i>Strong</i>
I know where I'm from and who my mob is.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a sound knowledge of the history of Aboriginal people before and after colonisation.	1	2	3	4	5
I am clear about the values that are important to effective Aboriginal leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
When visiting or working in other Aboriginal people's "country" I know how to build my knowledge of local community protocols and culture.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the major issues impacting Aboriginal people today and the key approaches, strategies and programs which are effective in improving outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the concepts and importance of Aboriginal community control and sovereignty rights as key mechanisms to achieving Aboriginal self-determination and self-management.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm able to work effectively and positively with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the spirit of reconciliation regardless of the issues or challenges at hand.	1	2	3	4	5

In summary, please provide some comments on where your leadership skills are at right now?

What do you think are your 3 to 5 **strongest** leadership skills?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

What are the 3 to 5 leadership skills that you would most like to **develop further**?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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