



**AIATSIS**

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**Education Strategy**  
**2021–25**

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Education Strategy aims to influence what children learn at school about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia and support educators to teach confidently.

The strategy will meet our transformative initiative priority **to develop resources for the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in schools, and the support of professional development through cultural competency training.**

With a growing collection of more than 1 million items dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, AIATSIS has a unique opportunity to share Indigenous knowledges with the next generation of Australians, as told by and through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices.

**The AIATSIS vision is of a world in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and cultures are recognised, respected, celebrated and valued.**

## **AIATSIS role**

AIATSIS is significant, as both a keeping place for culturally important Indigenous knowledges and as a resource for improving individual understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. We are custodians of the largest collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander materials in the world.

AIATSIS is in a unique position to develop authoritative resources from an Indigenous viewpoint, to support teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, and provide teachers with professional learning to teach in a culturally safe way. With the newly established education team, AIATSIS will work alongside education groups to support all educators, from early childhood settings through to primary and senior school levels.

# Moving forward together: a national agenda

Families and communities have long lobbied governments, education ministers, and national education standards and curriculum bodies to demand schools teach about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, and improve pedagogical practices for teaching Indigenous students. AIATSIS joins this important call to action and will support education systems, schools and teachers by enacting the AIATSIS Education Strategy.



Clockwise from top: Josie from Waiben (Thursday Island) in the Torres Strait, one of the young authors of *Our Land, Our Stories*. Warlpiri artist Tess Napaljarri Ross with granddaughter Bethalia Kelly in Yuendumu, NT. *Our Land, Our Stories* contributors Josie, Orlando and Shae at the launch of the landmark education series. Photos: AIATSIS

# Goals

The goals of the AIATSIS Education Strategy are to:

Develop and implement a cutting edge schools program

## Key activities

- Establish a place-based learning collective that delivers an engaging and interactive schools program, and culturally responsive curriculum resources.
- Develop and deliver transformative learning opportunities for students and educators visiting Canberra, and those accessing content online.
- Bring the stories from the AIATSIS Collection to life and make them accessible to all Australian students and educators.



Deb Stiles teaching her daughter about Country using the AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia. Photo: AIATSIS

Generate world-leading education resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum

#### Key activities

- Create a comprehensive bank of resources to support educators to confidently teach about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to strengthen their pedagogical agility to improve learning and engagement for Indigenous students.
- Develop education resources linking the AIATSIS Collection to the Australian Curriculum.
- Create a digital platform to house world leading, authoritative curriculum resources.
- Publish and vend high-quality education resources and tools for both students and educators.

Develop and deliver culturally responsive professional learning for educators

#### Key activities

- Provide in-person and online professional learning, including culturally responsive pedagogy, about how to confidently embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures into the curriculum.
- Develop Core learning modules for educators.

Our strategy complements the Education Council's **Mparntwe Education Declaration**. This significant statement, prepared in agreement with every Australian education minister, has two distinct but interconnected goals:

Goal 1: The Australian education system promotes excellence and equity.

*Provide all young Australians with access to high-quality education that is inclusive and free from any form of discrimination.*

*Ensure that learning is built on and includes local, regional and national cultural knowledge and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and works in partnership with local communities.*

Goal 2: All young Australians become confident and creative individuals; successful lifelong learners; and active and informed members of the community.

*Understand, acknowledge and celebrate the diversity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.*

*Possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.*

As part of Australia's education community and through our education strategy, AIATSIS will promote educational excellence and equity by providing culturally responsive professional learning, and generating authoritative curriculum resources to teach about local, regional and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.



Family fishing using a cast net on Mer (Murray Island) in the Torres Strait. Photo: AIATSIS

## Performance indicators

- Number of visits to the learning collective in Canberra by students and educators increases year on year.
- Percentage of Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) is spent on visits to the learning collective in Canberra and increases year on year.
- Number of interactions with web-based platform increases year on year.
- Time spent on the web-based platform pages and downloads increases by 5 per cent per year.
- Number of educators undertaking AIATSIS professional learning increases by 5 per cent per year.

## Impacts

- Increased levels of teacher and student cultural competency, and safer learning environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners.
- Positive contributions to reconciliation by embedding truth-telling in education.
- Increased transmission of Indigenous knowledges to the next generation of Australians.
- Improved student and teacher understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are Australia's cultures, and all Australians can celebrate these together.
- More students and educators will encounter, engage with and be transformed by the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.





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