

# Northern Territory's Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2020-2030 Annual Report Card

Year Ending June 2024

## Overview

This is the 4th annual report card for the Northern Territory's Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2020 – 2030 (Strategy), detailing outcomes to the year ending June 2024. It should be noted that during the reporting period the Strategy was refreshed, with the updated strategy released in June 2024.

## Vision

We inspire visitors to connect with one of the world's oldest cultures through immersive tourism experiences, which sustain the Aboriginal tourism sector for future generations.

## Mission

In participating in the tourism sector, the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory are respectfully supported in order to benefit economically, socially and culturally.

In collaboration with the Traditional Owner, we look to advance tourism interests on their lands and waters.



## Cultures

Respectfully sharing Aboriginal cultures will enrich the visitors' understanding and provide distinctive experiences and product that promotes Aboriginal cultures for future generations.

## Communities

Promoting and facilitating mutually beneficial, respected, and trusted relationships and networks will continue to strengthen the Aboriginal tourism sector.

## Lives

Supporting skills development through initiatives that are responsive to individuals' needs and goals will create better business and job outcomes.

## Landscapes

Ensuring the Aboriginal tourism sector is represented in the development of destinations that will improve the NT's profile to attract visitors.

## Interactions

Building effective engagement, monitoring, and measuring the connection with visitors and industry will support the continued development of the Aboriginal tourism sector.

**\$1.38M** > In funding provided to Aboriginal tourism businesses in 2023-24 through Tourism NT grant programs.<sup>1</sup>

**78** > Aboriginal experiences and tourism product listed on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse are majority owned NT based Aboriginal businesses.



> In 2023, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Brolga Award Winner was Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia – Wintjiri Wiru.

**4 in 5** > International travellers seek out Indigenous experiences.<sup>2</sup>

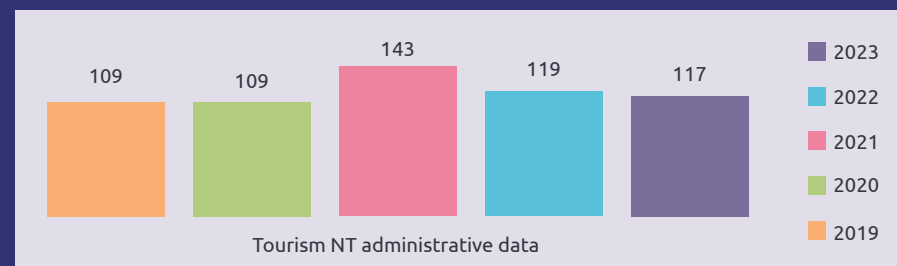
**4 in 5** > Of Australian travelling population associate NT with a place where you can connect with Aboriginal cultures.<sup>3</sup>

## Aboriginal experiences<sup>4</sup>

Proportion of NT holiday visitors that participate in an Aboriginal experience	2022-23	2023-24	Change (percentage points)
International	63%	68%	+5pp
Domestic	22%	22%	0pp
Interstate	33%	32%	-1pp
Intra-Territory	9%	7%	-2pp

① Source: Tourism Research Australia, YE June 2020-23 and 2021-24 (3 years average).

## Aboriginal tourism businesses



1. Supported through the Aboriginal Tourism Grant Program round 5 and 6, and the Aboriginal Tourism Development Support Grant Program round 2

2. Tourism Australia Consumer Demand Project, June 2024

3. Market Tracking Survey, June 2024

4. Tourism Research Australia, YE June 2020-23 and 2021-24 (3 years average)

# Achievements under the five pillar initiatives

## Cultures

- The Northern Territory Aboriginal Tourism Committee (ATC) engaged in 10 meetings, consultations, and workshops in Darwin, Alice Springs, Kakadu, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy.
- The ATC's nominated representative participated in 3 National First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership working group consultations and workshop sessions.
- With guidance from the ATC, a review of the NT Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2020-2030 was completed and released in June 2024. The review examined actions and priorities, and made adjustments to long-term goals and measures.
- Secured \$6M in co-investment for the NT's Strategic Indigenous Tourism Projects with support from the National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA) and the ATC.
- The [Aboriginal Tourism Grant Program](#) rounds five and six, provided 14 NT majority owned Aboriginal businesses a total of \$1.09M in funding.
- The [Aboriginal Tourism Development Support Grant Program](#), provided 10 NT majority owned Aboriginal businesses with a total of \$289,000 in funding for business planning, architectural design, tourism partnerships and land tenure planning.

## Landscapes

- Aboriginal tourism opportunities are identified and prioritised in all 6 Destination Management Plans.
- Continued support to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Gallery of Australia project in Alice Springs with the aim of ensuring an internationally renowned cultural attraction is delivered.
- Hermannsburg Historic Precinct extensive restoration works were completed.
- \$13.2M in funding was committed by the National Water Grid Authority to improve Yulara township's long-term water security and support Aboriginal economic participation.
- Uluru to Kata Tjuṯa multi-day walking trail received in-principle approval from the Board of Management for the operation of accommodated multi-day walk.
- Watarrka National Park multi-day walking trail – trail corridor alignment approved.
- Larrakia Cultural Centre – Construction tender was awarded, and the first ground was turned to development.
- East Arnhem Tourism Support – continued support for a dedicated tourism development role within Developing East Arnhem Limited.

## Lives

- Delivered the first NT Aboriginal Tourism Accelerator Program in collaboration with Indigenous Business Australia and support from NIAA with 7 Aboriginal Territorians completing the 6-month face-to-face tourism development program.
- Sixteen Aboriginal people participated in the Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa Knowledge for Tour Guides and 32 Aboriginal people participated in the Kakadu Knowledge for Tour Guides training through Charles Darwin University.
- Tourism NT appointed a second dedicated Aboriginal Tourism Officer
- The [Unlocking Aboriginal Tourism Development Funding program](#), supported 12 NT based majority owned Aboriginal businesses and organisations with tourism interests. The program provided professional services to seek investment for fishing tours, stations stays, photography tours and education tours.

## Living communities

- In November 2023, the Aboriginal Tourism Forum in Alice Springs was delivered with 110 registrations and 60 per cent of delegates identified as Aboriginal. Forty-two per cent of the forum delegates responded to the forum evaluation survey, with the majority rating the forum as highly valuable.
- Eleven Aboriginal tourism businesses representatives were approved to attend the inaugural Talking Tourism Forum and Australian Tourism Industry Awards.

## Interactions

- Undertook a Top End Aboriginal cultural tourism film shoot. for website, social media and paid advertisement marketing content.
- Dedicated Choose Tourism career campaign featured Aboriginal tourism workers in Kakadu and Central Australia and participation by Aboriginal tourism businesses at the Vocational Education and Training Career Expos.
- Aboriginal events, experiences or attractions included 100% of international trade famils and international media famils.
- 94% of domestic media famils included Aboriginal tourism events, experiences or attractions.
- Cooperative partnerships with AAT Kings, NT Now and Voyages, selling Aboriginal experiences, delivered over 12,000 passenger bookings.

## Future focus

- Continue to provide secretariat support to the ATC and collaborate on priority Aboriginal tourism development activities.
- Work in partnership with the NIAA and partners to progress the Strategic Indigenous Tourism Fund co-investment projects.
- Deliver \$2.7M in total grant funding pool to support the development of and activate Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences and tourism products.
- Deliver the second NT Aboriginal Tourism Accelerator Program in collaboration with Indigenous Business Australia.
- Deliver the third NT Aboriginal Tourism Forum in Darwin, including support for regional and remote Aboriginal Territorians to participate.
- Continue to showcase the NT's Aboriginal tourism experiences through marketing including a new domestic trade training program and establishing a Tourism NT Aboriginal stock music library to support the integrity of marketing assets.
- Deliver a 'sharing your culture with visitors' campaign, aimed at Aboriginal Territorians with the objective of increasing participation in the tourism industry across the NT.
- In partnership with ATC representative, lead a small Aboriginal tourism leadership delegation to the Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference to strengthen leadership in the Aboriginal tourism sector.
- Contribute to national strategic First Nations visitor economy and trade advisory groups related to Australian strategic policy priorities that support the development of the NT's Aboriginal tourism sector.
- Develop and deliver the NT Aboriginal Tourism Cultural Tourism Framework and practical resources.
- Develop and deliver a tailored trade-ready initiative that includes supporting Aboriginal tourism operators in participating in the Australian Tourism Exchange and Australian Tourism Export Council events.
- Using an evidence-based approach, deliver initiatives that will assist in developing Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences and tourism products on key drive routes and in the expedition cruise sector.