



# Longtime Learning

## Queensland Indigenous Knowledge Centres

*"We started with the message stick,  
we continue today with the memory stick."*

Shirley Costello, IKC Administrator, Hope Vale

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My name is Tanaio and I live on Boigu Island in the Torres Strait. From the north of our island I can see our neighbour, Papua New Guinea.

On Boigu we have a primary school which goes to Grade 7. When I went to school, we had only a few books and the bible. The closest place to buy books is the newsagent on Thursday Island - three drums of fuel away by boat.

Until our IKC opened two years ago, there was never a place for little ones, teenagers and adults to go to learn.

Our wet season is long and it gets SO hot and wet from December to May – you cannot believe it!

It's wonderful to go to the IKC where it's cool and dry and you can read books and sit in comfy chairs. Internet access is a bit unreliable but when it works we can even pay bills on line.

Now I am the IKC Administrator and I love my job. I encourage the children to take advantage of the knowledge and technology that I could not access when I was their age. The IKC is a place where the children can play and learn safely and everyone in the community is welcome to come and keep our culture strong.

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*Aurukun, Badu, Boigu, kuril dhagun, Cherbourg, Dauan, Erub,  
Hope Vale, lama, Injinoo, Kubin, Lockhart River, Mabuiag,  
New Mapoon, Pormpuraaw, Poruma, Seisia, Wujal Wujal.*

# Library services for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders create and enhance opportunities for Indigenous people to participate fully in education, employment and society.



Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs) are owned, managed and staffed by local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Councils. The State Library of Queensland funds and facilitates the establishment of these Centres, and provides ongoing support through staff training and delivery of programs to promote literacy, build life skills and keep culture strong.

There is a network of 17 IKCs in remote and regional communities: across Cape York, the Northern Peninsula, Torres Strait Islands, and at Cherbourg in South East Queensland. These connect to *kuril dhagun* Indigenous Knowledge Centre at the State Library in Brisbane.

*kuril dhagun* is a keeping place, a learning place and a meeting place for all Queenslanders. Visitors can access information and learn about Indigenous people and their cultures, histories and languages. Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders can trace their family histories and take part in exhibitions and performances that express their cultures. Storytelling, creative activities for children, talks and social events invite people to gather, and build understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

## About Indigenous Knowledge Centres

### Building capacity

Combining library services - books, magazines, computers and the Internet - with a range of training and informal learning activities, IKCs enable access to information, knowledge and culture. Through services and resources, IKCs help to overcome barriers to learning and develop the capacity of individuals to participate in the social and working life of communities.

### Making learning fun

Activities at IKCs include arts and craft, computer and Internet usage in ways that make learning fun for people of all ages. Early childhood and adult literacy programs include summer reading clubs, homework clubs, movie evenings, karaoke competitions, listening stations, colouring competitions, community morning teas and storytelling.

### Strengthening cultural identity

A particular focus of IKCs is to affirm and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural identity as a vital source of individual and community strength and pride. IKCs are places for recording, keeping, accessing, sharing and celebrating the living cultural heritage.

## Learning programs

**Queensland Indigenous Languages** project assists communities to record, access and maintain their traditional languages.

**Keeping Culture Strong** is building community-based collections of material objects and digital records of photographs, videos, stories and songs, managed by local advisory groups.

**Away With Words** promotes intergenerational sharing and builds literacy by bringing together community elders and school-aged children in writer and illustrator workshops to create narrative stories.

**Children's Picture Diaries** encourages children to tell their stories of growing up in Queensland, combining visual arts and writing to create books and exhibitions.

**I Can Sing, I Can Read** promotes reading and self esteem through the fun and vocal expression of karaoke.

**Culture Love** engages children during school holidays to compose and choreograph hip hop for performance at home and away at community events and festivals.

**Taking IT On** is a model for introducing adults to basic and practical computer skills

### More information

State Library of Queensland  
Indigenous Library Services

Cairns office  
Reef Terminal Building  
Level 1, 1 Spence Street  
p (07) 4031 3232  
f (07) 4031 1234  
ILS.Cairns@slq.qld.gov.au

Brisbane office and *kuril dhagun*  
Queensland Cultural Centre  
Stanley Place, South Bank  
p (07) 3840 7666  
f (07) 3846 2421  
ils@slq.qld.gov.au

For access to on-line resources  
and contact details for IKCs:  
<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about/who/orgchart/ils/ikc>



Queensland  
Government

slq state library  
of queensland  
South Bank

*"Learning communities will grow where community members come to the realisation that learning is a community activity as well as a community responsibility"* Hope Vale Mayor, Cr Greg McLean