

Mad Mob culturally endorsed and strongly governed

Change

Mad Mob is an Aboriginal Corporation based in Hawkesbury, NSW with a goal to educate and promote Aboriginal culture, art, spirituality, health and well-being within the wider community. They are using social and economic development to relieve the challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Mad Mob does this in a number of ways, such as the provision of cultural awareness training, and the production and sale of arts and crafts.

Mad Mob enlisted the support of ICV to become a sustainable organisation, to secure resources they need to keep their cultural heritage alive and to support and maintain improvements in the well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Mad Mob successfully secured Deductible Gift Recipient status to receive tax deductible gifts and to help them along this journey, and is currently engaged with an ICV volunteer to develop a five year business plan. They are seeking to articulate a clear direction for the organisation, including a roadmap to diversify funding sources and become sustainable in a way that will effectively meet the community's needs.

Social Policy Implications

Mad Mob has identified the importance of becoming sustainable in order to continue providing vital services to the Hawkesbury region. Two of the three projects Mad Mob is working on have identified 'Improved economic well-being and financial independence' as a key indicator.

As Mad Mob works to become sustainable by diversifying funding sources and recruiting paid employees rather than volunteers, they are setting themselves up to achieve economic independence. This is in line with the Federal Government Indigenous Advancement Strategy's key priority of 'employment, economic independence and social participation.'

In a 2018 report, Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) stated that:

In the contemporary era, the development of a robust and sustainable 'Indigenous economy' is essential for realising self-determining futures, facilitating sustainable and independent communities, and closing the gap. In line with the principle of self-determination, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than ever are seeking to achieve economic independence by contributing to the economy through the establishment of Indigenous businesses.

ICV is working with Mad Mob to put the necessary structures in place to move towards sustainability so that they can secure a safe and culturally appropriate space for Aboriginal people to come and meet. As ICV continues to work with Mad Mob, and a number of other organisations around the country with similar objectives, it will gather broad insights around the process of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations seeking economic independence and sustainability. An improved evidence base in this space would be a valuable resource in light of both government priorities, and the potential benefits of successful Indigenous organisations and businesses to communities.

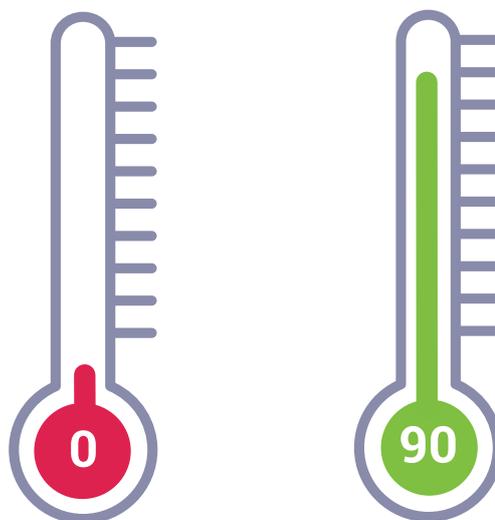


Deadly gathering coordinated by Mad Mob to meet our Indigenous MP the Hon Linda Burney and Susan Templeman MP Federal Member for Macquarie.

ICV reflections

Mad Mob only recently gained legal status as a Corporation and Not-for-Profit, yet they have made strides towards clearly articulating what they're trying to do, and how they're going to do it. ICV has been working alongside the community to support the development of a five year business plan, which will improve the accountability of the organisation and their effective use of resources. Mad Mob chose indicators that are most relevant to their dream, one of which was to develop a 'clear strategic direction for the organisation.' An ICV Community Development Officer has gauged their progress by making reflections at different monitoring points along their journey, as reflected below. The first reading read '0' as Mad Mob had only just approached ICV, they were just starting out, and they weren't yet a registered Aboriginal corporation. The thermometer reading was updated to '90' due to the development of a business plan which is now almost complete.

Progress towards indicator: develop clear strategic direction for the organisation



First monitoring point

Second monitoring point

Governance

Good governance is an important part of achieving "success in business investment," which in turn leads to economic independence. There are seven key attributes of good governance, which are listed in the table below alongside evidence of Mad Mob putting the attribute into action.

Attribute	Description	Evidence to support this attribute
1. Engagement	<p>Community: community members and relevant local networks inform and/or participate in the decision-making process</p> <p>Broader networks: relevant stakeholders from the broader network, such as governments or other external institutions, inform and/or participate in the decision-making process</p>	<p>Community members are central to the operations of Mad Mob, as the organisation currently has no funding. It is members and the community who work on a volunteer basis to deliver services.</p> <p>Through the process of seeking financial sustainability, Mad Mob has taken steps to build relationships with their broader network. For example, as they pull together a business plan they will be actively identifying potential investors and stakeholders who might like to get involved.</p>



Attribute	Description	Evidence to support this attribute
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2. Clear and shared strategic direction

A shared long-term view for what the community wants to do, and a timeline, or 'map', of how it will happen

Mad Mob has a shared vision to become a strong and united community proudly growing together by educating and promoting Aboriginal Culture, Art, Spirituality, Health and Well-being within the whole community.

They have identified a series of milestones that they are working towards in order to achieve their vision, including steps to broaden their reach, develop additional products (such as books, arts and crafts) and services, and diversify their funding sources.

3. Embedded culture

Governing in line with cultural and community values, understandings, and behaviours. Cultural principles that underpin Indigenous systems of governance may include, for example:

- A wide network of relationships
- Relationships built on shared culture
- Decision-making by consensus
- Strong links between geography and community identity

Underpinning everything that Mad Mob does is a commitment to keeping their culture alive. The organisation is currently built on a network of shared culture and key values, which include:

1. Being proud
2. Working together in unity
3. Sharing
4. Respecting
5. Awareness of cultural values
6. Support
7. Diversity
8. Acceptance





Attribute	Description	Evidence to support this attribute
4. Effective administration	Sufficient and appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- processes (organisational policies, mediations, rules, roles and responsibilities),- resources (natural assets, infrastructure, cultural, social, economic and human capital), and- capability (leadership, financial management etc)	<p>Mad Mob is legally registered as a Corporation, and as a charity and is subject to regulation in line with this business structure. They are in the process of finalising a business plan which outlines the strategic direction of the organisation, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of management.</p> <p>Mad Mob makes good use of human capital to deliver their services while they work towards building a sustainable funding stream. They run solely on community participation and volunteering of current members. They are currently being provided with a space rent free by Hawkesbury City Council within the Hawkesbury Community Nursery.</p>
5. Accountability: external and among community	Actions and decisions are justified and communicated, in particular to community members and the wider network	Mad mob reports annually to ORIC and all meeting minutes are recorded and available to all members. Any decisions are communicated via newsletter, email and their social media pages.



Mad Mob, Strong Nation and Café Corner Stone combined to provide local Aboriginal community members with Healthy eating, Traditional food slow cooker classes.





Attribute	Description	Evidence to support this attribute
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6. Legitimacy

Acknowledged legal, jurisdictional and cultural authority, and the genuine power to make decisions

Mad Mob became a corporation after Elders in the area approached them and suggested that they need another Aboriginal organisation in Hawkesbury. They were legally registered as a Corporation on 6 June 2017. Recently Mad Mob successfully completed Registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and the Australian Taxation Office and was granted Deductible Gift Recipient status in June 2018.

7. Strong leadership

Influential and respected leaders who act on behalf of shared values, and are held accountable for the decisions that they make. Leaders should encourage cooperation, use resources effectively, resolve conflicts and problems transparently, care for Country, and get things done.

The directors oversee the running of the corporation on behalf of all members, and make decisions about the affairs of the corporation. The directors manage, or set the direction for managing, the business of the corporation.

The leadership has a diverse set of skills, including one individual with a Cert 4 qualification in Governance. They bring a range of skills, knowledge and experience between them which will play a crucial role in helping them to achieve their long-term dream.

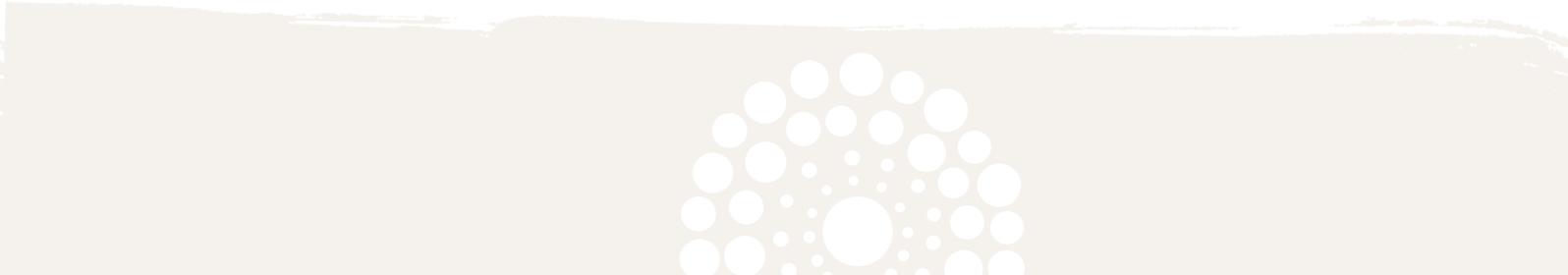
Key references

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, *Inquiry into Indigenous Australians at work: Successful initiatives in Indigenous employment*, 13 August 2007.

Price Waterhouse Coopers, *The contribution of the Indigenous business sector to Australia's economy*, April 2018.

The Australian Indigenous Governance Institute, *Indigenous Governance Toolkit: Culture is what makes governance strong*, <http://toolkit.aigi.com.au/toolkit/2-1-indigenous-governance-and-culture>.

Underpinning everything that Mad Mob does is a commitment to keeping their culture alive



Indigenous Community Volunteers

About ICV

Across Australia, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are working towards building a brighter future. Our people are incredibly resilient and resourceful, they just sometimes lack the know-how to turn their ideas in to reality. At ICV we provide access to skilled volunteers and resources in areas where education, health care and employment opportunities are often limited. ICV is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation. We are a registered charity and non-profit community development and research organisation.

Vision

Our vision is an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are recognised and celebrated for our culture and our contribution to Australia and societies around the world.

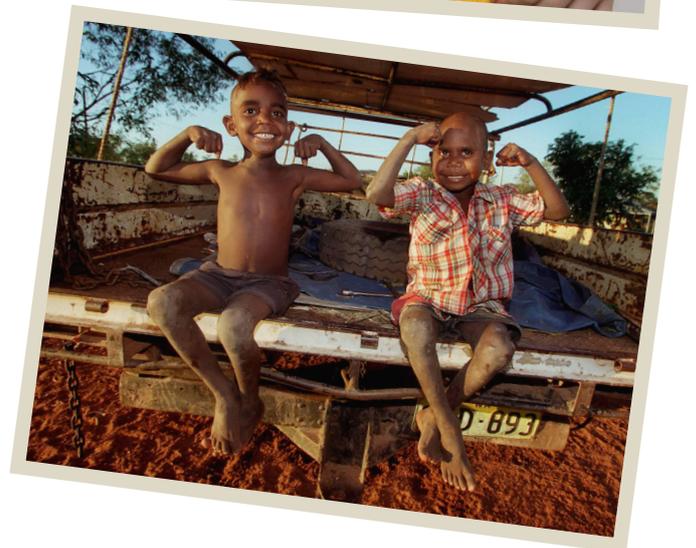
Purpose

ICV believes that our people hold the keys to solving their own challenges. We provide the opportunity and support they need to make it happen.

Approach

When a community sets their own goals, they have a much better chance of success. It's why our community development approach is so unique and effective.

*We do things with,
not to or for, our people*



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