



## THE PURPOSE OF THINK YOUR WAY IS TO:

- > Help build the aspiration in relation to higher education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, non-school leavers, mature age students, families, communities, teachers and career advisors.
- > Increase awareness of higher education, the know how to access it and the resources and services available to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prepare.
- > Provide accurate and relevant information in one central location for potential and existing students.
- > Promote social networking opportunities for students to form online cohorts by sharing their journey into and beyond higher education with peers, helping to foster pathways for others.

## RECOGNISING SOME OF THE CHALLENGES AROUND HIGHER EDUCATION

Some of the challenges\* affecting *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people* participating in higher education include:

- > Aspiration not directed at higher education
- > Poor preparation to go to university
- > Lower high school retention and completion rates
- > Lower expectations of teachers and career advisors for *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander* students
- > Inadequate information and support
- > Low levels of awareness from community and peer groups
- > Low positive self-identity in relation to attaining higher education

*Think Your Way* provides a range of content and resources to help *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander* students and their families overcome these challenges and aims to do so in a positive, empowering way, outlined in the approach below.

## APPROACH

*Think Your Way* is based on a positive role model approach. Importantly, all the people featured in video content (excludes animations) and photography are real life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (not actors) from across Australia with diverse backgrounds and pathways into and beyond higher education.

A careful selection process was undertaken to engage relatable, appealing and willing participants who were:

- > Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent
- > Youthful (so as to relate to current high school students)
- > Positive, successful, grounded and encouraging of others
- > Proud of their own achievements
- > A recent uni graduate (within last few years); or currently studying at uni; or planning to start uni studies shortly.

In addition a small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents with children who are or have participated in higher education (or have been to university themselves) also feature in *Think Your Way* as role models to parents, carers, families and communities.

More information about each of the role models is provided in the video case studies and extended interviews on the portal.

## WHAT IS THINK YOUR WAY?

*Think Your Way* is a comprehensive “one stop shop” style portal that houses a broad range of information and resources to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (potential or existing), their families, communities, teachers and career advisors in relation to higher education.

It features: **Your Stories**

- > **Video case studies** with role models
- > **Extended interviews** with role models



\* L Behrendt, S Larkin, R Griew & P Kelly, *Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2012*

## WE'LL HELP YOUR GET THERE

Features 7 animated videos (one for each challenge) that aims to help the audience think about the challenge(s) that might relate to them and a 'big picture' approach how to work through the challenge(s):

CHALLENGE ONE

THINK BIG

### Challenge 1 – Think Big

(Aspiration not directed at higher education)

CHALLENGE TWO

GET PREPPED

### Challenge 2 – Get Prepped

(Poor preparation to go to university)

CHALLENGE THREE

STAY IN SCHOOL

### Challenge 3 – Stay in School

(Lower high school retention and completion rates)

CHALLENGE FOUR

LOOK A LITTLE CLOSER

### Challenge 4 – Look a Little Closer

(Lower expectations of teachers and career advisors for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students)

CHALLENGE FIVE

GET IN THE KNOW

### Challenge 5 – Get in the Know

(Inadequate information and support)

CHALLENGE SIX

SHAME NO MORE

### Challenge 6 – Shame No More

(Low levels of awareness from community and peer groups)

CHALLENGE SEVEN

GETTING TO DEADLY

### Challenge 7 – Getting to Deadly

(Low positive self-identity in relation to attaining higher education)

Each video has a matching downloadable blank activity sheet, designed for use at home, in the classroom and/or as part of career guidance activities.

**We'll Help You Get There also features Pathways to Uni**, a short and simple animated video explaining higher education and the various pathways to apply.

## #SHAREYOURSTORY

**#ShareYourStory** is an interactive section where the audience can post (and update) their stories about their higher education journey (past, present and/or future). This section aims to be inclusive, fostering an online community, which encourages and empowers the audience.

**Privacy** - To ensure appropriate use, as with many user generated content sites, participants must meet and agree to publishing criteria:

- > Be at least 13 years of age
- > Be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent
- > Their story is not negative in relation to other people
- > Their story does not disclose personal information about other people
- > Is limited to 300 characters long
- > Their story does not contain negative or foul language

Participants will first need to register and confirm their registration via email, then log in each time they upload and/or edit their story.

The site will be moderated by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and via the site administrator, Carbon Media.

Any stories that do not meet the publishing criteria will be removed and the participant notified via email.

*For more information about privacy, security and terms and conditions, please visit the site.*

## FOR STUDENTS

The Students section contains tailored information, resources and links for current students, recent school leavers and non-school leavers in relation to:

**Qualifications** – information on the different types of qualifications available in Australia

**Financial support** – information on financial support available to university students

**Scholarships** – links to the different types of scholarships available

**Accommodation** – where to find accommodation and support away from home

**Study search areas** – helping students find what areas of study and careers that might be of interest to them

**Alternative pathways** – information on the different ways to gain entry into higher education through vocational education, certified training courses etc

**Indigenous Education Units** – what are they and their role in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (current or future) in higher education

## FOR TEACHERS AND CAREER ADVISORS

In addition to above, *Think Your Way* contains dedicated resources for teachers and career advisors:

**Teacher Resources** that house links to a range of relevant sites for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students grouped under:

- > Teaching and Learning
- > Reports, Papers and Policies
- > Career Information
- > Mentoring and Internships
- > Data and Statistics

**Indigenous Education Units** contains information for teachers and advisors on the role of *IEUs* (by state and territory) and services they provide in assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (current/future).

**Teacher Resource Kits** features downloadable information for teachers and career advisors including *Think Your Way* posters, presentation templates (for PC and Mac) and activity sheets for use with the **We'll Help You Get There** videos (challenges).

