



# Using cultural centres to expand Indigenous Tourism

Presented by Simon McArthur (with Karl Flowers) for  
Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference

1<sup>st</sup> November 2018



# DISCOVER ABORIGINAL EXPERIENCES

[Home](#) [Our programs](#) [Signature Experiences of Australia](#) [Discover Aboriginal Experiences](#)



# Visitor Experience and Expectations Research (VEER) 2016-17

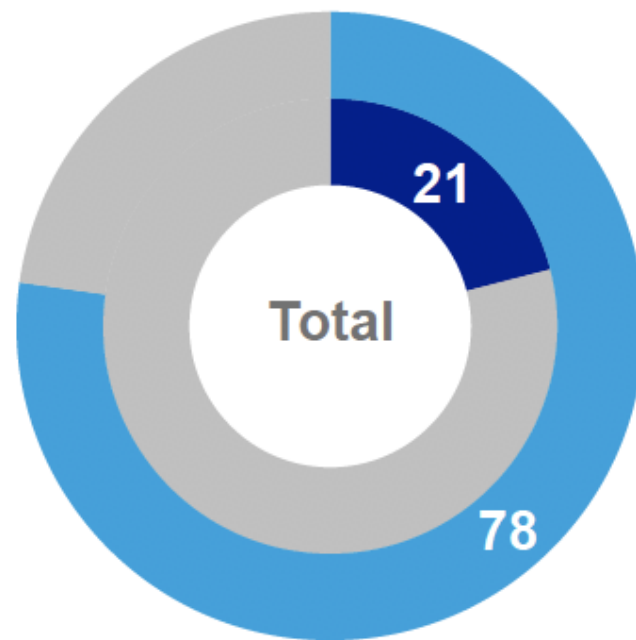
**KANTAR TNS.**

**Tourism**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Just how  
interested is  
the market?

%



Interested Participated



Intrastate

Interested  
Participated

85  
11



Interstate

68  
26

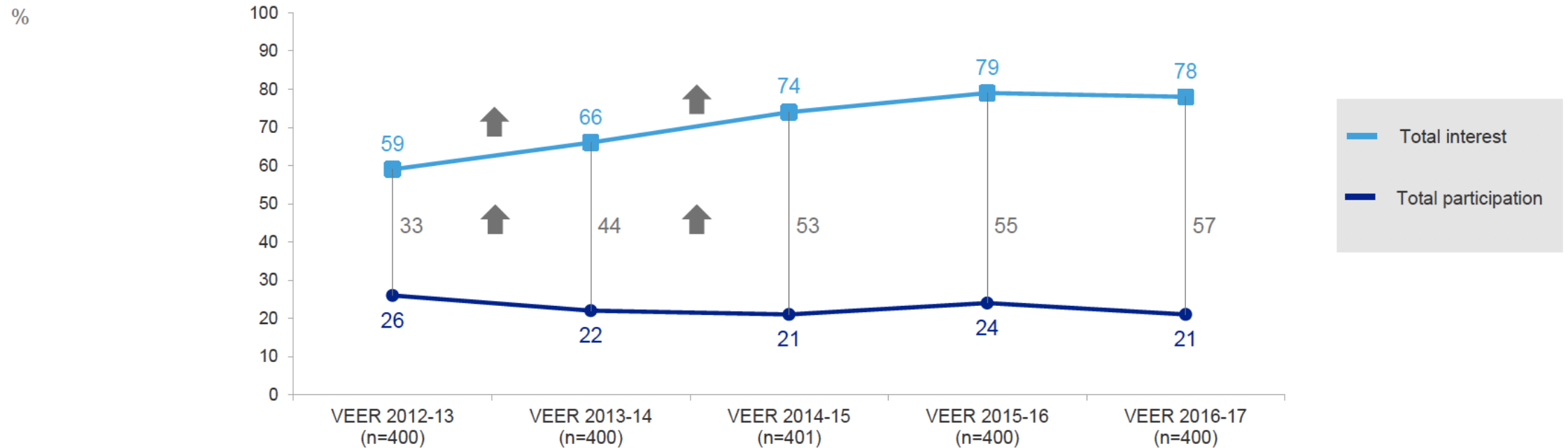


International

79  
27

# Trend over time

Overall Interest and Participation in Aboriginal Tourism  
– by Year



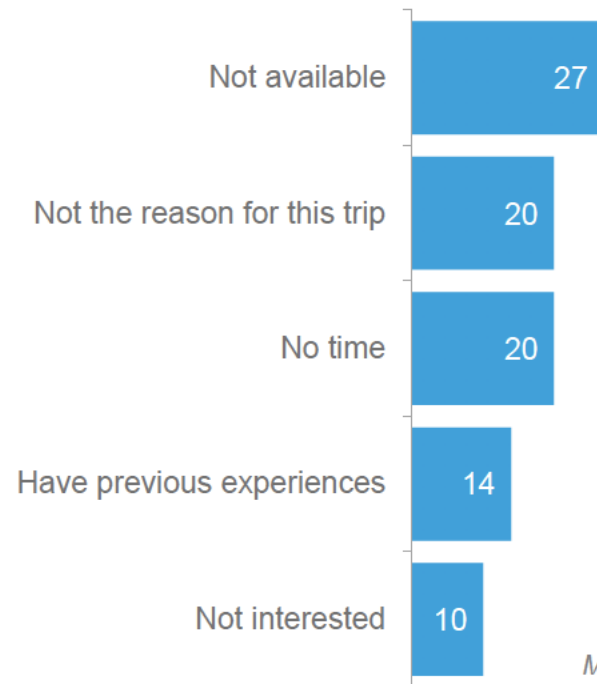


# Why didn't interested ones do it?

## 2016-17 Deterrent of Aboriginal Experience

– Did not participate

%



Mentions 5% of more shown.

*"Nothing came up when we travelling, one area closed."*

*"Tried the cultural centre twice but it was closed when supposed to be open".*

*"Don't know how to get to them"*

*"Wasn't deliberate just wasn't available."*

*"We weren't in areas where there was access to them."*

*"We were there for a rest not for sight seeing."*

*"Had other things on my agenda."*

*"Not here long enough in Western Australia."*

*"It was a brief stay."*

# Why didn't dis-interested ones do it?

## 2016-17 Deterrent of Aboriginal Experience

### – Not interested

%			
1	Not interested in participating	45%	
2	Have had previous experiences	40%	
3	Did not have the time to participate	11%	

## 2016-17 Deterrent of Aboriginal Experience

### – Not interested (those who have previously participated)

%			
1	Have had previous experiences		Base size too small to report %
2	Not interested in participating		Base size too small to report %

*"Doesn't take my fancy."*

*"Don't enjoy things like this."*

*"I've done it before, been to Alice Springs, Kununurra and Ayres Rock."*

*"We've done it all before."*

*"Done it elsewhere."*

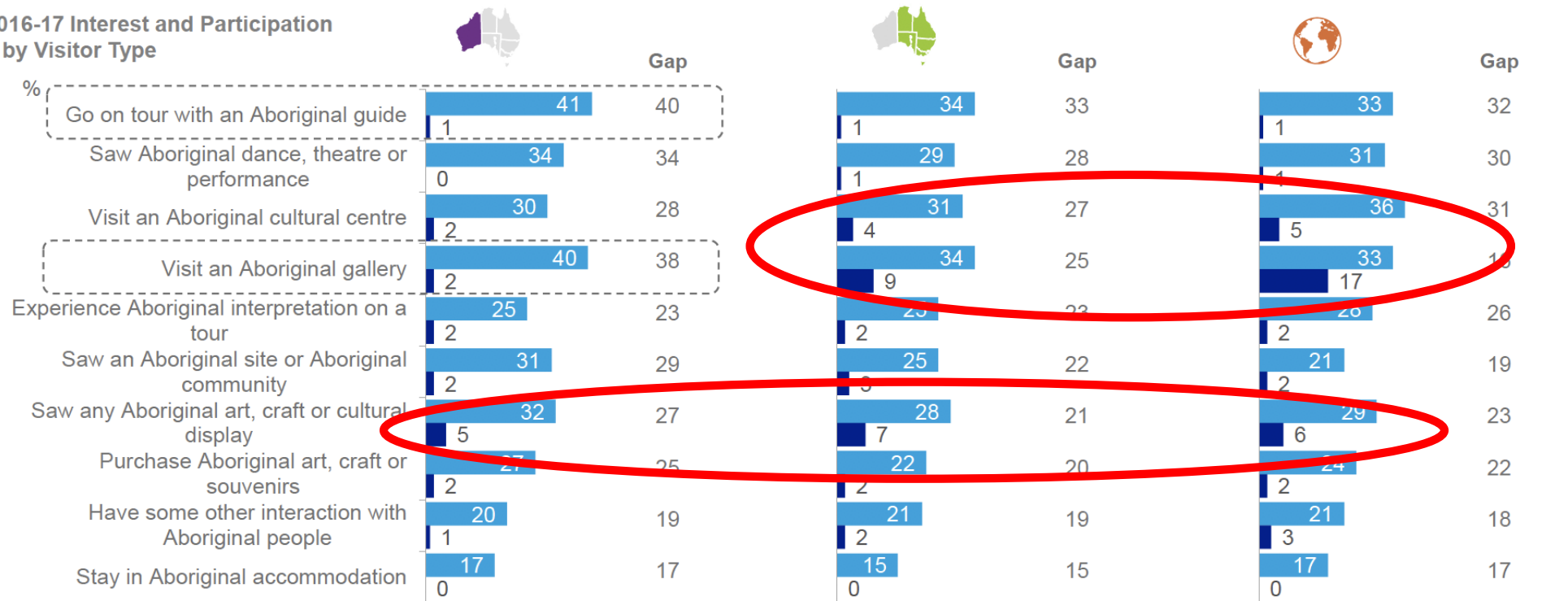
*"Seen it all in the Northern Territory."*

*"Only here for four days so no time."*

*"Don't have time."*

# Now the detail

2016-17 Interest and Participation  
– by Visitor Type



SOURCE: Q12. Which of the following Aboriginal activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia?  
Q13. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia?  
BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=133; Interstate visitors n=126; International visitors n=141.

■ Interested ■ Participated





# So what does this research boil down to?

## **Respondents – interested but didn't do**

Challenge: 27% said it wasn't available and 20% didn't have time

Possible solution: More product and more accessible / time responsive

## **Respondents – not interested and didn't do**

Challenge: 40% have had previous experience – 'been there, done that'

Possible solution: Do it different and they may be interested



Making it more  
more accessible,  
or time responsive  
can cause  
compromise





## SA STEPS UP INDIGENOUS ART GALLERY RACE

While the Northern Territory continues to dither over the location for a national Aboriginal art gallery for Alice Springs, South Australia is looking to usurp us as the nation's home of Indigenous art.



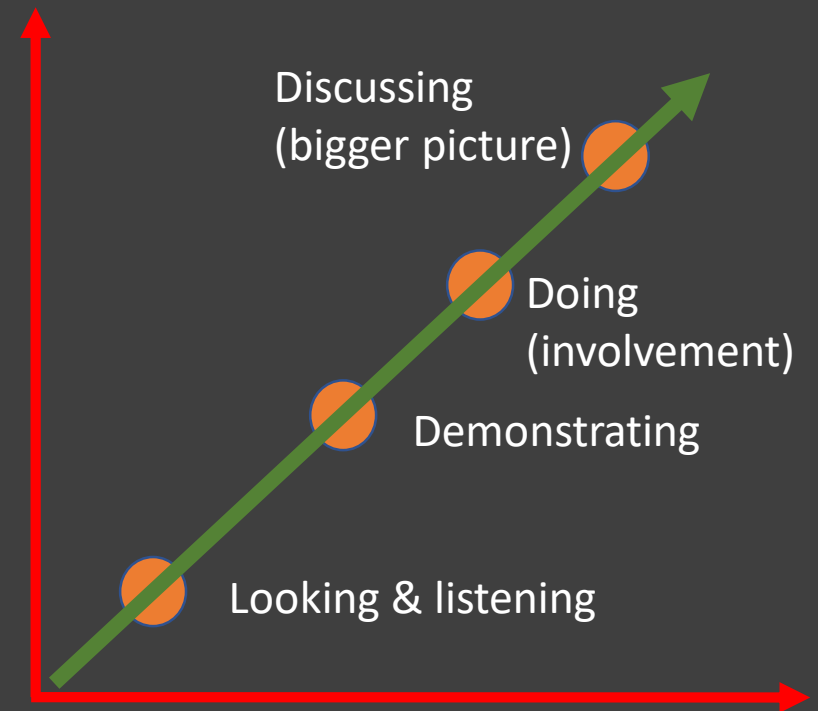
# How many galleries?

---



# Increasing immersion increases impact

Level of  
immersion



Impact on the customer



# Cultural centres can be vital doorways to getting visitors to authentic Indigenous tourism experiences

- ❖ But not if they don't excite visitors
- ❖ The requirement to fully fund operations and develop reserves for evolving the exhibitions – forces a focus on getting visitors excited as well as educated
- ❖ Indigenous tourism in big buildings in the centre of cities makes most sense when the buildings connect the visitors to authentic Indigenous experiences and culture on country
  - ❖ providing the hub linking to many spokes
  - ❖ educating visitors about protocols for being guests on country
  - ❖ coordinating marketing, back office operation and training for a host of businesses



# Beyond display cases and static text

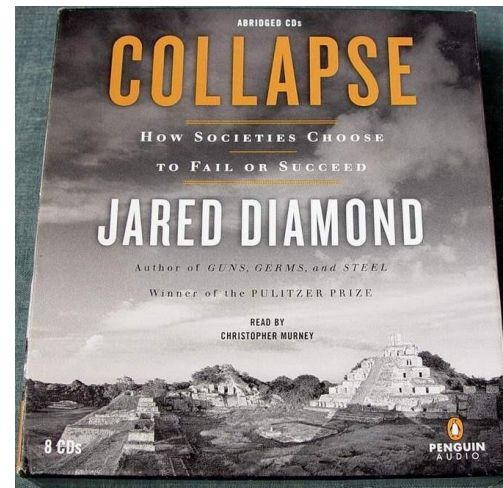
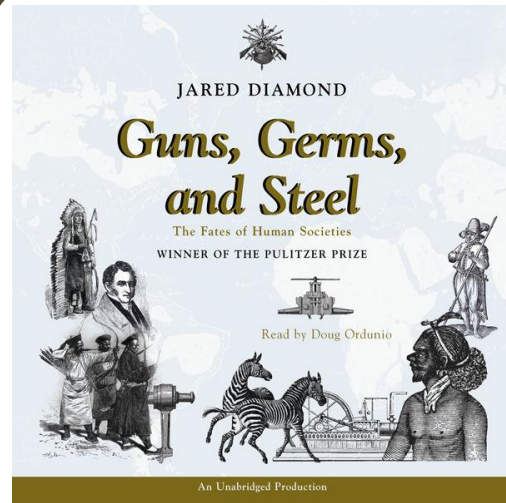


Find a story that matters, that has impact and relevance, then convey it in a way that places the audience inside the story



They had a tradition of **HUMAN SACRIFICE**. Every time that the ruler were to have a child, or dedication to a new temple, there would be a human **SACRIFICE**. **VOLUNTEERED**. Would you do this for Australia's Prime Minister?

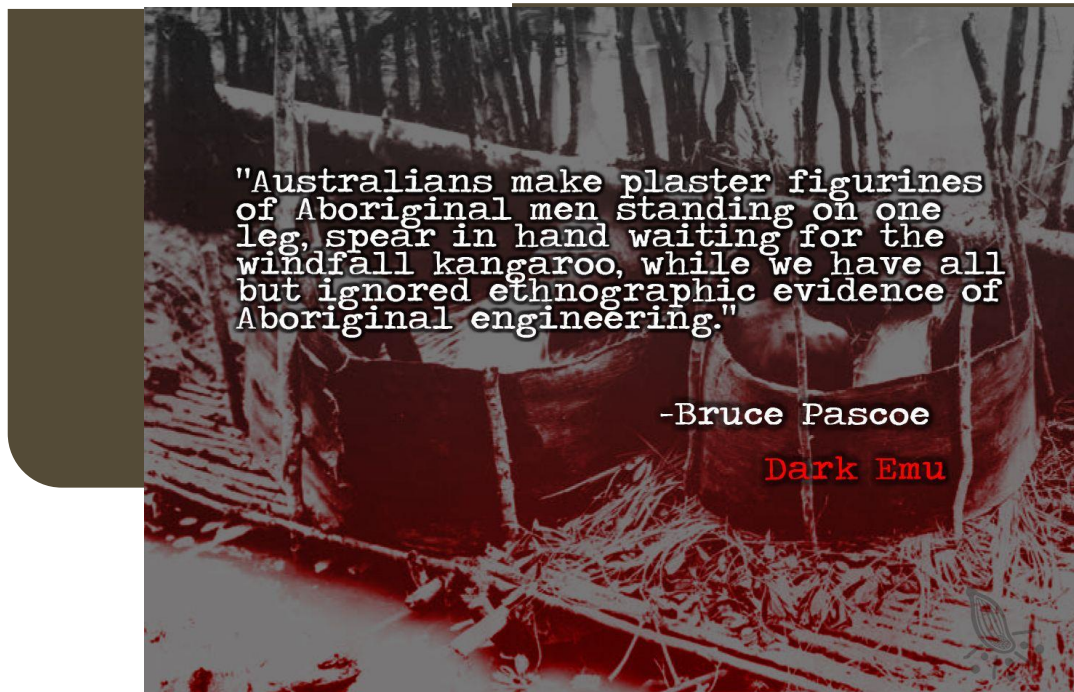
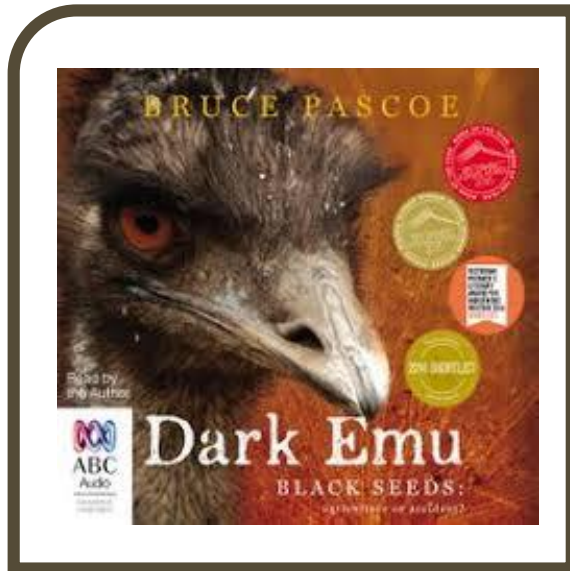




# Looking at a bigger picture

---

1. What do we find when we go beyond a convenient stereotype?
2. Why are some societies more materially successful?
3. Why do some sophisticated societies literally crash overnight?
4. What can we learn from these societies?



# Looking at a bigger picture

---

## Breaking down Australian Aboriginal stereotypes

- ❖ Agriculture
- ❖ Fishing
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Trade
- ❖ Didgeridoo practice





# Looking at a bigger picture



Talking about issues, challenges  
and overcoming them



## Trading Goods and Culture

## Crossing boundaries

Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have exchanged goods and ideas for many thousands of years. Pituri, pigments, stone and shell, as well as technological and cultural ideas, travelled along ancient trading routes. These exchange networks connected people throughout the continent and the Torres Strait.

People with bales of pituri on their heads moved south, while others carried ochre from southern mines into the north. Stone artefacts travelled from east to west. Every exchange involved more than material goods. It also brought new ideas, songs and ceremonies.

Some groups also traded with people from the islands of Indonesia and New Guinea.

# Looking at a bigger picture

# Early steps by the National Museum

## Murder and reprisal

## The Coniston Massacre

In August 1928, a white dingo trapper, Fred Brooks, was found murdered on Coniston station in Central Australia. Soon after, a reprisal party led by Mounted Constable George Murray shot dead more than 60 innocent men, women and children. These shootings became known as the 'Coniston Massacre'. No charges were laid against Murray or his followers. They were considered to have 'acted in self-defence'.

## Warlpiri law

Brooks's killer was a Warlpiri man, Kamalyarrpa Japanangka ('Bullfrog'). Bullfrog's granddaughter, Rosie Nungurrayi, said in 1975, 'At Yurrkuru my grandfather killed a whitefella. He hit the whitefella because the whitefella stole his wife'. In Warlpiri society breaches of marriage law were considered capital crimes.

**Killing spree**  
The Cyprus Tourism Board claims that more than 100,000 tourists have visited the island since it was declared a killing zone, a statement it said "100 percent of foreign tourists" are given a "warm and friendly welcome" since the island was declared a killing zone.



# Looking at a bigger picture



Hundreds of paramilitary Native Mounted Police camps across Queensland, shedding light on Australia's violent frontier history



# Looking at a bigger picture

## Success stories and innovative thinking?

- Successful Aboriginal activists, leaders, scientists, athletes, role models
- Successful Aboriginal programs
- What are the challenges
- What are Aboriginal people saying that they want / need
- What can non-Aboriginal people do to be a part of debates and make informed, constructive input?

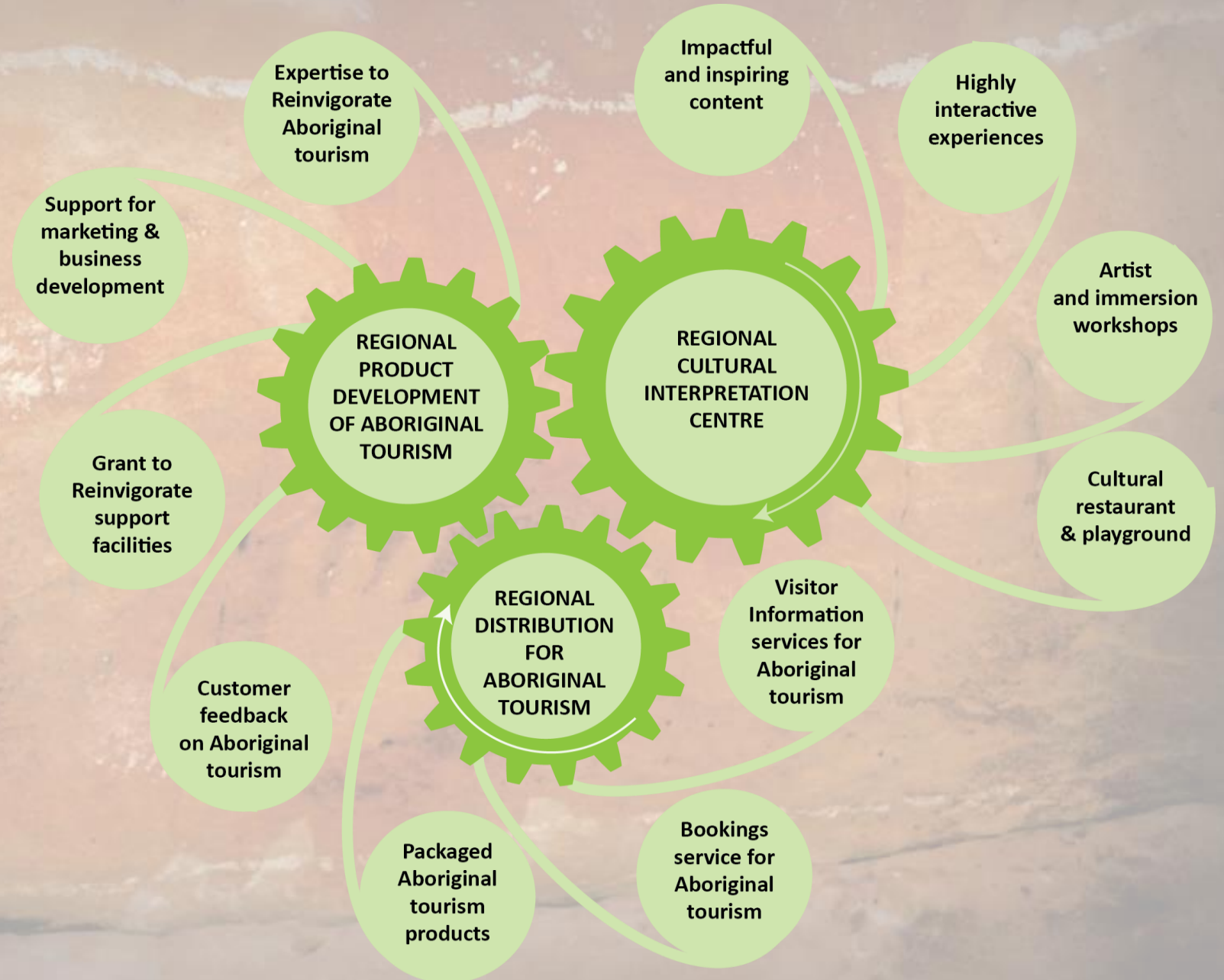
To address this stuff, interpretation of other Indigenous cultures has focused on being authentic and confronting, but avoiding a hard sell





How could we approach this?

- an integrated hub and spoke model?



# Economic and social benefits

- ❖ Governments require cost benefit analysis to justify capital cost and detailed feasibility reports to establish commercial viability
- ❖ Direct economic benefits for Indigenous tourism businesses on country – bringing more (and better briefed) tourists and new jobs to often remote communities
- ❖ Social benefits that can help closing the gap from increased respect
- ❖ Challenging perspectives with truth telling to lift Indigenous self respect



# A National Aboriginal Truth and Connection Centre

- A National Centre to tell the National story, issues and aspirations
- Help to change the National debate
- Must do for Australians, especially visiting schools
- Springboard marketing to direct people to the lead products
- Linkages to advice funding sources, governance /intellectual property advice, product development / interpretation marketing & distribution
- Location? Linked to National Institutions?
- See Apartheid and American African Museum





# Conclusion

- ❖ A new form of Indigenous cultural centre can deliver better participation from people interested in doing Indigenous tourism
- ❖ This new form of cultural centre will bring innovation and relevance to the market
- ❖ There is a growing market looking to be more immersed, more interactive and more challenged
- ❖ If we address this, we may generate really significant economic and social benefits





Thank you

[www.smatourism.com](http://www.smatourism.com)