

# LOTTERYWEST & BIG hART PARTNERSHIP

Impact Report: September 2018 - June 2020



*"I love that the Digital Lab has everything you need and young people can access it every day, everyone is involved and supportive of the kid's learning."*

**Michelle Adams, Pilbara News**



BIG hART ACKNOWLEDGES NGARLUMA, YINDJIBARNDI, BANJIMA, MARDUTHUNERA, GURUMA, NYIYAPARLI, KARIYARRA AND OTHER PILBARA ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

## Introduction

This report details outcomes from a partnership between Lotterywest and Big hART. This partnership has established the Digital Lab in the Ngurin Cultural Centre and continues to deliver a diverse digital workshop program for young people in Roebourne.

This report details the Digital Lab and Workshop Program between September 2018 - June 2020.

## Overview of Outcomes

The following aims have been developed, based on primary prevention theory and markers of digital inclusion, to assist with program design and establish measures of project success.

### 1. Education and Pathways

- Increasing digital inclusion and essential new skills
- Increasing educational engagement
- Expanding vocational pathways

### 2. Safety and Wellbeing

- Building confidence and agency
- Developing leadership
- Speaking up for equality

### 3. Intergenerational Approach

- Connecting to Elders
- Connecting to country
- Engaging families

*"I am immensely proud of the Digital Lab and the social value Lotterywest's funding has generated. New entry points into the digital domain for young Aboriginal people in Roebourne have been created. The Lotterywest Digital Lab has built digital literacies, confidences, abilities and access, so as to remove barriers to a digital future – which will leave a lasting legacy."*

**Scott Rankin, Big hART CEO**



## Overview of Partnership & Program

Lotterywest and Big hART have delivered across two streams to create opportunities for young people in Roebourne.

### 1. Digital Lab

Lotterywest provided critical infrastructure to establish the Digital Lab - a dedicated safe and inclusive space, equipped with new technology.

### 2. Digital Workshop Program

Through the Digital Lab, Lotterywest provided support for Roebourne young people, their potential and their skills. The program equipped participants with the skills and confidence to deliver compelling digital projects and events in their community. Mentors guided young people through many aspects of technology and content creation - including film production, photography, audio, animation, digital drawing, music, editing, coding and AR.

## Reach and Outputs

The Digital Lab engaged:

- 127 young people - 66 boys / 61 girls representing over 90% of Roebourne school students
- 15 community Elders advising work
- 12 trainees undertaking paid employment
- 14 local organisations collaborating

The Digital Lab delivered:

- 437 digital workshops
- 92 on country and intergenerational workshops
- 26 community events
- 64 positive stories about Roebourne in media including local, regional and national coverage

*"Big hART's work shows little kids how much they can learn and achieve. The Digital Lab and Workshops have encouraged younger generations to continue with their school and look for greater challenges in life."*

Allery Sandy, Yindjibarndi Elder, Big hART board member



## Impact - Digital Lab and Digital Workshop Program

### Education and Pathways

- Increased school engagement - stronger attendance recorded
- Increased digital inclusion - 4.5 point increase in Australian Digital Inclusion Index (Roy Morgan Research), for rural Indigenous Australians in 2019
- Increased digital ability - participants move from 'mobile only' to being competent using DSLR cameras, audio recorders, laptops, iPads, apps, graphics software programs, ProCreate, Garage Band, Premier Pro and more
- Increased access - over 70% of Roebourne young people accessed the Digital Lab
- Reduced resistance to digital amongst participant families
- Increased digital confidence - young people engage with digital education and remote learning during Covid-19
- Creation of training, professional development and employment pathways - 12 paid trainees and 32 paid adults
- Increased uptake in digital activities by young women (higher numbers of young women are now involved in programs compared to young men)
- High school completion - 3 young people completed Year 12

### Safety, Wellbeing and Leadership

- Increased safety - analysis and evidence from Western Australia Police Force crime statistics showing a drop in offending in Roebourne
- Increased positive regard for young people - level of community recognition for young people who usually receive negative attention for poor behaviour
- Youth leadership - youth presentations across forums including Governor General, State Ministers, local councils, philanthropists, corporate leaders, Children's Commissioners and National Council of Women Australia
- Increased leadership and positive decision making by young people - evidence from community feedback
- Increase personal agency, resilience and wellbeing - analysis from participant questionnaires and interviews
- Culture strengthened through intergenerational knowledge transfer - Seven Pilbara language groups involved: Yindjibarndi, Ngarluma, Banjima, Yinawanka, Kuruma, Nyamal, Marthudunera



## Case Study - Domains of Change

The Lotterywest Digital Lab and Workshop Program has delivered impact across Big hART's five domains of change simultaneously. Examples include:

**Individuals** – Participants were given opportunities, access to digital equipment, skills and mentorship. Young people gained confidence and agency, and improved their education and employment pathways.

**Communities** – The Digital Lab has enabled Roebourne to develop local solutions to increase digital inclusion. Cultural shifts and community attitudes around digital technologies have shifted and positive new community narratives are developing.

**Content** – Supported by highly accomplished digital artists including Australia's leading creative podcast agency, young people created high quality digital content and storytelling art.

**Influence** – Participants engaged with Australia's Governor General through a tour of the Digital Lab, a digital drawing demonstration and discussed their interests and aspirations including the importance of digital inclusion. Governments, local councils and Children's Commissioners seeking examples of best practice were given project data and internal evaluations. The head of Australia's Big Picture Learning program deems the workshop program as an ideal outcome of their education approach.

**Learning** – Big hART is a learning organisation. Knowledge gained on the project has been shared with others in the field, and also with Big hART's expanding staff. Knowledge, discoveries and approaches have been further shared during masterclasses, conferences and presentation at an AudioCraft Podcasting Festival.





## Case Study - Digital access and affordability

During the digital workshop program, technology from the Digital Lab was taken on the road - on country, into schools, streets, driveways, parks, basketball courts - breaking through access and affordability issues and engaging young people in digital learning experiences. Content captured on the road was then taken back into the Digital Lab for post production, where young people were involved in the editing process, increasing their skill development.

With 90% of participants lacking access to tech at home, access to digital resources (iPad / laptop / camera / audio recording equipment) was key to developing skills and digital literacy.

### On country workshops

For Aboriginal young people, learning is most effective when attached to culture, country and family. 92 digital workshops took place on country with arts mentors skilling up young people to document country and culture through digital story collection. This mentoring served two functions, passing on digital literacies, knowledge and skills, while simultaneously collecting raw story for safe keeping.

*'Tech keeps stories alive'*

**Pilbara News, 2019**

During one series of workshops, young people documented their country, on their terms, using photography, videography and audio capture. Elders and community members joined the workshops to ensure young people were culturally safe and supported by their community. Being on country, the young people were visibly calm and engaged which led to a deep focus on the task. Participants increased their skills in camera focus, capturing audio, appature, light, shutter speed, focus and depth of field.

*"Learning the camera settings and the laptop editing, it's connected to youth culture so I loved the workshops... I feel confident using the tech. I'm happy with my new skills and achievements."*

**Project participant**

The young people's photographs were presented locally in front of family and friends in a hard cover book which promoted the skills of these young people, so as to acknowledge and value them. Participants described this as a way to engage with and give back to their community.

*"There is a young person with an iPad, teaching an Elder digital drawing. Both are learning. These workshops have triggered a culture shift regarding digital futures. The culture shift started from the activities of the young people who are mentored by Big hART and reverberated through the community."*

*The Digital Lab has been an investment in the future, an investment in local entrepreneurial skills, an investment in local capacity to participate in the digital economy and an investment in young people."*

**Michelle Adams, Yindjibarndi cultural leader**



## Case Study - International Women's Day

Between February - March 2020, 14 young women were involved in script writing, presenting to camera, filming and audio recording to create a short video exploring their aspirations and unique voices. Participants commented on the feeling of being in a team of supportive peers and the feeling of being a "part of something". Words including "meaningful" and "empowering" were used to describe the activities.

As participants explored different digital artforms and built their skills and confidence, they began to reflect on how events and creative projects provided an opportunity to express their thoughts and get a stronger sense of who they were.

*"I want to find out who I am. Making films and digital portraits helps me to understand who I am."*

**Nina Derrell, project participant**

### Local Event

Young women presented their digital art to their Elders, friends and family at an event they held for International Women's Day. In the Digital Lab, young women shared their aspirations to their community as digital stories which assisted in changing negative community attitudes to the digital domain. This event promoted the skills of these young women locally in front of family and friends. Young women commented on feeling "seen", "heard", "acknowledged" and "valued" - as a result, their safety and well being was improved.

### State Event

Two young women travelled to Perth to present at a Big hART International Women's Day luncheon. The young women committed to writing, rehearsing and presenting speeches and digital art to a room of 100 adults including State Ministers, corporate leaders, advocates, philanthropists and the National Council of Women Australia. While in Perth, the young women visited North Metropolitan TAFE and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. The young women acknowledged many of the experiences they had in Perth were new and though they felt initially unsure, were excited and proud to have taken part in activities that challenged them and were outside of their comfort zone. Both young women have displayed improved confidence, leadership and belief in their own capabilities.





## Case Study - Radio Diary Digital Workshop Program

Over the last 18 months, Big hART delivered an 'Audio Diaries' project at the Digital Lab which formed part of the Lotterywest Digital Workshop strategy. Audio Diaries was for young women at Roebourne District High School as part of their Big Picture Learning Program at school.

### Creative space for healing

One participant, Aleika was shy to begin with, but soon became confident to record her thoughts and observations, interviewing her family and Elders. Aleika passionately spoke about country, and a small community out of Roebourne where she had lived. Weekly Radio Diary workshops ran initially at the Digital Lab in the Ngurin Cultural Centre, and as Aleika's project evolved, Big hART facilitated a series of on-country trips culminating in visiting this community. An important thread Aleika wanted to share as part of her connection to this community was the loss of her baby brother, an event that she saw triggering the family's departure from the community. Given the sensitivity of this topic, Big hART mentors worked with Aleika, her parents and her grandmother, to support Aleika to navigate these topics in a safe way. The trip out to this community, accompanied with her grandmother and Big hART mentors was the first time that Aleika had been able to visit the community since the funeral of her baby brother.

### Digital skills

With her Big hART mentors, Aleika shared her radio diary with her family, and they learnt to listen to her voice in new ways. Aleika showed her family how to use the audio recorder, headphones, upload the content onto a laptop and listen to it back. Her family were extremely proud of her, and her Nanna in particular was so happy that Aleika was able to share how she felt. The family noted Aleika's new digital skills and capability in navigating this digital world and sharing her knowledge with her family.

*"Learning to use the tech... it gives me greater control in my life and my future."*

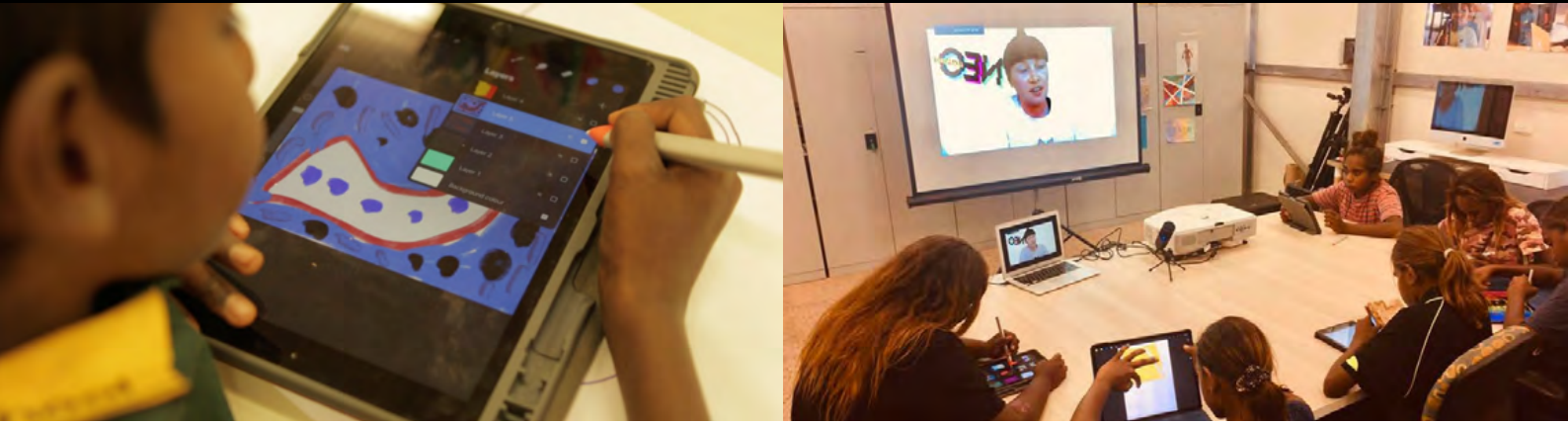
**Aleika, project participant**

### Increased confidence

Aleika shared her radio diary to a gathering of Elders, mothers and young women at an International Women's Day event in Roebourne. The Elders were visibly moved by Aleika, a normally very quiet young woman, sharing articulate thoughts on her deep feelings for country and family. Aleika's Nanna, whose involvement from the start of the project was marked by an interview with her grand daughter, painted a picture that was inspired by Aleika's recordings and asked this to be displayed when the audio was played.

Aleika and Big hART shared the radio diary with Roebourne School who noted Aleika's increased school attendance and engagement. Aleika is now working with mentors to build her radio diary into a longer form audio piece for national broadcast. Aleika has become increasingly confident in expressing her own voice, articulating opinions and reflections. She identified her passion to take care of her country, become a ranger, and document sites and stories of cultural importance.

*"Now it is my turn to take care of country."*



## Case Study - Young people become the teachers

Taking place in the Digital Lab, young people have built digital content based on local culture for a new online teaching resource in research and development called NEO-Learning. This education initiative sees young people in Roebourne become the teachers, and assists schools nationwide to deliver unique Indigenous teaching material across the curriculum.

### NEO-Learning

NEO-Learning recognises that in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories are mandated across every subject in the curriculum, however 99% of teachers are non-Indigenous. To provide a solution, NEO-Learning works in two ways:

1. Young Aboriginal people in Roebourne 'teach the teacher' by providing teachers across the nation with a dynamic educational resource, for mainstream students.
2. By creating this educational resource, young Aboriginal people from the Pilbara strengthen their own educational outcomes.

### Celebrating Roebourne's living culture nationally

Since its pilot launch in April 2020, NEO-Learning content from the Digital Lab been delivered live to 500 students in schools in WA, NSW, VIC, TAS & SA. Feedback from schools includes:

*"In the light of the recent international and local rallies about racism and injustice I wanted to thank you again for the part you are both playing in the education of my students. Many of them have not met an Aboriginal person before, so in a very real way you are both changing the world 1 person at a time. I admire both your work with the children in the Pilbara and also here in the Barossa Valley."*

**Teacher, Redeemer Primary School, SA**

*"Thank you for supporting our students success. We are going to include your sessions as part of our information round up to the Minister and our Director General."*

**Canberra Hospital School, ACT**

NEO-Learning is a once in a generation opportunity to share the strength of Aboriginal life with other young people to help rebuild social inclusion. Michelle Adams, a Yindjibarndi woman and Big hART cultural advisor says:

*"I am so proud of the achievements of our community in Roebourne who are contributing to change. NEO-Learning is an exciting opportunity to trial a platform of deep listening brought from our young people. NEO-Learning flips the narrative of growing up Aboriginal - from problem to strength. If young non-aboriginal students nationally, had fun, learned a lot, and wished they were lucky enough to have the adventures that Aboriginal young people have, there would be a long-term cultural shift as they grew up."*

**Michelle Adams, Yindjibarndi woman**



*“These Pilbara kids are learning how to record their own hip hop songs. These potential performers are writing and recording their own tracks. A unique opportunity for these children to explore their creativity.”*  
**ABC TV News**

## **Local Partnerships**

Over the Lotterywest funded period, Big hART increased impact by partnering with 14 different local organisations including Roebourne District High School, Police Citizens Youth Club, Wirru-murra Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation, Yaandina Youth Centre, Mawarnkarra Aboriginal Health Service, Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi Foundation, Pilbara Aboriginal Church, City of Karratha and Ngaarda Radio. Big hART looks forward to continuing to strengthen these local partnerships.

## **Conclusion - Legacy**

Complex social problems can't be solved with simplistic solutions. The Lotterywest Digital Lab and Workshop Program has been a layered, responsive, asset-based approach to overcome locked in disadvantage faced by young people.

The Lotterywest and Big hART partnership has increased digital access, digital ability, school retention, leadership, safety and wellbeing for young people in Roebourne.

Over the past two years, the Digital Lab and Digital Workshop program has enabled young people to develop as community change-makers, and have triggered a cultural and attitudinal shift regarding digital futures.

In July 2020, the Digital Lab completed its residency at the Ngurin Pilbara Cultural Centre and moved to a new space on Wellard Street in partnership with Ngarliyarndu Bindirri Aboriginal Corporation. Young people are continuing to build new digital literacies and developing vibrant new work through digital illustration, story, animation, digital music production, podcasting and film.

As further legacy, the Digital Lab is currently researching and developing a case for producing a 'mobile digital lab', that can take the Cultural Centre of Roebourne 'on tour' with young people from Roebourne encouraging digital uptake in other high needs communities.

**Big hART and the community of Roebourne thank Lotterywest for your generous support.**

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