Dear NIRAKN Members and Friends,

Welcome to the second edition of the NIRAKN newsletter for 2015 and season’s greetings to all of our NIRAKN communities across the country. The second half of 2015 has been a hive of activity for NIRAKN with the delivery of an International Indigenous Researchers Conference, International keynote speaking address and critical race workshop, Masterclass, Critical Reading Group and another edition of the NIRAKN IJCIS. NIRAKN also seed funded a healthy number of node members research projects and awarded its domestic Indigenous Undergraduate essay prizes again to four outstanding students. NIRAKN’s third year has been another year of achievement for the community and I look forward to more progress into it’s final year for 2016. Merry Christmas and happy safe new year.

Sincerely,

Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson

2016 NIRAKN Key Dates:
NIRAKN A Level Workshops: 15-17 Feb
NIRAKN Law Node Workshop: 18-24 Mar
NIRAKN Symposium: 30-31 Mar
NIRAKN Essay Prize Closes: 29 Apr
NIRAKN/NAISA Hawaii Conference: 18-21 May
NIRAKN Members Meeting and Workshops: 11-15 July

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Indigenous Qualitative Research Methodologies Masterclass & Critical Reading Group

In early November, Indigenous postgraduate students from across Australia attended the NIRAKN Masterclass and Critical Reading Group which was held over 3 days in Brisbane and facilitated by Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Dr David Singh and Dr Chelsea Bond. Postgraduate students undertaking research in the areas of health, law, anthropology, history, creative industries, and theology all found the Masterclass extremely helpful in enhancing their understanding of Indigenous research methodologies, with one student noting “I was able to articulate my methodology better after this discussion” and another, “[I’m] extremely grateful for the structured map to a thesis that was offered”. Students were also gifted with Professor Moreton-Robinson’s latest book “The White Possessive” as part of the Critical Reading Group where they explored several key chapters and considered the implications of the works in relation to their own communities, disciplines and research. Participants talked about their experiences of being challenged across the 3 days and leaving with a stronger sense of Indigenous research methodologies, ethics and world views noted here: “It really put me on the back foot…[and] made me realise that Indigenous Methodologies are critical to my thesis” and “I now know where I’m heading”.

NIRAKN/NATSIEC International Indigenous Research Conference 29-30 September 2015 Adelaide, South Australia

NIRAKN played host to an International Indigenous Research conference in Adelaide with participants including 100 Indigenous/non-Indigenous academics, public servants, post graduates and NIRAKN members. Audiences enjoyed attending the innovative and dynamic daily back to back panel sessions and keynote addresses from Prof Chadwick Allen (USA), Prof Linda Tuhiwai-Smith (NZ), Prof John Maynard (AUS) and Prof Aileen Moreton-Robinson (AUS). With over 20 national and international universities represented at the conference, NIRAKN anticipates publishing a special edition of papers for the UCIS in the near future. Thank you to all the speakers and the hub on making the event a great success. Full colour conference photo montage on page five.

JULY WORKSHOPS

NIRAKN’s third mid year workshops delivered a solid week of capacity building to a strong audience of Indigenous postgraduates and NIRAKN members. Once again, academics received a suite of research training and professional development from NIRAKN node leaders and funding agencies. The workshop sessions also included a NIRAKN postgraduate network meeting, Node meetings and a Critical Reading Group. NIRAKN will continue to offer to its members and postgraduates a diverse, strategic, empowering and engaging program for 2016. Thank you to all the attendees and presenters at this year’s program.

DID YOU KNOW? #NIRAKN2015 Trended as the No.1 Australian hashtag during the NIRAKN International Indigenous Researchers Conference September 2015?!
NIRAKN University of Alberta and UCLA visit 2015

In October, Professor Moreton-Robinson was the invited keynote for the Indigenous Foucault Symposium convened by the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta which examined the relevance of Foucault to critical Indigenous studies. Other symposium speakers included leading international Indigenous scholars Professor Brendan Hokowhitu, Professor Chris Anderson and Associate Professor Kim Tallbear. Professor Moreton-Robinson’s keynote was well-received and livestreamed to an audience in excess of 1000 people across the globe [http://livestream.com/ualberta/events/4458657]. Professor Moreton-Robinson was also invited to attend UCLA Law School at the request of leading critical race scholars Professor Cheryl Harris and Professor Devon Carbado. Here, Associate Professor Mark McMillan led a seminar with Professor Moreton-Robinson and Dr Chelsea Bond on Race, Indigeneity and Sovereignty.

NIRAKN @ QPAC Clancestry Talks 2015

NIRAKN Research Fellow Dr Chelsea Bond guest curated and chaired three public forums at the annual Queensland Performing Arts Complex’s (QPAC) Clancestry Festival between 2nd, 3rd and 4th of December 2015. Playing to a full house each night, Dr Bond worked to theme each evening covering engaging critical conversations around identity, activism and sovereignty. Distinguished guest panel members included members from the local and wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community including NIRAKN Director Professor Moreton-Robinson, visual artist Vernon Ah Kee, activist Dr Gary Foley, Senor Constable Matthew Bond and ABC Journalist Rhianna Patrick. NIRAKN was a proud sponsor of the forum series continuing to participate in the wider Indigenous and art communities.

NIRAKN 2015 Essay Prize Winners

Presented and awarded by the Federal Member of Hindmarsh Matt Williams MP, the 2015 Undergraduate Essay competition award ceremony was conducted at the NIRAKN International Researchers Conference, Stamford Plaza South Australia. Selected on merit by a panel of NIRAKN Management committee members, this year’s award competition winners included Sasha Purcell (QUT), Eliza Smith (Monash), Jenavive Westbury (UNSW) and Danielle Hobday (UNSW).

Thank you to all our national undergraduate entries and congratulations to the 2015 winners. Next years awards will open 10th March 2016 and for further details please visit www.nirakn.edu.au.
Each NIRAKN newsletter profiles Indigenous academics attributing their path to success to working as a collective with communities, keeping connected to country and driving a national Indigenous led research agenda. In this edition we interview Barry Judd, Pitjantjatjara traditional owner and Professor of Indigenous Studies, School of Global, Urban & Social Studies RMIT Melbourne and Dr Roxanne Bainbridge, Gungarri Traditional owner and Senior Research Fellow James Cook University Cairns Institute:

1. Where is your traditional country and what do you love most about it?

My mob are the Pitjantjatjara people of the far north west of South Australia. According to oral history my grandparents moved from their traditional homelands around the Mann and Petermann Ranges to a place called Tjiikala (Maryvale Station) which is about 110kms south of Alice Springs on the old Ghan Railway line and sits on Southern Arrernte country. They moved due to a severe drought and perhaps because they were killing too many cattle and the station people wanted them removed. I’ve heard they used to cut toes off men so they could no longer hunt stock. There is something special about the centre of the continent - it feels like the place where all song-lines converge. The generosity, good humour and determination of the people to retain culture and ties to Country are the best things about going ‘home’.

2. In your capacity as an Indigenous Academic, what are your areas of expertise? How important is this work for Indigenous people?

My postgraduate Grad Dip and MA are in public policy and I commenced a PhD that explored the development of Indigenous Education policy frameworks from the 1970s. Unfortunately, the Howard government imposed heavy financial and censorship restrictions on my planned project and I had to can the whole thing. Through a chance meeting with former AFL legend Syd Jackson I recommenced PhD level studies with a project that examined identity formation in Australian Rules Football. A book resulted and ever since I have been writing about the role sports play in shaping notions of both Aboriginal identity and national Australian identity. I think this work is important for everyone in Australia because sport is one area in life where you can open up a space for a conversation about history, race relations, identity, politics. I would hope that some of my writings might help both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people gain a better understanding of our shared histories since 1788.

3. Your research contributes significantly to a number of academies and universities across Australia. What are some of your recent highlights?

Landing an ARC Discovery Indigenous Award. This gives me the opportunity to engage with central Australia through my work. There isn’t a crowd of academics beating a path to research places like Papunya so the opportunity to do some social science research that may have short term as well as long impact is a major highlight. Being a contributor to Knowledge of Life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia edited by Kaye Price. This is a text book and hopefully it becomes a standard reader over the next few years and changes the way some people think for the better. Some of the co-contributors are people I admire greatly so its an honour to be in the same book.

4. What vision do you have for Indigenous academia in Australia? How do you see the future?

The most important thing is for a critical mass of Indigenous people to gain PhD level qualifications across all fields. NIRAKN and initiatives like it are so important to make this happen. We can’t rely on governments or anyone else to turn our communities around. This needs to be done by us - one by one. Education transforms lives and creates greater choice. I hate to admit it but it also underpins income and over generations the accumulation of wealth and with wealth comes greater political influence and power.

5. What message would you like to express to the future generations of Indigenous academics?

Never ever give up. 90% of academia is designed to give outsiders the idea that its difficult and exclusive and you have to be a genius to succeed. Indigenous people BELONG in Academia this is after all our Country :) The reality is that like everything in life if you practice and possess the will to succeed - you will - most of the time. The biggest challenge for many of us is reminding ourselves that we belong and also coming to the realisation that many of the non-Indigenous professors who are world’s experts on this and that wouldn’t survive 5 minutes in some of the situations we have experienced out there in the REAL world.
1. Where is your traditional country and what do you love most about it?
I am of the Gungarri/Kunja nation from South Western Queensland. My Country gives me an enduring sense of connection and belonging. The smell of Country is what I love most - it connects me to the Ancestors and memories of those who have passed, but also gifts me the courage and power to live life in the present and hope for the future.

2. In your capacity as an Indigenous Academic, what are your areas of expertise? How important is this work for Indigenous people?
My Father raised us to value family and health above all else. It comes as no surprise that I work researching health and wellbeing. I have multidisciplinary expertise clustered around the social and cultural determinants of health, Aboriginal psychosocial resilience, empowerment and social inclusion. My methodological expertise lies particularly in participatory and action-oriented research approaches; grounded theory; systematic literature reviews; and auto/ethnographic approaches. My field of expertise aims to contribute to ensuring cultural continuity and flourishing nations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia.

3. Your research contributes significantly to a number of academies and universities across Australia. What are some of your recent highlights?
In 2014, I led a successful Targeted Call for Research into Indigenous Youth Suicide: ‘Psycho-social resilience and vulnerability and suicide prevention: A mentoring approach to modifying suicide risk for remote Indigenous students at boarding school’. The project involves working with the Transition Support Service based in Cairns to better support the resilience of Indigenous students who are compelled to leave their homes in Cape York and Palm Island to attend boarding school because secondary school options are inadequate. The transition team support some 500 students from these communities. This work provides continuity in my commitment to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres psychosocial resilience as a way of building human flourishing and prosperous communities. Recently, I was also awarded NHMRC Career Development Fellowship which enables my full concentration in this area. Through an ARC Discovery Award and Lowitja Institute funding, I am part of a team committed to improve the integrity, quality and value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait health research.

4. What vision do you have for Indigenous academia in Australia? How do you see the future?
I am the eternal optimist. Indigenous knowledges have much to offer Western systems. I see a future where we operate independently and also at the interface of these two knowledge systems with mutual respect.

5. What message would you like to express to the future generations of Indigenous academics?
Draw strength from the Ancestors and dare to dream of the future you want. Put one foot in front of the other to achieve those dreams. Do it with integrity and from the heart. But don’t do it alone.

Expression of Interest: 2016 NIRAKN A Level Workshops

From Monday 15th - 17th February 2016, we are starting our capacity building calendar of events with a NIRAKN research and academic skills workshop designed for Indigenous PhD and Masters by Research postgraduate students.

These workshops will be led by the Director of NIRAKN, Professor Moreton-Robinson who has taught Indigenous Research Methodologies since 2006.

Participation is free of charge, however spaces are limited and applications are subject to review by the NIRAKN Director and teaching team.

We encourage you to register your interest by sending us an expression of interest email to nirakn@qut.edu.au with your name and contact details. Please note that return flights and accommodation will be provided for the duration of the workshops, however participants will need to meet the costs of meals outside of the daily program.

Indigenous Post Graduates enrolled in their PhD or Masters by Research at Universities affiliated with NIRAKN are particularly encouraged to apply. Registration closes Friday 30th January 2016.
Highlights: NIRAKN/NATSIHEC International Indigenous Research Conference 29-30 September 2015 Adelaide, South Australia (Photo’s courtesy of NIRAKN hub and Prof Bronwyn Fredericks CQU)
Indigenous peoples from around the world share common experiences of colonisation and have been involved in the struggle for self-determination at the global level. Our collective politics have been shaped by our intellectual traditions which inform our work within the academy.

The International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies offers a virtual intellectual space for the dissemination of international scholarship from scholars across disciplines that include the Humanities, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Law and Education in the field of Indigenous Studies. As Indigenous studies are a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field we are seeking articles, review essays and book reviews from a variety of disciplines. As a refereed journal with distinguished members across a range of disciplines on the editorial board, the quality of accepted submissions will be of the highest standard. The journal brings together emergent and ground breaking research in the field of Indigenous studies within the global community offering scope for critical international engagement and debate.

Whether you are an established scholar, early career researcher or postgraduate student, if you have an interest in critical Indigenous Studies and you have an abstract or proposed article, we would love to hear from you. For more information please contact us on nirakn@qut.edu.au or david.singh@qut.edu.au
Grants & Fellowships:

- NHMRC Practitioner Fellowships—Closes 3 FEB 2016
- NHMRC Early Career Fellowships—Closes 24 FEB 2016
- NHMRC Career Development Fellowships—Closes 9 MAR 2016
- NHMRC Project Grants—Closes 16 MAR 2016
- NHMRC Program Grants/TRIP Fellowships—25 MAY 2016
- ARC DECRA—Closes 22 MAR 2016
- ARC Discovery 2017—Closes 2 MAR 2016
- ARC Discovery Indigenous 2017—Closes 31 MAR 2016

If you missed the chance to become a member of NIRAKN, you may be interested in becoming an Affiliate Member! Affiliate membership of the network is now open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics across Australia. For an application form and more information on how to apply, please contact nirakn@qut.edu.au

If you're an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Postgraduate student, contact us now to ensure you're receiving information about access to our events and programs through our Indigenous Postgraduates email list. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous community members are also welcome to keep up with our news through our 'Friends of NIRAKN' email list.

Email nirakn@qut.edu.au for more information,

NIRAKN members are reminded that applications for funding to support attendance at International Conferences will be presented to NIRAKN Management Committee for decision, and funding will be allocated according to its criteria. The maximum amount of financial support provided to an individual will be $5000 in a calendar year.

All spending must comply with the Funding Rules issued by the ARC that govern network activities (available from http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ATSIRN_Funding_Rules_revised_20April2012.pdf) as well as the requirements of QUT as the Administering organisation.

Applicants must explain how supporting their attendance at the international conference or research activity is consistent with NIRAKN’s research agenda as outlined in the Research Policy Framework, and will further NIRAKN’s aims. For further information on obtaining application forms and guidelines, please log in to the NIRAKN website at www.nirakn.edu.au and visit the members only Links and Resources page.