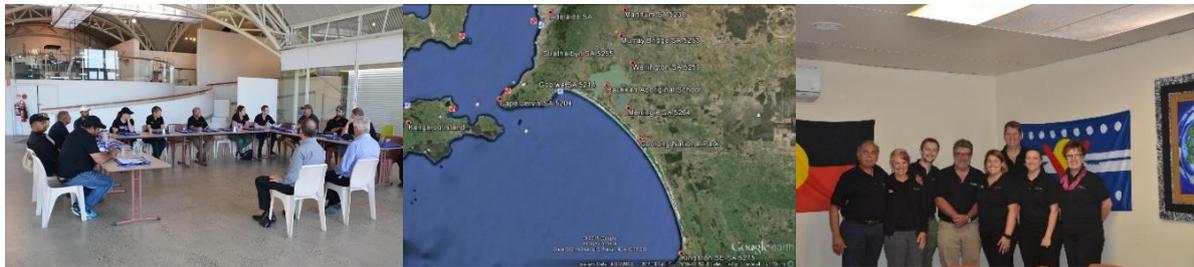


Case Study

Designing an Atlas of the Ngarrindjeri Nation



Background

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority (NRA) is the peak Indigenous organisation in the Lower River Murray, Lakes and Coorong region of South Australia. The NRA represents more than 12 community organisations from a broad range of sectors, including community services, land care, traditional governance, eco-tourism and cultural education.

Each community organisation has, over many generations, cultivated its own systems and assets, leading to unnecessary complexity and creating barriers to collaboration. In addition, many community assets have been retained well past their usefulness.

The NRA identified as a 21st century challenge the need to find new ways to understand the current strengths and weaknesses among its membership base, create a collaborative environment and keep up to date with the latest government information.

The NRA sought Jawun's support to create an aerial mapping tool or 'Atlas of the Ngarrindjeri Nation'. The Atlas would assist the NRA to better manage their country by combining government data sets (such as property values, water licenses, aquaculture permits, planning zones and mining applications) with their own community-driven data.

Six of the NRA's 12 member organisations agreed to be part of the project, and in October 2015 eight Jawun secondees commenced work on data collection and the design of the Atlas.

Approach

The eight Jawun secondees (from the Department of Defence, BankSA, the Australian Tax Office, Bendigo and Adelaide Bank, the RAA and SA Government) brought a range of skills and experience to the project, including HR, finance and asset management.

Together, they worked on two distinct stages of the project: data collection and designing the Atlas itself. As a first step, the secondees established key relationships with senior Indigenous leaders in order to compile data relating to:

- Digital media, publications and events
- Physical assets and real estate
- Employee and employer obligations
- Corporate governance, audit advice and intellectual property
- Government funding in the region
- Financial information
- Organisational change management and WH&S review; and
- Information management.

Once the data was collated, the secondees utilised the federal government's 'NationalMap' visual mapping tool to design the Atlas. The NationalMap tool provided free access to spatial data from government agencies and also the ability to show relevant systems, assets and processes at a GPS coordinate.

Outcomes

The Atlas was created in late 2015 and gives the NRA, for the first time, a central digital repository of its assets and systems. The aerial mapping tool also enables the NRA and its member organisations to 'take a deeper look' at the way they run their nation and support their constituents by giving key Ngarrindjeri decision-makers access to the latest government decisions at the click of a button. Importantly, being armed with the latest government information helps the NRA maintain its ambition of ensuring Ngarrindjeri equitable access to development opportunities in the region, while also defending native title and cultural heritage interests.

Already the Atlas and its role as a central repository of information has improved collaborative asset management practices. It has also assisted member organisations to move from being passive economic participants, often missing out on growth opportunities, to active contributors working towards sustainable development in the region. For example:

- The **Narrung Ferry** has long been identified as a potential employment opportunity. Details surrounding the government tender to run the ferry service have been uploaded to the Atlas and preliminary scoping work has commenced.
- **The collection of HR and WH&S policies** across NRA member organisations has enabled a preliminary review and recommendation to consolidate and standardise HR and WH&S policies to improve productivity and organisational mobility for staff and managers.
- **The scoping of a central digital archive** to consolidate provider costs and provide consistent information has commenced.

Next Steps

The NRA aims to dive deeper into the secondees' recommendations generated by the information collected and displayed on the Atlas to achieve economies of scale, systems and assets consolidation, and review policies across member organisations.