

CASE STUDY: COSMETICS ENTREPRENEUR INCUBATOR PROJECT

Murraylands SA



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Food Futures Company has developed the Indigenous Women in Entrepreneurship & STEM Pathways Program to facilitate increased participation by First Nations people in the native ag+food sector. Implementation of the program includes initiatives developed and delivered via five Regional Hubs across Australia, including one in the Murraylands in South Australia which is led by Dominic Smith, a Yuin man and owner of aquaponic farm Pundi Produce.

The Cosmetics Entrepreneur Incubator project is supporting female Indigenous entrepreneurs to build their own skincare brand and cosmetics products based on the natural healing of native plant ingredients. The project sets out to create intergenerational and socioeconomic change through entrepreneurship education; confidence building; and community consultation. The project incorporates a practical framework for encouraging entrepreneurship while incorporating cultural protocols.



KEY OBJECTIVES

A central component of the project involved ongoing consultation with the local community and Elders in the Murraylands. It was also important that the opportunity was extended broadly to Indigenous women in the region and a variety of approaches were deployed including meeting with Elders and job agencies; social media outreach; and 'word of mouth' communication.

The key objectives of the project are to:

Provide mentorship & support

Create mentorship and support for First Nations entrepreneurs by bringing together respected formulating chemists, contract manufacturers, and experienced entrepreneurs in the industry.

Develop high quality products using native ingredients

Young entrepreneurs work with mentors to build their own brand of skincare and cosmetic products using native ingredients. As part of the project, they learn how to start their own brand and launch their products to market.

Champion First Nations-owned cosmetics brands

First Nations-owned cosmetic brands can become a core part of the Australian beauty industry, enhancing the sustainability of the sector and the lives of First Nations women and communities.

"It's opening doors to supporting all women in the sector more broadly - this has the potential to impact many lives, beyond the project participants that we're currently working with"

Dominic Smith Director, Pundi Produce

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PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

The project has resulted in three new cosmetic brands led by female Indigenous entrepreneurs from the Murraylands. In addition to business training supported by Many Rivers and mentorship by Lisa Carroll from Native Extracts, the participants have been connected with cosmetic industry leaders from around Australia including Retreatment Botanics (created by Olivia Newton-John) and Mukti Organics.

They recently visited Byron Bay to meet Lisa in-person for an intensive 4-day workshop covering ingredients science, POS branding and marketing as well as visits to farms and factories. The entrepreneurs are now actively engaged with contract manufacturers to complete formulations prior to launch. Through the project, they are developing bespoke cosmetic products using Australian natives and unique product branding that link to their cultural heritage. The entrepreneurial framework developed in this project will be extended to other native ag+food opportunities and to the other participating Regional Hubs.



CUTCH by Stacey Wilson, Ngarrindjeri woman

Stacey's brand name comes from her Ngarrindjeri language (cutcherdy, cutcherdi, Katjeri) and means someone good looking/beautiful. Her first product is Hydra Active Mist (Skin Drink) with River Mint, Desert Lime, Kakadu Plum, Gotu Kola and Lemon Myrtle.

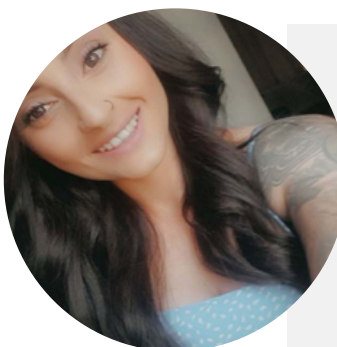
"I'm very excited to have this opportunity which allows me to showcase my culture. In Aboriginal culture we have always used the skin for identification, celebration and healing with natural remedies. CUTCH is also an avenue and platform for my culture to stay relevant and raise awareness."



GRACEFUL TUNKERRI by Tenesha Pickering, Ngarrindjeri woman

Tenesha's brand name means 'graceful skin' and focusses on ancestral beauty with a touch of grace. Her first product is Face Cream with River Mint, Strawberry Gum and Kakadu Plum.

"I am determined to be a successful entrepreneur within the cosmetics industry because I want to be able to give my daughter and the rest of the Indigenous community the same opportunity I have had. This project allows us to have our language and our culture incorporated into a business WE have created."



PARNBANDILA by Katisha Jackson, Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba woman

Katisha's brand name means 'to shine in many colours' and focusses on making generational change and being proud of who you are regardless of the shade of your skin. Her first product is Repair & Glow Serum with Lemon Myrtle, Kakadu Plum, Wattleseed and Emu Bush.

"I have a long-standing desire for keeping language alive by using it through my products, which gives myself the ability to have a stronger cultural connection and passing on that knowledge to my daughter, community and the wider world."



This project received grant funding from the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science Energy and Resources through the Women in STEM and Entrepreneurship Round 3 program

Food Futures Company acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present.