

Karkalla at Home

IEP Program 2023



Mindy is the owner of renowned native food restaurant 'Karkalla Byron Bay'. Karkalla at Home seeks to extend Mindy's expertise into the retail sector, offering a line of products like curry sauces, liqueurs, teas, and chai teas, all imbued with the distinctive qualities of native ingredients.



Karkalla at Home represents more than just a culinary enterprise. It encapsulates Mindy's conviction that food can act as a transformative force, aiding in the preservation of First Nations culture, facilitating healing for people and the environment. "Food is a great connector and a catalyst for change. When it's abundant we celebrate and when it's scarce it creates wars. I want Australians to connect with something that is all of ours to celebrate."

"I believe to experience a culture is to taste its food"

COMING INTO THE PROGRAM

Before joining the program, Mindy was already a well-established figure in Australia's culinary scene. Through her restaurant, her presence at industry events as a celebrated chef, her global travels to share the wisdom of native ingredients, and her support for businesses aiming to work respectfully and honourably with Indigenous entrepreneurs and native ingredients, she has made a significant impact. However, Mindy sought out the program to assist her in the next chapter of her entrepreneurial journey. She recognised the need for additional technical expertise to effectively commercialise her retail venture, which would entail a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the supply chain.



"I was looking to diversify my business to try and find ways to increase our representation and making the business viable, by not losing those cultural aspects through food that are so important to us as a mob and as a nation"

PROGRAM JOURNEY

Mindy has made significant strides in her business venture over the four-month span of the program. She's deepened her understanding of her key customer segments, conducting interviews to gather crucial feedback and to test her value proposition. Mindy is a regular presence at industry events, continually engaging customers in conversations about problem/solution fit to validate her idea. She jumped at the opportunity to attend the Naturally Good Expo in Sydney with Food Futures and other participants, (a trade show for the organic and wellness product industry), where she was able to connect with industry partners and buyers throughout the supply chain and gain valuable feedback. Throughout the program, Mindy has developed and formulated over four recipes and six tea blends. As part of her validation process, she sent samples of her products to her restaurant customers as a gift and as an additional means of securing product feedback. She also seized the opportunity to present at the CSU Innovation Showcase and conduct a taste test at the CSU Innovation Showcase, obtaining invaluable in-person feedback on her products.



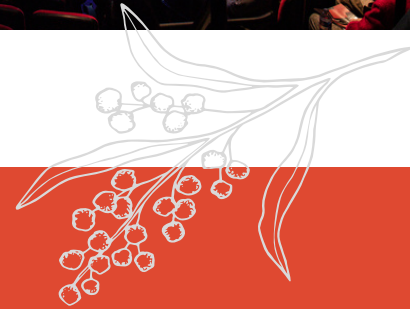
In preparation for the launch of her new product range, Mindy has added a pop-up to her existing website to grow her database. She's been sourcing packaging options, consulting with food scientists to determine the shelf stability of her product, and is currently exploring contract manufacturing. Impressively, Mindy has already secured some distributors and retailers for her product range upon its market launch. In addition, she's been hosting immersive dining events on Country to further promote the Karkalla at Home brand.

"I honestly think that programs like this actually not only offer a hand out because money doesn't help mob but a hand up, working together to get those tangible outcomes that we're looking for. I'm feeling really supported and have great hope for the future"

IMPACT

Mindy's long-term vision extends beyond the success of her business alone. She seeks to foster a more equitable and respectful native food industry in Australia, with specific focuses on:

- **Provenance and authenticity:** Mindy aims to protect First Nation producers by ensuring that industry practises respect protocols and acknowledge First Nation custodianship.
- **Acknowledgement:** Mindy is advocating for the respect and protection of First Nations knowledge in relation to bush foods and products. This includes proper recognition of intellectual property rights and fair access and benefit sharing arrangements.
- **Education and Awareness:** Mindy hopes to promote respect for First Nations knowledge, values and protocols. She believes that education is key to fostering understanding and respect between the native food industry and First Nations communities.



“The ideal scenario is that everybody has a connection. That all Australians have a connection to native foods and have a feeling like they are part of our national cuisine, our identity, something to be proud of and to celebrate. We need protections put in place around our native food industry. We need an Appalachian system so that protections are connected to geographical indicators that will solidify their connection to Country and Culture for future generations”

WHAT'S NEXT



“I believe that native food is going to be a big part of our revitalisation, culture and reconciliation as a nation. I’ve got great hope with the help of people like food futures that we can actually achieve those goals of making sure that Australia is protected for future generations, that native food is celebrated and engaged with and is commonplace in people's homes where it belongs.”

Mindy's strategic roadmap for Karkalla at Home is detailed and robust, encompassing key areas like product development, marketing, distribution, customer relationship management and resource procurement. Here's an insight into activities across the next 12 months:

- Finalise packaging and labelling in accordance with Australian food safety standards and requirements, which includes nutritional panels and country of origin.
- Engage a designer and/or a marketing company, if necessary, to assist with the start of a social media campaign.
- Finalise agreement with a contract manufacturer.
- Follow up on potential purchasers and distribution leads, such as markets, local shops and hotel groups.
- Launch the product into the market.
- Expand into online markets for direct sales and distribution.



About Food Futures Company

Food Futures supports, commercialises and invests in agile startups, entrepreneurs and disruptive technologies to be the vehicles of change for a better food system.

