

# DESERT PEA MEDIA

## Annual Report 2018





Desert Pea Media would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to Australia's Original Nations People, the traditional custodians and guardians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders past, present and future. This land is, was and always will be Aboriginal land.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Australia's Original Nations People and communities to Australian life. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

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B-Town Warriors My Generation Music Video Shoot, Bourke NSW

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Winangala means listen in the language handed down by the voices of my ancestors, to future generations, to future ancestors. Our first Desert Pea Media Annual Report marks a milestone in listening and respecting the voices of Original Nation's people from the past, to the present and into the future. Listening is a fundamental principle in the Desert Pea Media creative process. A process that makes it easy and fun for our future ancestors, our young people, to find their voice on a platform where all Australia has an opportunity to listen.

When you listen to the music, beyond the captivating visuals of empowered young people, you hear their own words reinforcing their motivation, self-worth and pride in identity, culture and country. It was therefore not surprising to me that our first independent impact evaluation revealed a measurable positive impact experienced by participants in the program. What was surprising is the positive impact the videos are having on local communities. It was revealed that the broader community also experienced a sense of pride along with more positive perception of their young people and their future.

Our visionary supporters this year have understood the power of this social impact. Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, Primary Health Network Western NSW, the NSW Environment Protection Authority, NEWaste, NSW Government Health and The Yulgilbar Foundation... I applaud you for your courage to invest in a creative process for social impact, realise the results and continue support with belief in our shared vision. I also acknowledge the dedication of our volunteer board and the executive team who have applied their extensive knowledge and expertise to guide Desert Pea Media seamlessly in a period of exponential growth while supporting the creative team to deliver results. And while all this support is important, I must highlight that it is the extraordinary talented team of creatives who make every process authentic and every production of the highest possible quality.

An Elder once told me there are two-ways to 'Close the Gap' between the lives our people and everyone else living in Australia. He explained that real and lasting change can only happen when the voices of our men, women and children are heard, listened to and understood with respect, and our true story told. There are relatively few authentic storytelling opportunities that are broadcast in a contemporary and accessible medium for young people. Certainly not those that facilitate young people to tell their story in their own words communicating lived experiences, history, heritage and culture. The music videos are now shared stories that all Australians have the opportunity to know and understand. Desert Pea Media indeed facilitates closing the gap two-ways and its impact is measurably powerful, just winangala.

Shelly Rowell  
Chair, Desert Pea Media



Githabul Next Generation Looking Out For Country Music Video Shoot, Woodenbong/Mulji Mulji NSW

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Family, connection, generosity, humility and truth. It makes me very proud to say that all of the core principles that helped form Desert Pea Media (DPM) almost 17 years ago, have remained part of our ethos to this day.

At the start of it all, DPM was a group of young, passionate and relatively inexperienced university undergraduates at Charles Sturt University in Bathurst, NSW. This was in the early 2000's – at a time that pre-dated the boom of internet and social media, and at a time when community media in Australia was smaller, and more disconnected.

So much has changed in the past two decades in terms of the composition and connectivity of Australian popular culture. The way young people communicate, and the frequency in which technology shifts and shapes our common language has an incredible effect on audiences, stories and the global conversation on culture.

DPM has been shifting and re-shaping itself. Developments over time in our strategic focus, governance, recruitment and evaluation process have meant flexibility and resilience, and I am very proud of both the organisational culture we are building, and our constantly improving creative process. You can see in the stories and testimonials in this report that there is a real 'buzz', and a fantastic positive energy in our team.

In 2018, it feels like we are reaching a certain level of organisational maturity that is both empowering and exciting to be a part of. We've done the hard yards, we've consulted, we've survived, we've built trust, we've built a brand, we've built a managerial and creative team, and a strong and effective Board. DPM now has a reputation for empowering and inspiring community work. In 2018, this evolution has attracted partnerships, exciting new opportunities and enabled some of the most effective and rewarding work that we have ever delivered in Australian Indigenous communities.

DPM is about family. Connection. Generosity. These things are important, and as I watch young people on our programs succeed through their connection with DPM, I am reminded of all the incredible work we have done in community and culture all around Australia for almost two decades. There is still a huge amount to be done, and we all feel deeply honoured to listen, learn, share, connect and create on the lands of the Original Nations of Australia.

We cannot undo the past, but we can actively contribute to a respectful, truthful, aware, and ultimately positive future, for everyone.

Toby Finlayson  
CEO/Founder, Desert Pea Media

# OUR VISION

An Australia where Original Nations people are respected, embraced and supported to live a life of their own design.

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## OUR MISSION

Working with Original Nations Australians to build a best practice model, creating social change through collaborative storytelling.

## OUR PROCESS

We facilitate, document and distribute creative and collaborative conversations that explore 'the real, the ideal and the bridge'.

## OUR STRATEGY

Reaching our full potential by building on our success and trusting our creative instincts.

Driving positive cultural change by partnering with like-minded organisations that will invest in our work.

Scaling up our activities to become accessible to all Original Nations of Australia.

Maturing our Business Model and achieving sustainability for the organisation.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

To develop and deliver storytelling and media mentoring programs for young people in marginalised and disadvantaged communities, particularly in regional and remote areas.

To create dialogue around local social and cultural issues, through the creation of story and art, using a fusion of contemporary and traditional storytelling forms.

To re-engage marginalised young people with community, culture and country and to encourage the development of life skills, access to education, employment and leadership programs.

To develop training and mentoring for young people and artists to deliver Desert Pea Media programs to a wider range of communities.

To grow and maintain a network of partnerships with community organisations and individuals, that supports sustainable and ongoing initiatives.

To create high-end media outcomes to educate audiences, to advocate awareness of social and cultural issues and to celebrate community and culture on a local, national and international level.

To contribute to the evolution of a balanced and respectful social and cultural relationship between Indigenous and non-indigenous Australia.



B-Town Warriors My Generation music video shoot, Bourke NSW

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARD

## SHELLY ROWELL, CHAIR

I was euphoric when the B-town Warriors released their fifth music video *My Generation*. Talented young people confidently calling on their generation with music, movement and motivation while respecting Elders and acknowledging four nations. They are becoming truly inspiring artists and leaders without compromise to identity and culture.

## CHRIS ANDREW, VICE CHAIR

I'm proud that DPM's work this year supported communities to call out the silent killer, mental health. Giving a contemporary voice to address such a crippling issue is a powerful tool to tackle the challenge front on.

## PETER MACLEAN, TREASURER

As treasurer, I'm particularly thrilled by DPM's income increasing significantly this year, because it represents greater opportunities and more resources to engage with a larger number of Indigenous communities; even higher quality productions and wider ranging content; and provides opportunities for repeat engagements with a number of the communities.

## JANE BENNETT, SECRETARY

Our work with the Western NSW Primary Health Network is especially exciting for me, after having worked in Aboriginal Health for many years. A project that changes lives through making music together speaks to our ancient human cultural roots as well as the science of neuroplasticity, cultivating health and wellbeing.

## MATTHEW PRIESTLEY, CULTURAL CONSULTANT & CO-FOUNDER

DPM's work has excelled to new levels. We've found a new way of engaging with community creatively, with true cultural and social community consultation. Rebuilding ownership of story and song, creating a better understanding of past, present and future. It makes me proud to be a founding member.

## TOBY FINLAYSON, CEO & CO-FOUNDER

In the past 12 months, DPM has formed a series of partnerships that have enabled some really genuine, long-term relationships with communities around the country. It is through sustained engagement that real trust and real consultation is created, so my highlight has been participating in deep connection with people and country. I feel very grateful and humbled to be a part of this journey.

## SUE PAMMENT

Seeing such brave, powerful and positive messages in the work, especially from communities where our relationship is enabled to be ongoing. Hearing our extended Creative Team talking about how privileged they feel, and the commitment they have, to be working with, learning from and sharing experiences with communities.

## FRED LEONE

I had the pleasure of working with the DPM creative team on the ground in Walgett and Bourke this year. It was powerful to experience first-hand the integrity and authenticity of the DPM process. The impact of these projects on young people and community can not be overstated. Full power to the DPM crew!

## BEN BARDON

Some projects make me smile, some make me dance, some scare and shame me. But the piece of work that took my breath away this year was *Rock Bottom*, the short film made in Wellington, NSW with its message of despair, hope and timeless connections to the earth, 'our mother'. A story of rebirth told through a new creative collaboration, with new technology and in a spoken word format with a haunting yet life affirming soundtrack. *Rock Bottom* is deep storytelling.



The land was here before me it will be here when I'm gone.

My connection to mother earth went missing... I hit rock bottom... finally, I saw the earth for what it was... our mother.

I reached up to my Elders and they extended their arms down to pull me out, they slapped ochre on my skin, put my ancestors in me and brought their spirit alive.

The same dirt that held me down now lifts me up.

Now I make new songlines with old words... reconnecting young people to an identity that was stolen from us. These songlines are for my people...

My culture was here before me. It will be here when I'm gone.

WILL HILL, *ROCK BOTTOM*

Rock Bottom short film shoot, Wellington NSW



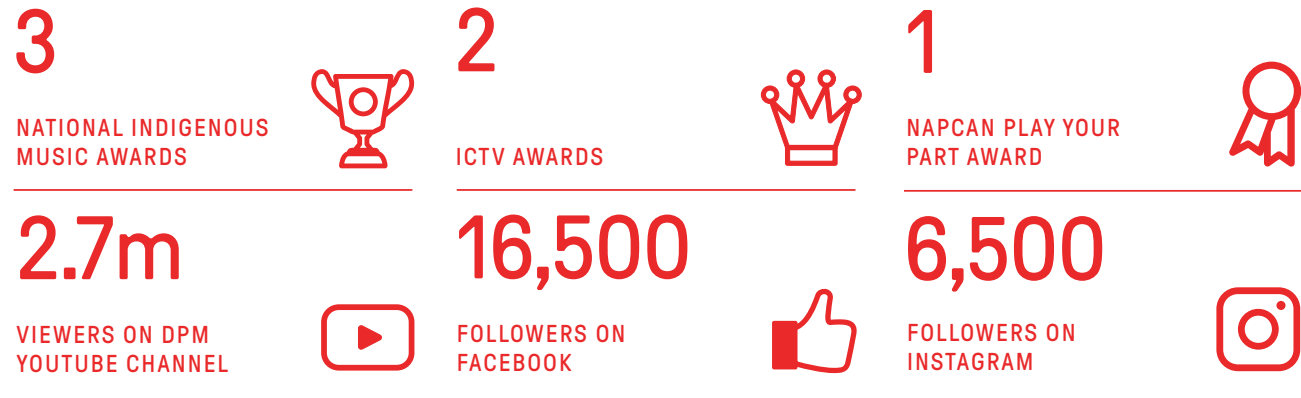
B-Town Warriors *My Generation* music video shoot, Bourke NSW

"Closing the Gap is about our young people leading. Whether it's cultural, physical, spiritual or emotional we have to listen to our young people. Desert Pea Media allows that to happen."

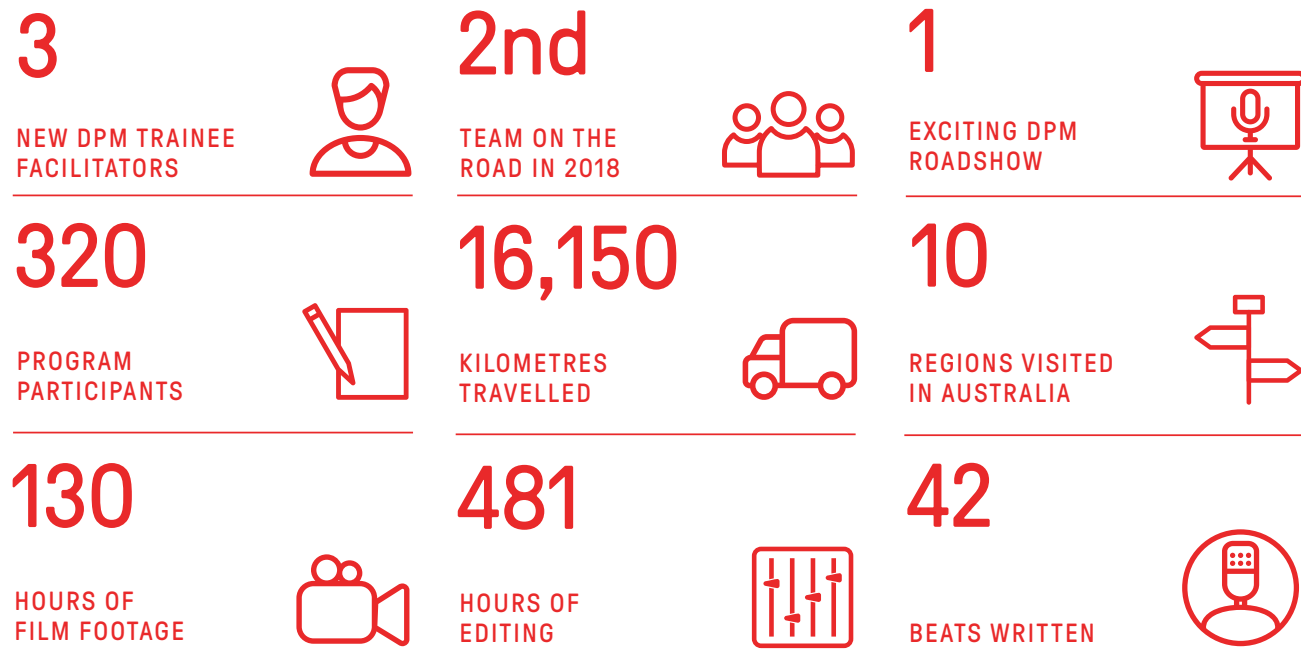
JAMIE NEWMAN  
CEO, ORANGE ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE

Over 17 years, DPM projects have directly strengthened cultural identity in thousands of young people. The results are evidenced by the popularity of DPM music videos among Indigenous youth.

We've completed over 150 projects in more than 70 remote and regional communities across Australia.



Milestones in 2017-2018

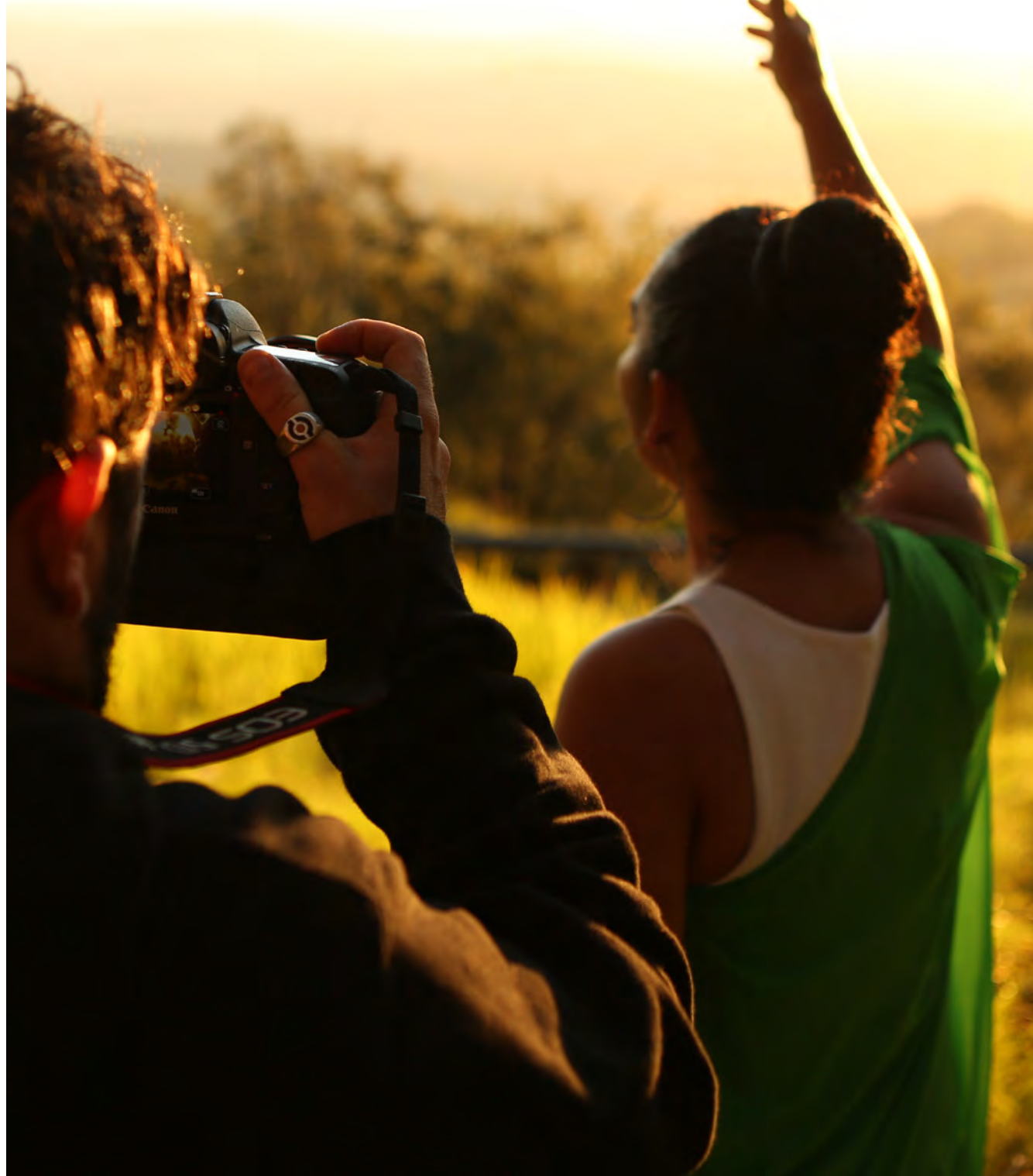


B-Town Warriors Dreams music video shoot, Bourke NSW





# THE DESERT PEA MEDIA STORY



Githabul Next Generation *Breaking Habits* music video shoot, Woodenbong/Mulil Mulil NSW

**2002**

The Desert Pea Media concept founded by a group of students at Charles Sturt University. Toby Finlayson chairs the Board.

**2006**

Kamileroi artist Matthew Priestley joins the Creative team, bringing with him 25 years of cultural and creative experience as a traditional and contemporary Indigenous artist. Matthew and Toby become Co-Directors.

**2010**

DPM releases *You + Me* by The Colli Crew, Collarenebri NSW, starring Michael Graham. It was the beginning of our first DPM mentorship which has spanned almost a decade.

**2011**

Matthew Priestley joins the Board as permanent Co-Founder/Cultural Consultant.

**2013**

DPM wins first National Indigenous Music Award (NIMA) for *Fly Back Home* – The Desert Sevens, Ampilatwatja, NT.

**2015**

Michael Graham releases debut EP *Boomalli*

**2016**

Government funding cuts restrict access to resources for DPM projects. Schools and community groups struggle to find funding – income drought for DPM.

**2017**

DPM employs first fulltime Business Manager.

**2003**

DPM runs first project in Central Western NSW.

**2009**

DPM releases *Aboriginal Justice* by the PI Boys, Palm Island, NT. Number One on Triple J Unearthed charts for over 2 months.

**2010**

The Colli Crew perform at the Aria Awards, Sydney Opera House.

**2011**

DPM releases compilation *Song Nation Vol 1* in partnership with The Smugglers of Light Foundation. Rolling Stone magazine publishes a special editorial piece on the compilation. Triple J added the first single *Built To Last* to rotation.

**2014**

DPM wins second National Indigenous Music Award (NIMA) for *Built To Last* – Cairns Murri Crew, Cairns, QLD.

**2016**

DPM Releases *People of the Red Sunset* by B-Town Warriors. National media coverage. The Project produce an editorial piece about the B-Town Warriors that screens on prime time national television.

**2017**

DPM forms first significant government health partnership with WNSW Primary Health Network.

**2018**

DPM wins third National Indigenous Music Award (NIMA) for *Thundercloud* – The B-Town Warriors, Bourke, NSW.

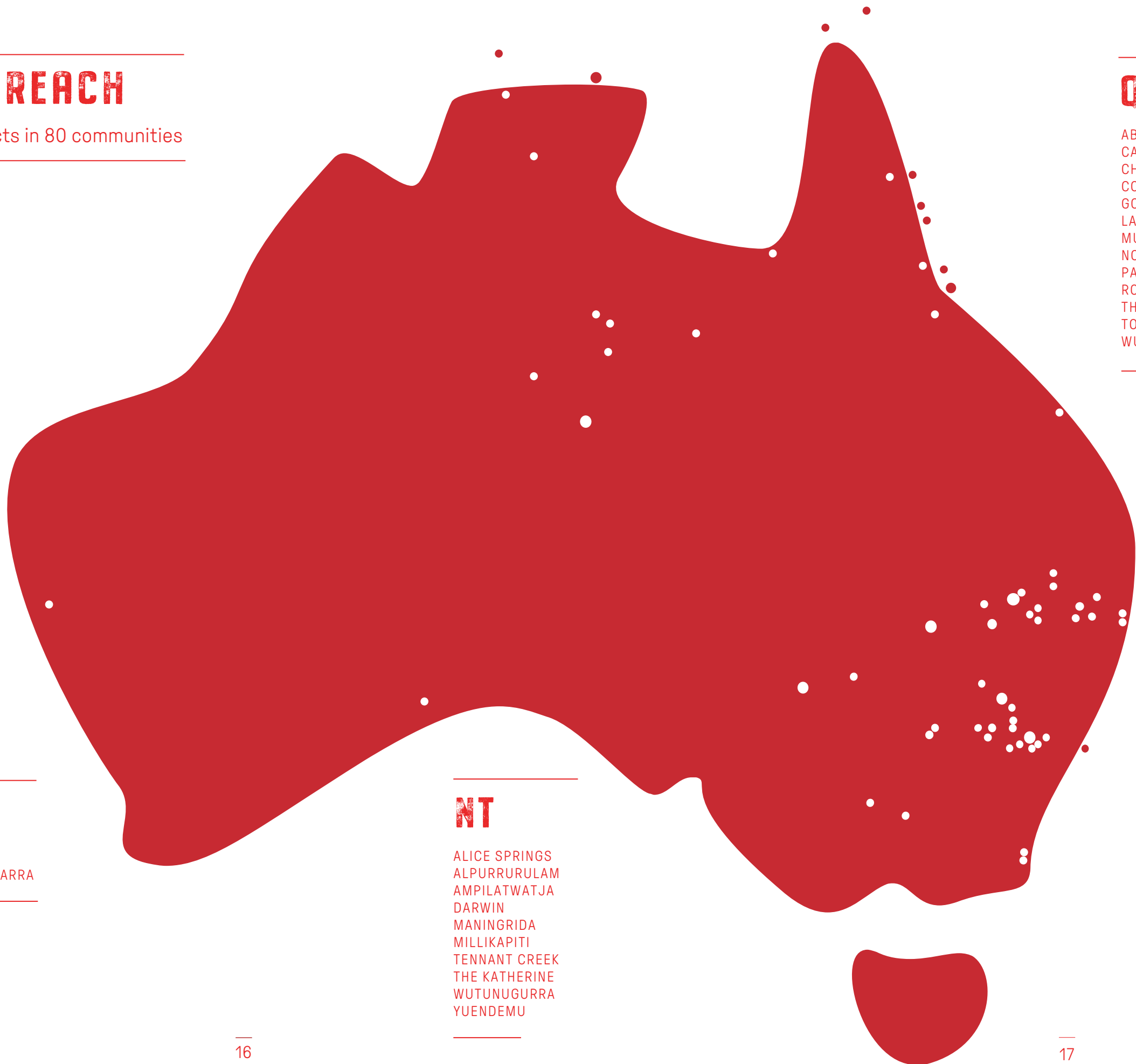
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# OUR REACH

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150 projects in 80 communities

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## WA

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MULLEWA  
TJUNTJUNTJARRA

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## NT

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ALICE SPRINGS  
ALPURRURULAM  
AMPILATWATJA  
DARWIN  
MANINGRIDA  
MILLIKAPITI  
TENNANT CREEK  
THE KATHERINE  
WUTUNUGURRA  
YUENDEMU

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## QLD

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ABERGOWRIE  
CAIRNS  
CHARTERS TOWERS  
COOKTOWN  
GOONDIWINDI  
LAUR  
MURRAY ISLAND  
NORMANTON  
PALM ISLAND  
ROCKHAMPTON  
THURSDAY ISLAND  
TOWNSVILLE  
WUJAL WUJAL

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## NSW

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ASHFORD  
BATHURST  
BEGA  
BLAYNEY  
BOGGABILLA  
BOURKE  
BROKEN HILL  
COLLARENEBRI  
CONDOBOLIN  
COWRA  
DENILIQVIN  
DUBBO  
EDE  
ENNGONIA  
FORBES  
GILGANDR  
GLEN INNES  
GUYRA  
INVERELL  
LAKE CARGELLICO  
LIGHTING RIDGE  
LITHGOW  
MACLEAN  
MOLON  
MOREE  
MULI MULI  
MUNGINDI  
MURRINBRIDGE  
OBERON  
ORANGE  
PARKES  
SHOALHAVEN  
SYDNEY  
TINGHA  
TOOMELAH  
URALL  
WALGETT  
WARREN  
WELLINGTON  
WILCANNIA

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## VIC

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SWAN HILL

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*"Using popular culture forms like hip-hop and film we enable young people to speak in a language that they are fluent in. Young people understand their own world, and they've got a lot more to say than we are hearing at the moment."*

TOBY FINLAYSON  
CEO, DESERT PEA MEDIA

2820 Crew *Bring It Back* music video shoot, Wellington NSW

# MUSIC VIDEOS

## THE MOB

### Speak With Me – Walgett, NSW



*Speak With Me* is an invitation from the Kamileroi people to the Government and Private Services working in the community. A call to country. The Mob want us all to connect, around the fire, by the river, where we all belong. This song is an invitation born of warmth, respect and inclusion. The oldest culture on earth welcoming people to country with a sense of genuine calm and generosity.

### 2820 Crew Bring It Back – Wellington, NSW

This song is a celebration of culture, history, and a conversation about supporting each other and breaking down stigmas attached to mental health in Indigenous communities. In a context where mental health is at crisis point for young Indigenous Australians, and the pressures of living in two worlds are bigger than ever, 2820 Crew wants to remind us of the importance of connection to family, to country, and to our own well being.

### THE CONDO CREW How Ya Feelin’ – Condobolin, NSW

*How Ya Feelin* is a conversation driven by young people to yarn up about wellness, to be positive, inclusive and supportive of each other and our community. Pride, culture, family and connection are vital in this story, and critical thinking about how we can affect positive change. With the pressures of living in two worlds are bigger than ever, The Condo Crew wants to remind us of the importance of connection to family, to country, and to our own well being.

### COWRA CREW What We Can Do – Cowra, NSW

*What We Can Do* is a nod to the leaders of the resistance - the freedom fighters of Erambie Mission and Western NSW who fought for Indigenous rights for decades. This story talks about the importance of knowing and understanding your cultural heritage, of celebrating diversity, and of working together to create an inclusive and positive popular culture. The Cowra Crew wants to remind us to remain connected to ourselves.

### THE OC Pride Within – Orange, NSW

*Pride Within* is an affirmation of resilience, strength and positivity - it’s celebration of family and cultural connection and also a commentary on the multi-layered social issues that affect Indigenous young people in Western NSW. *Pride Within* wants to remind us of the irrepressible spirituality that flows through Original Nations people, and the inherent strength and resilience that can carry us into a positive future.

### WAMBOOL WORLDWIDE Changes – Bathurst, NSW

*Changes* is a story of resilience, strength and positivity - it’s celebration of survival and also a commentary on the multi-layered social issues that affect Indigenous young people in Western NSW. Wambool Worldwide wants to remind us of the irrepressible spirituality that flows through Original Nations people, and the inherent strength and resilience that can carry us into a positive future.

### GITHABUL NEXT GENERATION

#### Looking Out For Country – Muli Muli, NSW



*Looking Out For Country* is a funky, emotive reggae ballad that touches on some very contemporary and relevant environmental issues. Staunch, double-time dub rap lyrics and a lilting chorus that sings us through the Githabul mountain ranges - *Looking After Country* contains an important message for our future generations.

## B-TOWN WARRIORS

### My Generation – Bourke, NSW



*My Generation* is a call to arms. A call to country. In a context where mental health is at crisis point for young Indigenous Australians, and the pressures of living in two worlds are bigger than ever. With support from the Elders of five nations, The B-Town Warriors are challenging ALL of us to participate in positive change. Walk the river. Connect. This song is an invitation born of warmth, respect and inclusion. The oldest culture on earth welcoming people to country with a sense of genuine calm and generosity.

## B-TOWN WARRIORS

### Rewrite Your Story – Bourke, NSW



Inspired by real experiences, this story came from a young person in the group who had found common ground with a new friend about a shared traumatic experience. The strength and affirmation this experience presented opened up a whole new perspective for her. This song is a story of hopefulness, positivity and strength. You are not alone. There is no need to feel shame. You are loved and your story is important. In a context where mental health is at crisis point for young Indigenous Australians, and the pressures of living in two worlds are bigger than ever. This is a brave and emotive production, driven by young people to inspire and support mobs to be resilient, healthy and feel supported.

## THE WILCANNIA MOB: NEXT GENERATION

### River Down – Wilcannia, NSW

It stars one of the original members of The Wilcannia Mob Lyndall King, and a group of community members including vocalist Owen Whyman Snr and Maureen King aka ‘Radio Mor’. DPM was invited to Wilcannia to facilitate a conversation about important issues facing the community around healthy choices and to create some works that would inspire and educate.

## B-TOWN WARRIORS

### Thundercloud – Bourke, NSW



This song is a story of struggle. In a context where mental health is at crisis point for young Indigenous Australians, and the pressures of living in two worlds are bigger than ever. This is a brave and emotive production, driven by young people to inspire and support mobs to be resilient, healthy and feel supported. You are not alone.

## GITHABUL NEXT GENERATION

### Breaking Habits – Muli Muli, NSW



*Breaking Habits* is a funky, roots-inspired anthem from the local Original Nations community that hopes to raise awareness and educate people about the importance of caring for country. The song also features vocalist Jennifer Williams – a local cultural leader, mentor, mother, educator and deadly Githabul woman.

## 380 CREW

### Yaegl Biirrinba – Maclean, NSW



*Yaegl Biirrinba* is a celebration of culture, community and country. In a context where mental health and suicide are at a crisis point for Indigenous young people around the nation, this song is a reminder of the strength, resilience and cultural identity of the Yaegl people. The track includes Yaggirr language sung by the Yaegl Elders. Elders welcome listeners to enjoy their story of life growing up in the Clarence Valley and pass on resilience to the younger generations.

# SHORT FILMS

## Wildfire Munwurrk – Maningrida Central Western Arnhem Land, NT

*Wildfire Munwurrk* was co-directed by and starring Victor Rostron, an incredible songman, community leader and our dear Uncle. This is his journey - the story of one man and his fight to protect his country and culture from destruction. The Djelk Rangers fuse together ancient knowledge, songline, spirituality and land management technique with science and technology to create a world-leading land management program in the Djelk Indigenous protected area.

## Anne Dennis' Yarn Living History – Walgett NSW

Anne joins the dots between the decimation of Aboriginal culture, and the alarming statistics around the impact of grief and trauma on Aboriginal people’s day-to-day lives. “Something’s got to change,” Anne says, and by this she means reintroducing cultural knowledge back into young people’s lives in a meaningful way. The relationship between mental health and cultural identity is obvious, and can only be solved by valuing and respecting cultural education.

## Eliza Packham’s Yarn Speak Up – Condobolin NSW

It’s terrifying to talk about the trauma in our lives, but that’s exactly what you have to do, in order to heal. When Eliza heard others openly talk about their problems, she realised that she too could do the same - and she has grown stronger because of that. Silence helps no one. Stand up, share your experiences with your mob, and encourage others to do the same. It’s the only way to beat mental illness.

## George Coe’s Yarn Bila Galari – Cowra NSW

Chasing the western ideal can turn out to be hollow, and lead to depression. For George Coe, that journey brought him back to his roots, by the river where he grew up. On country, George reconnected with the ancient ways that make him who he is today. Now his goal is to provide the kids of his community with direction, while placing the necessary emphasis on cultural wisdom.

## Gloria Rogers’ Yarn Two Worlds – Bathurst NSW

Life as a fair-skinned Aboriginal woman has not been easy for Aunty Gloria Rogers. Being caught between two worlds brings uncertainty, and inevitable anxiety, but Aunty Gloria has spent her life learning how to honour both. At the crux of everything is yindyamarra (respect), and it is through that knowledge that Gloria has built a life bringing the two worlds together.

## Jen Molyneux’s Yarn The Road to Trust – Lightning Ridge NSW

It takes a long time to build trust between a patient and a psychologist, and no one knows that more than clinician, Jenny Molyneux. Through her work providing mental health counselling to four remote NSW communities, Jen can see that there needs to be dedicated support staff in each town, to give that necessary time to build relationships. The Aboriginal youth suicide rate is the highest in the world and that has to change.

## Krista Kirby’s Yarn That Extra Support – Condobolin NSW

Krista Kirby is both a mum, an active member of her community. She knows that even though a problem exists, it can be difficult for people to acknowledge it. If her child was having mental health issues, Krista wouldn’t sit around and wait for help. Her advice to all of us is to have the conversation, and if it feels like the issue is bigger than you know how to deal with, seek out that help to ensure that your child gets the support they need to make it through.

## Les Coe’s Yarn (This is) Your Time – Cowra NSW

When you sit down for a yarn with Uncle Les Coe, you walk away with deepest sense of pride in who you are spiritually and culturally. There is a raw power in his words, and his way of sharing them with you. So much was taken away from the Original Nations people by Europeans, and Uncle Les knows how helpful it can be for young Aboriginal people to understand - that their ancestors fought hard to prevent this. It’s time to reconnect with those roots and grow, proud and strong, so that the real fight can begin.

## Nathan Sutherland’s Yarn The Hardest Step – Orange NSW

Going in to speak with a psychologist can seem like one of the hardest things to do, but once you take that leap, you will feel better than you’ve felt in ages. No one knows this more than provisional psychologist, Nathan Sutherland - one of only two hundred psychologists in Australia who identify as Aboriginal. Helping each other as a mob is essential, and sometimes it’s as simple as checking in with the people you care about. “Don’t let mental illness define you”, says Nathan. Take that step and reach out if you’re not feeling well.

## Nerida Lorde’s Yarn Too Many Funerals – Bathurst NSW

Sisterhood is a special bond that gives you the support and understanding to make it through the tough parts of life together. Nerida and Roxanne Lorde - sisters, have been through some trying times, but have come through it with a gentleness and emotional intelligence. In their story, we are reminded that there are too many deaths in Aboriginal communities, and of the strength it takes to honour all those left behind. Grief is painful, and at first, unrelenting, yet when you start to open up and share it with those close to you, like a sister, peace can be found. Knowing who you are and where you come from is vital in this journey.

## Payten Thorne’s Yarn The Art of Distraction – Walgett NSW

Life can be difficult in remote, rural towns, with kids looking for direction. Life can also be beautiful, with winding rivers and unparalleled nature. Payten Thorne is honest about her experiences and struggles navigating this world, and gives us insight into the way that she keeps her head above water when life becomes too overwhelming. With a pen or a camera in hand, Payten captures the magic of her town, and uses this constructive habit to channel those feelings into creation. Wise beyond her years, Payten can teach us a lot about how to stay positive and get to where you need to go.

## Sam Hill’s Yarn The Battle – Wellington NSW

Mental illness is a battle. Instead of fists and aggression, it takes sheer will and determination to keep your mind from falling into those negative cycles. Sam Hill takes us through some of the ways one can get ready for one of the most important battles in our lives. Using his might, Sam talks to us about the value of exercise, diet, discipline, communicating how you feel, and most importantly, taking a step back and relaxing. As Sam says, overcoming mental illness is “the greatest victory that any of us can achieve in our lifetime.”

## Will Hill’s Yarn Rock Bottom – Wellington NSW

Depression is one of the most debilitating illnesses around, and no one understands this more than Will Hill. Due to racism at school, and a consequent disconnect from culture, Will found himself in a suffocating “dark hole” of poor mental health. When things were at their absolute worst, Will had a choice. Thankfully, he made the right one, and what we are left with is a remarkable story of courage and strength. Will reached out to his Elders and found power in the culture that makes him who he is.



Thanks to *Triple J* for the airtime of these highlighted tracks.

# NGEMBA NGURRA

Light of the Ngemba people

Sept 2016 – Oct 2017

Bourke, NSW

\$120,000

Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation

B-Town Warriors was a collaborative partnership between Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation (VFFF), Desert Pea Media (DPM) and Bourke High School.

"Desert Pea Media is a shining example of citizen activism in the service of authentic reconciliation and community-building. Through the work of Desert Pea Media, we all come to appreciate what it means to be human in contemporary Australia."

GERARD BOLAND  
SENIOR LECTURER,  
CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

## SCOPE

B-Town Warriors comprised four separate workshops over a 12-month period. To aim was to provide opportunities for disadvantaged young people to reach their educational and social potential.

## LOCATION

Bourke High School serves a small isolated community in the far north west of NSW. Bourke township is situated on the banks of the Darling River and comprises approximately 2,000 people living in hot, isolated, dry and flat surroundings. The school's student population is approximately 150, of whom 69% identify as being Aboriginal. The school is classified a low SES school.

## BACKGROUND

Funding from VFFF enabled DPM to build on the momentum and the success of a project delivered through Bourke High School (with support from Outback Division of General Practice) in May 2016 which had engaged a group of marginalized Indigenous students and resulted in a song and music video *People of the Red Sunset* being created by the young people, who collectively called themselves The B-Town Warriors. The music video attracted huge support, was featured on The Project, had hundreds of thousands of views on DPM's YouTube channel, and was added to spot rotation on Triple J.

## AIMS

- To showcase contemporary Indigenous culture from the region and highlight community strengths
- For participants to experience – a sense of achievement and pride, a greater sense of agency and control over their lives
- A strengthened sense of local identity and place and positive perception of community
- A more positive perception of their futures
- Improvement observed in participants' attendance, participation, commitment and behaviour



Bottom | B-Town Warriors Dreams music video shoot, Bourke NSW Top | B-Town Warriors Thundercloud songwriting workshop, Bourke NSW



B-Town Warriors Thundercloud songwriting workshop, Bourke NSW



Left | B-Town Warriors My Generation music video shoot, Bourke NSW  
Right | B-Town Warriors Dreams music video shoot, Bourke NSW

# B-TOWN WARRIORS

## ARTISTIC OUTCOMES

This initiative enabled a series of collaborative songwriting projects in Bourke NSW. The first production titled *Dreams* was a conversation about leadership, role models and positive choices. The project engaged students from the initial B-Town Warriors group that featured in the song *People of the Red Sunset* (2016), but also engaged a group of 'at risk' young men from the 'Yarrapi' program and other younger Indigenous students. *Dreams* was released online and has 23,000 views on YouTube and 37,000 views on Facebook. It was premiered on Triple J's Home & Hosed and community radio around the nation.

*Thundercloud* addressed the ongoing mental health crisis for young people in Western NSW. The focus was on resilience, healthy choices, connection to community and positivity. Journalists from Channel 10's The Project came to Bourke during the process and produced a short segment about the B-Town Warriors, DPM and the local Indigenous community. The results were a stirring and inspirational piece about young people and their perspectives on positive social change, which was aired nationally on prime time TV. *Thundercloud* was also premiered on Triple J, featured on the Triple J Unearthed website and aired on community radio around the country. *Thundercloud* was released online and has 14,000 views on YouTube and 78,000 views on Facebook. *Thundercloud* won a National Indigenous Music Award (NIMA) for 'Community Clip of the Year' in 2018.

*Rewrite Your Story* is both a celebration of the contemporary culture of the community, and also the availability for support and connection to help people deal with grief and trauma. The content was inspired by real events and experiences from participants. Engagement diversified in this project to feature an all-female group including original members of B-Town Warriors, past members that had 'dropped off' in project two, engaged siblings and broader community. *Rewrite Your Story* was also played on Triple J and aired on community radio around the country. It was released online and has 6,400 views on YouTube and 14,000 views on Facebook.

The final production *My Generation* was the largest engagement to date – and the content was focused on cultural identity, connection and belonging. This song is an uplifting reggae anthem to connect young people to culture and country. The project engaged senior Wonkamurra elder, Uncle Clancy McKellar and featured a traditional Wonkamurra song as an introduction – a huge blessing and honour.

## SOCIAL OUTCOMES

Evaluation of the projects showed that the delivery of successive projects and repeated and ongoing engagements in communities exponentially increases the positive social impacts when these projects are designed in response to specific issues identified and defined by the participants themselves.

Participants:

- accrued a range of practical life skills
- showcase local practices,
- engage more in the arts,
- enhance their self-esteem, had more pride in their local culture/community and confidence and inspiration to control their own destiny, and
- increase their attendance at school



"It's an inspiring experience to witness the talent and creativity that the B-Town Warriors bring to the songwriting process. It's really exciting to see so many strong young women stepping up and representing their community. No doubt they are motivating their peers to speak up and share their own stories. I'm very grateful to have been involved in these productions and I'm stoked to see how the B-Town Warriors evolve and move forward on their musical journey."

Nicky Akehurst  
Production Coordinator  
& Stills Photographer

# MENTORSHIP

“My passion for songwriting and performing really started about the same time as my relationship with Desert Pea Media (DPM), way back in 2010 when I was a participant in a DPM song writing production at Collarenebri Central School. Over the years following, I have been involved as a participant in numerous DPM productions, which in turn has led me to perform as the front man for The Colli Crew at the 2011 ARIA Awards at the Sydney Opera House, the 2012 Yabun Festival in Sydney, the 2013 Indigenous All-Stars NRL Game in The Gold Coast, the 2013 NAIDOC Ball and various community events and festivals around the country.

Working and collaborating with DPM over the last eight years has allowed me to evolve into a more confident and successful music artist in my own right, so much so that now going under the name of MC Boomalli, I released my debut EP in 2015. The experience that I have gained with DPM as a storyteller, performer and collaborator, has allowed me to become a role model in my community and to kick-start my career in the music/arts sector, and also means that I am now more equipped for success than most young Indigenous adults my age.

I have experienced a great deal, and have been told that I speak with a voice beyond my years. My music deals with issues such as racism, substance abuse and grief, and I am privileged to inspire my peers and audiences from all cultural backgrounds.

I was chosen to represent my community in 2012, when I joined the “DPM All-Stars” – a collaborative project with UNICEF Australia - working alongside Indigenous hip hop artists Jimblah, Nooky, and Mau Power. I worked with other young people from DPM’s community projects around the country to write and record a song and a music video that created conversation around the UN Declaration of Human Rights for Indigenous peoples. I’m working with DPM’s music producer this year on my debut album. It will be released in 2019.”

Michael Graham  
MC Boomalli



*“We’ve known Michael since he was about 14 years old. We’ve been mentoring him as a songwriter and as an artist. He tells real stories of pride, resilience, inclusiveness and respect for all cultures. Mick brings hope and inspiration to his people.”*

TOBY FINLAYSON  
CEO, DESERT PEA MEDIA

MC Boomalli: EP photo shoot Opposite | The Colli Crew ARIA performance, Sydney Opera House 2011







"My work with DPM over the past 6 years has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Songwriting and production aside - being on country, learning and connecting and making meaningful friendships with Indigenous people is the reason I am committed to DPM. My friendship with Michael Graham has become more than just mentoring. It has been a beautiful thing to watch him grow as a young man, and as an artist, and I can't wait to show you all what we've been working on! "

Josh Nicholas  
Music Producer

# BREAK IT DOWN

Community conversations around mental health

October 2017 – June 2018

Orange, Bathurst, Cowra, Condobolin, Wellington and Walgett, NSW

\$480,000

Primary Health Network (Western NSW)

*Break It Down* was a collaborative partnership between Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN), Desert Pea Media (DPM), local Indigenous communities, the Aboriginal Health Services, Yarn Australia, representatives of mental and allied health agencies, as well as various education and other relevant community stakeholders across Western NSW.

"If we want to have a conscious conversation about mental health then we need to create a safe space. Yindyamarra. Be gentle. It's not a health professionals conversation, or a bureaucrats conversation, it's OUR conversation."

WARREN ROBERTS  
YARN AUSTRALIA

## SCOPE

*Break It Down* is an Aboriginal youth mental health literacy program comprised of workshops to create six of DPM's flagship songwriting and music video productions, and twelve 2 minute short films. Materials created during the workshops were used in a community campaign to articulate an innovative conversation around mental health issues, raise awareness and understanding of available services, educate and 'break down' the stigmas attached to mental health in Aboriginal communities. Warren Roberts (Dhungutti/Bundjalung), founder of Yarn Australia partnered with DPM to facilitate major community events around Western NSW - where Elders, experts, community members and young people learnt from each other's stories, in a safe and respectful space. A documentary was made about the workshops, films and roadshow.

## LOCATION

Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN) is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia established by the Australian Government to support frontline health services. It stretches across a total area of 433,379 square kilometres. The total population is estimated to be over 309,900 people, with approximately 10.5% of people in the region identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The project was run across six districts of Western NSW. Orange, Bathurst, Cowra, Condobolin, Wellington and Walgett.

## BACKGROUND

DPM's proven methodology provides a safe and positive environment for families and young people in communities to explore and discuss their concerns and challenges around mental health.

## AIMS

Using popular culture forms like hip-hop and film, to open a conversation around mental health in young people across the region.

To close the gap in health and well-being indicators between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

To build relationships and trust. To make health professionals known and approachable.

To solidify access to services for Indigenous community members;

To provide expert information. To make sure key messaging, statistics and facts about health issues and available services in the community are relevant, accurate and appropriate.

Cowra Crew What We Can Do music video shoot, Cowra NSW



"What we were looking for was a different way of approaching youth mental health for Aboriginal people. We need to try to do new things, things that are innovative."

The song, the words, the yarning, you feel as though something is happening that hasn't happened before."

ANDREW HARVEY  
CEO – WNSW, PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK

## SOCIAL OUTCOMES

The *Break It Down* project series enabled multi-arts projects in six communities in Western NSW. This innovative and unique project model featured songwriting and filmmaking projects that created a vital, and immersive conversation around mental health for Indigenous young people. Outcomes included six music videos and twelve short films, which articulate a broad and complex perspective on the many issues surrounding this problem in community. The focus was on breaking down stigmas and misconceptions around mental health, creating awareness of services and access, empowering young people and communities, and giving ownership of the conversation back to local communities.

DPM collaborated with Bundjalung/Dunghutti man Warren Roberts from a Sydney-based social enterprise Yarn Australia to deliver *Break It Down - The Road Show*. The Road Show sent the DPM crew back to each community to hold culture and conversation events, to screen the work, and to celebrate the achievements of the community. Events like this are an incredible way to engage communities, to broaden and sharpen the conversation around social change, and to honour and respect Original Nations communities in Australia. It was a very moving, and very important experience for everybody involved.

The model used for this project was a new one, offering multiple and repeat programs across a broad region; delivering sustainable, long term positive outcomes for the young people, and broader community, around mental health outcomes.

Our strengths-based approach emphasised people's ability to be agents of change in their own lives and created conditions that enabled people to identify, value and mobilise their strengths and capacities in the process of change. We maximised opportunities for change within the community and we connected the long term support needed to enable young people across the region to create their own future.

## ARTISTIC OUTCOMES

- THE MOB  
**Speak With Me** – Walgett, NSW
- 2820 CREW  
**Bring It Back** – Wellington, NSW
- THE CONDO CREW  
**How Ya Feelin'** – Condobolin, NSW
- COWRA CREW  
**What We Can Do** – Cowra, NSW
- The OC  
**Pride Within** – Orange, NSW
- WAMBOOL WORLDWIDE  
**Changes** – Bathurst, NSW
- ANNE DENNIS' YARN  
**Living History** – Walgett NSW
- ELIZA PACKHAM'S YARN  
**Speak Up** – Condobolin NSW
- GEORGE COE'S YARN  
**Bila Galari** – Cowra NSW
- GLORIA ROGERS' YARN  
**Two Worlds** – Bathurst NSW
- JEN MOLYNEUX'S YARN  
**The Road to Trust** – Lightning Ridge NSW
- KRISTA KIRBY'S YARN  
**That Extra Support** – Condobolin NSW
- LES COE'S YARN  
**(This is) Your Time** – Cowra NSW
- NATHAN SUTHERLAND'S YARN  
**The Hardest Step** – Orange NSW
- NERIDA LORDE'S YARN  
**Too Many Funerals** – Bathurst NSW
- PAYTEN THORNE'S YARN  
**The Art of Distraction** – Walgett NSW
- SAM HILL'S YARN  
**The Battle** – Wellington NSW
- WILL HILL'S YARN  
**Rock Bottom** – Wellington NSW



Top | 2820 Crew, *Bring It Back* music video shoot, Wellington NSW Bottom | Cowra Crew, *What We Can Do* music video shoot, Cowra NSW

# STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLANNING

In March, this year the Board conducted its 5th formal business planning process to review our operations and set business goals for the financial year ahead.

The planning process was to complete the second full year of the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

The planning process involved:

- Celebrating the successes from 2017 of which there were many. Including the B-Town Warriors achieving the most views on YouTube of any project DPM has conducted (175,000)
- Looking at how we can improve our creative process exploring new ideas and trying to fix known issues.
- Exploring how we can deepen the impact of DPM's work through new ways of working and co-design of our service mix
- We reviewed critical incidents including the personal strain working for DPM can have through exposure to trauma, uncertain funding, and the relentless project based nature of the work we do.
- We examined our key relationships with funding partners to ensure we continue to meet their needs whilst striving for our own 'Ultimate Model'
- Then we discussed emerging business goals to ensure that our business plans for the year ahead were current and impactful.

We also enjoyed the opportunity to get together as a Board and share in the generous hospitality of the Finlayson/Pamment family.

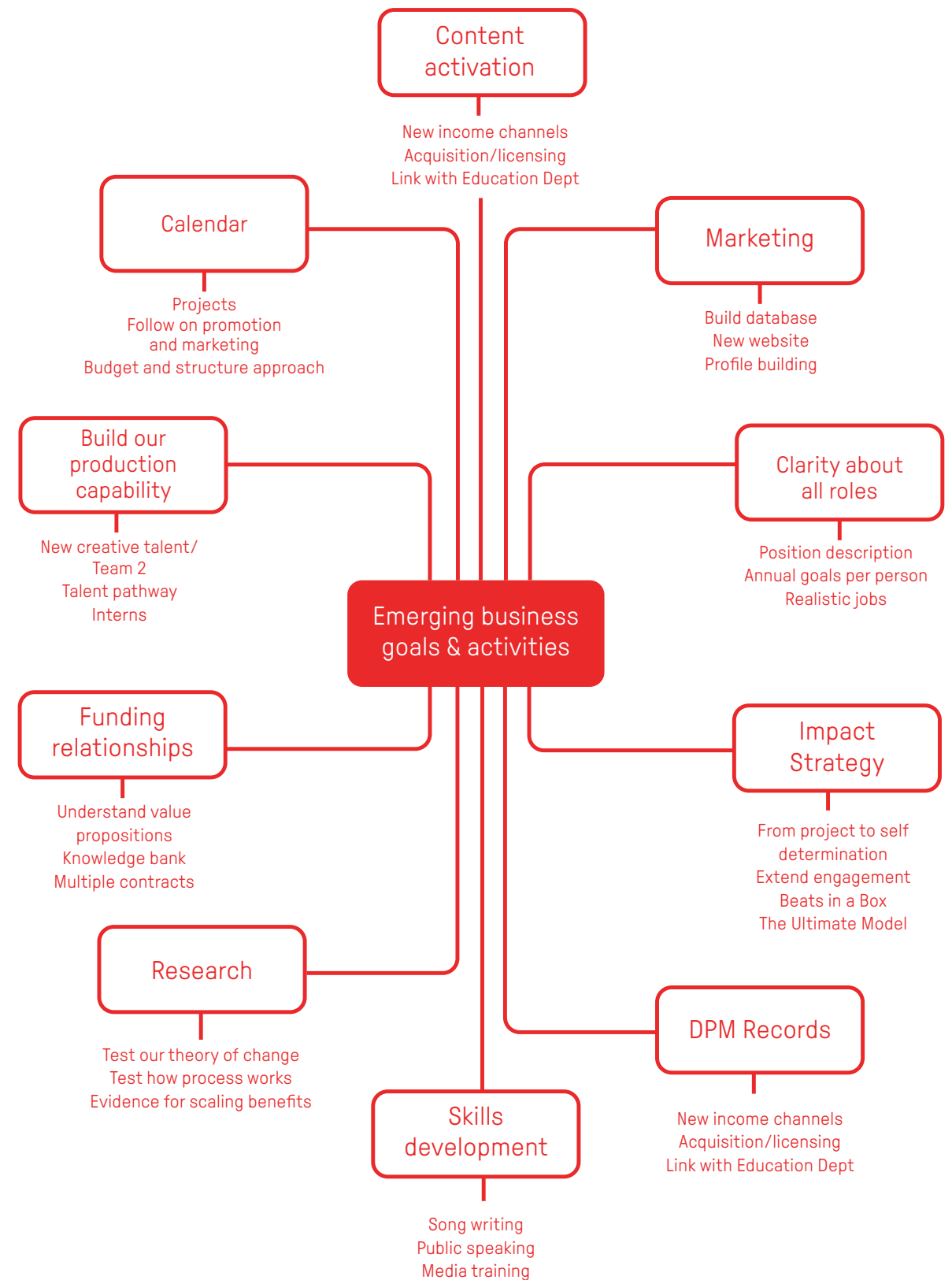
Then we updated our plan for the year.

Our plan is:

- To build on our success
- To partner with like-minded organisations
- Diversify and scale up our activities
- Improve the maturity of our business model
- Protect and respect the spiritual trust we receive

The Board remains in awe of the communities we work with and the creativity and dedication of the DPM crew.

Our mission, to create social change through collaborative storytelling, binds all of us at DPM together. What is so impressive is the mantra of positivity that emanates from the stories communities tell.



# AUDITOR'S REPORT

We have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Desert Pea Media Association Inc for the year ended 30 June 2018, comprising the statement of financial position, statement of comprehensive income and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the Declaration by the Committee Members of the Association.

During the audit we obtained all the information and explanations required to formulate our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial report of Desert Pea Media Association Inc has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW) and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

(a) giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2018 and of its performance for the year ended on that date;

(b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013; and

(c) proper accounting records and other records have been kept by Desert Pea Media Association Inc as required by the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW).

NFPAS

Adelaide, 15 October 2018

# STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	2018 (\$)	2017 (\$)
<b>Revenue and other income</b>		
Project fees	542,125	205,782
Sales	296	1,462
Grant income	106,000	68,000
Donations	2,135	17,664
Other income	-	3,109
	<b>650,556</b>	<b>296,017</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Administration & other	28,830	16,386
Accounting & assurance	3,740	585
Depreciation	6,468	1,005
Employee related costs	158,373	130,168
Marketing	11,133	15,389
Project expenses	280,254	168,678
	<b>488,798</b>	<b>332,211</b>
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>161,758</b>	<b>(36,194)</b>
Other comprehensive income	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income/(Loss) for the year</b>	<b>161,758</b>	<b>(36,194)</b>

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	For the year ended 30 June 2018	
	2018 (\$)	2017 (\$)
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash & other equivalents	260,848	129,320
Trade & other equivalents	59,159	-
<b>Total current Assets</b>	<b>320,007</b>	<b>129,320</b>
<b>Non-current Assets</b>		
Property, plant & equipment	12,496	13,445
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>332,503</b>	<b>142,765</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade & other payables	34,483	17,478
Income received in advance	98,500	77,000
Provisions	13,014	23,539
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>145,997</b>	<b>118,017</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>145,997</b>	<b>118,017</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>186,506</b>	<b>24,748</b>
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>		
Retained earnings at beginning of the Year	24,748	60,942
Net surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	161,758	(36,194)
<b>Total Accumulated Funds</b>	<b>186,506</b>	<b>24,748</b>

# STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

	For the year ended 30 June 2018	
	2018 (\$)	2017 (\$)
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Receipts from operations	612,897	404,416
Payments to suppliers and employees	(475,850)	(317,739)
<b>Net cash outflows from operating activities</b>	<b>137,047</b>	<b>86,677</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Acquisition of property, plant & equipment	(5,519)	(11,676)
<b>Net cash flows from investing activities</b>	<b>(5,519)</b>	<b>(11,676)</b>
<b>Net (decrease) increase in cash &amp; cash equivalents</b>	<b>131,528</b>	<b>75,001</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year</b>	<b>129,320</b>	<b>54,319</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>260,848</b>	<b>129,320</b>



*"We were in Condobolin for the PHN tour and we knew we had to track down the kids from the song. I was psyching everyone up to jump in the car to drive around and find them, but then suddenly, they all showed up at the caravan park where we were staying in the school minivan. They'd heard that's where we were and begged their teachers to drive them to see us because they clearly couldn't wait to catch up with the DPM team. That's the impact these workshops have. The young people see Toby and the crew like friends, family, collaborators, and so much more."*

Mitch O'Hearn  
Film maker

# TEAM DPM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Shelly Rowell** Chairperson  
**Chris Andrews** Vice Chairperson  
**Toby Finlayson** Co-Founder  
**Matthew Priestley** Co-Founder  
**Peter Maclean** Treasurer  
**Jane Bennett** Secretary  
**Ben Bardon**  
**Sue Pamment**  
**Fred Leone**

## TEAM

**Toby Finlayson** Director/Writer/DOP/Editor  
**Josh Nicholas** Music Producer  
**Rachel Rowe** Producer/Business Manager (2018)  
**Jules Lawson** Producer/Business Manager (2017)  
**Nicky Akehurst** Production Coordinator/Stills Photographer  
**Mitch O'Hearn** Filmmaker  
**Carlo Santone** Music Producer/Music Director  
**Jared Melrose** Co-Writer/Mentor/Facilitator  
**Michael Graham** Co-Writer/Mentor/Facilitator  
**Declan Furber-Gillick** Writer/Mentor/Facilitator  
**Lorenz Pritchard** Co-Writer/Facilitator  
**Warren Roberts** Facilitator  
**Fred Leone** Facilitator  
**Bee Cruze** Facilitator  
**Lusi Austin** Co-Writer  
**Kylee Ingram** Project Manager  
**Don Finlayson** Elder/Psychologist/Consultant  
**Ellen Doolan** Cultural Consultant  
**David Nicholas** Audio Mixing  
**Darren Ziesling** Audio Mastering  
**Genevieve Kaiser** Editor/Motion Graphics/Colour Grading  
**Roy Weiland** Motion Graphics/Colour Grading  
**Tony Mantz** Audio Mastering  
**Jannali Doncaster** Co-Writer/Trainee Facilitator  
**Coedie McCarthy** Trainee Facilitator

# THANK YOU

On behalf of the DPM Creative Team I would like to thank all of the Original Nations people, upon whose country we meet, share, learn and create together. We feel truly humbled and honoured to share these experiences with all the people in the communities we have reached this year.

Heartfelt gratitude goes out to the 2017/18 Board Of Directors. It is your support and wisdom that enables our Creative Team to continue our mission, and we honestly couldn't do it without you. Thank you so much!

DPM's creative work is the backbone of our organisation, so a special mention goes out to our entire creative team. Especially music producer Josh Nicholas, who's tireless commitment to DPM's core values and his genuine, authentic relationships in community are a constant asset.

We have undergone shifts and changes in the past 12 months, and much of our current stability and focus is thanks to our wonderful Business Manager, Rachel Rowe. Her hard work and vision has relieved so much pressure and continues to enable very positive and exciting opportunities for DPM.

We thank all our generous funders and community partners for supporting our work and enabling us to deliver programs to people and communities we work with.

## FUNDING PARTNERS

Environment Protection Agency, NSW  
Far West Local Health District, NSW Health  
NEWaste  
Primary Health Network, Western NSW  
The Yulgilbar Foundation  
Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

2CuzFM  
ABC Local Radio  
Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council  
Bathurst Regional Council  
Bila Muuji (Aboriginal Health Services Inc)  
Bourke Aboriginal Medical Service  
Bourke High School  
Bourke Shire Council  
Canobolas High School, Orange  
Charles Sturt University  
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)  
Condobolin Aboriginal Health Service  
Condobolin Aboriginal Land Council  
Condobolin Family Support Service  
Condobolin High School  
Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Service  
Cowra Community Mental Health  
Cowra Council  
Cowra Family Support  
Cowra Local Aboriginal Land Council  
Cowra High School  
Cowra PCYC  
Department of Education  
Dharrivaa Elders Group  
Dom Alessio – Triple J  
Dubbo Shire Council  
Headspace  
James Sheanah Catholic High School, Orange  
Juvenile Justice  
Kelso High School, Bathurst  
Lachlan Shire Council  
Maclean High School  
Maranguka, Bourke  
Marathon Health  
Mission Australia  
Muli Muli Local Aboriginal Land Council  
NSW Health  
NSW Police  
Nulla Nulla Local Aboriginal Land Council (Bourke)  
Orange Aboriginal Medical Service  
Orange City Council  
Orange High School  
Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council  
Orange PCYC  
St Joseph's High School, Condobolin  
St Mary's Catholic School, Wellington  
St Raphael's Central School, Cowra  
Triple J Unearthed  
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service  
Walgett Community College  
Walgett Local Aboriginal Land Council  
Walgett High School  
Walgett Shire Council (Development Team)  
Walgett Youth Service  
Wellington Aboriginal Community Health Service  
Wellington City Council  
Wellington High School  
Wellington Local Aboriginal Land Council  
Wellington Hospital  
Wellington Information and Neighbourhood Services (WINS)  
Wellington PCYC  
Western Plains Regional Development  
Woodenbong Central School  
Yaegl Local Aboriginal Land Council



# WE STAND TOGETHER



[desertpeamedia.com](http://desertpeamedia.com)



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