



Excellence in Indigenous Education

The National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research and Innovation (NIKERI) Institute at Deakin University provides access to university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through its distinctive Community Based Delivery (CBD) program. The CBD program was developed to offer Indigenous students from across the country the opportunity to access higher education with the flexibility to maintain family, work, and fulfil cultural obligations while studying without having to relocate from home.

Today, more than 1100 graduates have completed their studies at NIKERI Institute from all states and territories in Australia. Institute graduates have gone on to become leaders in many fields including health, education, arts, law, Indigenous research and land management.

For close to 40 years, the Institute has been committed to empowering students with opportunities that the community has identified as a core part in the education of Indigenous leaders. By leveraging the best of Indigenous and Western Knowledge systems NIKERI offers students a study experience that values their individual perspectives and experiences alongside a formal qualification.

Kokatha/Yunkunytjatjara man Chris Warrior studied an earlier iteration of NIKERI's Graduate Diploma of Land and Sea Country Management. After graduating from NIKERI, Warrior founded Wiru Drone Solutions in 2022. Wiru comes from Anangu language meaning beautiful or good.

"My Graduate Diploma of Natural and Cultural Resource Management experience has aligned me to run my drone business to better educate and also provide drone mapping programs to best capture Cultural Heritage sites using photogrammetry and LiDAR."

The business is focused on effective land management practices and working with communities to educate on the importance of mapping Country.

In 2023 Wiru Drone Solutions was awarded the Australian Association for Uncrewed Systems (AAUS) Diversity & Inclusion award which inspired Chris to seek pathways for other aspiring First Nations Drone Pilots.

The learning environment at NIKERI brings together students all with their own individual perspectives and experiences. Surrounded in class with Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander peers, students study in a space that prioritises First Nations Knowledges and cultural safety.

Chris says this was a highlight of his studies.

"The best part of the study at Deakin was the block study with other students from all over the country, where we all met and shared liveable experiences concerning First Nations issues to land management and policies."



NIKERI Institute graduate and founder of Wiru Drone Solutions, Chris Warrior

Current Bachelor of Nursing student, Akanisi Tuikaba from Adelaide agrees.

"The flexibility in being able to study in a place and environment where I feel supported is one of the best parts. Coming to NIKERI, being surrounded by other Indigenous students from all over the country who are all on their own journeys towards similar goals is very empowering and such a special place to be."

Akanisi is in her final year of study at NIKERI Institute and said a big part of her decision to study nursing was the potential to contribute to improving health outcomes for her community.

"I've always felt drawn to caring for others and felt that nursing gives me the opportunity to support individuals, families and communities in meaningful ways. After graduating, I am hoping to land a graduate program. Once I've gained some experience, I'd love to explore opportunities to work in rural and remote communities across Australia, delivering safe and appropriate healthcare where it's needed most."

Whitney Seden from Darwin is also pursuing a nursing degree.

"I have a passion in working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare and see the requirement for more culturally appropriate staff needed in the profession. I've always had a passion to care and provide support to my community, so nursing was the perfect opportunity to pursue this career."

NIKERI has a proud history of empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from across Australia to pursue careers in health, education, arts, law, research and environment management.

Whitney said that without the support and unique study approach, she doubts university would have been an option for her.

"The best thing about studying at NIKERI is the focused support you are provided as soon as you are accepted into the program. It is flexible enough for you to continue your work and personal requirements at home whilst also studying. I don't think I would have been to complete my study effectively if it wasn't for Community Based Delivery and the support provided by the teaching and NIKERI staff."



Learn today. Lead tomorrow.

Experience a university degree with the flexibility to maintain your work, family and cultural commitments.

Study education, arts, law, nursing, social work, land and sea country management, public health or Indigenous research through our Community Based Delivery.

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