



# iGetIT! Project 2010

## WV Internal Evaluation Report

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Get IT in YAI   
**iGet IT!**



workventures

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## Executive Summary

iGetIT! is a WorkVentures initiative specifically designed for Indigenous young people and open to other „at-risk“ youth. The project aims at improving their computer skills, motivating them to make positive educational and employment choices and providing them with a much needed confidence boost.

The participants of the program generally lack the support, self-reliance and opportunities to reach their full potential. Through this initiative, WorkVentures aims to offer these young people a stepping stone to further education and employment in order to help them create positive futures.

The program is a culmination of three specially designed computer training pilots delivered to youth in Indigenous communities in NSW and QLD in 2007-08. The success and positive outcomes achieved by the participants in these training courses, including the discontinuation of drug and alcohol abuse among participants and improved attitude to study and employment, were key drivers for the need and effectiveness of a program like iGetIT!

The program has been enhanced significantly since then. As of September 2010, the course has been offering participants with VETAB accredited outcomes in the form of a Statement of Attainment for two units of the Certificate II in IT. Through this accreditation WorkVentures is able to provide course participants with a tangible credential that they can use towards their journey to employment.

The participating youth value the hands-on sessions provided by iGetIT! that offer them an engaging learning experience and allow the development not only of their technical computer skills but also their soft skills which are vital for their persistence in reaching their academic and career objectives.

In 2010, 156 people took part in the project with an 88% completion rate. This evaluation report demonstrates the success of the program in boosting the confidence of these participants and giving them a more positive outlook on work and study.



*iGetIT! Participants receiving their Certificates of Attendance at Centacare Office in Narromine, NSW*

## 1. Background

### 1.1 A successful partnership

AMP Foundation and WorkVentures have been working together since 2002, when the Foundation provided start-up capital for Social Ventures Australia (SVA), together with the Benevolent Society, WorkVentures and The Smith Family.

In 2007 AMP Foundation provided funding to investigate the impact of technology on Indigenous young people's employability and education engagement.

Since 2009, AMP Foundation supported WorkVentures' initiatives to support Indigenous youth in improving school attendance and staying in education, and in increasing their employability.

In an area where there are no easy solutions, AMP Foundation's commitment to our objectives for these programs provides us with invaluable support for two quite different approaches to working with Indigenous youth.

### 1.2 About the Project

#### 1.2.1 Project Overview

iGetIT! is a computer training program specifically targeted to Indigenous young people and open to other disadvantaged youth.

The training is provided by WorkVentures in partnership with organisations that are already working with Indigenous young people and have identified a group who are interested in gaining basic computer assembly and fault finding skills.

The course is designed to engage Indigenous young people and other disadvantaged youth in learning new skills, support other activities offered by the partnering organisation and to build confidence and motivation to apply new skills to gain employment or enrol in further training. Everyone who completes the course will take away the computer the individual

personally re-built from components supplied by WorkVentures.

#### 1.2.2 Project History

In 2007 and 2008 WorkVentures delivered 3 computer training programs targeted to Indigenous youth in Redfern (metropolitan NSW), Bowraville (regional NSW) and Hope Vale (remote QLD) in basic computer skills and maintenance. The three locations were specifically chosen to provide a comparative outlook on the different types of communities.

The program targeted highly disadvantaged and „at risk“ Indigenous youth who were school drop-outs and had issues with substance and alcohol abuse and trouble with the law. The hands-on training was specifically designed for the target group and was sensitive to the issues experienced by the youth. While, technical in nature, the training was taught in a practical way that accommodated the low level of literacy and short attention span of the participants.

The training was conducted by a senior executive from WorkVentures who is the head of the electronic and communication repair centre and has experience working with the targeted group. The aim of the training was twofold: while the training aimed to equip the youth with basic computer skills, it had a further aim of raising the confidence and self-esteem of the youth by assisting them in recognizing their own capabilities and potential.

The training was successful and provided some of the youth with positive outcomes that included employment and IT traineeships.

Two participants were also reported to have stopped their drug use. Elders in the communities further commented on the increased motivation and engagement of the youth who took part in the training.

As a result of the positive outcomes achieved by the youth, WorkVentures decided to continue the training to benefit and re-engage more Indigenous youth in Australia.



*iGetIT! Participants practicing camera skills and collecting videos and pictures for their movie project, Katherine NT*

Since 2009, AMP has been supporting WorkVentures in reaching more youth by funding the iGetIT! computer training program.

In 2009, WorkVentures delivered 16 courses with 6 different organizations and reached 71 Indigenous young people. The course had a 93% completion rate, and its success was further demonstrated in the positive outcomes achieved by the youth. Participants reported a rise in confidence and some went on to further training and employment.

On the basis of these results, the AMP Foundation granted additional funding for further expansion of the program in 2010.

### **1.2.3 Training Outline**

Targeted to Indigenous young people, the iGetIT! program is structured over 2 weeks. At the end of each week the participants undertake a practical test to assess their new skills.

While technical in nature, the course is hands-on and all assessments are practical tasks that require very little or no written material.

During the first week of the program, participants are taught about the basics of computer hardware and maintenance and shown how to install an operating system and drivers. Participants are stepped through the installation of Windows, Office and drivers before they are taught the different hardware components and are trained in pulling apart and putting together a computer.

The second week of the program includes training on the installation and use of software applications and deals with learning the skills needed to complete the second assessment of the training. In order to successfully complete the training, participants are required to create their own movie using digital cameras and working on Windows Media Player. The skills required to make a movie are vast and include creating and saving files, converting files to appropriate formats, uploading images and videos and using software applications.

Participants who regularly attend the course and demonstrate to have successfully acquired all the new skills are awarded a Certificate of Attendance and can keep the computer they have been working with during the project.

#### 1.2.4 Accredited Outcomes

As agreed in the 2010 Funding Agreement with AMP Foundation, WorkVentures investigated and implemented the delivery of accredited outcomes.

After a thorough review of the training outline and documentation, the iGetIT! team identified two units from the Certificate I and II in Information Technology that could have been easily included in the workshop, and developed a hands-on, practical assessment methodology that combines a variety of methods to prove comprehension and retention while still meeting the participants' needs, without making the participants feel they are being subjected to a test but still be able to document the assessment and meet VETAB's criteria.

Once the documentation and accreditation process was finalised, the iGetIT! team sourced accredited trainers with the required qualifications for the delivery of accredited outcomes, and developed a new updated version of the Trainers' Manual to support the future contractors in the delivery of both accredited and non-accredited outcomes.

Leveraging on WorkVentures' RTO, since September 2010 the iGetIT! team was able to deliver the following units from the Certificate I and II in Information Technology:

- ICAU1128A *Operate a Personal Computer*
- ICAU2005A *Operate Computer Hardware*

The participants who do not meet the requirements but complete the course do not walk away empty handed as they still get a certificate of completion (not accredited) and a computer.



*iGetIT! participant rebuilding her computer during the Yarnteen course, Newcastle NSW*

## 2. Evaluation

### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to assess the performance of the iGetIT! Program in 2010 and will measure its actual and perceived impact on program participants and partner organisations.

This evaluation was carried out in regards to:

- Key Performance Indicators
- Impact evaluation – impact of the project on Indigenous young people and partner organisations who participated in it.

In light of the participants and partners' experiences, this evaluation report will make recommendations for program improvement to foster greater learning and stronger partnerships.

### 2.2 Methodology

This evaluation has utilized quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to best extract the impact the training has on participants and measure the overall success of the courses in 2010.

The following methods have been employed by WorkVentures in evaluating the delivery of iGetIT! in 2010:

- Attendance Record analysis
- Pre and Post Training Surveys analysis
- Organisations' Questionnaires
- In-depth Participants' Interviews
- In-depth Partners' Interviews
- Trainers' Feedback

This evaluation methodology was designed to fit the needs of our specific client group, and to be appropriate for both project participants and partnering organisations. The consultation process was carried out allowing the flexibility necessary to the various stakeholders, and phone interviews were arranged when face-to-face interaction was not a feasible option.

#### 2.2.1 Attendance Record

The Trainers are expected to keep records of the participants for each course delivered.

These documents record the following information:

- Details of participants enrolled at the beginning of each course (i.e. name, surname, age)
- Collection of relevant documentation (i.e. enrollment forms, media release forms, surveys)
- Project attendance of each participant
- Any drop-outs
- Project completion rate
- Project accreditation rate

#### 2.2.2 Pre and Post Training Surveys

Participants' satisfaction and perceived progress has been monitored regularly through the analysis of pre and post training surveys, which were distributed to the participants before and after each workshop.

These surveys provide WorkVentures with information about the program participants, including:

- Participants' demographics (i.e. age, location, current education and employment status)
- Main barriers to study and employment
- IT and computer access
- Development of IT skills during the training workshop
- Participants' satisfaction
- Expectations in terms of future employment and further studies

Over 70% of the participants provided their feedback through the pre and post training surveys.

### 2.2.3 Organisations' Questionnaire

As part of WorkVentures agreement with the delivery partners, these organisations were asked to assist us in the evaluation process by completing a questionnaire about the workshop.

The questionnaires were designed to provide the following information:

- Participants' progress after the completion of the course
- Number of computers still functioning
- Perceived and actual impact on the participants
- Perceived and actual benefits of the partnership
- Possible improvements

### 2.2.4 In-depth Participants Interviews

WorkVentures endeavored to conduct in-depth face-to-face and phone interviews with the project participants, where the participants were willing to participate.

These interviews were carried out 3 to 6 months after the completion of the program, to allow the assessment of mid-term results.

WorkVentures aimed to collect two interviews per each course delivered, monitoring a sample of about 20% of the program participants.



*iGetIT! participants enjoying the training in Brewarrina NSW*

Unfortunately the team was not always able to get in touch with participants from every single course, especially when residing in remote communities.

The table below shows the distribution of the participants who took part in the consultation process:

Organisation	No of Interviews
Redfern Aboriginal Children's Services (NSW)	3
Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council (NSW)	2
Yarnteen (NSW)	2
Centacare – Narromine (NSW)	2
Centacare – Lake Cargelligo (NSW)	3
St Joseph College – Katherine (NT)	1
Centrelink – Maroubra (NSW)	2
Centrelink – Lakemba (NSW)	2
PCYC Woolloomooloo (NSW)	2
Marin Weejali – Mt Druitt (NSW)	2
Miyay Birray Youth Services Moree (NSW)	2
Centacare – Bourke (NSW)	0
IS Australia (NT)	0
Centrelink – Shellharbour (NSW)	2
Redfern Community Centre (NSW)	2
Centacare – Broken Hill (NSW)	2
Alexandria Park Community School (NSW)	1
<b>Total Interviews</b>	<b>30</b>

The sample represents about 20% of the participants who successfully completed the training program.

The interviews were arranged directly with the participants by the WorkVentures staff, and ran for approximately 10-15 minutes. They reveal what participants thought of the delivery of the training, the benefits of taking part in the

program and suggestions about how the training could be improved.

The interviews are a useful means of assessing the success of the training in terms of its direct and indirect influence on participants and shed light on the different outcomes gained by participants as a result of taking part in iGetIT!

### 2.2.5 In-Depth Organisations Interviews

In-depth interviews were also conducted with representatives of our partnering organisations 3 to 6 months after the conclusion of each course.

The interviews measure the satisfaction of organisations with the iGetIT! training and provide us with useful information about our partnership. The interviews aim to reveal the general feedback that organisations receive in relation to iGetIT! as well as measure the outcomes for each organisation.

Face-to-face or phone interviews were arranged to fit the needs of our partners. Out of 17 different delivery partners, 14 took part in the in-depth interviews. WorkVentures staff was not able to arrange interviews with the following 3 organisations:

- Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Centacare - Bourke

- Alexandria Park Community School

This was mainly due to lack of availability and cooperation from the representatives of the organisation.

### 2.2.6 Trainers' Feedback

WorkVentures" has always collected and valued the feedback provided by the iGetIT! Trainers through regular contacts with the management staff based in Sydney.

While this process was treated as an informal procedure in 2009 and the first half of 2010, since July 2010 WorkVentures implemented a systematic and formal report structure. The Trainers are expected to provide a short daily update of the course, either via email or telephone, and a final project report.

Through this process WorkVentures is able to provide the best support for the Trainers working remotely, identifying any risk or obstacle for the training and endeavoring to solve it.

The Trainers" feedback also provides relevant information about the individual participants and a crucial insight in the day by day reality of the project and of the communities where WorkVentures operates. This understanding is essential for the continuous improvement of the program.



*The women of the Minyerri Aboriginal community in remote NT working on their computers*

### 3. Findings

As outlined in the funding agreement between WorkVentures and AMP foundation, the main goal of the iGetIT! program is to increase Indigenous young people's employability and provide them with the confidence of making positive decisions about their educational and employment options.

The two-week course aims to build both those technical and soft skills necessary for the participants to think again about their prospects and make positive steps to gain employment or continue their education.

In the following sections we will assess the success of the iGetIT! project against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed with AMP Foundation in the funding proposal, and its impact in terms of actual and perceived benefits on the program participants.

To measure and assess the performance of the program and its outcomes, WorkVentures analysed the data and information collected through:

- Attendance Records
- Pre and Post Training Surveys
- Organisations' Questionnaire
- In-depth Interviews with iGetIT! participants
- In-depth Interviews with partners' representatives
- Trainer's Feedback

#### 3.1 Participants' Profile

Due to its specific target group, the typical iGetIT! participant has experienced at least two or more of the following:

- Geographical and social remoteness
- Low SES (Socio Economic Status)
- Low levels of literacy and numeracy
- Low levels of self-esteem, self-motivation and sense of responsibility
- Drug and alcohol abuse/addiction
- Domestic violence and/or family disruption

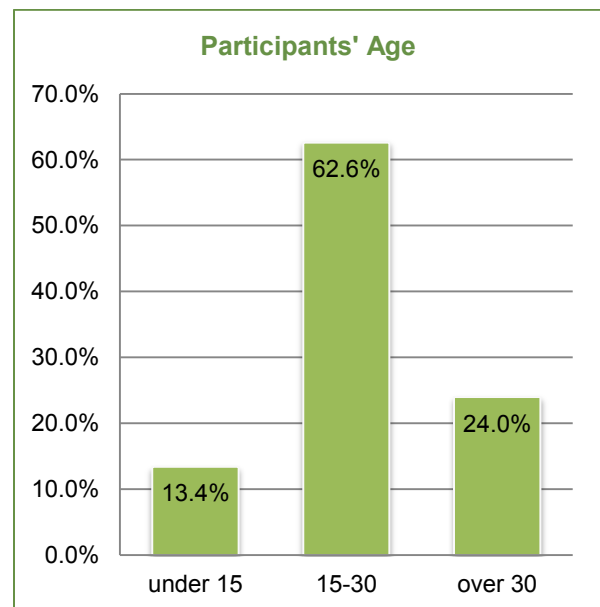
The data collected through the Pre and Post training surveys, the interviews with our delivery partners, and the Trainers' feedback validate the accuracy of the typical profile and provide additional information regarding the participants.

#### 3.1.1 Background, Age and Geographical Location

In 2010 WorkVentures registered 156 individuals enrolling in the iGetIT! program.

93% of the project participants identified themselves as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The remaining 7% included non-Indigenous individuals coming from low socio-economic status (SES) background.

Over 70% of the individuals who enrolled in the iGetIT! program were aged under 30.



66% of the students who participated in the survey reside in regional or remote areas in New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

In particular we had 2 courses delivered in the Aboriginal community of Miniyerri with 19 Indigenous individuals enrolling in the projects.

Other 8 projects were delivered in partnership with Indigenous organisations operating in regional areas in New South Wales.

### 3.1.2 Education and Employment

Only 34.5% of the participants surveyed were studying at the time of enrolment in the iGetIT! program. Only 9% finished Year 12, and about a third of the participants dropped out of school before completing Year 10.

The participants identified the necessity of looking after their family as their main barrier to studying, followed by absence of support and remote location. Lack of confidence and reluctance to study were also considered obstacles towards education. Less than 3% of the participants surveyed stated that they had not encountered any barrier in their educational pathway.

79% of the participants who stated they were not studying, declared that they were unemployed. About 15% of the enrolled participants had either part-time or casual jobs and only 5.3% had full time employment.

Lack of opportunities, unwillingness to work and looking after family were recognised as the main barriers toward employment.



*Taisha is formatting her computer in Moree NSW*

### 3.1.3 Access to Technology

13% of the participants identified the lack of computer skills as one of their main barriers to gaining employment.

Over half of the individuals who enrolled in iGetIT! did not have a computer at home, and only 11% had their own. Nearly 60% had no internet access.

As reported by our Trainers, around 10% of the participants had never used a computer before enrolling in the project. This occurred with groups residing in regional/remote areas and with older participants.

### 3.1.4 Family and Personal Issues

As reported by our Trainers and staff, and confirmed by our delivery partners, a consistent portion of the program participants were dealing with a number of personal issues. Many of the participants under 18 were not cared for by their parents, but in custody of other family members, their parents often living in other regions/states. Some experienced domestic violence.

Some of the participants had experienced or were still experiencing drug and alcohol abuse and dependence. On a few occasions our Trainers reported some of these participants arriving to the training under the effect of either drugs or alcohol. Our Trainers made every effort to retain these individuals; however in some cases their behaviour was so disruptive that, after consultation with our delivery partners and the rest of the students, our Trainers had to remove a particular individual from the course.

## 3.2 Performance Against KPIs

The 2009 funding proposal identifies the following KPIs for the initiative:

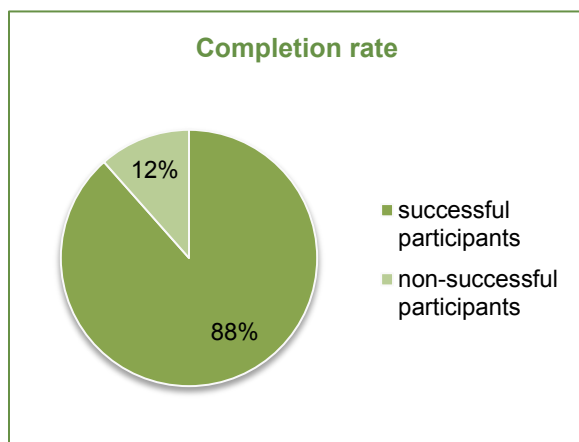
- Total number of projects delivered
- Total number of delivery partners
- Average number of participants per project
- Total number of participants enrolled in the program
- Completion rate
- Participants' satisfaction rate
- Partners' satisfaction rate
- Delivery of accredited outcomes

In terms of performance against the KPI, the program implementation in 2010 was excellent,

and WorkVentures exceeded all the agreed targets and objectives, as shown in the table below.

KPIs	2010	
	Target	Actual
<b>No. of projects delivered</b>	16	18
<b>No. of partners</b>	10	17
<b>Av. No. of participants per project</b>	8	8.6
<b>Total No. of participants</b>	128	156
<b>Completion rate</b>	75%	88%
<b>Participants' satisfaction rate</b>	75%	98%
<b>Partners' satisfaction rate</b>	75%	100%
<b>Delivery of accredited outcomes</b>	End of 2010	September 2010

The completion rate represents the proportion of participants who regularly attended the course and successfully passed the two weekly practical tests (identified in the graph below as *successful participants*). In 2010, 156 individuals enrolled in an iGetIT! course and 138 successfully completed the training and were awarded a computer.



For what concerns the quality of the PCs provided through WorkVentures' computer repair centre (SIRC), after 3 to 9 months all computers are still functioning except for two, one of which has been replaced.

### 3.2.1 Delivery of Accredited Outcomes

As per our agreement with AMP Foundation, in 2010 WorkVentures worked towards the accreditation of the program outcomes.

After a thorough revision of the course documentation, the iGetIT! staff created an updated version of the Trainers' Manual covering the VETAB technical content and requirements, and developed a hands-on practical methodology which combines VETAB requirements and participants' needs.

Since September 2010 WorkVentures was able to offer the iGetIT! participants the opportunity to undertake a VETAB assessment and obtain a Statement of Attainment for one or both of the following units from the Certificate II in Information Technology (depending on their skills level):

- Operate a PC
- Operate Computer Hardware

This new way of delivering the program was monitored by introducing a new KPI, the accreditation rate.

The accreditation rate represents the proportion of participants who pass at least one VETAB test, out of the total number of successful participants.

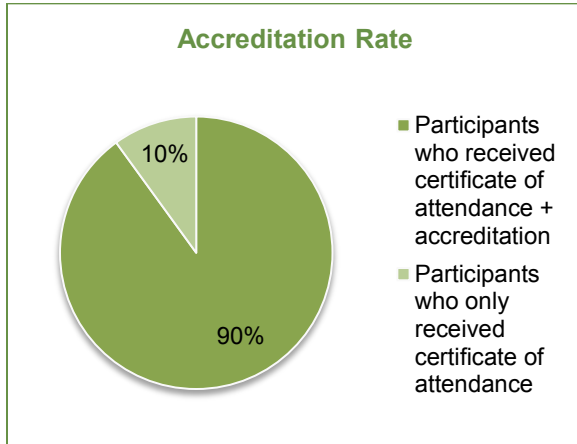
The accreditation rate is different from the completion rate, as not all participants who regularly attend the course and successfully pass the iGetIT! assessments will also actually succeed in the VETAB tests.

This KPI was introduced at the completion of the accreditation process, after the delivery of the first accredited course.

Since then WorkVentures ran six courses delivering accredited outcomes, achieving an accreditation rate of just over 90%. This result

was particularly brilliant, especially considering that it was achieved during the piloting phase, and that some of the courses were very challenging in terms of logistics and participants (i.e. two of these courses ran in Aboriginal Communities).

The graph below provides a visual snapshot of the performance of the program in 2010 in terms of accredited outcomes.



The table at the following page provides a detailed overview of the results of these six courses and of the calculation of the indexes.



*Fault finding exercise during the iGetIT! course in Redfern NSW*

Project	Enrolled participants	Successful Participants	Accredited Participants	Completion Rate	Accreditation Rate
IS Australia Miniyerri	10	10	10	100%	100%
IS Australia Miniyerri	9	7	6	78%	85%
Redfern Community Centre	11	7	7	64%	100%
Centrelink - Illawarra	5	5	5	100%	100%
Centacare - Broken Hill	8	7	6	88%	85%
Alexandria Park Community School	5	5	3	100%	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>90%</b>

**Completion rate = No. of Successful Participants / No. of Enrolled Participants**

**Accreditation rate = No. of Accredited Participants / No. of Successful Participants**

### 3.3 Impact Evaluation

The iGetIT! team utilised a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and measures to assess the impact of the initiative on its participants, collecting in-depth interviews with a sample of the participants and with our partners, analysing the surveys and integrating this with the Trainers' feedback.

As outlined in the program proposal, and in line with WorkVentures organisational goals and mission, the initiative aims to positively impact Indigenous young people's employability, and provide them with both technical and soft skills necessary to make their first steps into the workplace or enroll in further training.

#### 3.3.1 Educational and Employment Outcomes

Through the iGetIT! program, WorkVentures endeavors to support the participants in developing confidence and self-esteem to apply the skills learnt during the training to continue their education, enroll in further/higher training or education, apply for jobs or gaining employment.

While every effort was made by WorkVentures to build a lasting relationship with our partner organisation and regular contact was attempted to monitor the progress of the participants after the project, unfortunately in some cases we were not able to collect data on the actual employment and educational outcomes.

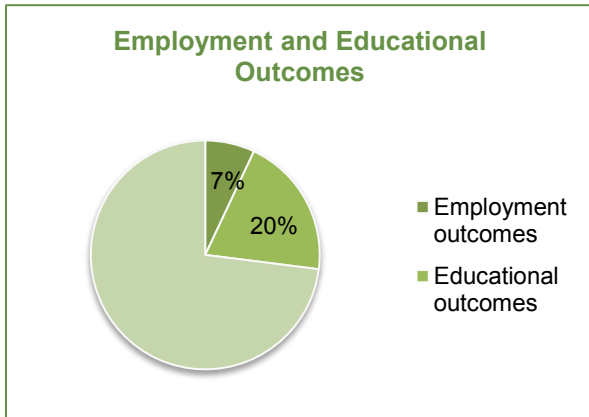
In some cases the iGetIT! team simply was not able to establish any contact after the completion of the project (i.e. delivery partners and/or participants not replying to email or answering/returning phone calls).

In other instances, while a relationship was established with the organisation, unfortunately our partner representatives were not able to provide us with the information requested. This was mainly due to changes in the organisational management and staff turn-over or to losing track of the participants after the completion of the training course.

WorkVentures was able to track the progress of some of the participants of 14 courses out of a total of 19, as shown in the following table.

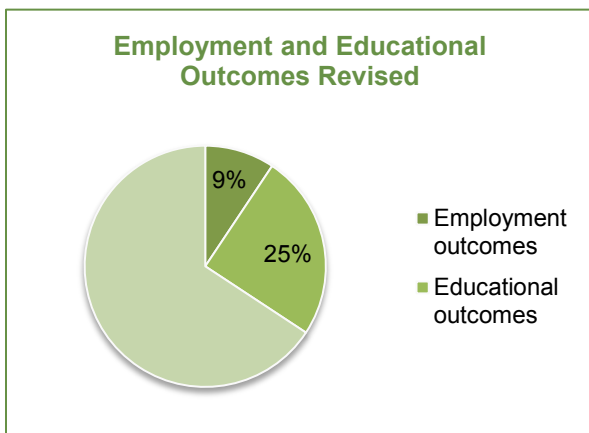
Organisation	Outcomes
Redfern Aboriginal Children's Services (NSW)	NA – partners didn't have this information
Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council (NSW)	NA – not able to contact partner
Yarnteen (NSW)	1 into work experience 2 enrolled in further education
Centacare – Narromine (NSW)	6 further education
Centacare – Lake Cargelligo (NSW)	NA – partners didn't have this information
St Joseph College – Katherine (NT)	10 successful participants all stayed in schools
Centrelink – Maroubra (NSW)	1 enrolled in further education
Centrelink – Lakemba (NSW)	4 found employment 2 further education
PCYC Woolloomooloo (NSW)	1 into further studies
Marin Weejali – Mt Druitt (NSW)	1 found part-time employment
Miyay Birray Youth Services Moree (NSW)	1 enrolled in further education 1 re-enrolled in Y10 3 moved from disruptive kids special courses back into mainstream
Centacare – Bourke (NSW)	NA – not able to contact partner
IS Australia (NT) (2 projects)	No jobs in the community and no education opportunities 3 participants continuing previous courses
Centrelink – Shellharbour (NSW)	1 found employment 3 into further education
Redfern Community Centre (NSW)	3 in to further education
Centacare – Broken Hill (NSW)	NA – not able to contact partner
Alexandria Park Community School (NSW)	5 high school participants all remained in school

Out of the 96 participants of these 14 projects, nearly 7% found employment and 20% enrolled in further training, as shown in the graph below.



However if we consider only the 11 projects where employment and educational outcomes were actually possible and remove the projects in remote communities, the proportion of participants who landed in a job or enrolled in further training raises consistently: 9% achieved employment outcomes and 25% resulted in educational outcomes.

Please refer to the graph below for a snapshot of the results.



All the participants who were enrolled in school or other training were reported to be continuing the education pathway started before the project.

*...I did quite well in the course and I got a lot out of it. I didn't have much luck with study before that course. I have taken on further study since then and have achieved more than I ever would because of the course!*

**Laurence, 22 – Attended iGetIT! in Woolloomooloo, NSW**

If we compare these results with the performance of the program in the previous year, there has been a considerable increase in the proportion of participants who found employment, which went from 4% in 2009 to 7% or 9% (as documented above) in 2010.

When analysing employment and educational results it is important to keep in mind how employment and educational outcomes are strongly linked to where the participants reside and to their family situation.

For example, the 2 training courses delivered in the remote Aboriginal community of Miniyerri did not result in any of the participants gaining formal employment or enrolling in further education, due to the lack of job opportunities and to the absence of educational institutions in the area (i.e. the closest TAFE is in Katherine, about 4 hours' drive from the community on a



*iGetIT! participants from community of Minyerri in remote NT celebrating their achievements*

partly unsealed road). However our partners reported that one of the participants is now using her PC and the computer skills learnt during the project to record the history of the community.

Another one is trying to gain self-employment in a home based-business thanks to the access to the computer and the ability to effectively use it.

For what concerns the family situation, WorkVentures ran a few courses for young Indigenous mothers groups.

These women were either pregnant or with young kids and were not looking at going into



the workforce in the short term.

*iGetIT! participant installing the DVD burner during the Moree course in NSW*

However thanks to the computer and to the skills learnt they can better assist their kids in doing their homework and assignments and are better equipped to effectively look for support services.

Our delivery partners have reported that some of these young mothers were inspired by the program and were thinking about enrolling in further education once their kids start school or are old enough.

As one of our delivery partners stated, employment cannot always be the direct outcomes of this project in remote communities, but moving people forward and getting them to help and show others what they can do with technology in job search and further study is invaluable.

This will be analysed in the following section of this Evaluation Report, where we will assess the impact of the project in terms of increased employability and development of motivation and self-esteem and confidence.

### 3.3.2 Employability Outcomes

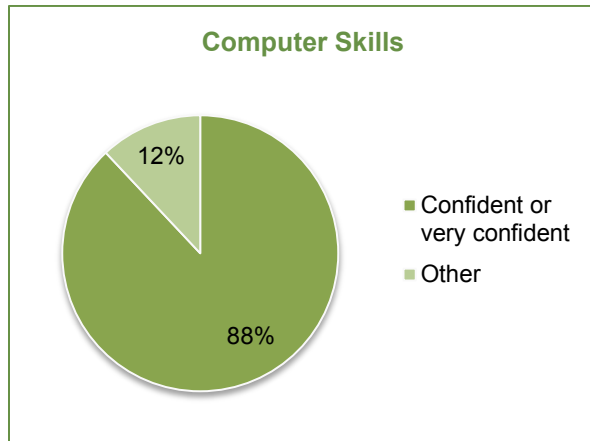
In this Evaluation Report we measure the impact on employability by monitoring the following variables:

- Perceived and actual development of technical skills (specifically IT skills)
- Perceived and actual development of soft and life skills (i.e. self-esteem, self-confidence, sense of responsibility, leadership skills)
- Motivation to apply for jobs and further study

In terms of development of technical skills, before enrolling in the course nearly 51% of the participants surveyed rated their computer skills as “good” or “very good” and, about 58% of the participants surveyed stated that they felt “confident” or “very confident” about using computers.

After participating in the project, the portion of participants who rated their computer skills as “good” or “very good” raised to over 85% of the iGetIT! participants, and about 88% stated that

they felt “confident” or “very confident” about using computers.



This represents a considerable improvement in the project performance compared to the 2009 results, where the percentage of participants rating their IT skills as “good” or “very good” after the project was about 82%.

While the delivery of national accreditation introduced a standard way to assess the actual IT skills development, the achievement of accredited outcomes cannot always be considered an accurate indicator of the performance of the iGetIT! students.

For those participants who have never used a computer before, who have alcohol/drug related issues or who have actual learning barriers, VETAB accreditation cannot always be achieved, but this does not mean that the participants have not acquired technical skills.

Some of these individuals went from not even knowing how to switch a PC on, to being able to create and save files, navigating through directories and re-building a computer.

The consultation process with the different stakeholders revealed that the majority of the participants were applying the technical skills

*...I left school in year 8 so I had no idea about computers, but now I feel like I know everything and can work things out on my own...*

**Bobbie-Jo, 29 – Attended iGetIT! in Narromine, NSW**

learnt during the project and that they greatly appreciate and use the computers at home.

Particularly in regional and remote areas, being able to access a computer at home was reported to be extremely beneficial by both participants and representatives of the partnering organisations.

Some of the ways these individuals were using the newly acquired skills and their PCs include:

- Studying at home
- Carrying out homework
- Doing research for school and TAFE assignments
- Making more movies and video presentations
- Looking for jobs
- Supporting their own business
- Applying the IT skills to current or further education
- Applying the IT skills to current or further employment
- Staying in touch with friends and family

Kathleen, who attended the iGetIT! program in NSW, shared with us her experience:

*I wasn't really good at computers before I did the course. In year 10 I did really bad on a computer exam at school. After I did the course, I did the exam again and the things I learnt at the course really helped me!*

Some other participants reported having bought printers to print out assignments and other training/educational materials.

One of the participants is using the computer and the skills learnt to record and document the history of the Aboriginal community where she lives and another one is writing a book.

One of the participants, who took part in the in-depth interviews, stated that he was able to fix his dad's computer which was sitting broken at home thanks to the skills learnt during the course.



*Classroom interaction in Narromine NSW*

Both the participants and the representatives of the partnering organisations believe that the skills learnt during the course are absolutely crucial for gaining employment, and that the participants who successfully completed the course are better equipped to succeed in their job search.

For what concerns accredited outcomes, all stakeholders agree on the value of a nationally recognised certificate to support the participants' individual pathway towards employment.

The project evaluation process has also shown the impact of the initiative on improving the participants' confidence, self-esteem and motivation to achieve something in their lives.

Over 93% of the participants who took part in the post-training survey acknowledged that the course was a great confidence boost and that improved their motivation. About 94% of the participants confirmed a change in their attitude towards education and employment, and stated

that the project helped them to think more positively about studying and working.

Nearly 70% stated that they would consider enrolling in further education or training, and 65% that they would consider applying for jobs.

All representatives of the partnering organisations, who participated in the in-depth interviews, reported an increased self-confidence in the participants' attitude towards learning.

They were surprised to see how the participants engaged during the course, and the level of focus and concentration they demonstrated.

*...Josh was considering going to uni but he was unsure and didn't know what he wanted to do. The course surprised him about what he could learn and now he is enrolled!*

**Wayne Star – Centrelink Shellharbour, NSW**

The sense of accomplishment that accompanied the participants during the performance of the different tasks and throughout the whole project was noted by the majority of the stakeholders. This was particularly important especially for those with a history of educational failures. A student in particular reported that the best thing of the whole project was actually completing the course: it was the first time in a very long time that he completed something he started.

Some of the participants who dropped out of school were thought to be unable to cope with a traditional class-room environment, but they showed a very different behaviour in iGetIT! and were able to perform and excel in practicing a number of difficult skills and tasks.

*No one could keep him at school; he wouldn't listen to anyone or do any work. During iGetIT! he was the first one in and the last one out of the classes, he did everything the trainers told him to do. Now, Christ he never gets off the computer. It's in a treasured corner at home.*

**Ralph Smith – Centacare Lake Cargelligo, NSW**

After completing the course many participants reported how they are showing other people in their communities how to use computers and some of them expressed their interest in formally training other Indigenous young people how to use computers.

*...I want to teach the kids at the internet café the skills that I learnt at the course so that they too can learn about computers...*

**Denise, 21 – Attended iGetIT! in Brewarrina, NSW**

This shows how much the participants valued the technical skills learnt during the course, but also the development of leadership skills and a new sense of responsibility towards themselves and towards others.

*Participants connecting during the iGetIT! training in Katherine NT*



## 4. Conclusion

### 4.1 Performance Against KPIs

WorkVentures and the iGetIT! program performed well against the agreed KPIs in 2010, meeting and in most cases exceeding its targets.

The VETAB accreditation process was completed around July 2010, and WorkVentures was able to deliver accredited outcomes as of September 2010.

Particularly remarkable was the accreditation rate that reached over 90%, and is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the project and of the efficacy of the assessment methodology developed by the iGetIT! team and by the Trainers (even not included in the initially agreed KPIs).

Very few hardware issues were reported, as a confirmation of the good quality of the PCs provided by WorkVentures through its computer repair and refurbishment centre SIRC.

### 4.2 Overall Impact Analysis

The 2010 evaluation process revealed the achievement of the iGetIT! program in maintaining the success of its delivery and in providing Indigenous youth with a more positive outlook on education and employment.

Interviews with representatives from partner organisations as well as course participants validated the effectiveness of the training in improving the computer skills of the Indigenous youth who took part in the program. This enhancement in technical skills and knowledge consequently gave the youth an increased awareness of their own potential and positively lifted their self-assurance in working towards their academic and employment goals.

Discussions with organisations and participants presented us with a strong understanding of the extent of positive influence the course had on the youth who engaged well with the training. The course was positive particularly for youth who still attended school, with none of the

participants discontinuing their secondary education. Consultation with our partner organisations' representatives revealed an improved attitude and behaviour in some of the participant towards their studies. This is a fantastic outcome for these students who are on their way to building brighter futures.

The iGetIT! program has been especially successful in providing participants with a more positive outlook on education and employment. Interviews with participants have revealed that the confidence boost and skills that they gained as a result of attending the training has made them more aware of their capabilities and has succeeded in having them explore further education and employment options.

The participants' newly found computer skills have proven not only to benefit their own development but have additionally been useful in assisting other members of the community in their struggles to connect with technology. The program has consequently been a valuable experience not only for the participants but also their broader communities.

### 4.3 Accreditation and Recommendations

iGetIT! is a program that from the beginning has aimed to continually enhance its processes and delivery in order to provide Indigenous youth with the most valuable and productive learning experience. In 2010, WorkVentures has again endeavoured to improve the delivery of the training through positive and practical developments. As stated as one of our objectives in the 2010 Funding Agreement, since September 2010, WorkVentures has been offering iGetIT! participants with the opportunity to attain accredited outcomes through the two-week training.

This new development aims to provide Indigenous youth with credentials that they can utilize to support their job search. Following the recommendations outlined in the 2009 Evaluation Report, WorkVentures did its utmost

to ensure that the required VETAB assessments for the accreditation would not greatly alter the hands-on and practical nature that the course is valued for.

Overall, the program remains a practical training in IT skills and the Trainers are cautious to meet the needs of the participants by keeping the classes appealing with the use of various interactive and visually charged activities.

With an accreditation rate of over 90%, WorkVentures has found that the assessments required for the accreditation have not been a barrier for participants who have successfully achieved to gain at least one unit from the Certificate II in IT.

WorkVentures succeeded in developing an effective and engaging way to offer credentials to all Indigenous youth who participate in the program.

For what concerns the continuous improvement of the program and of its impact on Indigenous young people's employability, consultations with participants and partners revealed scope for additional training in generally used computer applications including MS Word, MS PowerPoint and/or MS Excel.

All stake-holders agree that increasing the participants' proficiency in utilizing this software would better equip them for working in an office environment and would have an even greater impact on Indigenous youth's employability.



*Graduation ceremony in Lake Cargelligo, NSW*

## 5. Case studies

### Bobbie-Jo, 29

Bobbie-Jo is a 29 year old mother of five who undertook an iGetIT! course in Narromine (NSW) in March of 2010. Prior to doing the course, Bobbie-Jo was a stay-at-home mum who was busy running around after her five children. The iGetIT! program changed all that when Bobbi-Jo gained useful knowledge about computers and received a great confidence boost that impacted her perspective on work and study and changed her plans for the future.

Boobie-Jo was surprised at how easy she found the course despite having no previous knowledge about computers, "I dropped out of high school in year 8, I knew nothing about computers", says Bobbie-Jo who believes that she took away a lot from doing the course. After completing the course, Bobbie-Jo decided that she wanted to study Year 10. Though she had previously started the year 10 course, her interest had fizzled and it wasn't until she undertook iGetIT! that she decided that she was ready to get back into studying. "Now I'm sending my assignment through!" says Bobbie-Jo who enthusiastically explains that the computer skills she gained through iGetIT! has been very useful, "The Trainers taught me how to do research on the internet and I find it very easy to do research on the internet for my English class."

Now successfully working on completing her year 10 course, Bobbie-Jo has bigger plans for the future. "I want to do the Aboriginal Education Officer's (AEO) course after I finish year 10. I want to work as an AEO". Bobbie-Jo believes that the confidence that she gained through iGetIT! helped her to realise her potential and strive to work hard towards achieving her goals. "I don't stop!" exclaims Bobbie-Jo when asked about her confidence in using computers.

### Denise, 21

The iGetIT! course had a very positive impact on 21 year old Denise who believes she gained confidence as a result of taking part in the program. As an admin worker in her local Land Council, Denise is happy that she gained the relevant computer skills to better perform her duties in her role, "Doing the course helped me with my job because I use a computer regularly as part of my role", says Denise. Denise claims that she is now a confident computer user and attributes her skills to taking part in the course.

Denise is pleased with the positive outcomes she has gained in the short two-weeks she took part in course, "It was important learning how to make an extra hard drive so that I could save everything there and not lose anything...it was a good confidence boost", she says. Denise also adds that the iGetIT! blog has been a useful tool to utilize after the completion of the course.

The program has inspired Denise to help other Indigenous youth overcome their fear of technology. She plans to teach her new found computer skills to kids in the local community, "I want to teach the kids at the internet cafe the skills that I learnt at the course so that they too can learn about computers", Denise proudly remarks.

### Kathleen, 17

17 year old Kathleen is glad she participated in the iGetIT! program. Currently undertaking her Year 12 Higher School Certificate, she believes the training has improved her grades, "I wasn't really good at computers before I did the course. In year 10 I did really badly on a computer exam at school. After I did the course, I did the exam again and the things I learnt at the course helped me" says Kathleen. She also feels that owning and operating her own PC has been very helpful in her school work and assignments.

Kathleen is now very confident in using computers and is delighted that she can fix problems on her PC without having to send it elsewhere to be repaired. She has also continued to apply her new skills

by producing more movies with the Moviemaker application that she was introduced to as part of the training.

The Indigenous training program is also credited for helping Kathleen bond with her cousins who undertook the course with her, “it helped me to connect with them better” says Kathleen. She also believes that accessing the internet through her new computer has helped her to connect with other family and friends.

### Jedda, 22

Jedda is a 22 year old young woman who lives in the Indigenous community of Lake Cargelligo in the Northern Territory. Like most other youth her age, Jedda entered her adolescent years confused about her education and employment options and lacked the confidence to make positive decisions about her future. However, that all changed when Jedda participated in the iGetIT! computer training in April 2010. The two-week practical course improved her technical computer skills as well as helped her realize her own capabilities. Keeping the computer at the completion of the course was also great plus for Jedda who regularly practiced her computer skills, “[the course] helped me to become more computer literate... I now type at 48 wpm thanks to my home computer!!” states Jedda enthusiastically. Equipped with the relevant skills and improved confidence, Jedda enrolled into a 12-month Administration Traineeship which gives her good longer-term employment prospects. She thankfully credits her success to the course which she believes has had a positive influence on her future, “I am definitely proof that your program does help people both in looking for work and obtaining it at their own pace.”

### Dylan, 22

Dylan is a 22 year old youth from Shellharbour who undertook the iGetIT! course in November 2010. While Dylan is a hardworking young man who works for two different radio stations he lacked the confidence to aim higher and challenge himself in his job. As managerial positions came and went, Dylan lacked the confidence and computer skills to put his hand up for them. After doing the iGetIT! computer course, Dylan achieved three units in a Certificate II in IT which boosted his morale and increased his chances of securing a more challenging role. A few weeks after taking part in iGetIT! Dylan was offered a 12 month trial for a managerial position at the radio station Koori Time – VOX FM 106.9. “The course was a big influence in me getting that”, says Dylan who is grateful for everything he has learnt through iGetIT! “I install programs all the time now. I didn’t know how to do that before... I’m teaching younger staff how to do it too. I also use MS Word heaps too now, especially mail merge.” The future looks bright for Dylan who one day aims to manage a radio station. He is now a confident computer user, who knows the value of the accredited outcomes he achieved during the training.

### Erica, 26

Erica is a 26 year old Indigenous young woman from Broken Hill who took part in the iGetIT! program in December 2010. Having never before used a computer, Erica was unsure about what to expect from the two-week course. The training provided Erica with the basic computer training to confidently operate computer and learn new skills. The course additionally provided Erica with great positive outcomes as it boosted her confidence and helped her find work for a few hours a week making excursion notes for holiday programs for students. “I learnt how to type and do that during the course. I didn’t know how to do that before.” Proud of her achievements, Erica is thrilled about the accredited outcomes she achieved during the course, “[the accreditation] it’s valuable to me. I can show my employers all my skills” she states, when asked about their value to her. Erica is currently looking for a job as a receptionist so that she can “use more of the computer and learn how to take notes.”

### Josh, 18

Josh is an 18 years old Aboriginal young men who attended the iGetIT! program in Shellharbour delivered in November 2010.

After a couple of months from the completion of the project, one of the case managers who was working with Joash contacted Wayne, the Centrelink representative who worked with us for the implementation of the project with some great news. Wayne shared with us the email he received from the case manager:

*21 January 2011*

*Hi Wayne,*

*Hope you've had a great break over Chrissy and the New Year!*

*I just wanted to share some good news with you. Josh, a young fella who participated in the iGetIT program run a few months back has undergone a transition from being very unmotivated and disliking school to now expressing a strong interest in looking into further study at TAFE and even study at University in the area of Information & Technology / Computers!*

*He said that the program showed him things that he didn't know about computers (which I think shocked him as he feels he knows a lot about them) and that he feels inspired to want to learn more about it and possibly enter into a career in this area!*

*So a big THANK YOU Wayne and a big WELL DONE! I think this is a great example of how these initiatives have the potential to really change people's future prospects and pathways!*

*His mum, her family and myself are all ecstatic about his turn around!*

*Cheers,*

*Lauren*

## About WorkVentures

WorkVentures is an Australian not-for-profit social enterprise, established more than 30 years ago. Our vision is to build communities that work, and we aim to improve the employability of the people we work with. We engage with individuals and communities to build the capacity to improve lives through new skills, access to technology, community contribution and fulfilling employment.

We work in partnership with other organisations who help us deliver programs that help individuals in socially excluded communities. We have established and built effective partnerships with local residents, government, business and community partners that deliver positive and lasting social and economic change.

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