

About IndigiGrow



IndigiGrow is a 100% Aboriginal-owned, run & staffed not for profit native plant project. IndigiGrow sustains **people**, **land** and **culture** through the propagation and sale of local critically endangered native plants and the revival and sharing of cultural knowledge.



IndigiGrow supports and employs local young Indigenous apprentices and senior staff in permanent, culturally safe and supportive jobs on country. The IndigiGrow team passes down traditional knowledge to its young Indigenous staff and provides opportunities for the wider community to engage and learn about culture.



In just 5 years, IndigiGrow has grown from 2 staff to now employ 6 full-time apprentices and a further 4 senior staff. The team has facilitated volunteering and education sessions to a diverse range of groups and the business includes native plant nurseries at La Perouse Primary School and Matraville High School.



IndigiGrow's strategic narrative: A future in culture

Because...

many young Aboriginal people face barriers to achieving meaningful work in culturally safe settings...
...and caring for country has become ever more important with climate resilience and biodiversity at critically low levels.



We respond by...

employing and training young Aboriginal people and supporting them to build long-term connections to country...
...as well as building community awareness about the importance of caring for country and our critically endangered plants.



Which results in...

more local Aboriginal young people accessing meaningful training and employment and are empowered by connection to culture and country to make positive choices for their future and the environment by increasing biodiversity & wildlife.



And leads to...

Young Aboriginal people & the community see a **future in culture.**
Cultural knowledge and caring for country are respected and handed down.
Native ecosystems are built back to be diverse and resilient.



IndigiGrow's training and employment model

IndigiGrow apprentices access:



Outcomes for IndigiGrow's young apprentices and team members:*

Employment pathways



Empowerment



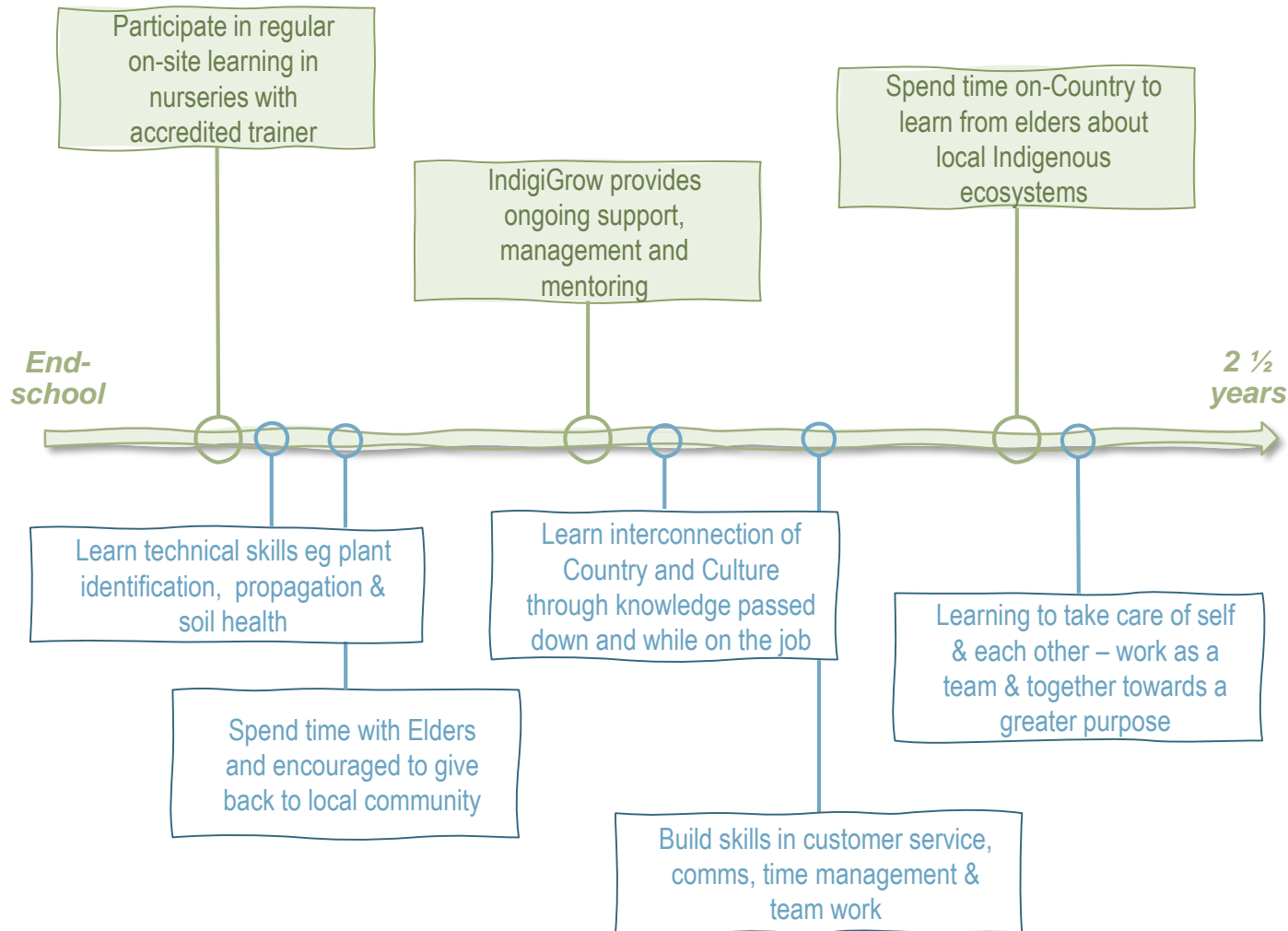
** A full Theory of Change is included at the back of this document*



The journey for an IndigiGrow apprentice

Young person completes Yr 10 or Yr 12 then begins full time, paid apprenticeship. If at school, IndigiGrow works with the young person to support transition.

Apprentices must be willing to listen and learn, committed to work & training expectations, and keen to connect with culture, country and community.



After 4 years of TAFE and full-time work, the young person earns **Cert. III in Parks & Gardens**.

They complete apprenticeship and move into a qualified role at IndigiGrow or elsewhere.



IndigiGrow's key achievements

In under four years since founding, we have delivered...



10

**Meaningful,
culturally safe jobs**

Fully-paid full-time and
part-time positions working
in our team

More than



1200

accredited TAFE hours
delivered on-site



200

Hands-on community
education sessions
delivered



100%

of apprentices and staff
reported high levels of
satisfaction with their role
at IndigiGrow



8000

practical learning
hours provided to
community
members



100%

of the team report an
improved sense of
wellbeing & belonging
since joining IndigiGrow



25

partnerships
formed with local
organisations and
businesses



Bradley's story

"It's a privilege to be able to share knowledge and to learn the systems of our ancestors"

Before starting at IndigiGrow, Bradley was working in demolition and landscaping. While those jobs were okay, he didn't feel that he was working towards anything important or long-term.

Originally, IndigiGrow's appeal was that he could spend his time **somewhere culturally safe**, where he could trust his colleagues. He now feels that his work is not just about a paycheck; he is happily **dedicated to the purpose**. Bradley says that being on country every day and working with like-minded people is integral to his wellbeing.

Bradley adds that the most important element of IndigiGrow is the organisation's integrity –

"We are always working towards the greater interest and purpose by growing and nurturing endangered plants. We don't just grow the easy ones – we grow the ones that need help and support to establish and become resilient."



Since beginning his apprenticeship at IndigiGrow, Bradley feels more confident with speaking and leading. It makes him proud to be a custodian of knowledge he can share with others, including colleagues and customers. Bradley feels a strong sense of responsibility as part of a small organisation and team working towards goals, with expectations and timelines.

Bradley also feels more connected to his local community with IndigiGrow mentors and Elders sharing local history and cultural knowledge.

Bradley is always keen to talk about work now. He wants to let other people know how proud he is of what he's achieved personally, as well as what they've achieved as a team.



Jay & Daniel's story

"The land doesn't belong to us; we belong to the land"

Jay & Daniel spent their local childhoods together. Weekends were for camping, fishing, collecting golf balls and selling them back to golfers. Now they are **working together** at IndigiGrow and **also working alongside local golf clubs** to reintroduce and nurture Indigenous plant species.

Jay & Daniel say that they **learn as they work** - with time and patience. With IndigiGrow's support model, they're able to approach colleagues, Elders and mentors with questions. Every day they feel they **build their technical skills on the job**, including maths, science and communications with customers, visitors and corporate groups. The apprentices often conduct research – testing plant types, germination conditions and what it takes to create healthy ecosystems.

Jay & Daniel don't see their work as separate from other aspects of their life - they're one and the same. The way they live with family, friends and community members reflects the cyclic and symbiotic rhythms of Country.



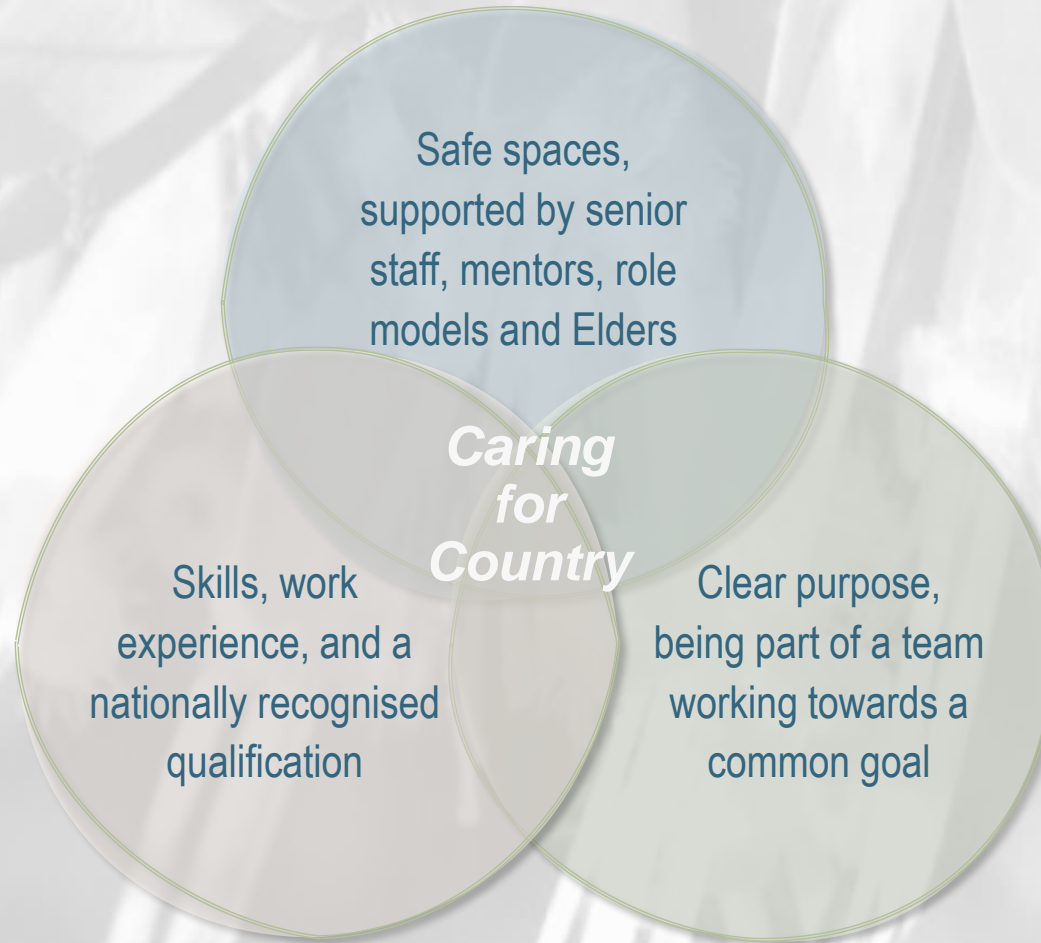
Jay & Daniel believe that every day at IndigiGrow is an opportunity to give back to Country and community, and to learn about the local ecosystem. They believe that the knowledge and skills they're building are **empowering**, and they're keen to share their excitement with visitors.

They feel immense satisfaction in their work at IndigiGrow – pride in all that they've learnt, **self-worth** and a **sense of belonging**. This comes from the hard taking responsibility for sharing valuable knowledge with visitors and non-Aboriginal community members.

Jay & Daniel are committed to IndigiGrow's mission to nurture endangered local ecosystems. And they see a clear pathway to a meaningful future available for them through their work.



The seeds of IndigiGrow's success





IndigiGrow's Theory of Change

Impetus for change

Young Aboriginal people face barriers to achieving meaningful and sustainable employment. There is a need for more employment pathways for young Aboriginal people to build skills, confidence and experience in culturally safe settings.

Against this backdrop, caring for country has become hugely important. Climate resilience and biodiversity are at critically low levels. Indigenous plants, including many endangered species, are central to building back resilience & sustainable environments.

Our strategic response

IndigiGrow recognises the essential role that culture and connection to country play in creating positive outcomes for Aboriginal people.

IndigiGrow engages, employs and trains young Aboriginal people while supporting them to build long-term connections to country.

Their work caring for country is increasing local, Indigenous plants, & biodiversity and building community awareness about Aboriginal culture & connection to country.

Our activities

- Paid apprenticeships
- (training & certification)
- Job creation
- Cultural learning, sharing of traditional knowledge
- Propagating endangered and Indigenous plants
- Wholesale plant contracts and commissions
- Retail plants sales
- Community events
- Education activities around Indigenous ecosystems
- Corporate, groups, individual volunteering

Those involved

Participants: Local, Aboriginal people

Local Aboriginal community: Community members, Elders

Wider community: Schools (La Perouse Primary, Matraville High, TAFE, retail customers, volunteers

Clients/distributors: Harris Farm, Sydney Golf Clubs, Sydney Councils, Government

Supporters: Philanthropic supporters and sponsors, government departments

Shorter term

Longer term

Outcomes for young people

Employment pathways

Opportunities available to work & train

Learning by engaging with mentors and elders, through practical work

Build technical & practical skills in horticulture & ecology

Work experience builds up, increasing employability

Complete formal training & move into full-time employment

Access to formal training

Develop people/work skills such as customer service, comms

Build career aspirations

Empowerment

Feels that someone is willing to back them

Sense of achievement from earning money & developing skills

Increased sense of self-worth and confidence

Increased self-care and coping skills

Increased wellbeing

Feel supported in a culturally safe work environment

Sense of belonging

Strength from building & being responsible for cultural knowledge

Sense of purpose, part of something 'bigger' in caring for country

Proud of their culture and their role

Outcomes for Country

Local Indigenous plants are being propagated

Process begins of re-establishing endangered plant species

More local indigenous plants are grown by customer base

Local Indigenous plants supported by mainstream horticulture industry

Demand for Indigenous plants at levels needed for biodiversity

Greater public interest in local Indigenous plants

Increased public awareness about biodiversity & caring for country

Govt/business recognition of need for biodiversity/climate resilience

Community invests in Aboriginal-led caring for country action

Outcomes for the wider community

Indigenous plants are available for the community

Opportunities to engage & learn about Aboriginal culture & caring for country

Greater awareness & appreciation of Aboriginal culture and practices

Cultural knowledge is passed down and protected

Aboriginal businesses lead the indigenous plant industry

Local employment pathways available to young people

Local young people engage with work & play positive community roles

Savings in programs responding to unemployment & related issues

Community and local economy thrives

Vision & impact

Young Aboriginal people & the community see a future in culture.

Young Aboriginal people are empowered by connection to culture and country to make positive choices for their future.

Cultural knowledge and caring for country are valued, respected and handed down.

Supported by the wider community, Indigenous plants and ecosystems build back to be diverse, resilient and no longer endangered.



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