



**NPY Women's Council**  
**Strategic Plan 2014-2018**



Ngaanyatjarra  
Pitjantjatjara  
Yankunytjatjara  
Women's Council  
(Aboriginal Corporation)

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Anangu and Yarnangu readers are warned that this publication may contain images of deceased persons and images of people that could open sorrowful memories

## Acknowledgements

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Thank you as well to all Directors, members and staff who provided valuable input at Directors, community and staff meetings, as well as the 2013 NPY Women's Council Annual General Meeting.

**“...the women were all  
thinking the same way.  
We wanted our own meetings.  
We wanted to talk about our  
issues to the government.  
We wanted to talk together to  
give a strong message.  
That’s why we formed the  
Women’s Council.”**

**Nganyinytja (dec)  
– OAM 1980**

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Andrea Mason,  
Coordinator



Ingrid Simms, Chairwoman

## Introduction And Welcome

In 2014 NPY<sup>1</sup> Women's Council celebrates thirty four years of advocacy and service delivery to the NPY region, investing in the most important asset of the region - women and their families.

This five year plan aims to reduce levels of vulnerability, violence, and harm in our communities in conjunction with strengthening our increasing workforce. In developing this plan, members and Directors identified the responsibility to develop relationships and evidenced based practices that reduce harm, expand social enterprise and concurrently influence constructive personal and civic responsibilities in our communities. In identifying these areas it is clear members are asking others to consider what they are committing to achieve.

Like all non-government organisations, the impact of services delivered by NPY Women's Council's is commensurate to the funding support it receives. At NPY Women's Council, this investment is maximised by working alongside our members who have a vital role in offering advice and direction to NPY Women's Council staff, who are then responsible for executing their instructions. Certainly, I also acknowledge here the hundreds of women over the years that have been the backbone in Aboriginal communities in the NPY region, participating as volunteers in their own time to the business of community governance.

With this approach I believe NPY Women's Council is working in the best paradigm for the region, and through which it can continue to contribute to the broader economy within and outside the borders of the NPY region.

I commend this latest NPY Women's Council Strategic Plan for your consideration and action.

Andrea Mason  
Co-ordinator

## Who We Are

Aboriginal women of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands created NPY Women's Council to give a voice to women in this region. A service delivery, advocacy and support organisation, NPY Women's Council is governed and directed by Aboriginal women across 26 desert communities in the cross-border regions of WA, SA and the NT.

It remains a strong voice for its members on issues such as substance abuse, domestic and family violence, child protection, policing and other safety issues, and the needs and aspirations of young people.

At its core NPY Women's Council is about family and community – walytja. The members' determination to improve the quality of life for families in the region is what drives the organisation.

## Our Mission

Our core purpose is to work with the women and their families of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara region in central Australia to increase their capacity to lead safe and healthy lives with improved life choices.

For the purpose of this mission the NPY Women's Council aims to:

- Provide a forum for Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women to discuss their concerns;
- Assist and encourage the representation and participation of women from the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara region on local, regional and other relevant bodies;
- Help individual women and girls to achieve further training, education and employment;
- Establish, provide and or promote services to improve the health and safety, education and general well-being of people in the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara region;
- Establish, provide and promote the artistic and cultural interests of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women;
- Promote and support the achievements and authority of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women;
- Gather and provide information about issues of importance to Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women and to the broader community;

**“ALL THESE PROGRAMS  
ARE HELPING OUR  
FAMILIES. OUR  
ACHIEVEMENTS  
HAVE COME FROM  
OUR IDEAS; NOW  
GOVERNMENTS ARE  
TAKING ON OUR IDEAS”**

**MARGARET SMITH 2010**

**“FROM LITTLE THINGS  
BIG THINGS GROW TO  
BE BIGGER, WIDER AND  
STRONGER”**

**YANYI BANDICHA 2010**

- Promote and encourage the law and culture of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women;
- Support and encourage other women and organisations who work towards similar aims.

## **Our Guiding Principles**

The qualities and the spirit through which the members and staff will work to fulfil the mission and objectives of the Rulebook (Constitution):

**NGAPARTJI NGAPARTJI KULINMA MUNU  
IWARA WANANMA TJUKARURUNGKU**

respect each other and follow the law straight

**KALYPANGKU**

conciliatory

**PILUNTJUNGKU**

peaceful and calm

**KUTUTU MUKULYANGKU**

kind-hearted

**TJUNGUNGKU**

united

**KUNPUNGKU**

strong



# Our Value In The Region And Beyond

## LAW AND CULTURE RESPONSIBILITIES

Women's only law and culture gives strength to the women. Through these meetings our members promote their authority; it is how NPY Women's Council members fuel their passion to speak up on matters important to them and their families and communities.

## PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

NPY Women's Council members believe everyone should be treated with respect and dignity and understand the importance of personal responsibility in the context of remote communities. We value behaviours that empower others and reduce the level of disadvantage of Aboriginal people in central Australia.

## CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES

NPY Women's Council is an active participant in policy development at both the Regional and National level. To this end we consider and analyse policy issues, deal with government and other external agencies and advocate on behalf of our members.

## ENTERPRISE RESPONSIBILITIES

NPY Women's Council actively supports and promotes opportunities to create sustainable, independent income streams and enterprises that create further employment opportunities.

## ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

It is widely acknowledged that NPY Women's Council provides a range of human services that are more cost effective and efficient than government, while maintaining a high quality service.

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Our people are highly motivated to improve the quality of life of Anangu and Yarnangu<sup>2</sup> living in the NPY region. We are reaching higher to practice our guiding principles to enable the membership to participate and benefit from strong leadership.

We know that to attract and retain staff we must provide a workplace that values best practice people management, adheres to lawful corporate management, and supports contemporary professional standards and knowledge.

We are reaching higher to support our members, their families and communities with opportunities to reach their potential and to improve their well-being.

## Our Achievements 1980 - 2014

- Assisted women to obtain funding for the establishment and upgrading of art and craft centres on communities.
- Assisted women in the registration and protection of women's sacred sites.
- Facilitated and created opportunities for women to participate in forums dealing with issues ranging from health, land management, birthrights, education, housing and cultural affairs.
- Conducted comprehensive research examining the care and needs of the elderly and disabled in the NPY region.
- Established the first remote community based disability support program for people in the NPY region.
- Advocated for better renal services for people living in remote communities; a federal study on the needs of people requiring dialysis in central Australia; initiation of visiting dialysis service to the APY lands; establishment of permanent dialysis facility in Warburton.
- Since 1998 the NPY Women's Council has been at the forefront of a campaign addressing foetal alcohol spectrum disorder in central Australia and advocacy for the improvement of services to clients and their families.
- Recipient of the 2011 Deadly Award for Outstanding Achievement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health for our 'No Safe Amount' campaign – educating people about the damage drinking alcohol during pregnancy can do to unborn babies.
- Home of the highly acclaimed Tjanpi Desert Weavers.
- Established a Domestic Violence Service for the protection of women and children in the NPY region.
- Campaigned for the introduction of low aromatic fuel in central Australia and worked towards the eradication of petrol sniffing in the NPY region.
- Advocated for alcohol restrictions to reduce alcohol related harm in central Australia; after a 10 year campaign the end of takeaway alcohol sales at Curtin Springs Roadhouse.
- After 13 years of advocacy, lobbying and consultation, the introduction of the ground



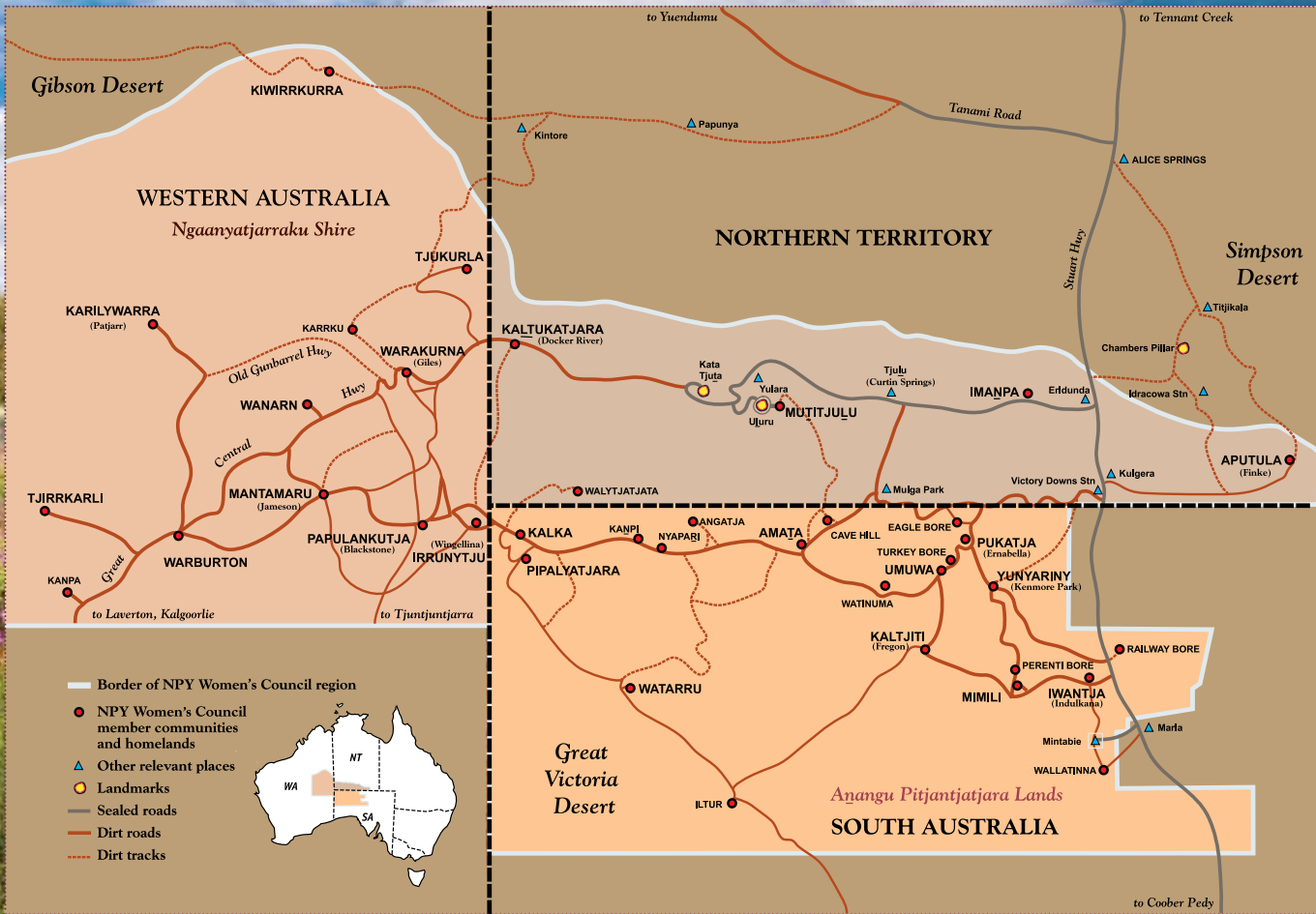
breaking WA, NT and SA Cross Border Justice Scheme, legislation that allows cross border policing.

- Promotion and employment of the award winning Ngangkari (traditional healers) who are widely acknowledged as a highly sought after complimentary service to main stream medicine and psychiatric treatments.
- Winner of the 2012 Indigenous Governance awards (co-convened by Reconciliation Australia and BHP Billiton).
- Acknowledgement for our work in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

**NPY WOMEN'S  
COUNCIL SERVICES  
AN AREA OF OVER  
350,000 SQ KM**



# Where We Work



## Our Future

While we have reached a great many milestones over the last 30 years it is now time to stop and consider the future.

Like all Australians, we know that a greater investment in our young people through education and employment is the key to success. Meaningfully engaged and culturally purposeful leadership in communities, together with building resilience and hope for the future, are crucial to supporting young people to reach their potential. We will advocate for our young people to be educated to the highest possible standard and that, wherever possible, meaningful work is available for all Anangu and Yarnangu living in the NPY region.

At a regional level we are 'reaching higher' and our aim is to give all our young people every opportunity to shine, be it in culturally based positions, Aboriginal enterprises or in mainstream employment, and for young women to learn and participate in the law and culture of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women.

## Our Strategic Plan

NPY Women's Council works with Anangu and Yarnangu of the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara region to increase their capacity to lead safe and healthy lives with improved life choices, in line with the Australian Government targets for 'Closing the Gap' in Indigenous disadvantage in Australia.

We will continue to provide services to the highest standard that meet the needs and priorities of our members. The following focus areas have been identified for inclusion in the Strategic Plan 2014-2018<sup>3</sup>:

1. **SERVICE DELIVERY**
2. **ADVOCACY**
3. **EDUCATION**
4. **EMPLOYMENT**





## Service Delivery

Through our longstanding commitment to deliver on our mission statement we have targeted the following service delivery areas.

### YOUTH PROGRAM

NPY Women's Council believes that young people are our future leaders.

The Youth Program is central in supporting young people to achieve their dreams and aspirations. NPY Women's Council strongly believes in the power of education and has highlighted this as a key focus for the Youth Program.

The balance between maintaining culture and thriving in the mainstream world is a primary goal for the Youth Program. The Program is dedicated to supporting young men and women to access opportunities that allow them to reach higher and rise above the social profile that society has set for them, regardless of who they are and where they come from.

The Youth Program does this by focusing on key areas such as youth leadership, education, diversion, and case management. The Program works with young people between 10 and 25 years in many different capacities including, but not limited to, facilitating opportunities to engage in leadership activities and the annual Kungka Career Conference. They also run healthy, active diversionary programs and work closely with a variety of stakeholders to improve services and facilities for all young people and their families in communities.

### CHILD AND FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE

Our Child Nutrition Program supports families in the NPY region to increase their capacity to care for children. The team provides an early intervention and prevention service for families with children aged 0-5 years who have been assessed as growth faltering or who are considered to be 'at risk' from a health or welfare perspective, as well as working within a public health nutrition framework at a community level. The service provides practical food and nutrition skills, case management, nutrition and parental education, advocacy and health promotion advice and activities.



Our Walytjapiti Program works intensively and holistically with parents and caregivers of children aged 0–12 years where there has been substantiated neglect, or a high risk of neglect occurring. Individual case plans are developed with families and child protection services to address 5 key areas of ‘neglect’ in the domains of:

1. Supervision
2. Physical needs
3. Health needs
4. Emotional and developmental needs
5. Educational requirements



Service delivery will continue to be based on frequent visits and extended stays in communities. We will operate in keeping with a holistic model of family support work. This builds on the many strengths NPY Women’s Council has to offer from years of service delivery in the NPY Lands. At this stage the program will have four teams working in a number of communities in the NT and on the APY lands i.e. Finke, Imanpa, Mutitjulu and Docker River in the NT, and Ernabella, Indulkana, Mimili and Amata in SA.

Families who participate in the program will continue to be given intensive support through a range of activities aimed at skilling up parents and other caregivers so they can provide the best care and nurturing for their children.

While each case is assessed individually to accommodate for the needs of individual family members, it is anticipated that in order to see and experience lasting and meaningful outcomes, the work with families may take up to 18 months to complete.

### **TJUNGU PROGRAM**

Our Tjungu (working together) team provides support for people in the NPY Lands with a disability, and for frail aged people.

The team’s main focus is to support people to remain in their home communities with family for as long as possible.

The Tjungu Program focuses on high quality case management for people with disabilities and frail aged people, continued re-assessment of eligibility criteria for funding under the programs, ongoing provision of support, respite and equipment for carers of frail, aged and people with disabilities.

### **DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICE**

All women and children have the right to live their lives safe and free from domestic and family violence and sexual assault. This Service declares that Aboriginal women and children should be offered the full range of protective measures that women and children can expect elsewhere in Australia.

Our Domestic and Family Violence Service provides an effective, proactive and responsive service that results in outcomes that prioritise women's and children's safety.

The Service identified that women's safety in the tri-state region would be better supported by a cross-border approach to criminal justice issues. The service has continuously advocated for this response at an individual and systemic level and played a pivotal role in the introduction of the WA, NT and SA Cross Border Justice Scheme which allows police and the courts to deal with offenders in any of the three jurisdictions, regardless of the jurisdiction in which the offence occurred. The Service continues to promote information sharing and cross-border practices to better ensure the safety of women and children.

### **TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS**

Tjanpi Desert Weavers is recognised as a leading social enterprise for women from the NPY region. Tjanpi continues to support women to come together on country, to keep culture strong and to develop their fibre art in a malparara way, now and for future generations.

Tjanpi Desert Weavers' purpose is to contribute to improving the lives of NPY women and their families by supporting cultural activity and employment through the creation of fibre art.



The following goals capture the holistic purpose and activities of Tjanpi:



- Be a sustainable social enterprise of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council;
- Facilitate access to country for Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women to maintain law and culture;
- Increase opportunities for women and girls to achieve further training, education and meaningful income and employment pathways in the areas of arts and cultural enterprise;
- Achieve recognition of the knowledge and strength of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women and ensure NPY women's voices are heard;
- Be recognised as the leading body for fibre art in the NPY region.<sup>4</sup>

## NGANGKARI PROJECT

Anangu have a culturally based view of causation and recovery from physical and mental illness and attribute many illnesses and emotional states to harmful elements in the Anangu spiritual world.

Ngangkari are highly valued for their unique ability to protect and heal individuals and communities from this harm.

Our Ngangkari Project will continue to:

- Provide Anangu from the NPY region with Ngangkari traditional healing;
- Promote the work and skills of Ngangkari as a means of ensuring their work is highly valued and respected within the broader mainstream mental health and public health system;
- Educate health and mental health workers about the role and work of Ngangkari;
- Provide direction for the development of culturally appropriate mental health services in the region.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

NPY Women's Council is committed to maintaining a high quality of service delivery by continuously monitoring the organisation's compliance with the Australian Service Excellence Standards. Ultimately, our aim is to ensure our clients receive a quality service and that we are able to respond accordingly to changes in clients' needs.

First class human services are what Anangu, Yarnangu, funding bodies and stakeholders expect of us.

To this end, we are increasingly investing in and building contemporary people and workplaces services inclusive of work health and safety reforms.



## Advocacy

We will continue to represent and work with NPY communities to encourage and support them in order to ensure that their rights are upheld, specifically those matters important to women. This may involve speaking, acting or writing on behalf of NPY Women's Council members.

As advocacy may involve working against established or entrenched values, structure and customs, NPY Women's Council will continue to speak independently on matters as well as seek collaboration with other service providers where there is common ground.

NPY Women's Council's advocacy work for the period 2014-2018 will focus on the following areas:

- Alcohol, drugs and volatile substances causing harm
- Renal Services
- Employment
- Housing
- Women's Centres
- Mental Health
- Education and Youth Leadership
- Funding

It is important to note that this list of priorities does not mean that other advocacy areas the Council has been vocal about in the past will lapse or be forgotten. Rather, members and staff will make every effort to advocate on these matters when opportunities arise.

Some of these specific areas include: Cross Border Justice, Domestic Violence, Child Protection, Law and Culture, Income Management, Boarding Schools, Gambling, Kungka Career Conference and Disability and Aged Care.

Members and Directors will monitor progress and where necessary the NPY Women's Council will modify and amend approaches.

## Education

Through educational and technical programs available locally and interstate, we will increase the capacity of Anangu and Yarnangu to access opportunities beyond their current standing. In meeting this responsibility, NPY Women's Council acknowledges its role of providing knowledge and personal development in areas that relate to its service delivery and advocacy areas.

The Youth Program is critical in supporting young people to realise their dreams and aspirations. The Youth Program strongly believes in the power of education and has highlighted this as a key focus for the Youth Program. Better access to education through assistance with boarding school and scholarship applications is one example of how the Youth Program is looking to improve the life choices of our future leaders.

NPY Women's Council continues to educate and raise awareness among individuals and whole of community groups on current issues impacting families, including:

- nutrition and parenting skills;
- programs to reduce the high rates of domestic and family violence;
- support for the carers in the NPY region;
- forums to inform mainstream health and mental health workers about the role and cultural authority of Ngangkari;
- initiatives to inform a broad audience on the cultural significance of the Tjanpi Desert Weavers art and the skills itself.

Underpinning all of these strategies is the commitment of NPY Women's Council staff and members to use every opportunity to educate young women and the community in the law and culture of Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara women.





## Employment

NPY Women's Council aims to be a preferred employer of choice across the NPY region for indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.

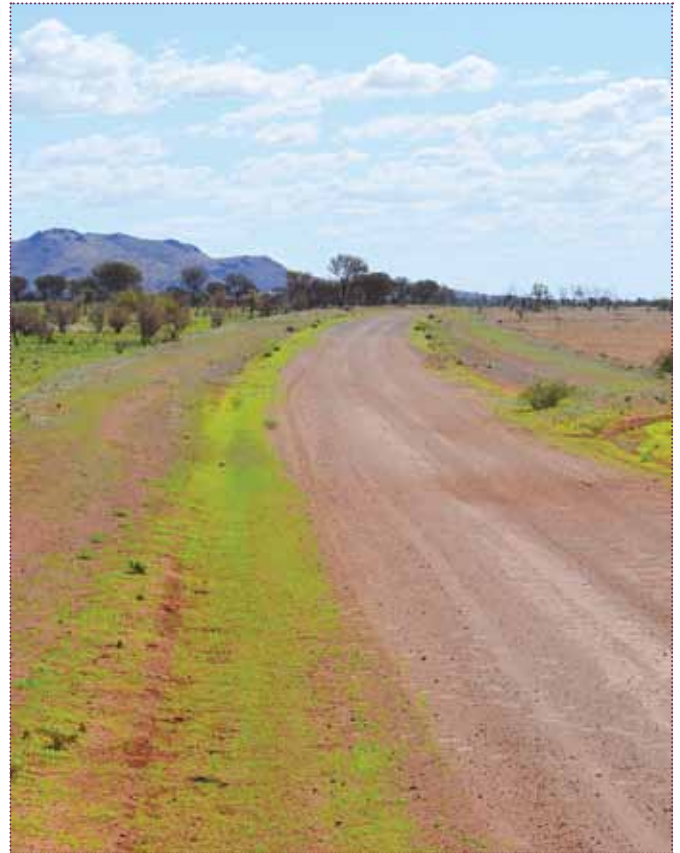
Our Employment Strategy aims to increase the capacity of NPY Women's Council by strengthening and increasing Aboriginal employment, specifically in the Council and generally across the NPY Lands. A key to success in this strategy is the simplification of entry to employment as well as supported career advancement.

NPY Women's Council acknowledges that attending school offers young people substantial opportunities to develop their leadership potential. However, we also acknowledge that through our targeted service delivery and case management model NPY Women's Council plays an important role in improving employment outcomes of our future leaders.

We will proactively offer employment opportunities to Anangu and Yarnangu to support entry into the workforce at NPY Women's Council across the full spectrum of professions, from administration and casework to project management.

We will ensure that our future maintains our culture too, through the continual employment and promotion of our Ngangkari and other positions at NPY Women's Council that are culturally based such as Anangu Support Workers and interpreters.

Culturally based positions offer Anangu and Yarnangu a broader scope to exercise personal skills and abilities. The development and implementation of a Ngangkari succession plan will ensure this unique cultural ability can continue. Our highly acclaimed Tjanpi Desert Weavers will continue to generate income and provide employment opportunities for new weavers in the future.







As part of the NPY Women's Council's commitment, we will work with other agencies to support employment initiatives throughout the region that particularly offer Anangu and Yarnangu opportunities to earn an income working in culturally based positions.

## Easy To Do Business With

In order to be effective in our key areas of Service Delivery, Advocacy, Education and Employment, it is essential that NPY Women's Council continues to build and maintain strong relationships throughout the NPY Lands.

Through open and frequent communication with Directors, Members and Communities, NPY Women's Council staff naturally become conduits to share the instructions of these community leaders to other workplaces and forums in central Australia and throughout Australia. Through productive and positive relationships with other agencies, the long term goal of improving the health and wellbeing of Anangu and Yarnangu will be enriched.

The strong and enduring relationships that NPY Women's Council has built on the NPY Lands allow the service delivery and advocacy models to be flexible and responsive to change.

## Deliver Quality Services

NPY Women's Council has a proud history of providing quality services.

NPY Women's Council will continue to be a leader in increasing the capacity of Anangu and Yarnangu in the NPY region to lead safe and healthy lives with improved life choices. We will do this through continued good governance and quality measures and targets across the Service Delivery, Advocacy, Education and Employment areas.

Throughout 2014–2018, reporting on these core activities will enable NPY Women's Council to continually review and improve the understanding of the changing needs and priorities of the region, therefore ensuring targeted and appropriate service delivery and advocacy across the NPY region.

## Highly Skilled And Empowered Staff

NPY Women's Council values its workforce and appreciates the contribution of each staff member and the role they play to provide quality service delivery and advocacy.

By being culturally sensitive and adopting flexible work practices, we will maintain and indeed increase Aboriginal employment. With an ongoing commitment to recruiting, retaining and developing staff, NPY Women's Council will reach the goal of preferred employer of choice across the NPY region.

The people priorities include:

- High quality staff in all communities
- Empowered and capable leaders and managers
- Fresh and improved ways of working
- A high performing, inclusive and safe workplace<sup>5</sup>



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