

Celebrating and sustaining Indigenous Knowledges through Higher Education

Abstract

In its intervention at the 10th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2010, the World Indigenous Network Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC) acknowledged that despite a history of protracted but limited attempts by Governments globally to address the low participation and graduation rates of Indigenous peoples from higher education at post graduate level, this continues to as an area of considerable concern.

This paper speaks to the development of an innovative academic process that profiles the ground breaking work of WINHEC and a cohort of Indigenous academics in developing academic programs designed to address this systemic failure. The concept of these programs was endorsed in 2006 at a WINHEC conference where Indigenous representatives from across the world met to discuss in part, the impediments to Indigenous success within higher education. The goal of WINHEC has been to develop a nested suite of inventive postgraduate awards founded within the scholarship of Indigenous Knowledge which encapsulates an epistemological approach. This has been a ground breaking process that has included collaborative and intellectual contributions of Indigenous academics from diverse cultural nations across the globe and, in particular, Australia.

In 2012 the culmination of this dream and the suite of courses developed, honours and embrace the uniqueness of Indigenous Knowledge and the cultural integrity of Indigenous Leadership.