

# APAIE 2024



PERTH, AUSTRALIA 4-8 MARCH 2024

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*Collaborating for sustainable impact: partnerships across the Asia Pacific*

APAIE Perth 4 - 8 March 2024



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Session 9A: Weds 6<sup>th</sup> March, 14:00 – 15:00

**Learning abroad and First Nations students: Asia-Pacific perspective**

Kelly Smith  
Murdoch University, Australia

Bep Uink  
Murdoch University, Australia

Chanelle van den Berg  
Murdoch University, Australia

Linda Yang  
Murdoch University, Australia

**Chair**  
Andrew Champagne  
Colleges and Institutes Canada, Canada

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# Session 9A-Learning abroad and First Nations students: Asia-Pacific perspectives

Wednesday, Mar 6, 2024

14:00 - 15:00

Meeting Room 1

## Panel Members:

- Chair: Kelly Smith IEAA SF, Pro Vice Chancellor International, Murdoch University
- Dr Bep Uink, Dean of Indigenous Knowledges, Murdoch University
- Chanelle van den Berg, Pro Vice Chancellor First Nations, Murdoch University
- Dr Linda Yang, Adjunct Senior Lecturer, Murdoch University; Managing Director, Intercultural Development Institute (ICDI)
- Student Voice: Maddi
- You (the participants)

# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that we are meeting on the boodjar (country) of the Whadjuk Noongar people, in the place known as Boorloo, on the banks of the Derbarl Yerrigan. We pay our respects to their enduring and dynamic culture and the leadership of Noongar Elders past and present.

We acknowledge and pay respects to First Nations people from across the world who are joining us on Noongar land.

# Background

- Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy (2022): commitment to: “...do more to engage and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and their communities, to extend opportunity.” (p. 7) by (inter alia) increasing Indigenous student participation in study abroad experiences (p. 25)
- Sitting behind this assumption is the growth in general student mobility by Australian students and assumed benefits
- Implementation of the financial support provisions in the NCP has led to a significant increase in the number of Australian students undertaking study abroad, with an estimate that 25% of the graduating cohort participate (Thi Tran 2021)
- Researchers such as Potts (2015, 2022) and Thi Tran (2021) in Australia and Farrugia et al (2017) and Kishino and Takahashi (2019) in the United States have all explored the benefits of studying abroad
- Potts (2015, 2022) and Farrugia et al (2017) suggest benefits to employability outcomes. The concept of personal transformation has also been explored by Kishino and Takahashi (2019), who suggested positive impacts on global citizenship traits

# But....

- In spite of the intent of the UA Strategy (2022), the most reliable source of information on numbers of Indigenous Australian students studying abroad is from the 2022 AUIDF benchmarking, suggesting that relatively small numbers study overseas
- The 2022 report indicated that 3.2% of the graduating cohort of Indigenous Australian students at universities that reported this data (n=10) participated in a study abroad experience
- Netz et al (2020) and Harvey et al (2017) explored socio-economics as a factor and concluded that whilst the activity of study abroad itself is seen as a positive contributor to life outcomes (including employment), participation tends to be concentrated in higher socio-economic groups
- It can be concluded therefore that whilst study abroad is perceived to be beneficial and there is some work to suggest that it can lead to both practical (employment) and personal (self-transformational) outcomes, it is not clear how this plays out across groups other than the dominant national social cohorts

# And....

- An additional point of consideration if we wish to meaningfully engage First Nations students in study abroad is the experience in the western academy
- The work of Coates et al (2022) and Indigenous Institutional Theory is relevant to consider. This work developed a theoretical framework through which Indigenous experience within western institutions can be examined
- Dudgeon et al (2006) looked at how Indigenous Australians engage in tertiary education suggesting that educational institutions and their activities continue to be dominated by western ideologies and discourses, and that Indigenous Australian engagement has been characterised by colonialist/anti colonialist dichotomies
- Liddle (2016) suggest challenges faced by Indigenous Australians in education is based on the fact that clear guidelines and strategies are not embedded across the institution
- Nakata et al (2012) suggests that more effective outcomes may be via a pedagogy that recognises the complex interface between decolonial and western paradigms

# Why?

- There is substantial research on the experiences of First Nations students in the western academy
- There is a lack of research on how these elements may impact on First Nations students in their decisions about non-core activities such as study abroad. This includes consideration of the types of programs that may best suit First Nations students.
- Therefore from here, let's discuss theories and concepts of decolonisation and global Indigeneity as it references cultural factors such as displacement in order to explore the following:
  - How does study abroad as currently conceptualised and executed benefits First Nations participants across the Asia Pacific?
  - What are the institutional enablers that will maximise participation in study abroad and outcomes for First Nations students?
  - How can we develop best practice models to facilitate engagement in study abroad by First Nations students and staff?



# Questions: Maddi

- Tell us about your experience of study abroad.
- Where did you go?
- Why did you go there?
- What did you learn? About yourself? About others?
- What were the main challenges?
- Do you think there are broader benefits to your community?

# Panel discussion and Q&A

- Dr Bep Uink
- Chanelle van den Berg
- Dr Linda Yang

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