

PREFATORY NOTE

This book arose out of a workshop funded by the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia in 2018 at The Australian National University. At that workshop, we arrived at four implications of our findings:

1. That greater public policy attention and funding be directed towards community-controlled adult education and to supporting campaigns and programs aimed at raising adult literacy levels among Indigenous people on a mass scale. Adult literacy is the foundation both for financial literacy and sound governance for Aboriginal incorporations; a rise in literacy is essential to political capacity building and to advocacy of Indigenous interests.
2. That the role of Indigenous interests within governments be expanded. This includes revisiting the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration that in 1974–76 advocated both greater recruitment of Indigenous public servants and building the capability of Indigenous organisations.
3. That governments actively consider ways to build greater Indigenous control and influence, according to the decisions of Indigenous people, using the various extant capital funds (for instance, Indigenous Business Australia, Aboriginal Benefits Account, Indigenous Land Fund).
4. That Australian governments legislate to ratify the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples so that any future debate about a ‘treaty’ (at any level of government or region) will know in advance what principles and terms of reference treaty processes would bring into play.

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