Case Study
Deadly Perspectives Forum

What:

In recognition of the anniversary of the national apology to Australia’s first nation people, and in light of the finalising of the wording of the proposed changes to the constitution, South West Indigenous Network, Toowoomba Regional Council and the Empire Theatre came together to present a forum to offer to the whole community an opportunity to hear from indigenous leaders, young people and professionals on what it means to be indigenous, right here, right now.

Four speakers from the community were asked to speak from their own experiences and their own perspective about what it is like to be an Aboriginal person in Toowoomba, the opportunities, the differences between the past and present and what is possible in the future.

Thomas Draper, Construction Supervisor for Arrow Energy talked about overcoming prejudice and using opportunities to make the most of his life. Young athlete Anthea Moodie spoke about what she has done and where she hopes sport will take her. Uncle Darby McCarthy spoke from his vast experience of the past and the differences to the present and Bradley Saunders spoke about cultural and spiritual priorities and how they relate to everyday life.

After these presentations and morning tea, the speakers sat on a panel with MC Priscilla Holborn from the Department of Education and Training to discuss some the most pertinent issues facing the Indigenous community at the moment.

When: 13 February 2015
Where: Toowoomba, Armitage Centre, Empire Theatre Precinct

Partners, Contributors and Sponsors:

This project is supported by the Queensland Government Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs.

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Outcomes:
The day was a wonderful gathering of local leaders and community which highlighted some of the issues and achievements of local Indigenous people.

The whole community was invited to attend. More than 70 people attended from organisations such as Heritage Bank, Youth and Community Learning Centre, South West Indigenous Network, ABC Open, Toowoomba Libraries, Relationships Australia, The Smith Family, PCYC, Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme and other interested community members.

The forum focused on the issues that are the most relevant to local Indigenous people including housing, education, health and child safety and maintaining culture and spiritual links.

The lack of visibility and coverage of positive stories about Indigenous individuals in the media was also identified as an issue.

Further events are planned to continue to foster relationships and build networks to help promote wellbeing and opportunities for local Indigenous communities.

Learnings and reflections:
In the seven years since the apology, there is still some question as to if we as a Nation have moved forward towards a better future for all its citizens.

However, there are opportunities to act locally to improve the wellbeing of the community and thereby assist the key areas identified as having the biggest room for improvement.

With further activities and events designed to create awareness and opportunities for community sharing, we can continue to pursue reconciliation and find ways to enrich the present and honour the past.

This project directly correlates with four objectives in the Empire Theatres Projects Company Business Plan.

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<tr>
<th>Aim One</th>
<th>To be accessible and engaging to broad sectors of the community.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 1.1</td>
<td>Create and facilitate programs and projects that are mindful of the diversity and richness of all regional Australians inclusive of all ethnic and cultural origins and demographic and socio-economic circumstances</td>
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<td>Objective 1.2</td>
<td>To foster and maintain relationships with a broad range of community and government groups in order to be in tune with current priorities and desires</td>
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<th>Aim Two</th>
<th>To be vital to the cultural and social health of the wider Toowoomba and south central Queensland region.</th>
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<td>Objective 2.1</td>
<td>Respond and contribute to discussion of social, political and environmental issues important to regional Australians</td>
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<th>Aim Four</th>
<th>To maintain sustainable business practise.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 4.1</td>
<td>To develop thriving arts business practices through strong partnerships, commercial income streams and alternative funding programs</td>
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This project also correlates with Community outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 in the TRC 2014-2019 Corporate Plan.