



Our Ref: **Int. Ref. 327720 File: 4520 Information Technology MD:KFT**
Your Ref: ---

17 May 2006

Indigenous Telecommunications Section
Regional Communications Policy Branch
Department of Communications, Information
Technology and the Arts
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA ACT 2601

SUBMISSION FOR MOUNT ISA COMMUNITY – BACKING INDIGENOUS ABILITY

To Whom It May Concern

In response to a presentation in Mount Isa on 5 April by DCITA, Mount Isa City Council has given consideration to making a submission to this program.

Council believes the program which is part of the \$1.1 billion *Connect Australia* package could provide significant benefits in Mount Isa by providing infrastructure and personnel who would connect many members of our indigenous community to the world of information technology.

Mount Isa has a population of some 24,000 people as well as many visiting individuals and groups from the many outer communities. Some 30% of the permanent population are of indigenous background however only a small number of those have any access or experience with internet based technology.

Bringing internet-based technology to the Indigenous Community of Mount Isa

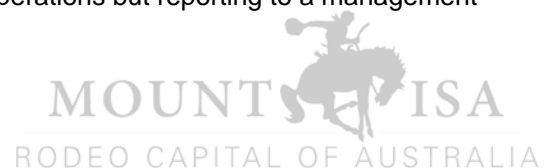
As a great number of the indigenous families in Mount Isa live in the suburb of Pioneer, it has been proposed that a shop or house be leased in that suburb which would then be fitted out with suitable computer equipment, furnishings such as work stations, administration office, phone lines, fax and necessary equipment to allow the facility to function as “a *place to connect*”.

It is believed that many of the people in the area do not have any access what-so-ever to a PC, let alone the internet and that it is necessary for most to travel into the city centre to fill out forms, check account balances or to do basic account transactions.

The Project

What has been considered for Mount Isa is to establish a management structure to oversee the set-up and operation of a Technology Hub located in the suburb of Pioneer where it would be accessible and used by the people in the vicinity.

To ensure culturally appropriate delivery of services and longer term sustainability, there is potential to link the project the local indigenous radio and communications organisation, Mob FM 100.9, given their focus on communication and IT. They could be responsible for day to day operations but reporting to a management committee.





It is expected Mount Isa City Council and possibly a number of other local organisations (reference to page four) would participate as partners and would be represented on the management committee to ensure the project had appropriate levels of support.

Elements that would underpin the project include:-

1. Coordination

- A community champion would coordinate all aspects of getting the project up and running and in all likelihood supervise the facility when it is completed.

2. Public Internet

- Access for the indigenous community to the internet, for use in making transactions such as internet banking, Centrelink, Family Services, housing, electricity, telephone and so on.
- Video conferencing, via Web Cam to people in outer settlements e.g. Doomadgee, Mornington Island, Camooweal and Lake Nash. Also to relatives who may be in correctional institutions at places such as Townsville can be connected to families in Mount Isa.

3. Training and Skills Development

- Community engagement
- Capacity building
- Enable communities to gain skills to use telecommunications technology
- Encourage youth to up-skill and use IT equipment and receive training

4. Communication

- Develop a web site for the centre promoting local issues, activities, news and events
- Encourage participation by youth
- Encourage use of centre to communicate with families in outlying communities
- Recording and archiving culturally significant material
- Communicate with communities in other regions

5. Entertainment/Drop In Centre

- Youth involved in developing the centre's website
- Youth recreational activities e.g. computer games
- Youth Counselling Service

6. Sustainability

- Facility to be adequately resourced (phased development)
- Management structure in place
- Business Plan developed
- Partnerships in place
- Leadership and community champions

7. A model for other communities to follow

- Once established and operating successfully, the facility will become a model for other communities
- The project will be cause for pride by those who are associated with it



Initial Project Period

In line with the recently announced *Connect Australia* package, it is proposed that the project be designed around the four year funding timeframe and subject to further funding with the potential for continuing in the longer term.

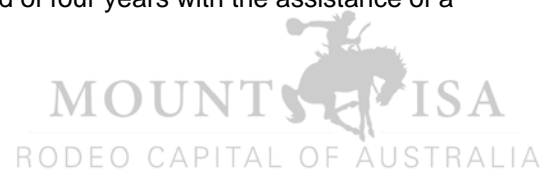
Project Budget

| | Item | Amount \$(k) | Number of years | Total \$(k) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Coordinator Salaries and overheads | o Training Delivery & Administration | 80 | 4 | 320 |
| | o Counselling | 40 | 4 | 160 |
| Location | Lease Shop or house | 20 | 4 | 80 |
| Building Modifications & Fit-out | Building, | 50 | 1 | 50 |
| | Furnishings, Comms, Electrics | 50 | 1 | 50 |
| Hardware | 5 x workstations (Server or Hub) | 15 | Each 2 years | 30 |
| | 1 x Video Conferencing Printer | 3.5 | " " | 7 |
| | | 1 | 1 x 4 | 4 |
| Internet | Service | 1.2 | 4 | 4.8 |
| | Set-up | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Phone | Line est | 0.30 | 1 | 0.30 |
| | Line rental | 0.36 | 1 x 4 | 1.44 |
| | Calls | 2.4 | 1 x 4 | 9.6 |
| Maintenance | IT equipment | 5 | 1 x 4 | 20 |
| | Cleaning | 2.5 | | 10 |
| Consumables | Power | 2 | 1 x 4 | 8 |
| | Stationary | 2 | | 8 |
| | Fares/ travel | 2 | | 8 |
| Management costs | Committee meetings | 2 | 1 x 4 | 8 |
| | | | | |
| Grand Total | | | | \$780,140 |

Investment represents \$195,035 per annum over four years

Auspecting Grant Funding

Mount Isa City Council proposes to submit to the Commonwealth Government, (in conjunction with other Government Agencies) that should this application be approved that a partnership is established with Indigenous Radio Mob FM to jointly manage the project for a period of four years with the assistance of a management committee.





Management Committee

The management committee would represent a number of key stakeholders (and not limited to), would include the following:-

Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
Mob FM
Kalkadoon Tribal Council
North West Cultural Heritage
Mount Isa Men's Resource Centre
Mount Isa Justice Group
Mount Isa Development & Recreation Women's Association
Mount Isa City Council
Telstra Country-wide
Arilla Paper Mob
TAFE

Mount Isa City Council believes the project would be supported by the above organisations and is worthy of consideration under the guidelines of your program. Additional details pertaining to the operations, anticipated outcomes and confirmation of project partners can be forwarded at a later date.

We await further advice from your department in respect to this proposal.

Yours faithfully

Michael Dougall
Chief Executive Officer

