

# Fellow Profile



## Associate Professor Sandy O'Sullivan University of the Sunshine Coast

Wiradjuri (Aboriginal) person, Deputy Head of the School of Creative Industries at USC, working in First Nations' creative practice, identity (queer and diverse), technologies and across Aboriginal representation and engagement.

**Fellowship title:** Promoting strategies and creating opportunities for inter/multimedia practice as a culturally appropriate dissemination tool for Indigenous postgraduate research training.

**Year completed:** 2011

**Expertise key words:** Creative Practice, Research Training, First Nations' HDR

**What did you achieve?:** The Fellowship focused on a major issue for the sector: that Indigenous research students had significantly reduced participation in the academy compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. Key issues that arose was the sector's understanding of the aspirations, needs and agency of First Nations' students, and especially of those engaging in research training.

A key recommendation of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Committee was the need to develop strategies pedagogically inline with Indigenous Knowledge practice, at the same time as promoting meaningful methods of merging the community experience of Indigenous research students with sound research training and appropriate outcomes that would reach Communities.

Through the Fellowship there were over 30 workshops where supervisory panels developed a better understanding of culturally appropriate dissemination research strategies to reach First Nations' Communities. The workshops also served to reinforce the need for greater agency and connectedness to Communities, and to mythbust ideas around research that we do in, and for, Communities as less rigorous. To do this, the Fellowship borrowed on some ideas from the newly developed identifier of non-traditional research outputs, and the research practices across creative industries to suggest alternative pathways to research than distanced engagement and a thesis-form.

As a learning and teaching exercise the focus was on providing supervisory panels with tools that could be explored in a comprehensive way with their higher degrees students, and that provided for non-Indigenous supervisors across disciplines a sense of the work being achieved across the First Nations' research space.

The lasting legacy of the Fellowship is a better understanding of the role of impact and engagement from research students into the Community.

**What does the sector need now?:** A continued presence in understanding the role of supervision of, and by, First Nations' Peoples across the disciplines.



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