



# **Lived Experience Research Project**

**2021**

**REQUEST FOR TENDER**

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## 1. SUBMISSION DETAILS

<b>Opening date</b>	Feb 15, 2021
<b>Closing date</b>	Midnight on March 31, 2021 Late submissions will not be accepted
<b>Lodgement method</b>	Via email to: <a href="mailto:majon@australianstogether.org.au">majon@australianstogether.org.au</a> Subject line: Lived Experience Research Proposal
<b>Tender Type</b>	Open / Competitive
<b>Questions about this tender</b>	Please send any questions by email to: <a href="mailto:majon@australianstogether.org.au">majon@australianstogether.org.au</a> Subject line: Lived Experience Research Project - Enquiry  Answers to questions received about the tender will be circulated to all parties who have communicated an interest in submitting.
<b>Australians Together contact person</b>	Name: Dr Majon Williamson-Kefu Position: Head of Research and Manager of Partnerships Email: <a href="mailto:majon@australianstogether.org.au">majon@australianstogether.org.au</a> Telephone: 0420306931

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Australians Together (AT) requires the services of an external organisation or group of organisations to design and conduct a qualitative research project.

The project will ascertain the degree and nature of impact of the use of Australians Together resources in schools on effecting change in the lived experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities in and around participating target schools.

## 3. BACKGROUND

Australians Together (AT) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and addressing injustices and inequities experienced by Australia's First Nations peoples. We believe this starts with a change in the perspectives of non-Indigenous Australians.

Australians Together is privately funded through philanthropists who have a desire to see change in this country. Established in 2010, AT is working to create new narratives by listening to the voices of First Nations People to help non-Indigenous people learn the true story of our shared history, understand how it's still having an impact today and imagine new ways to live together more respectfully.

AT's mission is to bring First Nations People and other Australians together by raising awareness and understanding of our shared story and its ongoing impact while encouraging meaningful responses. We focus specifically on engaging teachers, schools, and the education sector as the priority for effecting societal change. We offer both professional learning and a diverse suite of educational resources to enable teachers to engage Indigenous perspectives in their classroom practices.

AT's vision is that working with the education sector will catalyse new narratives and an increase of open discourse on the issues that have arisen since colonisations, enabling the broader Australian community to understand and acknowledge the true history and to contribute to a sense of healing within First Nations communities.

To date, AT has funded a variety of research including a desktop audit of teacher education programs and a broad national survey of inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and perspectives in teacher practice across a partner school association. We are currently undertaking a project with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) to examine the impacts of professional learning and curriculum resources in partner schools in SA and Victoria. This is an extension of an original project in which we partnered with BIITE to evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning workshops in changing teachers' confidence in two Lutheran system schools.

The Lived Experience Research Project is critical to the evaluation of the continuing operations of Australians Together (AT) because it examines the theory of change on which the core pillars of our work are based. This document outlines the need for an extensive, longitudinal research project on the lived experience of First Nations people around participating schools, with the aim of understanding change processes and testing the foundations on which our work has been built.

AT has expressed a North Star goal of “an improvement in life outcomes for Indigenous people”. Through our activities, projects and resources we claim to contribute to this type of positive change in the lived experiences of First Nations Peoples. However, we currently lack sufficient evidence, formalised data and research on whether our current approach and educational resources result in the types of demonstrable change we aim to achieve, specifically positive change in the lived experience of First Nations People.

The Lived Experience Research Project (Phase 1) would therefore develop an understanding of the connection between our work and change in the communities around the participating schools. It will establish a baseline for future change, and monitor early indicators and progress. We will work with a diverse cross-section of schools and may include, for example, Aboriginal parent-directed school/s, alternative school/s, large urban private school/s, small regional school/s and state school/s.

This three-year research project is the first phase of a longitudinal project potentially spanning 10-25 years. By undertaking this research, AT will build a better understanding of the relationship between the work being undertaken. This will include ascertaining whether First Nations perceptions connect this work with meaningful change both early in the project and on a longitudinal basis. This research would help us to monitor change over time, specifically concerning our work with the participating schools and communities. It will also establish a strong foundation for continuing this research more efficiently beyond Phase 1, which would help AT to see the bigger picture of longitudinal societal change.

### **3.1 Research Aims**

The aims of this research project are to:

1. establish a pre-engagement baseline;
2. identify early indications of change in the specified observation group; and
3. develop a framework to enable the continuation of this research independently to ensure a more cost-efficient option moving forward.

We have prepared the following broad guide research questions. Applicants are invited to edit or rewrite these questions as they deem appropriate. If applicants would like to discuss their intended changes in more detail, please contact AT directly.

### **Draft Research Questions**

- What is the lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities in and/or around targeted participating schools prior to the introduction of AT resources?
- In what ways does this change with the introduction of AT resources in the schools?
- What are the other outcomes on Indigenous students, families and communities from the schools' interactions with AT?

## **4. BUDGET**

For this research project, a total of up to \$260,000 will be available over 3 years. AT is open to the project being completed over a shorter time frame if that is preferable to the research team.

## **5. DESIRED ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE**

Please note that applications from consortiums are welcomed and desirable. Consortiums that include researchers from First Nations backgrounds, and First Nations organisations are strongly encouraged to apply.

The selected organisation/s will have a proven track record conducting high quality research projects and have finely tuned qualitative and quantitative research and analysis skills. The selected organisation/s will have a high level of experience conducting research in and around school, with specialisation in education settings and school environments a desirable trait.

Experience conducting research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will be considered favourably.

## 6. STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

### 6.1 Requirement / method

The design issues to be considered include:

#### Scope:

The intention of this research is to examine multiple sites for 3 years, to engage with a diverse cross-section of experiences. This may include 5-10 schools representing a cross-section of geographical, sector and year level contexts from across Australia. AT is open to this being a 2 year project, depending on the proposal.

#### Methodology:

We invite applicants to examine the research aims and put forward the methodology best suited to achieving those aims.

We encourage mixed-method approaches and a methodology that prioritises relationships. The methodology should also account for the longitudinal plans of this project, acknowledging that this is Phase 1 of a multi-phase project, and should enable AT to move forward efficiently and independently with clear objectives into subsequent phase/s.

#### Sample design:

Applicants may wish to build on existing relationships they have with schools or use the relationships that AT has with school associations across the country to select a cross-section of schools, which represent diverse settings. These may include remote, regional and urban contexts, as well as primary, middle and senior years, government, independent and faith-based schools. Applicants may also consider alternative schools.

After developing relationships with each of the target schools, the research team could conduct baseline research ideally before the schools have engaged with AT resources. Baseline research may take the form of surveys, interviews and /or yarning circles (or other methods deemed appropriate by the applicant. Schools could then begin to work with the suite of resources that AT offers to develop their staff, improve classroom practice and effect broader change within the school.

Following baseline research and schools initiating interaction with AT resources, the research team could conduct mid-project and end-of-project data collection to provide some indications of early change occurring as a result of the school's engagement with AT resources.

The findings could be reported through a combination of methods, including a written report to AT, a community presentation to the participants and journal articles and conference papers to the education researchers and academics.

### Relationships:

Relationships are a central pillar of the work and approach of AT and we would like to partner with an organisation or individual/s that understand and respect this priority. This should be embodied in the research design and reflected throughout the research proposal.

The following table provides an overview of the expected phases of the project and the suggested timing of each phase.

**Table 1. Project phases and timing**

<b>Project phase</b>	<b>Organisation Responsible</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Project briefing sessions	Australians Together and Successful Applicant/s	<b>April 15, 2021</b>
Application for ethical approval	Research team – member TBC	<b>June 30, 2021</b>
Literature review	Research team – member TBC	<b>Jul 31, 2021</b>
Finalisation of research design	Research team – member TBC	<b>Jul 31, 2021</b>
Baseline data summary report	Research team – member TBC	<b>Nov 30, 2021</b>
Interim / annual reports	Research team – member TBC	<b>Nov 30, each calendar year or 3 months after each round of data collection</b>
Mid-project progress meetings with Australians Together	Research team – member TBC	<b>Aug 2022</b>



Conducting main body of research	Research team – member TBC	<b>Aug 2021- Apr 2024</b>
Publication	Research team – member TBC	<b>Jun 2024</b>
Community reporting	Research team – member TBC	<b>Jul 2024</b>

## 6.2 Outputs / Services

### Project briefing session

A project briefing will be conducted by the AT Head of Research, Dr Majon Williamson-Kefu, and Executive Director, Stewart Bogle early in April 2021, at a time agreed with the successful applicant/s. AT is providing this briefing to address any concerns or questions that might arise and clarify any further details as necessary.

### Research Design

The successful applicant will lead the design of research methodology and will maintain clear and consistent communication with the Australians Together team regarding research design and implementation, including any challenges or barriers that arise.

### Baseline data

Early data should be comprehensive and function as an effective baseline for comparison of all future data. Ideally, early data will be collected prior to the participating school's engagement with AT resources. However, in certain circumstances AT acknowledges that this may not be possible.

### Qualitative research component

While we envisage a mixed-method approach, AT sees significant value in qualitative data that tells the stories of the participants and acknowledges the complexities of lived experiences. Story telling is a substantial part of AT's organisational approach and we would like this reflected in the research.

### **Quantitative research component**

AT recognises the potential value of concise quantitative data, specifically as we move towards approaching government departments and leadership teams in the education sector to build the case for change.

### **Recruitment of participants and conduct of fieldwork**

The successful applicant will be responsible for the recruitment of participants and must consider the requirements set out under section 4.1 heading 'Sample Design'. AT is willing to facilitate introductions and access to our existing partners who have expressed an interest in being involved in the research.

### **Analysis and Reporting**

The successful applicant/s will be required to maintain clear and consistent communication with AT, ensuring AT is informed on and engaged in the progress of analysis and reporting. This will include sharing early analysis of data, draft reports prior to finalisation and broader planning around community reporting and presentations, as well as any plans for publication/s or conference presentation/s.

## **6.3 Summary of Deliverables**

The successful applicant will deliver the following to Australians Together:

1. Literature Review
2. Baseline data summary report
3. Annual reports for interim findings and recommendations
4. A final report
5. A minimum of one peer-reviewed paper per year of the project for academic journal, as well as one conference presentation per year
6. A framework for independently carrying the project forward as a longitudinal project

## **7. TIMEFRAMES**

Please refer to Table 1 for the suggested timeframe for each phase of the research project. Applicants are welcome to provide and justify alternative timeframes to meet the same reporting requirements. The final timeframe will be discussed and agreed upon with the successful applicant.

## 8. RESPONSE FORMAT

Applicants are required to complete and return the Applicant Response Template by midnight on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Any questions received during the application period will be answered and circulated to all parties who have communicated an interest in submitting an application. Please see the attached Applicant Response Template for detailed instructions.

## 9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Australians Together will use the following criteria to assess each applicant:

- Understanding of the expectations of Australians Together, the organisation's mission, and the project requirements.
- Past experience of the applicant and the personnel in designing and delivering comparable projects, particularly experience and expertise in education settings, working in school environments and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Proven ability to work sensitively in culturally diverse settings.
- Capacity to implement the project and deliver the desired outputs within the allocated time frame.
- Proven capability in effective communication of key research findings to diverse audiences, including plain language reports to community, education-specific reports to schools and school leaders, and academic analysis for publication.
- High quality risk management skills.
- Financial capability and compliance.
- Detailed budget provided that represents value for money.
- Desirable: Proven ability to establish the framework for a longitudinal research project.
- Desirable: Proven ability to design the latter stages of a continuing project that can be run efficiently and effectively with minimum input by non-research specialists.

## 10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### 10.1 Disclaimer

This Request For Tender does not oblige Australians Together to enter into any legally binding contracts or agreements with an applicant.

Australians Together will not be liable for any acts or omissions of the respondent or costs or expenses incurred, as a result of the information provided by Australians Together in this RFT.

The respondent is deemed to have read and understood all relevant information associated with the RFT and warrants that their submission is complete and contains accurate information.

## **10.2 Intellectual Property**

All intellectual property developed in the course of the project, including methodology, data sets, reports and presentation materials, will be owned by Australians Together. The successful applicant/s agree that AT may use Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property ("ICIP") but ownership of any ICIP rights will remain with the traditional owners of such ICIP; and Background Intellectual Property of the Supplier or AT will remain the Intellectual Property of the relevant owner.

### **10.2.1 Moral rights of Attribution and Integrity**

- a) AT will attribute the Supplier as a co-author of the Deliverables;
- b) AT will consult the Supplier about how the Recording and information shared is incorporated into the Deliverables, and the Supplier must approve the final version of the Deliverables;
- c) Once the final version of the Deliverables is approved by the Supplier, AT agrees that no further changes will be made without going back to the Supplier for re-consultation and permission; and
- d) AT may not materially alter the Deliverables, or use them for another purpose, without the prior written consent of the Supplier.

### **10.2.2 Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property**

- a) ICIP refers to the rights of Indigenous peoples to their cultural heritage. Heritage comprises all objects, sites, expressions and knowledge, the nature or use of which has been transmitted or continues to be transmitted from generation to generation, and which is regarded as pertaining to a particular Indigenous group or its territory.
- b) The ownership of any ICIP contained in Deliverables will remain with the relevant traditional owners of such ICIP. If the Deliverables incorporate ICIP, the Supplier must advise AT of the cultural attribution to be given and must ensure the relevant traditional owners have consented to the use of the ICIP in the Deliverables, and to its proposed use by AT in accordance with this Agreement.

- c) In accordance with Indigenous cultural and intellectual property protocols, AT will attribute the traditional owners as advised by the Supplier, and re-consult with the Supplier for any new use or purpose.

### **10.3 Privacy**

Australians Together will use the information you have provided to make an assessment of the suitability of the respondent to design and conduct the quality improvement research project.

Information will be held in line with responsibilities under Section 273 (Duty of confidentiality) of the National Law.

Respondents should familiarise themselves with other policies relevant to this RFT including:

AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research (The AIATSIS Code)

### **10.4 Conflict of Interest**

If a respondent is concerned about the existence of, or potential existence of, a conflict of interest, they should notify Australians Together immediately. Australians Together will then determine how the matter should best be handled.

### **10.5 Ethical Behaviour**

Probity and ethical behaviour governs the conduct of all procurement activities at Australians Together.

All staff with the authority to procure goods and services or otherwise involved in the procurement process must act with integrity, probity, and ethically, and in line with the Australians Together Procurement Policy and Procedure.

Australians Together requires the same standards from those with whom it deals.