


SHARING STORIES
FOUNDATION

Nykina Community

IMPACT REPORT 2006, 2012-2020





Words from Annie Nayina, Nyikina Cultural Custodian.

“We have to look after the story and look after the Country. Our children have got to have the story so they can carry on.”

“This is really important for our kids. I want for our kids to learn not just the stories but all the places Woonyoomboo put down; the names he gave, and how he made the Country. He gave us everything and now I want the kids to have all the language. I can put that language down for them now. This project is for all Nyikina people and then for everyone to learn from.”

Our kids and their kids will be so happy for what they’ve done. I’m really pleased with them and what they have learned and what they have made and now I want them to keep learning so I want to put it down in the right way. Thank you for helping us to make this.”

- Annie Milgin March 2018

Introduction

SharingStories Foundation has worked with senior knowledge holders, Nyikina Mangala Cultural Custodians and the broader Jarlmadangah Community in the West Kimberley region for many years to help record and creatively interpret the story and knowledge of 'Woonyoomboo' – The Night Heron.

The Woonyoomboo Project began in 2006 when SharingStories Founder Liz Thompson and Annie Nayina Milgin, a Senior Nyikina Cultural Custodian, collaborated on a print version of the story.

Annie shared the story as it was passed to her by her father Darby Nangkiriny. It tells of how Woonyoomboo brought the Nyikina world into being and where he lived and travelled.

Woonyoomboo named and created all things for the Nyikina people, including the mighty Fitzroy River. He left language, law, ceremonies, dance, kin and skin relationships and vast libraries of knowledge in an epic Songline as he travelled.

The Woonyoomboo Project continued to evolve.

Since 2013, participants in SharingStories Digital Storytelling Program on Nyikina Country have brought the story to life using a wide range of digital arts media skills transferred during programs.

A vibrant, engaging community-produced multi-touch book interpretation of the story has been created under the guidance of Senior Knowledge Authorities. Filled with important Nyikina teachings about Country, Law, and Ceremony, the book contains original artwork, animations, soundscapes, songs, language and spoken word versions of the story of Woonyoomboo in both English and Nyikina.

It includes a dynamic interactive map with drone footage, songs, photographs and drawings relating to 26 important sites. More than 50 songs were recorded, some of them collectively recalled and remembered as senior community members travelled on Country together.

100 Nyikina senior custodians, young people and community members have joined together with the SharingStories Foundation to produce and distribute this unique insight into Nyikina Country, culture and language.



Best Educational
App/eBook, ATOM Awards.
Winner



Best Non-Fiction
Digital World Book Award
Finalist



Best Language/Cultural Production
First Nations Media Awards
Finalist

Over 11 Years

SharingStories offered

589

hours of programs for the Woonyoomboo project.

30

young people contributed

2921

hours towards the production.

Elders were involved for a total

774

hours in the creation of Woonyoomboo.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The **program led by community elders** supported the passing of knowledge to community members.

All of the community participants embraced the opportunity to impart knowledge, learn from their elders and work with technology.

The mapping of the story of Woonyoomboo occurred on **Nyikina Country**, and was further explored within the community and in the classroom.

On
Country

In
community

In
classroom

ON COUNTRY

323

hours of the Woonyoomboo program occurred on Country where the story and knowledge lives and can be taught.

IN COMMUNITY



151

hours of the Woonyoomboo program occurred in the community.

IN THE CLASSROOM



108

hours of the Woonyoomboo program occurred in the classroom.

TOTAL PROGRAM HOURS

2

Community Presentation

26

Co-curation/approvals

52

Pre and Post-production

98

Other arts development

102

Media Skill Development

304

Elders transferring knowledge

323

Storymapping

326

Language speaking and learning

589

total hours

"Culture - the songs and stories Woonyoomboo left for us - helps me know how to listen to Country. To the trained ears Country speaks and we can hear it if we listen hard enough. When we're teaching on Country, Country is teaching with us and the spirits of our old people are talking to us"

- Leela Watson, Nyikina Cultural Custodian and Program Participant

I look after Country and Country looks after me, because our leader, he left things for us for a reason. It's important to us, and we gotta follow what he left for us."

- (Marvin Watson, excerpt, Community Voices in Woonyoomboo)

MENTORING

The community's aspirations to nurture the learning of traditional knowledge in young people, created opportunities for young mentees to deeply engage in learning from elders. Mentees gained skills in media, arts, and a significant amount of time speaking and learning language.

Mentees

204

spent hours of learning from elders

165

of those hours encompassed speaking and learning language



USE OF TECHNOLOGY

To draw upon cutting edge technologies to hold and transmit some of the world's oldest stories (stories that have been passed on by senior people through oral traditions, song, dance and time on country). This way of working also acknowledges Aboriginal knowledge systems, brings Elders into the classroom to take up their role as teachers and returns children to Country with their Elders for the purpose of intergenerational transmission and media production.

Dave Palmer
Independent Evaluator, Murdoch University

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

iBook
2020

Film
2020

Interactive
Panel
2021-22

Education
Resources
2019-

Radio Program
2021-22

Cultural
Education
Portal
2022

Through the creation of these cultural works there is increased capacity for **cultural continuity** and provides opportunities for the nation to learn about and celebrate First Nations culture.

COMMUNITY VOICES AND FEEDBACK

"I have been working with SharingStories for the longest time because they really listen and they help me and my community to hold on to our culture. We have been making movies and animations and using the drone to see our stories and our land from a different perspective. We have recorded lots of stories in Nyikina now that all crossover and map our Country and everyone is feeling really proud of the work they have done."

- Annie Milgin (Support Letter)

"This book gives the young people knowledge about their Storylines and their ancestors... Culture is a big part of who I am – It makes me feels strong and proud."

- Anita Gray,
Community Voices in Woonyoomboo iBook

"I wouldn't be who I am if I didn't have those songs and stories and culture. Carrying on the culture connects me to my old people, to the knowledge the old people have carried and passes on. All that knowledge came though their ears, their heart"

- Leela Watson,
Community Voices in Woonyoomboo iBook

"We've got to make sure our culture stays strong, got to teach the kids their stories, their language and their law."

- John Darraga,
(Community Voices in Woonyoomboo iBook)



