Inquiry for Indigenous science students
What we’re doing

• Developing Indigenous-themed, hands-on, inquiry-based science education resources that are linked to the Australian Curriculum
• Delivering professional development for teachers focused on increasing cultural competence and knowledge of science inquiry skills
• Forming professional learning communities with teachers in school clusters
• Building links with the local Indigenous community.

School clusters

Inquiry for Indigenous Science Students (I²S²) targets year 5 to 9 school students in mainstream metropolitan and regional schools.

The program encourages schools to work together in clusters to support each other and develop their skills in increasing their cultural capacity and science inquiry delivery.

Each cluster includes a secondary school working with multiple primary schools to ensure a smooth pathway for students from primary through to secondary school.

Class resources

Schools and teachers are supported with classroom materials and other resources to assist with teaching science using contexts that highlight the links between

Bringing Indigenous and western science knowledge together to engage students and help them excel
Indigenous and western science knowledge and ways of working.

Professional development for teachers builds lifelong skills in inquiry-based teaching and learning as well as cultural competence.

\textit{I}^2\textit{S}^2 draws on best practice in inquiry-based science education and Indigenous education and supports teachers to implement the Australian Curriculum.

**Curriculum links**

The Australian Curriculum identifies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures as an important cross-curriculum priority. Engagement with \textit{I}^2\textit{S}^2 will ensure all students – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – have an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the world’s oldest continuous living cultures.

Using contexts that highlight the historic and enduring high-level science inquiry skills for which Indigenous Australians are renowned, students undertake hands-on inquiry activities as they work through the requirements of the science curriculum.

\textit{I}^2\textit{S}^2 engages Indigenous students and exposes them to potential science careers. Many science-based careers can be culturally relevant and assist Indigenous Australians in maintaining their connection to country.
Pilot program

A pilot program was run in 2015 to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach.

Six clusters were part of the pilot involving 14 schools across Queensland and New South Wales. The program will continue to expand over the next four years including clusters in to South Australia and Western Australia.

$PS^2$ is part of a broader Indigenous science, technology, engineering and mathematics education program managed by CSIRO in partnership with the BHP Billiton Foundation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
www.csiro.au/indigenous-education

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