

CEO Workshop

September 2025



Beyond the Numbers

How Strategic Planning and Reporting Drive Sustained Impact and Legacy

Session Overview

This session provided an opportunity to reflect on the program's achievements so far and to explore shared ambitions for its future. It reinforced the importance of strategic planning and reporting for ensuring the TIS program continues to grow stronger, create lasting impact, and evolve with community needs.

At the start of the session, organisations were asked to share two reflections:

- One thing your organisation is most proud of in relation to the TIS program
- One aspiration you have for the program moving forward

These reflections were later collated to form a collective legacy and direction for the program. Responses demonstrated that TIS Program funded organisations are achieving [strong, community-led outcomes](#) grounded in [self-determination, culture, and collaboration](#). The program is proudly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led, with local workforce strengths, trusted partnerships, and cultural authenticity driving innovative, place-based activities. These efforts are creating real impact - from youth leadership and creative digital engagement to stronger community participation and behaviour change. There is a shared commitment to deepen this impact through [expanded reach](#), sustained [youth empowerment, workforce growth, and smoke and vape free environments](#).

This activity highlighted the importance of planning and reporting for driving program success and how legacy is an important part of planning for the future. When we plan for the future, we are building our legacy. We can learn from what has gone before (program reporting):

- Planning helps clarify priorities locally and nationally
- Reporting provides insights to guide smarter, community-focused decisions and future opportunities.

Using the metaphor of legacy as a campfire, participants explored the future of the TIS program in small groups. Participants reflected on what fuels the program:

- the people and resources that sustain it (logs/fuel)
- its successful activities (the flames),
- what remains to inspire future opportunities (embers).

Participants were also asked to think about who's gathered around the fire. Who do we want to draw to its warmth, and is anyone missing?

The activity highlighted how planning and reporting help clarify priorities, guide smarter decisions, and spark ideas for the next phase of the program. Analysis of the campfires provided the following themes, which reflect the collective strengths, aspirations, and future direction identified by participants:

Key take aways

- [Self-determination and Aboriginal Sovereignty](#) continue to be the foundation of success.
- Long-term [funding](#), [workforce stability](#), and [youth leadership](#) are essential for lasting impact.
- Future focus should be on [deeper connection](#), [structural change](#), and [sustained community empowerment](#).

Achievements that drive program success

Self-determination and Aboriginal Sovereignty

The program is proudly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led, grounded in cultural authority and community control. This is why it works.

- Culture and identity shape every activity, from murals and music to language and youth projects.
- Communities design, deliver, and guide the work, ensuring authenticity and relevance.
- Young people are stepping up as leaders - youth ownership signals long-term sustainability.
- This self-determined, sovereign approach builds trust, visibility, and long-term sustainability.

Partnerships, Workforce, and Collaboration

Strong community ownership and local leadership are at the core of program successes.

- Longstanding partnerships with ACCHOs, local governments, and community organisations drive collective impact.
- Trust, collaboration, and locally grounded teams are key drivers of success.
- Many staff bring lived experience and deep community ties – this is an important workforce strength
- Teams are cohesive, passionate, and locally grounded.

Innovation and Impact

Creative, digital, and data-informed campaigns are vital for influence and longevity

- Creative campaigns like We Breathe TIS and Puyu Blaster have achieved wide reach and positive recognition.
- Innovative use of social media, video, and branding keeps TIS messages fresh and relevant.
- TIS is now a visible, trusted community presence contributing to real behaviour change - people are quitting smoking and vaping, and messages are spreading through families and friendship networks.

Aspirations

Expand Program Reach and Local Engagement

A skilled, passionate, culturally grounded workforce is essential for program reach and sustained impact

- Increase reach to priority populations, including pregnant women and families, youth, and people in rural and remote areas.
- Strengthen community ownership and local voices in program design to ensure the activities are tailored to local needs.
- Upskill local Aboriginal health workers and support place-based, community-driven approaches.
- Maintain national consistency while meeting local priorities.

Youth Empowerment and Digital Innovation

Young people are key change agents for a nicotine-free generation.

- Support youth-led campaigns, digital hubs, and storytelling platforms
- Use social media, video, and online platforms to connect with younger audiences
- Build youth capacity to design and lead creative tobacco control initiatives.

Increase Smoke and Vape Free Environments

Reducing smoking and vaping contributes to healthier futures and chronic disease prevention.

- Support smoke and vape free spaces that make healthier choices easier.
- Shift from awareness to creating environments that enable healthy choices.
- Work with communities, schools, and local organisations to embed supportive smoke and vape free policies.

Sustainability, Growth and Impact

Sustainable resourcing underpins all program successes - from workforce to innovation. However embedding TIS into health systems and policy is needed to safeguard long-term impact.

- Secure long-term funding to maintain and expand program.
- Workforce stability and forward planning beyond 2027 are key priorities.
- Continue to review and adapt program content to stay relevant.
- Strengthen evidence of impact through research, stories, and evaluation to guide continuous improvement.



Figure 1: Legacy campfire themes

Conclusion

This session reaffirmed the strength, resilience, and future potential of the TIS program. The reflections and discussions demonstrated that the program's greatest achievements come from its foundations in self-determination, cultural authority, and locally driven action. The passion, creativity, and commitment of the workforce, combined with strong partnerships and community leadership, continue to shape meaningful change across the country. Participants highlighted both the impact already being achieved and a clear, shared vision for what comes next. There is deep commitment to expanding reach, strengthening youth leadership, growing a stable and skilled workforce, and creating environments where smoke- and vape-free choices are supported and sustained. The campfire metaphor reminded us that the program's legacy is built through intentional planning, strong reporting, and the collective energy funded organisations bring to the flame.

As the program looks ahead, its success will rely on maintaining long-term resourcing, embedding tobacco control within broader health systems, and continuing to innovate while staying grounded in culture and community wisdom. By building on what has been created and nurturing the embers of new opportunities, the TIS program is well positioned to continue reducing smoking and vaping harm and to support healthier futures for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Workshop Participants

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