



Release date: 26 July 2018

ABC donates library to Indigenous students

The ABC has donated more than 10,000 reference books to Indigenous Australian students in the Northern Territory, to strengthen their education and employment opportunities.

The donation of the ABC Reference Library collection to the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education features 10,500 carefully-curated titles with a strong Australian focus, across biography, politics, history and current affairs.

The reference books were packed into 265 boxes and transported by train from Sydney to the Batchelor Institute's Desert Peoples Centre Campus in Alice Springs, in July 2018, to help support the education and vocational training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across the Northern Territory.

The Batchelor Institute is Australia's oldest, specific-purpose provider of university education, vocational training and research for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Since the late 1960s, it has successfully supported generations of students, their families and communities, particularly in regional and remote Australia.

Mary Jane Stannus, ABC Head of Content Services, said: "The ABC's move to digital resources offered us the opportunity to find a good home for our extensive reference books. We are proud to donate our carefully-curated collection to the Batchelor Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary students and communities, as part of the ABC's broader commitment to Indigenous Australians."

Gillian Terry, Manager of the Batchelor Institute's Library Service, said: "We are thrilled to receive such an extensive collection from the ABC, as it will broaden our campus libraries and support learning in remote locations in Central Australia. Our focus at Batchelor Institute is to champion Indigenous development in all its forms but particularly through improved literacy, so this material is highly valued and appreciated".

The ABC has separately donated some of its rare books to the National Library of Australia and several state libraries and cultural institutions, including the National Film and Sound Archive, Jessie Street Women's Library, Parramatta Heritage Centre, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Victorian College of the Arts, Monash University, Melbourne Athenaeum Library, Victoria University, JMC Academy, Photography Studies College, Geelong Library & Heritage Centre, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide Central School of Art and Goldfields Library Corporation.

These donations were made possible by the ABC's move to digital resources, which has improved efficiencies and resources by minimising duplication and offering access to e-books and digital publications for ABC employees, straight to their desktop or mobile. These digital resources enable the ABC to continually adapt and enhance its collection to meet the needs of its programs and content makers.

The ABC has retained some ABC print publications and reference books.

The ABC has also improved efficiencies by centralising its Sound Library collection of CDs in Melbourne. Digitised music is now available on-demand to ABC content makers across the country. A separate niche collection of classical music CDs will remain at the ABC Ultimo Centre for use by ABC Classic FM producers in Sydney.

The ABC has donated duplicate CDs to cultural institutions, such as the National Film and Sound Archive, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, State Library of Victoria and Monash University. These resources will now be more accessible by the public, in line with the ABC's commitment to inform, educate and entertain Australians.



Batchelor Institute students Tiarne de Beer and Allen Minniecon in Alice Springs, with books donated by the ABC. Photo: Angela Harrison

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