

THIS WEEK YOU WILL...

- Explore different types of nature-based businesses.
- Choose one type of business, then brainstorm ideas for specific products.
- Identify your best ideas and present them in a visually-striking way.

INTRODUCTION

As you know from the previous session, this year's ATSIAP Challenge will have you build a toolbox (a public repository of ideas and resources) to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs.

Have you wondered: "The internet is already full of resources for entrepreneurs, how could we possibly top that?". To which I reply: have you considered how much time and effort it takes to read through thousands of online resources? And then to organize and summarise the findings? Most entrepreneurs start on their own, perhaps as part of a small team, or as a family. They have very little time to juggle many tasks, and some might not have sufficient access to computers or internet. Chances are, they'll end up cutting their research short, possibly missing out on crucial information. On the other hand, it seems to me like a pack of super smart, high-school students would have a field day helping out with those tasks, don't you think? ATSIAP students eat research for breakfast. So, let's be the Research Team Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs around Australia need. Our toolbox will absolutely top the internet because it will:

- Talk specifically to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs
- Focus on businesses that can be run from regional/remote communities
- Care for the sustainability of our communities and natural environment
- Save endless hours and effort, with a top-notch quality output!

This week, we'll narrow our scope down to one type of nature-based business (for example, eco-tourism) and a few product options (e.g. outback survival skills student excursions). Ready?

BEFORE WE START

- ☐ **Pick a facilitator.** This person will be responsible for keeping everyone running on schedule. **If you are the facilitator:** don't be shy to prompt others to get started or stop doing an activity, you're just doing what is best for the team; also, find a timer or stopwatch and have some practice setting 1- and 2-minute timers. **Other team members:** support your team by following the facilitator's cues to start and stop the various activities, and by respecting other members' turn to speak. Our facilitator will be: _____.
- ☐ **Be kind.** The ideation process works best if we hold back any judgement of others' ideas, or even our own! So, give yourself and others permission to be silly. You might find the more ideas you let out, the better they get!
- ☐ **Be present.** Some people feel uncomfortable coming up with ideas on the spot and sharing them with others. Some have too many ideas and won't stop talking. That's all ok. The main rule for this exercise, however, is to **be present**. That is: **speak** when it's your turn to speak, and **listen intently** to others when it's theirs.
- ☐ **Pen, paper, tape.** Each person will need 4 or 5 blank sheets of papers, something to write/draw with, and something to stick paper to the walls (blue tack or masking tape). It's a good idea to watch Graham Shaw's video about sketching ideas first. The video is available from the Challenge's website, under 'Week 2 – Additional Resources'.

Is the facilitator ready with that timer? Off you go!

ACTIVITY 1 - THE NATURE OF THE BUSINESS

This ATSIAP Challenge focuses on a special kind of enterprise: nature-based businesses.

What is a nature-based business? Nature-based businesses are defined as “socioeconomic initiatives that make profit by marketing, promoting and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services”¹. ‘Ecosystem services’ is a fancy term to refer to any benefits humans receive from nature. Take deserts, for example. Some of the ecosystem services derived from deserts include archeological features (e.g. fossils), places of cultural significance, unique landscapes and species, and unpolluted night skies, among others. A nature-based entrepreneur is someone who finds a way to make money from such services, while protecting or even enhancing the resource. In the desert example, a nature-based entrepreneur could earn money by setting up an astronomy tower in the middle of the desert to sell visitors an unforgettable star-gazing experience. This entrepreneur could *protect* the desert by building only low-impact visitor infrastructure, and even *enhance* it by mixing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and stories about the stars. There are many different types of nature-based businesses:

Raw or primary products:

- Sustainably grown food
- Sustainable or recycled raw materials (e.g. wood, paper, fabric, etc.)

Manufactured goods:

- Eco-friendly technology (e.g. water-saving device)
- Wild or native plant products (e.g. food, medicine)
- Hand-made or eco-friendly items (e.g. fashion, homewares, etc.)
- Arts and crafts

Services:

- Nature restoration/protection
- Nature- or experience-based tourism
- Equipment hire
- Blogging, content production
- etc.

Time to work:

- ☐ As a team, choose up to 4 business categories to research further **(1 minute)**.
- ☐ Assign one category to each member (it's ok if two or more members are assigned the same category).
- ☐ Members will now work individually in the following activity (page 4) **(10 minutes)**.

¹ Taken from 'Are Nature-Based Businesses Really Innovative? An Assessment of European Entrepreneurial Activities', a report published in 2017 by Ecstar Natural Talents with funding from the European Commission.

Exploring business opportunities in

(your assigned business category)

Three examples of **sustainable** business products in this category include: (Search online for examples of specific products, include those you liked best)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

From what the websites say, the customers willing to pay for these products/services are mostly: (This may not be explicitly stated in the websites. If required, use your intellect to deduct or infer from the information that is available)

1. Individuals or Businesses? (type of customer)
2. Male, female? couples, families? younger, older? (demographics)
3. People who live locally? Visitors? People who live overseas? (location)

I believe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs could make products/services in this category even more innovative or unique by... (use your personal knowledge and imagination)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Take turns to share your findings with the team!

ACTIVITY 2 - STAND-UP AND STORM

You've just shared your research about a specific businesses sector, and reflected collectively about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs could put an innovative spin on green enterprises. Now it's your turn to imagine potential nature-based products or services. The following activity has been loosely adapted from the 'Design Sprint' method².

Prepare

- Each team member:
 - Grab a blank piece of paper and something to write (e.g. pen, marker).
 - If possible, pick a place nearby where you'll feel comfortable engaging your creative brain. For some of us, creative thinking may involve talking aloud to ourselves, making faces, moving around, lying down... so find yourself a suitable thinking space.

Time to brainstorm!

- The goal is to write down as many business ideas as you can, filling both sides of the paper if possible.
- The businesses should link to nature in some way, and be suitable to be run from regional or remote locations.
- Don't worry about practicalities at this stage ("I don't know how to produce that", "will it make profit?", "how many employees will I need?", etc.). Rocket-launching? Yes can do.
- **Everything goes** and should be written down: good, bad, boring, crazy, original, unoriginal, simple, ambitious, variations of the same idea, variations to ideas you've heard earlier,... you get it. Keep the ideas flowing, don't stop to judge them.
- A rough sentence per idea is enough. For example: "Postcards endangered species".
- Having said that, try to be specific. "Nature tourism" doesn't say much, whereas "night wildlife spotting for families" makes a clear point.
- If you're feeling a bit 'blank', try some of these strategies:
 - In the previous activity, the team identified opportunities for innovative or unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander products. Start with one of those.
 - What are the first 3 things that come to your mind when you think about Australian nature? (mine are: "brigalow", "barramundi", "bottlebrush"). Challenge yourself to imagine 3 businesses out of each!
- **Facilitator: Allow 8 minutes.**

² 'Design Sprint - A Practical Guidebook for Building Great Digital Products' (book) was written by Richard Banfield, Todd Lombardo and Trace Wax and published in 2016.

Regroup

- At the end of the brainstorming, each person takes some time to review their ideas and pick their best 2. Circle or highlight them. **2 minutes.**
- Each person now draws rough sketches of their ideas (1-page sketch per idea). Check the example in the next page. **3 minutes.**

Share

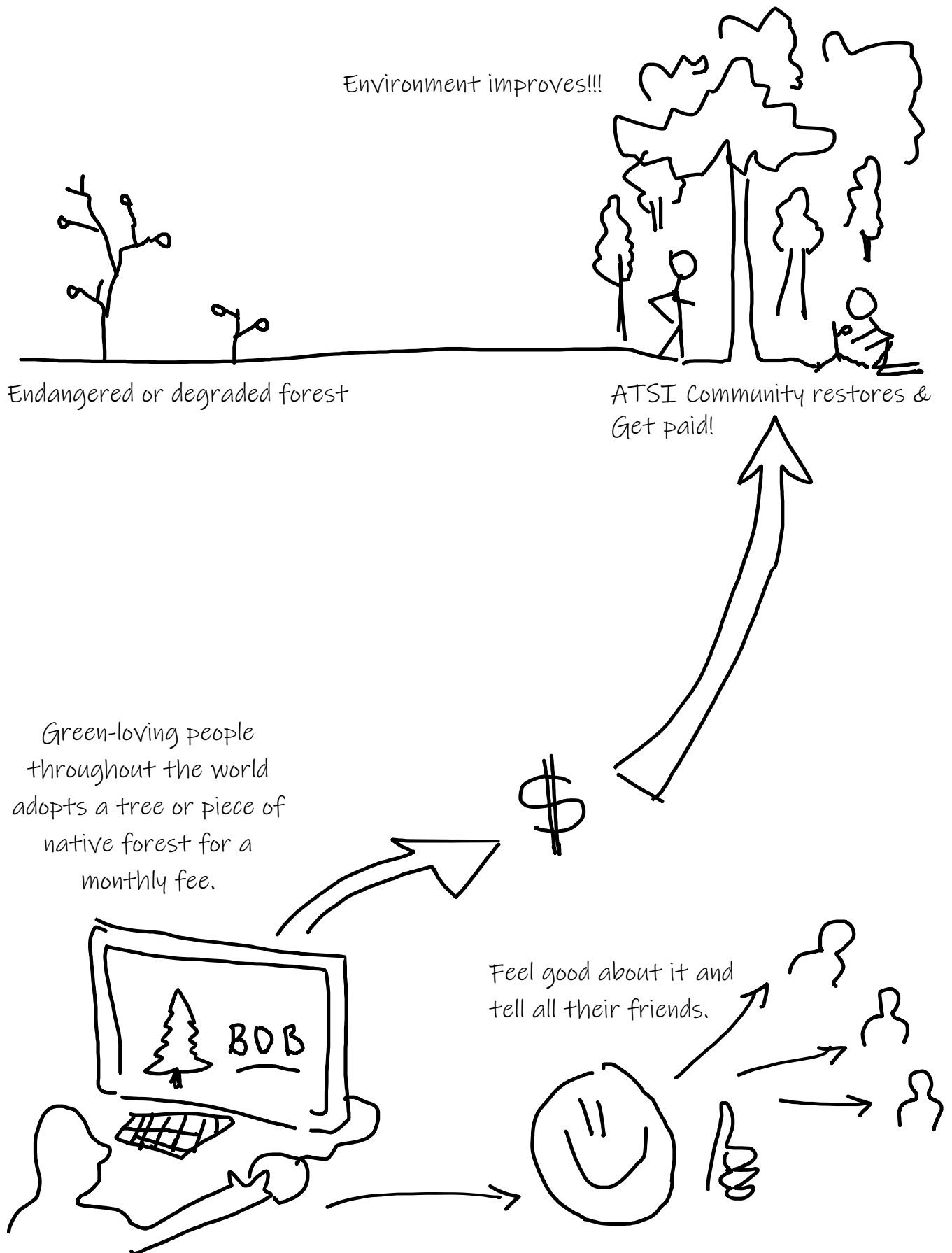
- Team members take turns to share their ideas with the team, using their sketches and a few sentences (e.g. "my idea is to sell ____ to _____. I like it because ____"). **Allow about 30 seconds per idea.**
- Put up all posters on the wall using blue tack or masking tape.
- Wow together at your awesome gallery of ideas ;)

Vote

- Now each person gets to vote for the ideas she/he liked best out of the lot.
- Each person gets 3 votes. Cast a vote by drawing a star or smiley inside the poster. You can give all your votes to a single idea, or spread them in different ones, whatever you want. It's ok to vote for your own ideas. **2 minutes.**
- When the voting has concluded, count the votes to find the 1 or 2 most voted ideas. **1 minute.**

The team has voted for their preferred ideas. Congratulations to the individuals who produced them! However, keep in mind these ideas are only a sketch, a starting point, and they will continue to evolve as the team explores and learns about nature-based businesses. Also, these ideas are now the team's, and all members should feel free to contribute to them and help give them shape.

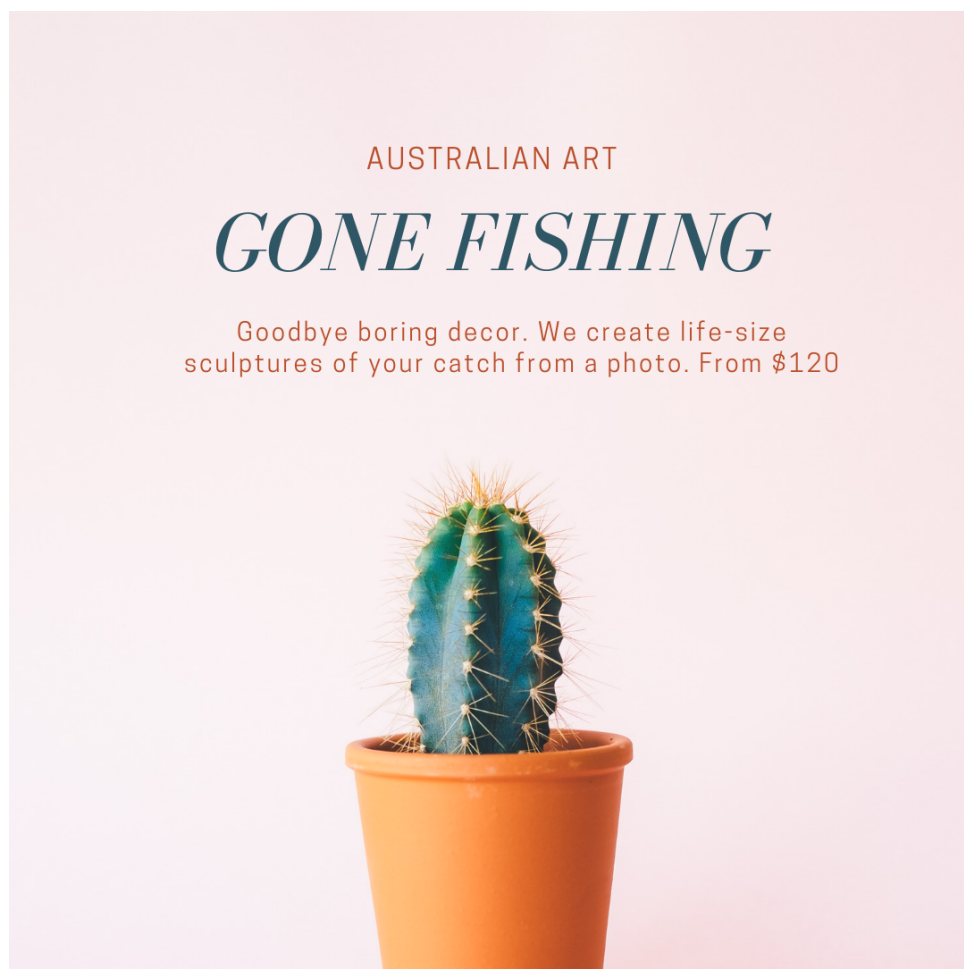
Adopt-a-Forest



ACTIVITY 3 - FULL COLOUR, PLEASE

After all that hard thinking, it's time for some fun.

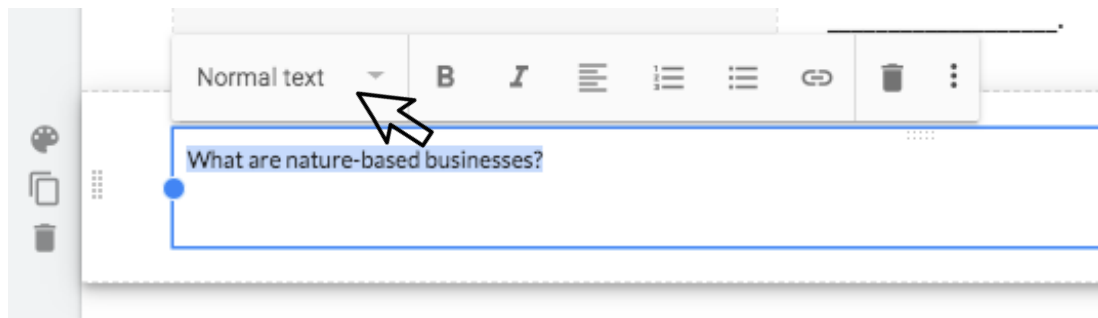
- Head to www.canva.com
- Sign up for an account using an existing email or facebook account. One sign-up for the entire team is enough, as you'll be working together on this one.
- When prompted, choose the 'student' option.
- Click 'Skip' when asked to invite others to collaborate.
- For this exercise, choose the template 'Instagram Post' or 'Logo'. They're nice and square.
- Have a go at creating striking visual props for your selected business ideas! Pick something relatable from the existing examples, come up with a catchy name and slogan for your product, and that's it. I've copied mine below for you to have fun at.
- When you've finished each design, click on 'Download' (top right) and save the file to your computer.



ACTIVITY 4 - PUBLISH IT

To conclude this Week's activities, let's publish our work.

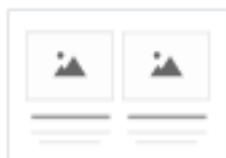
- Head back to your team's Google account, and open the working file for your website. Instructions for getting into Google and Sites (the website editor) are available in Week 1's activity sheets.
- On the right-hand column, under 'Insert', click on 'Text box'. A new textbox will appear on your website.
- Write the title 'What are nature-based businesses?' within the textbox. To increase the size of the font, select the text you just typed, click on the styling tool (see image below), then click on 'Title'.



- Below your title, in a new line, write a definition of nature-based businesses (a few sentences or short paragraph). It's ok to copy the one given in Activity 1 (make sure to include the source), to search a different one, or draft one in your own words. Repeat the trick above, this time to change the size of the font to 'Subheading'. It should now be looking roughly like this:



- Insert another Text box. As a title, type in the name of the first business category you researched (e.g. "Arts and Crafts"). Below, state what you collectively like about this type of business, list the examples of existing businesses you found on the internet, and share your thoughts about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs could make products/services in this category even more innovative or unique (from Activity 1).
- Repeat for the remaining business categories.
- Lastly, insert an additional Text box, and title it: "Our business ideas".
- From the right-hand column, under 'Layouts', select the block with two large images.



- Click on the plus sign to upload the images you created using www.canva.com.
- The new sections of your website should now look something like this:

What are nature-based businesses?

My definition of nature-based business.

Arts & Crafts

What we like about arts and crafts businesses is _____. Some examples of businesses in this area include _____, _____ and _____. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs could put an innovative spin on arts and crafts products by _____.

Our business idea



- When you're done, click on 'Publish' to update the live version of your website with the latest changes.
- See you next week!