



**Australian Government**  
**Indigenous Business Australia**

**Koori Mail Column**  
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**Education – Achieve, Share, Enhance**

The decision to take on study as a mature age student can be a difficult one. There are many questions you ask yourself such as, Do I have the time? Do I have the ability? Can I afford it? Can I juggle study and family responsibilities?

Achieving higher levels of education is an important pathway to accomplishing both career and personal goals. The knowledge and skills gained are invaluable to advance your career, but once shared, it can also enhance the development of your community.

The recently released *2009 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators Report* points to a large gap in the level of education of Indigenous Australians compared to non-Indigenous Australians.

The low numbers of well-educated Indigenous people within Indigenous communities is often cited as a contributing factor to the frequent lack of economic development and participation by those communities in the mainstream economy.

With encouraging Indigenous economic development in mind, IBA has developed its Indigenous Scholarship Fund.

The first round of IBA's Scholarship Fund is now open. The Fund aims to provide mature age Indigenous Australians with opportunities to develop their financial, commerce, business or leadership knowledge and skills through education which will contribute to economic development in Indigenous communities.

It is well recognised that mature-aged people make great personal and financial sacrifices in order to achieve greater levels of education. By providing both financial and structural support mechanisms, this scholarship program is designed to reduce many of the obstacles encountered by aspiring mature age students wishing to achieve educational qualifications.

IBA Scholarships are intended for mature age Indigenous Australians facing financial barriers that prevent them from undertaking study. The Fund will provide tailored financial assistance to successful applicants, allowing them to undertake study in commercial and economic management at their preferred institution. Qualifications can be achieved at recognised education institutions such as TAFE, University and other relevant education providers.

Applications for this round of Scholarships close 30 September 2009, and are open for mature age Indigenous Australians looking to study in the first semester of 2010.

Application forms, eligibility criteria and further information are available at [www.iba.gov.au](http://www.iba.gov.au) or for other enquiries email [scholarships@iba.gov.au](mailto:scholarships@iba.gov.au) or call 1800 107 107.