

## Connection to place



Organisation:

## Town Team Movement

Website: [www.townteammovement.com](http://www.townteammovement.com)

Focus: First Nations



Town Team Movement's South Hedland Youth Changemaking Program set out to help youth reconnect with their community by reimagining the places they live in. South Hedland youth were given responsibility and empowered to solve problems impacting their community.

The program's aim was to break down barriers, promote volunteering, and support young people to build a sense of ownership, pride and belonging by positively influencing change.

### APPROACH

Town Team Movement partnered with organisations including Polly Farmer Foundation, Spinifex Hill Studios, the Town of Port Hedland, RAC, Julyardi Aboriginal Corporation, Kariyarra Aboriginal Corporation; Youth Involvement Council and Volunteering WA. They worked closely with Elders and local First Nations people to co-design and co-create a central public space that people love and connect with.

The project team facilitated sessions to support youth to design and create a 40-metre road mural along Wise Terrace. The project was place led and driven by the local community.

### OUTCOME

The completed mural expressed local stories and depicted the youth's connection to Country. Town Team Movement's approach connected and mobilised young people, building a strong sense of belonging and connection with public space and civic action.

The young participants felt a sense of achievement and pride, as well as a stronger connection with peers. The project created a platform and opportunity to showcase their work. Through the process, the youth learnt about leadership, teamwork and the benefits of volunteering in the community. **[Click here to watch a video about the South Hedland Youth](#)**

**Changemaking Program** which has become a roadmap for engaging First Nations youth volunteers.

***"This project inspired me. It made me get out and do something, and make the community come together."***

**– Student, South Hedland**

***"I'm not a social person so this encouraged me to go out and try new things."*** – Student, South Hedland.

***"It was authentic collaboration, the students were truly involved, their voices were heard, and they were part of the project from beginning to end, and still are. Most see their work every day when they walk through"***

**– Jessica Albers, Follow the Dream**

### LEARNINGS

- While ideas and energy can create structure it's important to avoid preconceived or predetermined outcomes.
- Allow extra time and resources to form genuine connections and relationships.
- It is critically important to bring First Nations culture into the public realm.
- Value everyone's time and ideas through a curated approach; celebrate results and expand on successful outcomes.
- Use end-to-end engagement. Trust your community to be key decision makers and equal collaborators.
- Distribute power and provide opportunities to celebrate cultural heritage, diversity, and pride.
- Build leadership capacity in young people: develop their skills and confidence, foster a sense of belonging and connection, and create a sense of achievement and pride in their work.