



Business planning for Aboriginal cultural tourism



Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge and honour the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory and recognise the continuation of culture, connection to lands, water and country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

About this guide

Business plans are an important tool for planning, building and successfully running your Aboriginal tourism business. In this guide, learn what a business plan is and how it can help you start, grow, improve or manage a sustainable Aboriginal tourism business.

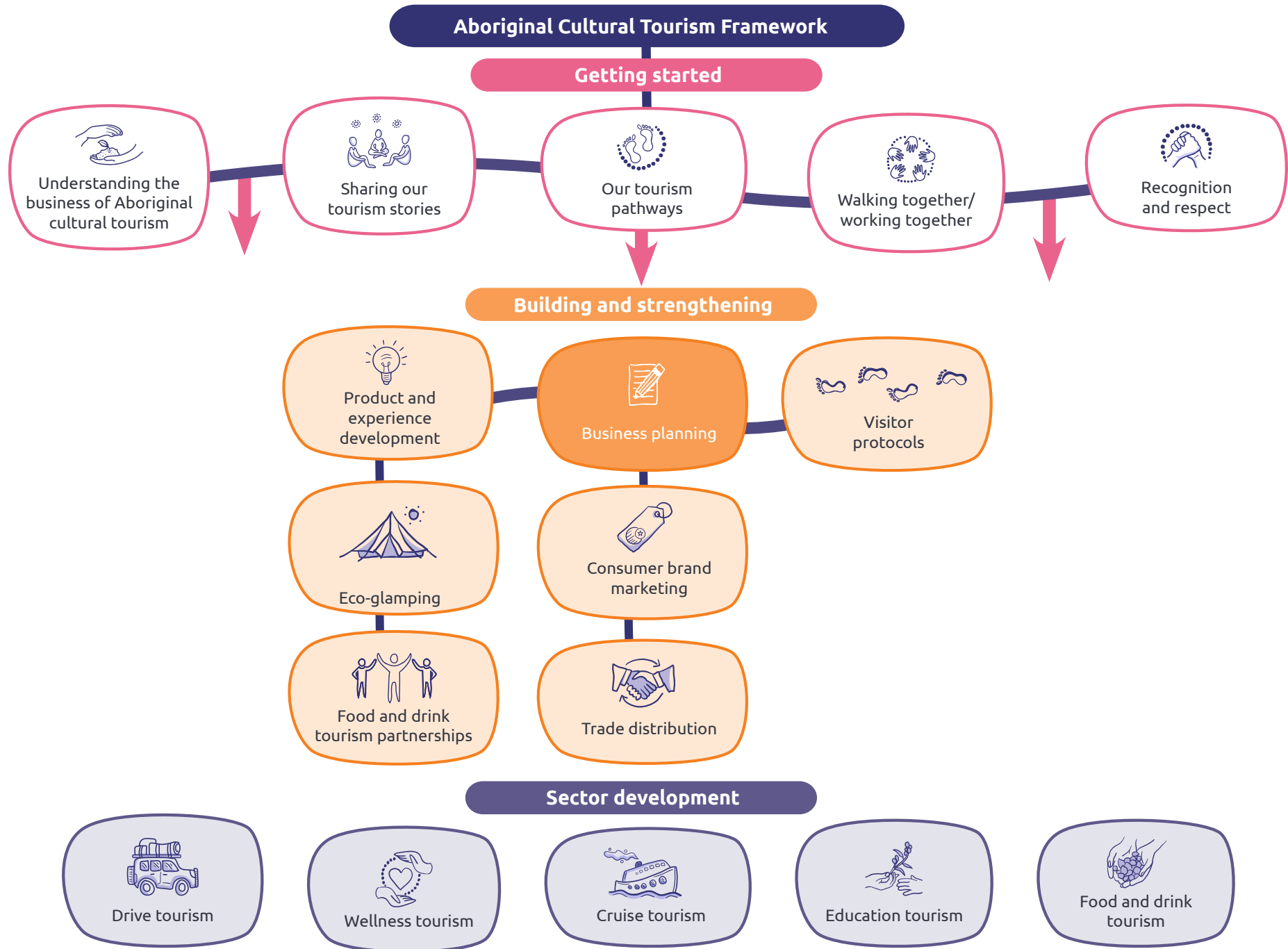
More information

For more information and access to other Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Framework resources visit www.tourismandeventsnnt.com.au or contact Tourism and Events's Aboriginal tourism team today.

PH: 08 8999 7420 E: Aboriginal.tourismeventsnt@nt.gov.au



Tools to help you



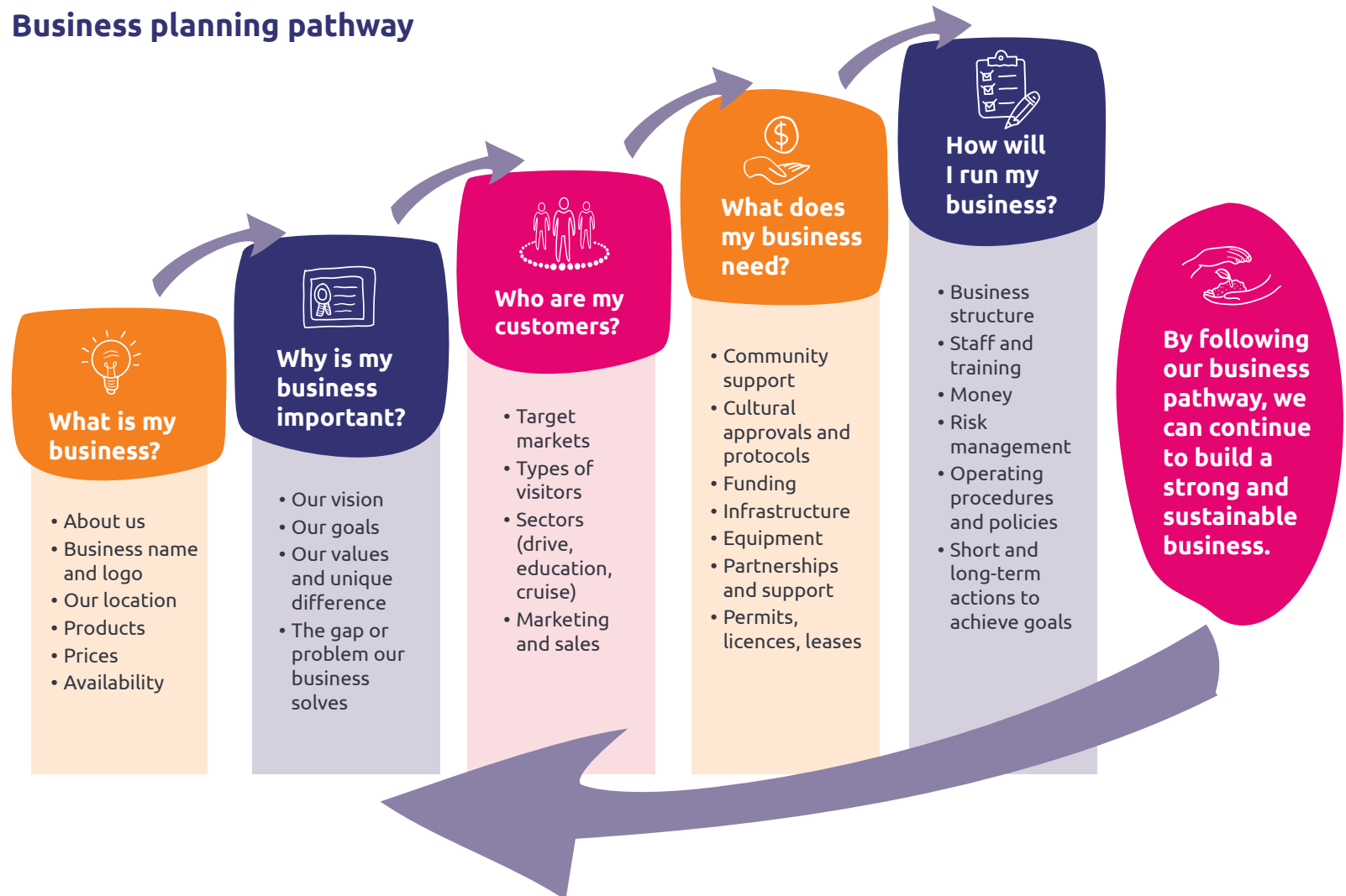
What is a business plan?

A business plan is your business story – it is the pathway to start, build or grow your business.

It explains **how to do it** what your business is, where you are located, what you will sell, who your customers are, what your business needs to be successful and how you will run your business.

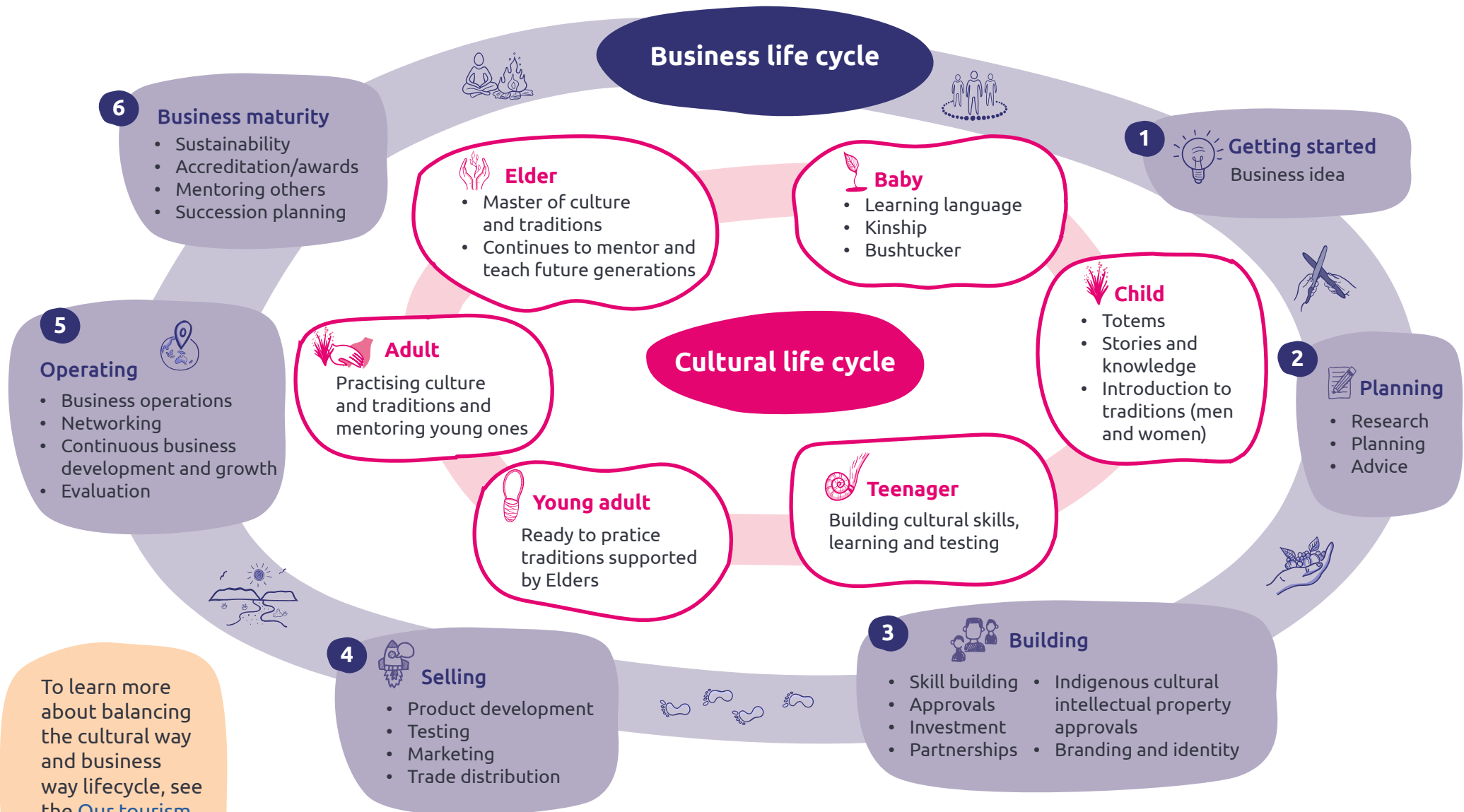
A business plan is a tool you use to get the right approvals and support, to measure your success and decide how you want your business to continue into the future.

Business planning pathway



Balancing cultural way and business planning

A business plan is the 'business way' to make, build, guide and strengthen our business. Every step of planning, building and growing our tourism business needs to respect and benefit our cultural way, keeping culture, community and Country strong and safe.



What can I use my business plan for?

You own your business plan. It is your working document to build, check, change and test how your business is working. It gives you the stages to follow to successfully get you where you want to go.

Share with stakeholders

Present your plan to family, community, land councils, national parks, boards, governments and partners to gain their support.



Test and implement ideas

Test and improve business ideas as you work through the recommendations and actions.



Funding and approvals

Use the plan to apply for grants, loans, commercial leases, national park licences, permits and other approvals.



Reduce risks

The plan provides a clear decision-making pathway to minimise the risks and enhance the likelihood of success.



Establish partnerships

Build strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, investors, cultural authority groups, government agencies and other organisations.



How business plans and feasibility studies helped me



“Back then it would have made life easier, doing a business plan. Knowing the ins and outs about rates, we didn't know about all that sort of stuff. But now, having them (a business plan) just made it so easy, you get to see the bigger picture of the business that you do.”

Graham Kenyon

Owner of Pudukul Aboriginal Cultural Tours



“I got some funding from Tourism and Events (NT Government) for a consultant to help me develop a Trade Distribution Strategy and update my Business Plan. These are tools I now refer back to constantly – they are a guide for our family business to go forward with clear steps to help us implement our vision and goals.”

Mandy Muir

Owner/Director of Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp



“When I first started the business, I had to do a business plan for things on guiding and how tour business run and that got me going in the park itself.

Then as my business started to grow, I moved away from some of those things, but an idea came up that I felt I was ready for, and I was looking at an option where my business can grow. So, I had a business plan, but my next step was to do a feasibility study.

That feasibility study is the one that came from family, how we can make things better where we have tourism, people come through the park itself, meet and greet people, and share a lot of our cultural knowledge and stories. For that to kick off, we had to do a feasibility study to look at what the long-term stages are for those areas.

A feasibility study is very important. It is a thing that tells you how you can make your business work better once you do it, and how you can find the funding.”

Victor Cooper

Owner operator of Ayal Aboriginal Tours Kakadu

Business planning language

When preparing your business plan, you will notice some different 'business way' words that are used. Here we introduce the business planning language you may hear and what it means.

Action plan: A staged pathway with steps to take and when to take them to ensure a strong, sustainable and successful business. Action plans help you to check and measure your success and achievements.

Budget and financial management: How you plan to manage finances, what your daily, monthly and yearly costs will be.

Business description: Overview of your business - where is it, what is it, why your business exists, who owns and manages it?

Capability and capacity building: Building a strong business through training, experience and support so you have the right people with the right skills working with you.

Comparative or competitor analysis: Researching and learning about other tourism businesses like yours. See the [Sharing our stories](#) guide to learn more about different Aboriginal tourism businesses in the NT. What will you do differently to those businesses? Are there ways you can work together?

Concept design: What does the business idea look like? Is it a tour, activity, artwork, accommodation, dining? A concept can be architect drawings, example photos or example of a tour itinerary.

Cost benefit analysis: Looks at more than just money. What other community, employment, environment, culture, social and economic benefits will your business idea create over the next 10 years?

Feasibility study: Research and testing of your business idea to decide is it achievable, will it make money, will it be approved, how much will it cost, what will it look like, will it work?

What is a feasibility study?

Before you prepare a business plan, you may need a feasibility study. If a big decision that involves leases, cultural approvals, building and money is needed, a feasibility study can research and test your idea first to help you make the right decision.

For more advice on whether a business plan or feasibility study is right for you, contact the Aboriginal Tourism Team:

Ph: 08 8999 7420

E: aboriginal.tourismeventsnt@nt.gov.au

Financial feasibility: Return on investment for every dollar spent how much will you get back over the next 10 years.

Goals: Short to medium-term steps that will help you achieve your vision.

Governance and operating structure: Who owns your business, makes decisions and how it managed and run. Is it a sole trader/one person business, owned by a family, corporation or partnership. Learn more about business structures in the [Our tourism pathways guide](#).

Market analysis: Understanding the visitors that come to your region and the target markets that will be interested in your business. Learn more about NT's visitor markets in the [Understanding the business of Aboriginal cultural tourism guide](#).

Business planning language

Marketing strategy: Marketing actions you need to take to attract your target markets and sell your products, services and experiences to them.

See the [Consumer brand marketing guide](#) for more information on developing an attractive brand and the [Trade distribution guide](#) for more details on selling your product.

Operations plan: How the business will run day-to-day. Who is the boss, what other jobs, roles and responsibilities are there? What training and equipment is needed. Policies and procedures to guide and protect staff, visitors, equipment and infrastructure.

Opinion of probable costs: A tourism or design expert's opinion of how much it will cost to make your business idea happen.

Planning and legislation requirements: Land tenure, consultation, cultural and business approvals, environmental considerations, insurances, certifications and qualifications, leases, licences and permits. See the [Walking together/working together guide](#) to learn more about legislation, cultural approvals, Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property and the Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

Potential partners: Who is best for us to work with to deliver and build on our business. Investors, business mentors, funding support, joint ventures, trade distribution, marketing.

Pricing strategy: Planning the right prices for your products to cover operational costs, commissions and make a profit.

See [Tourism and Events NT's Pricing rates and commissions](#) to learn more.

Products, services, experiences: What you sell to visitors and 'offer' to them to buy – tours, art, cultural activities.

See the [Product and experience development guide](#) to learn more.

Risk assessment: Finding any existing or potential risks and challenges for your business and preparing ways to remove, change or manage them.

Strategic alignment: What local, regional, Northern Territory and national opportunities we can tap into such as grants and support programs?

SWOT analysis: Stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis helps you to see what is good about your business and where you might need support.

Vision and purpose: Why do you want to run the business? What does success look like in 10 years' time?

Tourism and Events has a helpful glossary to explain some of the other tourism language you may hear:
[Fact Sheet - Glossary of NT Tourism terms and acronyms](#)

Getting started with your business plan

Use this template to help write down your business idea and planning needs. This will help you prepare the right information to build your business plan or to share with a tourism consultant to work with you.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW		
Our business	Describe your business. Is your business a new or existing business? Where is your business? What products will you sell?	
Our vision	Why do you want to do your business? What is your business dream? What does success look like to you in 10 years' time?	
Our details Visit business.gov.au/planning/business-structures-and-types/business-structures to learn more about business structures Visit abr.gov.au/business-super-funds-charities/applying-abn to learn more about ABNs and business registration	Business owner/s name/s:	
	Phone:	
	Mobile:	
	Email:	
	Business name:	
	Is your business registered? Yes / No	
	Business structure: Sole trader, company, partnership, corporation?	
	ABN:	
	Who will work for the business?	
The problem we are solving	Why is your business idea a good idea?	

YOUR CUSTOMERS

Who will your visitors be?

To learn more about the different types of visitors, see [Understanding the business of Aboriginal cultural tourism](#)

List the types of visitors you will sell your tourism products to.

For example: families, school groups, drive visitors

[illegible]

BUSINESS PLANNING NEEDS

Why do I need a business plan?

How will a business plan help you?

- Cultural way approvals
- Law way approvals
- Funding
- Leases (for example: Section 19 Aboriginal Land Rights Act), licences and permits
- Tourism mentoring and support
- Training
- Partnerships
- Getting started and building your business
- Other

TIMEFRAME FOR DELIVERY

Business planning start date

When do you want to start your business planning journey?

[illegible]

Who can help me?



Tourism and Events | Department of Tourism and Hospitality

Tourism and Events is the NT Government agency providing support and advice to the tourism industry. They have many different resources available for tourism businesses to learn more about visitors, marketing, business development and grant opportunities - visit www.tourismandeventsnnt.com.au to learn more.

All tools and guides for the [Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Framework](#) can also be found on this website. You can also contact the Aboriginal Tourism Team on 08 8999 7420 or email Aboriginal.tourismeventsnnt@nt.gov.au



Grants, funding and investment support

To learn more about what grants and support is currently available for business planning and development visit:
NT Grants Directory - www.nt.gov.au/community/grants-and-volunteers/grants/grants-directory
Australian Government Grants Connect - www.grants.gov.au
Australian Government Business Grants and programs finder - www.business.gov.au/grants-and-programs







References

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Page 14 – Garden tour, Ayers Rock Resort – Tourism and Events/Shana McNaught

Back Cover – Hermannsburg Historic Precinct – Tourism and Events/Charlie Bliss

