



Case Study – Purpose-built office facility for the Kimberley Land Council Aboriginal Corporation

Summary Report November 2015



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This summary is prepared by Hyde Park Media and based on the case study *'Purpose-built office facility for the Kimberley Land Council Aboriginal Corporation'* by Nous Group.

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How Royalties for Regions helped re-house the Kimberley Land Council

The Royalties for Regions program has provided nearly \$4 million for new premises for the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) in Broome in WA's Kimberley region.

The money was used to design and build a purpose-built office facility with fit outs including IT and communications, furniture and fittings, landscaping, parking and security.

The new office facility is expected to contribute to KLC's financial sustainability by reducing costs and enabling it to raise additional revenue

The facility is also expected to enhance KLC's workforce capacity by providing the space, resources and facilities to retain staff and ensure improved performance.

A likely benefit of the new premises to the wider community will be greater access to facilities to support commercial activities and additional services for Kimberley Aboriginal people that will enable them to better manage their land and build sustainable prosperous communities.

What does the project involve?

The KLC is a not-for-profit organisation that represents Kimberley Aboriginal people in Native Title matters.

It was established in 1978 with a focus on advocacy, and its vision is to "Get back country, look after country and get control of the future".

It has evolved from advocacy to Native Title settlement and now into land management and securing the future for its members and stakeholders.

The KLC was previously spread over four separate locations which was affecting its ability to operate effectively and to provide a positive work environment for staff.

The former leased premises were also regarded as outdated, unsafe and cramped.

The objectives of the project were:

- To assist the KLC to be more efficient and effective, and
- To assist the KLC to have long-term stability and sustainability.

The total cost of the project was \$15,139,305.

Royalties for Regions provided \$3,930,000 and the balance was provided by five other organisations, including:

- Regional Development Australia: \$4,900,000
- Indigenous Land Corporation: \$2,000,000
- LotteryWest: \$2,000,000
- Kimberley Land Council: \$1,762,500

- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet: \$546,805

The new building was opened in August 2015.

It is expected to contribute to KLC's financial sustainability by reducing its operating costs and providing it with opportunities to expand revenue and become more self-sufficient. The project is expected to do this in the following ways:

- The project is expected to ease KLC's costs. An example of this is the archives function, whereby archives were maintained and stored separately to the location where the archives manager works. This added time and travel costs to the role and made things inefficient.
- The project is also expected to enable KLC to develop commercial revenue. For example, The new building has an externally accessible conference centre that KLC proposes to rent out to third parties on a fee-for-service basis.
- KLC expects that the new facilities will improve its capacity to attract additional funding from the private and public sectors.

The new building is also expected to enhance KLC's workforce capacity.

The KLC has experienced issues with staff retention in the past which it suspects is partly due to the poor working conditions with staff unable to properly undertake their role due to the lack of appropriate space and resources to do so.

In addition, KLC management indicates that a poor physical environment affects culture, morale and performance.

The RfR-funded building is expected to provide KLC with the capacity for it to obtain maximum value from its workforce and create the conditions for staff to operate more effectively. It is expected to do this in the following ways:

- The new facility will provide conditions to enhance staff performance.
- Collocation will also improve people's capacity to collaborate.
- The enhanced facilities will assist with staff retention.

The new facility will also enable staff to perform their functions more effectively and professionally.

For example, legal staff were previously constrained from maintaining confidentiality and protecting documents due to the lack of private space as well as areas for document management.

The archives were maintained offsite in premises subject to risks such as dampness and ants which threatened the preservation of important artefacts.

The new facility has a purpose-built archive area and appropriate facilities for document management and confidential meetings and discussions.

The legal and archives team are now able to perform the requirements of their job without risks to confidentiality and archives management.

What is the feedback?

Feedback from those involved in the project (prior to the completion of the building) included:

“Archives and records are kept in four different locations—a lot is still in hard copy. There are huge issues with efficiency due to travel time and the time it takes to get all the material. There are also issues with documents of national significance which aren't currently safely housed.”

KLC Manager

“We are able to rent out some of the meeting spaces to generate additional revenue. So it opens up the ability to diversify revenue streams through renting of additional facilities.”

KLC Manager

“We no longer have to book conference facilities which will reduce costs.”

KLC CEO

“We currently don't have the ability to house staff as we grow. The physical layout holds us back from growing the staff numbers to service our needs.”

KLC Manager

“There are issues with the morale and output of staff. The (current) facilities are not conducive to staff performance.”

KLC Manager

“We can already see that people are thrilled and looking forward to it. It does have an effect on staff morale. Staff are very excited about it. It goes without saying that what it will do for staff morale is incredible.”

KLC CEO

“We have a problem with recruitment as we need to relocate people from far away (such as the east coast). When they get here, it's already hard for them especially with respect to cost. So if they have to work in really poor conditions, it affects them in a big way.”

KLC CEO

“Historically we have had trouble retaining staff, for a variety of reasons. A lot of these reasons are workplace physical conditions.”

KLC Manager

“The new facilities will make them more efficient and able to operate together due to collocation. Collocation will generate knowledge sharing, innovation, efficiency and

improved team work. The informal conversations can generate great impacts on the organisation.”

KLC Manager