NT training initiative for Indigenous tour guides

Fifteen Indigenous students are set to benefit from the Territory Government’s latest tourism training initiative to better place Indigenous people for employment in the tourism industry.

The Lhere Artepe Tour Guide Training Program began this month at the Alice Springs Desert Park and will run over the next 12 weeks.

The program will provide students cultural awareness training and tourism guiding skills in presenting flora, fauna, heritage and interpretive talks.

Minister for Tourism, Kon Vatskalis, met with students and staff at the Desert Park today.

“The Northern Territory Government has invested around $10,000 towards this terrific initiative that equips Aboriginal people with a whole range of tourism skills and essential qualifications,” said Mr Vatskalis.

“Through the program each student will attain a St Johns first aid certificate, a 4WD awareness course and an H-endorsement licence permitting the Aboriginal tour guides to transport passengers.

“Both Indigenous and mainstream tour operators in Central Australia have also backed the program by enabling students to visit and learn from their businesses practices.

“The program was designed to address a concern within the private industry regarding investing in on-the-job training for Aboriginal guides that often did not guarantee long-term employment.

“The Lhere Artepe Tour Guide Training Program provides an opportunity to fill this training gap for Aboriginal people interested in tourism employment.”
The Territory Government plans to replicate this program in the future at the Alice Springs Desert Park and through a similar initiative with Darwin’s Botanic Gardens.

Preliminary discussions with the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Larrakeyah Nation have commenced and will be pursued following the successful completion of the Alice Springs Desert Park trial.

*Media contact: Nikola Lekias 0438 323660*