



Ministerial statement

New digital literacy program rolls out for Indigenous communities

Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy Leeanne Enoch today (Monday) announced Queensland's remote and regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will receive digital literacy training.

Speaking during NAIDOC Week celebrations, Ms Enoch said the new Deadly Digital Communities program will be delivered through the State Library of Queensland, Telstra and local councils.

Ms Enoch said the program will see community based training and professional development delivered to 26 regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland.

"This is a huge step towards closing the gap and improving the digital inclusion of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples," Ms Enoch said.

"It is programs like this that boost our state's entrepreneurial culture, by giving all Queenslanders the skills needed for the jobs of the future."

Telstra's Chief Sustainability Officer Tim O'Leary said the company was committed to working with organisations such as the State Library of Queensland to improve digital inclusion across Queensland.

"As more and more services and daily interactions move online, being able to use digital technologies brings vital health, social and financial benefits – especially for Indigenous people in remote locations," Mr O'Leary said.

"We believe digital literacy has become an essential skill in the digital age. At Telstra, we want to see all Australians connect, participate and interact in the digital world, irrespective of where they live. This is what this initiative is all about."

Mr O'Leary said Telstra had expanded its network coverage to rural locations such as Aurukun and Burketown over the last few months, and that this project was another example of Telstra's ability to work with the government to deliver innovative programs to regional and rural Australia.

State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald said Deadly Digital Communities was indicative of the innovative programs the State Library delivered in collaboration with public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres throughout Queensland.

"Deadly Digital Communities will help realise the often untapped potential of these unique and vibrant communities," she said.

"Participants will learn about everything from sending an email to using social media to connect with family or to promote a business idea."

Ms McDonald said digital inclusion was vital in helping communities reap the immense social and economic benefits of the digital world.

Deadly Digital Communities will commence in September and will roll out over two years to the communities of Aurukun, Cherbourg, Hope Vale, Lockhart River, Palm Island, Pormpuraaw, Wujal Wujal, Woorabinda, Bamaga, Injinoo, New Mapoon, Seisia and Umagico.

Another 13 Indigenous Knowledge Centres and remote public libraries will soon be added to the program.

Deadly Digital Communities is an initiative of the State Library of Queensland and Telstra in partnership with Indigenous Knowledge Centres and local councils.

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