



National Housing  
Conference 2022

# Meeting the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households

Dr Megan Moskos

University of Adelaide



# **‘What works’ to sustain Indigenous tenancies in Australia**

Dr Megan Moskos, Future of Employment and Skills Research Centre, The University of Adelaide

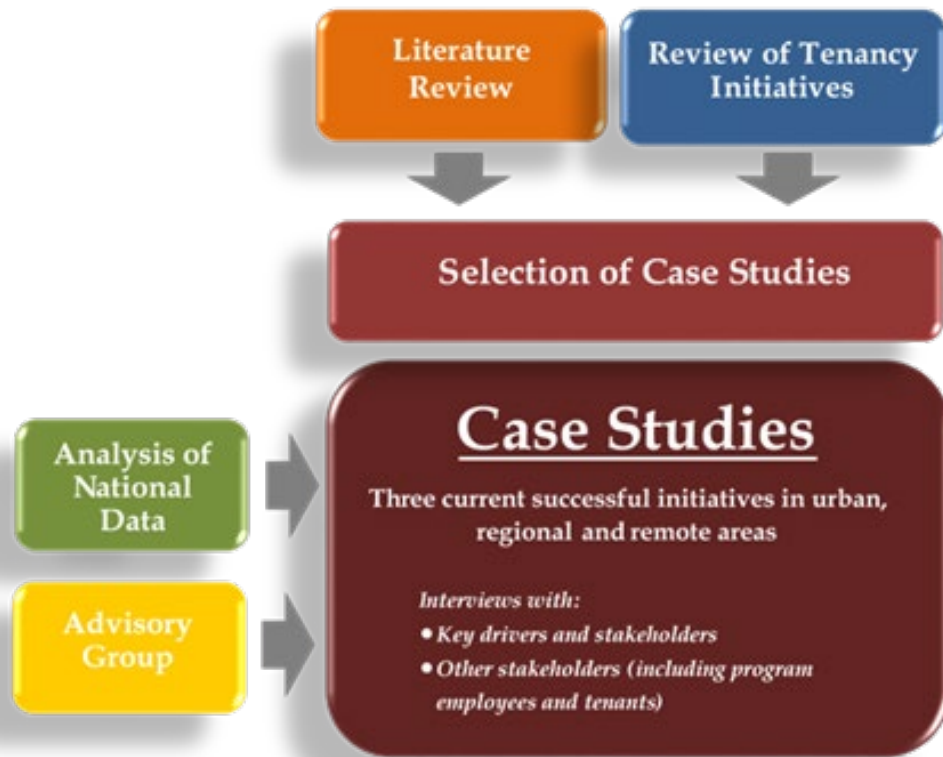
Dr Linda Isherwood, Prof. Emma Baker, and Dr Ahn Pham, The University of Adelaide and Prof. Mike Dockery, Curtin University.

---

## Rationale

- › Indigenous housing is an enduring policy issue in Australia
  - › Previous research has primarily focused on what contributes to poor tenancy outcomes among Indigenous people, **very little is known about what contributes to successful tenancies**
  - › Sustainable tenancies not only prevent tenancy failure, but help achieve positive tenancy outcomes (such as stability, security and improved health and well-being)
  - › Our research adopts a strengths-based approach rather than a deficit approach **to understand ‘what works’ for securing successful housing outcomes for Indigenous Australians**
-

# Multidisciplinary Research Approach



**Quantitative:** Analysis of National Data

**Qualitative:** Literature Review, Initiative Review & In-depth Case Studies

Three case studies were conducted to investigate:

- › What are successful tenancies for Indigenous people?
- › What are the factors that contribute to a program successfully meeting the needs of Indigenous tenants?
- › What factors limit this success?

New insights into the definitions and determinants of successful tenancies, and the characteristics of initiatives that have been successful in sustaining tenancies



---

## Successful Tenancies for Indigenous People

- › Tenant has safe and appropriate home (size, condition, location) with a stable tenure
- › Mutual obligations are met by tenants and landlords
  - › Tenants adequately supported to understand/fulfil tenancy responsibilities
- › Broader outcomes achieved, e.g. improved health and wellbeing
- › Definition of success will vary depending on where tenant is on housing continuum
  - › E.g. having own rental property for first time through to achieving home ownership

### RECOMMENDATION

A one-size-fits-all approach will be unsuccessful. Housing policies and programs need to be flexible and holistic, with different types of support provided depending on the circumstances of an individual and the housing outcomes they aspire to.

---

---

## Determinants of Successful Tenancies

- › The research also identified broader factors that determine whether or not a tenancy is successful:
    - › **Systemic level**—availability, affordability and diversity of properties
    - › **Policy level**—housing allocation, rental models and flexible policy settings
    - › **Program level**—adequate and appropriate tenancy support
    - › **Tenant level**—tenancy management skills and personal motivation.
-

---

## Best Practice in Delivering Indigenous Tenancy Support

- › Best practice in tenancy support includes the need for:
    - › **flexible approach** to service delivery
    - › **appropriate staffing**- including the employment of local Indigenous workers
    - › **effective linkages** with broader support services
    - › program delivery by **Aboriginal controlled** organisations
    - › the provision of **education** to support tenant understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
    - › the adoption of an **early intervention** approach
    - › the provision of **intensive and ongoing support**- with an outreach approach for hard-to-reach groups.
-

---

# Policy and Program Development Options

- › **Systemic level**
    - › increase housing quality and availability
    - › new houses better fit the needs of Indigenous tenants
    - › increase housing options (e.g. more visitor accommodation)
  - › **Policy level**
    - › understand and address the policy levers that impact upon housing outcomes and/or adversely affect Indigenous people
    - › develop partnerships between Government and Aboriginal organisations to co-design policies and programs
    - › improve housing allocation policies
  - › **Program level**
    - › provide ongoing funding and expansion of tenancy support
  - › **Tenant level**
    - › fund and deliver additional “wraparound” services to assist tenants with broader issues
-



---

## Future Interventions: Considerations

- › **Numerous areas** that could potentially be the focus of future interventions to improve Indigenous housing outcomes.
  - › These can be seen to operate at the **systemic, policy, program** and **tenant** levels.
  - › Consideration should be given to the fact that **some of these areas are more amenable to intervention than others**.
    - › For example:
      - › Policy and program factors are in the direct remit of policy makers and can have immediate impact
      - › Systemic factors will require coordinated intervention by government and industry and will thus take longer to implement
      - › Tenant factors are largely personal and depend on an array of socio-demographic characteristics and circumstances, which may or may not be amendable to intervention.
-

