

ABORIGINAL RESEARCHERS NETWORK

WORKSHOP REPORT

26 NOVEMBER 2025

**Researcher
Wappayalawangka**



**Central Australia
Academic Health Science Network**

Acknowledgements

Thanks to ARN members who were in attendance. Thanks also to the following individuals and organisations for their contributions to the planning, preparation, delivery and support of the Aboriginal Researcher Network (ARN) held on 26 November 2025 at the Flinders Centre for Remote Health, Lecture Rooms 3 & 4, West Wing Entrance, Skinner Street, Alice Springs.

- Sally Davis – Lecturer ICT Cyber Security & Digital Charles Darwin University (CDU)
- Wendy-Lea Lechleitner – Research Administration Officer CAAHSN
- Guy Krippner – Chief Operating Officer CAAHSN
- Janey Fowler – Communications, Media and Marketing Manager CAAHSN
- Zania Liddle – Community Research Coordinator CAAHSN
- John Huigen – Chief Executive Officer CAAHSN
- Flinders Centre for Remote Health
- Reality Bites Catering

CAAHSN also thanks its Partners and Members:

ANYINGINYI
HEALTH
ABORIGINAL
CORPORATION



Ngaanyatjarra
Health Service



Flinders
University



Ngaanyatjarra
Pitjantjatjara
Yankunytjatjara
Women's Council
(Aboriginal Corporation)



Introduction

The Central Australia Academic Health Science Network (CAAHSN) hosted the Aboriginal Researcher Network (ARN) on Wednesday 26 November 2025 in Lecture Rooms 3 & 4, West Wing, Flinders Centre for Remote Health, Skinner Street, Alice Springs. This workshop was the final ARN for 2025 and was the sixth workshop in a series hosted by CAAHSN since 2020.



Lorraine Liddle (Menzies School of Health Research) with presenter Sally Davis, Lecturer in ICT, Cyber Security and Digital from Charles Darwin University.

Previous ARN workshops in 2025 were held in January, May and September. This is a report of the 3-hour face-to-face workshop which took place on 26 November. It involved 16 ARN members and guests (see Appendix Two – ARN Members and Guests List). Based on suggestions shared by ARN members in 2025, CAAHSN's plan for the ARN for 2025 was to host four workshops.

CAAHSN is encouraged by the level of interest and support shown by researchers who make up the ARN. The researchers come from a range of age groups, stakeholder agencies, research backgrounds, work roles and current research experiences. Many of whom attended more than one workshop in 2025 were supported by their workplaces and colleagues to participate in the ARN. Apologies received have been noted and included in the records for this workshop.

The overall theme of the workshop was to connect researchers, including researchers new to the ARN, so they can talk about their research experiences, skills, training and development. As well, there was a special focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) presented by special guest speaker Sally Davis, Lecturer in ICT Cyber Security and Digital, CDU.



ARN Member Walbira Murray (AMSANT)

The overall theme of the workshop was to connect researchers, including researchers new to the ARN, so they can talk about their research experiences, skills, training and development. As well, there was a special focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) presented by special guest speaker Sally Davis, Lecturer in ICT Cyber Security and Digital, CDU. Knowing about AI and how it can be used in research, as well as becoming informed about AI and understanding AI technology, were important considerations for inclusion in the workshop program.

Sally aimed to answer as many questions as possible from the ARN group, together with learning from and hearing their stories and experiences of doing research and using AI.

The workshop mode was relaxed and friendly, with the opportunity to discuss and ask questions as participants needed. Following lunch, introductions, Acknowledgement of Country, housekeeping and background information, Wendy-Lea Lechleitner facilitated a group connecting activity, Desert Bingo, where the researchers participated in light and active discussions on a range of specified topics for the purpose of exchanging thoughts and ideas and group connection.

Details on available financial support for researchers were shared by CAAHSN COO Guy Krippner, including how to apply for financial support using CAAHSN processes and procedures, with relevant links to access documentation shared. Each of these presentations are explained in more details as part of this report.

ARN Background

The overall focus of the ARN is to support and connect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working in health and health-related research in Central Australia. Prior to the 2025 ARN workshops, and the ARN workshops held in October 2021 and October 2020, there were a series of planning meetings and consultations held with Aboriginal people involved in research, and with the CAAHSN Management Committee and Governing Council.

Over time, Aboriginal people working as researchers have said that they would like discussion on a range of themes, including research terminology, best practice research, and learning from the research experience of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Wendy-Lea Lechleitner (CAAHSN), Yasmin Watts (Menzies School of Health Research & CAAC), Kureisha Wilson (Menzies School of Health Research), Kenny Lechleitner (Alice Springs Hospital) and Walbira Murray (AMSANT)

These themes also include capacity building, communications, consumer-driven research, Indigenous cultural and intellectual property, audit of researcher qualifications and experience, and AI as content for ARN workshops.



In 2025, we managed to include some of these topics as workshop content. In 2025, we managed to include some of these topics as workshop content.

The Terms of Reference for the ARN are underpinned by CAAHSN's commitment to foster Aboriginal leadership on research teams, as well as Aboriginal community-driven research, which facilitates better health and social outcomes for Aboriginal people living in Central Australia.

As per its Terms of Reference, the ARN exists to:

- provide a forum for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (henceforth Aboriginal people) involved in health and health-related research to share ideas, knowledge and experiences;
- support the professional development of Aboriginal people involved in health and health-related research;
- promote and support the leadership development of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people involved in health and health-related research;
- assist in monitoring the implementation of Doing it Right across CAAHSN research activities; and
- discuss, consider, evaluate and/or make recommendations to the CEO on other culturally appropriate research practices, tools or frameworks.

Overall, in 2025, providing a forum for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people involved in health and health-related research to share ideas, knowledge and experiences was a focus for ARN workshops, underpinned by the presentation of professional development options and opportunities relevant to working in research. In addition, promoting and supporting researcher priorities for leadership development in research was also a focus.

Various options and opportunities for professional learning were communicated through the CAAHSN network for the benefit of researchers, including the development of processes and procedures for accessing financial support available from CAAHSN.

The 26 November workshop focus on AI was in response to a participant request and group discussions at the 9 September workshop. The topic of AI was presented by Sally Davis, Lecturer at CDU, details of which appear below.

AI Presentation: Becoming Informed About AI and Understanding AI Technology

Sally Davis, Lecturer – ICT, Cyber Security and Digital, CDU



Sally covered a range of AI topics and understandings in the use of AI, including ChatGPT, personal devices and storage of data, Retrieval Augmented Generation, how AI is used in team environments, security concerns, and what CDU (the organisation Sally works for) tolerates from AI. Sally also shared stories about working with students enrolled in Certificate I in Digital Technologies and where these students were in terms of their interest and motivation around information technology. An important tip provided by Sally in the use of AI is to check the facts and talk back to it [AI].

From the group activity, questions on the use of AI included:

- How much would it cost to set up and maintain our own Aboriginal health AI?
- Is there an off switch?
- Can we do a one-day workshop on it [AI]?
- How do we actually use it [AI]?
- What are some common AI that people use?
- How do we determine real news from fake news – what should we look out for?
- How are we going to manage Aboriginal cultural knowledge?

Following the workshop, Sally followed up with an offer of ongoing support to ARN members about becoming informed about AI and understanding AI technology by way of the following email:



Dear ARN Members

Thank you so much for your time and engagement at today's AI workshop. I really appreciated the thoughtful questions and discussions about how AI might affect your work as Community Researchers.

I know how much is asked of you, and the work you do in your communities matters deeply. So I'm genuinely grateful you gave part of your day to sit with me and explore what this technology means for keeping people's data safe and in the right hands.

With only 90 minutes together, I know we didn't get to cover everything. If questions come up later – or if you just want to talk something through – please reach out. I hope you'll think of me as a colleague who has the time and interest to help you out with anything related to AI either on its own, or as it relates to any online data security questions.

Honestly, my favourite part of working in the technology training space is helping people feel confident enough to stay in control of it. So whether you want to try out a tool with someone alongside you, think through whether AI is right for a particular task, or just have a yarn about how it all works – I'm here.

The best way to reach me is at my CDU email (sally.davis@cdu.edu.au)

Warm regards,

Sally Davis Lecturer - ICT, Cyber Security & Digital

Sally has emailed flyers (See Appendix Four) with details on short courses on AI and Cyber Security available through CDU commencing in 2026 and designed to address the Critical Information Security and Data Sovereignty issues which are known to affect local NT organisations.

The idea of revisiting a session on AI and other ICT, Cyber Security & Digital Issues in 2026 has group support and a follow-up session, involving Sally, in the future would be most welcome.

In addition to AI, how to access financial support available from CAAHSN was a focus. This topic was presented by Guy Krippner Chief Operating Officer for CAAHSN.

Fostering Aboriginal Leadership in Research Initiative – Financial Support for Entry-level Qualifications & PhD (Master’s Stipends)

Guy Krippner, COO, CAAHSN

CAAHSN COO, Guy Krippner, talked about the specifics of funds available from CAAHSN for training and development for researchers working in health and health-related research in Central Australia.

CAAHSN can provide financial support for ARN members to undertake professional development through various training or education programmes. There are funds available for entry-level qualifications, as well as for Master’s and PhD stipends. (Financial support to attend conferences is not included.) CAAHSN has developed an information sheet with guidelines, together with an application form, for potential applicants to apply for financial support.

For ease of access for researchers, these documents are now available on the ARN page <https://caahsn.org.au/aboriginal-researchers-network> (see Appendix Five).



Yasmin Watts (Menzies School of Health Research & CAAC) and Kureisha Wilson (Menzies School of Health Research)

Next Steps from 26 November 2025 Workshop

ACTION	PROGRESS
Scheduling and planning and preparation for 2026 workshops: -calendar invite -preparation of agenda -reminder notice -identify guest speaker on A.I.	Proposing the first ARN workshop for 2026 to be held on 8 April.
Publication and circulation of 26 November 2025 ARN Workshop report.	We expect to circulate the link to the Workshop Report via email to members in early February 2026. The Workshop report will also be available on the ARN page on the CAAHSN website.
Making contact with ARN members - Visits/phone calls to agencies – to discuss preparations for 2026 workshops as well as suggestions for improving future ARN workshops.	Ongoing. Have drafted up a plan for visits/phone calls. Will carry out visits/phone calls during the month of February 2026.
Applying for Financial Support to support study - CAAHSN Process and Forms for study & a framework for relevant courses of study – circulated to ARN members – links to the information and tools on ARN page on CAAHSN website.	Set of guidelines and application form for financial support introduced to researchers at 26 November ARN Workshop and now available to access on ARN page on the CAAHSN website.
Improving communications and ensuring information reaches members. Explore options for connecting the group between workshops – identify a practice/tools/initiatives to connect ARN members based on existing examples from the research community, e.g. Rapid Update, ARN page on CAAHSN website, other. Fostering and promoting these practices/tools/initiatives will also be a priority for CAAHSN in 2026.	Ongoing

Appendix One: Workshop Invitation

Aboriginal Researchers Network

Supporting and connecting Aboriginal people working in health and health-related research.

Invitation

our final workshop for 2025

When: 12noon to 3pm Wednesday 26 November 2025

Where: Flinders Centre for Remote Health, Skinner Street, Alice Springs, Lecture Rooms 3&4, West Wing Entrance.

Special focus on **AI** by visiting expert on ICT, Cyper Security & Digital.



For more information, go to the CAAHSN website.

RSVP info@caahsn.org.au by Friday 15th November 2025

We look forward to seeing you.

Appendix Two: ARN Members and Guests

ARN Members

Gloria Baliva (Menzies School of Health Research)

Kureisha Wilson (Menzies School of Health Research)

Cheryl Ross (Menzies School of Health Research)

Lorraine Liddle (Menzies School of Health Research)

Sherrelle Khan (Menzies School of Health
Research)

Walbira Murray (AMSANT)

Kenny Lechleitner (Alice Springs Hospital)

Yasmin Watts (CAAC and Menzies School of Health Research)

Renisha Watts (CAAC)

Lorna Murakami-Gold (Flinders University)

Zania Liddle (CAAHSN)

Wendy-Lea Lechleitner (CAAHSN)

Guests

Sally Davis (Charles Darwin University)

Rachel Walpole (Menzies School of Health Research)

John Huigen (CAAHSN)

Guy Krippner (CAAHSN)

Appendix Three: Workshop Program

ABORIGINAL RESEARCHERS NETWORK

Central Australia Academic Health Science Network

Supporting and Connecting Aboriginal people working in Health
and Health-related research

Wednesday 26 November 2025

Centre for Remote Health, Skinner Street, Alice Springs,
Lecture Rooms 3&4, West Wing Entrance.

	SESSION	FACILITATOR/PRESENTER
12 noon – 12.30pm	Lunch and informal catchup	CAAHSN Team
12.30pm – 12.40pm	Welcome and Introductions - Acknowledgement of Country - Housekeeping	CAAHSN Team
12.40pm – 12.50pm	Group Connecting Activity	Wendy-Lea Lechleitner – Research Administration Officer CAAHSN
12.50pm – 1pm	Your Training and Development: How CAAHSN can help. Applying for Financial Support	Guy Krippner – Chief Operating Officer CAAHSN
1pm – 2.30pm	AI: - Becoming informed about AI - Understanding AI Technology Sally will answer as many of your AI questions as possible, and she also hopes to learn from you and hear your stories about doing research and using AI	Sally Davis, Lecturer – ICT, Cyber Security & Digital – CDU TAFE (Professional Service Industries)
2.30pm – 3pm	Summary, What's Next and Close	CAAHSN Team

Appendix Four: AI and Cyber Essentials 1-Day Course



AI and Cyber Essentials 1-Day Course

CDU COURSE CODE
ZSCV009

LOCATION
Alice Springs, Casuarina,
Katherine

DURATION
This short course is delivered
over 1 day
9:00 am - 4:30 pm (including
lunch break)

STUDY MODE
Face to face

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
Entry requirements for this short
course include:

- Basic computer literacy (email, web browsing, document creation)
- No prior AI or cybersecurity experience required
- Interest in professional development and AI literacy

Please scan the QR code for
course details:



This intensive one-day professional development course provides participants with essential AI literacy skills balanced with comprehensive cybersecurity awareness.

Designed for NT professionals, the course covers the fundamentals of how the technology behind ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and Microsoft Copilot works. In addition to an introductory exploration of these main AI proprietary tools, the course also covers responsible data handling for organisations, managing the use of unauthorised or 'Shadow AI' risks, and compliance with Australian Privacy Principles and NT Information ACT frameworks

Participants gain practical, actionable competency to leverage AI innovation whilst maintaining robust information security practices.

Learning Focus:

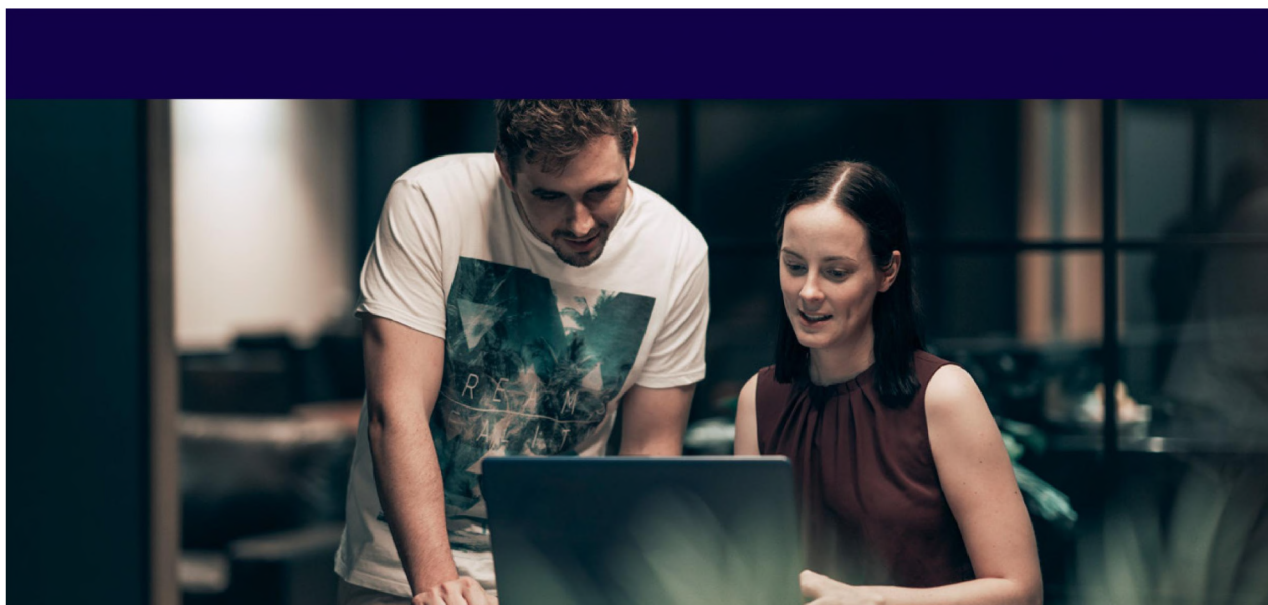
- > AI fundamentals; exploring text and media generation models
- > Responsible AI use for NT Workplaces
- > Shadow AI and data security risk mitigation
- > Building cyber security skills & online threat awareness
- > Privacy & NT Information Act compliance

Contact Details

ICT, Cyber Security and Digital
E. tafe.ict@cdu.edu.au | T. 08 8946 7517 (CAS)
W. cdu.edu.au/tafe



AI and Online Cyber Safety Skills 1-Day Beginner Course



CDU COURSE CODE
ZSCV011

LOCATION
Casuarina Campus, Alice Springs
Campus

DURATION
This short course is delivered
over 1 day
9:00 am - 4:30 pm (including
lunch break)

STUDY MODE
Face to face

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
Entry requirements for this short
course include:

- Basic ability to use a computer, smartphone or tablet
- Interest in learning about AI and cybersecurity for personal/family benefit
- Beginners welcome! No technical background or prior AI experience required
- Open to all NT community members aged 18+

Please scan the QR code for
course details:



AI and Online Cyber Safety Skills 1-Day Beginner Course

This accessible one-day Saturday workshop equips NT community members with essential AI literacy and personal cybersecurity skills.

Designed -for parents, families and individuals seeking to improve their digital wellbeing, it covers how to make the most of AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot), while also developing resilience against the associated cyber security risks: privacy breaches, online scams, inauthentic online content and deepfake technology. Participants will also learn essential electronic device protection, password security, and safe family technology practices.

The course balances innovation opportunities with building practical online security awareness and skills, empowering participants to access AI tools safely, whilst protecting themselves and their families online.

Learning Focus:

- > AI basics for everyday use
- > Online safety & data privacy for families
- > Cybersecurity for home users
- > Identifying AI data security risks, scams & manipulated online content.

Contact Details

ICT, Cyber Security and Digital
E. tafe.ict@cdu.edu.au | T. 08 8946 7517 (CAS)
W. cdu.edu.au/tafe



Appendix Five: CAAHSN Fund to Support Aboriginal Researchers - Information Sheet

CAAHSN Fund For Aboriginal Research

Guidelines for Applicants

Purpose of the Financial Support

The Aboriginal Researcher Application for Financial Support is designed to support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living and working in the Central Australia and Barkly regions who are engaged in health or health-related research, or who have an interest in pursuing a career in health research.

The funding aims to assist applicants to progress to the next stage of their health research career by undertaking credentialed training and professional development opportunities.

Applicants may apply for financial support prior to enrolling in a course. Where funding is approved, payment will be made directly by the Central Australia Academic Health Science Network (CAAHSN) to the training provider upon receipt of a valid tax invoice.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- Live and work in the Central Australia or Barkly region
- Be currently employed in health or health-related research, or demonstrate an interest in developing a career in health research

Application Criteria

1. Applications are invited for financial support to undertake training relevant to health research. CAAHSN has compiled a list of eligible learning opportunities and resources, available on the website.
2. Financial support is limited to one course at a time. The approved course or unit must be successfully completed before a subsequent application for funding will be considered.
3. Successful applicants will be required to submit a short written statement outlining how the proposed training aligns with and supports their career pathway in health research.
4. Applications seeking financial support for a Master's degree or PhD qualification may be subject to additional assessment requirements and may require further information following the initial review.

How to Apply

Applicants must complete the Aboriginal Researcher Application form attached to these guidelines and submit the completed form to: info@caahsn.org.au

All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt. Applicants will be advised of the funding outcome within 20 business days of submission.

For additional information about learning pathways and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers, go to our Researchers' Hub at www.caahsn.org.au and scroll down to Resources for Aboriginal Researchers.

FOR MORE INFO OR TO APPLY GO TO:
CAAHSN.ORG.AU/ABORIGINAL-RESEARCHERS-NETWORK/



SUPPORTING AND CONNECTING ABORIGINAL PEOPLE WORKING IN HEALTH AND HEALTH-RELATED RESEARCH

Artwork by Katie Budgen