



Media Release

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**Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs**

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\$24 M FOR NEW INDIGENOUS YOUTH CENTRE IN REDFERN

Work on a national centre for Indigenous youth is underway on the former Redfern Public School site following a \$24 million funding boost from the Australian Government.

At least 20 Indigenous jobs and training opportunities will be created as part of the construction contract.

The National Indigenous Development Centre (NIDC), designed by award-winning architects Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, will be built by St Hillier's Construction with building work estimated to be completed in August 2009.

Plans for the NIDC include a 25-metre heated swimming pool, a community sports and recreation centre and a sports training field to be operated by the YMCA.

The redevelopment includes new multi-use classrooms and accommodation and dining facilities for up to 100 people. Four school buildings (including two heritage-listed buildings) will be refurbished.

The Centre will accommodate a number of existing programs including:

- the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Association, which runs a number of sporting and life development programs for Indigenous people encouraging healthy lifestyles through sport and education
- the Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team, which provides opportunities for Indigenous youth to become involved in rugby union, netball and golf
- the Exodus Foundation, which will establish a tutorial centre for children aged 10-14

It is expected that up to 5,000 young Indigenous people from all over Australia will come to the NIDC to take part in sporting, educational, arts and leadership development programs.

The Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, said the awarding of the construction contract was an important milestone.

"The NIDC will be a fantastic community resource and will provide new education and employment pathways for young Indigenous people in Redfern and Sydney.

“Sport, arts, leadership and specialised education programs can all have a powerful role in expanding the life chances for young Indigenous people.”

Indigenous Land Corporation Chairperson Shirley McPherson said the NIDC would play an important role in assisting young Indigenous people to excel in their chosen field as well as providing positive role models and developing future leaders.

“This is what the NIDC is about – making a long-term, sustainable investment in developing our most precious resource, our young people,” she said.

NSW Minister for Planning, and Redfern Waterloo, Frank Sartor, said that NIDC would provide a minimum of 20 new jobs and training opportunities for Indigenous people.

“This is a great example of how local Indigenous projects can provide jobs and training for Indigenous young people.”

“Ensuring a range of local training and employment opportunities has been a key priority for the Redfern-Waterloo Authority (RWA).

“The highly successful Indigenous Employment Program Model has been developed by the RWA and provides job-ready employees and ongoing mentoring and support throughout their terms of employment.”

The Australian Government, through the Indigenous Land Corporation, bought the former school site from the NSW Education Department in late 2006 for \$14.8 million. The project was approved by the NSW Department of Planning in October 2007.

The Australian Government is committed to working with the NSW Government to foster local partnerships for closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.