

## 2014 Aurora Indigenous Scholars International Study Tour Reflections



**Luke Patterson**  
**University of Melbourne**

“Concerned with the thought that I would have to leave it all behind – family, friends, work, networks, even research interests – I had mostly dismissed studying abroad, let alone at prestigious institutions such as those on the Tour. This concern gradually eroded during our travels across the US and England. Each university has something special to offer and it was a privilege to discover the places, programs and professors that are the best fit for me.”

“All in all, the Study Tour changed my life.”

### **Berkeley**

“This place had it all for me. I felt very welcomed by Berkeley as an institution and the professors I met were not only generous with their time but also eager to introduce me to other academics whose interests aligned with my own. I was impressed by their dedication to decolonising their fields of study, their interdisciplinary approach to academia and their focus on diversity, all driven by integrity and rigour. Overall, the vitality of the Berkeley campus made for a great start to the tour.”

### **Stanford**

“Eavan Boland [Director of the Creative Writing program] was charming, generous with her time and very helpful in explaining the different English and Creative Writing programs at Stanford. Though I don’t intend to continue postgraduate study at Stanford, the Stegner Fellowship stood out as something I would very much like to apply for sometime in the future.”

## Harvard

“The minds, the resources and the passion of staff and students were inspiring. I had the opportunity to meet students from many different faculties; they introduced me to some amazing scholars and teachers. I was also fortunate to attend several lectures and seminars. These stand out as some of my highlights of Harvard. As well as being impressed by the academic passion of the institution, I felt that as a group on the Study Tour we were exceptionally well catered for by our contacts at Harvard.”

## New York University

“The Creative Writing Program at NYU displayed an incredible mix of creative, academic and community engagement. I enjoyed the time I spent with Christopher Soto, a politically active poet and teacher. He is very supportive of other writers and would likely welcome future scholars to readings and events, and even show them New York. Though I was thoroughly impressed with the program, NYU has a particularly localised aesthetic that may not be the place for my own writing pursuits.”

## Columbia

“Aside from being a joy to walk around the impressive and vibrant campus, I was also fortunate to meet academics, such as Alan Stewart who was genuinely curious about my interests and the Tour. He was also able to outline the mechanics of the graduate English program, of which its flexibility was especially appealing. Aside from the English program, I was also drawn to the ethnomusicology program offered at Columbia.”

## Cambridge

“My first impression of Cambridge was of how accommodating the colleges we visited were. Not only did they appear to be supportive residential communities but places of condensed intellectual growth as well. I found that though perhaps none of the courses at Cambridge suited my particular research

interests, after speaking with students and academic staff I began to recognise the wonderful collective desire for learning that I hope to find in whatever place I undertake postgraduate study.

## Oxford

“I was quickly charmed by Oxford. It was made particularly easy by having current Charles Perkins and Roberta Sykes scholars welcome us. I was also able to catch up with several Trinity College alumni that now attend Oxford. I was impressed and grateful for the amazing support given by the colleges whose reach extended into the broader culture and arts scene at Oxford, where learning becomes a life practice. I believe that prior links made between the Study Tour and the university has contributed to the homely feeling I had when there, or at least a feeling that it was definitely a prospective place of further study.”



*Left to right: Shelley Cable (Curtin Uni); Nicholas Johnson (Monash); Judd Harris (Curtin Uni); Bobby Maher (Curtin Uni); Karen Daniels (Uni of Newcastle); Skye Akbar (UniSA); Nathan Canuto (Charles Dawin); Luke Patterson (UniMelb); Jared Field (USYD); Nathan Bird (UQ and UniMelb); Tahjee Moar (UNSW); Christian Woodward (Deakin Uni); Rhiannon Allan (Uni of Newcastle); Allannah Hunt (CQU).*

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