

2014 Aurora Indigenous Scholars International Study Tour Reflections



Nathan Bird
University of Melbourne

“It has definitely been, with no exaggeration, an amazing experience and one that I’ll remember for a long time to come.”

Berkeley

“Berkeley was a great university to visit first. All of the students and staff I interacted with were very helpful and genuinely interested in what our group was doing at Berkeley.”

“Associate Professor Beth Piatote was very open and willing to answer any questions I had about studying a PhD or Masters at Berkeley. While sharing my study interests with Beth I felt she was very engaged in the discussion and was eager to help in any way she could.”

Stanford

“Before arriving at Stanford I had somewhat ruled it out of my interests, as I assumed there wouldn't be much that aligned with what I want to research. However, after meeting with various departments and particularly the Native American Centre and Professor Snipp, my perspective changed, as I was made aware of the array of support available for international students, both academically and personally.”

Harvard

“Much like most people I have met so far, Tessa was very helpful in directing me to the right place and providing an honest insight into what it’s like at Harvard, both academically and socially/culturally.”

“Through Tessa, I was able to arrange a meeting with Professor Morgan at the Hip Hop Archive, which was a great experience and definitely a major highlight of the trip (being a Hip Hop artist and wishing to pursue further studies in identity and Hip Hop). Not only was it great to talk about all things Hip Hop with Professor Morgan, I also gained important knowledge about applying to Harvard and once again gained more direction in terms of what field and department would best suit my line of research.”

New York University

“NYU has always been on my radar as a school that I would love to attend. Meeting with Dean Saranillio [an Indigenous man from Hawaii and a Professor in the Department of Social & Cultural Analysis] was a great experience. It was awesome to connect not only on a level of academic interest but also as Indigenous peoples from different lands.”

“At the close of the meeting Dean expressed that I would be a great fit for his department and extended an offer of support with my application if I did choose to apply to NYU. I believe New York is definitely the place for me.”

Columbia

“Visiting Columbia University and having the opportunity to meet with Professor Fox was, without a doubt, one of my biggest highlights of the tour. Not only was Professor Fox interested in my research focus around Hip Hop and Indigenous artists, he was also incredibly helpful and encouraging. While stating that I would be a good “fit” for Columbia and the ethnomusicology department, Professor Fox also made sure to inform me of the work other U.S. universities are doing around Hip Hop and programs that may also be of interest. Moreover, he reiterated the need to make an informed decision and be aware of all options available.”

Cambridge

“Whilst at Cambridge I had the opportunity to meet with Becky Inkster from the Department of Psychiatry. Becky is a neuroscientist and co-founder of “Hip Hop Psych”, researching the positive effects Hip Hop can have on youth and their mental health. It was great to meet with Becky and hear all about her research, which sounded fascinating, and also to find another academic devoted to shedding light on the immense potential Hip Hop has to empower, educate, and heal.”

“Although I established that Cambridge wasn’t for me, I managed to secure a great contact in Becky and will continue to be in touch, as I think it would be awesome to work with the Hip Hop Psych program in the near future.”

Oxford

“Visiting the UK universities was definitely a different experience than the U.S, both in terms of the culture and the university structure. Whilst I enjoyed the UK leg of the trip, it also served to confirm that New York and the States will be the place I’ll be looking to explore future postgraduate studies.”



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).

The Aurora Indigenous Scholars International Study Tour program is jointly funded by the Australian Government Department of Education.

We are also grateful for the generous support provided by:

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Australian National University
 Australian Studies Committee at Harvard University
 Central Queensland University
 Columbia University
 Curtin University
 Deakin University
 Griffith University
 Harvard University
 James Cook University
 Monash University
 Queensland University of Technology
 Rhodes House, Oxford
 Stanford University
 Swinburne University of Technology
 University of California, Berkeley
 University of Cambridge
 University of Canberra
 University of Newcastle
 University of Notre Dame
 University of Oxford
 University of South Australia
 University of Sydney
 University of Tasmania
 University of Technology Sydney
 University of Western Australia
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 Victoria University

Foundations and other organisations

Cambridge Commonwealth, European & International Trust
 Charlie Perkins Scholarship Trust
 Coronella Fund, a sub-fund of Australian Communities Foundation
 Elizabeth Eggleston Fund, a sub-fund of Australian Communities Foundation
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 James N Kirby Foundation
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