Empowering Disenfranchised Learner Identities through EPortfolios

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Abstract

To support VET participation, pedagogies need to recognize and respond effectively to the impact of the disparities between those students' realities and educational institutions’ assumptions about knowledge. This paper explores the potential of ePortfolios to recognise and engage diverse learner identities within formal education. The paper reports on the outcomes of a project that developed and utilised ePortfolios with a range of Indigenous learners in vocational education contexts. The learners come from different remote and regionally based communities and explored ePortfolios and a range of different technologies, knowledge systems and the associated literacies. The outcomes are discussed in relation to representations of learners' identities through ePortfolios. The discussion considers the opportunities and challenges for utilising ePortfolios in Indigenous contexts and the vocational education sector.

Introduction

To support the participation of disenfranchised students, vocational education and training providers at an institutional and individual level continue to examine the systems, resources and pedagogies that can enhance the engagement and outcomes of those disengaged learners. The use of information technologies in learning and assessment have been promoted as a part of the solution. In the assessment of evidence that utilises digital technologies, there is a need to identify people and learner driven systems that effectively engage a range of learners.
Electronic portfolios (ePortfolios) provide a way of organising digital based evidence. There are a number of challenges for learners, trainers and educational institutions when considering the use of ePortfolios to engage disenfranchised learners. EPortfolios can utilise a number of different structures and draw on a range of learning knowledge management approaches to support learners’ engagement in education and recognition of their competence. This paper discusses the experiences of using ePortfolios with Indigenous learners to improve Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes.

The paper seeks to identify the pedagogical and systemic considerations in using ePortfolios in the vocational sector with Indigenous learners. The considerations include the collection and organisation of digital evidence for the learners’ own purposes and assessment of their competence, the development of an ePortfolio system and interface that are aligned with Indigenous learners’ preferred ways to represent information. The systems, approaches and resources utilised was centred on learning from the learner’s perspective. Secondly, the approaches and resources addressed the ways to organise information to facilitate assessment against nationally accredited qualifications. The development of a learners’ community of practice supported their engagement in building the skills and ePortfolios for effective RPL. The leadership by Indigenous people in all aspects of the educational process was essential to improve the use of digital technologies to develop evidence in meaningful and sometimes innovative ways. Finally the chapter identifies some of the challenges in developing and implementing RPL processes that utilise ePortfolios.

The author acknowledges all of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners involved who have generously shared their ideas, learning and experiences.

**Significance**

The National Strategy for VET 2004-2010, *Shaping Our Future (ANTA 2004)*, identified that at the core of vocational education in Australia was ensuring Indigenous Australians have the skills for viable jobs, a shared learning culture, increased business development, and
employment opportunities that lead to greater economic independence where employers and individuals are at the core of VET. Over many years, high numbers of Indigenous Australians have participated in VET training, however, a much lower percentage have had positive results in relation to employment or higher level qualifications (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008). There is an urgent need to improve the recognition of educational achievements and the experience of formal education by Indigenous learners. Miller (2005), Young, Roberston et al. (2005), Young, Guenther et al. (2007), Gelade and Stehlik (2004) have identified some of the issues hindering the provision of training that can improve the educational and workforce outcomes of remote Indigenous adults. These issues include a lack of culturally appropriate learning approaches and learning resources utilised in VET teaching in remote communities. The *Djama in VET* (Henry, Arnott et al. 1998) study identified six interconnected issues in VET delivery with Indigenous communities that, if addressed appropriately, contribute to improving the outcomes from VET delivery in Indigenous contexts.

Training programmes improve Indigenous educational outcomes when Indigenous people are engaged in educational design and delivery, Indigenous community’s culture and knowledge are completely integrated and the relevant community has control over all aspects of VET delivery. Wallace and Boyle (forthcoming) note training needs to be matched with current and developing work, embedded into community and community business, and preferably taught by Indigenous trainers. Campbell and Christie’s (2008) recommendations to improve Indigenous community engagement in formal education, identified the importance of respect as identified by Indigenous participants, good communication based on respect and trust, long term engagement of institutional staff and the involvement of a network of organisations from the industry, governmental, community and education sectors. The development of training programmes in Indigenous contexts must be underpinned sound institutional, and educational approaches that support the effective engagement of Indigenous people, knowledge and their partnerships with educational institutions.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has identified the importance of ensuring the training system, and the products of the training system, are responsive to the needs
of individuals, businesses and industry. In the vocational education sector there is considerable scope to support ‘learner transitions and key national policy drivers such as RPL and fast-tracking apprenticeships’ (DEEWR 2009; pp. 7). Eportfolios have been promoted as improving outcomes for teaching, learning and assessment as part of a lifelong learning approach in education (Lorenzo and Ittleson 2005, JISC 2008). The potential of ePortfolios in the Australian Higher Education sector has been examined through the Australian E-portfolio Project (Hallam et al 2008) which recommended that ‘government policy recognise ePortfolio practice as a strategy to build an integrated relationship between higher education and the vocational education and schools sector, in order to support the individual’s lifelong and lifewide learning needs and to increase the potential for career progression’ (Hallam et al 2008; pp. iv). They note and that as Australia is in the early stages of ePortfolio adoption, there is an opportunity to understand how ePortfolios impact on educational outcomes.

Boyle and Wallace (2008) have explored the steady uptake of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in adult education in Indigenous contexts. Use of ICT was holistic; ‘framed and based in Indigenous students’ experiences and knowledge systems’ (p9). ICT pedagogies provided ways for Indigenous students to manage and record their knowledge and skills in accordance with the relevant Indigenous and personal governance structures while also meeting formal educational standards. Teachers and Indigenous community members customised the content and use of ICT for local learning purposes. Through lessons, Indigenous people developed confidence in accessing, using and innovating with emerging technologies and build networks across communities of practice and distance. Trainers were able to utilise ICTs to embed English literacies and numeracy development into learning and sharing all learners expertise; that of teachers, students and community members. In this way the control of learning is shared and supports co-production of knowledge within appropriate and critically aware cultural and social contexts.

**Literature review**
Definitions of ePortfolios have developed as their use has diversified and deepened. The definitions are based on the purpose, product or systems. Eportfolios, as a product, are a collection of digital artefacts articulating experiences, achievements and learning’ (JISC 2008). Eportfolios are a digitised collection of objects from a range of sources that include resources, achievements, responses through text, visual, graphics, reflections, multimedia artefacts or examples that are organised to share information and gain learners’ feedback (Lorenzo and Ittelson 2005, JISC 2008). Acker (2005) describes ePortfolios in terms of being student ePortfolios, teaching ePortfolios and institutional ePortfolios. Eportfolios have a range of different purposes; to collect the evidence to apply for employment or admission to a course, present a an overview of learners’ achievements and support their transition to a new environment, support learning processes through reflection and discussion, the collection of evidence for formative and summative assessment, and, for personal and professional development (JISC 2007).

The VET E-portfolio Roadmap notes the shift in the definition of ePortfolios (DEEWR 2009 pp 2-3) to one that focuses on what the ePortfolio does. This definition extends the concept of ePortfolios to being learner driven, supporting lifelong learning, enabling documentation and reflection on learning and an e-portfolio system that provides services for learners to create, maintain or present their e-portfolio’ (DEEWR 2009; pp. 3). The Roadmap describes ePortfolios as used to support the mobility and transitions within students’ plans, reflections on career development and learning, recognition of learning and skills, verification of qualifications, recording employability evidence and controlling private information (DEEWR 2009; pp. 2-3).

The uses of technology have developed with their technological advances and, as Kress and Pachler (2007) note, the incorporation of a range of devices into many peoples’ social and cultural practices. The use of digital media organised through a system like an ePortfolio provides an approach to incorporate learners’ and work contexts. Eportfolios have been found to engage learners through scaffolded tasks and that ‘most learners gain confidence through developing ePortfolios, and many acquire a greater sense of self-worth.’ (JISC 2008; pp. 11). They provide a framework for learners to present and engage in learning experiences that can
‘new possibilities for how people relate to each other, how knowledge is defined in negotiation between actors and changes our conception of learning environments in which actors make meaning’ (Erstad 2008; pp. 181).

Effective ICT learning and engagement is more than the technology and associated technical skills. The role of digital technologies in improving the educational opportunities for Indigenous learners is dependent on the ways they are used and connected to people’s own lives and purposes. Beetham (2007) notes that technologies should not be included in learning situations without understanding participants’ competence and confidence in using technologies and ideally extend that competence to build bridges to learning new skills and knowledge. The ways people learn is based on reflecting on their own cultural models of the world that do not denigrate their identities, social connections, strengths or contrast them to new models (Gee 2003).

In discussing the use of digital technologies in Aboriginal contexts, Christie (2006; pp. 83), notes that their use is not ‘predetermined, it develops in relation to the context, and that through use they are reinvented and configured in response to agendas arising from the context’ and are only useful when ‘revived on new contexts of knowledge production in active, creative, situated negotiated encounters’. Engaging approaches embed Indigenous knowledge and perspectives and encourage students to explore the potential of ICT to accurately express their ideas, knowledge and skills. Field (2005; pp. 1-2) noted the value of recognising ‘the complexity and diffusion of lifelong and lifewide learning (is a concept that is not )…easily absorbed by more conventional education and training systems’. Jarvis (2004; pp. 16-7) notes the inability of education institutions to maintain pace with the society’s new demands, meaning much learning occurs outside the education system in unplanned ways. This learning, if recognised, can improve educational delivery and be connected to formal educational experiences to build bridges to learners’ contexts and perspectives.

Falk and Balatti (2003) have indicated that a link exists between education and identity,
that learners are affected by the ways they understand or define themselves, usually called identity and described aspects of identity in learning. Understanding the key factors of learning engagement that impact on the different learner identities is dependent on understanding the identities on which individuals draw and the efficacy of those identities in negotiating new learning experiences.

Learning opportunities that build empowered learner identities by relating to disenfranchised learners’ social practices and group memberships may build bridges between students, educators and communities’ understanding of each other’s knowledge and learning practices and identities (Wallace 2008, 2009). These are informed by the different learning identities as they relate to peoples worlds; family, local, institution, workplace and global communities. As Gee (2003; pp. 51) notes, learning is connected to accessing and exploring a range of identities as a learner ‘it requires taking on a new identity and forming bridges from one’s old identities to the new one.’

Developing identity affirming learning experiences can support regional students and communities’ identities. If the educational system operates from a view that assesses what people coming to learning do not have – a cultural deficit view – their knowledge is not being recognised. The deficit view of students’ knowledge actively disempowers teachers and students, reducing their opportunities for learning. Effective approaches to e-learning also recognise the impact of learners having a learner identity that supports engagement in formal education and promotes strong connections between learners and educational institutions’ worlds and ways of managing knowledge. This kind of approach can reduce the risks of engagement to learners own community membership and support learners and educational institutions to build the strategies that encourage and sustain active engagement in formal learning. (see Wallace 2009 for more detail).

Methodology

This project utilises critical participatory action research approach. Participatory
research, a form of social research, has been associated with social transformation and is characterised by ‘shared ownership of research projects, community-based analysis of social problems and an orientation toward community action’ (Kemmis and McTaggart 2005; pp. 560). Participatory action research is a social process that studies, frames and reconstructs social practices through self reflection. Participative action research draws on Freire’s (1979) theories of emancipation (Marshall and Rossman 1999). Critical participatory action research involves a series of self-reflective cycles that include:

- planning a change
- acting and observing the process and consequences of the change
- reflecting on these processes and consequences, and then
  - replanning
  - acting and observing
  - reflecting, and so on. (Kemmis and McTaggart 2003, p. 381)

Higgs, Fish and Rothwell (2004; pp. 98) described a participative process to recognise practitioner knowledge that makes sense of observations and ideas through a ‘number of interactive, spiralling, reflexive, cognitive and communicative processes and actions (which) can usefully contribute to knowledge development’. Higgs et al’s framework commences with the formulation of an idea and then develops an understanding of the concept or event. The evidence base for the knowledge is generated through evaluation and critiquing that result in a sense of conviction or validation of the knowledge. The concept is then released for public critique so that it can be accepted and developed through interaction with the broader professional community (Higgs et al 2004; pp. 97).

Within a participatory approach, there are two sets of information that need to be recognised. The first is the set of experiences of the participants as learners and participants in the formal and non-formal education sectors. The second is the set of researcher’s own self-narrative understood in terms of a relational identification (Chappell et al. 2003), a reflexive process where a life experience or history that is interpreted in relation to the social and cultural definitions of identities. This approach to data collection was utilised throughout the project and
drew together the reflections of participants and facilitators in the workshops, assessment sessions and feedback to the resource. The results were examined using thematic analysis to identify the common elements that impacted on Indigenous learners’ outcomes. The analysis discussed and described how successful resolutions to some complex issues were achieved and provided examples of innovative practice.

Context

This project was undertaken in 2007 and 2008 with Indigenous learners and vocational education providers in the Northern Territory and the Kimberley region of Western Australia and aimed to develop effective e-learning approaches to recognise learners’ knowledge and strengths. This Australian Flexible Learning Framework, Indigenous Engagement-funded project was titled Working from Our Strengths: Using e-learning to recognise knowledge and competence in Indigenous enterprise training and development. This project approach emphasised the use of strengths based (as opposed to deficit based) approaches to learning. The project team included three facilitators and 15 participants and used e-learning tools and technologies to support Indigenous people employed across a range of Indigenous organisations to develop training plans with their current and potential staff. The participants had all completed a qualification in their particular industry area such as children’s services or business and wanted to undertake the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment to support their careers and to be qualified trainers in their organisations.

The project aimed to collect evidence using e-learning tools for a minimum of two units of competency from within the qualification per participant. The approach established effective processes using digital technologies to recognise the knowledge that Indigenous people have developed through working in different roles and industries. Participants undertook the RPL and current competence (RCC) process using digital photographs, videos and stories, ePortfolios and networking. The final product outlined the process for developing a training plan with an Indigenous enterprise team, ways to use e-tools to collect evidence to apply for undertake RPL and RCC and examples of successful e-applications for RPL and training plans.
Results and Discussion

Effective ICT learning and engagement is more than the technology and associated technical skills. Engaging approaches embed Indigenous knowledge and perspectives and encourage students to explore the potential of ICT to accurately express their ideas, knowledge and skills. This was evident across the project.

The project started by considering a range of e-learning approaches, mobile learning (m-learning) strategies and resources were found to be most useful. That is, using mobile technologies such as mobile phones, digital cameras, laptops, and USB sticks to collect and organise information in learning contexts. The projects were based in remote Indigenous communities and were best managed by collecting and organising information with people, while they were involved in relevant work-based learning activities.

In low ICT infrastructure and support environments, it was beneficial not to rely on complicated technology and instead, use approaches that can work anywhere, anytime. M-learning approaches, such as using laptops and cameras were less intrusive and already integrated into people’s daily lives, even if they were not used regularly by participants. M-learning based evidence collection strategies ranged from making digital stories and audio files to collating images and texts from various sources. Once these were accepted by students as a useful way to collect evidence, people identified a broad range of ways and places to collect images and examples. Participants used m-learning tools and associated learning strategies in ways that were familiar to them. Commonly, peer teams collected evidence for each other in their own workplaces and reflected on the images and recordings before remixing the information for presentation to the assessor.

Collecting digital evidence

Participants explored a number of digital technologies to collect evidence about their
skills and knowledge for assessment. The key features that were successful were; to use hardware and software that was intuitive and did not require a high level of technical expertise to use; using those technologies in teams; and, being able to share with peers. Although all participants had access to computers at work, and some also at home, Internet access varied considerably. This approach resulted in a collection of different learning objects that drew on a mixture of visual, audio and written elements to presented as evidence of their knowledge and skills. It was important for learners to be able to collect their evidence in teams so they could help each other recognise their strengths and interview each other about the reasons they worked in certain ways: the underpinning knowledge. The learning objects used digital stories, audio files, photographs and scanned and written documents. The use of visual and context specific materials assisted the assessor to elicit further information about their competence as they had a common reference point.

Participants examined a number of different ePortfolio systems and then designed an approach that they preferred. The features of the ePortfolio system chosen, demonstrate the central issues in designing an ePortfolio that engages Indigenous learners and provides an effective link between learners and institutional processes. Learners wanted engaging learning experiences that respect Indigenous knowledge and people, encouraged critical thinking rather than compliance, valued their knowledge and contexts, built learners’ knowledge of the system and supported learners growing independence in the VET system.

An ePortfolio system and interface

After examining a range of open and closed source systems, the ePortfolio system chosen used a USB drive to organise and store the information. This may be better described as an mPortfolio (mobile portfolio). This was chosen as learners could; retain a high degree of control of their information; focus on their perspective rather than the institution; adapt the system to their needs and priorities; and, they could decide what was shared and when. Large scale institutional systems were complicated and alienating. Learning complex systems to undertake
simple tasks such as creating a personalised page or linking images and text interfered with their learning and presenting their learning objects.

An interface had to be developed that made sense to learners, was sufficiently basic to make it easy for the learner to manage and facilitators to support them and, provided a point for assessors to be able to access the material prepared for them in a way that made assessment clear and explicit. The provision of exemplars and templates that could be adapted assisted learners access the technology. With advice from the learners, a splash screen styled view was developed that organised the material. It focused on the learners’ perspective and used a commissioned piece of Aboriginal art to navigate the sections. The view had the following areas:

- **My plan** - that outlined the study plan from the learner as it related to their career planning.
- **My media files** - in these section learners could ‘dump’ their materials without working out exactly where it belonged. This was the collection point for making decisions about relationships at a later and repeated stage.
- **My evidence** - in this section learners made a file for each unit of competence that they were collecting evidence for. Files could be moved to the appropriate folder and linked to multiple folders at any time.
- **My study history** - this was a place to collect all previous statements of attainment, student records and assessment items for later mapping.
- **My work history** – this was place to collect a resume, templates, references and any position descriptions.
- **My units** – in this section, learners downloaded the units of competency and associated materials from the National Training Information Service ([www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au)) for which they were applying for recognition.

This structure allowed learners to separate their own material from that of formal educational systems. It then provided a point to connect the two when people were ready. Regular backups onto CD-ROM were encouraged. This interface did not require extensive discussion with information technology support which could be alienating to learners.
Community of practice

Learners developed a community of practice to support the development of their ePortfolios. They had a place that was private until they were ready to share it, and no one could access their information before the learner made that decision. This was very important to people. Learners worked alone or in pairs. They met regularly and were able to share some of the information they had collected. Learners were also able to discuss how they had mapped their evidence to the units of competence from the certificate IV qualification. This encouraged extensive professional discussions and provided a sounding board for people to affirm their decisions and for others to encourage them to clearly elucidate their skills. They shared with the others in the group and adjusted their ePortfolios accordingly. This was a source of inspiration for collecting evidence.

The community of practice collected evidence in ways that were not discussed during the initial sessions but were able to defend those choices as they had developed an understanding of the requirements of evidence. This also meant that there was space for the unexpected, the ways people had collected and could collect evidence that were not anticipated by the facilitators and could have remained hidden in an RPL process. This was an important affirmation activity that supported learners to sustain their effort. When they were ready, learners took the evidence organised into units that were ready for the assessor and had an initial meeting that was not an assessment but a feedback session that allowed learners to refine their portfolio prior to submission. This was another affirmation activity designed to further develop learners’ confidence in their work. The facilitators acted as advocates for students and were separate from the assessment process, thereby splitting these very different roles.

Indigenous leadership

An Indigenous VET lecturer was an essential part of the team. She acted as a mentor and trainer to develop an appropriate process for identifying and negotiating the participation of
people who were ready for and could utilize the qualification. She also worked with TAFE lecturers to share the learning and tools developed in the project. This Indigenous lecturer was central in gaining community support for the project and the involvement of participants in associated activities. She identified the different ways the technologies could be used, assisted learners to construct their ePortfolios, organise their information and prepare for their assessments.

**Co-production of knowledge**

The ePortfolios provided a place to collect multimedia evidence and the work with it, outside the control of the educational institution. People had a space to collect different perspectives of their home, community, cultural and work-based lives. They had time and space to reflect on what they knew and talk to the people with authority in their worlds, about how that knowledge should be managed and presented and its relationship to broader networks. People planned activities in their workplaces and recorded them to demonstrate their knowledge and answer the educational questions. The discussions around these evidence preparation activities and how they related to underpinning knowledge, performance criteria and units of competency was complex and led by learners. In this way learners led much of this project as it developed over time. Through this process, Indigenous learners were able to present themselves in a positive way when this had not been their usual experience of education.

Participants developed skills in using a range of digital technologies to represent their knowledge and skills within their own context. Participants prepared an ePortfolio of their evidence that was discussed with a training specialist prior to the formal assessment. Assessors found that the process changed their relationship with learners as they were able to see individuals’ strengths within their own context. The images and examples provided a productive starting point for a discussion about what learners did know and targeted the areas for further training. In this way training did not repeat areas of learners’ strength but focussed on the areas that needed development.
Challenges for the future

The ePortfolio system developed through this project is not meant to be, nor could it be a universal system for a large education institution. The ePortfolio identifies key features for learners who are often marginalised and could continue to be by institutionally-focussed ePortfolios. EPortfolios need to focus on the learners and their view rather then the institutions’ and provide a safe place for learners to share, varying levels of privacy, and a structured interface for institutional purposes such as assessment. Educational institutions need to provide the material that learners can take into their own ePortfolio and manage as they understand it. There needs to be spaces for learners to demonstrate their knowledge and experience in unexpected ways. Effective approaches to engaging Indigenous students in learning through ICT uses an awareness of, and explicitly teaches the critical literacies linked to use, production and communication through ICTs. ICTs are not a gimmick to trick students into learning; they have the potential to create strong learning partnerships between educators, students and Indigenous community members.

Eportfolio design and implementation needs to take advantage of and utilise the multimedia aspects of knowledge management rather than replicating the English literacy based resources in many flexible delivery programmes. One key resource could be the provision of how to guides for using ePortfolios and collecting evidence that could be dragged into an ePortfolio. The recently released PowerUpPlus resource [http://powerup.edu.edu.au](http://powerup.edu.edu.au) provides the ‘how to’ guides for using multimedia resources in Indigenous contexts. This is an opportunity to present information visually and in many languages, to connect ideas in different ways and to a multitude of learners’ contexts. This is a resource rather than a detriment for an educational programme.

Working in multimedia formats through ePortfolios is a challenge for teachers who prefer and are expert in written forms of communication and evidence. This student- centred approach is different and teachers/trainers will need additional time to adjust their approach, gain
experience and their develop their own communities of practice in which to share ideas. This needs to be a private space, like the one for learners, where people share ideas without being monitored for assessment purposes or fail as part of the learning process.

Learners need spaces where they can listen to others, share their ideas, negotiate meaning, get or test ideas, share information from peers without any assessment attached to that activity. This is a place to affirm learners’ identities and work in evidence collection. This flexibility allows learners to experiment with their own knowledge and learning before it is prepared for formal assessment. Learners need access to technology that is free and reliable, rather than the new and exciting technology that may take longer to learn and resilience and experience to master. For learners who have been excluded from learning, it is important to focus in being successful and on their purpose – to learn and achieve, not to become a technological master.

Interoperability is an important issue in the development of ePortfolio systems. Learners have information in many places and increasingly in mobile technological devices. The ePortfolio needs to have ways to facilitate rather than complicate connection in ways that are meaningful to learners. The systemic issues are complex, as the principles of adult learning, particularly those for marginalised learners and the principles of good information technology design need to be addressed. The partnerships of teachers and learners, working across different knowledge systems now has an additional challenge, to provide information in ways that are not culturally biased or exclude different ways of working.

Learners’ use of ePortfolios extends beyond the official life of an enrolment in a course. In the VET system this can be especially short (small units of competency are 10 hours long), and learners may prefer to be able to access an ePortfolio to collect evidence and participate in a community of practice long before they are ready to enrol. The cost involved can also be an issue. Indigenous learners would be better served by a lifelong approach to learning and ePortfolios that promotes the collection of evidence and development of expertise over time. This is a serious challenge for educational institutions and governments. A lifelong system will work better for marginalised learners with limited access to computers and Internet than multiple ePortfolios across different institutions. Finally, ePortfolios and the associated approaches to
learning with Indigenous people need to make space for the unexpected: the learners’ view that could not be anticipated by the developers or facilitators, or the view of people from different cultural and social groups.

Conclusions

The potential use of ePortfolios with Indigenous learners to recognise skills and knowledge and the development of empowered learner identities has been demonstrated through this project. The use of multimedia has the potential to improve learning by making better connections to learners’ workplaces, homes and community contexts. What was more important than the technology was the ways it was used to engage and support Indigenous learners’ participation in formal education. An approach that focused on the learners’ purpose and perspective also supported the connections between learners and the educational institution. By providing a self-managed system with spaces that were private and open to a community of practice, learners developed a sound awareness of different ways of presenting their information with multimedia forms, including the use of their own contexts to support their learning and outcomes. An ePortfolio approach that combines multimedia approaches supports a strengths-based approach to learning with Indigenous learners and trainers.

There are a number of challenges in building effective systems that provide opportunities for learners to manage and control their ePortfolios with limited expertise in using technology or access to computers and the internet. This is an important challenge in order to engage different cultural and social perspectives while also meeting the need for stability and interoperability. The inclusion of a range of Indigenous trainers and learners at every stage in the design of ePortfolio systems can have benefits for learners and educational systems in the long term.

References


