

2026-27 HIVE Summer Internship Project

From Craft to Catwalk: An Immersive Documentary of Aboriginal-Led Circular Fashion

Primary Academic Supervisor

Dr. Roberto Minunno

Project Background

Fashion is one of the world's most wasteful industries: garments are produced and discarded faster than they are worn, and a large share ends up in landfill well before their useful life is over. To make matters worse, clothing gifted to remote and regional communities is frequently unwanted or unusable on arrival, adding another layer to the problem in places with few options for reuse or disposal.

To address this sustainability key issue, this project applies a circular economy approach and treats waste as raw material for Aboriginal art and design (waste as a new resource). Aboriginal women take unwanted garments and transform them into new, wearable pieces, turning waste into culturally distinctive fashion rather than sending it to landfill. And, in so doing, the making process contributes to building a market for circular fashion grounded in cultural knowledge rather than novelty, showing that Aboriginal-led design can close the loop rather than sit at its edges. Importantly, many of the women involved are also rebuilding their lives after contact with the justice system and experiences of family and domestic violence, and are connected to the Voice of Hope centre (Perth, Western Australia). For them, the making process has become a pathway to new skills, confidence and connection, alongside its role in reducing textile waste.

In August 2026, a collection produced this way was showcased at New Zealand Fashion Week's Pacific Fusion event, and its success was proof that Aboriginal-led upcycling can hold its own on a major international runway as a genuine circular-fashion business model, not just a waste-reduction exercise.

Project Description, Expected Outputs, Possible Stretch Goals

This internship will turn existing raw footage into an immersive-reality documentary tracing the journey from learning upcycling and design skills to the New Zealand Fashion Week runway, centred on the women's personal transformation.

The team already holds 360-degree footage (Insta360 X5) and standard 2D footage (DJI Pocket 4) captured at the event and surrounding moments of this journey. The student's task is to build a stitching/editing pipeline and structure a hybrid 360/2D narrative for the HIVE environment, working under supervision and without direct new data collection from community participants. Additionally, new narrating voices will be recorded and added to the narrative, as well as curating and editing the audio channels.

Expected outputs:

- A rough-cut immersive documentary sequence combining 360-degree and 2D footage
- A working 360-degree stitching and post-production pipeline
- A community-facing edit shared back to Voice of Hope and Whadjuk Noongar participants for feedback
- A final report and live demo/presentation at the HIVE Showcase (5 Feb 2027)

Stretch goals:

- Spatial audio design for the immersive sequences
- A HIVE dome or immersive-gallery presentation format
- A VR headset-ready export

These artifacts and the narrative might lead to a published journal article to describe the experience and successes of the Aboriginal team.

Links to background reading and any relevant recent work in the field

- Immersive cinematics: reimagining 2D production workflows for VR (link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/25741136.2026.2648389>) the peer-reviewed journal article that came out of a prior HIVE internship (2023-24); precedent for this pathway.

- Immersive Nature (link https://hive.curtin.edu.au/internships/2025-26/34HUM_SE_Nature360.pdf) 360/180 stereoscopic capture pipeline (HIVE, 2025-26) — closest recent HIVE capture-to-immersive workflow template.
- “Upcycled designer garments take Nyoongar stories to New Zealand Fashion Week” (link: <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/CU2608/S00134/upcycled-designer-garments-take-nyoongar-stories-to-new-zealand-fashion-week.htm>) media coverage of the NZFW showcase this documentary is built from.
- Deadly Denim: upcycling to create fresh, contemporary clothing (CEBIC case study) (link <https://www.cebic.vic.gov.au/learn/case-studies/deadly-denim-upcycling-to-create-fresh-contemporary-clothing>) Beck Barlow's practice, a Phase II case study underpinning this project.

What type of visualisation will the student develop or produce?

A hybrid immersive-reality documentary: 360-degree video (captured on an Insta360 X5) interwoven with standard 2D footage (DJI Pocket 4), stitched and edited into an immersive narrative sequence suitable for HIVE-format viewing (and potentially VR headset export), tracing the women's journey from the upcycling workshop to the New Zealand Fashion Week runway. Further, the student could create 3D copies of the garments similar to "Digital Twin Exhibition An Exploration of Garment Circularity."

How will the visualisation contribute to your research outcomes?

The visualisation would contribute to research outcomes of a current research project titled "IP5.02.04 Identifying opportunities from waste management and resource recovery and the circular economy for indigenous communities and businesses." The HIVE internship would contribute as a fabulous addition by creating more traction with media and an independent research publication on visualisation and Aboriginal art and circular economy, which would boost the success of the project above.

If the project is successful, where would you consider publishing the results?

The immersive documentary would act as the backbone for an academic publication on journals such as the Australian Aboriginal Studies (AAS) or a selected outlet from Indigenous Related Scholarly Journals. The underpinning research question would be on how modern visualisation tools such as VR and 360 can engage remote communities and inspire Indigenous Peoples to upcycle unwanted garments and work towards business opportunities in sustainable fashion and Indigenous Art.

Draft Project Timeline:

Week 1

Nov 16 - Full day HIVE induction

Nov 17 - Area and Project Induction with Primary supervisor

Develop project plan with HIVE and academic team

Literature and relevant project review

Project Familiarisation

Week 2

Narrative design to draft story arc centred on the women's transformation from learning the craft to the NZFW runway; scene selection and storyboard/paper edit.

Week 3

Community checkpoint 1.

Storyboard shared with the women for input on how their journey is told; narrative revised accordingly.

Week 4

Technical work, 360° stitching, colour and audio workflow established; hybrid 360/2D integration tested.

Garment photos.

Week 5

Rough assembly with full documentary structure assembled end-to-end. Stitching garment photos on 3D model.

Week 6

Review and refinement and supervisor feedback on rough cut; pacing and 360↔2D transitions refined.

Voice recording.

Week 7

Community checkpoint 2.

Rough cut v2 screened to the women for approval and edits and control of narrative.

Week 8

Fine cut and deployment with community feedback implemented; final cut; build deployed to headset and tested in showcase format.

Week 9

Focus on report writing and presentation (including demo) preparation

Week 10

Focus on report writing and presentation (including demo) preparation

5th Feb Final Showcase Day and final report due

Student Experience and Supervision:

How often will you meet with the student over the 10-week period?

Twice per week.

Your work desk location and the location of student desk

418.401 (open office)

Student Attributes:

Please indicate any preference for student's academic discipline or field of study

We would prefer a student from either Media or Fashion with knowledge of video editing. Knowledge of Aboriginal and Australian Indigenous Culture is highly appreciated.

What competencies are required to start this project

Beginner - 2D art/editing

Intermediate - Virtual Reality Development (rendering pipelines, scene content design, interaction)

Advanced - Video production/editing

Advanced - 3D modelling software (Blender, 3ds Max)

Do you have any other student attributes you think are important to the project?

NA