

ABBIE NORTHWOOD

STRATEGIC & BUSINESS ADVISOR | DIRECTOR, THE AWARE ADVISORS

PROFESSIONAL OVERVIEW

Abbie Northwood is a Darwin-based strategic and business advisor with more than 20 years of experience across consulting, government, tourism and business development.

As Director of The Aware Advisors, she supports businesses and organisations through strategic and business planning, commercial advice, engagement and facilitation, organisational development and practical implementation planning.

Her specialist strengths include tourism and the visitor economy, Aboriginal business and enterprise development, and regional and remote Northern Australia. Abbie is known for working in partnership with clients, understanding local context and translating complex issues and diverse perspectives into achievable priorities.

CORE EXPERTISE

- Strategic and business planning; feasibility and business cases
- Commercial advisory, enterprise development and business support
- Stakeholder and Aboriginal community engagement; facilitation
- Governance, organisational reviews and program development
- Tourism strategy, industry development and regional economic opportunities

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

THE AWARE ADVISORS | DIRECTOR | 2024–PRESENT

Leads a Darwin-based advisory practice delivering strategy, business advisory, engagement and facilitation, and organisational development assignments for government, Aboriginal organisations, industry bodies and businesses.

KPMG DARWIN | MANAGER, BUSINESS ADVISORY | 2019–2024

Managed and contributed to strategic advisory projects, including Territory-wide strategies, policy and program reviews, community engagement and advisory support for Aboriginal enterprises.

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER | 2014–2019

Provided business and tourism development support across Katherine, Big Rivers, Kakadu and Arnhem regions, working closely with Aboriginal businesses and remote communities on commercial opportunities and business capability.

MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND | TOURISM MANAGER | 2009–2014

Managed tourism operations and industry-facing functions, including visitor experience, marketing, sales, distribution, trade, business events, destination development and sustainability.

QUALIFICATIONS& PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Master of Business Administration, Social Impact | UNSW
- Bachelor of Business, Tourism Management | La Trobe University
- Advanced Diploma in Sustainable Tourism | William Angliss Institute
- UNWTO Sustainable Tourism & International Development course (Member, UN Tourism Volunteer Corps)
- International Partnership Brokers Training (2026)

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90 Ryland Road, Rapid Creek, NT 0810

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SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE | GOVERNMENT STRATEGY & INDUSTRY

A selection of projects demonstrating Abbie's individual contribution across The Aware Advisors and earlier advisory and government roles.

NT Visitor Economy Strategy | Tourism and Events NT

Supported the development of the Territory's overarching visitor economy strategy, contributing to the direction and priorities for long-term industry development.

NT Aboriginal Tourism Strategy | Tourism NT

Undertook policy and sector analysis and extensive stakeholder engagement to review and update the Aboriginal tourism strategy, including engagement with the Aboriginal Tourism Committee and an accessible supporting video.

NT Drive Tourism Strategy | Tourism NT

Developed the Territory-wide drive tourism strategy informed by regional workshops, individual engagement and cross-sector consultation, identifying development and investment priorities.

Aboriginal Cultural Tourism along NT Drive Routes | Tourism NT

Delivered engagement and business development work with Penangke Cultural Consultants across Aboriginal communities along NT drive routes, culminating in ten plans for prospective Aboriginal tourism enterprises.

NT Housing Strategy | NT Department of Housing

Project-managed development of the 2019 housing strategy, incorporating the priorities and issues affecting remote, social and public housing in the Territory.

Parks Australia | Kakadu and Uluṟu-Kata Tjuṯa

Locally project-managed work reviewing critical park assets and led Traditional Owner engagement concerning potential future uses.

COVID Tourism Recovery Program | Tourism NT

Project-managed a six-month program providing individual business survival and recovery advice to more than 200 NT tourism operators.

Territory Tourism Discount Scheme Review | Tourism NT

Reviewed the scheme through stakeholder engagement and analysis, informing government consideration of program settings and funding.

Sustainable Travel Toolkit | Tourism NT

Contributed to the development of practical resources to help tourism businesses adopt more sustainable practices.

Tourism Top End | Business Resilience Workshop Series

Designed and delivered practical workshops and resources supporting operators to assess risks, strengthen business operations and plan actions.

Tourism Business Development Program | Tourism Top End

Provides tailored business essentials consultations, strategic advice and practical planning support for tourism operators.

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SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE | ABORIGINAL BUSINESS & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Business development, governance, strategic planning and community-led opportunity exploration, delivered through long-term relationships and place-based engagement.

Yagbani Aboriginal Corporation | Warruwi

Provided long-term business and organisational advisory support spanning community decision-making, governance training, strategic planning, business cases, an oyster enterprise opportunity, funding submissions, policies and ongoing strategic advice.

Demed Aboriginal Corporation

Facilitated Board governance training and mentoring, then worked with Directors and management to develop the 2019–2024 strategic plan, supporting the corporation's organisational growth.

Central Land Council | Strategic Planning

Supported strategic planning for a Prescribed Body Corporate with commercial enterprises, focusing on organisational priorities and future direction.

Karrke Aboriginal Tours | Feasibility

Prepared a feasibility study with Directors for a proposed cultural and retail centre connected to the existing tourism operation.

Elliott Aboriginal Art Centre | Business Case

Worked with community members in Elliott and surrounding areas to develop a business case for a proposed Aboriginal art centre.

Warburton Aboriginal Art Centre | Tourism Opportunities

Engaged with the Warburton community to explore aspirations and potential tourism uses for the art centre and roadhouse. Areyonga Community | Tourism Opportunity Planning

Worked with community members to explore potential tourism experiences associated with the art centre, documenting local priorities and initial business considerations.

Imanpa Community | Tourism Opportunity Planning

Undertook local engagement to identify potential visitor experiences, clarify community aspirations and frame opportunities for further planning.

Aboriginal Tourism Start-ups | Enterprise Development

Supported four emerging Aboriginal tourism enterprises with business planning and practical considerations for operations, marketing, governance and market readiness.

Thamarrurr Region | Community Engagement & Planning

Worked with Aboriginal stakeholders across the region to identify community priorities and translate engagement findings into strategic planning and development documents.

UN Tourism Volunteer Corps | Indonesia & Ecuador

Participated in international assignments in Borneo and Ecuador focused on tourism enterprise development and community development.

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SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE | ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY, ARTS & COMMUNITY

Projects that demonstrate the transferability of Abbie's strategic, engagement and organisational development expertise beyond tourism.

Darwin Symphony Orchestra | Strategic Plan 2025–2028
Led stakeholder engagement and facilitated Board workshops to develop the organisation's strategic direction and priorities.

Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT) | Strategic Plan
Supported the development of a new organisational strategy through engagement with councils and stakeholders, alongside Board workshops and briefings.

Wadeye Women's Centre | Strategic Planning
Developed a strategic plan shaped by local women's aspirations, through culturally appropriate engagement and planning workshops.

Penangke Cultural Consultants | Strategic Plan 2025–2028
Facilitated a two-day team planning workshop exploring purpose, values and priorities, then translated the outcomes into a practical strategic plan.

Duprada Dance Company | Organisational Review
Undertook an organisational and strategic review and developed a strategic plan with an accompanying operational plan.

Darrikardu Art Collective | Marketing & Audience Development
Developed a digital marketing and communications strategy with a practical implementation plan, through work associated with Thamarrurr Development Corporation.

Tracks Dance | Marketing & Communications Strategy
Developed a marketing and communications strategy and implementation framework to strengthen audience engagement, storytelling and coordination.

HOW ABBIE WORKS

Abbie takes a partnership-focused approach: listening first, building trust, working with clients and stakeholders, and developing advice grounded in the circumstances of each organisation and community.

She combines strategic analysis with facilitation and practical commercial understanding, and draws on trusted NT-based collaborators where specialist expertise is required.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For an overview of the services offered by The Aware Advisors, see the separate Capability Statement or visit theawareadvisors.com.au.

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