

## **Research topic: Indigenous Story Teller (IST): The Northern Cape as a case study**

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### **Abstract:**

In recent years storytelling has gained increasing attention as a global marketing trend and development tool in the tourism industry. Studies have shown that a “real” or “fictive” story associated with a destination or its peoples has the distinct ability to give the specific area an advantage over its competitors, while still simultaneously providing the tourist with a more valuable and “unique” experience. This essentially means marketing domestic and international tourist destinations as “story-scapes” through the interaction between all stakeholders, including story tellers, tourist guides and tourists. This capitalises on the tourist’s adherent need for a more authentic story behind the tourism product, along with the tourist’s interest of how this “unique” story was acquired, created and then ultimately conveyed in an understandable and meaningful way.

This project explored the viability and practicality of considering and incorporating the “Indigenous Story Teller” (IST) into the wider tourist guiding sector of South Africa. It recommends the creation of a new tourist guiding classification to add to the established three levels of tourist guiding already regulated and monitored within the country. It suggests the possible addition of an unit standard which will enable the culture guide to facilitate and provide a platform for the inclusion of the IST in the tourism sector. Culture guides will therefore be elevated to a position where they are enabled to facilitate the inclusion of the IST in the tourism offering and mediate between the IST and the tourist group as an intercultural communicator. They will also need to play the role of a conservator in ensuring that the IST and his/her landscape is preserved, respected and not damaged. In the case study of the Northern Cape the report illustrates that the concept IST refers to a diverse collection of local voices that contribute to the authenticity and integrity of a particular tourist attraction. This model can also be applied generically throughout South Africa with the range of indigenous and marginalised voices that abound. In essence, in this role, the cultural tourist guide becomes a co-creator of the IST experience.