

# Flinders University

## Indigenous Workforce Strategy

Update April 2019

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 The Flinders Commitment

Flinders University recognises the unique position of Indigenous Australians as First Nations people, and is committed to Indigenous education and engagement.

As a community engaged university, Flinders supports Indigenous nation building and economic stimulus objectives, addressing social and economic disadvantage through investment in social infrastructure and promoting meaningful and sustainable employment for local Indigenous people.

Flinders University has expressed its commitment to becoming a University of Choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff through the endorsement of the Innovative Research Universities Statement of Intent on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education<sup>1</sup>.

This Indigenous Workforce Strategy builds on and replaces the Flinders Employment Strategy for Indigenous Australians, with its focus on representation, retention and career progression. The Workforce Strategy aims to establish a framework for broader Indigenous engagement that achieves the University's long-term goals for Indigenous employment. The Strategy includes key success indicators; prioritises increasing the number of Indigenous academic employees; provides a focus on academic and professional staff development and career advancement; and sets an ambitious target of 3 per cent of all employees by 2025.

#### 1.2 Flinders Reconciliation Action Plan

We recognise that Flinders was established on the lands of the Kurna nation, with the main Flinders campus located near Warriparinga. Warriparinga is a significant site in the complex and multi-layered Dreaming of the Kurna ancestor, Tjilbruke.

For the Kurna nation, Tjilbruke was a keeper of the fire and a peace maker/law maker. Tjilbruke is part of the living culture and traditions of the Kurna people. His spirit lives in the land and waters, in the Kurna people and in the glossy ibis (known as Tjilbruke for the Kurna). Through Tjilbruke, the Kurna continue their creative relationship with their country, its spirituality and its stories.

Flinders acknowledges the traditional owners, both past and present, of the various teaching locations the University now operates on, and recognises their continued relationship and responsibility to these lands and waters. The following is an indicative (but not exhaustive) list of traditional owners on whose country Flinders University has campuses (listed alphabetically): Arrernte; Boandik; Bungarla; Gunditjmara; Jawoyn; Kurna; Larrakia; Nauo; Ngarrindjeri; Peramangk; Ramindjeri; Wurundjeri; Yolgnu

The University has undertaken to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan building upon and replacing the Flinders Indigenous Engagement Framework (FIEF) with a view to registering it with Reconciliation Australia.

## 2. Purpose and Strategic Alignment

The purpose of this Indigenous Workforce Strategy is to deliver sustainable employment and economic engagement opportunities for Indigenous people at Flinders University.

Our Strategic Plan, *The 2025 Agenda: Making a Difference*, outlines our commitment to: engaging with Indigenous Australians, students, staff and the community, respecting Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives and progressing Indigenous advancement in education, research, employment and wellbeing.

The Core Value of Integrity within the Strategic Plan outlines that we 'embrace diversity and promote equity, inclusion and social responsibility' and in line with this value, the Plan puts *People and Culture* as the first of four pillars on which it is based. The Plan requires a set of metrics that are applied throughout the organisational structures of the University and completed with a Planning and Accountability cycle to enable continuous improvement.

## 3. Definitions

**Indigenous Australian people** are people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent and who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and are accepted as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in the community in which they live or have lived.

**Cadet** means an Indigenous undergraduate student selected on the basis of their potential to progress into a professional position within the University. The cadet will be studying in their final year of their degree program and work at a 0.4 FTE contract, in a role suited to their experience and area of study. The cadet will be trained with the ultimate aim of progressing into a mainstream position classified at HEO5/6 level upon graduation.

**Graduate** means an Indigenous undergraduate student who is intending to progress into honours or postgraduate research degree. The student will be selected on the basis of their potential to progress into an academic career with the University. The graduate will work at a 1.0 FTE contract and will be provided with 0.3 FTE to progress their honours / postgraduate qualification as their research focus with the ultimate aim of progressing into an academic career.

**Trainee** means and Indigenous person who is starting their career path for the first time. A traineeship will include structured on the job training and the completion of a Nationally Accredited qualification relevant to the position. Upon successful completion of the program the trainee will be considered for ongoing employment with the University, if available.

## 4. Key Stakeholders

**Indigenous employees:** a valuable resource to provide a unique perspective of their employment experience at the University and contribute to their knowledge to broader issues around helping to change perceptions of culture diversity and respect at the institution.

**Senior managers:** integral for establishing expectations and influencing the workplace culture.

**Line managers:** integral for moderating a range of factors which impact on the retention, engagement and career progression.

**University staff:** understanding and embracing a cultural inclusive workplace.

**Indigenous community:** a rich source of future employees and cultural connection and building of collaborative partnerships.

## **5. Related Documents**

- 2025 Agenda
- Flinders Indigenous Engagement Framework
- Enterprise Agreement 2014 – 2017 Clause A12
- Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy
- Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP) Funding Guidelines, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Innovative Research Universities (IRU) Statement of Intent: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education

## **6. Governance and Reporting**

The University's Employment Strategy for Indigenous Australians (ESIA) Advisory Committee oversees and monitors the implementation of this strategy.

APRIL 2019

## 7. Objectives

Objective 1: Build organisational capability to recruit and retain Indigenous staff

Objective 2: Provide equitable employment opportunities for Indigenous candidates

Objective 3: Provide retention and career progression opportunities for Indigenous employees

| Objective   | Strategy   | Success Indicators   | Accountability  | Timeline                   | Update  |
|---|--|--|---|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Build organisational capability to recruit and retain Indigenous staff</b> | Commit to advancement of Indigenous employment   | Reference to indigenous employment included in University strategic plans  | VC  | December 2018              | Completed.<br><i>Agenda 2025</i>  |
|   | Develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan   | Reconciliation Action Plan developed and submitted to Reconciliation Australia<br><br>Reconciliation Action Plan implemented across the university | Chair: Reconciliation Action Plan Committee<br><br>SET members  | Dec 2019                   | Initiated.<br>Working Group established.<br>Timeline for completion on track        |
|   | Appoint senior Indigenous staff to positions that influence strategy, policy and advocacy across all core business of the University | PVC( Indigenous) appointed   | DVC Students  | July 2019                  | Interim PVC(Indigenous) to be appointed during substantive recruitment              |
|   | Train, educate and increase awareness of Indigenous knowledges, culture and educational approaches within the University             | SET members have undertaken training in Reconciliation and Indigenous Engagement<br><br>Online Reconciliation training available for staff         | SET members<br><br>DVC Students<br>Director, People and Culture | July 2018<br><br>July 2018 | Completed.<br><br>Online training unable to be sourced.<br>Strategy to be reviewed. |
|   | Ensure a process for consideration of Indigenous employment at Senior Executive Management forums.                                   | SET receives quarterly reports on Indigenous employment  | Chair: ESIA AC  | March 2018                 | Quarterly reports provided to UCC.  |

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|   |  |   |   |               | Report to SET, April 2019  |
|   | Indigenous employment is a standing item for the Indigenous Governance Mechanism   | Indigenous Governance Mechanism monitors Indigenous employment and provides advice to the University through appropriate mechanisms | Dean: Indigenous Strategy and Engagement                  | February 2018 | Indigenous Governance Mechanism under review                             |
| <b>Provide equitable employment opportunities for Indigenous candidates by increasing Indigenous employment at all classification levels, with a particular focus on academic positions</b> | Review recruitment processes to ensure they are culturally appropriate and designed to attract applications from Indigenous people           | Undertake a review of recruitment practices within People and Culture.  | Director People and Culture                               | December 2018 | Completed.   |
|   | Understand where Indigenous applicants source job opportunities and target advertising effectively   | Request to Advertise forms reflect information from Indigenous staff and external advice  | Director People and Culture                               | December 2018 | Completed. Job advert placement now targets indigenous staff             |
|   | Promote the University as an employer of choice to Indigenous Australians  | Flinders commitment as an employer of choice acknowledged through the website and promoted  | Executive Director Office of Communication and Engagement | December 2018 | Responsibility and action to be confirmed                                |
|   | Develop a range of entry-level positions, via cadetships, traineeships, student employment, graduate employment and work experience programs | Positions are developed, advertised and Indigenous cadets, trainees and graduates are engaged                                       | Director, People and Culture DVC(S)                       | December 2019 | Cadetships being initiated. Indigenous student employment targeted.      |
|   | Encourage Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to apply for positions in the University   | Numbers of Indigenous applicants increase   | Director, People and Culture                              | December 2019 | Current difficulties in identifying indigenous applicants for positions. |
|   | Recruit Indigenous employees (successful appointment).   | Numbers Indigenous employees increases  | Director, People and Culture<br>Managers                  | December 2019 | New Indigenous academic staff in College structures and being recruited  |
|   | Engage with Indigenous Alumni of Flinders to raise awareness of employment opportunities.  | A network of Indigenous Alumni is developed and activities for engagement are undertaken  | Executive Director, OCME<br>Coordinator:<br>Yunggorendi   | December 2018 | Responsibility and action to be confirmed                                |

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| <b>Provide retention and career progression opportunities for existing Indigenous employees</b> | Ensure that the Induction processes are culturally inclusive   | Online Induction is culturally inclusive   | Director, People and Culture   | July 2018     | Online induction processes in development. Availability of appropriate online cultural training a barrier. |
|   | Train managers with the necessary skills to ensure employee retention and engagement   | Indigenous Reconciliation training is rolled out across the University for all staff   | Director, People and Culture   | December 2019 |  |
|   | Ensure that workplaces are able to welcome and support Indigenous employees through showing respect and sensitivity for cultural differences, needs and expectations | Reconciliation Action Plan is promulgated across the University under appropriate professional development activities delivered to all staff<br><br>An Indigenous staff member is available to consult and support workplaces to be welcoming and supportive | Director, People and Culture<br>College Vice Presidents and Executive Deans        | December 2018 | RAP under development  |
|   | Understand why Indigenous employees leave the University and implement strategies to address negative workplace factors.   | Indigenous staff are empowered to provide information on why they are leaving and de-identified reports are provided annually to Director People and Culture   | Director, People and Culture   | December 2018 | Exit interviews/ surveys undertaken.   |
|   | Provide career pathways and appropriate development opportunities essential for growing and retaining the future Indigenous workforce                                | Individual career plans and professional development plans are developed for every Indigenous employee   | College Vice President and Executive Deans<br>Vice President<br>Corporate Services | December 2019 | PDR process revised and implemented  |
|   | Develop and implement training and mentoring programs that support Indigenous academic and professional staff to achieve career development and progression          | Training and mentoring programs are developed and implemented  | Director, People and Culture<br>DVC Students                                       | December 2019 |  |

<sup>i</sup> Innovative Research Universities: Statement of Intent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education 2015