Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Professional Staff Employment Strategy

2013 - 2016

January 2013
Introduction

The Australian National University’s (ANU) vision is for an Australia that provides equal chances for all, while recognising and respecting the special place, culture and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians.

In 2009 the ANU launched its Reconciliation Action Plan with a vision which included ‘making a significant contribution to improving… employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians’. Further, that ‘ANU will be a supportive learning environment where Indigenous Australians can realise their potential and achieve their aspirations’.

The College initiated its own CAP Reconciliation Action Plan in November 2011 and within that plan focussed on the University target to ‘develop and implement long term strategies to enable ANU to attract and retain at least 2.5% Indigenous full-time and part-time staff (professional and academic) at all levels across the ANU.’

Objectives

The key objectives of the CAP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Professional Staff Employment Strategy are to turn good intentions into effective actions and are primarily two-fold:

1. Increase Workforce Participation: To increase the participation of Indigenous staff in the workplace through:
   a) Internships
   b) Traineeships
   c) Identified Positions
   d) Internal Transfers

   This objective is designed specifically to address increasing workforce participation for professional staff within the College. Further work is needed to design specific strategies around increasing workforce participation for academic staff.

2. Enhance the Workplace Environment: To further promote an understanding of Indigenous culture and history and to build the cultural competency of CAP staff by:
   a) Providing online cultural awareness training
   b) Providing workshop based cultural awareness training
c) Raising the profile of Indigenous cultures by:
   o mounting framed maps of Indigenous Australia around the College;
   o including Indigenous flags on all Garrurru Scholarship material;
   o flying Indigenous flags alongside the Australian flag in the Coombs and Crawford precincts.

Data

Prior to 1 January 2011, the College did not have a single self-identified ATSI staff member, either academic or professional. As of January 2013, the College has three ATSI staff members. With a headcount of over 400, this is well below the target set in the ANU and CAP Reconciliation Action Plans of 2.5%.

The overall aim of this strategy is to increase the workforce participation of ATSI professional staff from two to a target of ten by 2016, based on a core group of continuing staff combined with regular and ongoing traineeships and internships within the College.

Strategy

1. Increase the participation of Indigenous staff in the workplace:
   a) Internships: The ANU has an Indigenous Internship program, which is a paid work experience program for Indigenous undergraduate [possibly post-graduate] students at the ANU. The intended outcomes for the student are an increase in their employability skills, a greater understanding of how workplaces operate and a positive workplace experience leaving them with a favourable view of ANU as a possible future employer. For the workplace, the outcome is intended to be a positive mentoring experience and for the identified work duties to be completed. Interns are employed and paid for by Diversity & Workforce Planning on a one year fixed term contract at ANU Level 3, to work 7 hours per week and are placed for a minimum of 1 semester. The placement can be extended for additional semesters. **Action: the program to be widely publicised through the College with a view to employing at least two interns per semester, depending on availability of students.**

   b) Traineeships: finding your first job can be a very challenging task for school leavers with no work experience. Providing traineeships allows school leavers to gain that
vital work experience whilst also continuing with their studies. For a variety of reasons, Indigenous Australians can be disadvantaged in accessing employment opportunities and providing traineeships allows them to gain valuable employment experience and training opportunities and also have a positive workplace experience leaving them with a favourable view of ANU as a possible future employer. A key measure of success will be transitioning the successful trainees into long term employment within the College or the University.

**Action:** CAP will to partner with the Australian Training Company (ATC) and Habitat Personnel to engage two trainees over a two year period from January 2013 to December 2014, with a view to extend this approach to two additional trainees in the 2015-2016 period.

c) **Identified Positions:** Under the ANU [Procedure](#), positions may be identified as being filled by ATSI candidates only as part of special measures to meet the employment targets under the ANU and CAP Reconciliation Action Plans. Using this identified position procedure allows local areas to go through a merit based selection process selecting only from ATSI applicants.

**Action:** CAP HR to assist local areas in identifying suitable professional staff positions as they come up that could be recruited through the Identified Positions procedure, with the aim of advertising a minimum of two Identified Positions per year.

d) **Internal Transfers:** There are occasions where opportunities arise for existing staff to transfer internally within the ANU to gain different experience. These situations should be seized as it means that the staff involved remain engaged and employed by the ANU rather than leaving to gain the experience that they are looking for. Where any such internal transfer opportunities arise for existing Indigenous staff to transfer to CAP, that are in the interests of staff retention, the College will facilitate and fully fund such transfers.

**Action:** any opportunities for Indigenous staff to transfer to CAP to gain different experience should be fully explored.

2. Enhance the workplace environment by promoting an understanding of Indigenous culture and history and building the cultural competency of all CAP staff:

a) Online Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training is available for all staff at ANU and is mandatory for new staff for completion in their probation period.
Action: the online Indigenous Cultural Awareness training module to be mandatory for all staff in the College, for completion in 2013.

b) Classroom based Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training was provided in 2012 by David Widders of Widders Consultancy and was met with extremely positive feedback from all participants. The College will continue to centrally fund this training opportunity for all CAP staff on a regular annual basis from 2013.

Action: ongoing classroom based cultural awareness training scheduled twice a year.

c) Raising the profile of Indigenous cultures in the CAP workplace environment:
   - Action: maps of Indigenous Australia to be mounted around the College
   - Action: include Indigenous flags on all Garrurru Scholarship material
   - Action: fly Indigenous flags alongside the Australian flag in the Coombs and Crawford precincts.

Reporting

Reporting against this strategy will be done by CAP HR on an annual basis in January of each year. The strategy and progress towards its employment targets will be reviewed annually by the CAP RAP Committee.