

ACER INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY 2013–2016

ACER engages in research on the education of Indigenous Australians and, because of the link between education and work, ACER is also interested in employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians. Accordingly, ACER is committed to efforts towards making a practical difference in the lives of Indigenous Australians in these two regards – education and work.

ACER has revised and updated its Indigenous Employment Strategy (AIES) in the context of the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This strategy is a practical step by ACER toward reconciliation. Our approach to Indigenous employment is graphically illustrated in the model in Appendix I

AIES OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate capacity building and, in particular, development of broad educational research skills among Indigenous Australians.
- Facilitate opportunities for the employment of Indigenous Australians at ACER.
- Facilitate and promulgate relevant education research by Indigenous Australians.

AIES PRINCIPLES

Each AIES triennial program ('Triennial Program') is an expression of a long-term commitment to the realisation of reconciliation through the objectives of and actions in the AIES.

Each Triennial Program is undertaken with due regard to ACER's intention to contribute to reconciliation by redressing Indigenous disadvantage.

The operational elements of the Triennial Program will, wherever practicable, either directly involve some Indigenous Australians in planning and execution or at least be informed by Indigenous perspectives.

The Triennial Program will be translated into an annual workplan which will be reviewed and assessed each year of the program.

ELEMENTS OF THE TRIENNIAL PROGRAM

The Triennial Program will include a financial budget that provides a costing of each annual workplan. In particular, each annual workplan will provide opportunities for the training and/or professional development of Indigenous Australian researchers which may include traineeships, cadetships, graduate work placements and opportunities to work on particular projects that are judged to be of developmental benefit. It is recognised that Indigenous Australians recruited as researchers will likely be at an early stage of their career development and accordingly will require support and mentoring which may also include the creation of opportunities to participate in a cross section of research work and with a variety of research colleagues.

2013-14 ANNUAL WORKPLAN

Indigenous Research Training Fellowship

ACER will introduce an Indigenous Graduate Program which will have the following characteristics:

- placement/s will have a research focus and be under the direction of a Research Director;
- a senior member of ACER's research staff will be appointed as the mentor of the graduate, although it is anticipated that the graduate may potentially work across a number of research programs during the period of the program.
- the program will be for a period of 12 months
- placements will consist of at least two to three rotations to different areas of ACER;
- six months prior to the end of the graduate's program the Research Directors and the Director Human Resources will commence a process of evaluation aimed at placing the graduate in a contract research position;
- ACER will place one Indigenous graduate in 2014 with recruitment starting in May 2013;
- the graduate will be paid at the current Australian post-graduate award rate;
- the graduate will be provided with a one year contract incorporating a 3 month probation period in line with the ACER Enterprise Agreement; and
- recruitment for the 2015 program will commence in May 2014.

Indigenous Employment Program

ACER will establish a working group for Advancing Indigenous Employment. The Working Group will include the ACER Director Human Resources, the ACER Indigenous Liaison Officer and three ACER members (at least one senior researcher). The working group can co-opt ACER staff in an ex officio capacity as required.

The Working Group will, in accordance with the Guidelines in Attachment 2, identify Indigenous Australians who have the qualifications, attributes and experience to be considered for appointment to ACER positions (both research and non-research). The working group will, subject to the privacy principles of the Privacy Act, maintain information (resumes etc) about Indigenous Australians who may be potential applicants.

After consideration of potential matches, the Director Human Resources will, with the permission of the Indigenous person, notify the Chair of the relevant selection committee that potentially suitable Indigenous person/s may be available and provide their resume. The Chair of the selection committee will give due consideration to the applicant field but ensure that the Indigenous applicant is considered carefully for short-listing and interview.

Indigenous Cultural Competency Training

ACER will provide Indigenous Cultural Competency Training for (at least) key staff who are involved in the implementation and support of the Indigenous Employment Strategy. At a minimum, such staff will include senior management, human resources and those who frequently act as chairpersons of selection committees. In addition, all staff will be encouraged to complete the ACER Pulse online Cultural Awareness module.

Human resource practice

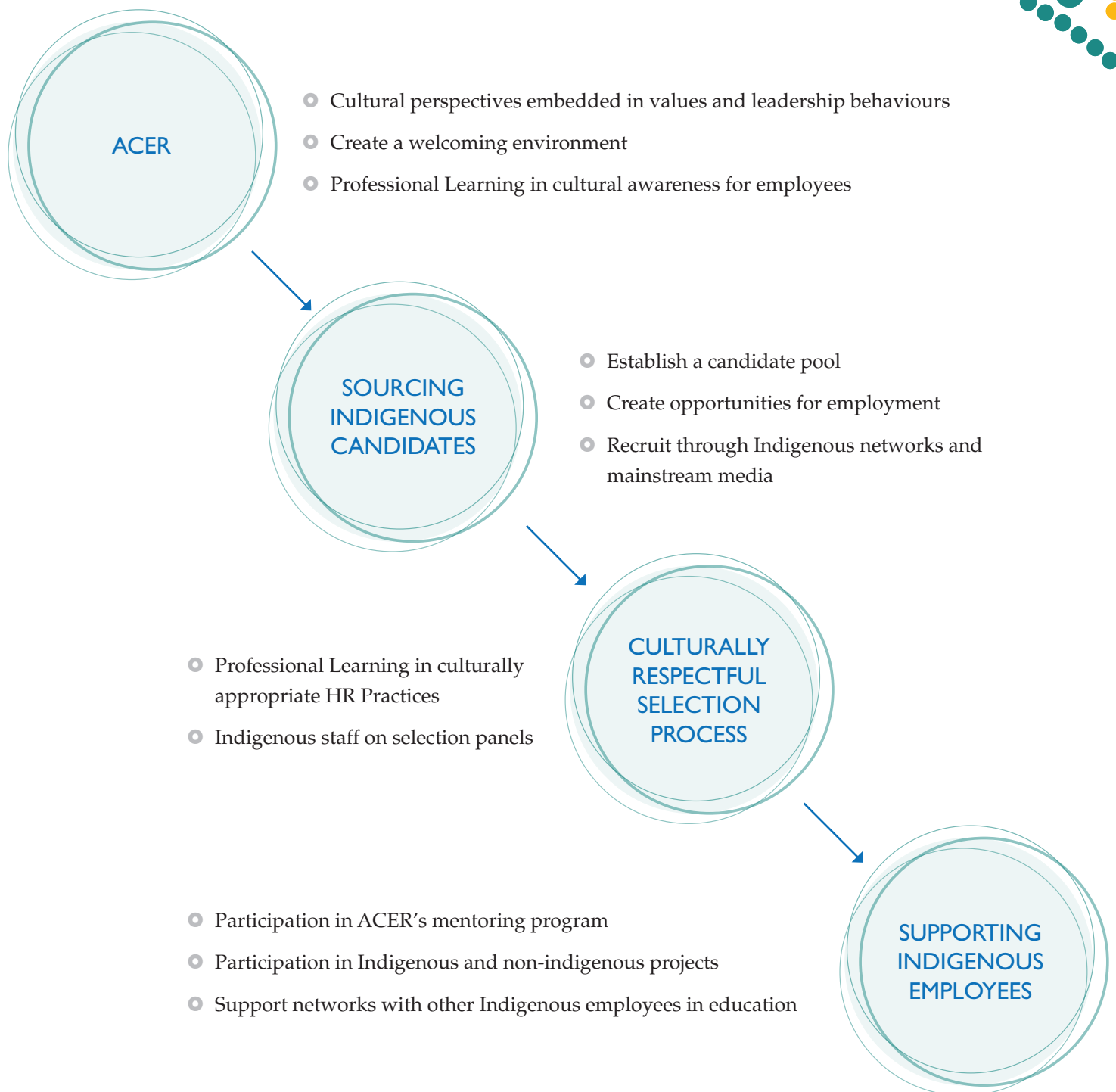
ACER will tailor human resource practice to provide practical support for Indigenous applicants and employees in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the recruitment and retention section.

Review of Annual Workplan

The Director of Human Resources will provide an annual report to the CEO and make recommendations regarding any change required to improve the program. This report will be provided to the Advisory Committee on Indigenous Education.

INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Our model



GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTIVE AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

The tailoring of human resource practices (as practiced by HR, senior executives, managers and supervisors) to provide practical support for Indigenous applicants and employees will include the following elements:

RECRUITMENT

The Director Human Resources and the Indigenous Liaison Officer will, in liaison with and with the support of members of the Working Group for Advancing Indigenous Employment:

- establish and maintain liaison with university and other relevant Indigenous employment officers;
- create and maintain a network of employment contacts to which information on externally advertised ACER positions may be disseminated;
- ensure employment advertisements are included in Indigenous media.

ACER will facilitate the recruitment of Indigenous Australians by ensuring the following:

- the language of position descriptions and advertisements should be clear and avoid the use of acronyms and jargon;
- the Chair of a selection panel interviewing Indigenous Australians will contact the Indigenous Liaison Officer to ensure all panel members are briefed on our Indigenous Employment Strategy and the guidelines in this document.
- selection committee members responsible for interviewing an Indigenous applicant will be provided with guidelines on what to expect from Indigenous Australian applicants.

These guidelines will highlight and explain cultural and behavioural factors that need to be taken into account when interviewing Indigenous Australians. The guidelines will cover the following issues:

- Making Indigenous applicants feel comfortable during an interview;
 - Introducing all selection committee members and ensuring that the interviewee understands how the interview will progress;
 - Ensuring that the interviewee understands the question that is being asked of them;
 - Acknowledging the interviewee's answers; and
 - Understanding common behaviours exhibited by Indigenous Australians during an interview for cultural reasons, including silence and lack of direct eye contact.
- the selection committee will be provided with a one page summary of key considerations for conducting a culturally sensitive and respectful selection process and interview.

RETENTION

The proposed cultural awareness training will provide non-Indigenous employees with skills and knowledge to enhance the development of culturally sensitive processes and communication.

ACER recognises the importance of Indigenous networks as a source of support and advice to Indigenous employees, and accordingly ACER encourages, and will facilitate, the accessing of such networks by Indigenous employees and participation in ACER's mentoring program as both mentors and mentees.