

Section three

# Community-based advertising and networking

Information Pack:  
Aboriginal  
Culturally  
Responsive  
Recruitment in  
Early Education

## How can we advertise jobs to reach Aboriginal candidates effectively?

Word-of-mouth and Community networks are the most effective form of recruitment for Aboriginal peoples. Connecting with Community, Elders, local leaders and Traditional Owners is one of the most effective ways to share job opportunities.

Employers should actively engage Traditional Owners and Community leaders, especially when working on Country, and maintain these relationships.

Partnering with Aboriginal organisations is another great way to develop strong relationships with local Aboriginal Communities, Land Councils, and employment service providers.

These groups can help promote roles and recommend potential candidates. Some businesses also engage Aboriginal stakeholders to co-design employment programs and recruitment strategies, which often leads to better engagement and retention.

### Where should we advertise roles to reach Aboriginal Communities?

Use a combination of:

- [National Indigenous Times](#)
- [Indigenous Employment Australia](#)
- Aboriginal-specific radio stations (i.e. [Umeewarra Radio](#))
- [Torres News](#)
- [Turkindi Network](#)
- Community noticeboards
- Local Aboriginal organisations' job boards
- Career Trackers, Aboriginal Workstars, and AIME.

### How to use social media

Create a dedicated Aboriginal employment webpage or landing page that showcases:

- Current vacancies
- Career pathways
- Staff stories
- Cultural commitments (like RAPs).
- Include visual images of Aboriginal employees in a range of roles to reflect the diversity of opportunities.

### Examples

- [Aboriginal Employment SA | Facebook](#)
- [Aboriginal Labour Force Development | Facebook](#).

## How should we design job advertisements to attract Aboriginal applicants?

To design job advertisements that support Aboriginal recruitment, consider including the following:

- A clear and concise description of the role, including the key responsibilities and how the position contributes to the organisation's goals.
- Information about leave entitlements, including the availability of cultural leave and how the organisation supports cultural obligations such as Sorry Business or Community events.

### What is Sorry Business?

Sorry Business refers to the mourning practices and cultural protocols followed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples after the passing of a loved one.

It is a deeply significant part of cultural life and can vary greatly between different Communities. These customs provide a way for individuals, families and Communities to express grief, show respect, and support one another during times of loss.

### Understanding Sorry Business

- **Mourning period:** The length of mourning can differ depending on cultural practices and family ties. It may last from a few days to several weeks or even months. During this period, family members might wear traditional mourning clothing, observe cultural restrictions, and participate in particular customs.
- **Ceremonies and rituals:** Ceremonies are central to Sorry Business and are held to honour the person who has passed and to guide their spirit. These may include smoking ceremonies, song and dance, storytelling, and other cultural practices unique to each Community.
- **Community involvement:** Sorry Business is not just a private family matter. It often involves the broader Community, who come together to offer support, help with funeral arrangements, and take part in shared mourning practices. Sharing memories, expressing condolences, and assisting the family are all important elements of Community care.
- **Cultural protocols:** Each Community has its own protocols and expectations around Sorry Business. These can include specific roles for family members, behavioural expectations, and rules about participating in ceremonies. Understanding and respecting these protocols is essential.
- **Healing and connection:** The practices involved in Sorry Business help Communities process grief, find healing, and maintain cultural strength. They allow space for emotions to be expressed, stories to be shared, and cultural bonds to be reaffirmed during a time of great loss.

### Supporting Sorry Business in the workplace

Sorry Business is a sacred and complex aspect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. It's important for organisations to approach it with respect, cultural sensitivity, and flexibility.

To respectfully support Sorry Business within your workplace or Community:

- Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff or connect with local Community organisations, such as your Local Aboriginal Land Council, Torres Strait Regional Authority or council liaison officer, to understand specific cultural protocols in your area. In some regions, businesses may close completely as a mark of respect.
- Stay informed through local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander networks. You can subscribe to newsletters, check Community websites or follow relevant Facebook pages to receive updates on Sorry Business and related Community notices.
- **Details about hours of work**, with a focus on flexibility, such as part-time options, job sharing or remote work, where possible.
- **Mention of innovative practices**, such as the use of new technology or ways of working that might appeal to candidates with different experiences or learning styles.
- **A visible statement of encouragement**, such as: **"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply for this job."**
- **Images of Aboriginal staff (with consent)** that reflect cultural inclusion and Aboriginal representation within the organisation, helping applicants envision themselves as part of the team.
- **Plain English language** to ensure the ad is easy to read and accessible to a wide audience.
- Leave entitlements, including cultural leave.
- Hours of work and potential for flexible working arrangements.
- Reference to your Reconciliation Action Plan and/or Aboriginal engagement strategy (if applicable).

## How can job descriptions be more culturally inclusive?

When making job descriptions more culturally inclusive for Aboriginal peoples, employers need to rethink the language, structure, and intent behind the position to ensure it is accessible, strengths-based, and welcoming.

A culturally responsive job description goes beyond just adding a diversity statement, it reflects a genuine commitment to inclusion, equity, and cultural safety.

### Here are some useful tips:

- **Keep the language simple and inclusive:** Use plain English and avoid bureaucratic jargon. Make the advert short, clear, and welcoming. Tailor the language to suit your intended audience. Avoid complex online application portals unless support is provided.
- **Add cultural elements:** Use culturally relevant artwork or imagery where appropriate and always include a statement like “**Aboriginal peoples are strongly encouraged to apply.**”
- Where possible, provide the name and number of an Aboriginal contact person who can answer questions about the role and support potential applicants. Outline:
  - Role responsibilities
  - Application deadlines
  - Leave entitlements including cultural leave
  - Potential for flexible working
  - Clear explanation if the role is under Affirmative Measures or is an Identified position.

### Other useful supports:

- Offer the name and number of an Aboriginal contact person for culturally safe support during the application process.
- Add relevant cultural imagery or artwork to reflect diversity (with appropriate permissions and cultural guidance).
- Clearly outline the role, including responsibilities, deadlines, and expectations. This includes listing entitlements, including cultural leave and flexible work options.
- Explain if the position is an Identified role, with a clear and respectful description of what that means, and what the candidate is expected to undertake as part of their role.

## How can we engage with Aboriginal Communities during recruitment?

Engaging with Aboriginal Communities during recruitment is about building genuine relationships, respecting cultural protocols, and creating pathways that are accessible, inclusive, and empowering.

Successful is not transactional or an afterthought; it is grounded in trust, reciprocity, and long-term connection.

Use a combination of:

- Hosting information sessions in local and culturally safe spaces.
- Partnering with Aboriginal organisations, Elders, Land Councils, and local leaders to co-design and promote roles.
- Sharing staff stories and show organisational values, not just job tasks.
- Introducing your organisation and its values.
- Explaining job roles and application processes.
- Featuring Aboriginal staff sharing their lived work experiences.
- Allowing attendees to ask questions and receive help with applications.
- Establishing links with Aboriginal Community organisations and talk to Community members about your organisation and jobs.
- Aboriginal staff sharing their own stories and experiences, offering insights and building connection.
- Offering opportunities for attendees to ask questions, receive support with job applications, and connect with recruitment staff in a culturally respectful setting.
- Providing printed materials or digital resources in plain English to take home and share with others.

### Examples of job culturally inclusive advertisements

- Aboriginal Community Elders Services: [Activities Assistant – Aboriginal Community Elders Services Inc \(ACES\)](#)
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative: [Jobs | Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative](#)
- [BDAC Recruitment Campaign](#)
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative (RAC): [Program Manager – Family Safety - Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative](#)
- Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation: [Employment Opportunities | Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation \(AHAC\)](#)