

Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples: CareerTrackers

CareerTrackers is a national non-profit organisation that provides support for Indigenous university students during their studies and links them with private sector employers to participate in paid internships. Their program offers businesses a guided method to implement local workforce diversity initiatives that complement Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs).

Program design

Modelled on the successful INROADS diversity internship program, the overarching goal of the CareerTrackers initiative is to increase Indigenous representation in corporate Australia by supporting students to convert from an intern into a full-time employee on completion of their university degree. The program boasts a high success rate, with 95% of its alumni in full-time employment within three months of graduating. This success can largely be attributed to the support that CareerTrackers provides for both students and employers. Students are provided with specialised training that includes interview skills, CV compilation, mock interviews/role plays, and confidence-building exercises. They are then matched with a company that is aligned to their career interests. Both the interns and the employers are provided with assistance to set workplace goals and objectives for the duration of the internship and provided with weekly support on issues that may act as barriers to the successful completion of the internship. If necessary, employers are provided with advice on approaches to modify existing programs to better suit and support Indigenous employees. To help students transition from university to full-time work they are also provided with leadership development training, covering topics such as Indigenous leadership, personal development and community building.

On completion of the internship, intern managers are requested to complete a performance evaluation to provide their intern with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses, and an action plan for their professional development. This helps ensure the success of the program for both the intern and sponsoring company.

Support does not end with employment. CareerTrackers alumni are given continued personal and professional assistance, such as executive mentoring and peer encouragement. Alumni are also engaged in supporting the next generation of interns.

There are 1,354 students currently involved in the program around Australia, as well as 485 alumni and 108 corporate partners, including St John of God Healthcare. Several companies have committed to take paid interns from the program for at least 10 years, including Commonwealth Bank, Westpac, NAB, Origin, Qantas, Bupa and Lend Lease.

For more information on Grow Your Own workforce initiatives visit
www.gyoworkforce.com.au

