



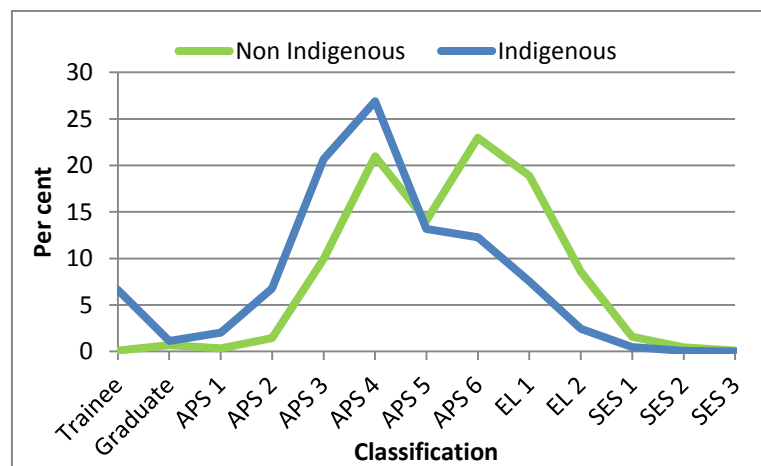
INDIGENOUS MENTORING PROGRAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

The Australian Public Service Commission (the Commission) is responsible for the [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy](#), which aims to build Indigenous employment within the Commonwealth public sector. The Strategy supports the Government's target of three per cent Indigenous employment across the sector by 2018.

Every agency has a target to meet. You can find out more about the Strategy by visiting <http://www.apsc.gov.au/managing-in-the-aps/indigenous>.

Why do we need a mentoring program for Indigenous Commonwealth employees?



APS representation by classification (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) – June 2016

We've got a mountain of Indigenous employees hitting a career peak at the APS 3–4 level. Only one per cent of our APS Senior Executive Service is Indigenous. Indigenous Australians remain under-represented—currently 2.6 per cent, which means recruiting an additional 2,500–3,000 employees while retaining our current workforce.

We invest heavily in recruitment only to lose 16 per cent of our Indigenous recruits after their first year of employment, and continue to lose them at a faster rate than we recruit them. We have a retention and advancement problem which will undermine our ability to meet targets and deliver the best service to communities.

We need to give Indigenous employees at all levels access to training and development opportunities to identify meaningful career pathways. This will have a significant impact on the ability and willingness of Indigenous employees to build careers in the public sector and positively influence policy development and service delivery.

Mentoring offers a great opportunity for both Mentors and Mentees to develop their skills, share key knowledge, encourage the formation of networks and work towards future goals.

We need to move the mountain and close the gap in the classification profile of Indigenous employees to more closely resemble that of their non-Indigenous colleagues. If you're an Indigenous Commonwealth employee, your career could benefit from the support of a Mentor. Whether you're Indigenous or not, you can play a part by becoming a Mentor.

What is workplace mentoring?

Workplace mentoring is a structured agreement between two people. It is designed to help those being mentored achieve their full potential, both professionally and personally, through their work experiences. The mentoring relationship involves sharing experiences and expertise through which advice, support, encouragement and reciprocal learning takes place.

It is a supportive and mutually beneficial relationship based on honesty, mutual trust, respect, encouragement, confidentiality and a willingness to share and learn.

According to Management Mentors¹, mentoring:

- Takes place outside of a line manager–employee relationship, at the mutual consent of both parties
- Is career-focused or focused on professional development that may be outside a Mentee's area of work
- Relationships are personal—a Mentor provides both professional and personal support, but referral to Employee Assistance Programs and Lifeline should be used where appropriate
- Relationships may be initiated by either party or created through a match initiated by an organisation (in this case the Commission)
- Relationships cross job boundaries
- Relationships may last for a specific period of time (six months to a year) in a formal program, at which point the pair may continue in an informal mentoring relationship with mutual consent.

Mentoring for Indigenous employees

Mentoring for Indigenous employees shares many elements with mainstream mentoring, but it is important to ensure the process is culturally appropriate and consistent with the diversity, values and characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is also important to understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people differ from each other in values, beliefs, language and in many other aspects of their identity. Effective mentoring for Indigenous employees will include mutual trust, empathy and respect between the Mentor and Mentee, to facilitate the sharing of experiences and cultural backgrounds.

Some benefits of establishing a Commonwealth-wide Indigenous mentoring program are that it can:

- increase advancement and retention of Indigenous employees
- provide an opportunity for Mentors to develop their own leadership capability

¹ <http://www.management-mentors.com/resources/corporate-mentoring-programs-resources-faqs#Q1>

- provide a cultural exchange and increased awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- assist Indigenous employees to feel secure in the workplace
- provide a framework for positive interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees.

How do I become a Mentor?

To be a Mentor, you must be at the APS5 level and above, and you need to have:

- a high level of respect for your Mentee and the ability to create a trusting, safe and empowering environment for discussions, particularly in respect to language, culture and gender, and ensure that their confidence will be kept
- an interest in sharing your professional experiences with your Mentee, and supporting their development
- effective listening and questioning ability
- willingness to complete a mentoring agreement with your Mentee and work towards the agreed goals and approach for the mentoring period
- the ability to identify your Mentee's strengths and weaknesses and foster their career development
- an adequate amount of time to be in contact with your Mentee—a minimum of two hours per month
- the ability to provide constructive feedback to your Mentee, provide reflections, ask questions and support them to make their own choices, experiment and observe outcomes
- agreement to maintain confidentiality within the mentoring relationship
- your manager's support.

The Commission will provide training for all Mentors.

What do I need to do as a Mentor?

You need to foster the career understanding and development of your Mentee in a professional, constructive and proactive way, and work towards achieving the goals outlined in your mentoring agreement.

You would liaise regularly with your Mentee and provide them with advice and support in line with the mentoring agreement. This can include:

- information and/or advice on making an effective transition from their current employer or classification to others
- information and/or advice on working at higher classifications, and in different departments or agencies
- advice on options for or experience in relation to balancing home, parenting, education, career and extracurricular activities
- insights and advice on how to effectively work with senior staff and/or Ministers' offices
- honest feedback and constructive criticism.

Who will I mentor, and for how long?

You will ideally be matched with a Mentee whose preferences best align with your preferences and experience. Mentor/Mentee matching will be conducted by the Commission with the assistance of a panel of participating agencies.

The relationship will continue for six months, after which the formal oversight of the mentoring ceases and neither party is committed to continuing with the mentoring relationship.

What do I need to do as a Mentee?

- focus on what you want to achieve during the mentoring relationship
- stay in regular contact
- initiate meetings
- ask for, and consider your Mentor's guidance
- encourage your Mentor by showing your interest and drive
- share your experiences
- provide constructive feedback
- have your manager's permission and support.

Availability of Indigenous Mentors

It is likely that non-Indigenous Mentors will outnumber Indigenous Mentors. If you have a strong preference for an Indigenous Mentor, we'll do our best to find one for you, but you may have to wait a bit longer.

How often should Mentors and Mentees have contact?

How frequently you both agree to engage, and how you do it (in person, by phone, etc.) needs to be discussed and agreed as part of your mentoring agreement, taking work and other commitments into account. To get the most out of the mentoring relationship, at least two hours every month is suggested.

The Commission will also host networking sessions for all program participants.

What if the relationship isn't working?

Once you have been matched, completing the mentoring agreement up front will help support clear communication for both parties. If at any stage the relationship is not working for whatever reason Mentors and Mentees should contact the Program Manager immediately, so that an alternative match can be arranged.

I want to be a Mentor or Mentee – what do I do?

Go to <INDIGENOUS CAREERS WEBSITE ADDRESS> and complete your nomination form online, or fill out the attached form, scan and email it to the Commission's Indigenous Capability Team at indigenous@apsc.gov.au, and we'll be in touch with you about the next steps.

Timing – program launch and Mentor training

The program will launch with an event in late March/early April 2017, and Mentor training will be delivered late March 2017.

Want to know more?

Contact the Commission's Indigenous Capability Team on 1300 656 009 (Freecall), or indigenous@apsc.gov.au.



INDIGENOUS MENTORING PROGRAM – MENTOR NOMINATION FORM

Mentor details			
Name			
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
	<input type="checkbox"/> X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)	<input type="checkbox"/> Choose not to disclose	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 25 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 35 years	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 36 – 45 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 46 and over	
Department/Agency (in full)			
Branch or Section (in full)			
State/Territory		City	
Position title			Level
Email			Telephone
Qualification/s			
Do you identify as	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Torres Strait Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Both
			<input type="checkbox"/> Neither
Experience as a Mentor	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please specify)		<input type="checkbox"/> No

Mentee preferences			
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> No preference
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Any	<input type="checkbox"/> Preference (please specify)	
Level/Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Any	<input type="checkbox"/> Preference (please specify)	
No. of Mentees	<input type="checkbox"/> One	<input type="checkbox"/> More than one	

More information
Is there any other information that would assist us in matching you with a suitable Mentee?

Application declaration

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the Australian Public Service Commission's Indigenous Mentoring Program guidelines, and confirm that I am able to fulfil all commitments required of a Mentor through this Program, and have the support of my direct supervisor/manager.

Signature		Date	/ /
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Please scan and email completed nomination form, with resume/CV, to indigenous@apsc.gov.au.



INDIGENOUS MENTORING PROGRAM – MENTEE NOMINATION FORM

Mentee details

Name			
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
	<input type="checkbox"/> X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)	<input type="checkbox"/> Choose not to disclose	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 25 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 35 years	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 36 – 45 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 46 and over	
Department/Agency			
Department/Agency (in full)			
Branch or Section (in full)			
State/Territory		City	
Position title		Level	
Email		Telephone	
Qualification/s			
Do you identify as	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Torres Strait Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Both

Mentor preferences

Please note: It is likely that non-Indigenous Mentors will outnumber Indigenous Mentors. If you have a strong preference for an Indigenous Mentor, we'll do our best to find one for you, but you may have to wait a bit longer.

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Either
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Mentor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No preference	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Any	<input type="checkbox"/> Preference (please specify)	
Level/Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Any	<input type="checkbox"/> Preference (please specify)	
Other (please specify)			

Questions

Please Note: As it is likely that Mentees will outnumber Mentors, participation in the Indigenous Mentoring Program is a competitive process. Your response to the following questions will assess your motivation, and assist in matching you with a suitable Mentor. Incomplete nominations will not be accepted.

Why would you like to participate in this program? (e.g. personal development, career advancement and progression, networking opportunity)

What skills, knowledge and experience do you wish to develop through the program? (e.g. leadership skills, policy development, project/program management, technical expertise)

Is there any other information that may assist in matching you with a suitable Mentor?

Mentee declaration

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the Australian Public Service Commission's Indigenous Mentoring Program guidelines, and confirm that I am able to fulfil all commitments required of a Mentee through this Program, and have the support of my direct supervisor/manager.

Signature		Date	/ /
Manager's signature*		Date	/ /
Manager's name			
Manager's Email			

*Please note that by signing this form you agree that you understand the commitments required of a Mentee and you give approval for your employee to participate in the program and fulfil all requirements.

Please scan and email completed nomination form, with resume/CV, to indigenous@apsc.gov.au.