

Recruitment and Selection Resources

Your guide to hiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people



What is the NDIS Workforce Capability Framework?

The Workforce Capability Framework (the Framework) tells participants what workers and providers should do, what they should know and how they should act. Participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.

The Framework has resources that explain how to hire staff and gives tips for how to talk to workers.



Why recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Workers and providers should respect a participant's culture and identity and uphold their rights. This means participants are treated with dignity and respect; are free from abuse, exploitation, and violence; have their identity and culture respected; and have support to achieve their goals.

Relationships, family, kinship and culture are important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In many rural and remote communities, there will be people from that Country who understand the kinship and culture.

Hiring support workers who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander means that they will understand:

- The importance of Country,
- The role community play in supporting people, and
- The need to understand the relationships and roles people in that area hold.

Their lived experience and cultural knowledge is important to help a participant be heard and supported in the right ways.



What to consider when recruiting?



Provide culturally safe support



Understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability may:

- Want to involve family and community in decisions about their support
- Need to go on Country for periods of time
- May have cultural responsibilities or need special types of support for their health and wellbeing



How to recruit workers

Identify a job opening

A job role can become available for many reasons:

- Replacing a support worker who has left.
- Supporting more participants, so there are more jobs.
- Providing a new or specialised type of support with new skills.

When you need to start looking for workers, it is important to know what type of work you need to hire for:

- What do you need this person to do?
- Is the role casual, part time or full time?
- Do they need to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or someone who is familiar with the community and culture? This is important to make clear in the hiring process.
- What skills or experience does this person need?
- Do you have a current job description?



You can use the [Position Description Tool](#) to create a new job description or edit an existing one.

Position descriptions set expectations for the role, create a shared understanding between the worker and their supervisor and can be used for managing and supporting performance on the job. They also help with job advertisements (ads).

Plan the process

Once you know what job you need to hire for, you can plan how you are going to recruit.

You should:

- Put time in your calendar to create or edit a position description or job advertisement.
- Decide when you will go through applications and conduct interviews.
- Know who will help you with selecting and interviewing, what they will do and when.
- Think about who you need to hire and what ways you will choose a worker. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, you may consider a Yarning Circle to interview potential workers.
- Decide when you will communicate with potential workers and what language and wording you will use.
- For an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participant, consider if they require a worker with cultural or local community knowledge.

How you will choose a worker

Decide how you will choose workers based on:

- How many roles you need.
- How many potential workers will apply.
- How complex the role is.
- Cultural considerations of the participants and community.

You can speak to potential workers:

- One on one – this is the most common approach for a small pool of potential workers.
- Group – this method saves costs and brings all potential workers together. It suits a larger pool of people, specialised roles or culturally safe spaces.



What to consider

Remember: an interview is not the only part of the hiring process. You also need to see how workers communicate, interact and apply their skills. Also, consider who is on your interview panel.

For example, if you are hiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or hiring workers for those in the community, you should have someone who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or a community member on the panel.



One on one

This method involves:

- Creating a shortlist based on your requirements.
- Interviewing each candidate.
- Asking them to complete assessment activities.
- Doing referee checks.



Group or Yarning Circle

This method involves:

- Inviting groups of shortlisted potential workers for a half or full day.
- Asking them to undertake individual and group activities, observed by several people.
- Doing referee checks.

Advertise your job

Identify a job opening

Advertising a job should include any additional information for potential workers. This could mean more information about the job, the industry or your organisation. Consider where you will place this job ad. For example:



Social media



Online job boards



Local training colleges



Recruitment fairs and university career days



Referrals from other work



Word of mouth

Your job advertisement can use part of the position description but should be short and simple.

It should include:

- Information on expectations and key duties.
- Title of role using common language, for example disability support worker.
- Hours and location.
- Salary or hourly rate.
- Requirements such as driver's license, worker screening check or qualifications.
- A note to encourage potential workers from diverse or specific backgrounds to apply (as appropriate).
- Information on how to apply.
- A realistic closing date.
- Contact information.



Shortlist and choose your worker

Your advertisement may attract a large number of applications or only a few. Follow the same process for both:

- Choose which potential workers you want to meet by checking applications against your essential requirements and desirable criteria.
- Arrange a time and place free from interruptions.
- Give your potential workers and panel members reasonable notice about when, where and what will happen.
- Check if they need anything to help them participate in the interview.
- Send background information to potential workers in advance.
- Brief your panel on what they need to do and how you will rate or score the potential workers. You can download templates to support you with this.
- You can also consider whether some potential workers do not need a Worker Screening Check and you are happy with just a Police Check. This can be helpful in rural, regional or remote areas where there are fewer potential workers or if you are hiring new support staff.



The interview: questions you may ask:

When hiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or hiring for a member of this community, there are some specific questions you may wish to ask. This can help you choose someone who understands and respects the local culture and can support the participant.

You could ask questions such as:

- 1 How will you work with the participant, their family, community members and local organisations to coordinate supports that maintain a connection to family, community, land and language?
- 2 Tell us a time when you needed to build and maintain connection with organisations who engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- 3 How do you establish relationships with Elders, family members and community members?
- 4 How would you handle cultural obligations such as sorry business for the participant or for yourself?
- 5 When these situations happen, how would you balance cultural and family obligations with needing to turn up for the participant to ensure they were not left without support?



Give them the job

When you have a preferred worker, you can follow these steps:



Step 1: Making the Offer

Let the successful applicant know as soon as possible.



Step 2: Sending the formal offer

A formal offer should include the position title, salary, location, and any conditions or arrangements.



Step 3: Communicating next steps

In the formal offer letter you should let the candidate know about any remaining steps and what to expect.



Step 4: Managing unsuccessful potential workers

Let them know the outcome as soon as possible, thank them and provide feedback.

Welcome your new worker

Set the right expectations for a new worker with a good induction process.

As part of this, all new workers should complete the NDIS Worker Orientation Module: 'Quality, Safety and You', if they have not already done so.



Essential points to cover:

- Organisational structure and responsibilities: use the position description.
- Capabilities for the role: service providers are responsible for making sure workers have the capabilities they need for the work they do.
- Organisational policies and procedures: new recruits need to know about policies or procedures they need to follow.
- Orientation to practice: a new support worker will need an introduction to the person they are supporting and their tasks. 'Shadow shifts' or 'buddy shifts' are a common method for new workers.
- Ongoing support: consider how to provide regular points of connection and contact with other workers and supervisors.

Other considerations:

Ensure that candidates understand that they are supporting and being present for their participants. Share scenarios explaining that they are supporting a participant in their role within both the family and community, as well as the consequences of not turning up to a shift.





The Recruitment and Selection Resources

For more information, guidance or access to the templates mentioned in this guide, visit the online [Recruitment and Selection Resources](https://workforcecapability.ndiscommission.gov.au).



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