

# Indigenous Employment Index

## Draft discussion guide for Indigenous Employees

11 August 2021 version 6

Murawin will undertake interviews using the method of **Yarning**, which supports an Indigenous worldview of oral storytelling, and encourages open dialogue, informal conversation and the sharing of participant's thoughts and experiences. *This method is appropriate for interviews with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people as its aim is to create a culturally safe space for discussion.*

The guide will support a semi-structured interview that explores key topic areas, rather than a sequential question and answer approach. The questions included in this guide and their sequence are indicative only.

Priority questions are indicated in **red**. This is to ensure the interview adheres to the agreed 45 minute time. Other questions will be asked as appropriate for the interview.

Key topic areas include:

- Commitment, Governance and Reporting
- Workplace culture and leadership
- Attraction and Recruitment
- Engagement, Retention & Development
- Indigenous Community Engagement

## Interviewer guidance

- Introduce researcher (Murawin) and the research scope.
- Explain what the discussion is about - "We've been asked to conduct research by Minderoo Foundation with 50 large employers to produce a dataset that will provide an evidence base on closing the Indigenous employment gap and will also educate employers on strategies to improve Indigenous employment. We are working with Generation One/Minderoo and the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre on this research. We'd like to hear your views on your experience as an employee, your views on any initial outcomes and impact, and any thoughts you have about how this could be improved"
- Explain if they would like to also participate in a focus group, to please indicate in the consent form and we will contact them separately.
- Advise the participant of the ethics approval through Curtin University, and in alignment with the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research
- Explain audio-recording and transcription
- Explain how data will be used and stored – especially that it will be stored/used in line with Australian privacy and Indigenous data governance principles and, that it will not be passed to anyone else or any other organisation and will be used solely for evaluation of the program
- Interview will take about 45 minutes
- Explain that participants can ask to stop at any time, particularly if they feel distressed
- Explain the importance of honest opinions, no right or wrong answers.
- Explain recording and confidentiality of participant information and informed consent process
- Any questions before starting?

## Discussion guide

### 1 Introductions and context

For Indigenous employees:

- Can you tell me a bit about yourself - your mob, where you're from?
- And what about your role and the company you work for?
- How did you get started with these mob?
- How long have you been working for here?
- What attracted to you to this role?
- What do you like about the role?
- When you talk about your experience, think about how this compares to previous workplaces.

### 2 Attraction and Recruitment

- What was your experience like searching for jobs?
  - Were there a lot of opportunities available? How did you find this job?
    - Were you involved in any Indigenous-specific programs such as an Indigenous recruitment agency or job fair?
    - If yes, did these programs provide any support such as a working with children check or licence?
  - Did you feel as if the job market was welcoming to you as an Indigenous candidate? Why or why not?
- What about in your current role, is it targeted for Indigenous candidates only?
  - If no, were you asked to identify yourself as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in the recruitment phase or when you commenced employment?
    - How was this done?
    - Did you feel comfortable in doing so?
- Did the job ad include anything that stood out to you as an Indigenous person? e.g., was language included in the advertisement, did it say Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants are welcome to apply?
- What was your interview process like?
  - Did you feel culturally safe?
  - If so, what was done during this process to make you feel this way?
- Overall, how do you feel about your organisation's approach to recruitment?

### 3 Engagement, Retention & Development

- What support was offered to you by the organisation when you started work with them?
  - Overall, how do you feel about the supports that are offered for Indigenous employees?
- What does your review process look like?
  - How do you work with your manager to identify career goals and development opportunities?

- Are you provided opportunities or activities for professional development and leadership?
- Do you feel confident, encouraged, and supported to participate in these activities?
- Do you feel that these activities are appropriate and or accessible for Indigenous employees?
- How are Indigenous people represented at leadership level in the organisation?
  - What about managers and team leaders?
  - Do you feel that leadership opportunities are accessible to you as an Indigenous employee?
  - Overall, how do you feel about the organisations current level of Indigenous leadership?
- What do you understand about HR options for cultural needs? E.g. time for sorry business, allowances to work 'on Country', recognition of kinship/guardianship requirements?
  - How confident and safe do you feel making HR requests based on cultural needs?
- How responsive do you feel your organisation is to experiences of racism, harassment or discrimination in the workplace? Prompt: this can include stereotypes, jokes and not being taken seriously.
  - What avenues of communication and feedback are there for you to raise any issues you face as an Indigenous employee with management?
  - How confident do you feel to be able to raise an issue?
  - Could you outline any experience you have had with these processes to date, and what your experience has been?
  - Do you feel you will be acknowledged, appropriate support provided, and/or action taken?
- What programs and supports are available to you at work to support your wellbeing as an Indigenous person? E.g., health and wellbeing services, financial literacy etc.
  - If available, do you feel comfortable to access these programs and supports?
  - Do you feel that these are culturally safe and responsive to Indigenous needs and experiences?
  - How is cultural safety encouraged by your line manager?
- Are you provided with opportunities to network with other Indigenous employees?
  - If yes, is this something that you value?
  - Are you encouraged by your manager or leadership to participate?

#### **4 Workplace culture and leadership**

- How culturally responsive do you feel your organisation is? This refers to being aware of and having respect for Indigenous ways of working, thinking and being.
  - How does your organisation celebrate Indigenous culture? E.g., events, art, Country, place, language

- How important do you feel it is that the organisation provides training or acknowledges past injustices at these events?
- Do you feel you have to hide or change your identity or character at work to fit in?
- How are Indigenous Australians represented in marketing material, including graphics, or customer facing materials?
- What is your organisations process regarding Acknowledgement of Country?
  - How do you feel about this process and how Acknowledgements are being conducted? E.g., How personalised and well thought out do you think they are?
- What cultural activities or training does your organisation provide?
  - How do you feel about the training and the outcomes it achieves?
- What do you think are leadership's expectations around building an inclusive work environment?
  - How are these expectations communicated with employees?
- Do you believe your organisation will treat you fairly?
- Are you aware if there is an employee engagement process? E.g. survey
  - If so, does it capture the perspectives of Indigenous employees?
  - Do you feel confident, encouraged and supported to provide your perspective?
    - Do you feel your perspective is acknowledged and valued?
  - How do you feel this information is being used in business decision making, marketing, communications and/or activities and events?
  - Overall, how do you feel about your organisations approach to Indigenous engagement?

## 5 Commitment, Governance and Reporting

- Do you know much about your organisation's diversity and inclusion strategy?
  - If yes, does it represent the needs and aspirations of Indigenous employees?
  - How committed do you feel your organisation is to diversity and inclusion?
- What is your understanding of the organisation's RAP, Indigenous employment strategy and/or commitment to reconciliation?
  - If RAP or Strategy:
    - what role have you played in its design and implementation?
    - what do you think it has achieved to date?
    - Is there a working group or reconciliation action group responsible for the RAP?
    - How supportive do you feel all staff are toward the RAP and RAP activities?
  - Overall, how do you feel about your organisation's commitment and approach to reconciliation?
- Are you aware if the organisation has KPIs for Indigenous employment?

- How do you view Indigenous employment in your organisation? E.g., is it genuine and based on merit or tokenistic?
- Do they have funded identified roles or roles targeted to Indigenous candidates?
- How much do you know about your organisation's approach to Indigenous procurement?
  - If an understanding, do you know how well it is working and what is your opinion on the current approach?

## 6 Indigenous Community Engagement

- Do you have any understanding about how your organisation engages with Indigenous communities on Indigenous related work? E.g., is there an Indigenous Engagement Strategy?
  - Were you consulted on its development or implementation?
  - Overall, how do you feel about this approach?
    - As an Indigenous person, are you comfortable with or proud of how your organisation engages with Indigenous people?
- Do you know if your organisation has any partnerships that provide benefits to Indigenous people? E.g., with Indigenous communities, organisations, or universities.
  - For what purpose do you think these partnerships exist?
  - Are you aware of any opportunities offered to potential Indigenous employees such as apprenticeships or internships?
  - What value or outcomes for Indigenous people do you think they provide?
  - Overall, how do you feel about the organisations approach to these types of partnerships?

## 7 Closing notes and recommendations

- Overall, how do you feel your organisation is performing in regard to Indigenous employment?
  - Does this mirror your previous experiences at other workplaces?
  - Are there any standout initiatives, practices, ways of working that you think the organisation should build on?
- How do you describe your organisation to your friends, family and community? E.g. is it with pride?
  - Would you recommend your employer to other Indigenous people?
  - What is one thing your employer could do, that would make the most positive difference to your employment experience?
  - What are you most proud of in your work?
- Are there any improvements you would like to see across the themes from today that you haven't already mentioned?
- Is there anything else you would like to add before we finish?