



Indigenous housing workforce capacity building program

Australia urgently needs more skilled, senior Indigenous housing policy makers, practitioners and researchers. Closing the gap in Indigenous housing outcomes will depend on this.

A capacity building program

Senior Indigenous housing managers and practitioners are needed to deliver better outcomes. To achieve this they need the support of improved Indigenous housing research and policy.

With its partners, AHURI seeks to achieve an increased number of Indigenous people participating in high quality, policy relevant research.

We know this must happen alongside a broader increase in the participation and seniority of the Indigenous housing workforce.

That is why this program aims to increase the number and capacity of Indigenous people working on a range of issues—from asset management to research—in the Australian housing sector spanning private, NGO and government organisations.

We are not just making unprecedented investments in Indigenous communities, we are doing things differently. For example, central to our \$5.5 billion investment in remote Indigenous housing is our target of 20 per cent Indigenous employment.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister
11 February 2010

What we want to achieve: outcomes based on collaboration

The shorter term outcomes sought from the Indigenous Housing Workforce Capacity Building Program include:

- Increased numbers of Indigenous people in senior positions in the housing sector workforce.
- Increased numbers of Indigenous people undertaking education and training relevant to the housing sector.
- Increased numbers of Indigenous people with research training and participating in research activities.
- An evidence base that will be relevant to Indigenous housing.
- More informed public discussion on Indigenous housing.

Over time, these results will contribute to improved Indigenous housing outcomes, improved Indigenous housing policy and practice and improved senior capacity for Indigenous housing organisations.

...there remains a long journey ahead of us to lift Indigenous outcomes in health, housing, schools and jobs, but as a government and as a people, we can now see a path ahead and we are determined to move forward ... walking together, First Australians alongside all Australians, towards a stronger and fairer Australian nation.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister
11 February 2010

How will we get there?

- Increased training opportunities for Indigenous housing workers.
- Scholarships and mentoring for Indigenous students and promising young Indigenous researchers.
- Greater marketing of housing careers to Indigenous university students.
- Tertiary level housing courses for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, including degree and shorter courses. New Indigenous-specific curriculum for housing workers.
- Cultural competency in the non-Indigenous housing workforce to ensure respect and sensitivity when dealing with Indigenous housing issues.
- Improved research into barriers to adequate Indigenous housing outcomes.

Investment in social housing is central to the Government's housing reform agenda and critical if we are to close the gap.

The Government's substantial investment will also open up important employment opportunities for Aboriginal people. And there will be scope for Aboriginal corporations to bid for contracts for construction and upgrades.

Jenny Macklin, Minister for Indigenous Affairs
5 March 2009

Making a start: progressing the capacity building program

AHURI will build strong partnerships across private, not-for-profit and government agencies in order to create:

- Scholarships and support for Indigenous housing studies and research.
- Sponsorship and significant funding of Indigenous-led housing research.
- Internships in private and not-for-profit housing-related occupations.
- Graduate recruitment of Indigenous people into a range of government housing policy and program roles.

Activities already underway

Background work is in progress to further the development of this strategy:

- The AHURI Research Synthesis Service is preparing a synthesis of existing research on Indigenous workforce capacity in Australia.
- The South Australian and New South Wales governments are conducting an audit of Indigenous workforce capacity in their jurisdictions. This reviews the existing Indigenous housing workforce and Indigenous participation in tertiary housing studies.
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous housing specialists are invited to contribute to ensure the program is culturally appropriate.

A group at AHURI is charged with progressing this nationally important initiative, advised by Ms Lois Peeler. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

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