



SAGE

SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA
GENDER EQUITY

SAGE Cygnet Awards

Cygnet Award # 3 – First Peoples Employment



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Date of Application	June 2024
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Acknowledgement of Country

Griffith University acknowledges the people who are the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to the Elders, past and present, and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Griffith University's campuses are based on the lands of the Yugarabul, Yuggera, Jagera, Turrbal, Yugambeh and Kombumerri peoples.

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GLOSSARY

AIATSI	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
CS	Corporate Services
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
DVC(IDI)	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion)
DVC(E)	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education)
EA	Enterprise Agreement Academic Staff Enterprise Agreement 2023-2025 Professional and Support Staff Enterprise Agreement 2023-2025
First Peoples Employment Action Plan	First Peoples Employment Action Plan 2021-2025
GU	Griffith University
IRU	Indigenous Research Unit
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PVC	Pro Vice Chancellor

SAGE Cygnet Award Details

Griffith University: SAGE CYGNET # 3

Word limit – 2500 words – Actual 2495

	Current Cygnet	Barrier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · List the Barrier addressed in this Cygnet · List the Barrier for Cygnets already submitted
[Mandatory] Institution-wide barrier		
[Mandatory] Sub-group barrier		Inclusion of LGBTIQ+ staff and students.
Sub-group barrier		Attraction and recruitment of women in the Sciences Group.
Sub-group barrier	✓	Attraction and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
[Please select] Institution-wide/Sub-group barrier		

CYGNET AWARD: FIRST PEOPLES EMPLOYMENT

Key Barrier

This Cygnet Award addresses the underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Griffith. The submission primarily focuses on the development of a more targeted and culturally appropriate approach to supporting the recruitment of Indigenous people and ensuring that the University environment is culturally safe for new and current Indigenous staff.



Figure 1: Griffith University Strategic Plan 2020-2025 front cover image by Aboriginal artist Jody Rallah (Biri Gabba, Yuggera)

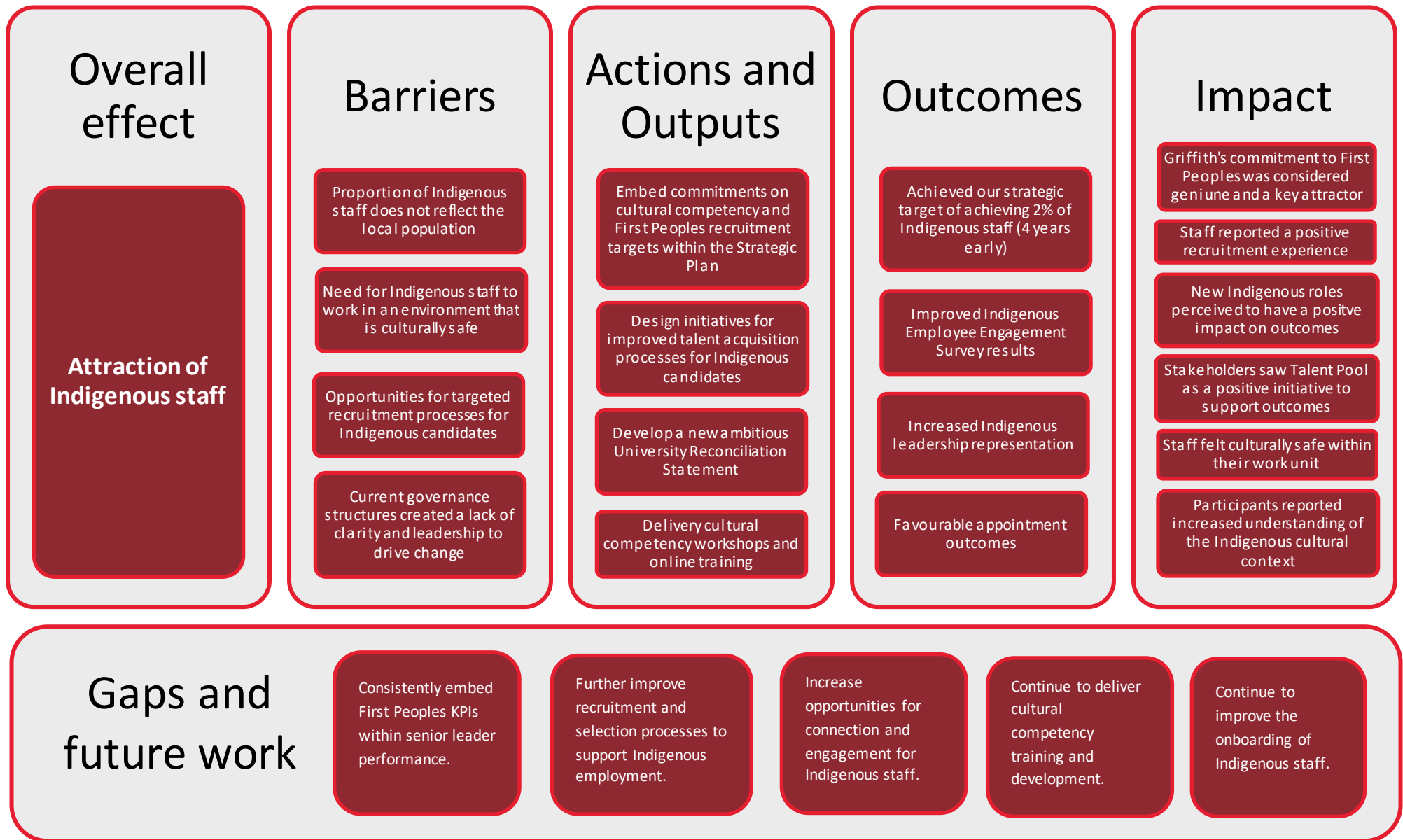


Figure 2: Summary diagram of Cygnet Award – barriers, actions and outputs, outcomes, impact, gaps and future work

Evidence of Barrier

Our Athena Swan Bronze submission revealed that Indigenous staff comprised only 1.4% of all continuing and fixed-term staff in 2017 (Table 1). This did not reflect the proportion of Indigenous people in the local population¹. We also found that Griffith had relatively large numbers of Indigenous research higher degree students (35 in 2018), yet this was not translating to academic employment opportunities.

Griffith acknowledged the need for a targeted and holistic approach to improving the representation of Indigenous staff. Several sub-barriers were identified which included:

- Ineffective or unclear governance structures including lack of leadership accountability.
- The need for targeted recruitment strategies to support hiring managers to increase representation.
- A particularly low representation of Indigenous staff in some Groups and levels.
- The need to ensure that Indigenous staff can work in a culturally safe environment.

Governance and leadership

In 2018, Griffith had multiple committees related to Indigenous matters including:

- Griffith's Council of Elders
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (ATSIAC)
- Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Working Party
- First Peoples Employment Committee

Feedback suggested that similar agendas were being addressed in each of the meetings and there was evidence of overlapping membership, resulting in unnecessary duplication. Executive leadership responsibility and education were seen as key enablers to drive change.

Griffith had a KPI to *"Increase by 5% per annum the number of First Peoples employed at Griffith"* which was articulated in the University's People Plan 2017-2020. At the time the University's progress on this target was not easily accessible or monitored by key leaders, therefore additional dashboards and other reporting mechanisms were required to ensure the achievement of this goal.

Targeted recruitment strategies

While the University had KPIs around increasing the representation of Indigenous staff, there were limited processes or guidance to support candidates into roles. The recruitment system had limited capacity for candidate management, making it difficult to retain information on qualified Indigenous candidates. Proactive candidate management was deemed crucial to achieving outcomes.

¹ Estimated approximately 4.6% in Southeast Queensland: <https://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/issues/2781/population-estimates-projections-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-qlders-2006-2031.pdf>

A 2020 review revealed the need for improved recruitment processes and systems. The recruitment data was not reliable or readily available and did not include the capacity to identify Indigenous candidates. The lack of useful data made it difficult to identify potential bias in recruitment processes.

Underrepresentation in particular areas

The 2017 data indicated that slightly more Indigenous staff were employed in professional roles (n=32). There was also a higher proportion of Indigenous women (70%) staff than men (30%). A review of the data by Group showed that there were no professional or academic Indigenous staff in Sciences Group. Within the Health Group, there were only two women in medical science and three in health/allied health.

Table 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff statistics by Gender and contract type, 2017

	Gender		Contract Type		Total
	Women	Men	Academic	Professional	
Headcount	39 (70%)	17 (30%)	24 (43%)	32 (57%)	56
% of cohort	1.6%	1.1%	1.6%	1.3%	1.4%
FTE	36 (67%)	17 (33%)	23 (44%)	29 (56%)	52
% of cohort	1.7%	1.1%	1.6%	1.3%	1.4%

Culturally safe environment

During consultations for the First Peoples Employment Action Plan, staff recommended that all staff should undergo training on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency to create a culturally safe environment for current and future Indigenous staff.



Figure 3: First Peoples Employment Action Plan 2021-2025 front cover image

Activities and Outputs

In 2019, Griffith appointed a First Peoples Employment Partner to support strategies to improve the attraction, retention, and progression of Indigenous staff. First Peoples employment also came under the remit of the Senior Lead (Inclusion & Development).

University strategy and commitments

In late 2019, Griffith launched its new Strategic Plan 2020-2025 which included key Indigenous related commitments ([Table 2](#)).

Table 2: Key Indigenous related commitments in the Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Griffith University Strategic Plan 2020-2025 commitments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake an ambitious recruitment strategy including recruitment of senior First Peoples leaders and develop a framework for recruitment of Indigenous academic and professional staff across the University.• Reach 2% of our academic and professional staff being Indigenous, with a clear plan to reaching population parity after this.• Provide a more coherent framework for teaching Indigenous content and cultural competency in our degrees and creating appropriate cultural training for students and staff.

In 2021, the First Peoples Employment Action Plan was endorsed by GU Executive Group, articulating clear objectives to achieving strategic goals through the employee lifecycle.

Griffith refined the meaning of “*population parity*” and set a target of 3.6% as part of the EA negotiations in 2023. Recruitment targets were also introduced in some operational plans and leadership KPIs (e.g., Corporate Services and Griffith Business School) to drive outcomes. In 2024, the revised Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy included a statement that we would “*continue to phase in equity, diversity and inclusion related key performance indicators (KPIs) in leaders’ performance*” which was inclusive of targets on Indigenous employment.

Table 3: Progress on University strategy and KPI actions

Action Reference	Action	Progress
Athena Swan Action 8.6	All senior managers will include KPIs in annual plans to increase First Peoples employment by 5% per annum, as specified in the University's People Plan.	IN PROGRESS Clearer KPIs were established in the Strategic Plan 2020-2025. Senior manager KPIs have been established in some areas with a commitment to establish KPIs more broadly.
First Peoples Employment Action 1.7	Embed KPIs within senior leader performance to maximise the focus and implementation of actions.	
Future action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed KPIs within senior leader performance to maximise the focus and implementation of actions (Action 1). 		

Monitoring and reporting

Employment targets were embedded in dashboards and regular reporting (e.g., to Committees and through the quarterly Workforce Profile Report) to ensure leaders were able to monitor progress.

The First Peoples Employment Committee also tracked/s progress by:

- examining employment data at each meeting
- bi-annual reporting from academic groups/major organisational areas on relevant initiatives and
- reporting against the First Peoples Employment Action Plan.

Table 4: Progress on First Peoples HR dashboard

Action reference	Action	Progress
Athena Swan Action 8.7	Create a First Peoples HR dashboard where Groups may examine their progress on First Peoples employment to achieve the People Plan goal.	COMPLETED First Peoples indicator included in University-wide dashboards. A more detailed First Peoples dashboard is also available to key HR and DVC(IDI) staff.
Future action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate to stakeholders a quarterly update on use and efficacy of First Peoples Talent Pool (Action 3). 		

Leadership and governance

In 2020, Griffith appointed the inaugural PVC (Indigenous) to provide executive level leadership and oversee all Indigenous matters at Griffith. This role was expanded in 2023 to DVC (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion) providing further opportunities for intersectional approaches. There was also a review of Indigenous leadership and governance which resulted in the establishment of the Elders and First Peoples Knowledge Holders Advisory Board. This review recommended the appointment of a new leadership position in Indigenous Learning and Teaching which was established in 2022.

Attraction and recruitment

From 2019 onwards, several actions were taken to improve talent acquisition for Indigenous staff including:

- Re-establishing the First Peoples Talent Pool (2019) to assist in filling roles with Indigenous candidates.
- Establishing regular engagement with Deans Academic, Talent Acquisition Partners and Business Partners to promote opportunities for employment.
- Creating guidance on identified positions to support the establishment of these roles.
- Establishing dashboards and regular reports to key Committees to monitor performance.

In 2021-2022, a project was established to implement a new recruitment system and a restructure of the recruitment function. The project team considered diversity and inclusion criteria as part of the system procurement process.

The new system provided several key features that supported Indigenous employment including:

- Talent pool capability to support improved candidate management.
- Improved capacity to analyse diversity data (including Indigenous status) which enables meaningful reporting of attraction and appointment outcomes.
- Improved selection processes such as candidate scoring to reduce bias.
- Capacity to move qualified Indigenous candidates straight to shortlists.

Initially there were some difficulties around the management of the Talent Pool as the responsibilities were unclear. A new process was defined in 2023 to provide role clarity.

While a graduate program specifically for Indigenous candidates was not established due to resourcing, dedicated places were included as part of the CS Graduate Employment Program in 2020. This resulted in one of the five graduates in the program being Indigenous. The intention was to continue to have Indigenous staff places in this program, however, the program was discontinued due to the impact of restructures. Other employment initiatives were prioritised to allow for a more whole-of-university approach to Indigenous recruitment.



Figure 4: Deputy Vice Chancellor (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion), Professor Cindy Shannon AM

Table 5: Progress on talent acquisition actions

Action reference	Action	Progress
Athena Swan Action 7.6	Ensure appointment and promotion panels include individuals who themselves identify as belonging to multiple groups and have a greater potential of awareness of the impacts of intersectionality.	IN PROGRESS Consideration of gender and other diversities in panel composition was embedded in the revised Talent Acquisition Procedure.
Athena Swan Action 8.4	Establish a Graduate Employment Program to place First Peoples graduates in employment at Griffith and monitor uptake, including the number of women who are recruited.	COMPLETED / REDESIGNED A Corporate Services Graduate Program included places specifically for Indigenous graduates. As part of the First People Employment Plan consultations, broader actions were designed around workforce planning and employment pathways to allow the flexibility to develop targeted approaches based the needs of individual areas.
First Peoples Employment Action 1.1	Maintain and actively engage with a First Peoples talent pool to indicate their interest in working at Griffith.	COMPLETED / ONGOING During 2019-2021 the First Peoples Employment Partner maintained at First Peoples Talent Pool. In 2022 the talent pool was redeveloped in the new recruitment system. The First Peoples Employment Partner role was vacant for a period of time across 2022 and 2023. Regular maintenance of the talent pool commenced again in 2023.
First Peoples Employment Action 1.2	Review, recommend and implement talent acquisition processes and branding that will attract and appoint First Peoples candidates.	IN PROGRESS In 2023 processes were redesigned to align to new talent acquisition structure. Indigenous staff are also being considered as part of the Employee Value Proposition project which is currently underway.
First Peoples Employment Action 3.3	Review fixed-term positions occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff for possible conversion to continuing appointments.	COMPLETED / ONGOING Indigenous staff in fixed term positions were reviewed during 2020 restructure processes. Additional opportunities have been examined in 2023 in Corporate Services for Indigenous staff on fixed term contracts.
University Strategic Plan 2020-2025	Undertake an ambitious recruitment strategy including recruitment of senior First Peoples leaders and develop a framework for recruitment of Indigenous academic and professional staff across the University.	COMPLETED / ONGOING In addition to the First Peoples Employment Action Plan and above actions, we also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited several senior Indigenous staff (for example, DVCIDI and DVCE)

Future actions:

- Continue to maintain and actively engage with a First Peoples talent pool that allows prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to indicate their interest in working at Griffith ([Action 2](#)).
- Develop and communicate to stakeholders a quarterly update on use and efficacy of First Peoples Talent Pool ([Action 3](#)).
- Refine the process for moving First Peoples applicants and talent pool members through to shortlisting for suitable positions ([Action 4](#)).
- Create bespoke digital assets to support the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates ([Action 5](#)).
- Promote internal job opportunities to the First Peoples Staff Network on a regular basis ([Action 6](#)).
- Continue to establish and prioritise recruitment into ongoing identified academic positions in each academic group ([Action 7](#)).
- Using workforce planning as a foundation, work with academic groups and other major organisational areas to establish pathway opportunities for prospective First Peoples staff (for example, graduate positions, internships) ([Action 8](#)).
- Extend opportunities usually available to internal staff in the first instance to also be promoted to members of the First Peoples Talent Pool ([Action 9](#)).
- Offer workshops to help support Griffith staff with First Peoples employment. These workshops will include support and talent acquisition workshops for hiring managers ([Action 12](#)).

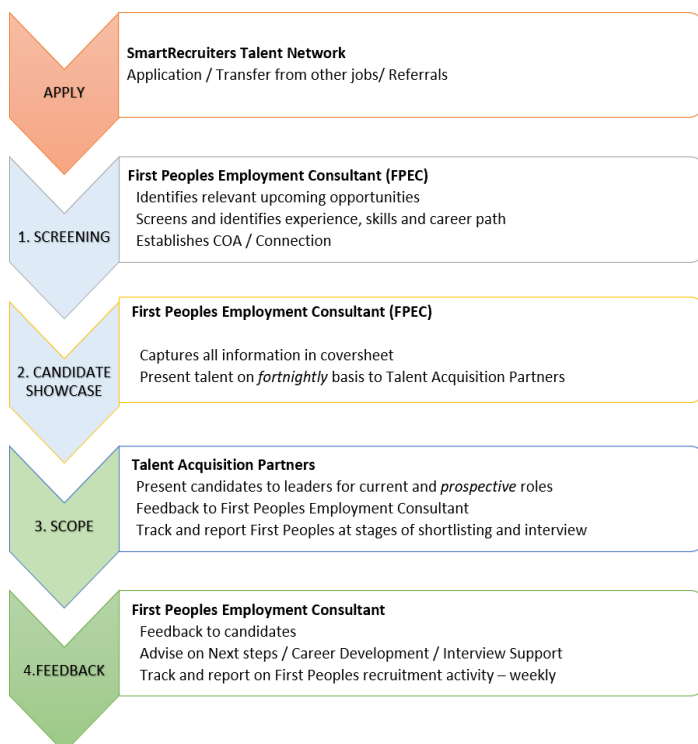


Figure 5: Revised First Peoples Talent Pool process – detailed steps, 2023

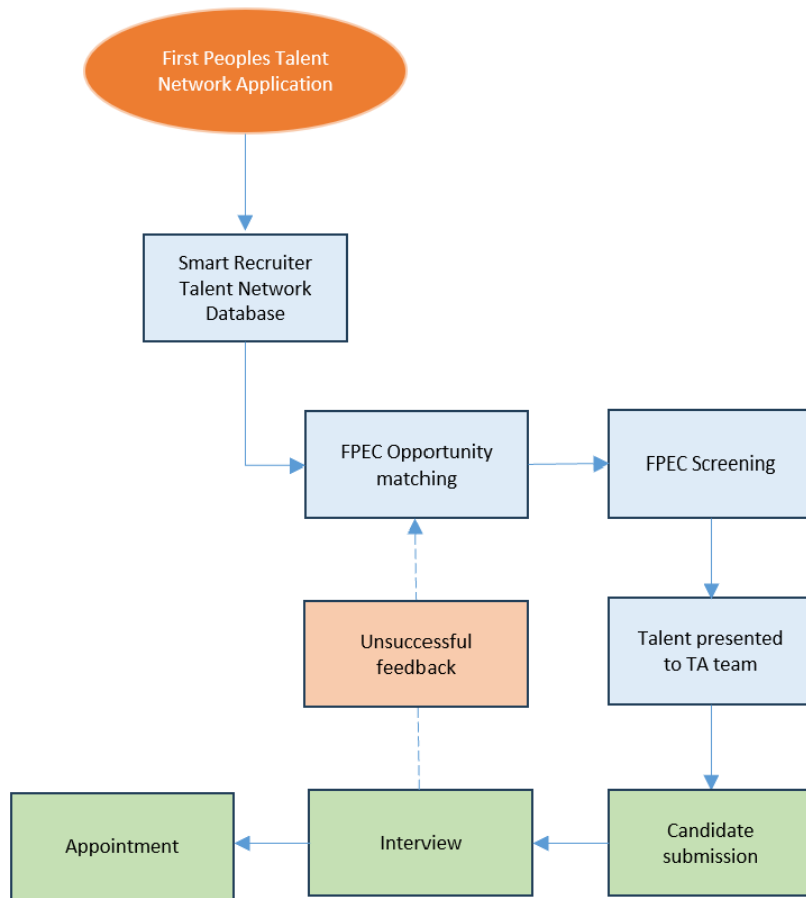


Figure 6: Revised First Peoples Talent Pool process - workflow, 2023

Academic pathways

Since our Bronze submission, Health and Sciences Groups have awarded three First Peoples Early Career Fellowships. The Sciences Group also advertised however did not fill an identified role in the School of Information and Communications Technology. Targeted Indigenous academic positions were part of the '100 academics' recruitment campaign (see [Figure 7](#) for website microsite and [Table 6](#) actions related to this initiative). In Phase 1 of this program, 6 Indigenous academics were recruited with 4 having completed their PhD at Griffith.

First Peoples academic recruitment

Artwork: Together by Sid Domic

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Here, you can make it matter

Griffith University is deeply committed to recognising the unique place of First Peoples in our history and culture and the importance of respecting Indigenous knowledges, culture and talent, and in providing positive opportunities for a diverse and inclusive staff and student community.

We're seeking to recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics with a passion for teaching and research who share our commitment and values to help us create a brighter future for all. Opportunities are available in many disciplines across our campuses on the Gold Coast, Brisbane and Logan in South East Queensland.



Join us

Griffith has a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career progression. Within Australia, we are one of the top five universities for the largest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

We are currently welcoming applications for various roles in research and teaching across our diverse academic departments. Your expertise and unique perspective will play a pivotal role in enriching our academic landscape and driving positive change.

Apply now and express your interest in accelerating your career at Griffith University.

[Apply now >](#)



“Griffith has given me the opportunity to engage with students, academics and the broader community, to enact processes that prioritise Indigenous voices in shaping outcomes.”

Dr Kerry Hall
 Lecturer, First Peoples Health
 Project Officer, Embedding Indigenous Content

Figure 7: First Peoples academic recruitment microsite as part of the '100 academics' campaign

Table 6: Actions to support Indigenous academic employment in the ‘100 academics’ campaign

Actions to support Indigenous academic employment in the ‘100 academics’ campaign	
	Established a First People’s Academic Recruitment microsite (Figure 7)
	Advertised on First Nations specific targeting platforms such as Koori Mail, OurMob & ATSIJOBS in addition to general advertising platforms
	Included an Indigenous representative on selection committees
	Consulted with DVC(IDI) and First Peoples Employment Partner
	First Peoples Employment Partner engaged directly with successful candidates and provided support for onboarding

We continue to focus on the pipeline of future Indigenous Australian staff by IRU prioritising the:

- expansion and promotion of competitive scholarship opportunities for Indigenous HDR students
- consultation and the development of a new fit for purpose *Pathways into Research Program* for Indigenous undergraduate students to equip students with the knowledge and skills to successfully maintain a research higher degree.

Table 7: Progress on academic pathway actions

Action reference	Action	Progress
Athena Swan Action 8.1	Across all Groups, create mentoring and sponsorship opportunities for Griffith Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PhD students on Griffith academic career tracks.	<p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>Informal opportunities to support Indigenous PhD students have been identified within local areas and have resulted in academic appointments in some cases (for example, in Engineering and Psychology). Other examples to support students into academic roles include Honours scholarships for Indigenous students in Nursing and Midwifery.</p>
Athena Swan Action 8.2	In the Health and Sciences Group, at least every two years award a First Peoples' Early Career Fellowship to a candidate within five years post PhD. Configure this as a bridge to an ongoing position, subject to performance. 50% of Fellowships will be awarded to women.	<p>COMPLETED / REDESIGNED</p> <p>The Health and Sciences Group established and awarded three First Peoples Early Career Fellowships. Strategic funds were put aside towards identified academic positions across all Groups and relevant actions were embedded in the First People Employment Plan.</p>
First Peoples Employment Action 1.4	Provide short-term opportunities (up to 1 year) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates to upskill and support progression towards academic and research careers.	<p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>Increased Indigenous PhD top up scholarships.</p> <p>Additional Postdoctoral Fellowships made available.</p>
First Peoples Employment Action 1.5	Establish and prioritise recruitment into ongoing identified academic positions in each academic group.	<p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>13 identified academic positions were advertised as part of the 100 academics campaign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 academics staff have commenced between January and April 2024, out of these 13 positions • Appointments have been made in 3 out of the 4 Academic Groups

Connection and engagement

The First Peoples Employment Partner established a Staff Network to facilitate further connection and belonging and meetings have been held more regularly in 2023-2024.

In 2021 we included diversity demographic questions in the Engagement Survey so that we could analyse differences in engagement through an intersectional lens. The First Peoples Employment Partner also delivered workshops to key areas such as Human Resources, Digital Solutions and Student Engagement on how to support Indigenous staff in the workplace.

Table 8: Progress on connection and engagement actions

Action reference	Action	Progress
Athena Swan Action 4.1	Maintain a staff network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to collaborate and communicate.	COMPLETED / ONGOING First Peoples Staff Network was established in 2019.
Athena Swan Action 4.2	Ensure that staff surveys have the capacity to understand the experiences, engagement and satisfaction of First Peoples staff. Devise actions to address issues identified in staff engagement surveys.	COMPLETED / ONGOING Demographic question was included from the 2021 survey. Results and potential actions are reviewed at the EDI and First Peoples Employment Committee each year.
<p>Future action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further build the First Peoples Staff Network by establishing more regular meetings and promoting the network to new staff (Action 10) 		

Reconciliation and cultural safety

In May 2022, Griffith launched a Reconciliation Statement demonstrating our commitment to promoting an environment valuing the cultures, knowledges, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This was informed by thorough consultation with Griffith students and staff and the wider Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

There were slight delays on the delivery of cultural competency development for staff due to considered consultation on an agreed framework. In the first instance, the AIATSIS CORE Cultural competency online modules were rolled-out in 2023.

In 2022, a Project Officer was appointed to lead the delivery of initiatives to improve the cultural competency of staff including a suite of face-to-face workshops designed to build on the foundational knowledge gained through online modules. These workshops were delivered from 2023 onwards and included general (359 completions) and learning and teaching workshops (74 completions).

Table 9: Progress on reconciliation and cultural safety actions

Action reference	Action	Progress
First Peoples Employment Action 8.5	Develop and implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency modules for new and existing staff.	COMPLETED / ONGOING Griffith introduced the AIATSIS CORE Cultural competency online modules and face-to-face workshops in 2023.
First Peoples Employment Action 4.3	Create a network of trained First Peoples Griffith allies/champions.	COMPLETED / ONGOING A Cultural Competency Community of Practice Teams site has been established with people who have completed Cultural Competency offerings.
<p>Future action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop cultural competency training and development opportunities to improve the capability of staff (Action 13). 		



Figure 8: Griffith Reconciliation Statement email signature banner, featuring artwork by proud Kalkadoon man Sid Domic – *Together*.

Outcomes

Griffith’s primary target outcome was to reach 2% *Indigenous staff representation by 2025*. This target was achieved in late 2021 (four years early) and another target of 3.6% was set in 2023 ([Table 10](#)).

Table 10: Progress on First Peoples representation goals (as at 31 March), 2017-2024

	2017-2020				2020-2025			
Target outcomes	Increase by 5% per annum the number of First Peoples employed at Griffith – Griffith University People Plan 2017-2020				Reach 2% of our academic and professional staff being Indigenous, with a clear plan to reaching population parity after this – Griffith University Strategic Plan 2020-2025.			
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*	2024*
Actual ‘Headcount’	56	51 (-4)	60 (+9)	65 (+5)	63 (-2)	78 (+15)	88 (+10)	104 (+16)
Target 2017-20 (Headcount)	-	59	62	65				
Actual ‘Headcount’ %	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	2.0%	2.1%	2.5%
Actual FTE	52	47	54	62	59	73	84	95
Actual FTE %	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	2.1%	2.2%	2.4%
	Target 2020-25 (FTE %)				2.0% by 2025		3.6%	
<i>Note:</i> 2017 – 2022 data is based on annual Government reporting. 2023 and 2024 is based on the Griffith Planning and Analytics dashboards.								

A secondary outcome of *increasing the engagement and satisfaction of Indigenous staff by 5%* was established as part of the First Peoples Employment Action Plan which aligned to the whole-of-University engagement goals. Engagement, wellbeing and progress categories were used as key outcomes. Informally, we also aim to have no large gaps (>10%) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff. [Table 11](#) shows that both these targets were achieved in 2023, in addition to Indigenous staff exceeding non-Indigenous staff in positive sentiment on engagement and progress.










Table 11: High level differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, 2021-2023

	2021		2022		2023	
	Indigenous (116)	Non-Indigenous (2512)	Indigenous (156)	Non-Indigenous (3156)	Indigenous (106)	Non-Indigenous (3313)
Engagement	71%	76%	72% (+1%)	76% (+0%)	80% (+8%)	77% (+1%)
TARGET	BASELINE		76% by 2025			
Wellbeing	59%	62%	60% (+1%)	64% (+2%)	65% (+5%)	65% (+1%)
TARGET	BASELINE		64% by 2025			
Progress	59%	65%	63% (+4%)	65% (+0%)	72% (+9%)	66% (+1%)
TARGET	BASELINE		64% by 2025			
Note: The Employee Engagement survey was established in 2021 therefore no data was available prior to this date. Previous Athena Swan surveys did not have the capacity to extract responses from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Griffith staff engagement survey includes continuing, fixed term and casual staff.						

There were no formal targets on recruitment of Indigenous staff since this data was not available until late 2022. A gender breakdown, preliminary recruitment and additional survey data has been included below to provide further context on how we achieved our outcomes.

While only a small amount of work has completed to date, it was identified that actions to support retention would further strengthen these results ([Action 16](#)).

Table 12: Other key achievements to support target outcomes

Other key achievements to support target outcomes	
Recruitment	
	First DVC Indigenous, and Diversity and Inclusion appointed, Professor Cindy Shannon AM
	Two Executive Indigenous leaders: Professor Cindy Shannon AM (DVCIDI) and Professor Shaun Ewen (DVCE) (Representing 14% of Griffith Executive Group)
	More than 2% of our new appointments have been Indigenous staff since 2017. Indigenous staff have equalled or exceeded 4% of appointments in the last 2 years
Engagement	
	+9% improvement on Indigenous staff engagement scores since 2021
	+6% improvement on Indigenous staff wellbeing scores since 2021
	+13% improvement on Indigenous staff progress scores since 2021
	No large gaps (>10%) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff across survey items
	Engagement and progress scores of Indigenous staff exceed scores of non-Indigenous staff
	Reducing the gap between Indigenous women and men on respect scores since 2021

Indigenous representation

In addition to achieving our targets, since 2018 we have sustained an increase in the proportion of Indigenous staff each year on both headcount and FTE (see [Figure 10](#)).

Between 2020 and 2021 the number of Indigenous staff declined slightly from 65 to 63 due to higher attrition rates and recruitment freezes during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. This measure had recovered and exceeded previous results by March 2022. Most of the Indigenous staff were women across this time, with the proportion of women varying between 69% and 78%. Our largest increases in employment occurred between 2023-2024 due to more deliberate recruitment activities in CS and the '100 Academics' campaign.

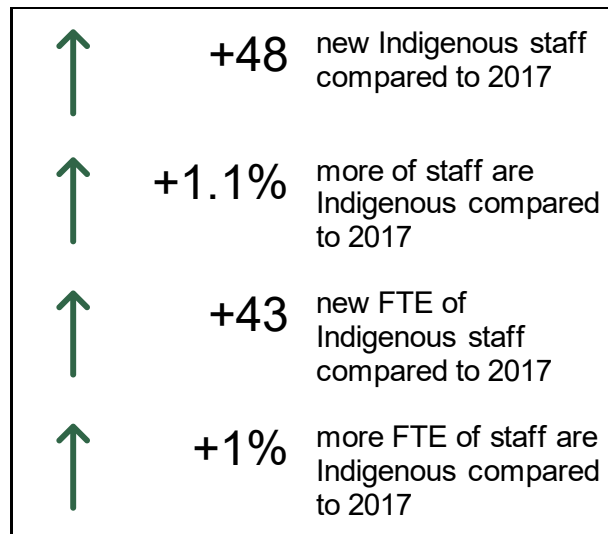


Figure 9: Summary representation achievements between 2017 and 2024

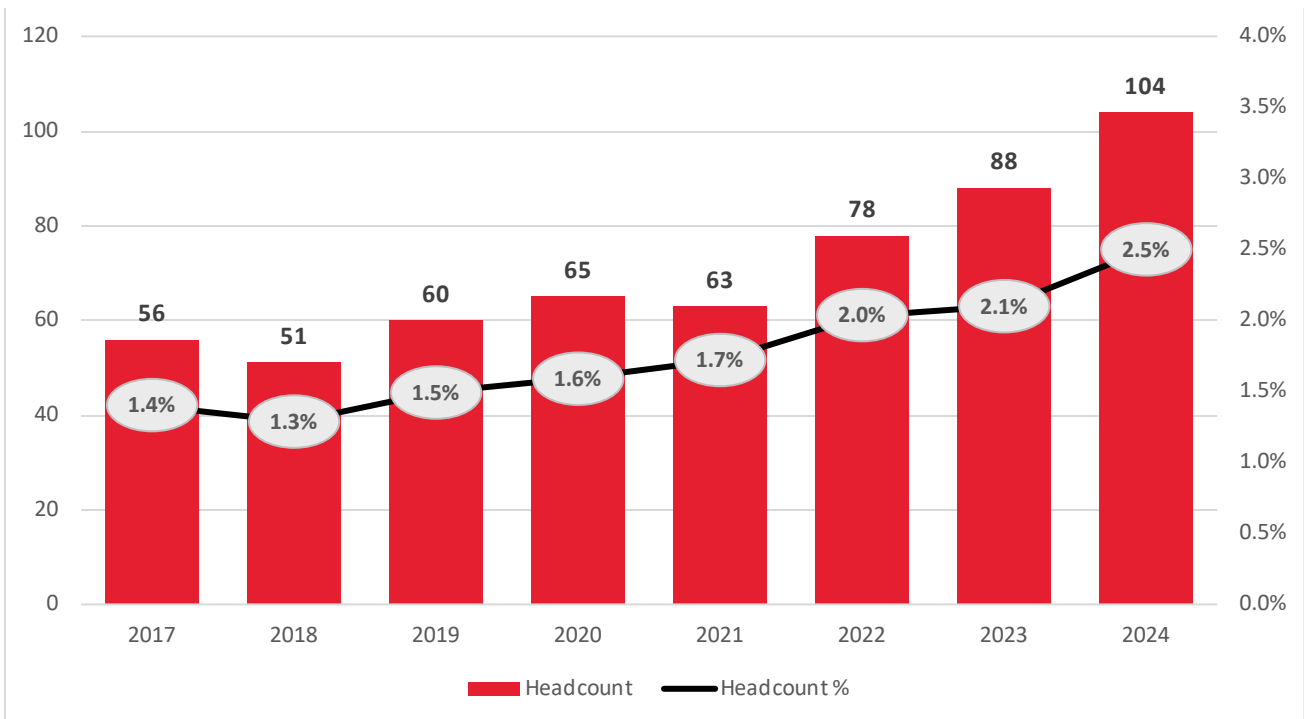


Figure 10: Indigenous staff 'headcount' numbers and percentage, 2017-2024

Table 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff statistics by gender, 2018-2024

		Year							
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Women	'Headcount'	36	31	39	49	42	50	66	75
	Percent	70%	69%	72%	78%	71%	69%	75%	73%
Men	'Headcount'	17	16	15	14	17	24	22	28
	Percent	30%	31%	28%	22%	29%	31%	25%	27%

Note: 2017 – 2022 data is based on annual Government reporting. 2023 and 2024 is based on the Griffith Planning and Analytics dashboards.

In 2023, CS, set an ambitious target of 2.5%. Figure 11 shows an increase in representation from 1.6% to 2.4% (January 2023 to 2024).

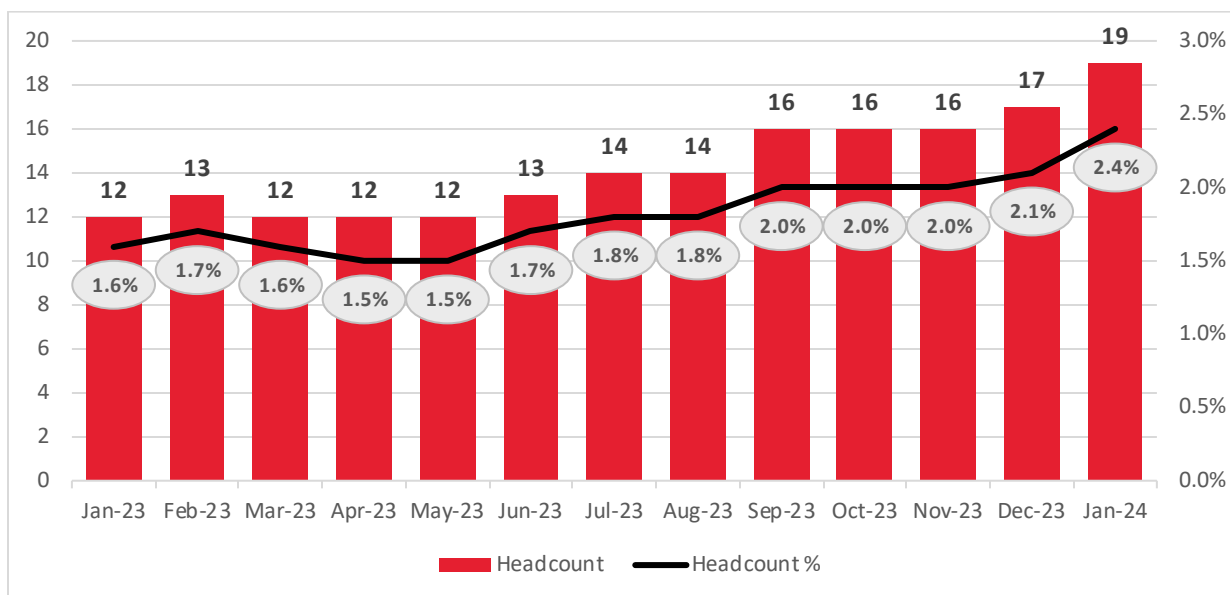


Figure 11: Indigenous staff number and percent representation – Corporate Services, 2023

Attraction and recruitment

While no formal target outcomes were established on appointments, we saw significant improvements in these results across five years which contributed positively to the overall representation of Indigenous staff.

Our commitment to attracting Indigenous people has resulted in an increase in Indigenous representation at the Executive level through the appointment of Professor Cindy Shannon, DVCIDI and Professor Shaun Ewen, DVCE.

Table 14 shows preliminary recruitment data available via the new talent acquisition system. The proportion of Indigenous staff applying for roles was above the current Indigenous representation in 2022 (+0.7%) and slightly below representation in 2023 (Action 5). However, interviews and hires with Indigenous candidates

were above representation and the interview and hire rates of Indigenous candidates exceeded that of non-Indigenous candidates in 2022 and 2023 (Table 14 and 15), indicating the effectiveness of the recruitment initiatives that have been established. Only a few roles had been advertised to date in 2024.

Table 14: Applications, Interviews and Hires by Indigenous status, 2022-2024

	Applications			Interviews			Hires		
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	% Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	% Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	% Indigenous
2022	178	6333	2.7%	27	484	5.3%	7	139	4.8%
2023	571	29892	1.9%	53	1534	3.3%	18	401	4.3%
2024	88	3467	2.5%	10	176	5.4%	1	42	2.3%
TOTAL	837	39634	2.1%	90	2192	3.9%	26	589	4.2%

Note: %Indigenous reflects the percentage of total applications, offers or hire that are from Indigenous staff. Data for 2022 and 2024 represent partial year data. Recruitment data is only available from 2022 onwards as the previous system did not have the capacity to yield responses from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Table 15: Interview and Hire conversion rate, 2022-2024

Year	Interview rate		Hire rate	
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous
2022	15.2%	7.6%	3.9%	2.2%
2023	9.3%	5.1%	3.2%	1.3%
2024	11.4%	5.1%	1.1%	1.2%
TOTAL	10.8%	5.5%	3.1%	1.5%

Note: Interview and Hire rates reflect the percentage of all applications from Indigenous candidates (or non-Indigenous) who were offered a role or hired. Data for 2022 and 2024 represent partial year data. Recruitment data is only available from 2022 onwards as the previous did not have the capacity to yield responses from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

The survey item “I would recommend Griffith as a good place to work” provides additional context on whether Indigenous staff are likely to positively contribute to the attraction of candidates through recommendation. In 2021 and 2022 Indigenous staff reported 3% lower agreement than non-Indigenous staff in response to this question. Indigenous staff sentiment improved by 7% in 2023, now exceeding non-Indigenous staff.

Table 16: Favourable responses from Indigenous staff on attraction related employee engagement survey questions, 2021-2023

	2021		2022		2023	
	Indigenous (116)	Non-Indigenous (2512)	Indigenous (156)	Non-Indigenous (3156)	Indigenous (106)	Non-Indigenous (3313)
I would recommend Griffith as a good place to work	72%	75%	72% (0%)	75% (0%)	79% (+7%)	77% (+2%)
Note: The Employee Engagement survey was established in 2021 therefore no data were available prior to this date. Previous Athena Swan surveys did not have the capacity to extract responses from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.						

Engagement by gender

In 2021 Indigenous women responded more favourably on engagement (+8%) and less favourably on wellbeing (-10%) than Indigenous men. On engagement, this gap has reduced to a 1% difference in both 2022 and 2023. The wellbeing gap had also reduced, whereas Indigenous women and men were now within 4% favourability of each other. Overall, all three categories had improved between 2021 and 2023.

Table 17: High level differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, 2021-2022

	2021		2022		2023	
	Indigenous Women	Indigenous Men	Indigenous Women	Indigenous Men	Indigenous Women	Indigenous Men
Engagement	75%	67%	75% (0%)	74% (+7%)	82% (+7%)	81% (+7%)
Wellbeing	55%	65%	58% (+3%)	67% (+2%)	65% (+7%)	69% (+2%)
Progress	60%	60%	66% (+6%)	62% (+2%)	73% (+7%)	70% (+8%)
Note: The Employee Engagement survey was established in 2021 therefore no data were available prior to this date. Previous Athena Swan surveys did not have the capacity to extract responses from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Non-binary staff have been excluded due to low numbers (<10) and are not accessible since an external provider was used.						

Impact

In 2024, Indigenous staff were consulted on their experiences of First People employment through 1-on-1 interviews (n=9). Staff were contacted to participate in these sessions via the First Peoples Staff Network and covered a diversity of staff including across genders. Findings from Indigenous onboarding and CS engagement projects also informed this evaluation. Key stakeholders, such as the First Peoples Employment Committee (n=10 including a high proportion of Indigenous representatives), HR Business Partnering (n=13) and Talent Acquisition teams (n=16), and leaders, were consulted to evaluate the implementation of employment initiatives, to ensure the longevity of these initiatives and identify opportunities for further growth.

Key themes from the consultations include:

- Indigenous staff generally described a **positive experience at Griffith** and attribute supportive colleagues and leaders to this experience.
- Griffith's **commitment to its values, reconciliation and Indigenous employment** was considered genuine and is a positive attractor, and there are opportunities to increase the external profile of Griffith's work.
- Some staff observed an **increase in University focus** on First Peoples employment.
- Indigenous staff generally reported that they felt **culturally safe** in their work unit.
- Indigenous new starters indicated that they had a **positive onboarding and recruitment experience**.

“

I think the referendum and the fact that the university got behind the referendum - that was so reassuring, like we knew that we had that support right from the top ... The VC is very on board with reconciliation and wanting to do more ... the statement that Griffith put forward after the referendum was incredibly reassuring also, and the fact that the VC wanted forums about where Griffith wants go next on reconciliation is very supportive

”

“

I think what (the First Peoples Employment Partner) has done is sort of changed the game a little bit. She's doing a fabulous job in that space and if I've learned anything about Aboriginal people, it's about personal relationships. We do like to call somebody, have a person to talk to and be that connected towards those roles.

”

“

[On the Voice Referendum] The support that was provided from the whole University, even amongst Executive, was actually really good, especially right from the top

”

Participants also commented on the effectiveness or importance of specific initiatives:

- The **Staff Network** was appreciated by Indigenous staff as it was considered **an important avenue for connection amongst community**, particularly for those outside of the DVC(IDI) portfolio. Staff requested that meetings happen more frequently across campuses ([Action 10](#))
- New roles such as the DVC(IDI) and First Peoples Employment Partner were recognised as **playing a significant role in achieving positive outcomes**.
- The **Talent Pool** was seen as a positive initiative to support Indigenous employment. Participants provided examples of where Indigenous staff had been approached or hired through the Pool.
- Given the cultural load of Indigenous staff, there is a need for **cultural competency uplift** for staff and leaders ([Actions 12,13](#)).
- Workshop feedback revealed examples of how the training had **increased staff understanding of historical injustices** and its impact on staff and students.
- **The tailored onboarding communication was valued** as it provided support to connect with the Staff Network and other key contacts ([Actions 14,15](#)).
- There was a need for further opportunities to **support and connect Indigenous academics** ([Action 11](#))
- The targeted recruitment work in CS was considered effective.

“
The Talent Pool really made it easy for me because I felt like the people that are behind this will understand the needs of Indigenous people, what is needed moving into this setting and the sorts of things that might come up as barriers. So that was perfect

”

“
It's positive to see that an organisation takes the time and effort and has that focus on hiring First Peoples and I think that's a big change to what I've been used to... it's been really good to see, the proactiveness from Griffith ... as I've come back there's a lot more things in place, whether it's to do with the talent pool or having a position that looks after reconciliation.

”

Further Action

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
Consistently embed First Peoples KPIs within senior leader performance.						
Action 1 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 1.7, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy)	A review of KPIs across the university revealed that some areas have First Peoples Employment targets and other do not.	Embed KPIs within senior leader performance to maximise the focus and implementation of actions.	2025, then ongoing	Chief of Staff	DVC (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff
Further improve recruitment and selection processes to support Indigenous employment.						
Action 2 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 1.1.1)	Evaluation of our current First Peoples Talent Pool suggests that this initiative has been successful in move Indigenous candidates into roles thus should	Continue to maintain and actively engage with a First Peoples talent pool that allows prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to indicate their interest in working at Griffith.	Ongoing	First Peoples Employment Partner Talent Acquisition Partners Business Partners	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
	continue going forward.					
Action 3 (HR Forward Plan 2024)	Feedback identified opportunities to improve reporting on the Talent Pool to maximise the effectiveness of the pool.	Develop and communicate to stakeholders a quarterly update on use and efficacy of First Peoples Talent Pool	From 2024	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff
Action 4 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 1.1.2)	Feedback from hiring stakeholders suggest that the practice of moving Indigenous candidates to shortlist has been inconsistent across teams. Further structure is needed to support this process.	Refine the process for moving First Peoples applicants and talent pool members through to shortlisting for suitable positions.	2024	First Peoples Employment Partner Talent Acquisition Partners HR Business Partners	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff
Action 5 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 1.2, HR Forward Plan 2024)	The proportion of Indigenous staff that have applied for roles is lower than the proportion in the local population. Further work is needed to attract Indigenous	Review, recommend and implement talent acquisition processes and branding that will attract and appoint First Peoples candidates.	Ongoing	Capability and Development team Talent Acquisition Partners	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
	candidates to address this.	Initiatives to support this work include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create bespoke digital assets to support the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates. 		HR Business Partners		
Action 6	Indigenous staff expressed interest in hearing about vacant positions outside of their immediate work area.	Promote internal job opportunities to the First Peoples Staff Network on a regular basis.	Ongoing	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff
Action 7 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 1.5)	Targeted academic identified positions can further contribute to improving the representation of Indigenous staff.	Continue to establish and prioritise recruitment into ongoing identified academic positions in each academic group.	2021–2025	Group Deans (Academic)	Group PVCs	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff
Action 8 (First Peoples Employment	Opportunities were identified to consider Indigenous representation in workforce planning.	Using workforce planning as a foundation, work with academic groups and other major	2021-2025	Capability and Development team	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
Plan Action 1.3)		organisational areas to establish pathway opportunities for prospective First Peoples staff (for example, graduate positions, internships)		Talent Acquisition Partners HR Business Partners		
Action 9	Some roles are only available to internal staff in the first instance. This could be extended to the First Peoples Talent Network as a second step to further support achieving Indigenous representation targets.	If internal Griffith roles are not filled by internal applicants in the first instance, create a process whereby suitably qualified candidates in the First Peoples Employment Talent Pool may apply.	July 2024	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Indigenous staff represent 3.6% of overall staff.
Increase opportunities for connection and engagement for Indigenous staff.						
Action 10 (First Peoples Employment	Feedback suggested Indigenous staff appreciate the existence of the Staff Network.	Continue to maintain a staff network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to	From 2024	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Continue to meet or exceed Indigenous staff engagement surveys targets.

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
Plan Action 4.1)	Opportunities were identified to increase connection and promote the network.	collaborate and communicate. Further build this network by establishing more regular meetings and promoting the network to new staff.				
Action 11	Feedback suggestions there is more that can be done to support Indigenous academics	Investigate opportunities to better connect and support Indigenous academic staff.	From 2024	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Continue to meet or exceed Indigenous staff engagement surveys targets.
Continue to develop and delivery cultural competency training and development.						
Action 12 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 3.2, HR Forward Plan 2024)	Feedback further highlighted the importance of cultural competency for staff for ensuring the cultural safety of Indigenous staff	Offer workshops to help support Griffith staff with First Peoples employment. These workshops will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support and talent acquisition workshops for hiring managers • professional development workshops for supervisors to help them to develop, 	From 2023	Capability and Development team Talent Acquisition Partners HR Business Partners	Director (Human Resources)	Continue to meet or exceed Indigenous staff engagement surveys targets.

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
		retain and progress First Peoples within the University.				
Action 13 (Aligning to University Strategic Plan 2020-2025)	Feedback further highlighted the importance of cultural competency for staff for ensuring the cultural safety of Indigenous staff	Continue to develop cultural competency training and development opportunities to improve the capability of staff.	Ongoing	Cultural Competency Project Officer	DVC (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion)	Continue to meet or exceed Indigenous staff engagement surveys targets.
Improve the onboarding of Indigenous staff.						
Action 14 (First Peoples Employment Plan Action 2.1)	There were opportunities identified to improve the onboarding of Indigenous staff.	Ensure that new First Peoples staff receive an onboarding survey and are regularly consulted through staff networks and meetings.	Ongoing	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Continue to meet or exceed Indigenous staff engagement surveys targets.
Action 15 (First Peoples	There were opportunities identified to improve the onboarding of Indigenous staff.	Ensure new First Peoples staff receive a welcome email and welcome pack upon starting at Griffith.	Ongoing	First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Continue to meet or exceed Indigenous staff engagement surveys targets.

Action Item and reference to other plans	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome/Targets/Success Indicators
Employment Plan Action 2.2)						
Further understand and act on Indigenous staff retention.						
Action 16	Initial analyses suggest that Indigenous staff retention rates are lower than non-Indigenous staff.	Further explore available retention related data (HR data, engagement data, focus group consultations) to gain a nuanced understanding of retention issues and opportunities. Devise relevant actions addressing retention issues and opportunities.	2024-2025	Senior Diversity & Inclusion Partner, First Peoples Employment Partner	Director (Human Resources)	Improvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff retention.