NIAA Feedback – NORTEC 02092021

**1. How should the Indigenous skills, engagement and employment Program (ISEP) work alongside the new employment services model and the new remote engagement program to build work-ready skills and connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to rewarding, sustainable jobs?**

**• NIAA is interested in stakeholders’ views on whether Indigenous-specific employment investment should target specific cohorts, transition points, regions, industries, barriers, etc.**

- The ISEP program should be approached by way of a singular co-ordinated connection (Provider) that collates all supportive employment and supplementary funded programs together in (up to 3) Employment Regions to ensure that social barriers and structural challenges can be identified and mitigated.  Ideally the variety of funding should be able to encourage a co-designed ability at local level with funding stakeholders to get best value for money and close gaps as much as possible.

- Local ISEP providers should consider ## "major" employer partnerships that engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples into pre-employment training workplace exposure, Traineeships, Apprenticeships, National Work Experience Program and sustainable employment thereafter.

- The industry market and employer needs re job types, candidate types and employment access will determine what Indigenous-specific employment investment

- Should be a streamlined services i.e., singular or multiple providers. Should be no distinction between what jobseekers come from which provider to access and be supported by ISEP program. An existing provider should be contracted to support their ongoing delivery.

- Engage NRL or equivalent to provide Ambassadors in regions to get employers and jobseekers on board to

- ISEP to identify and align partnerships between NESM and NREP with Industry Skills Councils, RDA and other credible industry/employer groups to develop cohort specific employability development and employment pathway initiatives and strategies

**2.How could IAS investment be designed to be more flexible and responsive at the regional level, and better meet the needs of the community for Indigenous job seekers and employers?**

**• NIAA is interested in stakeholders’ views on more flexible investment that builds on success factors and leverages partnerships and other investment at the local level, including partnerships and opportunities for co-investment with industry.**

- The ISEP program should be approached by way of a singular co-ordinated connection (Provider) that collates all supportive employment and supplementary funded programs together in (up to 3) Employment Regions to ensure that social barriers and structural challenges can be identified and mitigated.  Ideally the variety of funding should be able to encourage a co-designed ability at local level with funding stakeholders to get best value for money and close gaps as much as possible.

- Local ISEP providers should consider determined number of "major" employer partnerships that engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples into pre-employment training workplace exposure, Traineeships, Apprenticeships, National Work Experience Program and sustainable employment thereafter.

- ISEP to facilitate NESM and NREP in connecting with Indigenous Chambers of Commerce to increase employment options for Aboriginal people to be employed by local and regionally based Aboriginal businesses, and generate opportunities for procurement of services by Aboriginal businesses with NESM and NREP entities

- Whoever is delivering the contract should generate a list of every Aboriginal - funded organisation to generate a connection as potential employers to feed into the ISEP program including community groups, sporting groups, small businesses etc to facilitate the jobs although connections as a central go to

**3.How should results of the new ISEP program be measured, monitored and evaluated to ensure investment contributes to closing the gap in employment outcomes?**

**• NIAA is interested in stakeholders’ views on how Indigenous-specific employment investment should be monitored and meaningful data collected and made accessible to demonstrate clear outcomes.**

- The results should be measured by ESP outcomes (4 weeks, 12 weeks & 26 weeks) plus identified entry points into training programs and completion rates.

- Consider adding an additional milestone point between 12 weeks and 26 weeks for greater assurance of attaining a 26-week outcome e.g., 18 weeks (which attracts a payment which doesn’t currently exist).

- Jobseeker dependence on post-placement support is magnified and to maximise 26-week outcomes, a more robust PPS needs to be applied with a pro-rata payment made at 18 weeks to support this function. Add a 52-week mark with a pay point.

- 52-week post placement supports apprentices and traineeships better also from a retention perspective.

**4.How can we embed shared-decision making in community-based workforce planning?**

**• NIAA is interested in identifying the opportunities for partnerships with appropriate stakeholders in the employment space, and how shared decision-making can be best facilitated, for example through community-based workforce planning.**

- The ISEP program should be approached by way of a singular co-ordinated connection (Provider) that collates all supportive employment and supplementary funded programs together in (up to 3) Employment Regions to ensure that social barriers and structural challenges can be identified and mitigated.  Ideally the variety of funding should be able to encourage a co-designed ability at local level with funding stakeholders to get best value for money and close gaps as much as possible.

**5.How can the ISEP encourage potential employers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide safe and culturally appropriate work environments? How can employer’s better value the skills and perspectives of Indigenous employees?**

**• NIAA is interested in understanding how all employers, including Indigenous employers and SMEs, can be supported to further employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.**

- Good News Stories and Best Practice Model sharing via Ambassadors – employers and jobseekers

- Use of Indigenous Consultants/Mentors to practically support employers into options that exist in creating culturally safe spaces

- ISEP could work with potential employers to engage and co-design a workable Reconciliation Action Plans or cultural pathway workshops for their organisations.  This should be viewed as an educational opportunity and tool for all in the workplace to build knowledge across the cultural and sensitivities of both parties.

- ISEP to develop, deliver and support delivery via employers of structured mentoring customised to cohorts and diverse industries, additional to what NESM and NREP would provide;

**6.How should the ISEP consider a local focus?**

**• NIAA is interested in stakeholders’ views on whether defined boundaries required for the ISEP, or whether applicants for funding under the ISEP are best placed to determine the local region within the context of a specific funding proposal?**

- Local focus would be best managed by singular co-ordinated connection.

- ISEP to connect NESM and NREP into Local Decision Making forums as reference groups to understand community issues and need + support community to understand the programs and how best they can be utilised to support employment of community members