

EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS COORDINATOR PROJECT

Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW)

Project Description

What is Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative?

The State Government's "*Skilling Queenslanders For Work*" (SQW) initiative funds organisations to provide full time employment, for three to six months, to long-term unemployed people and those at risk of long-term unemployment, on a range of community and environmental projects. The aim of the initiative is to provide people with skills and experience so that they are able to secure ongoing employment. The Employment Pathways Coordinator project is jointly funded by the *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative and Brisbane City Council.

Background

Settlement of migrants and refugees is a long and steep process affected by various factors such as language barriers, difficulty in accessing employment and training opportunities, experience of poverty and disadvantage, access to transport, lack of appropriate and affordable housing, experience of racism and discrimination,

Employment plays an essential part in the settlement process of migrants and refugees. Mainstream (job network providers) and specialised labour-hire and recruitment agencies manage most aspects leading up to and through recruitment. This, however seems to be a transactional process with little or no case management beyond the interview.

Through our experience in developing and implementing employment programs for high-need groups, we have understood that sustainable employment is enhanced by the provision of support to both, the employee and the supervisor/manager before, during and after appointment.

Employment Pathways Coordinator project will employ six participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and train them to become Employment Advisors. The Employment Advisors will get extensive training in recruitment and retention of migrants and refugees so that they can become the link between jobseekers and employers. The participants will be placed in relevant Council sections to gain practical knowledge of recruitment and selection process.

After the completion of the project the Employment Advisors will have broad knowledge of:

- issues faced by migrants and refugees,
- information and referral process which they will use in assisting members of their community to access and maintain meaningful employment
- services and support available for migrants and refugees in particular those seeking employment.

The Employment Advisors will be able to inform, guide and support community members regarding:

- preparation for work,
- job search and gaining employment
- expectations of the work environment for an employee and employer
- management of self in workplaces.

Also they will be able to provide:

- links between employers with skill shortages and a job-ready pool of local workers

- information and advise for workplace team leaders and supervisors about cultural differences and how to retain and integrate migrants and refugee workers into the workforce
- facilitation for resolution of issues between individual and workplace for a nominal period (up to 3 months) after employment.

Project objectives

The objective of this project is to employ and train six people to:

- acquire a broad awareness of the issues faced by migrants and refugees and the knowledge of processes, information, referral services and advocacy to enable them to assist members of their community to access meaningful employment.
- develop understanding of services and programs available so they can inform, guide and support members of their community through periods of cultural adjustment and overcoming personal and family issues associated with leaving their home country and settling in Australia.
- get personal and professional development to address their own needs and create a confidence to become an experts in employment pathways
- learn about job search techniques and how to market their skills to the broader job market.
- develop employer understanding of how best to support migrant and refugee employees and the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce (refuting common myths and negative stereotypes).

Employment outcomes

Six participants who will become the Employment Advisors will be equipped with sufficient knowledge to assist members of CALD communities in job search, applying for a job and maintaining that job. Also they will become experts in cultural matters and capable of providing support to employers to retain migrant and refugee employees.

The Employment Advisors will be exposed to various industries and provided with extensive networking opportunities to best capture the current employment market for CALD clients so that they may provide direct influence upon employment opportunities for their communities as well as being able to feed their cultural knowledge directly back into the various industries.

Also, through the project the participants will document the whole process of job search, applying for and maintaining a job including all barriers, cultural and linguistic differences and work place issues. At the end of project they will develop a resource, which can be used in future by employers and employees to assist them in developing a good relationship with CALD employees.

Participants

Participant of the Employment Pathways Coordinator project will be employed by the Brisbane City Council. Council is the largest local authority in the country, and the only Council that covers an entire capital city. Council has a large and diverse workforce of over 7,000 people, with numerous workplace locations geographically dispersed throughout Brisbane. As a Council employee participants will be subject to the Industrial Awards and Agreements that apply to all council workers.

Participants for this project will be selected through Councils recruitment and selection process. They will be required to address the selection criteria and go through an interview process before being appointed to the position.

See the attached role statement

The Employment Pathways Coordinator project participants' performance will be assessed at 4 weeks, 3 months and on completion of the project. At any time during the first 4 weeks either the participant or the Council can end the agreement

Remuneration

Participants in this project will be paid Council's BAND 5.1 level (Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement) at approximately \$28.9 per hour

Project duration

20 weeks

The project will start on 18th February 2008 and will finish on 30th June 2008.

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