



Corporate services news

My Jawun experience: [REDACTED]

Expired 9/29/2023

If you have been thinking about applying for the Jawun secondment program, round 1 nominations are still open! If you want to know what it's like to participate in the Jawun Secondment program, we hear from [REDACTED] about his secondment experience earlier this year.

Main image: [REDACTED] *during his secondment.*

Nominations for round 1 of the 2024 Jawun APS Secondment Program are open until Friday 13 October. For more information, see [2024 Jawun Secondment Program: Apply now!](#)

[REDACTED] Jawun experience

We caught up with our Canberra colleague [REDACTED] Assistant Manager in HR Operations, to hear about his experience participating in the 2023 [Jawun APS Secondment Program](#).

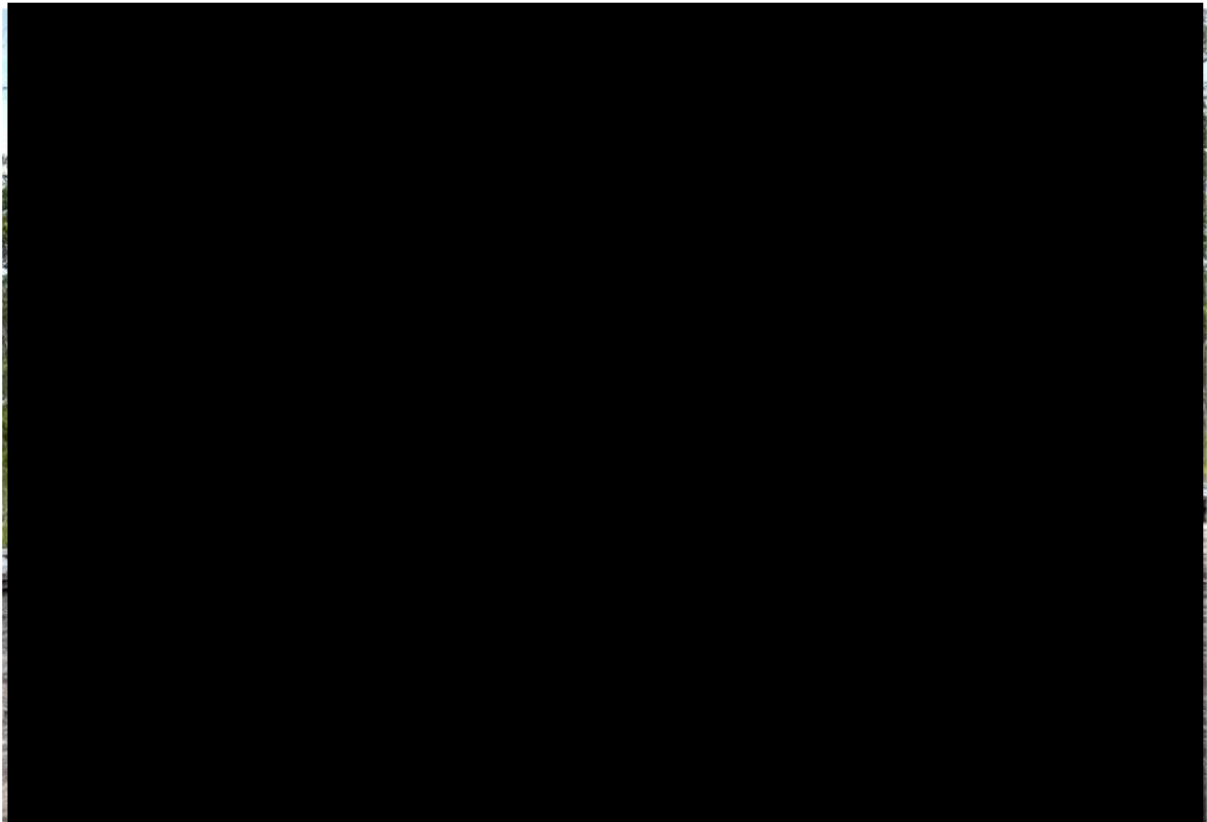
Tell us about your secondment!

My secondment was based on Darkinjung country in the NSW Central Coast region. It consisted of three placements with [NAISDA Dance College](#), the [Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council](#) and [Mingaletta Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation](#).

I opted for the virtual secondment and was impressed with the flexibility of it. I attended a

one-week induction in place, to meet the participating organisations and engage in a variety of cultural experiences. After the induction week, I worked remotely back home from Ngunawal country in Canberra.

That first week on Country was powerful and I really built a connection to the land and with my cohort. My cohort included a few APS employees like me, as well as employees from organisations like Rio Tinto and Endeavour Group, banks and insurance companies. They are a fantastic bunch of people and it was awesome getting to know them.'



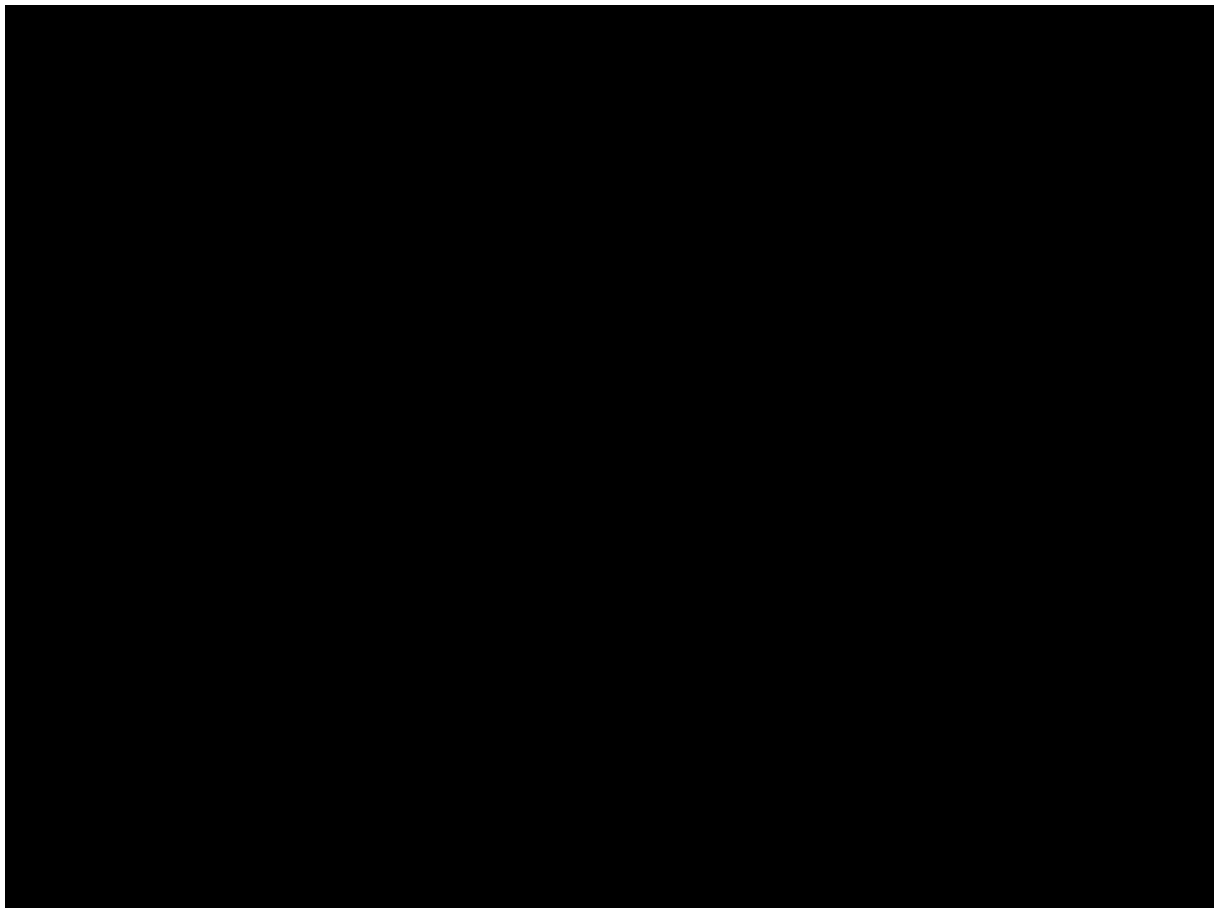
Can you tell us a bit more about your placements?

I completed three placements during my secondment, but how many you do will depend on your circumstances and what's available. There's lots of flexibility and variety in the available projects and I was able to bring my unique skill set in HR policies and processes to my host organisations:

- [NAISDA Dance College](#) – this is a national Indigenous performance training college. I led the design of an induction process that provided assurance that new employees had read and understood their policies. As part of this body of work, I revised and rewrote around 20 policies, procedures and guides and consolidated them all into an induction handbook.
- [Mingaletta Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation](#) – this is a community hub servicing the local community with health, welfare, culture and education support. I

assisted in reviewing and revising their suite of governance documents, including a cultural safety document.

- **Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (DLALC)** – this was a three-part project for a local land council that focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of the community. I conducted two separate scoping activities– one to place QR codes in situ at significant Aboriginal sites and another to develop a mobile phone application called Darkinjung Discovery, which provides an interactive map of the region. I liaised with local councils and National Parks to see what regulations were in place surrounding the QR codes. For the app, I identified and laid the groundwork for a university IT student to develop the application at no cost, through a program at the University of Newcastle. My last project for DLALC was creating an online booking system where people can book in for cultural tours. The system involved creating a link to the guide's calendar and establishing a payment method.



What are your reflections on these projects?

During my placements at NAISDA and Mingaletta, I filled a capability gap and helped reduce their legal exposure in a few different areas, while also setting up their administrative processes so that they can focus on their core business. My impact at DLALC wasn't as immediate, but I made headway in improving their tourism offerings, which will help generate income to be invested in supporting the Central Coast Aboriginal community.

It felt great to be able to contribute so much to organisations that often lack resourcing. These organisations and projects were very different to my APS experience and I appreciated the opportunity to learn and work in a new environment. I feel it has helped broaden my view and build my confidence that I can contribute and be effective in different industries and organisations.

What were some highlights of your experience?

During the induction week we enjoyed hearing from [REDACTED] from DLALC, who spoke to us at [Bulgandry Art Site Aboriginal Place](#). We were hanging on his every word as he explained the history of the area, the impacts of colonisation and how things are now.

We also camped near [Finchley Lookout](#) which included some four wheel driving with walkie talkies to get there. It was a lovely night camping under the stars in an area of significant cultural importance which was made more interesting by a very large goanna trying to access our camp supplies.

At the start of the secondment we were given some books to read including [Daughter of the River Country](#), written by [REDACTED]. It's a powerful and deeply personal memoir about her life and I read it in one sitting on the train up to the Central Coast. I was pleasantly surprised when I found out [REDACTED] would also be my supervisor for my project at Mingaletta! We had a great yarn and I felt like I was meeting a celebrity, but it was also a bit jarring because I basically knew everything about her life from her book, but I was a complete stranger to her!



Why would you recommend Jawun to other staff?

Jawun is a way for us to contribute to an important social issue that we're all grappling with – reconciliation.

The program is very flexible and it's not always about having a 'red dirt' experience away from your home for 6 weeks. You can do Jawun in Redfern in inner Sydney and in many other non-remote regions around Australia. You can do it virtually, in place or a mix of the two so I think it can fit well into most people's circumstances. Everyone who does Jawun is helping to close the gap by learning and contributing where they can.

Thanks to the ACMA, Jawun and my host organisations for giving me the opportunity to be a Jawun secondee. It's a real privilege and something I'll always cherish.

Further information

- [Jawun APS Secondment Program](#)
- [Jawun Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- APS Academy [Jawun APS Secondment Program information](#)

- [Jawun website](#)
- [Jawun COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#)
- Recording of the [ACMA's Jawun information session](#).

If you have any further questions regarding the process, contact the HR Strategy team at [REDACTED]