# 2025 Australian Government Indigenous Apprenticeships Program

## Ross Ross: I used to sit back and thinking to myself like, oh, no, I'm, I'm too old. I'm not educated enough. I thought of every excuse in my head. The support that I got was enough for me to go, you know what, I don't need to keep thinking like this. I'm here. Let's, let's do this.

## So my name is Ross and I work for the NDIA. I'm a proud Luritja man from Central Australia. Born and raised in Darwin. I don't think I'll ever leave. As much as I like to complain about the weather and how hot it is. It's home.

## I was delivery driving. I was only doing around 5 hours a week. It was sort of a part time job and I was looking for a career change. Once the IAP (Indigenous Apprenticeships Program) came around, it was that opportunity that I needed.

## I saw how good the program was. My daughter at the time, she was working in local government and I told her that, you know, if this comes around next year, I'd really like for you to think about it. She jumped at it as well and landed a role as well with the NDIA.

## Trinity: I'm very proud of my dad. And I could always go to him for anything. If I'm having trouble with my IAP assessments that, you know, maybe nobody else knows the answer to, I'll go straight to him.

## Background: So where would I go to find this?

## Ross: I've put my hand up to be a mentor. It's helping a lot of the apprentices out, making them feel comfortable, making them feel safe and just knowing that, you know, yes, this could be scary but, you're here, you can do this.

## Jay: Ross is my mentor as part of the program. And from day one, he showed me around and showed me where to go. If ever I had an issue, I could just pop over, see Ross and he’d help me out instantly. Just knowing that he was part of the program and he knows exactly what I'm going through and what I'm about to go through is awesome.

## Ross: I've been very passionate about Indigenous affairs and anything to, to help mob out. To be given this opportunity, I'm going to run with it and take it.

## Peter This job has, it's changed my life. I now see life differently. I see opportunities where before I just saw nothing. I see advancement, I see potential for me to keep developing in myself. Like, I just see, I see it more clearly now.

## So I was born in Mount Isa. Moved up to Darwin when I was eight and have been here ever since. So my Indigenous side is from Kukuk Yalangi. That's North Queensland, rainforest people.

## I’m a Customer Service Officer. I work at the smart centre up here in Darwin. I'm trained in employment services and Indigenous and remote servicing.

## I was out of school for a long time and I felt like I was stuck in hospitality.

## I was on my lunch break at work and I saw it on a Facebook ad and I literally applied right there and then at my lunch break. And as soon as I applied, it was just positivity and like, I had this weight lifted off my chest and I haven't looked back. It was exciting.

## I probably upsell this program at least once a week. I encourage them to apply. You're not losing anything. It took 5 minutes of my day just to apply.

## When you get through to the interview, just be yourself. You can't do wrong. They're placing you in the job that they believe that you can do. You will be trained and you will be perfectly fine. That's what I would tell someone.

## I feel like I've come a long way. So I've come to the point now where I am delivering the training for the new staff and I'm really liking it. It's a big learning curve. I feel like I'm shining. I feel like I'm using my brain. I feel like I'm using other skills that I haven't used before. And I now feel that I can potentially go higher or move in other directions. There's more possibilities.

## Quinton

I am currently on Larrakia land here in Darwin. There was other participants where I was working at the time in Townsville. And, that sort of encouraged me a little bit more to find out what the IAP (Indigenous Apprenticeships Program) itself was about and what that certificate meant in the long run and what it meant for me personally once completing it.

There wasn't a placement offered where I wanted, which was home. But it didn't stop me. It encouraged me to go and see the rest of Australia as well.

That was a little bit exciting in the fact that I had to pack up and go all in a hurry and move to a new place and get started and get settled and do all that. But it turned out in the end.

This is a great opportunity. From the very start, we were all put together as a group of participants. The generation of people, I call them kids because the ones that I work with are young enough to be my own. Being in a role young enough and getting a grasp of it, you’ve still got 10, 15 years, 20 years left in you.

Some participants were of my age and hadn't been in the workforce for a long time. And it's good to see older people at that level too, wanting to get something later in life after they've looked after their kids and everything else like that, and done everything possible and now it’s their time.

I appreciate seeing somebody learn from me and taking bits from me that when they go away and I leave them alone, that they're actually doing that bits and pieces like that and making it their own. So taking bits and pieces from everybody and I think that’s the best way of learning, because then you develop it to make it your own business, you know, you put your own approach on it.

I don’t see myself as being grown in that sense, like I've learnt I know that. But I don't share that with anybody because that's, that's just me, as a person. Services Australia is all over Australia so there's an opportunity to travel around even more later down the track.

## Tash

If you can get into the public service and you can get a Diploma in Government, your world is your oyster. Like, your doors are open. My name's Tash. I'm originally from Darwin and I'm now based in Canberra and I work for the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

So I've got a long running family history in different conflicts. Yeah, so it's just something I wanted to be a part of. Something I was really interested in. And once I got into the security unit, I just knew this is the place that I wanted to be.

I completed the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program. We studied for a Diploma in Government and that consisted, that ran over a year. I could study with mob from different federal agencies, you know, and everyone, everyone had their own story as well, you know. Where they’re from, you know, where they come from, what they did previous, their current role now and it's actually really good. It was really exciting just to hear where they ventured from.

We had people who had just come out of school or, you know, had been out of school for like 3 or 4 years, we had people they hadn't studied in over 30 years. So it is daunting initially. But once we all come together, we find that well, we're all there for the same reason. So, and that's where the support comes in. We just support each other.

By the end of the study, it was good because we formed like a close knit relationship with everyone.

I can see the difference from when I started from being accepted, to the learning curve throughout the IAP program, to where I am right now.

Initially I was, I was really shy. So I wouldn't really say 2 words to anybody. [Laughter] But now, yeah, you know, I feel comfortable in my own skin because of that learning development. I've now gone to that next stage of just growth, you know, and that's growth in work as well as personal development.

Yeah, I definitely recommend it. Definitely recommend it.