

Applications open for First Nations Director Scholarships

The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) is pleased to announce that applications are now open for the First Nations Director Scholarship Program.

Now in its final year, the First Nations Director Scholarship Program 2024–2026 is supported by \$1 million in funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

The Program aims to strengthen the governance capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by providing access to world-class governance education and mentoring.

Over its three years, this initiative will support 135 full-fee scholarships for directors and emerging leaders.

The 2026 program, delivered in partnership with the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI) and The Observership Program, runs for 12 months and will provide foundational and senior director training and mentoring for up to 46 successful applicants.

AICD Managing Director and CEO Mark Rigotti said all organisations, and the communities they serve, benefit from strong governance foundations.

“We’re proud to work alongside our partners to support the next generation of First Nations leaders with access to high-quality governance education and mentorship.

“By building governance capability and supporting leadership pathways, this program helps ensure First Nations voices are represented and influential at decision-making tables across Australia.”

Scholarship recipients also benefit from a tailored mentorship program led by AIGI, connecting them with experienced First Nations directors with deep expertise in Indigenous governance.

The program is open to individuals of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who:

- Are currently serving as a director on a board, or on a committee with aspirations to become a director; and
- Are endorsed by a senior government officer, company director/CEO or recognised First Nations leader.

Further information, including full eligibility criteria and application details, can be found at: [First Nations Director Scholarship Program 2026](#). Applications are now open and close on Sunday, 7 September at 11:59pm AWST.

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The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to strengthening society through world-class governance. A trusted voice in national policy creation and roll-out, the AICD advocates for, informs and empowers those leading, influencing and shaping the future of contemporary governance.

Its flagship Company Directors Course™ has been the gold standard in practical, real-world governance education for over 50 years—equipping leaders across all sectors with the skills and confidence to navigate complex boardroom challenges and lead their organisations with impact. The AICD is also home to the world's largest community of professionals committed to better governance for a better future. To learn more, visit aicd.com.au