

Indigenous

Employee newsletter

An update for Rio Tinto Indigenous employees

June 2022

Welcome and update

from Adam Lees, Chief Advisor Indigenous Affairs

I'd like to start by congratulating 17 Indigenous leaders who recently graduated from the six-month Emerging Indigenous Executive Leadership Programme (EIELP). I had the privilege of joining them for the last week of the programme in Cairns, and was humbled by the stories they openly shared, the projects of work presented and the vision they hold for Rio Tinto.

I believe the business is better because they are in it, raising Indigenous voices for all of us.

I'm excited about the upcoming events we have planned throughout the business for NAIDOC Week. It's so important that we, as a business, celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples during not only the week but all year round.

There are many activities planned including yarning circles, traditional dances, trivia sessions and even a family-friendly storytelling session for Rio families. I really like this year's theme of Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!

It speaks to me as I firmly believe all Australians need to Get Up and understand and embrace Australian history. As a storyteller, I absolutely believe in the power of having good, honest yarns, showing vulnerability and having a frank and genuine conversation.

And while we are being vulnerable, National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is always a time of reflection for myself and indeed my family. It can be a hard week and I know many of you feel the same. NRW was held just days after the two-year anniversary of Juukan Gorge which made it even more raw.

I am proud that Rio Tinto held many activities to recognise the week and employees were genuinely invested.



Adam Lees, Chief Advisor Indigenous Affairs.

During the week, I gave an interview to a Western Australian newspaper about what I think a reconciled Australia looks like. I believe that as a nation we would be well-advanced down the path of truth-telling; Indigenous peoples would have a voice in decisions that affect us and there would be many examples of treaty and agreement-making right across the country. In saying all of that, I do believe we have Indigenous leaders in our business who are paving the way for this to happen.

Adam

Rio Tinto celebrates Emerging Indigenous Executive Leaders with Australian Graduate School of Management

In April, 17 Rio Tinto Indigenous leaders completed the six-month Emerging Indigenous Executive Leaders Programme and marked the graduation with a week-long immersive experience in Cairns.

The programme is a partnership between Rio Tinto and the Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM) at UNSW Business School and has been tailored for Rio Tinto to focus on empowering Indigenous leaders who have an influential role in shaping the future of its business.

Rio Tinto Chief Executive, Australia, Kellie Parker said “This partnership was formed from our strong commitment to attract, retain and grow Indigenous leaders within the company and improve the way we do business. We are thrilled to partner with AGSM and UNSW to deliver this programme.”

“We know a diverse workforce with a strong Indigenous voice at its centre will strengthen our business, and this initiative will play an important role in advancing Indigenous leadership across all areas of our company, and at all levels,” Kellie said.

The roll out of the globally recognised programme is part of Rio Tinto’s \$50 million commitment over five years to attract, retain and grow Indigenous leaders in the company, and incorporates Rio Tinto’s ways of working, including our values and business priorities.



Leaders celebrate completing the programme in Cairns.

Since November 2020, Rio Tinto has increased the number of Indigenous leaders five-fold, and more than 126 Indigenous employees earned promotions across Australia in 2021.

The final week of the programme was in Cairns and included the presentations of strategic challenges that participants had worked on throughout the six months and a cultural immersion experience on Country. A video of the final week can be viewed [here](#).

For more information on the programme, please contact **Brendan Church**.



We know a diverse workforce with a strong Indigenous voice at its centre will strengthen our business...”

Kellie Parker
Rio Tinto Chief Executive,
Australia

Eye opening. Emotional. Honest and raw. Invaluable. Life changing.

These are some of the comments from our leaders across Australia who have recently completed a two-day immersive workshop as part of Rio Tinto's Cultural Connection Programme.

As part of Rio's journey and efforts to do better and be better, there is a fundamental need to develop our people's cultural understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history. After significant consultation with stakeholders including Indigenous employees, the Cultural Connection Programme was designed to provide a transformational learning journey for our leaders with the aim of increasing cultural maturity at every level of our business.

The programme, co-designed by Rio Tinto and the Indigenous Consulting Group, equips leaders with the skills and tools to succeed in a changing world. The two-day workshop is the start of a learning journey and includes role-plays that encourage leaders to experience the challenges faced by Indigenous employees in our workplace and in society. The facilitator creates a safe space of truth telling where uncomfortable questions are encouraged, participants' views are challenged, and Indigenous stories are shared including the topics of history, colonisation, the Stolen Generation, the effect of the destruction of the rock shelters at Juukan Gorge on communities, and what it means to live in Australia today as an Indigenous person.

Around 80 per cent of our A-E leaders have now completed the workshop and have spoken about how the course has translated into their professional and personal lives, how they're sharing what they've learned with family and friends, and how lessons learned through some schools in Australia do not reflect an authentic history of our nation. Most importantly, the course challenges pre-existing bias and encourages change and action in one's personal and professional life. Many of the leaders have completed cultural awareness training before and speak about how the workshop has revolutionised their understanding, attitudes and beliefs.

Ronald Mutambiranwa, General Manager Capability Development said, "For myself as a person of colour, the course content did not surprise me, however it highlighted how many organisations talk about diversity, but haven't taken the time to listen to Indigenous people about their needs. This course has changed my life. I now look and act with a different cultural lens."

Chief Advisor Indigenous Affairs Adam Lees is passionate about the impacts the programme can have on expediting change within the business. "The Cultural Connection Programme is one of many ways we are working towards ensuring our people are culture and values led when engaging in decision-making. Across every role in the business, our people have the potential to make a real difference from day one and create a legacy they're proud of," he said.

The Indigenous Affairs Australia team is now working to extend the programme to all leaders across Australia. For more information, please email indigenousaffairsaustralia@riotinto.com

National Reconciliation Week



Rio Tinto team members taking part in the Walk to Kings Park.

On 27 May – 3 June, we were all presented with a challenge to Be Brave and Make Change as we celebrated National Reconciliation Week.

Several activities were held around Australia as teams got together to reflect on what the week means to them and what we can all do at Rio Tinto, and in our personal lives, to make change towards a reconciled Australia.

In Perth, we held a breakfast and dialled into the Reconciliation WA's virtual panel which featured prominent WA Aboriginal panellists. For anyone that couldn't attend, the video can be found [here](#) and is relevant to not just West Australians, but all Australians as we move together on our journey together to do and be better.

Also in Perth, a group of Rio Tinto team members joined Reconciliation WA on a walk to Kaarta Koomba (Kings Park) – a highly significant place to the Whadjuk Noongar people at the heart of culture, with its location a key junction of the river and a chain of lakes, all of which are linked by song-lines and continuing cultural practices.

People Profile: Ashleigh Hughes

What is your Country?

Eastern Guruma.

What Language Group do you Identify with?

Eastern Guruma.

What is your current role?

Cultural Connection Advisor. I did the Cultural Connection Programme prior to starting my position which was such an incredible experience and it really outlined for me that I get to be a part of a team that really understands the importance of cultural understanding.

What was your first job with Rio Tinto?

Officer, Central Services – Scheduling in Capability Development.

What are the toughest challenges you've had at work?

Being new to Rio Tinto and learning the languages, systems and everything else was a bit of a shock!

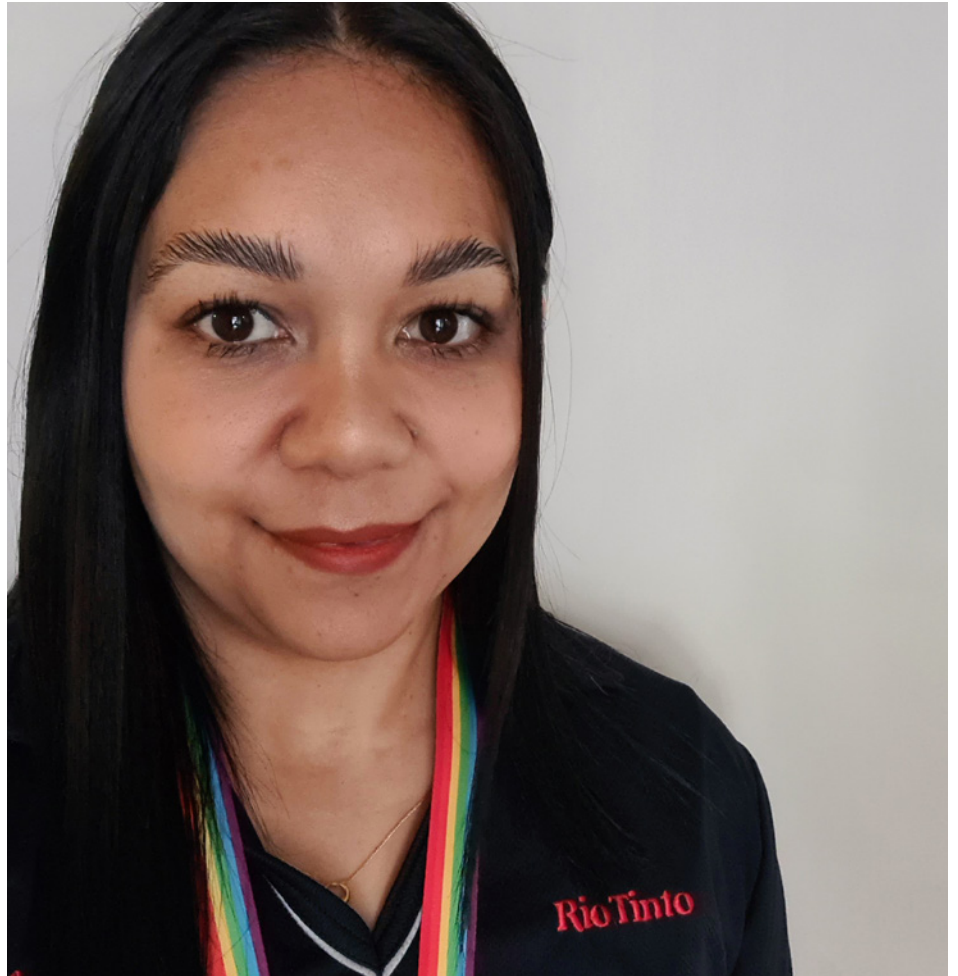
What do you most look forward to at work?

I have only just started in my current role so I'm looking forward to fully understanding the role, creating routines and really making it my own.

I have a 6-year-old at home, so I also enjoy coming into work for adult conversations!

What does a normal day at work look like for you?

This is a new role within the Indigenous Affairs team.



Ashleigh Hughes.

My scope is coordination of the Cultural Connection Programme and its associated activities for our leaders in Australia, learning and development, design and projects, engaging with our internal and external partners in the co-design and progress of the programme. It is very diverse and dynamic.

What's the best advice you can give to someone who is just starting their career with Rio Tinto?

Have patience. At first, it can feel like there is a completely different language barrier and that nothing makes sense so the best advice I was given was just to have patience. Ask the questions that you think might sound silly and don't doubt yourself.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Being at home, spending time with my family, cooking and exercising.



Ask the questions that you think might sound silly and don't doubt yourself"

Ashleigh Hughes
Rio Tinto Cultural
Connection Advisor

Volunteer of the Year WAFC

We are proud to sponsor the Rio Tinto Volunteer of the Year Award as part of our ongoing partnership with the WA Football Commission.

This award recognises outstanding volunteers who selflessly give their time to ensure that sport and other activities are run successfully and enjoyed by all.

If you know someone that is a worthy WA volunteer, you may like to nominate them [here](#). The Volunteer of the Year will receive \$5,000 and may also be submitted to the AFL National Volunteer Awards to become eligible for the overall National awards hosted by the AFL.

The award was launched during National Volunteer Week in May and the stunning photo is the Optus Stadium which was one of the many landmarks across Perth which were lit up in red to celebrate the many volunteers across our state.



Optus Stadium - Photo courtesy of Volunteering WA.

Nova Peris joins Perth employees for a Networking Session

On 2 June, there was a buzz of excitement in the room as fifty Perth-based Indigenous employees attended the Indigenous Employee Networking session in Perth. The reason? Nova Peris was the guest speaker. Not only is Nova the first Aboriginal Australian to win an Olympic gold medal and the first Indigenous woman elected to federal parliament, it turns out that she is many of our employees' personal hero.

After a wonderful Welcome to Country by Noongar Elder, Walter McGuire, Nova shared her story of how against all odds, she ended up an Olympian and how she owed it all to the generations before her that fought so hard for change. She vows to keep fighting and encouraged the audience to do the same.

The group also heard from Mikalie Nash, Programme Director for Leadership Success, on how important development is in building leadership skills. The programme is available for all Indigenous employees, and we encourage you to get in touch with **Gabrielle Graham** for more information. The next session will be held in Brisbane on 30 June.

2022 Women in Resources Award Winner

Congratulations to Tanya Nakata from Energy Resources Australia (ERA) for her wonderful achievements at the 2022 Exceptional Women in Resources Awards.

Tanya won the 2022 Outstanding Tradeswoman/Operator/Technician Award and the Overall Exceptional Woman in Resources Award. She is a proud Torres Strait Islander woman who loves her work at Ranger as a Water Technician because she helps to ensure pristine waterways remain protected.

Well done Tanya!



Tanya Nakata and CEO of Energy Resources Australia Brad Welsh

Follow us on Facebook!



The Indigenous Affairs team has recently established a new Facebook group: Rio Tinto Indigenous Employees.

This group will be regularly updated with upcoming events, dates for the diary, stories, photos and more.

We encourage you to join and invite other Indigenous colleagues to take part too.

The group administrators are Senior Advisor Communications – Indigenous Affairs **Monika Page** and Graduate Communications **Karita Button**.

Please reach out to them if you have any suggestions for the group, what content you would like to see more of or any feedback.

The group is a safe space for us all to come together and connect as Indigenous employees at Rio Tinto.



Employee INDEX

The Australian-first **Indigenous Employment Index** was recently launched by Minderoo Foundation's Generation One initiative, which surveyed 42 of the nation's most significant employers, including Rio Tinto, with the aim to identify and end Indigenous employment disparity in one generation.

The research was conducted by the Curtin Economics Centre, and Murawin, an Indigenous owned consultancy, who co-authored the Index with Generation One.

The Indigenous Leadership team is committed to Indigenous peoples having a stronger voice within our business and fast-tracking Indigenous Australians into professional and leadership roles. We currently have more than 200 Indigenous employees across our Australian business enrolled in professional leadership programmes including the Emerging Indigenous Executive Leaders programme, Leadership Success, Developing Indigenous Superintendents programme and our two-way mentoring programme.

Rio Tinto is proud to support the initiative and are pleased to have contributed to the research. We look forward to being part of the change.



Employee INDEX report.

Rio helps footy go regional

Late last year, Rio Tinto entered an exciting three-year partnership with the WA Football Commission to support grass roots Indigenous participation programmes across Western Australia.

Our partnership aims to strengthen relationships and connections with West Australians and Indigenous communities through the power of football, whilst creating leadership and employment opportunities in football for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Most importantly, the new partnership supports male and female AFL athletes equally.

As part of the partnership, Rio Tinto helped to bring footy to the regions – to Northampton in April and to Kalgoorlie in May.

In Northampton, the Indigenous Affairs team joined Marandoo leaders, 30 of our mid-West-based employees and their families, 20 Clontarf students and local AFL legends, to cheer on the East Fremantle Sharks to their victory. Not only was it a fantastic game of footy, the event raised \$20,000 towards Cyclone Seroja community funding.

In Kalgoorlie, the Rio team was once again cheering on, and proudly supporting the Indigenous round. General Manager Communities and Social Performance, Ainslie Bourne and the Rio team attended the match and was thrilled to receive a commemorative Rio Tinto football marked with Indigenous artwork, making for a unique and beautiful gift.



Rio Tinto team members at the Kalgoorlie event.

Advancing Indigenous Leadership with graduates

Excitedly, we have welcomed some new faces to our organisation as part of the first graduate intake for 2022!

Welcome to Elijah Thomas, Julia Casa, Christi Chapman, Scott Henry, Erin Johnston, Chantelle Martin, Kyle McDonald, Hayden Sealey, Clayton Small, Nicholas Trappett and Amanda Martin who have recently joined our business since the start of the year.

In the last edition of the Indigenous Employee newsletter, we put the call out to encourage employees to connect with Indigenous students and share the information out through their networks. In a great result, we are pleased to share that we received 60 applications from Indigenous students who we are now progressing through the recruitment process to complete vacation work with us and/or enter our graduate programme.

Over the last few years, the Indigenous Leadership team have worked in close partnership with the Graduate Talent team to increase Indigenous representation on the graduate programme. Between 2019 – 2021, we had 21 Indigenous graduates join our business, which has now increased to 18 in 2022 alone (11 joined in March with another seven commencing in August).

We're on track to welcome our largest cohort yet

We're also on track to bring on our largest Indigenous graduate cohort yet with the recruitment process underway for 2023 graduates – 32 graduates! We are also on track to welcome 24 Indigenous students as part of our vacation programme over the summer break. Better yet, we expect this number to grow as we continue our recruitment activities throughout the year and meet more high calibre diverse individuals that can add value in our business.

A big thank you

We'd like to recognise the following employees who put their hand up to volunteer their time and support the graduate recruitment process by partaking in interviews and supporting student engagement:

Shanelle English, Megan Highfold, Taimur Rind, John Angel-Hands, Elle McNamara, Paul Holland, Rowena Alexander, Brad Welsh, Sergio Rojas, Howard Fell, Denzyl Moncrief, Jake Witchard, Chris Heelan, Owen Walpole, Chantelle Groth, Carmel Adams, Sasha Busch, Peta Gooda, Brian Charlie, Suraya Bin Talib, Brendan Church, Colin Brokate and Steven Pelham.

Graduate get together

The Graduate Talent team and Indigenous Leadership team have also recently facilitated a virtual get together for our 27 current Indigenous graduates. The session was facilitated by Christi Chapman, Graduate Human Resources, and included a Q&A panel of Indigenous leaders across our business. A big thank you to Shannon Finlay, John Angel-Hands and Matthew Plichta for sharing their experiences and insights. We look forward to running more events like this in the future.

Applications are still open!

Still know someone interested in our graduate or vacation programme? It's not too late. We've kept applications open on the website to accept applications on a rolling basis throughout the year.

For more information, please email indigenouaffairsaustralia@riotinto.com

Here's the link to find out more.

Thanks to everyone who joined Chief Executive Australia, Kellie Parker on the quarterly Indigenous employee webcast.

Employees from across all areas of the business are encouraged to ask any questions they have directly to Kellie in this regular knowledge sharing session.

Lateral Violence panel

Watch out for an invitation to a panel session in July with guest speakers who will talk about lateral violence and solutions for prevention.

2021 marks bumper spend

Did you know that 2021 marks the biggest Indigenous spend in Rio Tinto's history, which is a 40% increase from the previous year?

This highlights our commitment to contributing to a shared future and positive legacy by developing lasting relationships with people, learning about, and supporting their goals and aspirations.

Recently, Hicks was awarded a contract at our Yandicoogina operations. **Watch a video of the Hicks family** as they share how this has supported their business, family and vision to provide sustainable employment for local people and be a leading Aboriginal business in the region.

Rio Tinto invests \$3.25m to bolster Murujuga Ranger Programme

A new partnership with Rio Tinto will help more Murujuga land and sea rangers protect Aboriginal heritage and ensure the sustainable management of Murujuga National Park in the Pilbara, which is home to large collections of ancient rock art.

Our new five-year partnership with Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) provides support to the Murujuga Land and Sea Unit (MLSU) which is celebrating its 10-year anniversary this year.

Meeting on Murujuga, representatives from MAC, Rio Tinto and existing programme partner Woodside celebrated the success of the programme and Rio Tinto's new agreement.

The Murujuga Ranger Programme was developed by MAC in partnership with Woodside to help the Ngarda-Ngarli community amplify their voice in the management of land and cultural heritage, and to deliver sustained social, cultural and economic benefits.

MAC Chief Executive Peter Jeffries said the Murujuga Ranger Programme had been hugely successful.

“Our rangers are incredibly important, as is the time they spend with our Elders learning the different ways to care for Country,” said Peter.

“We want our ranger programme to be considered best-in-class around the world, and with the help of our partners, we're making this happen”.

Rio Tinto's five-year, \$3.25 million partnership with MAC will complement existing funding and contributions from Woodside to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the programme for decades to come.



Richard Cohen (Rio Tinto), Peter Jeffries (MAC) and Michael Price (Woodside).

Australian Advisory Group Update

“When we work with courage, care, and curiosity, magic can happen”. Professor Peter Yu AM, the chair of the Australian Advisory Group (AAG), has gone on record with the National Indigenous Times, and spoken positively about his hopes for working with Rio Tinto.

“If there is an opportunity to make change and contribute to this in a constructive way, that's an exciting opportunity, as challenging as it might be,” Professor Yu said.

You can read the full interview [here](#). The next meeting will be held in June on site at Weipa. Find out more about the Australian Advisory Group [here](#).

Ask our team

Got a question? Want to share your story? Or have an idea on how we can provide better support to our communities? Please reach out to a member of the Indigenous Affairs team at indigenousaffairsaustralia@riotinto.com

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your family and community.