

First Nations Director Scholarship Program Round 2 (2025) FAQs

What is this program about?

The First Nations Director Scholarship Program is aimed at building the capability of First Nations directors in the community-controlled sector to be able to contribute to First Nation and non-Indigenous boards.

Funded by the National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA), the program supports the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reform Two and the Government's commitment to building a strong and sustainable First Nations sector that delivers high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.

Who can apply?

- Anyone who is thinking about contributing and/or leading within their community in the future.
- A community led senior government officer, First Nations Leader or CEO.
- Anyone who has potential and is interested in becoming a Board director within First Nation and non-Indigenous community led organisations.
- Applicants supported by a senior government officer, company director/CEO or First Nations leader as having potential/being a prospect to transition to a senior leadership position.
- Applicants who are dedicated to succeeding at the Foundations of Directorship™ program or the Company Directors Course™, or Observership placements - including all preparation, commitments and deadlines associated with the program.
- Applicants who provide evidence of being on the board or committee of an [Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation \(ACCO\)](#) will be looked at more favourably for this program.

Full eligibility criteria can be found on the AICD website.

When will scholarships open for applications?

This second round will open for applications on Monday 1 July 2024, and close on Sunday 25 August 2024 at 11:59pm Western Australia time.

What is included in this round of the scholarship?

Each scholarship will include one of the following:

1. Enrolment onto the AICD [Foundations of Directorship](#)™ for Indigenous Organisations; **OR**
2. Enrolment onto the AICD [Company Directors Course](#)™ for Indigenous Business Leaders; **OR**
3. 12-month placement on [The Observership Program](#)'s 2025 program.

Plus:

- Accommodation for those travelling from outside of the course delivery city, to attend their course face to face.
- Reimbursement of travel costs of up to \$500 (excl GST) for participants who live outside the course delivery city and are required to travel to attend the AICD course.
- Participation in a workshop and mentoring program led by the [Australian Indigenous Governance Institute \(AIGI\)](#).
- Facilitated peer learning through workshops and networking opportunities
- 12-month AICD Membership.

Reimbursements will be paid upon completion of the course, subject to receipt of valid tax invoices/receipts.

Can I select when and where to undertake the course?

The AICD courses will be scheduled based on availability of venue and suitable course facilitators, and unfortunately there won't be multiple delivery dates to choose from. See our website for more information on the dates of the course deliveries. If you are unable to attend on the dates outlined, we encourage you to apply for the next round of this Scholarship in 2026.

How many scholarship places are available?

In this round, we are offering up to 56 places in total, and anticipate the allocation to be as follows:

Foundations of Directorship:	up to 26
Company Director Course:	between 15-20
Observership Placements:	approximately 10

The final placements will depend on the quantity of successful applications received and their selected product.

What are the scholarship timings and commitments?

The whole scholarship program will be delivered over 12 months between January to December 2025. Timings will vary depending on the chosen course/product.

Commitments include:

If selecting AICD's *Foundations of Directorship™* OR *Company Directors Course™*:

- **Pre-reading:** You will have access to the course materials from 4-6 weeks prior to your course delivery and will be expected to complete the recommended pre-reading.
- **Course delivery:** Attendance in person at your allocated delivery of the AICD Foundations of Directorship™ for Indigenous Organisations (3 consecutive days) and Company Directors Course™ - Indigenous Business Leaders (5 consecutive days) programs. Each day will start promptly at 8:45am and conclude at 5:00pm, and you must attend each day of the course to qualify to sit the assessment.
- **Assessment:** Although optional, you will be prepared for and encouraged to undertake the assessment element of the course, which should be completed within 3 months of the course delivery.
- **Travel:** You or your organisation will arrange transport to attend your allocated course. AICD will reimburse up to \$500 + GST for your transportation to the course delivery location. Reimbursements will be paid upon completion of the course (attendance at all days), subject to receiving valid tax invoices/receipts from the Scholar.
- **Accommodation:** If you live outside of the capital city where the course scheduled, AICD will arrange and pay for your accommodation for the duration of the course delivery, 3 nights for Foundations of Directorship course and 5 nights for Company Director Course.

If selecting Observer Placements with *The Observership Program*:

- **Observer Placements:** The following commitments are required of all Observers participating in the Program. Please consider these commitments carefully before deciding whether to submit an application to the Program. Observers must:
 - Attend all board meetings, training, networking and guest speaker events. Observers are ambassadors for The Observership Program and failure to demonstrate adequate commitment jeopardises opportunities for future candidates.

- Treat all materials, discussions and activities associated with the Program and your organisation with strict confidentiality.
- Contribute to the board meeting discussions only when invited or appropriate.
- Engage with a board subcommittee or strategic project if requested by your board.
- Ensure your employer is aware of your participation in the Program and understands you may need to leave the office early to attend training sessions or board meetings.

Additional commitments include:

- **AIGI workshops:** Immersive workshops to empower scholars with governance wisdom facilitated by Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI).
- **Mentoring:** Participation in all mentoring and group sessions facilitated by AIGI. These will take place online or in person.

Successful applicants will be provided with a Program Schedule with additional details after your scholarship is confirmed.

Which product is right for me?

AICD's Foundations of Directorship: The program is designed for new and aspiring directors, senior executives, and managers wanting to gain a foundational knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of boards and directors. This course offers a comprehensive introduction to governance, finance, strategy and risk is suited for new and aspiring directors, senior executives and managers. For more information please visit the [AICD website](#).

AICD's Company Director Course: This course is essential learning for directors seeking to elevate their career and establish themselves as a trusted and respected board member. This course is right for you if you are a more experienced director or business owner. It is recommended to have completed the Foundations of Directorship or have equivalent professional experience to ensure equal participation in group discussions throughout this course. For more information please visit the [AICD website](#).

The Observership Program, Observer Placements: This initiative facilitates the involvement of young, talented and energetic individuals in a structured experience on non-profit and Government appointed boards. Each Observer is paired with an organisation for a 12-month period. During that time, Observers attend all board and/or committee meetings as non-voting members and learn about fundamental principles and functions of not-for-profit and Government appointed boards, the roles of board members, fiscal processes and other governance priorities. For more information please visit [The Observership Program website](#).

What will I gain from this scholarship?

Depending on the product selected, successful scholars have the opportunity to obtain the following:

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| Foundations of Directorship Program: | Certificate of completion |
| Company Director Course: | Certificate of completion and post-nominals (GAICD) upon passing the Assessment (if a member of AICD) |
| Observer Placements: | Observers who complete the program will receive a certificate of completion. If at least 85% of the AICD components of this program are completed Scholars will receive a certificate of learning; If the Observer placement is successful, Scholars may be offered a permanent seat on the board (this is not guaranteed); No AICD certificate or post nominals are applicable |

What should be included in the Support Form?

Applicants must upload a completed Support Form from their organisation, signed by the Chair/Board Member/CEO or Officer with authority to sign on behalf of the Board and/or CEO. The form asks for:

- Brief overview of the organisation, including location, industry and number of employees.
- Organisation's reasons for supporting your application.
- Expected benefit to your organisation and/or community if you were successful.
- Agreement to support your participation in the program and fund transport costs incurred beyond the AICD reimbursement.
- The signatory's name and contact details.

[Follow this link to download a copy of the Support form in pdf format.](#)

Can I upload more than one Support Form?

We are requesting one Support Form to be uploaded into your application. Applicants are permitted to combine multiple forms into one document for uploading, we suggest putting your preferred organisation first.

Do I have to be a member of the AICD to apply?

No. The First Nations Director Scholarship Program is open to both members and non-members of the AICD. Each scholarship will include a one-year membership to the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

I missed the application deadline – can I still apply?

No. Unfortunately, late applications cannot be accepted.

Can I apply if I have been awarded a scholarship from AICD before?

Yes, if you have previously been awarded another scholarship from the AICD, you are permitted to apply to this program.

Do I need to be a board member of an Aboriginal organisation?

No. We welcome applications from board members of First Nation and non-Indigenous organisations. The Scholarship is also suitable for applicants not already on a Board, but who are thinking about contributing to and/or leading within their community in the future. Applicants who provide evidence of being on the board or committee of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) will be looked at more favourably for this program.

Does my organisation need to be linked to Coalition of Peaks?

No. In this round your organisation **does not** need to be a member or subsidiary of Coalition of Peaks, but you must be supported by a First Nations Leader, senior government officer, company director or CEO as having potential/prospect to transition to a senior leadership position, and provide a completed Support Form with your application.

How can I get more information on this program?

Please send all enquiries to Scholarships@aicd.com.au

How can I learn about future scholarships?

AICD Scholarship Programs are advertised on our [Scholarships page](#). If you would like to receive an email from us when a new Scholarship Program opens, please register for our Notifications List [here](#).