How to recruit, support and retain multicultural workers

# Building a diverse workforce

The care and support sector is as diverse as the people and communities you work with. If you’re looking to grow your organisation and build a more diverse and inclusive workforce, this guide features practical tips and advice that will help you to recruit and retain workers from multicultural backgrounds, which will in turn enable you to provide better support to your clients.

# The Benefits of a diverse workforce

There are many benefits to building a diverse care and support workforce.

## Build stronger relationships with clients

Research shows that a key reason people work in the care and support sector is the warm and mutually beneficial relationships they develop with the people they support. The foundations for some of these fulfilling relationships between workers and clients stems from their shared backgrounds, languages and skills. By recruiting and retaining multicultural employees, you will be able to support a wider range of clients by providing them with opportunities to build meaningful connections with a diverse team of care or support workers.

## Increase productivity

Diverse employees bring unique perspectives and ideas, which create more interesting and productive conversations and discussions in the workplace. This creates an environment where employees are able to engage with and learn from each other, and ultimately perform their roles more effectively and efficiently.

## Boost creativity and innovation

If everyone in your organisation looks, talks and thinks a certain way, there’s nothing to challenge and inspire people to think differently. Building a diverse and inclusive workforce, where differences are shared and embraced, can help your team to improve their problem-solving skills and generate better ideas.

## Improve workplace culture

For any organisation that wishes to attract and retain talent, creating a positive workplace culture is crucial. If you are building an inclusive space that respects people from different walks of life, your employees will feel a sense of belonging, and experience a higher level of job satisfaction, which will be reflected in their output and attitudes.

## Attract and retain more talent

An employer that prioritises diversity and inclusion will attract candidates with the same values. If your team is already made up of people who have diverse backgrounds, experiences and skills, you will appeal to a much wider range of job seekers when recruiting.

# How to recruit multicultural workers

People want to work for leaders and stay in organisations where their unique perspectives and contributions are valued. These tips and strategies will help you appeal to multicultural job seekers when you are recruiting.

* Co-design your recruitment process with your clients, participants and existing employees. They are the best influencers for your organisation and will naturally highlight the benefits of working in the care and support sector.
* Ensure that your job advertisements are accessible to all candidates. Use clear and simple language when writing job ads and avoid overly formal language or jargon. Make it clear that your organisation is open to people from all backgrounds and encourage them to apply.
* Host community events or meet-and greets to attract prospective employees. A traditional job application process can be intimidating and might not be the best way to engage with people who are looking to transfer into the sector, including those from multicultural backgrounds. Instead, provide people with the opportunity to meet with your existing staff and clients and find out more about the roles you are recruiting for.
* Highlight the benefits of working in the care and support sector. This could include the multiple pathways into care and support work, flexible working arrangements, on-the-job training and mentoring, peer support, and the rewarding relationships people build with the clients they support.
* Consider the role unconscious bias can play in the recruitment process and make an effort to minimise its impact. For example, when you are speaking to potential candidates, try asking yourself if you are basing your communication tactics on assumptions or if you are prioritising interactions with applicants who have a similar cultural background.
* Consider other ways your recruitment strategy can attract multicultural applicants. For example, developing in-language job advertisements and information about the application process, posting job opportunities via social media, working closely with multicultural communities, and accepting personal references (where Australian based professional references are unavailable) are all valuable ways of engaging diverse audiences.

# How to support and retain multicultural workers

These tips and strategies will help you to build a diverse and inclusive workforce that retains great talent.

* Provide extra support to new multicultural employees during onboarding. Starting a new job can be daunting, especially for those who are new to the sector. Care and support work can be highly varied, so organisations should set expectations and provide clarity and direction at this time. Consider implementing a buddy system where new employees are paired with existing staff.
* Invest in your employees’ professional growth and development. The care and support sector offers a range of roles and responsibilities across aged care, disability and veterans’ support. Have regular conversations with your staff about their progression and ensure multicultural workers understand what their options are for training and development within the sector.
* Build cultural competency in your organisation. Cultural competence is about working towards being more inclusive, understanding and knowledgeable about different cultures. In the workplace, this could involve cultural awareness training for your team or discussions around how cultural and linguistic differences can impact how your organisation operates. Learn more about cultural competency and cultural awareness training options.
* Review your policies and procedures to ensure they reflect the needs of a diverse workforce. Your code of conduct and other HR documents should outline inclusive behaviours, processes, and ways of working that are accessible to and encourage participation from multicultural workers and other diverse groups. Learn more about how your organisation can build a diverse workforce.
* Learn about, accommodate and support your staff’s cultural needs. This might involve allowing people to take time off for cultural or religious holidays or dedicating a quiet space to staff for prayer or meditation.

For more resources, visit careandsupportjobs.gov.au/employers