

2015 LEARNINGS AND INSIGHTS

# A STORY OF SHARED VALUE

CORPORATE AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

15 years  
jawun



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**Disclaimer:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this report may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.

In this report, the term Indigenous refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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‘In Jawun, we’ve built a great engine for social change. There is no better way of corporate and philanthropic Australia supporting a disadvantaged people to rise up in the world.

I’ve seen so many good things that are the consequence of our partnership and our friendship.’

**NOEL PEARSON**  
CHAIRMAN, CAPE YORK PARTNERSHIP AND JAWUN PATRON

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‘What began as an idea 15 years ago to connect corporate Australia with Indigenous Australia has grown in depth and breadth across the country. More importantly, evidence of the impact on both sides is now becoming quite compelling. This “shared value” is what makes Jawun such a successful and enduring model of community partnership.’

**KARYN BAYLIS**  
CEO, JAWUN

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<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Key insights</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Jawun: Since 2001</b>	<b>3</b>
Origins of Jawun	4
Key stages in the Jawun story	5
Where we are in 2015	8
A story of shared value	8
<b>Creating value for corporate and government partners</b>	<b>11</b>
Impact on individuals	12
Case study: Growing soft skills and intercultural competency	21
Case study: Becoming a leader	24
Case study: Joining the board of an Indigenous organisation	27
Impact within organisations	28
Case study: The corporate ‘why’—KPMG	29
Feature: Defence and Jawun—delivering a return on investment	31
Case study: Growing global intercultural competency	36
Case study: How the APS evaluates capability growth through secondments	39
Case study: Transitioning back into the workplace—IAG	40
<b>A growing ripple effect</b>	<b>47</b>
Changes within the individual	49
The ripple effect beyond the individual	53
Case study: A transformative friendship between schools	54
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>59</b>

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Acknowledgments	62
Notes	62

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# Executive summary



For 15 years Jawun has facilitated corporate, government, philanthropic and Indigenous partnerships to help build Indigenous capacity and advance Indigenous-led initiatives in nine regions across Australia.

The concept of 'shared value' denotes the role of business in society now, whereby a company's success and social progress are interdependent. This report explores how partnering with Jawun enables corporate and government organisations to create shared value by driving their own interests while helping to build capacity in Indigenous Australia.

In this report, Jawun analyses the direct experiences of people who have taken part in the secondment program, and the insights of senior executives in secondment partner organisations. Their learnings highlight Jawun's impact on both individuals and organisations, and provide insight into the different ways our partner organisations can realise value.

**Individuals** are motivated to do a Jawun secondment for personal and professional development reasons, including the desire to understand more about Indigenous Australia and meet the challenge of an 'out of comfort zone' learning experience.

The immersive nature of the secondment challenges their perceptions in ways that typically lead to attitudinal

and behavioural change. Personal growth occurs through greater awareness and understanding of Indigenous Australia, along with accelerated growth in intercultural competency and the so-called 'soft skills' of emotional intelligence.

After a secondment, personal growth accelerates valuable professional development for secondees when they apply their learnings in the workplace. Secondees identify Jawun as a key development experience and continue to draw on their learnings over time in their professional life. Many continue to engage with Indigenous Australia through their employer or in the community.

**Organisations** choose to partner with Jawun because it provides access to opportunities that help drive their interests. A Jawun partnership helps to build organisational capability by supporting strategies on people and leadership development, sustainability, brand and stakeholder relations. At the same time, of course, it provides opportunities to engage with Indigenous Australia and deliver corporate responsibility outcomes.

Secondment partners experience growth in employee capability (often more rapidly than they otherwise would), in particular as secondees progress to leadership roles, take on broader roles, or achieve influence within the business in other ways. They see positive impact of the partnership on organisational culture, intercultural capability and inclusiveness, and employee engagement and loyalty. Many organisations find that it helps to deepen relationships with community, client and government stakeholders. Organisations that link the Jawun partnership to strategy in a deliberate way and evaluate its internal outcomes are able to articulate clear returns on investment.

With alumni now approaching 2,000 secondees, and more than 500 leaders who have participated in a Jawun Executive Visit, there is a growing **ripple effect** of engaged and informed people who are building effective relationships with Indigenous Australia. What begins as a personal process is often transferred through family, professional and social circles, and the positive effects can be felt across community, industry and government.

# Key insights

A number of key insights emerged during the research for this report on ways to create positive impact within secondment partner organisations. Barriers to value creation were also identified.

## Opportunities for value creation

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1

### Shared value exists beyond contribution to Indigenous development

Partners typically first engage with Jawun to support Indigenous engagement or corporate social responsibility goals, and then find that there are broader opportunities to derive value through partnership. These are in the areas of building internal capability, particularly in people and leadership development; intercultural competency; inclusion; deeper connection to organisational culture and values; and brand and stakeholder relations, which can become predominant value drivers for partners.

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2

### Secondees learn and experience growth, particularly in emotional intelligence

Exposure to new ways of thinking and working builds capability in individuals, which is applied in the workplace in different ways. This is reflected in attitudinal and behavioural change, growth in intercultural competency and emotional intelligence. Attributes of emotional intelligence such as the ability to deal with ambiguity and manage complexity, social skills, resilience and empathy are challenged and stretched on secondment. This in turn contributes to personal and professional development, leadership effectiveness and an individual's potential to progress in the workplace.

3

### Growth is accelerated through immersion

Secondees develop skills faster on secondment than in other learning environments due to the unique nature of the 'out of comfort zone' experience, which requires an individual to be flexible, improvise, be accountable, make decisions 'in the grey', adapt to different styles of working and engage with new stakeholders with diverse cultural perspectives. The necessity to deliver meaningful work in this immersive environment significantly accelerates the learning curve.

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4

### Individuals experience long-term impact from a Jawun secondment

The effects of a secondment are felt immediately post-secondment and continue to deliver value over the long term. Secondees continually draw on their learnings and, over time, attribute the growth they experienced to influencing and shaping their self-efficacy, behaviours, choices, actions, leadership style and career paths. Many identified the program as a catalyst in their personal or professional development.

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5

### Leveraging Jawun across multiple strategies can increase return on investment

When the partnership is leveraged across a range of aligned business strategies, it can deliver a material return on investment. Jawun can be used to help drive people and leadership goals, organisational culture, corporate social responsibility, stakeholder relations, brand and inclusion strategies, among others. When senior leadership articulates how the partnership supports the organisation's strategies and makes the desired outcomes clear, employees better understand expectations and can drive greater value back into the business.





6

### Alignment to people development agendas drives organisational value

Organisations that align Jawun to people and talent development strategies are better able to evaluate and leverage capability growth, career progression and leadership opportunities for secondees. An internal application process that incorporates performance criteria drives effective candidate selection. Pitching the program as a valuable professional development experience helps the secondee to understand organisational expectations, maximise the immersion opportunity and apply their learnings back in the workplace.

7

### Increased intercultural competency fosters more inclusive behaviours

Secondees return to work with improved intercultural competency and are better able to demonstrate inclusive leadership behaviours and thereby influence organisational culture. The process of changing or altering perceptions that occurs on secondment, bolstered by growth in emotional intelligence, increases an individual's understanding of what it means to behave inclusively and how to work more effectively with others to achieve outcomes—better enabling an organisation to tap the proven value available through leveraging diversity in the workforce.

8

### Individuals who have had a Jawun experience are part of a growing ripple effect

What begins as a personal and individual experience often sparks a process of change—first attitudinal, then behavioural, then taking action—the effects of which flow into family, professional and broader social circles. The opportunities for individuals facilitated by Jawun result in an increasing pool of informed, engaged and interculturally competent people who go on to engage with Indigenous Australia in constructive ways that may have a positive impact on society, industry or government.

### Barriers to value creation

*Partial, siloed or limited leveraging of the Jawun partnership*

The Jawun partnership can be leveraged in a number of ways to benefit secondment partner organisations. The key barrier to value creation is when organisations do not leverage those channels to full effect. Indicators of partial, siloed or limited leverage are:

- *Lack of advocacy at senior leadership level:* Executive advocacy is necessary to engage employees in the organisational importance of the program, position managers to support people in their teams to go on secondment, and recognise value-adding outcomes.
- *Siloed approach to partnership:* When the partnership sits within a siloed or disconnected business unit, opportunities to reach more employees and create value in the broader organisation are limited.
- *Lack of internal processes to support secondees:* Sound internal processes are necessary to manage secondments effectively from end to end and deliver value back to the business.



Cape York Executive Visit group in Coen, 2015. In foreground, Tim Jaffer and Dion Creek (at left) and Allan Creek (right) from Kalan Enterprises. Photo: David Rennie

# Introduction



As Jawun continues to grow and learn more about engaging with Indigenous communities, it is committed to sharing what it learns with government, corporate and philanthropic stakeholders.

Since 2010, Jawun has produced a yearly report that showcases key learnings and insights focusing on a particular aspect of the organisation. This is Jawun's sixth such report. Previous reports can be accessed on Jawun's website at [www.jawun.org.au/category/reports](http://www.jawun.org.au/category/reports).

This Learnings and Insights report is Part 1 in a two-part series. *Jawun—A Story of Shared Value: Corporate and government partners* focuses on our secondment partners and explores the value of the Jawun relationship at a number of levels. Part 2 in the series, to be released in 2016, will focus on Indigenous partnerships and explore how Jawun is contributing to lasting and measurable outcomes in the lives of people in those communities.

The first section of the report, 'Jawun: Since 2001', describes how the partnership has evolved over the past 15 years. In the second section, 'Creating value', we explore the personal and professional growth that has taken place in individuals as a result of their Jawun secondment. Then, from a secondment partner perspective, we look at organisational proof points of value creation

that come from engaging with the secondment program and the opportunities Jawun presents to collaborate with Indigenous Australia. We draw from these insights to affirm ways in which our partners can unlock deeper value through partnering with Jawun. In the final section, 'A growing ripple effect', the larger impact of Jawun is described: how the growing number of Jawun secondees capable of genuine and effective engagement with Indigenous Australia can influence society more broadly.

The information in this report was garnered from more than 50 in-depth interviews with individuals and senior executives, including current and past secondees, from our corporate and government partners. Their names are listed in the acknowledgments. Wherever possible, the report includes direct quotations from the interviewees, examples and case studies to bring these insights to life.

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Reflecting on the collaborative work of our Indigenous, government and corporate partners, we start to see a richness of solutions and outcomes emerging due to the different skills and strengths that have been brought to the table. It is also heartening to observe the changes in attitudes and the benefits flowing across all three sectors as a result of this partnership through Jawun.

ILANA ATLAS, JAWUN BOARD MEMBER

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Cape York, 2014. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto



Jawun: Since 2001

## Origins of Jawun

In 2000, Cape York Indigenous leader Noel Pearson published his seminal essay *Our Right to Take Responsibility*.<sup>1</sup> At the time, the state of affairs for Indigenous people in the Cape was grim. The Fitzgerald Cape York Justice Study, conducted a year later in 2001, found that alcohol abuse and violent misconduct had become socially normalised in Cape York communities. In his essay, Pearson examined the culture of excessive drinking in the Cape, and argued that ‘passive welfare’ (payment given to individuals or groups without any

assistance’ to Indigenous people—an approach that had consistently failed to deliver lasting social and economic improvements—to empowering Indigenous communities to resolve their own problems.

These principles became the core philosophies for Jawun, which was established in 2001 under the name Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships (IEP). The founders of Jawun believed in supporting Indigenous-led programs that would promote and enable self-reliance, entrepreneurial activity and economic independence among Indigenous people—programs that would help them take their



From left: Grace George (KPMG secondee), Ben Andrade (Macquarie Capital secondee) and Kim Hogan (Westpac secondee), Cape York, 2014. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto

reciprocation on their part) had led to a breakdown of traditional Aboriginal values and become the most pressing problem for his people:

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Once we see the direct connection between our passive welfare dependence and our outrageous social problems, we realise the utmost urgency in the need for the transformation of [our communities].

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The solution to the passive welfare crisis, Pearson argued, was to facilitate the return of Indigenous people to the ‘real’ market economy. But the method was critical. In order to achieve lasting change, the focus needed to shift from ‘giving

place in the ‘real’ economy. To achieve these aims, they created a network of partnerships between Indigenous, corporate and philanthropic groups, with Jawun operating as the facilitator or point of connection between each group.

Within the network, Indigenous partners determined the priorities for social and economic development in their regions; corporate partners provided staff (known as secondees) for select periods to support Indigenous partner organisations in their objectives; and philanthropic trusts and foundations provided valuable leadership and financial support. The network later expanded to include government partners, with government departments providing secondees from 2011 (see Figure 1).

## Key stages in the Jawun story

### Early years, 2001–2005

When Jawun began in 2001 its efforts were focused solely in Cape York. Although the region was in crisis, Jawun had identified strong local Indigenous leadership and communities hungry for change. With Jawun invited into the community as the facilitator, corporate and philanthropic partners began working with local Indigenous organisations and leaders who identified the need to build Cape York enterprises.

While there were early signs of the success of the Jawun partnership model—including increases in the number of Indigenous partner organisations and the creation of new Indigenous businesses in the Cape—Jawun remained committed to learning and developing as an organisation. Significant lessons in the early years included:

- the importance of **long-term commitment** and action of key leaders from each partner group
- the benefit of secondees working locally or **‘on the ground’** with Indigenous partners
- the **key role of social issues** in building a real economy
- the necessity of **supporting strong, sustainable Indigenous institutions** grounded in Indigenous culture for development success.

In 2004 a review was commissioned by the Jawun Board to explore how the Jawun model might operate beyond Cape York. The review, conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), found that there was a growing demand for Jawun-style partnerships in other locations across Australia and recommended that Jawun expand to a second site.

### Expansion, 2006–2009

With the fundamentals of the partnership model in place, Jawun’s next phase was to expand to regions beyond Cape York. The rationale for expansion was fourfold:

1. It supported Jawun’s original vision as a **national entity** working with Indigenous people.
2. It answered the **growing demand** for Jawun-style partnerships in Indigenous regions across the country.
3. It allowed for **best practice exchanges** between Indigenous regions.
4. It tested the Jawun model for **application and adaptability**.

At the invitation of the Indigenous community, Jawun began work in the Goulburn Murray region of Victoria in 2006. The region was selected on the basis that it fulfilled the following strict criteria:

- strong local leadership
- effective, well-governed organisations
- appetite for change and reform
- openness to new ideas
- willingness to connect and learn.

The expansion of Jawun to a second site was critical in testing and proving the viability of the model and its value outside of Cape York. As Jawun Patron Noel Pearson explained: ‘[The model works] when it is geographically focused on a place where there is Indigenous leadership and there is an agenda, because you need continuity and you need people to drive a direction over a sustained period.’

FIGURE 1: THE JAWUN PARTNERSHIP MODEL



## Evolution, 2010–2015

Jawun’s most recent phase has seen a strategic expansion in the number of regions in the Jawun network, in order to more substantially effect change across diverse Indigenous communities. Jawun CEO Karyn Baylis explained:

In 2009, the Jawun Board clearly mapped out the plan for expansion of the model. This strategic decision was deliberate, bold and ambitious, and identified as a requirement for the ongoing sustainability and viability of the model. The question was asked, ‘Why shouldn’t other Indigenous communities benefit from ongoing relationships with the corporate sector?’

Jawun has grown from having eight corporate partners across two regions in 2009, to 28 corporate and government partners across nine regions in 2015 (see Figure 2). The number of Indigenous partners has also substantially increased: Jawun currently supports more than 70 Indigenous organisations.

FIGURE 2: EXPANSION OF THE JAWUN MODEL

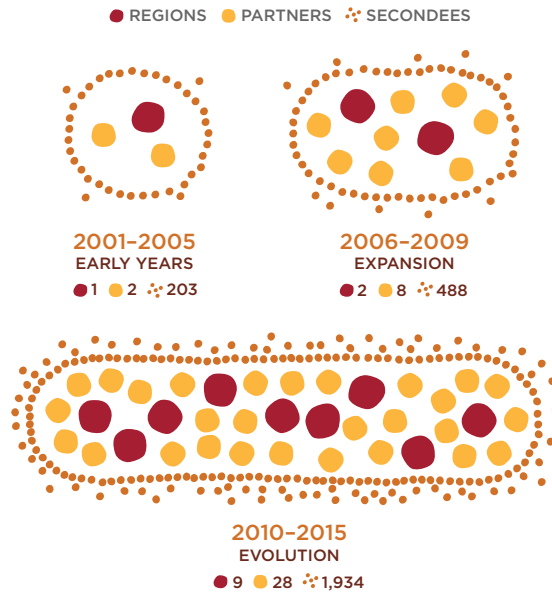


FIGURE 3

# The Jawun story

### VISION PUBLISHED

Noel Pearson’s visionary essay, *Our Right to Take Responsibility*, is published.

### BIRTH OF JAWUN

Jawun, then known as Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships (IEP), is established. Secondments begin in Cape York, QLD.

### EXPANDS TO SECOND REGION

Jawun establishes a base in Goulburn Murray, VIC.

### NEW NAME

IEP is renamed Jawun and expands to the East Kimberley, WA and Redfern, NSW.



2000



2001



2006



2010



This period has also seen significant innovation in the way Jawun operates. In 2010, Jawun began work in Redfern in Sydney—its first urban location. The differences between urban and remote locations—including the ‘scattered nature’ of Indigenous people in urban settings and the general by-products of an urban environment such as housing shortages and access to alcohol and drugs—posed their own challenges and required flexibility in Jawun’s approach.

Karyn Baylis explained the key to the successful application of the Jawun model in new environments:

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As Jawun has expanded, we’ve focused on keeping that dynamic edge through innovation, flexibility and adaptation. From our experience, **tailoring our approach for each individual community has been essential** to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the model.

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In 2011, Jawun made the strategic decision to include government as a secondment partner. This step added another dimension to the Jawun partnership model. Secondees from public sector agencies (federal and West Australian from 2011, New South Wales and South Australian from 2015) provide valuable insights into the mechanics of government for Indigenous organisations, which are critically affected by government priorities, policies and funding.

On the government side, secondees benefit from personal development and gain insights into the realities of Indigenous communities, which in turn leads to increased understanding of Indigenous matters in the Australian public sector as a whole.

Sunset in Cape York. Photo: Simon Veitch

#### GOVERNMENT SECONDEES

The first employees from the Australian Public Service take up secondments in Indigenous organisations.

#### 1,000 SECONDEES

Jawun hits the 1,000 secondee mark and expands to the West Kimberley, WA, the Central Coast, NSW, and North East Arnhem Land, NT.

#### CONSISTENT GROWTH

Jawun expands to NPY Lands, Central Australia.

#### JAWUN TODAY

Jawun begins work in its ninth region: Lower River Murray, Lakes and Coorong, SA.

2011

2012

2014

2015

## Where we are in 2015

Jawun as I see it today is what I originally envisaged so many years ago. A corporate-philanthropic partnership enabling and supporting Indigenous communities across Australia by providing skilled secondees to assist where help is needed most.

**NOEL PEARSON**, CHAIRMAN, CAPE YORK PARTNERSHIP, JAWUN PATRON

## A story of shared value

I think this is the magical part. If you combine philanthropic, corporate and government partners with Indigenous organisations, the single model formed is how effectiveness happens. Everyone is seeking and achieves leverage.

**RUPERT MYER AO**, JAWUN BOARD MEMBER

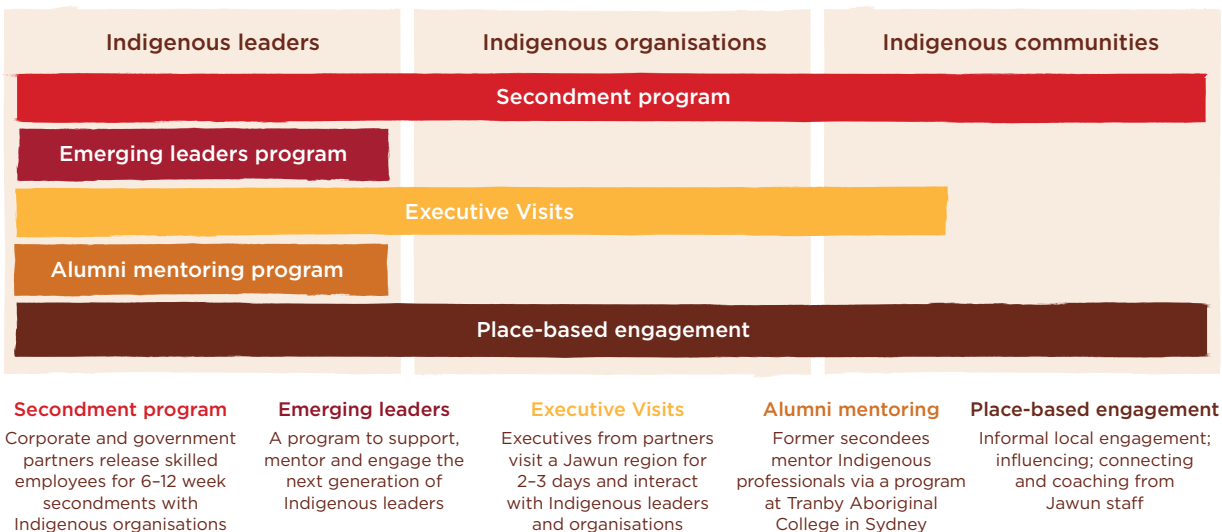
Today, Jawun’s core aim remains the same as it was in 2001: to build the capacity of Indigenous organisations and communities so that individuals can ‘choose a life they have reason to value’.<sup>2</sup>

But the model has grown and evolved, and the scope of Jawun’s activities has increased (see Figure 4). As well as the secondment program, Jawun runs a number of other activities that enable engagement between our Indigenous, corporate, government and philanthropic partners. These activities influence and provide support to the Indigenous sector at the individual, organisational and community level.

Fifteen years from its inception, Jawun has built a unique environment for engagement and collaboration among its Indigenous, corporate, government and philanthropic partners. Over time, this has contributed to positive change for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in communities across Australia. As Jawun’s partner organisations have leveraged these relationships, a rich story of shared value has emerged.

Commercially, creating shared value has been described as the ‘practice of creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges’.<sup>3</sup>

FIGURE 4: JAWUN'S SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES



The role of business in society is redefined through a simple but powerful idea: business success and social progress are interdependent. Jawun operates in alignment to this principle through its partnership model.

The Jawun partnership model enables value creation at each point of collaboration—between corporate and government partners, philanthropic partners, and Indigenous partners—which in turn contributes to shared value outcomes for all stakeholders.

The inherent strength of the model is that partners from each sector not only operate on a level playing field but experience **value creation** in a number of ways (see Figure 5).

Indigenous partners benefit from the skill sharing and expertise of corporate and government secondees, and through building connections with senior leaders across corporate and government sectors. Corporate, government and philanthropic partners gain access to unique opportunities to contribute to positive outcomes for Indigenous communities. In turn, value is created inside corporate and government partners in areas such as intercultural capability, leadership and people development, organisational culture and corporate social responsibility.

Jawun has a unique line of sight to value creation in its partner organisations through analysing:

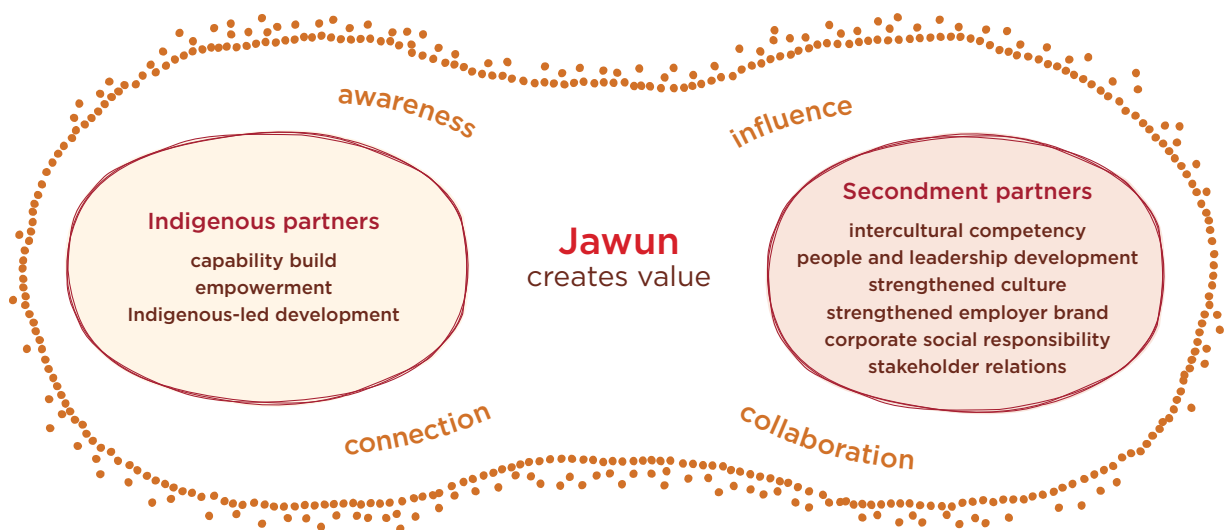
- the experiences of individuals who have taken part in the secondment program
- the insights of leaders in secondment partner organisations, who attribute certain proof points of value creation within their businesses to the Jawun partnership.

Together, these experiences build a significant picture of beneficial outcomes across the sectors in which Jawun operates.

If I didn't see the benefits of the Jawun program in terms of the organisation, I would still see merit in taking part, but I wouldn't necessarily be as enthusiastic. It's an inherently good thing to do; however doing good things only gets you so far. Where you get a trade-off in terms of your own organisational strategies is when you can say, 'If we were to run a cost-benefit analysis on this, it would be more than paying for itself.'

**DENNIS RICHARDSON,**  
SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

FIGURE 5: VALUE CREATION FOR JAWUN PARTNERS





West Kimberley, 2014. Photo: David Rennie



Creating value  
for corporate and  
government partners

## Impact on individuals

Individuals who participate in a Jawun secondment describe it as a unique and transformative experience—many go so far as to call it ‘life-changing’.<sup>4</sup> Secondees benefit both personally and professionally from the opportunity, gaining deeper insights into Indigenous culture, a broadening of cultural perspectives, development in emotional intelligence and accelerated career growth.

I got so much more back from the secondment experience than I think I was able to contribute: an awareness of myself, and how I am as a part of this country and this earth.

NATHAN KRIEGER, EX-WESTPAC,  
SECONDED TO CAPE YORK 2002

### The individual ‘why’

- Learn about Indigenous culture
- Professional development
- New challenge
- Personal satisfaction
- Make a contribution

The motivators for participating in a Jawun secondment are as diverse as the people involved; however, there are a number of common drivers.

The opportunity for a **professional challenge** was a key factor for many. Ben Tan from KPMG said: ‘Most of my work is around education and human services so the secondment was a great professional development opportunity.’ Nina Kordic from IAG had a similar drive: ‘From a professional point of view, I wanted to do something that would stretch me in a way I hadn’t been stretched in a corporate environment.’

Another strong motivator was the desire to **learn and understand more about Indigenous culture**. Chris Simpson, formerly of KPMG, said: ‘I wanted to get an idea of Indigenous affairs in Australia beyond what I’d studied and read in newspapers. I’d studied law and spent a lot of time on native title and recognition, but there was no exposure to what’s currently going on and what that means for people.’ Jodie Symes from Allens was similarly driven by a ‘thirst for knowledge. I felt very ignorant of Indigenous affairs as a whole, so I wanted to get involved in the program to understand the issues for myself.’

For the secondees, the ability to give back to the community through their work was seen as intrinsically linked to **increased personal satisfaction**. Jaimes Adlington from Westpac said: ‘I wanted something to give me that extra bit of satisfaction. There was the feeling: “I want to contribute something else.”’ Other secondees mentioned the desire for a new challenge or a way to marry personal interests with their professional life. Dr Tracey Benson from the Department of Industry and Science commented: ‘I thought it was a great way of combining the things I’m interested in outside of work with the things I’m doing at work.’

Renee Schicks from Commonwealth Bank Australia reflected: ‘I was looking for an opportunity to be able to use all the skills I’d learnt over my career to see if I could add some value and provide a social benefit—and Jawun provided the perfect opportunity to do that.’ Tanya Kaye from KPMG agreed: ‘I really wanted to make a difference and to be able to see the difference on the ground.’

### Experiential learning drives attitudinal and behavioural change

The primary purpose of a Jawun secondment is to help build capability and capacity in Indigenous organisations through the transfer of skills from secondees to employees of those organisations. However, genuine two-way skills and knowledge transfer also occurs, which drives attitudinal and behavioural change in secondees.

In his 1938 book *Experience and Education*, John Dewey wrote: ‘There is an intimate and necessary relation between the process of actual experience and education.’<sup>5</sup> The immersive nature of a Jawun secondment brings about attitudinal change by exposing individuals to a specific and unique ‘out of comfort zone’ learning experience over a set period of time, and in an environment of which they typically have little prior knowledge, predetermined views or stereotypical perceptions.<sup>6</sup> Fostering a new mind-set is important in changing behaviour and enabling an individual to perform more effectively.<sup>7</sup>

### Perceptions are challenged and changed

- Increased awareness
- Greater understanding
- Australian identity

Jawun secondees typically reported that the immediate impact of a secondment was that their preconceptions were challenged.<sup>8</sup> For the majority of them, a Jawun secondment represented their first opportunity to meaningfully engage with Indigenous people.



Tim Plant (CEO, QBE Insurance) and Winston Headford (QBE secondee) on the Cape York Executive Visit, 2015. Photo: David Rennie

I was a Sydney girl, born and bred in the western suburbs. Before my secondment I had absolutely nil understanding of the Indigenous way of life or Indigenous culture and the problems and issues they faced. Now I've seen it first-hand.

MELISSA GRIGGS, EX-WESTPAC, NOW SUNCORP,  
CAPE YORK 2003 AND 2008-09

The opportunity to live and work in an Indigenous community for several weeks or months changes people's views about Indigenous Australia.<sup>9</sup> Jaimes Adlington articulated the value of the secondment program in challenging misconceptions and unconscious biases:

I think you grow up with certain perspectives of Indigenous culture conveyed to you, whether it be through your parents or the media or friends or school life. But it's not until you're dealing with 99% Indigenous people that you realise what those embedded things are and think, 'Okay, that's not right.'

For Peter Rixon, who works in the Australian Public Service, his experience of working in an Indigenous organisation in Shepparton, Victoria, resulted in a '180-degree' shift in perceptions. He explained:

I went on secondment having had negative experiences of Indigenous communities in the past. Before Jawun, my suspicions were fed by what I now know to be ill-formed stereotypes. Thanks to the Jawun program I have a very different perspective today. I understand now the legitimacy of Indigenous aspiration; I see the need to allow cultural expression. Until I went on secondment and had this immersion opportunity, I would never have become an advocate of the Indigenous community and its ambitions.

For most secondees, their change in perceptions begins with an **increased awareness** of modern-day realities for Indigenous people—both the struggles and the gains. John Williams from Westpac was seconded in 2013 to The Glen Central Coast Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Centre, where the majority of clients are Indigenous. 'I didn't learn how to play a didgeridoo,' he said, 'but I did learn a lot about how people fall into drugs.'

Chris Simpson was working for KPMG when he was seconded to North East Arnhem Land. 'It definitely demonstrated the magnitude of the problem of Indigenous disadvantage,' he said, 'which is something that I knew theoretically but didn't really appreciate until I got there.' Trish Clancy from BCG explained that her secondment gave her a greater insight into the challenges in remote Indigenous communities: 'So many Australians have no idea what remote Indigenous Australia is really like—even just living in a town with no bank.'

For Tracey Benson, her very idea of 'remoteness' was challenged after visiting the Cummeragunja Mission in Victoria: 'Here was a community in a relatively populated area, but it was remote because it fell between the cracks of services between states.' Other secondees had their perceptions changed in a positive way. Ben Tan explained: 'I didn't realise how much had been achieved in Goulburn Murray. The Yorta Yorta people have achieved this huge amount in terms of development of a civil society and a community, assets and infrastructure.'

Bonnie Carter from the Department of Defence also experienced a positive change in view. 'I was of the understanding there were a lot of Elders in the community—I didn't know there were so many young people, the young leaders, really driving change.'

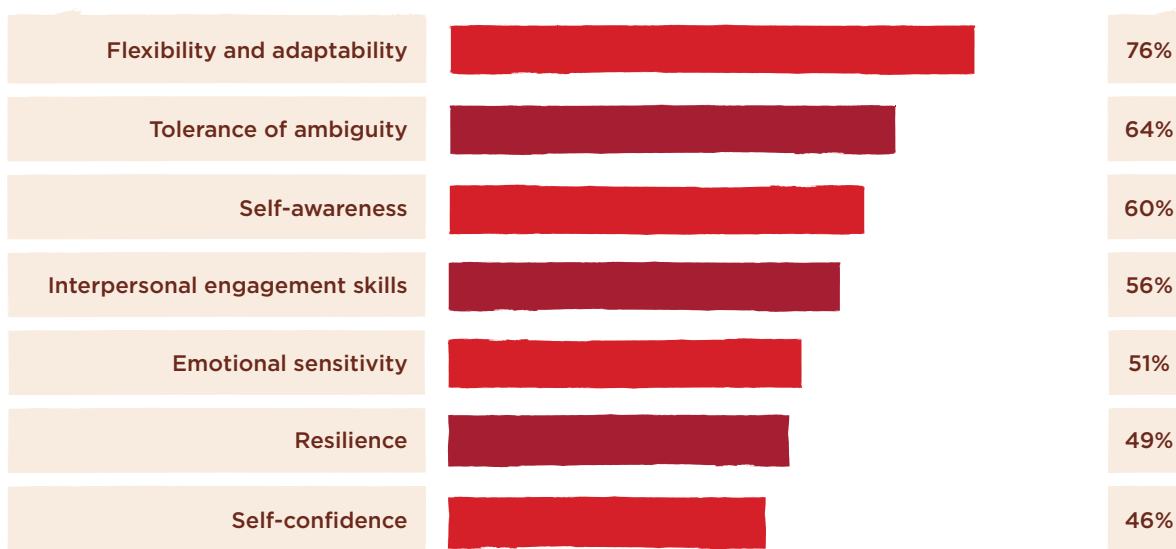
This increase in awareness usually brings **greater understanding** of Indigenous culture and the complexity of the challenges Indigenous people face. Issues and traditions such as land rights, Welcome to Country, education equality, and drug and alcohol addictions suddenly take on a deeper significance. Melanie Evans from Westpac was seconded to the remote town of Coen in Cape York, Queensland. 'I didn't understand the fact that non-Indigenous children were home-schooled or went to private schools and that the curriculum was fundamentally different for Indigenous children in the community I was working in. Having that "a-ha" moment when I arrived made me appreciate how much I needed to learn.' The experience also gave Melanie a better understanding of Indigenous culture:

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I've learnt about, and now respect, the relationship between connectedness to country and land rights. There are a whole range of fundamental beliefs that Australians who aren't as aware might incorrectly read as power and greed. Whereas someone who's done a secondment, who's connected with the Indigenous community and therefore understands that underlying principle of connectedness to country, has a fundamentally different view. There's a better understanding about the reasoning and complexity behind some of these issues.

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**FIGURE 6: PERCENTAGE OF FORMER SECONDEES REPORTING AN IMPROVEMENT IN KEY COMPETENCIES AS A RESULT OF THEIR SECONDMENT**



Source: Jawun Alumni Survey, 2014



For others, the secondment experience challenged not only their ideas about Indigenous Australia but their concept of **Australian identity**. As Luke Raffin from BCG reflected: ‘It changed the way that I thought about myself as being Australian, because it drove home the fact that Indigenous culture and Indigenous people are such a core part of our identity.’

Rachel Yang from KPMG explained that being exposed to an Indigenous language in North East Arnhem Land had a profound effect on her:

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When I heard Yolngu Matha being widely spoken and didn’t understand it myself, I thought, ‘This is a language of the first Australians and yet I consider myself to be Australian, so what does that mean?’ It was kind of a light-bulb moment—it made me realise people take the idea of being Australian for granted.

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Chadi Khalifeh, formerly of KPMG, had a similar revelation around identity after his secondment: ‘I came to Australia when I was 16 and became a citizen in 2011. I feel that Jawun allowed me to connect, at a more personal level, with my identity as an Australian. It provided me with a broader cultural perspective and a greater appreciation of the diversity of Indigenous communities.’

## Secondees experience growth in key capabilities

- Flexibility and adaptability
- Interpersonal skills
- Empathy
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Self-awareness
- Resilience

Individuals who have participated in a Jawun secondment often attest that it is the most significant development program they have experienced.<sup>10</sup> By nature of the environment, secondees find the greatest impact is on their emotional intelligence, which affects their self-efficacy and preparedness to lead. In some cases development in technical skills also occurs.

According to research studies, truly effective leaders are distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence.<sup>11</sup> Hallmarks of emotional intelligence include self-confidence, realistic self-awareness, comfort with ambiguity, openness to change, a strong drive to achieve, optimism even in the face of failure, cross-cultural sensitivity, integrity, effective leadership through change, social skills, and persuasiveness.<sup>12</sup> All of these were reported as outcomes in some form by secondees reflecting on their experience during and post-secondment.

Attributes of emotional intelligence are collectively referred to as ‘soft skills’ in this report.



David Linke (National Managing Partner Tax, KPMG), Craig Brent (KPMG secondee), Louise Law (Jawun Regional Director, North East Arnhem Land) and a Yolngu artist, North East Arnhem Land, 2014. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto

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The personal impact on me was enormous—and it had a knock-on effect for my professional development.

NATHAN KRIEGER, EX-WESTPAC, CAPE YORK 2002

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In the 2014 Jawun Alumni Survey, 92% of the respondents reported enhanced personal and professional effectiveness due to their secondment,

‘You had to be flexible in how you spoke to people,’ he said. ‘You had to be flexible in how you engaged them.’ Bonnie Carter also identified flexibility as key to engaging stakeholders. ‘I quickly learnt on my secondment that if I wanted to talk to people I had to go out and make an extra effort, and be flexible in how I went about that.’ Tom Hughes, formerly of Qantas, found that he needed to exercise flexibility to cope with a tight budget: ‘You learn how to do things on an absolute shoestring—you learn another level of flexibility and adaptability.’ Melissa Griggs, formerly of Westpac, now at Suncorp,



Jawun's 1,000th secondee Sarah Pohlen (Westpac), Ian Trust (Executive Chair, Wunan) and Karyn Baylis (CEO, Jawun), East Kimberley, 2012. Photo: Louise Law

with growth reported in key capability areas such as **flexibility and adaptability, tolerance of ambiguity, self-awareness and interpersonal skills** (see Figure 6).

In our interviews with former secondees, **flexibility and adaptability** were consistently identified as significant areas of growth. Secondees on the Jawun program are taken out of their corporate or government ‘comfort zones’ and placed in environments that are often very challenging for an extended period (typically six–12 weeks). Many work on projects in a different field to their day jobs, or find they need to apply their professional skills in new ways.

Jaimes Adlington found that his communication style and the way he interacted with people became more flexible on secondment.

believes the lessons she learnt about flexibility and adaptability have been invaluable to her throughout her career:

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[The secondment] helps you to realise there's something greater than you. So if your feelings get hurt or you don't understand why things are changing direction, you just put your head down and keep moving forward to achieve. That's a skill that's fantastic to have as you move forward in your career because sometimes that's just the way it is.

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Individuals recognised an increased **tolerance of ambiguity** as a direct outcome of the secondment program. Trish Clancy was seconded to Wunan, an Aboriginal development organisation in the East Kimberley, in 2011. She explained: 'Dealing with ambiguity is something you have to become very familiar with in the Kimberley, even the basic things about who maintains the diary, shall we have a meeting at 3pm on Tuesday—yes, but it might happen outside the supermarket on Monday.' Melissa Griggs said her secondment 'definitely taught me to work in the grey. You learn to change

what you do and don't know, what you can and can't do outside of the business environment.' Nathan Krieger, formerly of Westpac, said that awareness of his personal style and habits quickly came to the fore on secondment: 'I can talk a lot, and I became very self-aware of that on secondment. Now I'm better at recognising when I'm getting carried away and need to listen. That's so important when leading a team and growing a business.' Renee Schicks has similarly applied her increased self-awareness back in the office: 'It made me very aware of how my own experience



Shane Phillips (CEO, Tribal Warrior Association), Kimberley Gordon (Tribal Warrior Association) and Vicki Reed (KPMG secondee), Redfern, Sydney, 2010. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto

direction very quickly and move forward.' Luke Raffin reflected on the lessons learnt from his secondment around decision-making:

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Something I learnt from Jawun is to be more accepting of not knowing all the pieces of the puzzle ... to accept a fair degree of the unknown, but to make decisions based on the information you have and be comfortable with what's ambiguous.

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**Self-awareness** was identified as an area of significant growth. Jaimes Adlington said his secondment gave him greater insight into his own capabilities: 'There's more awareness of

in commercial companies framed how I evaluated options. Since doing my secondment, I've noticed I place a much greater value on considering the human impact of decisions.'

For many secondees, growth in self-awareness was followed by a boost in **self-confidence**. Richie Hadfield from Commonwealth Bank Australia said the experience of stepping out of the corporate world gave him increased confidence in his abilities: 'It's not until you get into a different environment that you realise how capable you are and how many skills you actually have.' Bonnie Carter agreed: '[After my secondment] I ran an information session which I hadn't had the experience of doing in the workplace before. When I came back to work, I was like, "Right, I can do this."'



Jawun 'burnie bean'—a thank you gift for secondees and Executive Visit participants. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto

For Phillip Chan, formerly of KPMG, the secondment taught him 'that I could actually lead within community. I learned that I had what it takes. Previously I doubted that I could work as independently as I did.' Martina Friedl from Westpac explained that the experience taught her to have more self-assurance in group situations. 'It helped me to get confidence in myself. Our secondment group was a very skilled, intelligent group of people, so that was my personal and professional learning—not to be too intimidated when you're in a group.' For Melissa Griggs, her secondment experience gave her the confidence to move to Melbourne and take on the challenge of a new role within Westpac. She reflected: 'It's about backing yourself and having confidence, and I think a secondment does that for you because you're often thrown in the deep end with minimal direction. You have to self-lead.'

Many secondees reported growth in **interpersonal engagement skills**, demonstrated by showing greater tolerance and empathy, and listening more actively. Jaimes Adlington from Westpac said the experience of working with people from different backgrounds made him more sensitive

in his communication style. 'You learn how to communicate with people who haven't necessarily come from commercial environments or haven't got commercial backgrounds,' he said. 'You learn you've got to communicate on a level that is both empathetic and going to get results.'

John Williams said that his experience sitting in on a counselling session at The Glen taught him the value of listening. 'You're in a group of about 20 blokes and you have to listen because some people are really trying to make a point and you can't jump in and make it for them—you have to let them express it the way they want to express it. That in itself is a good meeting technique.' Tanya Kaye said the experience of learning to relate to people in an Indigenous organisation and also fellow secondees in her group has been invaluable in her working life: 'It helped me understand how to build rapport and develop relationships with people from all different backgrounds—which is a really important thing in a client-facing role.'

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I thought I was really good at personal communication and understanding and dealing with people. But when I got into that environment, the way the Indigenous leaders deal with people and the relationships they build—that's next-level stuff. I learnt an awful lot from them.

**RICHIE HADFIELD, COMMONWEALTH BANK AUSTRALIA, CENTRAL COAST 2013**

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**Empathy and emotional sensitivity** were highlighted as strong areas of development for secondees. Maria Niedzwiecka was working for KPMG when she was seconded to Djarragun College in Cape York. She said the experience developed her 'ability to connect to others and truly listen to them and understand their point of view.' Jaimes Adlington said his secondment similarly taught him 'to think more about, "Where does that person come from? Why are they acting that way? Why are they making those decisions and communicating that way?"'

Chadi Khalifeh was working for KPMG when he was seconded to Bungree Aboriginal Association on the Central Coast. He reflected that his secondment: 'allowed me to genuinely put my empathy to the test. No matter how much you put yourself in someone else's shoes, it's a different experience to step out of a corporate environment and consider the history of Indigenous Australians.'

Phillip Chan said his ability to empathise was similarly tested on secondment. 'You learn to understand where a person in community, like an Elder, has come from and why they might be saying certain things—because, for example, in 1954 the Queen came down and these hessian sheets were pulled across certain areas where the Queen was touring to hide Aboriginal people.' Melanie Evans saw the value of increased empathy in the work environment:

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One of the benefits of these community secondments is about needing to share your vulnerability—a soft side, an emotional side—to be successful. Caring about people is a fundamentally human thing. I don't think we encourage people enough to bring that care and the softer, more vulnerable side to the workplace.

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'Resilience' has been defined as 'the ability to recover from setbacks, adapt well to change, and keep going in the face of adversity'.<sup>13</sup> A study of business leaders in the United Kingdom found that resilience matters because 'resilient people and companies face reality with staunchness, make meaning of hardship instead of crying out in despair, and improvise solutions from thin air. Others do not.'<sup>14</sup> Secondees commonly used the word 'resilience' to describe how they had to draw on their internal resources to work through challenges and setbacks on secondment. As Rachel Yang explained:

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You tackle so many challenges while working in Indigenous communities: community issues, complexities with different clans and relationships between people. Any one day you might be trying to deliver a project and something totally unrelated—something community-based or another issue—could arise and you need to adapt. The takeaway for me was the need to build resilience and flexibility to adapt to anything that comes your way.

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Sara McDonald from Westpac also found her secondment enhanced her resilience: 'On your secondment you can sometimes feel like you're not making headway, but you've got to have the resilience to say, "Well, I'm not going to sit here and do nothing, I'll find something else to do to be of value in the meantime." It definitely taught me that resilience.'

### **Learnings are applied in the workplace**

Secondees who reflected on their personal and professional development goals during their secondment experience were able to clearly articulate their growth and how they later applied their learnings back in the workplace.

Interviews for this report showed that the immersive nature of the program stretched secondees in ways that led them to perform more effectively afterwards, and to progress in ways they had not necessarily considered pre-secondment.

The unique learning ground of a Jawun secondment is key to this development. Experiential learning immerses participants in an active and shared learning environment, 'integrating shared contextual exploration with reflective thought processes—a dynamic combination that amplifies individual and group comprehension. The learning experience challenges people to move beyond established work routines into a learning zone.'<sup>15</sup>

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I'm a big believer that personal growth will always translate into professional growth. Your personality, the way you interact with people, and the way you respond to situations—those things inevitably translate into your professional life.

RACHEL YANG, KPMG, NORTH EAST ARNHEM LAND  
2014 AND 2015

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For the majority of secondees, the growth they experienced on secondment has transferred to their working life. Increased motivation, enhanced personal leadership style, and improved problem-solving, stakeholder management and intercultural competency were just some of the areas of professional growth identified by secondees. Not only do individuals find the skills they learned on secondment applicable and valuable in their professional roles, but they also find their rate of growth is accelerated due to the immersive nature of the experience.

For some, the development they experienced on secondment led to career progression and professional opportunities such as board positions, as we explore later in this section (see pages 23–27).

### Soft skill growth is recognised and demonstrated

- Patience and tolerance
- Interpersonal skills
- Listening skills
- Stakeholder management
- Personal leadership brand
- Lateral thinking
- Self-confidence
- Problem-solving

Whether the secondment was recent or over a decade ago, the majority of individuals attested that the soft skill growth they experienced underpinned the way they work today. In particular, **patience, tolerance and listening skills** were attributes that transferred into the workplace. Nathan Krieger was working for Westpac when he was seconded to Cape York. He said that the lessons he learned about listening have not only stayed with him but changed his entire approach to the way he works:

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If someone had asked me what my job was before the secondment, I'd have said, 'I tell businesses what products and solutions they need to do business.' Now I say, 'I listen to businesses talk about their challenges and aspirations, to see if there are opportunities for us to work together to achieve their goals.'

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Tom Hughes noticed that once he returned to his job at Qantas 'my tolerance levels went through the roof. I just didn't sweat the small stuff as much and didn't try to be as pedantic. I realised, "Well, there's another way to go about this rather than being so specific and jumping on every little point."'

Tanya Kaye found that 'the patience I learnt on secondment helps me in my professional life when I'm coaching and mentoring other staff'. Tracey Benson discovered she was more patient with herself when she returned to her role at the Department of Industry and Science: 'In the past, I'd be pushing myself very hard and would beat myself up if things didn't happen the way I wanted them to happen. Through the secondment process, I learnt to accept that sometimes it's actually better to just yield and let things evolve.'

Many secondees found their **increased self-confidence** and **interpersonal skills** transferred into their professional roles. Secondees discovered they were more adept at relating to others and more likely to embrace new opportunities. Tien Do from KPMG reflected: 'I can see a change in myself after the secondment—it's opened me up to talk to more people and grab opportunities within KPMG. I take a more active role now.' Tanya Kaye explained, 'I realised that humans are humans, we are all the same, everyone appreciates the same things: family, nature, stories. I've really used that to be able to build relationships in my professional life with other staff and with clients.' These changes were often noticed by colleagues and managers. Beau Beckman from the Department of Defence was Bonnie Carter's manager before and after her secondment. He observed:

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When Bonnie got back, she carried herself with a different type of confidence when relating to people—there was a genuineness in her relationships with people that was obvious from the outside. You saw that she was listening, she was hearing, and she was able to work with the other person in a different kind of way.

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Improved interpersonal skills often translated into better **stakeholder engagement and management** on secondees' return to work. Melissa Griggs was working for Westpac when she participated in a secondment and then later a fellowship to Cape York:

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Since that time, I've expanded into change management and now project management. Some of the skill sets I needed for project management had absolutely been learnt on secondment—particularly around stakeholder engagement. In terms of the diverse amount of people I had to deal with, different degrees of education and different passions and drivers—those skills have absolutely helped me.

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Renee Schicks had a similar view: 'The secondment increases your awareness of the diversity of stakeholders out there and how you can motivate those stakeholders.'

Ben Tan said his secondment contributed to enhanced stakeholder management skills due to exposure to senior executives. 'I'm much more comfortable dealing with senior stakeholders. In my work, I usually deal with junior managers but on secondment I was dealing with departmental secretaries.' Trish Clancy articulated the value for her in terms of stakeholder engagement and management: 'It has helped me in working with a wider array of people, learning how to communicate in different ways. Having a broader view plays back particularly well in working deeper with clients.'

## CASE STUDY

# Growing soft skills and intercultural competency

In 2007, Maria Niedzwiecka, then a business development market analyst for KPMG in Sydney, was seconded to Djarragun College in Cape York. She was attracted to the secondment program for the opportunity to 'spend several weeks working with Indigenous communities, making a positive impact ... while actually keeping my job.' She also found the partnership model appealing: 'I was really attracted to the model of working with Indigenous communities instead of just providing them with services.'

Maria spent five weeks creating a marketing prospectus for the college and says her time on secondment helped her become more flexible and adaptable. 'The project was something completely different for me. I remember sitting in front of the computer for the first time, working with software I had never used before, on marketing materials which were new to me, so it was a very steep

learning curve.' The secondment also stretched her interpersonal skills. 'I had to develop a network very quickly within the college and find people who could help me with challenges I'd never dealt with before.'

Maria recognised her growth in intercultural competency. 'Before you go on secondment,' she said, 'you've got a number of assumptions and they all get challenged ... One of the great things about the program is that you go through induction and have the opportunity to listen to Elders from the tribes who live in Cape York, and they explain their customs, their traditions, their challenges.'

That deepening of cultural awareness has been extremely valuable in her current role as Senior Manager for Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu in Japan. '[My secondment] made me realise that a solution developed in one

particular place, for a particular set of people, is not going to work that easily if you're just trying to transplant it to a completely different community and different situation. That was incredibly helpful throughout my career, but in particular in moving to Japan.'

Maria says her Jawun experience made it easier for her to transition to another culture and deal with a completely new set of challenges. 'It's just something you're prepared for,' she said. She draws from her secondment in her approach with the Japanese locals. 'My work in Japan involves a lot of listening to people, understanding where they're coming from, why they behave the way they do, what they consider are the biggest roadblocks ... At the end of the day, it's not about imposing [your ideas] on anyone else—and that's a skill that's applicable to any working environment.'

Secondees could strongly correlate an improvement in **lateral thinking** and **problem-solving skills** with their time on secondment. Tracey Benson explained: 'Since my secondment I'm more likely to come up with other ways or different thoughts about how to approach a problem. Just because we've always done things a certain way as public servants doesn't always mean it's the best way. I think that's where the value lies coming back to work.' Tom Hughes had a similar experience on his return to work. 'I went from being an engineer who's straight down the line and straight out of the manual, to being able to actually think about stuff outside of it.' Rachel Yang reflected: 'The experience has permeated my whole professional life. I've realised that you don't necessarily need to take the traditional path and am now more open to approaching things in different ways.'

The link between soft skills and leadership has been widely studied and validated over the last two decades.<sup>16</sup> Many secondees reported that the soft skill growth they experienced during their secondment enhanced their **personal leadership brand** at work. Melanie Evans said she learnt valuable lessons about leadership, which she has been able to apply to her current role. 'I became far more conscious of everyone's eyes being on me, that I was a role model in that community for that period of time. In terms of the way I lead now, that was a big lesson for me around people watching

for your cues and your behaviour.' Bonnie Carter was seconded to the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council in 2013. She was strongly influenced by observing the CEO's leadership style: 'I learnt from CEO Chris Ingrey a style of leadership that is very genuine. I see a lot of people around my age flying up the corporate ladder wanting to become leaders very quickly, but it's not perceived as being genuine yet. I want to take time to get to know the people I lead and have genuine belief in them.'

Melissa Noonan from Westpac said her experience taught her 'that I've actually got to walk beside people, not in front of them, not behind them—and I've got to listen to what they want. We come from such a task-oriented world, but the world these Indigenous leaders are living in is about how they connect with their people to bring them on a journey.'

Trish Clancy said her secondment has enhanced her credibility as a leader:

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The experience I had working with Indigenous communities is very much a part of my brand at work—I'm interested in these things, I've had an active role, it's something I'm passionate about, and because BCG works with the public service in allied areas that gives me credibility.

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Teneille Nuggins (Senior Sport and Recreation Coordinator, PCYC Hope Vale) and Luke Raffin (BCG secondee), Cape York, 2010.  
Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto



## Career progression is enhanced

- Accelerated skills growth
- Lattice progression
- Linear progression
- Leadership roles

For a number of secondees, the lessons learnt and development they experienced on secondment resulted in a step change in performance back in the workplace. This was often recognised both personally (by the individual) and externally (by their managers and colleagues), and led to enhanced career progression. Secondees nominated themselves for new challenges and opportunities, moved into the next stage of their career or were promoted to leadership roles.

Many secondees experienced **accelerated skills growth** during secondment, which was effectively applied in their professional lives post-secondment. Trish Clancy explained: 'The secondment was a chance to build skills that I built naturally in my job but it built them faster, particularly around engaging with stakeholders, thinking through the complexities of engaging with stakeholders across a community with very different views from each other and differences in the preferred ways of communicating.' Melissa Griggs similarly experienced a faster rate of professional growth:

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With a secondment you're often thrown in the deep end with minimal direction, you have to self-lead, you have to do things that are out of your comfort zone—and once you return to work, the speed at which your skills increase and your confidence increases is astronomical.

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Bonnie Carter believes the skills she acquired while on secondment allowed her to 'blossom much quicker with my sights set on where I want to go.' Nina Kordic felt that the immersive nature of her secondment—working with Indigenous partners in community but also alongside other professionals—contributed to her accelerated development:

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Not only are you working away from home and outside your own environment, you're also working with very different people at different life stages and career stages, and from different organisations and cultures, so when you're thrown together as a secondment group, it adds to the momentum of development you experience.

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Secondees reported various types of career growth post secondment. For some, it was **lattice progression** (a lateral move to a different role), or taking advantage of new opportunities or different responsibilities within their organisation. Tracey Benson said: 'Since my secondment I've joined a leadership learning circle, where a small group of women meet once a month and focus on things like your values and goals and career planning—I saw it as a really good opportunity to stretch myself.' Tracey reflected that her view of her career trajectory had also broadened since her Jawun experience. 'I'd always thought I'd do something related to my background in visual arts and never really considered working on the policy side of things, but that's something I've thought about since doing the secondment.' Elise Marciano from Woodside similarly viewed her career options more broadly after her secondment:

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Jawun showed me that as a commercial professional I can work and add value in very different areas. I'd studied economics and finance, but I realised I didn't need to confine myself to working in those areas. Since returning from my secondment, I have completed cross-postings to investor relations and LNG marketing. Jawun taught me to look more broadly for potential career paths.

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Nina Kordic was given greater responsibilities in her role when her manager saw how she had grown while on secondment. Carmen Ashcroft, Senior Manager of Talent & Diversity at IAG, explained: 'Nina has become more confident and she's more at ease with stakeholder engagement and management, to the point where part of the big piece of work for my team this year has been a rollout of a new talent framework and engagement within IAG, and I recommended that Nina carry out three rather large pieces of work for that.'

Other secondees have experienced **linear progression** in their careers, in the form of upward promotion or managing larger teams. Chadi Khalifeh was promoted shortly after his secondment. He reflected: 'I think my career path was accelerated by the secondment. I genuinely believe that I'm able to apply greater leadership skills because of this secondment—I'm better at listening, understanding my stakeholders' needs and applying empathy.'

Luke Raffin was only two years into his career at BCG when he was seconded to Cape York for six weeks. After his secondment he completed a Master of Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He went on to work for Tony Blair Associates as an adviser to the Prime Minister in Mongolia and then to the Prime Minister in Haiti. He now works as a consultant for BCG. He reflected on the influence of his secondment experience on his career progression to date:

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I think Jawun was a factor in the trajectory, both because it really doubled my interest in these types of problems—how you help people’s lives improve by giving them more opportunities—but also made me realise again the importance of understanding why people behave the way they do and what their incentives are, and what are the barriers to them accessing opportunity. I think the secondment was a foundation experience.

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## CASE STUDY

# Becoming a leader

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Steph Stokes from NAB had a very personal reason for applying for a Jawun secondment. ‘I had my daughter when I was 17. People may have looked at me and thought, “Young mum—probably going to live off welfare for the rest of her life.” When I learnt more about Indigenous disadvantage, it made me angry. I wanted to share that if you have the right support around you and people who believe in you, you can do whatever it is you want to do; you can get what you want out of life.’

Steph’s secondment in mid-2014 took her from Melbourne in Victoria to the West Kimberley in Western Australia, where she worked with the Beagle Bay Women’s Group for six weeks. She was willing to go to a remote community, even though it took her away from her three children. ‘My husband was very supportive ... I think if you take yourself out of it and even the kids out of it, it’s a small sacrifice for everybody to make for such a bigger, significant purpose.’

The six-week secondment had a profound impact on Steph, challenging her to come out of her shell and build new relationships.

‘It was like growing up,’ she said. During her time with the Beagle Bay Women’s Group, she developed skills in external stakeholder management and self-leadership. ‘It’s all autonomous work, so I learnt how to manage many, many moving parts.’

Steph came back to NAB feeling significantly more confident in her abilities, which enabled her to embrace new opportunities. ‘A couple of months after I got back from secondment, I was asked to do a presentation for 70 leaders for direct business down at the convention centre. I thought, “Wow, I have never done anything like that before.”’

Steph’s increased confidence and competency did not go unnoticed by her managers: she has been promoted twice within NAB in the last 12 months. ‘When I came back home, I was really looking for what that next step was. An opportunity opened up in our Indigenous team—a consultant role managing our traineeship program. I applied for the role and I got it, which was just amazing as I know there was a really strong pool of candidates.’

The role was a secondment to fill a maternity leave position, and Steph has since been promoted again to the role of Business Unit Manager. ‘I think seeing the change in me going away and then doing the employment consultant role was what gave [my managers] comfort that I was ready for this role.’

Steph now manages eight direct reports who are all team leaders. ‘Basically, I’m a leader of leaders,’ she said. She attests that her secondment experience has influenced her leadership style. ‘As a leader, my personal goal is to see the best in people, to see the potential ... The Jawun secondment was a really good opportunity to see that. When you think about it from an Indigenous perspective, about the disadvantages and stereotypes they face, sometimes they just needed someone to say, “You can do this!” It’s the same here. All our guys are super capable, but you have to tap into what motivates them—why are they here, what do they want to get out of it and where do they want to go.’

Some secondees saw their careers progress into **leadership roles** following their secondment. Melanie Evans was working as Director of Customer and Product for BT Financial when she went on secondment to Cape York. She is now General Manager Service Revolution & Transformation at Westpac and said the Jawun experience played a key part in her advancing into a leadership role:

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My Jawun secondment had a huge impact on my career. I don't think I would have been as effective or progressed in this environment. In my twenties I was very hard, very black and white. I thought, 'As long as we get the right outcome from a customer, shareholder or an investment perspective, we can deal with the people impacts later.' I think most organisations have worked out that that culture is not the right culture for big, complex organisations that want to be service led and attract talented leaders. Perhaps that 'hard' style might still work in certain workplaces ... but I wouldn't have become a leader in the Westpac culture.

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Jaimes Adlington now leads a larger team at Westpac following his secondment in 2013. He reflected: 'I've got a broader portfolio and a bigger team now and I think part of that transition has been the positive feedback I've received from a general community involvement and leadership perspective from having done a secondment.' He also believes the Jawun experience influences his style of leadership: 'My decision-making is a bit more considered. You've still got to make a call, but now I think more about, "Where does that person come from? Why are they acting that way? Why are they communicating to you in that way?" and then try to work through it.'

### **Intercultural competency increases**

Growth in intercultural competency is one of the most commonly reported outcomes of a Jawun secondment.<sup>17</sup> Intercultural competency is about our will and actions to build understanding between people, to be respectful and open to different cultural perspectives, and work towards equality in opportunity. Relationship building is fundamental to cultural competency and is based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and building on the strength of each other's knowledge to build on their understandings.<sup>18</sup>

While a Jawun secondment takes place within Australia's Indigenous community, intercultural competency is applicable in a global sense.

Cross-cultural experiences are considered essential to building 'cultural agility', which is recognised as a global leadership competency for business leaders who can operate successfully in today's global environment. In a culturally competent and inclusive organisation individuals function at full capacity, feel more valued and feel included in the organisation's mission. Interculturally competent individuals typically demonstrate inclusive behaviours at work that enable the culture to shift to a higher-performing organisation where motivation and morale soar.<sup>19</sup>

In 2011-12, a number of Jawun secondees participated in an intercultural competency study designed by Winthrop Professor Cristina Gibson and her team from the University of Western Australia's School of Business. The study measured changes in intercultural experience for secondees pre- and post-secondment. The findings of the study indicated that Jawun secondees had experienced statistically significant improvements in all three major competency domains (perceptions management, relationship management and self-management) necessary for effective intercultural interaction.<sup>20</sup> The study also showed that the intercultural development that occurred in secondees through the six-week Jawun secondments surpassed the development that occurred in a two-week intercultural project or 'classroom only' program (see Figure 7).<sup>21</sup>

Professor Gibson's research was borne out in interviews with secondees, with many testifying that their intercultural competency had increased and they behaved more inclusively after their secondment. Rachel Yang explained that the experience of working in an Indigenous organisation highlighted to her the importance of being culturally aware: 'The experience taught me to be more observant, emotionally responsive and culturally sensitive in different situations and environments.'

Sara McDonald agreed: 'You become more aware of the way you approach people as a result of the secondment. I travelled through communities where English was the second, third or fourth language, and with these cultural and language differences you become very aware of how you're interacting with people. You consider why you are there and what you're seeking to achieve.'

Others attested that their improvement in listening and application of empathy and patience had contributed to growth in intercultural competency.

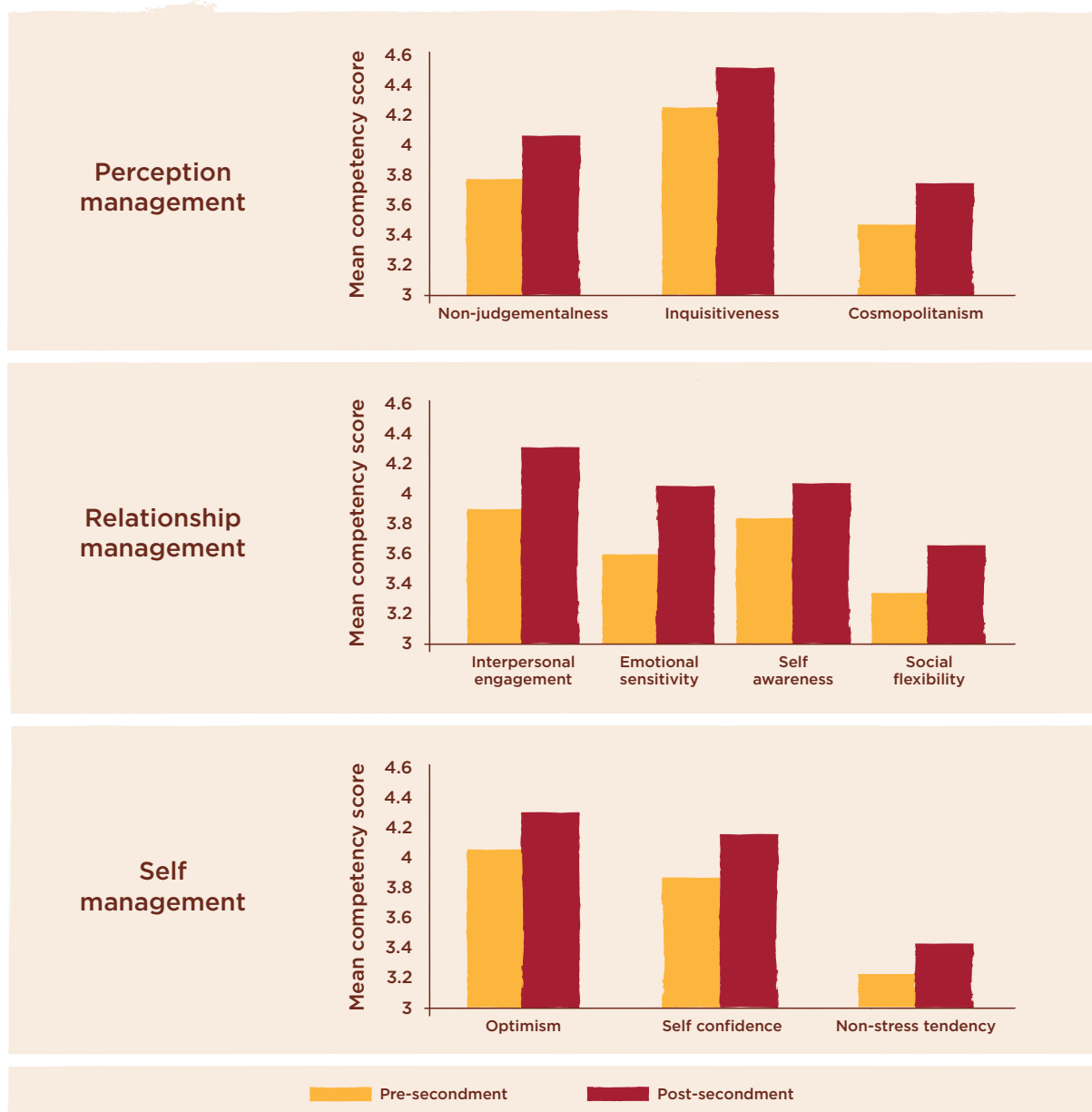
Elise Marciano reflected on her secondment to the East Kimberley:

What I took away from Jawun was the importance of listening, of non-verbal communication. A lot of the people I worked with on secondment didn't always say a lot, so it showed me the importance of silence. And the importance of showing an interest in the culture of the people that you're working with.

Tracey Benson became more conscious of being inclusive through her secondment:

I'm better at making sure I'm being inclusive in the way I'm working with people. In my job in the past, I just tended to talk to the people who I needed to talk to about a specific task, but when I worked with Yorta Yorta we had to get everyone on board. I think that's a much more empowering way to work.

FIGURE 7: RESULTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY STUDY



Source: Cristina Gibson & Patrick Dunlop, 'Developing leaders with intercultural competence', presentation at the 75th annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Vancouver, 11 August 2015.

### Career portfolio broadens

As well as progressing at work, a number of secondees expanded their career portfolios post-secondment by accepting board positions at Indigenous organisations. Trish Clancy was seconded to the East Kimberley in 2011 to work at Wunan, an Aboriginal development organisation. Later, Trish was invited to join the board of the organisation, along with Ross Love from BCG. Trish reflected that her position on the Wunan board has been a valuable professional development opportunity: 'Board experience is extraordinary, in terms of understanding how our clients behave and what level of detail they want to see in our work ... Also in terms of seeing how long things take, seeing them through.'

Richie Hadfield was invited to join the board of Youth Connections, a not-for-profit that helps

young Indigenous people access employment, education and training, after his secondment to the organisation in 2013. The board opportunity arose as a direct result of his secondment. Richie said: 'Jawun gave me the opportunity to get in that space to prove myself to the directors at Youth Connections. Without it, I would have just been some guy with a CV.' Richie also explained the value of his role on the board of Youth Connections for his professional development:

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In terms of strategic development and commercial experience, what I am learning there is far beyond anything that I would learn here at work, unless I was in the upper echelons of group strategy. It is far beyond anything I would learn doing an MBA.

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### CASE STUDY

## Joining the board of an Indigenous organisation

In 2013, Jaimes Adlington, from the Group Audit team at Westpac, was seconded to Tranby Aboriginal College in Glebe, Sydney. Tranby is a not-for-profit organisation that delivers vocational education and training (VET) courses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from across Australia. Jaimes was motivated to apply for secondment by the opportunity to contribute to community. 'I was starting to feel that I needed something else—from a personal satisfaction perspective—rather than just coming to work every day,' he said.

Prior to Jaimes' secondment, the college had been through a challenging period, with a reduction in federal funding and a decrease in the numbers of staff and students. Jaimes worked closely with Tranby CEO Belinda Russon to review the college's financial position, making several recommendations and introducing new processes. Along the way he found his perceptions changing.

'You grow up with certain perspectives on Indigenous culture and certain things conveyed to you, whether it be through your parents or through the media, friends or school life. But you don't necessarily verbalise that or think like that on a daily basis because you don't see it. So when you go out there, you're dealing with 99% Indigenous people and all of a sudden whatever those embedded things were bubble up and you realise, "Okay, that's not right."'

Returning to Westpac, Jaimes found the experience affected the way he approached his role. He identified patience, empathy and more considered decision-making as key growth areas. 'It makes you think more about: "Where does that person come from? Why are they acting that way? Why are they communicating to you in that way?"'

But Jaimes' Tranby story didn't end there. In mid-2013 he was invited to join the Tranby Board. 'They were looking for someone to augment the board from a financial

and commercial background,' Jaimes says. 'And I was looking for a way to continue the contact without leaving Westpac.' Jaimes' board role has led to further professional development opportunities, including external directorship courses organised through Westpac. 'I deal with boards here. So to learn more from the other side has been invaluable. Now when I present to a board, I think about mindset—for example, What are they likely to do with this piece of information they're getting? Now I can put myself in their shoes.'

Westpac CEO Brian Hartzler endorsed the value of this relationship for Westpac: 'I'm not sure who has benefited more from this exchange: Tranby College, through Jaimes' advice; Jaimes himself, through an excellent professional development opportunity; or Westpac, since Jaimes has become a real leader.'

## Impact within organisations

Measuring the impact of the Jawun partnership within organisations is difficult as there is no recognised single method by which to evaluate the various ways that value is captured and reported. Organisations choose to partner with Jawun for a range of reasons, which means there are differences in their expectations of value creation and in the extent to which effectiveness is measured.

Jawun has conducted extensive interviews with senior leaders of its corporate and government partners to explore how value creation and return on investment is demonstrated internally. It is clear that organisations that position the Jawun partnership at the core of their business strategy are best placed to recognise the internal dividend.

**KPMG's purpose is about inspiring confidence and empowering change— I think at all levels the Jawun program is probably the one that goes to the heart of that, in terms of efforts on the ground.**

**CAMERON ROAN, PARTNER, KPMG**

## The organisational 'why'

- Align to purpose
- Underpin values
- Support organisational goals

Corporate organisations and government agencies are inspired to partner with Jawun for reasons of 'fit'. The most effective partnerships occur when businesses see alignment between the opportunities Jawun presents and their organisational goals.

The ability to contribute to positive outcomes for Indigenous communities is a key driver, often supported by alignment of the organisation's purpose to Jawun's aims; the potential for internal capability build through increased intercultural competency, people and leadership development; and the demonstration of an organisation's values through employee activities.



Gary McDonald (Westpac secondee) and Millie Ingram (CEO, Wyanga Aged Care), Redfern, Sydney, 2010. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto



## The corporate ‘why’—KPMG

KPMG has partnered with Jawun since 2007, and reached a milestone in October this year when it celebrated its 200th secondee.

Catherine Hunter, Head of Corporate Citizenship, explained that from the start, the firm chose to invest in partnership because it saw deep alignment between the two organisations and a key global aspiration of the firm.

‘As an Australian firm and a global network we wanted to turn our minds with our community investment corporate citizenship work to address some of the more intractable big issues from a social and environmental perspective. We made a conscious decision to engage with Indigenous Australia because we felt that it was a core issue for us as a nation, because inequality is most acutely experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.’

To bring that intention to life, Catherine said it was important to ‘look at what we believe we stand for as a firm from a values perspective, and then walking

the talk in terms of what we tell our clients and the sort of service offering we provide our clients and how we work with our clients. Everyone has their code of conduct and their values statement and some of them are really very similar, but I think the test of that is not just what a company does but how it works and operates. Everything we do with Jawun so beautifully illustrates that purpose in a living way.’

KPMG produced a human rights statement that has changed and infused many of its policies and engagement practices with clients, and in 2014 the firm won Australia’s prestigious Human Rights Business Award. While the firm has been one of Jawun’s longest-standing partners, its ongoing alignment is important. Catherine explains that in considering its human rights agenda, KPMG asked the question: ‘How can we contribute to that global debate by looking at what’s happening in our own backyard and really try to demonstrate best practice? Jawun is very consistent with the whole notion

because we’ve always worked with Jawun as the conduit at the invitation of communities, and with communities rather than to or for, and so those principles are really important to us in terms of how we engage.’

One of KPMG’s values is commitment to communities and that has gathered momentum in the firm, to the point where this year KPMG acquired a human rights consultancy. In the last 12 months KPMG has ‘looked to identify a global purpose that unifies us. “Inspiring confidence, empowering change” is not something that we will use externally, but that’s our internal purpose as an organisation. If you look at the concept of Jawun around skills transfer and capability build to help empower our communities to self-determine, the notion of empowerment is absolutely aligned with our purpose, and really core to that human rights based approach that we’re taking as an organisation.’

## Jawun aligns to the organisation's purpose

An organisation's core purpose refers to its 'most fundamental reason for existence'.<sup>22</sup> Jawun aspires to build capable and empowered Indigenous communities who will lead systemic, breakthrough change for Indigenous people. Companies and government agencies are attracted to partner with Jawun when their organisation's purpose aligns to these aims. Catherine Hunter, Head of Corporate Citizenship at KPMG, explained:

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'Inspiring confidence, empowering change' is our internal purpose as an organisation. If you look at the concept of Jawun—around skills transfer and capability build to help empower our Indigenous communities to self-determine the communities they want to see—the notion of empowerment is absolutely aligned with our purpose.

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Engagement with Jawun enables companies to demonstrate their purpose to employees, clients and the wider community in practical ways. Westpac, Australia's first and oldest bank, was one of Jawun's founding partners in 2001. Westpac CEO Brian Hartzler described the value of the Westpac-Jawun partnership in helping to achieve the organisation's purpose:

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Westpac aspires to contribute positively to the national economy for the benefit of all Australians. Our relationship with Jawun gives Westpac employees the opportunity to continue to learn, respect, celebrate and share skills, so that ultimately we can help shape a nation in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians share social and financial equity. By doing this we'll be living up to our purpose.

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Another founding partner of Jawun is the Boston Consulting Group (BCG). BCG partners with its clients in solving the hardest problems challenging their businesses—and the world. In explaining Jawun's alignment to BCG, Anthony Roediger, Partner, said: 'Our work with Jawun and its Indigenous partners allows us to contribute to a better Australian society, to stretch and grow as individuals, and help Indigenous leaders and their communities solve some of the most intractable challenges there are.'

## Partnership helps drive strategic objectives

When the Jawun partnership is part of an organisation's business strategy it can be leveraged to drive value more broadly across the business in the areas of workforce development, culture and reputation.

For participating agencies within the Australian Public Service (APS), Jawun has been integral to **growing internal capability** in the area of Indigenous affairs. It also supports an agency's **talent** strategy by being positioned at targeted organisational levels as a development program for future leaders. Dennis Richardson, Secretary of the Department of Defence, said the partnership serves a very practical purpose for his agency: 'I see Jawun as a vehicle through which individuals can gain a lot, but I can get benefits which drive broader change in the organisation.'

APS secondees attest that public servants derive real value from working with people who are directly affected by government policies and seeing the effect **policy decisions** have on the ground.

This view was endorsed by Katherine Power, Director of Talent Strategies at the Australian Public Service Commission, who said secondment experience plays back into the way policy and programs are approached in the APS:

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In many instances we are seeing some quite transformational learning occurring. People are coming back and saying, 'As public servants we often focus on analysis and driving towards a solution, and actually it is also really valuable to pause and listen and find local solutions to local challenges without assuming we have all the answers.' So it is creating individuals who advocate a different approach on how we go about designing and delivering different policies and programs. This is a direction we are increasingly moving towards; finding local solutions and working with communities rather than telling them we have the answer. It is really important that we have people with experience that gives them those insights and they bring that back, share it with others and inject it into their own work and the work of their teams.

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A photograph showing a group of people in a professional setting. In the foreground, a man with glasses and a beard (Steve Grzeskowiak) is looking towards the right. Behind him, several other people are visible, some looking in the same direction. The background features a wall with horizontal wooden slats. The overall lighting is warm and indoor.

FEATURE

## Defence and Jawun—delivering a return on investment

In the five years the Department of Defence has partnered with Jawun, it has sent 45 secondees into eight regions across Australia. For Dennis Richardson, Secretary of the Department of Defence, while 'it's an inherently good thing to do', his *raison d'être* is to achieve mutual and material value for Defence within his national commitment to employment opportunity for Indigenous Australians.

As one of the largest employers in Australia, Dennis said: 'It's important for Defence, in all its dimensions, to have relationships with organisations such as Jawun that can assist our engagement within Australia and bring skills into the organisation, for quite selfish reasons.'

'If I didn't see benefits in terms of the organisation, I would still see merit in taking part but I wouldn't necessarily be as enthusiastic. Where you get a trade-off in terms of your own organisational strategies is when you can say, "If we were to run a cost-benefit analysis on this, it would be more than paying for itself.'"

In foreground: Steve Grzeskowiak (Deputy Secretary Estate and Infrastructure, Department of Defence) on the Cape York Executive Visit, 2014. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto

For Defence, the Jawun relationship has already delivered value in terms of capability build among its people, Indigenous employment outcomes, securing a major procurement contract, and forging deeper connection to the organisation's objectives around its role in community.

### On people and leadership

Defence utilises Jawun as a development opportunity for leaders and senior leaders. 'I am keen for Defence leadership, through to middle supervisory levels, to have a stronger sense of Indigenous Australia because that will feed into their commitment to growing the organisation's Indigenous employment and being committed to the strategies we have in that area,' said Dennis. 'It gives real life to our efforts.' Dennis has noticed, both among those who sit around the top table and others, that people who come back from Jawun have not only enjoyed their experience, but they all believe they have learnt things they didn't know before: 'Without exception, it has heightened their awareness and commitment to the department's strategies relating to Indigenous engagement and employment. It serves a very practical purpose for me.'

The program is targeted at senior levels in the organisation and selection is tied to performance. It is not limited to a hierarchical structure though, as Dennis believes that would limit its impact. 'I only have people go on it who have a capacity to influence others and to lead people—because that's what you want in an organisation of our size.'

Justine Greig, Acting Head People, Policy & Culture at Defence, said they get a strong sense of a suitable candidate through supervisors, and understanding what skills and attributes would be

advantageous in particular work areas: 'It's not just about selecting the candidate, it's also about the work area being supported and being able to influence those circles on return from secondment.'

Justine said secondees demonstrate their capability build in different ways: 'Some articulate how their decision-making processes have changed and how they approach problem-solving for more effective outcomes. Others, through deep self-reflection, understand how to work better as a team and apply that in their work groups. One described how it has changed the way he models himself as a leader. We consistently see people actively link their thinking and new-found perspectives—seeing things through an Indigenous lens—to the sorts of outcomes Defence is trying to achieve.'

### On employment

Steve Meekin is Deputy Secretary and head of the Defence Intelligence Security Group. His responsibilities include oversight of the Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap, located 30 kilometres outside Alice Springs. In 2013 Steve attended a Jawun Executive Visit to inner Sydney, where he experienced at first hand the collaboration between Indigenous organisations in Redfern and La Perouse and Jawun secondees from government and corporate organisations across Australia.

Dennis observed: 'To work at Pine Gap requires the highest level of security clearance in Australia. Steve's inner Sydney experience had a direct impact on his approach to the employment of Indigenous Australians at Pine Gap. He has been a real advocate.'

The first Indigenous employee at Pine Gap, Nicky Ross, took up his posting in July 2015. Nicky comes from the local Alice Springs area and, in addition to his other duties, is focused on the provision of advice on Indigenous issues: 'We haven't had Indigenous Australians working for Defence in Pine Gap before,' said Dennis, 'so I believe the Jawun experience does have a material effect on the way people see their jobs and their responsibilities.'

While progress may be slow, its pace is steadily picking up. Last year Defence reported a solid increase in its employment of Indigenous Australians. They include cadet Rhiannon Brown, who is completing a course in criminology that includes 12 weeks a year at Pine Gap.

### On procurement

Dennis attributes a significant Indigenous procurement contract to the Jawun partnership. Steve Grzeskowiak, Deputy Secretary and head of the Defence Infrastructure and Estate Group, took part in a Jawun Executive Visit to Cape York in 2014. Dennis said:

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It's one thing for someone in Steve's position to have a commitment to doing more with Indigenous Australia. It's another to actually go on Jawun, have that personal experience and come back with great personal drive and determination. The spin-off has been in the group's commitment to employ more Indigenous Australians and it has fed directly into Steve's negotiations with service providers.

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Defence achieved the very first exercise by a Commonwealth agency of a provision in the Commonwealth Procurement Rules for a construction contract to an Indigenous-owned enterprise—Pacific Services Group Holdings Pty Ltd—for a project worth up to \$6 million at HMAS Waterhen in Sydney. Dennis explained:

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It was Steve's group that did that. The benefits, the flow-on effects are what I'm looking for. The personal experience is one thing but it's the impact of those personal experiences on what someone brings back into the workplace which is the real trade-off, from a broader organisational perspective.

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### The value of senior leader secondments for Defence

When Warren King was seconded to Cape York in 2015, he had just completed his term as Chief Executive of the Defence Materiel Organisation. As the most senior Australian Public Service employee yet to participate in a secondment, Warren personifies Defence's commitment to the Jawun partnership. His ability to open doors and influence people both in community and within Defence created immense shared value.

Warren worked with Bama Services, a building and landscaping organisation that is part of the Cape York Partnership. 'In Cape York they are very successful in encouraging young people to complete their education but there are not enough jobs for them,' said Warren. 'I was working on how to develop their business so they can employ younger people as they move out of education.'

Given the nature of the organisation, the majority of the government's procurement contracts stem from Defence. As Warren explained:

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It turned out to be extremely useful that I was up there when the government's Indigenous procurement policy was being finalised. Both to input to government about some of the development of the policy and secondly, to prepare Bama Services to meet relevant people, which will give them an opportunity to bid for these contracts when they materialise.

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Warren was able to guide Bama through how Defence is structured, how it tenders and how it evaluates submissions, to prepare it to win Defence work. 'Being a senior executive really was very helpful as I could break through barriers. I was able to go from the Secretary down inside the Department of Defence and make connections.'

Warren proactively engaged with local Defence agencies during his secondment. He identified opportunities for 51 Far North Battalion Army and the Cairns Naval Base to develop stronger relationships with Bama. And when it came to Warren's attention that a number of local children had aspirations to join the military but were precluded by medical conditions, he engaged his colleagues to investigate opportunities for them to join the Reserves. 'This would mean that once a year they would be able to go up north and do some bush work with the Army or some work on a boat with the Navy.'

So trying to link the employment program with the military program was pretty positive.'

On return from secondment, Warren made a number of presentations at the most senior levels in Defence and across the organisation. He said:

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There was a very strong response within Defence. I was able to personalise my own experience for them. I was able to point out my own reactions. I think it's very useful to have that balance of senior executives on secondment to do these sorts of jobs. A), to support the returning secondees internally, who have an ongoing interest in delivering the organisation's Indigenous agenda; but B), to help break down some of these barriers more broadly.

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QBE became a Jawun partner in 2011, the same year it launched its **corporate responsibility** platform, the QBE Foundation. It strives to make a difference in key areas that align with QBE's vision and values, drive employee engagement and create impact through philanthropic resources. Tim Plant, CEO QBE Insurance, said:

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The QBE Foundation is committed to supporting the communities in which we operate and Jawun gives us a terrific opportunity to share our expertise, skills and knowledge to build resilience in Indigenous communities. I was lucky enough to take part in a Jawun Executive Visit and it was fantastic to personally witness the positive impact the locals and Jawun volunteers are having in Cape York. Our partnership with Jawun continues to provide our people with a unique experience and opportunity to develop life-changing skills that they can bring back to not only the workplace, but their personal lives.

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At Westpac, one of Jawun's longest-standing partners, Jawun is embedded within its **sustainability** strategy and underpins its commitment to supporting Indigenous Australians. Brian Hartzler reflected: 'At Westpac, we have long believed we have a responsibility to use our skills and our connections in partnership with Indigenous people to help bridge the disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.'

Other organisations report that they are beginning to understand broader opportunities for the partnership to help **drive culture, inclusion and brand** and to support strategy in areas such as attraction and **recruitment, procurement** (access to Indigenous supply chains) and **government relations**.

## Value is unlocked internally

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Jawun isn't one-way traffic. It doesn't just benefit Indigenous Australia—it benefits corporate Australia too.

BRIAN HARTZLER, CEO, WESTPAC

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Jawun's corporate and government partners attest that the Jawun model creates value for their organisations on many levels: as well as providing an opportunity for organisations to successfully engage with Indigenous Australia, it often results in increased intercultural capability, people and leadership development, a deeper connection to organisational culture and enhanced corporate

social responsibility. However, it is clear that the Jawun model is at its most effective when partners recognise and maximise this value within their own organisations. One organisation that recognises a return on investment across the board is the Department of Defence (see feature, pages 31-33).

## Improved intercultural capability drives inclusion

Global applications  
Inclusive behaviours  
Safe and diverse workplace

When an organisation is well populated by individuals who are intercultural competent, it is able to demonstrate '**intercultural capability**' as an attribute. This term refers to a 'set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies [which enables organisations] to work effectively in cross-cultural situations'.<sup>23</sup> The Jawun secondment program has been shown to accelerate intercultural development in individuals.<sup>24</sup> These individuals return to their workplaces with altered attitudes and behaviours, which helps an organisation to operate more effectively.

In today's global economy, intercultural capability is a hallmark of an inclusive workplace and can differentiate a company from its competitors. The Australian Human Rights Commission describes an inclusive workplace as:

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An environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, where the talents and skills of different groups are valued, and where productivity and customer service improves because the workforce is happier, more motivated and more aware of the many performance benefits that inclusion can bring.<sup>25</sup>

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Building **inclusion** is identified as a priority by CEOs who recognise the commercial return of a high-performing workforce. To ensure a sustainable and successful partnership with Jawun, Suncorp identified two program outcomes that align with their Diversity and Inclusion strategy: increasing the diversity of the workforce and building an inclusive culture throughout the business. 'It's with great pride that we are witnessing our secondees returning to the workplace better equipped to build inclusive teams,' said Leena Lim, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at Suncorp. 'They're demonstrating stronger cultural competency and bringing new ideas and perspectives to Suncorp's community.'

The Australian Public Service Commission reported positive recognition of inclusive behaviours in its 2014 Jawun evaluation (see case study, page 39). Katherine Power quoted one secondee as saying: 'The Jawun secondment consolidated a number of facets of my management style; I realise now how important it is to be consultative and inclusive in change activities.'<sup>26</sup>

For Cameron Roan, Partner at KPMG, building a team of inclusive people is critical to effecting higher performance within the firm. He attributes secondee Tanya Kaye's exposure to working in community as directly affecting her ability to demonstrate inclusive leadership in her role: 'What Tanya learnt from working in community was cultural sensitivity and cultural inclusion. And Tanya applied that to how she interacted with her colleagues back in Sydney and with clients who have different backgrounds.'

Organisations striving to create **safe and diverse** workplaces understand the importance of intercultural competency. IAG seeks to help 'make the world a safer place' not only at work but in the communities in which it operates. Carmen Ashcroft, Senior Manager Talent & Diversity, said that 'in learning more about themselves through the Jawun program, secondees are able to better navigate challenges at work and contribute more effectively to our organisational goal of creating a safer world.'

Catherine Hunter, Head of Corporate Citizenship at KPMG, explained how partnership with Jawun contributes to its aim to increase Indigenous employment: 'We really want to build a more diverse workforce, and one of the keys to being successful in that is to create a culturally safe workplace through cultural awareness and competency. Our Jawun secondees are going to be a fantastic support mechanism for us internally as we onboard Indigenous employees, in terms of buddies or mentors, or just helping their colleagues to be aware of creating that safe environment for Indigenous employees.'

Partnership with Jawun offers opportunities for capability growth beyond engaging with Indigenous Australia. As many partner organisations attested, intercultural capability has **global applications**. Emma Majstrovich, HR Manager Diversity at Woodside, explained:

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The opportunities offered through Jawun help our employees develop the skills to successfully communicate and collaborate across cultural boundaries. We see this as an important leadership competency for Woodside and way to build a diverse and inclusive workplace.

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Boarding a small plane on the East Kimberley Executive Visit, 2011. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto



Simon Veitch (Department of Agriculture and Water Resources secondee), Rosie Upton (Strathgordon Elder) and Tanya Kaye (KPMG secondee), Cape York, 2014. Photo: Vit Koci

# Growing global intercultural competency

Tanya Kaye’s secondment enhanced her ability to work effectively in a new country and new culture.

Tanya Kaye had been working for KPMG for two years when she applied for a Jawun secondment. ‘I wanted to use the skills I’d learned to make a difference, and to see that difference on the ground,’ she said. Tanya’s secondment took her to the remote town of Pormpuraaw in Cape York for six weeks, which turned out to be a period of intense personal growth. ‘It completely pushed me out of my comfort zone,’ Tanya reflected. ‘One of the first things the community asked me when I arrived was, “What is your story?” That sort of question forces self-reflection and allows for a much deeper understanding of who you are, where you’re going and what you stand for.’

During the secondment, Tanya underwent a step change in intercultural competency. ‘Through working with new people and a different culture, you develop

cultural sensitivity,’ said Tanya. ‘I learnt that you really need to understand who you’re working with and what their motives and values and perspectives are; that you can’t just go in with your own agenda and your own way of thinking about how things should work.’

Cameron Roan, Partner at KPMG, was Tanya’s performance manager at the time. He reflected Tanya was ‘a little apprehensive’ before her Jawun experience, but he was happily taken aback at the soft-skill growth he observed in her on her return. ‘Jawun exceeded my expectations in Tanya’s development,’ he said. ‘She grew in confidence in her own abilities, in her capacity to deliver positive change and in her resilience to take on new challenges.’

This year Tanya put her hand up for an opportunity to work in KPMG’s India office, which Cameron saw

as further evidence of the impact of the Jawun experience. ‘The proof’s in the pudding,’ he said. ‘Tanya put herself forward for this India placement and that wouldn’t have happened pre-Jawun. The secondment really enhanced her ability to work effectively in a new country and a new culture—you can see the impact she’s making over there.’

Cameron’s experience of Jawun has led him to advocate the program internally at KPMG. ‘What we’ve seen in terms of people who’ve done Jawun secondments is that it really rounds them out and they thrive,’ he said. ‘In my view, encouraging our people to undertake a Jawun secondment directly reflects the journey our firm aspires to take when working with our clients, and should be a key focus for all leaders in driving a high-performance culture locally.’

## Platform for people and leadership development

- Growth in employee capability
- Align to talent framework
- Evaluate competency build
- Build leadership strength
- Plan transition back to work

Corporate organisations and government agencies have found that Jawun secondments have led to valuable staff development, with noticeable **growth in employee capability** on their return to work. Participants come back from secondments more resilient and mature, with improved stakeholder relation skills and the ability to work with a greater degree of autonomy.<sup>27</sup> These benefits were particularly evident when the Jawun program was **aligned to talent management platforms**.

Colin Carter, a former BCG partner who helped establish Jawun, reflected on the positive impact of secondments on employees' effectiveness:

People came back better than they were before. The young consultants who went away had to deal with more responsibility and more ambiguity. They couldn't just talk to people using the normal consulting jargon. It was a challenging, formative experience and we saw the benefits of that when they returned.

Anthony Roediger commented that Jawun secondments 'provide fantastic development experiences for BCG employees. Staff can see a world they have never seen, practise skills in a completely new environment, take leadership roles that were previously unavailable and interact with stakeholders, such as senior Indigenous leaders and government stakeholders, they wouldn't normally be exposed to.'

At Westpac our people have taken up over 700 secondments with Indigenous partner organisations. And what we've found is that those secondments have been transformative—our people return with a greater understanding of, and respect for, Indigenous culture and a new set of skills that help them become leaders within Westpac. It's these shared benefits that make the program so powerful.

BRIAN HARTZER, CEO, WESTPAC

Katherine Power recognises the value of the Jawun secondment program in building leadership capability across the APS:

We are absolutely seeing improvement in leadership capability that we as a public service really value. And those capabilities are around engaging others in making progress on really difficult challenges, listening and diagnosing what is going on. For us, that is what leadership is all about. People come back from secondment and apply those skills at work.

Ann Sherry, formerly Group Executive, People & Performance at Westpac, observed an increase in maturity in staff who participated in the Jawun program: 'Many employees who returned from secondments stood taller because they realised they had a lot of opportunity that many people didn't have. Organisationally, Westpac had more people with a better understanding of the world, their own capacity and the communities Westpac was serving.'

We find Jawun secondments are extraordinary for growth for our people. They get the opportunity to work on what are often seriously complex problems, in a different environment with more space to manage themselves.

TRISH CLANCY, PRINCIPAL, BCG

Secondment partner organisations recognise the opportunity to see a return on investment through aligning Jawun to its talent management strategies. Many are working to link it to people and leadership development frameworks with some, including the Australian Public Service and QBE, using Jawun as a talent program.

National Australia Bank has partnered with Jawun since 2010 and links the program to its Group Talent Pool. Tina Bain, Business Unit Manager, Direct Consumer, Digital & Direct Banking, has seen the benefits of this first hand. Her direct report, Steph Stokes, went on secondment to the West Kimberley in 2014 and has been promoted twice since then. 'Steph has always been a high-performing leader who is passionate about people but with this opportunity she was forced to step out of her comfort zone and challenge herself, personally and professionally, and she rose to the



From left: Jacob Azzopardi (RAC secondee), Richard Long (Outback School Bus Services) and Kevin Chen (Macquarie Capital secondee), East Kimberley, 2015. Photo: David Rennie

challenge. Returning to work, Steph was able to do things she would never have tried in the past, to communicate messages to larger groups, articulate her thoughts well, take others on a journey of understanding Indigenous issues and she has a lot more confidence in her abilities. This experience has opened up a lot more opportunities for her in the bank too, which is also fantastic for NAB.'

The APS actively evaluates the impact of the Jawun secondment program on capability build across its agencies (see case study, page 39).

Partners that align the Jawun program with their talent management programs are not only better able to understand capability build and capture learnings, but to build **future leaders**.

At NAB, the internal Jawun selection process includes criteria on tenure, performance and manager approval; these criteria must be met before a candidate will be considered for a secondment. 'Employees identified as high-performing and high-potential are given the opportunity to participate in this rewarding leadership development opportunity,' said Rebecca Kotow, Head of Social Impact & Community Investment at NAB. Having been promoted twice within 12 months following her secondment, Steph Stokes said, 'Now they have

seen the investment they have made in sending me and what that's done. Not only for me, but the value it has brought back to the business.'

At Westpac, some employees are offered secondments as part of a broader leadership program. CEO Brian Hartzler reflected on the internal value dividend: 'Westpac is a beneficiary of Jawun. What we've found is that those secondments have been transformative—they really do turn our people into champions ... and many become leaders within Westpac.'

Susan Ferrier, National Managing Partner, People, Performance & Culture at KPMG, reflected on James Mabbott's progression from business development manager to Head of KPMG Innovate following his secondment. 'Doing the Jawun secondment has certainly helped equip James for his current role,' she said. 'Secondees learn how to engage with a variety of people; how to listen, consider and appreciate multiple perspectives so their leadership capability is expanded. I believe we will have better and stronger leaders at KPMG if those who ultimately end up in leadership positions have done a secondment, like the ones that are on offer at Jawun, at some stage in their career.'



## How the APS evaluates capability growth through secondments

From the beginning of the partnership between Jawun and the Australian Public Service (APS), the APS was looking at the big picture. 'We were thinking about what it was that we, as a public service, could contribute to Jawun and what benefit we could receive in return,' said Katherine Power, Director of Talent Strategies, Australian Public Service Commission (APSC).

In 2011, the APS piloted the Jawun program with 11 high-performing, relatively senior Australian public servants participating in secondments. The pilot was designed to achieve three objectives:

- positive outcomes for Indigenous communities
- increased cultural awareness and personal development for APS secondees
- increased cultural awareness and broader awareness of Indigenous matters for APS agencies.

'We saw it as a two-way program from the time we piloted,' Katherine explained. 'The first objective was around making a contribution to Indigenous organisations. But it was also important to us that we could offer employees personal and professional development,

and then experience those ongoing, APS-wide benefits from increased cultural awareness. We always felt the program enabled us both to give and to get some benefits back.'

Immediately following the pilot, the APSC conducted an evaluation, consisting of surveys sent to secondees and their managers, to measure whether the three objectives had been met. 'We wanted to check that the program would, in fact, deliver the benefits that we expected,' said Katherine. 'As a public service, we believe it's really important that any investment in development is delivering benefits. We spend public money so every dollar spent counts. It's our strong philosophy that we need to evaluate to make sure our programs are being delivered as expected.'

The pilot evaluation confirmed positive outcomes from the Jawun program against all three objectives, and the APS committed to a five-year partnership. Since 2011, the APSC has conducted two further evaluations: one at the two-year mark, and one the following year. Going forward, evaluations will be conducted annually. 'We check in with secondees and their managers up to six months after their secondment ends,' explained Katherine. 'And then all the data is pulled together on an annual basis.

This year we also surveyed agency coordinators to understand the value for agencies, so we'll effectively get a 360-degree view.'

The evaluation findings are shared at senior levels of the public service. 'Agencies and senior leaders have a genuine interest in understanding the results from the program,' Katherine said. 'It also keeps us focused on making sure the learning is translating from the secondment to the workplace.'

'You can see the value [of the program] for secondees and the APS is increasing over time,' said Naomi Jeacle, Jawun Program Manager at the APSC. 'Around 16 new agencies came on board this year, and more are looking to come on board in 2016.' The APSC believes the increasing interest in the program is mainly due to word of mouth. 'Secondees are coming back and spreading the word about these amazing experiences they're having on the program. And managers are seeing the value for their employees and pushing it internally,' said Naomi. Katherine agreed: 'We know that the Jawun program offers really powerful, in many instances quite transformational learning for individuals and that translates back into the workplace.'

# Transitioning back into the workplace

Nina Kordic from IAG applied for a Jawun secondment in 2014 for two reasons: 'I was looking for a way to give back to the community, and I wanted to do something that would stretch me professionally.' She was seconded to NAISDA Dance College, Australia's first Indigenous dance school, on the Central Coast of New South Wales. 'My project was to define the "DNA" of the college,' said Nina. 'It definitely developed my critical thinking and strategic thinking skills, and also my ability to influence.'

On returning to work after six weeks, Nina's manager Carmen Ashcroft, Senior Manager of Talent & Diversity, gave her a couple of days to readjust. For Nina, this was extremely valuable. 'The secondment is such a big experience, there is so much personal and professional growth. It's important for an organisation to be mindful of that change.' Carmen had kept in touch with Nina during her secondment and 'had a strong sense as to the sort of re-entry she would need. The re-entry is often as big an adjustment as the immersion experience. It was important for Nina to have an opportunity to internalise what she was processing. That time helped her to consolidate her understanding about her own elements of change.'

Carmen said conversations between manager and secondee on re-entry are important to help capture and maximise learnings. 'I always say to people, "You're coming back with a host of new and different experiences.

I want you to start thinking about how they help inform your thinking back here, and how you will best be able to share and utilise your new-found insights in the team and the business at large.'"

By acting as a sounding board for Nina, Carmen knew 'she came back with some different views to the ones she held when she left, but she could articulate them and I could say to her, "How will that play out differently at work? How will that make you approach something differently, influence differently?"' Allowing Nina time to think and process and then use me as a sounding board meant that we could springboard some of those experiences to greater effect.'

Carmen also looked for opportunities for Nina to apply her learnings. 'There was an upcoming project and I thought, "Here's a vehicle for Nina to practise and exercise what she's learnt.'" It was a culture project that allowed Nina to draw directly on her Jawun experiences. Carmen explained, 'It was a live opportunity for her to apply what she'd learnt.'

Nina's professional growth soon became obvious within the business. 'Other managers have observed the changes in Nina,' said Carmen. 'She's more confident and at ease with stakeholder engagement and management.' Based on Nina's performance, Carmen recommended her for 'three rather large pieces of work' on a new talent framework rollout and has continued to see her growing in the workplace.

## Maximising effectiveness on return to work

In researching this report, three elements emerged as key to a successful transition back into the workplace post-secondment:

- Time to process the transition.** Managers who supported individuals (through coaching or mentoring) to reflect on their secondment experience and how their altered perceptions may affect them in the workplace found that individuals could more fully appreciate their internal response to the experience, readjust effectively to 'regular work life', and demonstrate new capabilities.
- Opportunity to openly share learnings.** Secondees whose manager encouraged them to share their experience with colleagues in the form of presentations to leaders and peers were able to articulate how their learnings applied to the business, engage others in the benefits, and help to communicate secondment opportunities to others.
- 'Stretch assignments' to apply learnings.** Secondees who had opportunities to apply learnings through leading or taking an active role in assignments that would stretch them to a new level of performance were able to demonstrate capability build to leaders and colleagues outside of their normal circle of influence. This built greater understanding of the value of the program among senior leaders and gave secondees visibility on talent radars.

Peter Hanlon, now Chairman of BankSA, was in a senior marketing role at Westpac when he was seconded to Cape York in far north Queensland. He recognised that BankSA could ‘use the Jawun program as a very specific part of its people development processes’ because of the impact of his secondment on his own leadership style:

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I have no doubt whatsoever that the Jawun experience strengthened my perspective on being a real person, being a much more genuine leader, but also being a leader who’s connected not only to the broader society but to the people who worked for me.

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James Sheffield, GM Proprietary Lending Support at Commonwealth Bank Australia, is a senior leader who advocates the program within CBA. He had a taste of the secondment experience through attending a Jawun Executive Visit to the Goulburn Murray region in Victoria. James said learning to deal with ambiguity is critical to becoming an effective leader at CBA. ‘People often don’t realise earlier in their career that a huge part of being a leader is dealing with ambiguity, we do it every day in our roles. You must be confident and capable in leading through ambiguity to be an effective leader, and the secondment experience is absolutely a learning ground to test and build those skills.’

One aspect of secondments that is often overlooked is capturing learnings through the **transition back to work**, following a six- or 12-week period in community. Partner organisation IAG has actively managed this process with effective results (see case study, page 40).

### **Bolsters organisational culture and employer brand**

In plain terms, organisational culture is the way work gets done. It is often defined as a set of assumptions about how to think, feel and act.<sup>28</sup> High performance cultures are known to drive real value, and senior leaders have the greatest relative impact on creating culture in an organisation.<sup>29</sup> Many of Jawun’s longer-standing partners attested that Jawun has become a positive and essential component of their **organisational culture**.

‘It’s become part of our DNA,’ said Vit Koci, Westpac’s Program Manager Cape York Indigenous Community. Melanie Evans, General Manager Service Revolution & Transformation at Westpac, agreed: ‘When it comes to diversity and community, the Westpac-Jawun relationship is so core to what we’re proud of that you can’t disconnect it from our culture. The Jawun program has been subject to multiple CEOs, a lot of change, the GFC, when all programs were reviewed—and now our people see it as a critical part of who

we are. A person will always be a better leader if they have a more diverse experience, broader perspective, better understanding, more patience, if they’re more likely to accept non-traditional approaches and truly operate as part of a team. You can’t send someone to a university course to teach them that.’

Beth Patterson, Chief Legal & Technology Services Officer at Allens, said the firm is committed to building a positive culture: ‘Through Jawun, we as a firm can offer employees a way to make their own valuable contribution beyond their regular role. It’s a way to help build our culture. Allens’ commitment to this type of cross cultural exchange is beneficial both outside of and within our organisation.’

Partners at BCG are required to mentor secondees, which helps maximise their development. It also brings the experience to life for senior leaders and builds a learning culture within the organisation. Trish Clancy, Principal at BCG, now mentors BCG consultant Maria English, currently on secondment to Wunan. ‘Maria’s accountable for making the decisions, but I’m a sounding board for her,’ said Trish. Maria said:

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Having Trish as a mentor has given me the opportunity to benefit from both her knowledge of the East Kimberley, and her expertise at guiding projects to achieve impact. She has consistently encouraged me, and helped propel me over project hurdles with a combination of creativity and pragmatism.

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The term ‘employer brand’ refers to an organisation’s reputation as an employer. Since the GFC, building a strong employer brand has become a major focus for many companies in response to growing **competition for talent**. An employee value proposition (the benefits offered by the company as an employer) is often a key facet of employer brand. The Jawun program enhances an organisation’s employee value proposition by presenting a unique and highly attractive opportunity to new recruits. This is especially valuable for attracting Gen Y or ‘millennial’ talent; studies have shown this generation has a strong social conscience and desires ‘work-life integration’.<sup>30</sup>

Trish Clancy explained:

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The secondment program is a huge part of our ability to attract the right people to our firm—particularly the generation coming through now. People don't want to think of their career as some kind of linear path. They want to mix their career and work in other things—including things that have social impact. The richness and variety we can offer as a firm because of Jawun is really great. Because we've worked with Jawun for so long, we can point to specific things that we've had a role in—it's given BCG a genuine, rich story.

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Catherine Hunter deals with many new recruits at KPMG. She reflected: 'Something we hear again and again, particularly with the graduate program, is people telling us they've had offers from each of the Big Four [professional services firms], but the reason they choose KPMG is because of our commitment to community. And quite often they will call out Jawun.'

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**We can't underestimate it—do not underestimate the value the Jawun program has to employee engagement and therefore corporate value.**

**MELANIE EVANS, GENERAL MANAGER SERVICE REVOLUTION & TRANSFORMATION, WESTPAC**

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**Employee engagement** (the emotional commitment of an employee to an organisation and its goals) can also have significant implications for employer brand. In an age of social media and increased transparency, 'people are far more likely to trust a company based on what its employees have to say than on its recruitment advertising'.<sup>31</sup> Engaged employees care about their work and their organisations—they share their organisation's values and goals. The Jawun secondment program contributes to employee engagement by not only providing an opportunity for staff to grow and contribute, but to 'live out' their organisation's values.

Tina Bain noticed the impact secondee Steph Stokes had in her NAB business unit after six weeks in the West Kimberley. Tina said Steph ignited the interest of others by engaging with staff across the business and sharing her passion for Indigenous affairs: 'Steph has been able to share her experiences and understanding of Indigenous Affairs with employees across NAB via multiple

channels of communication. Since returning she has increased cultural awareness and engagement across our organisation through promotion of our Indigenous e-learning program and her work in our traineeship program.'

Not only does the Jawun program help attract people to a firm, but those who participate in secondments contribute to a healthy and engaged workforce. Jaimes Adlington, Executive Manager Group Assurance at Westpac, explained:

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It creates a domino effect internally—the more people who go on one of these secondments, the more it creates a mini groundswell of 'generous of spirit' people in the bank. And the more staff members you have like that, the more positive the work environment is going to be, because people who are generous of spirit tend to be more engaged and productive employees.

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Four years into its Jawun partnership, QBE recognises the link between the work it does in community and employee engagement. Jason Hammond, General Manager Workers Compensation, said: 'Being able to spend time with inspirational leaders who are driven by their beliefs and passion made our secondees realise just how lucky they were in their own lives and, interestingly, made them feel far more engaged with QBE, who was prepared to invest in their secondment.'

Adrian Fisk, Partner at KPMG, explained the impact of the Jawun program on employees: 'Working on Jawun secondments gives our people more meaning and purpose in their role. They can see that the skills they have—accounting, finance, strategy skills—can be used to really make a difference.' One of Adrian's team members, Tien Do, participated in a secondment to The Glen. 'It made me realise that my work supports something really meaningful,' Tien said. 'And that they're not only focused on the profit side of things, but on sustainable growth and development, the need to develop the community around you.'

**Employee loyalty** is a strong indicator of employee engagement. According to workplace studies, 'loyal employees are significantly more likely to make their organisation successful and execute the company's strategy'.<sup>32</sup> The Jawun program contributes to employee loyalty by engendering a sense of gratitude and pride within secondees towards their organisation.<sup>33</sup>



West Kimberley Executive Visit group in Broome, 2015. Photo: David Rennie

Catherine Hunter described how secondments affect employee loyalty: ‘KPMG won the human rights business award last year and I think it made everyone in the firm really stand up and think about what we do and feel enormously proud of what we do, because it has become quite core—the Jawun program in particular.’

Steph Stokes said her loyalty towards NAB was cemented after completing a secondment in 2014. ‘There’s the sense of organisational pride. I try to share with people that I am so proud to work for an organisation that thinks this is really important and invests in their people to give back.’ Trish Clancy talked about the impact of the Jawun program on both employee engagement and retention: ‘I have a theory that we retain people who’ve been on a Jawun secondment for longer. Our BCG alumni who have been secondees are often closer to us, it deepens that connection.’

## Delivers corporate social responsibility

- Community investment
- Sustainable development
- Bring RAP to life

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the ‘responsibility of an organisation for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment’.<sup>34</sup> This responsibility is expressed through behaviour that ‘contributes to sustainable development, including the health and welfare of society’.<sup>35</sup> Jawun supports its secondment partners to deliver on CSR by providing a framework to effectively engage with and contribute to positive outcomes for Indigenous communities. As Anthony Roediger from BCG attested: ‘Jawun’s brokering role dramatically raises the chances of success and sustainability by providing the mechanism for corporates to get involved with Indigenous Australia.’



Buraluba Yura Ngurra Workers Hostel in Halls Creek, East Kimberley, 2014. Photo: David Rennie

Adrian Fisk and his team at KPMG have been involved with The Glen via secondments since early 2013. Adrian also supports The Glen as an adviser to its board. He reflected that the Jawun partnership allowed for long-term **community investment**. 'We saw the benefit of using secondments and continuing to support a key organisation over the long term, not just six weeks.'

For many organisations, their commitment to CSR is reflected in a **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**, a tool to help translate good intentions towards reconciliation into action. In providing a framework for organisations to engage with Indigenous communities on the ground, Jawun helps corporates and government agencies convert their RAP ideals into tangible activities. Cameron Roan, Partner at KPMG, explained:

The Jawun program makes our RAP very real. A RAP is written on a piece of paper, but how do you make it real? Jawun is an organisation that KPMG has a strong connection with, and it means we can articulate what we have actually done, what value we have added to community. Jawun is one of the initiatives to showcase the impact we're making in Australia, which is directly aligned to our purpose which is to inspire confidence and empower change.

Jodie Symes, Community Engagement Consultant at Allens, said the Jawun program illustrates to employees the genuine and tangible commitment of the firm towards reconciliation:

At induction, all staff are told about our RAP and that includes the Jawun program. We invariably have a lot of lawyers asking about Jawun. They tend to come in with an interest in social justice—they want to know they're coming to work for a place that actually has a real commitment, rather than just paying lip service.

Siobhan Toohill, Group Head of Sustainability at Westpac, said Jawun enabled the organisation to convert Westpac's RAP goals into real, pragmatic efforts: 'Jawun is a flagship engagement program for Westpac, accelerating the progress of reconciliation throughout our business.'

### Enhances stakeholder relations

- || Broaden organisational networks
- || Connection into communities
- || Touch points for clients

The Jawun partnership model facilitates real and powerful connections between partner organisations. Through living and working in community, secondees form strong relationships with Indigenous organisations and leaders, which are often sustained long after the secondment ends. Through Jawun's Executive Visit program, senior corporate and government executives are given the opportunity to engage with and

establish meaningful relationships with Indigenous leaders and Indigenous partner organisations. These interactions serve to enhance relations with stakeholder groups such as **community, clients and government**.

QBE sees multiple outcomes from the secondment program. Victoria Doherty, Head of Programs, said: 'Through the immersion opportunity Jawun offers, our people not only gain further appreciation and connection with Indigenous communities but also build cultural awareness in dealing with various stakeholders and situations. As one of the largest insurers of Indigenous communities and organisations across Australia, this has helped us to foster deeper relationships with our customers, and create stronger links in the communities we serve.'

Warren King, former Chief Executive of the Defence Materiel Organisation, sees the Jawun program connecting Defence to more Indigenous communities across Australia:

agendas and it's something I can speak about at length and with credibility.'

Tracey Benson reflected on the very practical way secondments provide insight into communities the Department of Industry and Science serves: 'We're trying to engage people in the community, and the Jawun program gives us insight on some of those people. That's been really useful because we've found people aren't doing things the way we thought they were. For example, with telecommunications technology, quite often in remote communities the community would have a shared wi-fi instead of individual ownership of things, and that's important to consider when you're thinking about building tools or products for people.'

Glen Brennan, Head of Indigenous Finance & Development at NAB, said the Jawun program brings value to the business in the way it delivers services to Indigenous Australians.

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Defence has had a strong presence in places like the Northern Territory for many years, but what we're seeing now through Jawun is Defence staff engaging with communities in different ways and where we may have had less exposure. And by breaking down barriers we're able to bring those communities into Defence through commercial pathways like the Commonwealth procurement provisions.

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Returning secondees bring back both an improved understanding of the complexity of Indigenous culture and also an enormous belief in the potential of Indigenous Australians. This improves NAB's ability to engage more effectively to deliver our Indigenous programs and services. The simple truth is that Jawun's alumni are better able to understand Indigenous issues and meaningfully contribute to potential solutions.

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For NAB, the opportunity to send secondee Steph Stokes to Beagle Bay in the West Kimberley, gave the bank positive recognition in the community. Tina Bain said:

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NAB has received tremendous value from giving Steph the opportunity to do a secondment in Beagle Bay. Steph was an amazing ambassador for NAB, educating the Indigenous communities about what our organisation does and how we can work together to add value to their lives.

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Corporate partners acknowledge their reputation and credibility among **government** stakeholders is boosted through the Jawun connection. Trish Clancy often deals with government and social sectors in her role as Principal at BCG. She explained: 'My secondment and board position have enriched my views on lots of the issues I deal with from a work perspective and give me credibility with the public service in Canberra when I talk on these issues. When I refer to my experience living in Halls Creek in the East Kimberley, people respect the perspective that brings.'

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Corporate organisations find their partnership with Jawun plays a role in consolidating and deepening relationships with **clients**. The Jawun program not only demonstrates to clients the firm's values around commitment to community, it can create points of connection on Indigenous affairs. Trish Clancy from BCG now serves on the Wunan board. She explained: 'It's a great topic of connection—commercially and more broadly. I've noted Indigenous affairs is relatively high on people's

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Catherine Hunter talked about the impact of KPMG's nine-year partnership with Jawun on its interactions with government: 'It has built a reputation and recognition for us with government, in terms of the work we do, because it demonstrates that we are truly committed, given the significance of our investment over a period of time.'



West Kimberley, 2015. *Photo: David Rennie*





A growing ripple effect

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The subtext of Jawun is that it creates a group of people who become personally quite committed to Indigenous issues in Australia. So when we think about the broader issues of constitutional recognition and reconciliation, there are now hundreds and hundreds of people who have been through Jawun who are foot soldiers for the cause.

PETER HANLON, CHAIRMAN, BANK SA

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A 'ripple effect' is defined as a spreading effect or series of consequences, usually unintentional, caused by a single action or event.<sup>36</sup> Fifteen years from its beginnings in Cape York, Jawun is beginning to see a ripple effect occurring through an alumni of more than 1,900 secondees and 500 leaders in Jawun's partner organisations who have visited the communities in which it operates. As these numbers increase, it follows that the ripple effect of Jawun partnerships will reach more and more people in Australia.

The influence of the Jawun program often starts with an individual experience (the stone dropped in the pond) in the form of a secondment or Executive Visit (see Figure 4, page 8).

This experience tends to create 'ripples' or a series of changes within the individual that usually occur in the following order:

1. **Attitudinal changes** as a result of increased awareness and empathy.
2. **Behavioural changes** such as a deeper connection to community, greater interest in Indigenous affairs, more inclusive behaviours in the workplace.
3. **Taking action** in the form of volunteer work, formal or informal advocacy on Indigenous issues, board positions or related roles in Indigenous organisations.

By definition, a ripple effect often spreads to areas or populations far removed from its origins (see Figure 8). Similarly, the Jawun program goes beyond an individual experience. People who have participated in secondments or Executive Visits commonly go on to influence their social circles—usually starting with family and friends and then moving to wider networks—creating the following **ripple effect in broader society**:

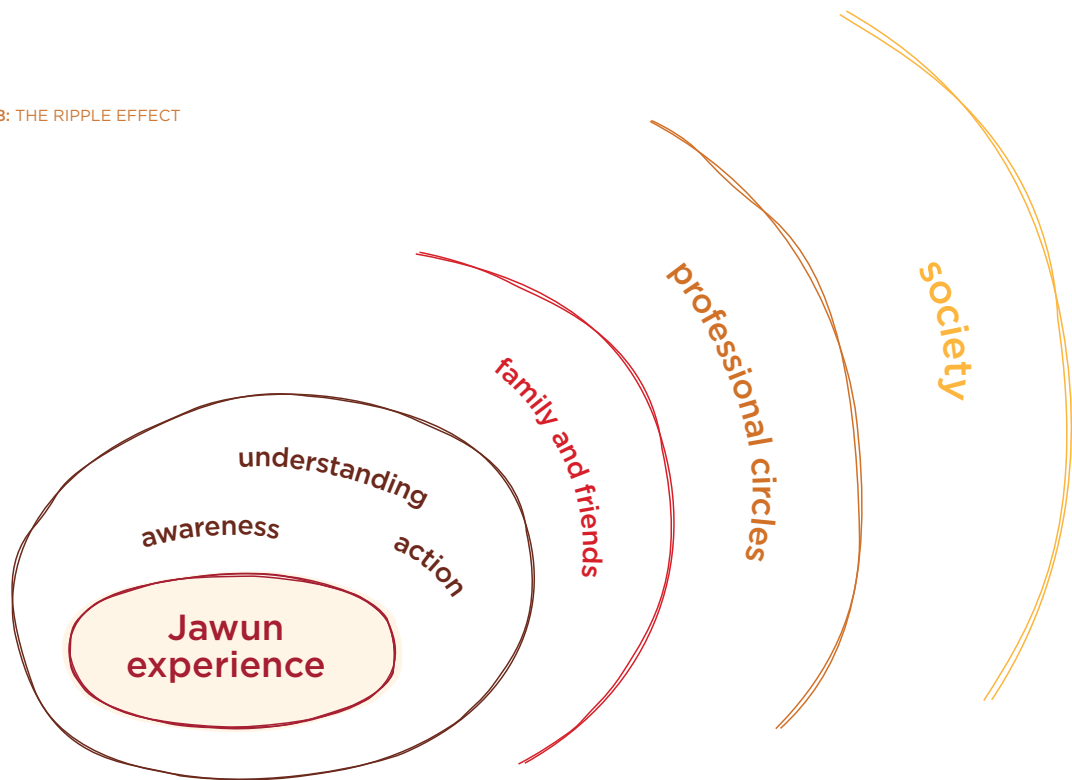
**Family, friends and wider social circles are influenced** when secondment or Executive Visit experiences and new insights are shared, and when perceptions are challenged through conversations.

**Professional circles are influenced** when alumni and executives model inclusive behaviour in the



West Kimberley Executive Visit group, 2015. Photo: David Rennie

FIGURE 8: THE RIPPLE EFFECT



workplace, influence organisational practices, challenge misconceptions, lead by example and encourage others to engage with Indigenous Australia. **Broader society is influenced** when alumni or Executive Visit participants who hold positions of authority are able to influence public opinion, government or industry, or when public servants inform and influence the delivery of policies and programs.

Every time you send out a group of secondees, there's a group of people who have the chance to go back into broader society with a better view and a better understanding of the issues that face Aboriginal people all across Australia.

PETER RILEY, WESTPAC, NPY LANDS 2014

## Changes within the individual

- || Attitudinal changes
- || Behavioural changes

A Jawun secondment or Executive Visit is often a deeply transformative experience, which not only changes the way an individual thinks about themselves and others but the way they operate in the world.<sup>37</sup> In the 2014 Jawun Alumni Survey, 77% of respondents described their Jawun experience as 'life-changing'. When individuals directly engage with Indigenous communities, it enables deeper awareness of Indigenous challenges and realities, and leads to **attitudinal changes** in the form of greater understanding, support, empathy and respect for Indigenous people.<sup>38</sup>

Katherine Power from the Australian Public Service Commission said secondees from the APS typically report a shift in attitude. One secondnee surveyed in the APSC evaluation conducted in 2014 reflected: 'I have changed from a blind follower of general attitudes to someone wanting to make a change.' Peter Rixon, who works in the APS, explained how his attitudes towards Indigenous Australians were radically changed following his secondment:

Before Jawun, when I was asked about the Indigenous community my answers were shaped by suspicions fed by what I now know to be ill-informed stereotypes. Thanks to the Jawun program, I understand now the legitimacy of Indigenous aspiration, and the need to allow cultural expression and provide meaningful opportunities for Indigenous communities.

Secondees' attitudes towards place and community changed as their understanding of Indigenous culture deepened. Pete Goss, formerly of BCG, explained:

I'd heard about connection to country and sometimes it comes across as a purely mystical thing, but when you're walked around the land by someone from community and they point out the place where people gave birth or the place where justice was handed out, it suddenly dawned on me that it's a deeply historical and practical connection to land.

Studies in the field of social psychology have shown that 'general attitudes toward ethnic or religious groups are good predictors of behavioural patterns'.<sup>39</sup> Secondees and Executive Visit participants with changed attitudes towards Indigenous Australia often go on to demonstrate **changes in their behaviour**. Secondees identified several new behaviours—including deeper connection to community, greater interest in Indigenous affairs and more inclusive behaviours in the workplace—that were linked to their Jawun experience.<sup>40</sup>

Renee Schicks from Commonwealth Bank Australia lives in a seaside suburb of Sydney and completed her six-week secondment in nearby La Perouse.

She feels more connected to her local Indigenous community since her Jawun experience:

I was fairly ignorant before about what the Indigenous organisations around here did. But now I have that insight, I can look around my area and say, 'Oh, look, the Land Council has sponsored the local touch team and kids are getting involved in touch' or 'There's the aged-care group and they're off to take the Aunties to arts and crafts day'. There are so many things the local Indigenous community has gotten involved in that you don't know about until you get in there and start learning.

Secondees and Executive Visit participants had an increased awareness of, and interest in Indigenous affairs following a Jawun experience. Martina Friedl from Westpac explained: 'After the secondment, all these things—like Mabo and land rights—were clearer to me, and it felt like I started reading or hearing about them everywhere. I was more tuned in to it after the secondment.'

Based on feedback from partner organisations, behavioural changes were also demonstrated in the workplace, with secondees becoming more inclusive of others, or adopting a more inclusive

FIGURE 9: AREAS OF INVOLVEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA FOR JAWUN SECONDEES FOLLOWING THEIR SECONDMENT



Source: Jawun Alumni Survey, 2014.



From left: Carolina De La Piedra (Qantas secondee), Sarah Henderson (ATO secondee), Tim McGreen (Hope Vale Traditional Elder), Donagh Warner (Westpac secondee), Glenn Weston (Jawun Regional Director, Cape York) and Vit Koci (Program Manager, Indigenous Community Partnerships, Westpac), Cape York, 2015. Photo: David Rennie

approach to projects.<sup>41</sup> One APS secondee explained: 'I'm now more tolerant and accepting of people's differences in the workplace.' Another commented: 'I realise now how important it is to be consultative and inclusive in change activities'.

I've always been interested in Indigenous affairs, but my secondment has left me even more passionate and motivated to utilise the skills and experience I have to contribute in this space.

STEPH STOKES, NAB, WEST KIMBERLEY 2014

Jawun experiences commonly inspired or unlocked a desire to **take action** and continue to **contribute to Indigenous affairs**. In the 2014 Jawun Alumni Survey, 83% of respondents reported that their Jawun secondment was a key motivator for more active involvement in Indigenous affairs. Secondees identified several areas of contribution post-secondment, including volunteer work, formal or informal advocacy on Indigenous issues, and advising or serving on Indigenous boards (see Figure 9).

Bonnie Carter from the Department of Defence was inspired to become a **mentor** following her secondment, and said her Jawun experience provided a valuable point of connection: 'I became a mentor for an Indigenous woman at work, which was outside of my usual role. I told her about my Jawun experience and she respected me for that. Then all of a sudden I had other trainees contacting me and I've ended up becoming a mentor to a larger group of Indigenous employees.' Bonnie said this continued engagement has been common in her department: 'A lot of people in Defence who've completed a Jawun secondment have gone on to support our Indigenous programs—particularly with the Navy, Army or Air Force reserves.'

In the 2014 Jawun Alumni Survey, one former secondee commented:

I have now joined the Brothers and Sisters program for Westpac. This is an Indigenous employee action group which celebrates Indigenous culture and helps Indigenous employees connect with each other. Through this, I promote Indigenous awareness throughout the business and also provide mentoring to young Indigenous employees.



Timothy Matthews (ASIC secondee), Peter (from ALPA Community Store) and Craig Brent (KPMG secondee), North East Arnhem Land, 2014.  
Photo: Louise Law

Other secondees continued to contribute by **providing advice and support** to Indigenous organisations and leaders. John Williams from Westpac remains in touch with The Glen. 'I continue to help them review business cases,' he explained. Beth Patterson from Allens has stayed in contact with staff at her Indigenous partner organisation. She said: 'I made some close relationships with colleagues at Wunan, so I get calls: "Beth, can you review this for me?" or "I've got this problem, what do you think?"' Gary Woods from NAB remains connected to Nirrumbuk in the West Kimberley, where he was seconded in 2014. 'I've reviewed information and letters they've written to government,' he said. 'When I finished my secondment, I told the CEO I was happy to stay involved.' In the 2014 Jawun Alumni Survey, one former secondee reported: 'I am continuing to work with the Yorta Yorta community to deliver a multi-platform application and website to revitalise the Yorta Yorta language in the community and through the school system.'

**Informal or formal advocacy** on Indigenous issues was identified as an area of continued engagement. Many became involved in Indigenous and diversity initiatives such as NAIDOC week or Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) following a secondment.

Jodie Symes said she noticed that former secondees at Allens generally 'become involved in our RAP committee, which is great because they're contributing their own ideas and getting involved in the different events and programs that we run'. Nina Kordic from IAG now contributes to her firm's

RAP, as well as 'providing ongoing support for our Indigenous engagement manager here with **recruitment**'. In the 2014 Jawun Alumni Survey, one former secondee attested: 'I was a champion for NAIDOC week in my workplace.'

Others are able to advocate for Indigenous Australians directly through their roles. 'I now have a job promoting Indigenous suppliers,' commented one APS secondee. Steph Stokes from NAB was able to fulfil her desire to stay engaged when an opportunity arose at work. 'A couple of weeks after my secondment, an opportunity opened up in our Indigenous team here as an employment consultant. I got the role—I think people could see how genuinely passionate I was.'

A number of secondees, like Trish Clancy and Richie Hadfield, continue to contribute to the Indigenous sector by **servicing on the board** of their Indigenous host organisation. 'It's been really interesting to see the development over the four years,' Trish said. 'As an organisation we're much more stable than we were four years ago. Wunan has also done a great job at increasing the number of Indigenous employees and broadening our reach.' Richie explained: 'I wanted to stay involved with Youth Connections to see some of the projects through and make sure they came to fruition. And it was very worthwhile staying in the mix, because they are really starting to go gangbusters.'

Pete and Sarah Goss found a unique way to stay engaged with Indigenous Australia after Pete's secondment in 2011 (see case study, page 54).

## The ripple effect beyond the individual

Most secondees and Executive Visit participants came away from the experience with a better understanding of Indigenous people and their culture, and increased empathy for the challenges they face. With these new insights came a desire to ‘spread the word’: to share experiences and learnings about Indigenous affairs with others, or to challenge misconceptions. Often this begins with **influencing family, friends and broader social networks**.<sup>42</sup>

One of the true benefits of the secondment program is having people like me who live in major cities, who would never have the opportunity to live in an Indigenous community ... we come back and we talk about it and we spread the word that it's not just this narrow view.

MELISSA GRIGGS, EX-WESTPAC, NOW SUNCORP,  
CAPE YORK 2003 AND 2008-09

Bonnie Carter reflected: ‘I got back and told family members about my experiences, and they were completely gobsmacked by it all. It's certainly changed their perceptions. I've been able to have these conversations, use my experience to influence others and change their thinking.’

Bonnie's reaction was typical of that of most secondees. Tien Do from KPMG completed a secondment in 2013, six years after settling in Australia. ‘I shared what I'd learnt about Aboriginal communities and culture with my wife and kids and friends,’ he said. ‘Some of my friends were surprised—they didn't really know that much, even if they were born here.’ Melissa Noonan from Westpac said her secondment had had a flow-on effect for her family:

I was a girl who grew up in Melbourne with no Indigenous friends, no awareness. I now have many Indigenous friends—through a secondment you develop those friendships. As a result, my family has connected with Indigenous Australians, my nieces and nephews share my experiences.

Other secondees travelled back to the place of their secondment with partners or family to introduce them to the organisations and communities where they worked. After her secondment to Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy, Martina Friedl from Westpac took her partner to Cape York. ‘I wanted him to understand; he's from England. We went back to the school and he saw the classes ... It was really important for me to pass that on to him so that he has a better understanding. We watch *Redfern Now* together, and we watch it with a totally different view and understanding.’

Steph Stokes from NAB wanted to pass on her knowledge to the next generation. She took her family to the West Kimberley following her secondment to the Beagle Bay Women's Group. ‘Taking my children back into the community where I worked was a very special moment indeed,’ she said. ‘My secondment sparked a lot of passion in me for Indigenous culture, and I really wanted my kids to see that. I wanted them to have that exposure to Indigenous people and culture that I didn't get when I was a kid. I want to bring them up with open minds, so they're considerate and appreciative of a culture that is different from their own.’

Nina Kordic felt better informed and able to contribute to general conversations about Indigenous affairs following her secondment:

What I've noticed in my own circles is that the understanding of Indigenous challenges is fairly low. After experiencing a Jawun secondment and getting a taste of how complex the issues are, you can actually hold a conversation about it. And then within your sphere of influence, you're able to have a conversation that has an educative, empathetic influence on others.

Secondees and executives commonly felt motivated to exert a positive **influence on their professional circles** following their Jawun experience. This came through educating and spreading awareness, or encouraging others to get involved in Indigenous affairs.

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No one comes back from a Jawun secondment without stories to tell of the complexities and challenges Indigenous people live with, the successes and how life really is. That has to be a great force for good.

TRISH CLANCY, PRINCIPAL AT BCG,  
EAST KIMBERLEY 2011

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Steve Raynor, Head of Organisational Effectiveness & Change at QBE, participated in an Executive Visit to the Central Coast of New South Wales in 2014. He reflected: 'The experience was something I could take back to the office, to have better informed diversity and inclusion conversations.'

Jaimes Adlington from Westpac said he wanted his work colleagues to gain a deeper understanding of their local Indigenous communities. 'I took my team out to a community day at La Perouse. Chris Ingrey, the CEO of La Perouse Local Aboriginal

## CASE STUDY

# A transformative friendship between schools

When Pete Goss, School Education Program Director for the Grattan Institute, formerly of BCG, went on a Jawun secondment to Cape York Partnership in 2011, the organisation ended up getting a two-for-one deal: Pete did a secondment and his wife Sarah worked for Noel Pearson at Cape York Partnership. Sarah explained: 'I'd been working in the development sector and was very passionate about going and doing something.'

Pete, Sarah and their three boys, aged 10, eight and six, moved to Cape York for an extended secondment period of nine months. 'The experience certainly impacted both of us and our kids,' said Sarah. 'It gave them a real insight into the privilege they'd been born into and the challenges and opportunities out there. They went from a little school in Melbourne with no Indigenous

children to attending a state school in Cairns. It sharpened their sense of justice and injustice.'

When Pete and Sarah returned home to Melbourne they felt 'inspired and challenged about how we could continue to contribute. We wanted to bring that experience to other children'. In 2013, Sarah arranged for a group of 24 children and their families from Alphington Primary School in Melbourne to visit Cape York for a week. A highlight was the time that they spent at Hope Vale Primary School. 'We had families come back and absolutely rave about it,' said Sarah. 'It wouldn't have been possible without the support we had from Jawun and the time we'd spent up there in community.'

From that initial visit, a sister school relationship was

established: on alternate years, Alphington children travel north and Hope Vale children travel south. 'When the kids from Hope Vale came down, that's when it became clear how transformative it could be,' said Pete. Sarah agreed: 'Just to see the kids' faces—it's exciting on both sides. They're exploring a new culture from a positive perspective.'

The ripples created by the Alphington-Hope Vale relationship have spread beyond the Goss family and the two schools. 'After the most recent trip I had other schools asking me about setting up sister school relationships,' explained Sarah. 'It's starting to build its own momentum, which is fantastic. Because it's the kids, it will be that generation who'll be able to really further the reconciliation message.'





Chatting around the campfire at the North East Arnhem Land Executive Visit, 2014. Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto

Land Council, gave us a 20-minute presentation. You could see by some people's body language that it was challenging their perceptions.' Ben Tan from KPMG organised a similar work trip to an Indigenous organisation. 'I brought a group of 15 colleagues out to Goulburn Murray to visit the Rumbalara Football Club so they could see for themselves and understand the types of projects the club is doing in community.'

Secondees influenced work colleagues through presentations or informal conversations. An APS secondee surveyed in the APSC evaluation conducted in 2014 commented: 'I delivered presentations across the agency to build understanding of the realities of life in remote Indigenous communities.' Renee Schick reflected: 'It's about busting those old stereotypes. I know people in my professional circles have been surprised when I've talked about the positive impact the Indigenous groups I was exposed to had on the community.'

Secondees and executives also encouraged or supported colleagues to get involved in Indigenous affairs. Chris Simpson, formerly of KPMG, said he was inspired to go on a Jawun secondment after he was told by colleagues that it was 'an unbelievably eye-opening experience, very unique. Everyone said it was the best thing they'd done at KPMG, which was enough to convince me'.

Bonnie Carter has noticed former Jawun secondees 'talking to their peers and getting them involved too. It's like this big ripple effect of all these people becoming more involved'.

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We all have the desire that Indigenous Australian children face a bright future. That desire is, for many people, accompanied by a feeling of powerlessness, but those who belong to the growing Jawun alumni have knowledge and connections so we can work towards that goal.

ALAN TUDGE, ASSISTANT MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

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Secondees and Executive Visit participants who hold positions of authority or influence can **influence broader society** through advocacy in their roles, whether by shaping public opinion through the media or reaching audiences through government and industry platforms. Those in public service roles can inform and influence the delivery of policies and programs that have broad effect.

Alan Tudge was the first employee from BCG to participate in a Jawun secondment in 2001, working for Noel Pearson's Cape York Institute, an experience he described as 'life-changing'. Fourteen years later, he is the federal member for the seat of Aston and Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister. He described the enduring legacy of his Jawun secondment on his career in the **public sector**: 'My experience from Cape York during the early years of the Cape York Institute, where I was deputy director, is indispensable for me when I work to develop policy not only for Indigenous people but for the wider community.' Alan also writes on Indigenous affairs in *The Australian*, seeking to raise public awareness of Indigenous issues, and bring attention to the challenges, the gains and the inspiring leaders in the sector.

Alan said the ripple effect from the secondment program is far-reaching and can be indirect:

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I am proud to have played a small role in the establishment of Teach for Australia, which recruits outstanding graduates and trains them to be teachers in schools where students' needs are greatest. TFA mostly works with non-Indigenous schools in the southern states, but it grew from Jawun secondees' work with Noel Pearson.<sup>43</sup>

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Ben Rimmer is another former BCG secondee whose experience in Cape York in 2002, as a development adviser to Cape York Partnership, informed his later roles in various government portfolios. Now CEO of the City of Melbourne, Ben said the skills, experience and capability that exist within the public and private sectors is informed by hundreds of secondees who have worked in Indigenous organisations through a Jawun secondment. He continues to draw from his learnings in the Cape:

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Working in an Indigenous business in a remote community is a very different experience than most people in government are used to. As public service leaders, we always have the challenge and responsibility of changing the way the public service delivers in order to meet the changing expectations of the day. Some of the most valuable things I learned in Cape York were actually about communication and about impact, and that is something that has informed the way I've approached my work, particularly in developing public policy. The ability to look at an issue and think about it in a systematic way—to ask, for example, 'What is different

about economic development in the Cape?'—and pick the right vehicle for the right issue is incredibly important.

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While not all secondees go on to become policy makers, many in the public service contribute to the ripple effect through their roles. The Australian Public Service Commission evaluation conducted in 2014 found that when APS secondees returned to work they drew on 'insights from the secondment to inform agency-specific program management and policy development'. One APS secondment in the evaluation reflected: 'The secondment expanded my knowledge of Indigenous communities to enable better delivery of the ABSTUDY program.'

In the **private sector**, executives are uniquely placed to influence their organisations around inclusion practices and Indigenous affairs, as well as influencing their executive networks. Noel Pearson has referred to these circles as 'the sectors of power and opportunity' and maintains that Indigenous development goals 'will never be realised without expanding our networks into these sectors'.<sup>44</sup> More than 100 executives attend an Executive Visit each year. The majority of them gain a deeper awareness of Indigenous Australia and are profoundly affected by their experiences, and go on to influence, inspire and energise the rest of their organisation around **building inclusive cultures** and contributing to **sustainability**.

Michael Rose, Chief Executive Partner at Allens, has been involved with Jawun since the firm became a secondment partner in 2007. Through regional engagement with Jawun he later became interested in Empowered Communities and was invited to sit on its Advisory Board. In recent years, as Chairman of the Indigenous Engagement Task Force of the Business Council of Australia, Michael has been instrumental in engaging senior business leaders in supporting Indigenous employment and economic development among Indigenous Australians. He sees the opportunities people have to experience life through an Indigenous lens on a Jawun secondment or Executive Visit as a deeply personal way to engage them in addressing Indigenous disadvantage in Australia:



Inner Sydney Executive Visit group at The Block in Redfern, 2012. Photo: Ceri Foster of ArtOf2

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The growing numbers of people working with Indigenous organisations and leaders through Jawun are supporting the development and long term sustainability of those organisations and the communities they serve. Many of the people working quietly behind the scenes with Indigenous people and communities have been inspired to do so by their Jawun secondment experience. Jawun has brought together Indigenous leaders, business leaders and senior bureaucrats in ways that have enabled them to forge strong relationships. These groups have real influence and are collaborating to drive positive recognition, empowerment and change for Indigenous people and their communities.

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Kate Chaney, Sustainability Manager at Wesfarmers, participated in a Jawun secondment to Cape York while she was working for BCG. Kate described the experience as 'one of the most rewarding things' she had ever done, and years later it prompted her 'to think in broad terms about how I could get involved in Indigenous affairs'. Kate went on to become Manager of Aboriginal Affairs at

Wesfarmers, where she developed a Reconciliation Action Plan and worked with the divisions on Indigenous employment strategies. Through that process, Wesfarmers became a Jawun partner and has since sent close to 100 secondees to Indigenous organisations. Kate's example highlights the value of her secondment in spurring her to further engagement with Indigenous Australia; she also reflected on the power of Executive Visits in maintaining that engagement at an organisational level: 'Most of the Wesfarmers board and many senior managers have been on Jawun's Executive Visits, which has informed the way Wesfarmers understands its role in relation to Indigenous disadvantage.'

As General Manager of Marketing at Westpac in 2001, Peter Hanlon was already in a senior role when he participated in a Jawun secondment to Cape York. He reflected: 'The impact it had on me was that it reignited my desire to use my position to help people and issues in Australia, but also enabled me to be that strong and experienced voice within Westpac.'



Sean Gordon (CEO, Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council), Richard Aspinall (Regional Manager, Greater Western Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet), Mick Gooda (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner), Peter Nash (Chairman, KPMG) and Ian Trust (Executive Chair, Wunan), East Kimberley, 2012. Photo: Mark Jay

Peter progressed to even more senior roles and participated in a Jawun Executive Visit to Cape York in 2010. His continued and passionate support of Westpac's efforts to support Indigenous Australians through partnership with Jawun has yielded fruit: since 2001, more than 700 Westpac employees have participated in secondments and personally engaged with Indigenous Australians.

Senior executives with access to large and influential **networks** are uniquely placed to effect real change. As well as shaping their organisations, they can tap into other people of influence, which can have significant flow-on effects. Jawun itself was established through this type of network: Graeme Wise from The Body Shop Australia, Colin Carter from BCG, Chris Bartlett from Harvard Business School and Ann Sherry from Westpac—three of whom are Harvard alumni—were among the original group to conceive the Jawun secondment model for tackling Indigenous disadvantage.

Martin Sheppard, National Managing Partner, Brand and Innovation at KPMG, participated in an Executive Visit to the East Kimberley in 2014. He described the ideas that are generated and commitment to Indigenous Australia that is reignited through executive networks:

On the visit, I saw leaders of some of Australia's biggest corporates—NAB, Coles, Downer, IAG, Suncorp, Freehills, Macquarie Bank—rallying around, formulating plans and looking for practical solutions to help break the cycle of Indigenous disadvantage. The presence of the Hon Fred Chaney AO was truly inspiring; his thoughts on constitutional recognition were immensely thought-provoking. We all left with a true sense of responsibility for corporate Australia to make sustained economic wellbeing a reality for Indigenous communities.

# Conclusion

Since 2001, Jawun has built a unique environment for engagement and collaboration among its Indigenous, corporate, government and philanthropic partners. As Jawun's partners leverage these relationships, a rich story of shared value has emerged.

The value created for corporate and government partners is experienced at both the employee and organisational level. Employees who participate in Jawun secondments benefit both personally and professionally from the experience, gaining deeper awareness and understanding of Indigenous culture and challenges, a broadening of cultural perspectives, development in emotional intelligence, and enhanced career growth.

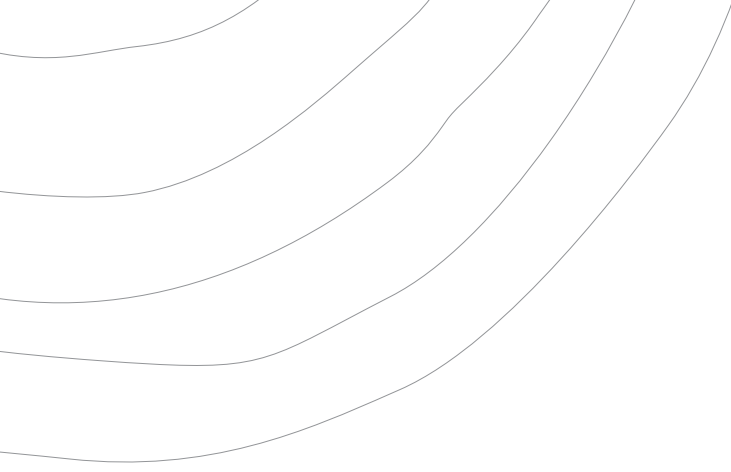
Organisations experience value creation and return on investment in the form of improved global intercultural capability, people and leadership development, enhanced organisational culture and employer brand, and the delivery of corporate social responsibility.

The influence of the Jawun model extends beyond individuals and partner organisations as those transformed by their experiences share their learnings and insights about Indigenous Australia with others, take action to redress Indigenous disadvantage, or use their positions of authority to influence public opinion or the cultures of large organisations.

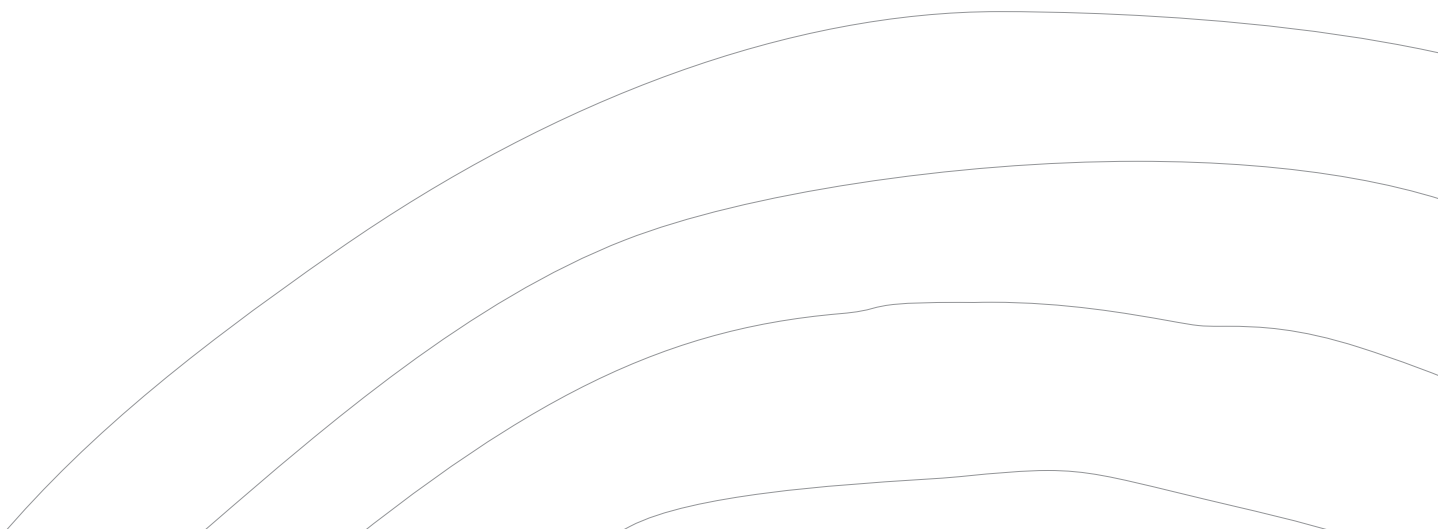
This story of shared value will continue in 2016, when Jawun's Learnings and Insights report will focus on the impact of the Jawun program on Indigenous organisations and communities.



Tony Berg AM (Chair, Jawun Board), Rose Manzini (Jawun General Manager, Remote Regions), Louise Law (Jawun Regional Director, North East Arnhem Land), Rupert Myer AO (Jawun Board) and Karyn Baylis (CEO, Jawun), North East Arnhem Land, 2014.  
*Photo: Daniel Linnet, Linnet Foto*



Jawun burnie beans. *Photo: Louise Law*





## Acknowledgments

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In preparing this report, Jawun drew on in-depth interviews with more than 50 individuals and senior executives, including current and past secondees, from our corporate and government partners. Their names are listed below.

Jaimes Adlington, Westpac  
Carmen Ashcroft, IAG  
Ilana Atlas, Jawun Board member  
Tina Bain, NAB  
Beau Beckman, Department of Defence  
Dr Tracey Benson, Department of Industry and Science  
Glen Brennan, NAB  
Bonnie Carter, Department of Defence  
Colin Carter, ex-BCG  
Phillip Chan, ex-KPMG  
Kate Chaney, Wesfarmers  
Trish Clancy, BCG  
Tien Do, KPMG  
Victoria Doherty, QBE  
Maria English, BCG  
Melanie Evans, Westpac  
Susan Ferrier, KPMG  
Adrian Fisk, KPMG  
Martina Friedl, Westpac  
Pete Goss, ex-BCG  
Sarah Goss, SJ Spencer Consulting  
Justine Greig, Department of Defence  
Melissa Griggs, ex-Westpac, now Suncorp  
Richie Hadfield, CBA  
Jason Hammond, QBE  
Peter Hanlon, BankSA  
Brian Hartzler, Westpac  
Tom Hughes, ex-Qantas  
Catherine Hunter, KPMG  
Naomi Jeacle, Australian Public Service Commission  
Tanya Kaye, KPMG  
Chadi Khalifeh, ex-KPMG  
Warren King, ex-Department of Defence  
Vit Koci, Westpac  
Nina Kordic, IAG  
Rebecca Kotow, NAB  
Nathan Krieger, ex-Westpac  
Leena Lim, Suncorp  
Rebecca Lund, NAB  
James Mabbott, KPMG  
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Beth Patterson, Allens

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Tim Plant, QBE  
Katherine Power, Australian Public Service Commission  
Luke Raffin, BCG  
Steve Raynor, QBE  
Dennis Richardson, Department of Defence  
Peter Riley, Westpac  
Ben Rimmer, ex-BCG  
Peter Rixon, Australian Public Service  
Cameron Roan, KPMG  
Anthony Roediger, BCG  
Michael Rose, Allens  
Renee Schicks, CBA  
James Sheffield, CBA  
Martin Sheppard, KPMG  
Ann Sherry, ex-Westpac  
Chris Simpson, ex-KPMG  
Steph Stokes, NAB  
Jodie Symes, Allens  
Ben Tan, KPMG  
Siobhan Toohill, Westpac  
Alan Tudge, ex-BCG  
John Williams, Westpac  
Gary Woods, NAB  
Rachel Yang, KPMG

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## Indigenous partners

Jawun supports over 70 Indigenous organisations across Australia, some of which are represented below:



## Secondment partners



## Funding partners



## Supporters





PO Box A199  
Sydney South NSW 1235  
e [info@jawun.org.au](mailto:info@jawun.org.au)  
p 02 8253 3619