



Family Dispute Resolution Scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Trainees

Family Dispute Resolution service providers, funded by the Attorney-General's Department are invited to support individual applications for scholarships that will assist people from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage to undertake training in Family Dispute Resolution during 2012.



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department

INFORMATION

Purpose

Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) has secured funding from the Attorney-General's Department to administer a scholarship scheme which aims to increase opportunities for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage to undertake training to obtain the Vocational Graduate Diploma of Family Dispute Resolution (FDR). The goal is to increase the number of FDR Practitioners from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, building workforce diversity and the capacity of the service sector to respond appropriately to community needs.

This scheme is a pilot, and FRSA estimates that just 4 - 6 scholarships will be awarded in 2012. However, if successful we would expect that this pilot may provide a model for future scholarship schemes within the Family Support Program.

Service Providers

Organisations that deliver Family Dispute Resolution services funded by the Attorney-General's Department (as part of the Family Support Program, administered by FaHCSIA) are eligible to apply for a scholarship on behalf of one or two eligible trainees.

The trainee may be a current employee, job applicant, volunteer or otherwise known to the organisation. The organisation must be willing to support them through the training, including:

- Determining eligibility and suitability for a scholarship;
- Identifying and engaging a training provider;
- Providing advice on the qualification to be obtained; and
- Providing work placement, supervision and on-the-job training to complement the training program.

The scholarship will cover the full cost of the training provided but not participation costs such as transport, accommodation, study materials etc. These costs may be covered by trainee or the service provider, by individual arrangement.

JOBS

The Vocational Graduate Diploma in FDR qualification can be a pre-requisite for jobs such as:

- Aboriginal Family Consultant
- FDR Practitioner
- Barrister Mediator
- Family and Child Mediator
- Family and Couples Mediator
- Family Law Mediator
- Family Relationships Mediator
- Indigenous Family Facilitator
- Manager of an Alternative Dispute Resolution Service

An initiative of the FRSA Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The artwork reproduced on the front cover is titled 'Old girls...yarn for us young girls...about country and family' (2004) by artist Rosella Namok of the Ungkum people. This painting is in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.



Trainees

The trainee must be prepared to undertake the full Vocational Graduate Diploma of Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) or the 6 core units required for accreditation as an FDR practitioner under the *Family Law (Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners) Regulations 2008* (the Regulations)¹. This qualification relates to dispute resolution practitioners working in agencies or independently to provide dispute resolution services and interventions for families experiencing high levels of relationship conflict and/or where the clients may be involved in the Family Law system.

Entry Requirements

Candidates seeking entry to this qualification must provide evidence of one of the following:

	1. An undergraduate degree or higher qualification in Psychology, Social Work, Law, Conflict Management, Dispute Resolution, Family Law Mediation or equivalent
OR	2. An accredited qualification in conflict management or dispute resolution at Diploma or Advanced Diploma level
OR	3. Certificate IV in Mediation
OR	4. Previous experience in a dispute resolution environment in a job role involving self directed application of knowledge with substantial depth in some areas, exercise of independent judgement and decision making, and a range of technical and other skills

Work Application Requirements

For award of this qualification, candidates must complete workplace application under direct supervision. Based on this workplace application, evidence provided by the supervisor will contribute to assessment of the candidate's ability to apply skills and knowledge as specified in the core units as outlined below:

CHCDFV811B	Respond to domestic and family violence in family work
CHCDISP801B	Facilitate dispute resolution in the family law context
CHCDISP802B	Implement family dispute resolution strategies
CHCDISP803B	Facilitate dispute resolution in an impartial manner and adhere to ethical standards
CHCDISP804B	Create an environment that supports the safety of vulnerable parties in dispute resolution
CHCFAM505B	Operate in a family law environment

These scholarships are limited to trainees who can demonstrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage. FRSA will rely on the Service Provider to assess heritage claims.

¹ www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2009C00158/Download

Training Providers

The organisation and trainee must agree on the training program to be undertaken and partner with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that has the FDR qualification on its scope. The Training Provider must assess the scholarship applicant as suitable to undertake the qualification, including that they:

- Meet the entry criteria
- Have a good understanding of the demands and duration of the training program
- Appear to have the potential to complete the chosen level of qualification

Information on RTOs in the FRSA network is enclosed. A list of all RTOs with the qualification on scope is available at www.training.gov.au

Costs Covered

Each scholarship will cover all RTO costs associated with the FDR training, whether the candidate is undertaking the full Vocational Graduate Diploma or the 6 compulsory units of competency only.

The value of a scholarship will range from approximately \$5,000 to \$10,000, depending on the qualification obtained and the RTO delivering the training. The scholarships may also cover additional training costs such as language/translation costs but only those directly incurred by the RTO. The scholarship will not cover out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the trainee such as transport and accommodation. The scholarship will also not cover expenses incurred by the service provider organisation, such as work placement, mentoring or supervision.

Number of Scholarships

Because this is a modest pilot, service provider organisations are limited to one scholarship application, unless they are willing to split the value of one scholarship across two trainees. If they will cover half the RTO costs for two trainees then they can nominate **two** candidates for scholarships. Just to be clear - organisations should only do this if they are prepared to cover 50% of the RTO costs for both applicants, as well as any other additional costs not covered by the scholarship (see above). If only one nominee is successful, the scholarship will cover 100% of the training costs. If both are successful, the scholarship will cover 50% of the training costs – in this case the organisation would be expected to contribute the remainder.

The number of applications for an RTO is not limited.

The nominating organisation, RTO and nominee should all read the requirements carefully before submitting an application.

If the application is successful, FRSA will remit training costs directly to the nominating RTO on an agreed schedule. The RTO must provide tax invoices and attest to the participation of the trainee in the training program.

Selection

Applications are to be made using the Application Forum. Complete applications that meet the criteria for these scholarships will be accepted unless the scholarship program is over-subscribed. If the scholarships are over-subscribed, priority will be determined on the basis of:

1. Training costs and maximizing the number of scholarships that can awarded;
2. Selecting a mix of training delivery formats;
3. Location factors such as workforce shortages and local community characteristics.
4. All the above being equal, priority will be given on the basis of date of receipt of application.

Submitting the application

Please ensure that each page of the application form is completed by the appropriate person. These documents should be received by FRSA via fax, email or post by **27 January 2012**.

Fax: 02 6162 1794 (Attention: Kate Allen)

Email: projects@frsa.org.au

Post: FRSA, PO Box 326, Deakin West, ACT 2600 (Attention: Kate Allen)

Applications will be assessed during late January and early February 2012. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by **8 February 2012**.

Scholarship Administration

Once selected, FRSA will request that the Service Provider Organisation, Trainee and Training Provider enter into a simple Memorandum of Understanding which will outline:

- The commitments of the service provider to support the trainee during and after the training.
- The commitments of the training provider to deliver the training and support the trainee to complete the qualification.
- The total value of the scholarship and an agreed schedule of payments (to be negotiated with the RTO depending on the duration and format of the training).
- Contingency arrangements if the trainee withdraws from training or the training/support can no longer be provided.

As part of signing the MoU Service Provider Organisations and Registered Training Organisations will need to confirm that they comply with State/Territory and Commonwealth relevant legislation including the Racial Discrimination Act 1984, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Disability Act 1992. A draft MoU can be provided on request.

Our Thanks & Good Luck to all Applicants.

