

# *Tunin' In* – An Early Years Education Initiative

## Guidelines - 2017



## **Contents**

1. Aim of the Initiative
2. Overview
3. Strategic Alignment
4. Engagement and Management
5. The Community Engagement Officer Role
6. Recruitment and Conditions
7. Reporting for Evaluation

**ATTACHMENT A** - Expression of Interest template - Community Engagement Officer - Operational Paraprofessional

**ATTACHMENT B** – Community Engagement Officer - Letter of offer

**ATTACHMENT C** – Community Engagement Officer – Acceptance of offer

**ATTACHMENT D** – Data entry form

## 1. AIM OF THE INITIATIVE

*Tunin' In* is an early years (preschool) education initiative which aims to assist Aboriginal parents/carers to support their child's early learning through the use of social media. By employing a Community Engagement Officer (Aboriginal) and utilising the social media platform, Storypark, *Tunin' In* will promote learning practices among families with children in preschool.

## 2. OVERVIEW

*Tunin' In* enables Aboriginal parents/carers and families to connect with each other and recognise ('tune in' to) everyday experiences that develop early literacy and numeracy concepts, to support their child's learning. By seeing visual examples of positive learning experiences in the home or in community environments, parents/carers can support their child's learning by taking on different roles such as modelling, guiding or observing independent learning.

Community Engagement Officers are appointed as operational paraprofessionals, working under the guidance and supervision of a principal or delegated officer.

The NSW Department of Education will, in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc., provide professional learning for the Community Engagement Officers.

This will include:

- Raising awareness of the department's policy and protocols around how to use Storypark as an educational tool, including appropriate use of social media. <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/technology/communication/PD20110418.shtml>
- Information on early literacy and numeracy in the home and throughout the community.
- Guidance on:
  - Working with families to address identified needs.
  - Promoting the initiative to families to establish shared understandings, responsibilities and expectations with the community.
  - Aboriginal community protocols in relation to working with Aboriginal families and the broader community.

Meaningful engagement with parents of Aboriginal students is a key aspect of this initiative. Participating schools must therefore ensure that parents of all students participating in the project are fully informed on all aspects of the initiative. Schools must discuss and seek parent approval for their child's participation in the initiative and permission to photograph and video children as these will be used on the school's website and on the Storypark page.

In accordance with the department's *Social Media Policy and Implementation Procedures* schools are required to setup and monitor a closed Storypark Group. Membership of and participation in the closed Storypark Group is by invitation only. The establishment and ongoing maintenance of this group must follow department policy, paying particular attention to the following sections:

- Section 2 - Official Social Media Accounts
- Section 4 - Professional Use of Social Media
- Section 7 – Permission and Consent
- Section 9 – Rules of Engagement
- Section 10 – Risk Management

- Section 11 – Removal of Social Media Posts

The Community Engagement Officer will upload videos and photographs of children learning together in everyday learning situations, with a brief caption, to help parents/carers see the learning on display and then use these with their own children. Parents/carers would then be encouraged to contribute by capturing their own shared learning moments with their child and uploading these to Storypark with comments for others to see and learn from.

As relationships and networks become established the Community Engagement Officer would also encourage parents/carers and families to physically come into the preschool setting to engage in activities that support early learning and cultural belonging.

The department will seek feedback on the initiative's effectiveness from participating parents/carers and schools during the initiative.

### **3. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

This initiative aligns with the following:

- The *Early Years Learning Framework*, as it recognises play-based learning as a powerful tool in developing in children a genuine interest in learning, building self-motivation and self-confidence and creating positive dispositions to support lifelong learning.
- The *NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Partnership Agreement*, as it supports parents and/or carers and families, within the context of improving education outcomes for students, to build their capacity to actively engage in the formal education of their children (and young people).
- Quality Area 6 of the *National Quality Standard*, as it enables preschool staff to establish genuine partnership-based relationships with parents/carers and families prior to their child's enrolment.

### **4. ENGAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

*Tunin' In* Community Engagement Officers will be employed part-time (at 0.6 FTE to be negotiated at local school level) over 1 year to work in targeted department preschools from January to December 2017. These are identified Aboriginal positions and need to be filled by people with early childhood knowledge and experience, and the ability to build strong links with parents and the community.

The Community Engagement Officer will be managed by the school principal or delegated officer.

They will also be encouraged to access additional professional learning and to further explore early childhood area study options at certificate level.

### **5. THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER ROLE**

The Community Engagement Officer is to:

- Engage in professional learning with preschool staff.
- Engage preschool families and community members in discussions about the project, including building the capacity of parents to engage with early literacy and numeracy strategies.
- Establish, maintain and monitor a Storypark page promoting early literacy and numeracy strategies to parents and families.
- Develop preschool student profiles in consultation with families and preschool staff.

- Meet with preschool staff regularly to ensure the project is aligned to the identified needs of the children in literacy and numeracy.
- Work closely with preschool teachers to enhance the early literacy and numeracy development of Aboriginal students.
- Track and measure the progress of the initiative, with reference to the number of Aboriginal parents/carers accessing and contributing to Storypark pages.
- Provide a progress reports to local and regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups each semester (written and verbal). The report must include the numbers of parents involved in the initiative, the types of learning activities being used and the outcomes of these activities. A copy of the written report must be forwarded to the Aboriginal Early Years Advisor, Aboriginal Education & Community Engagement Unit via email: [aboriginal.programs@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:aboriginal.programs@det.nsw.edu.au).

## 6. RECRUITMENT AND CONDITIONS

### Recruitment

Community Engagement Officers are to be recruited through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process (please refer to Attachment A).

As it would be preferable to attract community members, schools are strongly encouraged to use a range of methods to advertise the Community Engagement Officer positions. Suggestions to do this could include through community groups like local Aboriginal Land Councils or local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups.

### Assessment Panel for Community Engagement Officer

The assessment panel for Community Engagement Officer positions will consist of:

- Principal or nominee (convener)
- A member of the school staff (or school staff from another school)
- A local AECG representative

Assessment panels should also comply with the principles of merit selection in their composition:

- There should be at least one male and one female representative.
- Panel members should be familiar with recruitment policies and procedures.

Please refer to the *Employment of Operational Paraprofessionals in NSW Government Schools Guidelines*, located at the following

address: <https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/intranet/lists/directoratesaz/humanresources/schoolteachers/recruitemploym/paraprofempglines.pdf>

for all necessary information regarding recruitment and employment of a paraprofessional.

### Conditions

Conditions of employment are drawn from the following industrial instrument. [Determination No.3 of 2009](#) Operational Paraprofessional – Generalist, located at [http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/detresources/sassd3\\_2009\\_TGhYybkmcl.pdf](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/detresources/sassd3_2009_TGhYybkmcl.pdf)

### Letter of Offer

The letter of offer for a successful applicant is at Attachment B.

### Arranging Community Engagement Officer salary payments

The designation for payment of a Community Engagement Officer is PARPROOCEO. To enable the payment of a salary for a Community Engagement Officer, schools must submit a

completed *Temporary Engagement / Variation Notice Operational Paraprofessional* form to the Shared Services HR Bathurst, **Attn: Deborah Costello**.

The *Temporary Engagement / Variation Notice Operational Paraprofessional* form can be found on page 23 of the link to the guidelines above. The centre can be contacted by email at [EDConnect.Bathurst.Forms@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:EDConnect.Bathurst.Forms@det.nsw.edu.au) or by phone on 1300 32 32 32 and select option 3, 1, 2.

School funds will be debited to meet the cost of Community Engagement Officers in the same way billable temporary engagements for non-teaching staff in schools are processed.

#### **Non 229 schools**

- Funds may ONLY be used for salaries to employ Community Engagement Officers
- Schools must use **billable CEPS code 302** (inclusive of on-costs)

#### **229 schools**

- Funds may ONLY be used for salaries to employ Community Engagement Officers
- **Billable CEPS code 022** (Non-Teaching) MUST be used. These codes are inclusive of on-costs. Expenditure relating to this funding must use this order number so the school can track the financial position.

Community Engagement Officers will be employed for five days before the end of the 2016 school year. These five days will be utilised for professional learning opportunities developed by state office and orientation within preschool settings. Principals can employ Community Engagement Officers for orientation purposes for up to 12 hours. (12 hours to be used flexibly within preschool settings). Community Engagement Officers should be engaged for periods of no longer than seven hours per day.

Payment for the five days is made through the submission of a completed *Temporary Engagement / Variation Notice Operational Paraprofessional* form (found on page 23 of the link to the guidelines above) to the Shared Services HR Bathurst, **Attn: Deborah Costello, noting the days and hours of work over the casual days. The submission of this form is separate to the temporary engagement form to be used for 2017, for which an additional form will need to be submitted.**

Community Engagement Officers will be employed on a temporary contract from January to December 2017 which will require a separate form submission.

### **7. REPORTING FOR EVALUATION**

Data will be collected from schools to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of *Tunin' In*. Principals are required to complete and return the *Tunin' In Data entry form* (Attachment D) to the Aboriginal Early Years Advisor, Aboriginal Education & Community Engagement Unit via email: [aboriginal.programs@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:aboriginal.programs@det.nsw.edu.au) by the due dates specified on the attached forms.

An end of year evaluation and return date will be provided nearer to the completion of the initiative.

An online survey will also be provided for parents/carers and families during the initiative, accessible via *Tunin' In* Storypark pages. This will be provided by the Aboriginal Education & Community Engagement Unit.

**TUNIN' IN – EARLY YEARS INITIATIVE  
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER (Aboriginal)  
(OPERATIONAL PARAPROFESSIONAL- SPECIALIST)**

[INSERT NAME OF PRESCHOOL]

A Community Engagement Officer (Aboriginal) position has become available at [insert name of preschool] to achieve the objectives of *the Tunin' In* initiative.

*Tunin' In* is a twelve month early education initiative jointly funded between the NSW Department of Education and the Australian Government's Indigenous Advancement Strategy. The initiative focuses on connecting with Aboriginal parents/carers and families to support their child's early learning through utilising the social media platform Storypark.

This is a part-time temporary position appointment to December 2017. The successful applicant should be willing to commence on Day One, Week One of the 2017 school year and agree to participate in four days of professional learning/orientation which will be held in December 2016.

The *Tunin' In* Community Engagement Officer position is classed as an Operational Paraprofessional and will be employed under the *Education (School Administrative and Support Staff) Act 1987*.

Salary: \$34,334 (0.6 of a full FTE \$57,223)

**Applications for this position close:** [insert time and date of closing]

**This is a child related position. Applicants must have a valid and current Working with Children Check clearance as a condition of employment. In addition, your employment will be subject to the department's National Criminal Records Check.**

**School Context:**

[Insert brief description of the preschool, with a link to the preschool's website]

**Statement of duties:**

Under the direction and guidance of the preschool principal or delegated officer, the Community Engagement Officer will:

- Engage Aboriginal preschool families and community members in discussions about the *Tunin' In* project.
- Establish and maintain effective partnerships with families to improve Aboriginal student learning.
- Work collaboratively with school staff to support effective communication between home, school and community.
- Establish, maintain and regulate Storypark pages promoting Early Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
- Liaise with families and school communities to discuss school programs to better understand students' learning.
- Assist in the development and maintenance of links across transition points from pre-school to school.

- Identify issues impacting on the local community and resources available in the community that could be shared to support the school.
- Develop and implement community based initiatives that provide benefits to the school and the community.
- Refer family and community concerns to the principal.

### **Selection criteria**

Applicants for the position of Community Engagement Officer will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Aboriginality
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain meaningful links with Aboriginal parents and the community, coupled with an understanding of the values and beliefs of the local school community.
- Sound knowledge of and experience in delivering culturally inclusive early childhood practices and learning ideas for Aboriginal children
- Effective communication and organisational skills, including the ability to prepare written reports, record data and run parent focus groups and/or workshops.
- Knowledge of and commitment to the Department's Aboriginal education policies, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015 and *Together We Are, Together We Can, Together We Will* – the NSW Department of Education and NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. Partnership Agreement.

This is an identified Aboriginal position and proof of identity may be sought.

Aboriginality is a genuine occupational qualification and is authorised by section 14 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977*.

### **How to apply**

Applicants are asked to submit an expression of interest addressing their Aboriginality, the selection criteria and the statement of duties (no more than 2 A4 pages), together with a copy of their resume (no more than 3 pages).

Applicants **must include** their telephone number; postal address and email address (if applicable) as well as contact details for **two referees**.

**Any interview or offer of employment is conditional on the outcome of the Working with Children Check, National Criminal Records Check and verification of qualifications.**

Enquiries should be directed to: [Insert contact number, telephone number and email address]

Applications should be forwarded to: [Insert name, email and postal address]

**The closing date for an expression of interest is** [insert time and date]



Community Engagement Officer  
(OPERATIONAL PARAPROFESSIONAL- SPECIALIST)

Letter of offer

Dear Ms/Mr (*insert.....*)

I am writing to offer you a period of temporary employment to carry out the work of a *Community Engagement Officer* (OPERATIONAL PARAPROFESSIONAL- SPECIALIST) at ...*(to be inserted) .....School in accordance with the Education (School Administrative and Support Staff) Act 1987.*

The relevant remuneration and conditions of employment are as follows.

**Salary:** \$34,334 (0.6 of a full FTE \$57,223)

As a temporary employee you may be eligible for leave and other conditions of employment on a pro rata basis in accordance with the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2009* or successor instrument and *Determination-3* of 2009 Operational Paraprofessionals – Remuneration and Conditions.

**Engagement period:**

**From.....** Jan 2017                      **To.....** Dec 2017    (*insert school term dates*)

Hours / days per week: *7 hours / 3 days*

**Terms of engagement**

**Required documentation** - If you have not been temporarily employed previously, please complete the following documents and forward them to your *Community Engagement Officer* contact person with your Letter of Acceptance;

- Tax file number declaration form and/or withholding declaration;
- Direct deposit account details form (please note you can now update your banking details online through ESS), and;
- Details of your complying superannuation fund where you wish your superannuation guarantee contributions to be deposited to a fund other than the Department's nominated fund of First State Super.

**Conditions of employment** - The conditions of employment are as provided in the relevant industrial awards and handbooks and are available at: <https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/lists/directoratesaz/humanresources/index.htm>

**Leave** - Any leave you intend to take during your employment must be applied for in advance where possible.

**Cessation of employment** - This appointment is in accordance with the Employment of Paraprofessionals in NSW Government School Guidelines. Should the circumstances of this appointment change, you will be given as much notice as practicable before the change

occurs or your employment is terminated. There is no guarantee or expectation of any further or ongoing temporary employment continuing beyond the end date as specified in the Letter of Offer. Circumstances which may arise which would lead to the dispensing of the services of a temporary employee include, but are not limited to:

- The reason or purpose for employment is no longer necessary, e.g. the specified task or project is completed;
- The position is no longer temporarily vacant;
- Additional assistance is no longer required;
- Budget constraints including the termination of funding for the work;
- Misconduct by the temporary employee; or
- Poor or unsatisfactory performance by the temporary employee.

If circumstances arise where your services as a temporary employee are dispensed with, you will be given as much notice as practicable prior to the termination of the temporary employment.

**Superannuation** - The Department will contribute the relevant superannuation guarantee entitlements to the First State Super Scheme, or other superannuation fund you have nominated. Please note should you wish to choose a superannuation fund other than First State Super, written notification will be required from the nominated fund of compliance under the Superannuation Guarantee Legislation and the Department's eligibility to contribute to this fund.

**Employment Screening** - No engagements can commence until confirmation is provided that you have met the relevant Working with Children Check requirement and National Criminal Records Check.

To formally confirm your acceptance of this position please sign the attached Acceptance of Offer and return it within seven (7) working days from the date of this letter, together with any other required documentation. The forms must be returned to:

*Community Engagement Officer contact person  
(insert school name)  
(insert school address)*

Yours sincerely

Principal  
Date  
Phone: *(insert phone contact details)*

Community Engagement Officer  
(OPERATIONAL PARAPROFESSIONAL- SPECIALIST)

**Please return your acceptance to:**

(insert name and address....)

**ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER**

I wish to accept/decline (please circle) the offer of temporary employment, as a *Community Engagement Officer* at x school..... , salary \$34,3334 (0.6 FTE) from.....to.....under the conditions outlined in the letter of offer to me dated .....

I understand that this offer of employment is subject to my satisfactory performance.

I understand and accept that my employment is conditional upon a satisfactory Child Related Employment and Criminal Record checks and authorise the NSW Department of Education to conduct such checks for that purpose on my behalf.

Consistent with NSW Government policy (Premier's Department Circular 2004-03), any person who falsifies their record of academic and/or professional qualifications to gain employment may be dismissed and/or prosecuted. I have attached certified copies of the following documents:

- Birth Certificate or Proof of Change of Name (if applicable)
- Evidence of approval to work in Australia if not born in Australia (working visa, Australian citizenship or permanent resident status)
- Tax Declaration form
- Bank Account details form
- Superannuation fund details where you wish payments to be deposited in a fund other than First State Super.

I understand that if I nominate a superannuation fund other than First State Super, written notification will be required from my nominated fund of its compliance under the Superannuation Guarantee Legislation and the department's eligibility to contribute to my nominated fund.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TUNIN' IN – EARLY YEARS INITIATIVE****DATA REPORTING FORM**

<b>Name of Preschool:</b>			
<i>Tunin' In</i> Community Engagement Officer (name):			
This report will be used by the department to collate information about the effectiveness of <i>Tunin' In</i> . It will also be used by the department to prepare progress reports for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Please ensure it has been filled out correctly and accurately.			
Please email reports to the Aboriginal Early Years Advisor, Aboriginal Education & Community Engagement Unit via email <a href="mailto:aboriginal.programs@det.nsw.edu.au">aboriginal.programs@det.nsw.edu.au</a> by COB on the following dates:			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Baseline Due 24 February 2017</b>	<b>Progress Due 23 June 2017</b>	<b>Final Due 1 December 2017</b>
<b>Preschool Enrolment (number)</b>			
<b>Total Aboriginal Preschool Enrolment (number)</b>			
<b>Number of Aboriginal parents/carers contacted to participate</b>			
<b>Number of Aboriginal parents/carers participating</b>	N/A		
<b>Number of Aboriginal parents/carers not participating</b>	N/A		
<b>Reasons for not participating</b>	N/A		