

Role Description

Senior Project Officer, Closing the Gap (Aboriginal Targeted)

Role Description Fields	Details
Cluster	Stronger Communities
Department/Agency	Legal Aid NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Aboriginal Services Branch
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 9/10
ANZSCO Code	511112
PCAT Code	1119192
Date of Approval	October 2025
Agency Website	www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

Legal Aid NSW is the largest legal aid agency in Australia, comprising a Central Sydney office and 28 regional offices in metropolitan and regional centres across NSW including the two satellite offices located at Walgett and Bourke and a number of specialist services and advice clinics. It was established under the *Legal Aid Commission Act 1979* as an independent authority to assist economically and socially disadvantaged people to understand and protect their rights in the legal system. People with disabilities, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women and children, First Nations people and people with mental illness are some of the groups who may experience difficulties when enforcing and defending their rights.

Working in partnership with private lawyers and the community legal assistance sector, Legal Aid NSW provides legal advice, information, minor assistance and legal representation in many areas of law. Legal Aid NSW also provides alternative dispute resolution services, community legal education programs, and publications on legal issues.

Primary purpose of the role

The Senior Project Officer, Closing the Gap, brings their experience and understanding of the key challenges underpinning the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in contact with the justice system to manage and coordinate the development, implementation and evaluation of Closing the Gap projects and initiatives which support the targets, priority reforms and other organisational objectives. In addition, the Senior Project Officer will provide their expertise, advice and guidance on a range of projects and strategies led by the Aboriginal Services Branch in relation to client services and employment.

Key accountabilities

- Develop and deliver a project plan for Closing the Gap targets and priority reforms
- Manage and oversee project planning, development and implementation for a range of projects and strategies within the Aboriginal Services Branch, including the development of project plans, and project related activities, to ensure project outcomes are achieved on time, to quality standards and within agreed scope
- Prepare project reports/briefings to the Aboriginal Services Branch and the Legal Aid Executive

- Establish and maintain internal and external stakeholder relationships through effective communication, negotiation and issues management to engage stakeholders and ensure project deliverables are met
- Provide advice and information to stakeholders on emerging project issues and to support project development
- Provide policy and program advice to the Aboriginal Services Branch to ensure client-centred and evidence-based approach is brought to the program of work.

Key challenges

- Achieving project goals and milestones to the required standard given the complex and interconnected program of work
- Managing relationships with diverse stakeholders with varying interests, expectations and timeframes
- Identifying innovative approaches to addressing Closing the Gap priority reforms and socio-economic targets and obtaining organisation wide buy-in to implement them effectively.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Director, Aboriginal Services	• Manage or co-ordinate various projects to meet project goals • Provide advice and contribute to decision making regarding projects • Escalate issues and propose solutions • Receive guidance and provide regular updates on projects, issues and priorities
Manager, Aboriginal Programs	• Manage or co-ordinate various projects to meet project goals • Receive guidance and provide regular updates on projects, issues and priorities • Discuss priorities, issues and resourcing • Develop and maintain open channel of communication
Team	• Guide, support, coach and mentor team members • Support team members and work collaboratively to achieve project goals • Participate in meetings to share information and provide input on work
Internal Stakeholders	• Develop and maintain effective relationships and open channels of communication • Exchange information and respond to enquiries • Report on and guide the implementation of strategies and projects • Liaise and work collaboratively with the Criminal Law, Family Law and Civil Law Divisions and other areas to achieve project goals

External

Who	Why
External Stakeholders	• Develop and maintain effective relationships and open channels of communication • Exchange information and respond to enquiries • Liaise and work collaboratively with relevant external stakeholders to achieve project goals

Role dimensions

Decision making

The role operates with a high level of autonomy in respect to their day-to-day work priorities and the co-ordination of work in order to manage Closing the Gap projects for the Aboriginal Services Branch. The role also provides advice from a specialised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lived experience perspective to the Aboriginal Services Branch and the Executive.

Reporting line

Director, Aboriginal Services

Direct reports

Project Co-ordinator (AFO Program)

Budget/Expenditure

Nil

Key knowledge and experience

- Demonstrated knowledge of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the diverse histories, social structures, cultural practices and contemporary issues of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Essential requirements

- Aboriginality
- Demonstrated experience managing complex projects in short timeframes
- Demonstrated experience establishing and maintaining multiple stakeholder relationships

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into focus capabilities and complementary capabilities

Focus capabilities

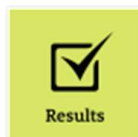
Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Focus capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
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 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	• Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change • Give frank and honest feedback and advice • Listen when ideas are challenged, seek to understand the nature of the comment and respond appropriately • Raise and work through challenging issues and seek alternatives • Remain composed and calm under pressure and in challenging situations	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning	• Keep up to date with relevant contemporary knowledge and practices • Look for and take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills and develop strengths • Show commitment to achieving challenging goals • Examine and reflect on own performance • Seek and respond positively to constructive feedback and guidance • Demonstrate and maintain a high level of personal motivation	Adept
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect	• Focus on key points and speak in plain English • Clearly explain and present ideas and arguments • Listen to others to gain an understanding and ask appropriate, respectful questions • Promote the use of inclusive language and assist others to adjust where necessary • Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary • Write and prepare material that is well structured and easy to follow • Communicate routine technical information clearly	Intermediate
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	• Recognise outcomes achieved through effective collaboration between teams • Build cooperation and overcome barriers to information sharing, communication and collaboration across the organisation and across government • Facilitate opportunities to engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop joint solutions • Network extensively across government and organisations to increase collaboration • Encourage others to use appropriate collaboration approaches and tools, including digital technologies	Advanced



Plan and Prioritise

Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances

- Consider the future aims and goals of the team, unit and organisation when prioritising own and others' work
- Initiate, prioritise, consult on and develop team and unit goals, strategies and plans
- Anticipate and assess the impact of changes, including government policy and economic conditions, on team and unit objectives and initiate appropriate responses
- Ensure current work plans and activities support and are consistent with organisational change initiatives
- Evaluate outcomes and adjust future plans accordingly

Adept



Think and Solve Problems

Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions

- Research and apply critical-thinking techniques in analysing information, identify interrelationships and make recommendations based on relevant evidence
- Anticipate, identify and address issues and potential problems that may have an impact on organisational objectives and the user experience
- Apply creative-thinking techniques to generate new ideas and options to address issues and improve the user experience
- Seek contributions and ideas from people with diverse backgrounds and experience
- Participate in and contribute to team or unit initiatives to resolve common issues or barriers to effectiveness
- Identify and share business process improvements to enhance effectiveness

Adept



Project Management

Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods

- Understand all components of the project management process, including the need to consider change management to realise business benefits
- Prepare clear project proposals and accurate estimates of required costs and resources
- Establish performance outcomes and measures for key project goals, and define monitoring, reporting and communication requirements
- Identify and evaluate risks associated with the project and develop mitigation strategies
- Identify and consult stakeholders to inform the project strategy
- Communicate the project's objectives and its expected benefits
- Monitor the completion of project milestones against goals and take necessary action
- Evaluate progress and identify improvements to inform future projects

Adept



Manage and Develop People

Engage and motivate staff, and develop capability and potential in others

- Collaborate to set clear performance standards and deadlines in line with established performance development frameworks
- Look for ways to develop team capability and recognise and develop individual potential
- Be constructive and build on strengths by giving timely and actionable feedback
- Identify and act on opportunities to provide coaching and mentoring
- Recognise performance issues that need to be addressed and work towards resolving issues
- Effectively support and manage team members who are working flexibly and in various locations
- Create a safe environment where team members' diverse backgrounds and cultures are considered and respected
- Consider feedback on own management style and reflect on potential areas to improve

Intermediate

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Intermediate
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Intermediate
	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Adept
	Deliver Results	Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes	Adept
	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Intermediate
	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Intermediate
	Technology	Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Adept
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	Adept
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Intermediate
	Manage Reform and Change	Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change	Adept