

First Circles Leadership Program

About the First Circles Program

The Northern Territory Government recognises that supporting Aboriginal leadership capacity and building strong community governance is essential to empowering Aboriginal Territorians. This leads to local solutions and shared decision-making with government about matters that impact them and their communities.

The First Circles Leadership program is a unique program that brings new voices, and quiet voices, to the conversation to ensure Aboriginal people from remote areas are engaged and can confidently and directly speak to, negotiate and influence government about matters affecting their lives, their families and communities.

The program helps participants develop and expand their leadership skills, develop their professional profiles and better understand the impact of public policies and programs on their communities, and help influence and contribute to change, while having direct engagement with Members of the Legislative Assembly, Ministers and Cabinet.

First Circles is an annual leadership program, delivered over the course of six months and offered to Aboriginal participants from the six regions of the Territory; Top End, East Arnhem, Barkly, Big Rivers, Central Australia and Darwin Palmerston and Litchfield.

An expressions of interest process is undertaken for members to nominate to be part of the program each year.

What is the role of First Circles members?

Members' roles include:

- A First Circles member must be an Aboriginal person who comes from a Northern Territory remote community, homeland or town camp
- Hold current employment or actively fulfill job commitments while participating
- Proactive in the community and throughout their region
- Ability to liaise with community members, seeking advice and support for local and regional opportunities/initiatives
- Participate in community forums, projects and policy development
- Work collaboratively with the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, local authorities and other agencies
- Support department officer visits and assist with community discussions
- Attend five workshops which includes travelling to Darwin, Alice Springs and other regional towns.

How are First Circles members supported?

The First Circles Leadership Program is managed through the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet's, Aboriginal Partnerships and Reform Unit, with staff providing mentoring to First Circles members.

First Circles members are not paid as the program is voluntary. The Department will meet all associated costs for members attending workshops, including travel, accommodation, and meals.

To find out more about the First Circles Leadership Program go to aboriginalaffairs.nt.gov.au or call 08 8999 8237, or email first.circles@nt.gov.au