Future Leaders Program
Outcomes Snapshot 2022:
Empowering Regional Educators
Acknowledgement of Country

Teach For Australia is headquartered on the land of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

Teach For Australia acknowledges and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia. Their deep relationship with and enduring care for Country is a gift to our nation and bestows an obligation to us all to honour our first peoples and look after Country alongside them.

This was and will always be their land.

Our community of teachers, leaders, supporters and partners live and work across a great many more lands. On behalf of all, Teach For Australia pays respect to the Elders past and present of this wide land of Australia, their custodianship, their courage and their resilience. Theirs is the oldest living and continuous culture on earth, and their emerging leaders will carry it forth with strength, pride and determination.
Teach For Australia’s Future Leaders Program (FLP) Pilot is a one-year professional development program that supports educators working in regional and remote schools to develop their leadership skills and capabilities.

School leaders in Remote, Rural and Regional (RRR) schools face unique demands including limited access to support services and difficulties attracting and retaining staff. While acknowledging these challenges, the FLP recognises and celebrates the strength and resilience of these communities, and the valuable insights they offer to the education system as a whole.

The program supports communities in RRR locations across Australia by developing the next generation of school leaders, improving access to high-quality teaching and learning for all students.

FLP Fellows experience targeted workshops, a peer network with a shared context and the support of an experienced leadership coach – all targeted to help drive positive student outcomes.

Teach For Australia is an innovative non-profit organisation and part of a global movement dedicated to developing leadership in classrooms and communities to ensure all children achieve their potential.

The Future Leaders Program has been designed to address the following objectives:

- To increase the quality of school leadership training and development in remote, regional and rural schools.
- To increase aspirations among high-achieving educators in regional and rural schools to become school leaders.
- To increase the supply of educators with high-quality leadership skills who can fill available leadership positions.

About Us

Future Leaders Program at a Glance

- 75+ Partner Schools spread across four states and territories
- 70+ Countries - the Traditional First Nations Lands the FLP community is living, working and learning on
- 100+ Fellows who are developing as leaders within their communities
- 460+ years of RRR education experience is shared across the FLP network
- 2 cohorts

Where our community is teaching and leading

Work in:
- primary schools (40%)
- secondary schools (31%)
- combined schools (28%)
- special education (1%)

Are in:
- an Outer Regional setting (45%)
- a Remote setting (29%)
- Very Remote setting (18%)
- an Inner Regional setting (8%)
Growing the Next Generation of Regional Educators

The Future Leaders Program delivers professional learning designed to meet Fellows’ point of need and build the leadership practices that are crucial to school leadership in RRR schools.

Before the program, 25 per cent of participants felt well prepared to progress in school leadership – this increased to 83 per cent by the end of the program. Furthermore, since completing the program, our Cohort 1 Fellows’ have experienced:

- 57% growth in the ability to manage stress
- 38% growth in the ability to manage and lead change
- 58% growth in preparedness for school leadership
- 40% growth in preparedness for school leadership
- 49% growth in the ability to manage staff
- 40% growth in the ability to manage conflict

FLP is equipping regional and remote educators with the skills, knowledge and confidence to move into school leadership roles within their school or community, with nearly 40 per cent of the first cohort being promoted to a position of leadership or higher responsibility since commencing the program.
Empowering Regional Educators -
A Snapshot of our Impact to Date

The following program elements are equipping participants
with the skills and mindsets to be impactful leaders in their
schools and communities.

1:1 Coaching and
Contextualised Support:

100% of Cohort 1 Fellows agreed
that their leadership practice
improved as a direct result
of leadership coaching.

94% of Cohort 1 Fellows said
their leadership coach was
helping them contribute
to their school’s overall
improvement efforts.

My coach has a great insight into country schools
and the importance of strong leadership. They
understand the different contexts and challenges
a very small school poses.”
—Cohort 1 Fellow

94% of Cohort 1 Fellows agreed that FLP provided them with
opportunities to build a
network with other emerging
school leaders working in
similar contexts.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to network and
meet aspiring leaders in WA and work with my
mentor... FLP provides purposeful and targeted
growth and development which is unique to me
and my leadership context.”
—Cohort 1 Fellow

88% of Cohort 1 Fellows said the
group learning experiences
were relevant to their needs
as aspiring leaders.

Peer Learning:

More than
85% of Cohort 1 Fellows found
workshop content relevant
to their school context.

Loved all of these sessions, I feel like I’ve learnt
so much about things that will not only help
build my skills as a leader but also empower
those around me.”
—Cohort 1 Fellow

School-based
Innovation Project:

85% of Cohort 1 Fellows said the
Innovation Project has improved
their leadership performance.

81% of Cohort 1 partner school
Principals agreed that their
participating Fellow(s)
Innovation Project is
improving outcomes for
students at their school.

Throughout my project,
students were regularly
telling me how relevant
and different this project
was for them. They
told me that they felt
seen and heard and
supported.”
—Cohort 1 Fellow

Two Way
Teaching and
Learning:

84% of Cohort 2 Fellows agreed that
the design and delivery of the
sessions they’ve engaged in to date
have balanced First Nations’ ways
of being and doing with Western
ways of being and doing.

FLP has given me the knowledge and skills
to tackle challenging and complex issues
in my school with a focus on improving
student outcomes. The leadership coaching
and professional learning have driven
my commitment to authentically embed
contextually relevant cultural knowledge
into our classrooms...”
—Cohort 1 Fellow

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to their school context.

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Redefining Leadership with a Purpose Built Framework

We believe leadership is a set of skills and behaviours which enable translation of a vision into reality – mobilising others to bring about change.

Teach For Australia has developed a purpose-built Leadership Competency Framework¹ to underpin all activity within FLP. Aligned to our theory of leadership, the framework articulates the beliefs, mindsets and skills we hold as central to the program.

In the context of advocating for equity for all children, our theory of leadership asserts the following critical domains of leadership.

¹Teach For Australia acknowledges the work of First Nations Leaders, education policies and initiatives that have preceded this Leadership Competency Framework. If you would like to learn more about this Framework please get in touch at info@futureleadersprogram.org.au.

"I have learnt a lot about being an effective leader and developed my understanding of relational leadership. Adopting a leadership style that empowers staff through building trust, listening, considering others’ perspectives and getting to know staff, students and community has supported my ability to manage change in our school."

— Cohort 1 Fellow

"I have learnt that leadership journeys are not linear and often we take a different path or direction than we originally thought. To challenge myself as a leader, I realised that I needed to dive into the learnings from FLP and purposefully experiment with new leadership behaviours."

— Cohort 1 Fellow

This data was collected through a 360-degree feedback survey conducted by the Future Leaders Program. The growth is based on the average of participants’ self-rating scores.
I have wanted to move into leadership but felt I didn't have the skills or knowledge to do so. The FLP has helped close that gap for me." —Cohort 1 Fellow
Program Spotlight: Two Way Learning – From Design Principle to Design Element

A key principle of FLP program design is two way learning. The FLP holds First Nations knowledge, principles, perspectives and ways of being in balance with Western ways. This approach ensures programmatic decisions and outcomes build towards cultural safety and inclusion.

In line with the First Nations principle of reciprocity, we attribute and express gratitude for the knowledge shared by Jean McMahon, TFA’s First Nations Cultural Advisor and FLP team member, to bring this knowledge to the Future Leaders Program and its participants.

Some ways that the FLP has endeavoured to embed two way learning into program design include:

- First Nations presenters included in all programming
- A Welcome to Country at in-person events
- Embedding First Nations approaches to building relatedness and gratitude into all programming
- Holding sessions on Country
- Designing and delivering sessions aligned to the Relational Leadership Domain of the Leadership Competency Framework and Teach For Australia’s Reconciliation Framework including:
  - Deep Listening and Relational World Views
  - Acknowledgement of Country
  - Two Way Teaching and Learning
  - Reciprocity in Action

Jean McMahon, TFA’s First Nations Cultural Advisor and FLP’s Program Manager of Design and Delivery, said these frameworks have been created to support the program and its Fellows accountability in this space.

“We are striving for ways to hold ourselves accountable as individuals, as a team and for the program - by embedding a two-way learning approach we are taking small actions, stepping back and providing safe spaces for First Nations voices, ways of being and knowledge’s to sit alongside Western ways, and to be present and valued in our work.”

Across 2021, First Nations educator Shelley Ware from Culture is Life worked with the FLP team to develop a visual representation (captured on page 15) of the program’s approach to two way teaching and learning. This visual model is supported by a short narrative that explains the key visual elements.

It tells the story through visual art, using Aboriginal meeting circles and travel lines to represent the journey that educators and First Nations students take together.

100% of Cohort 2 Fellows reported that the content covered in FLP’s Two Way Teaching and Learning sessions was relevant to their development as leaders.

“It was lovely to have such a strong woman, leader and advocate for First Nations People, come and share her experience and first hand knowledge of working within a school.”
—Cohort 2 Fellow following a session with 2021 Senior Australian of the Year Dr Miriam Rose Ungumerr Baumann.
Fellow Spotlight: Anna Latz

Transitioning Tomorrow’s Little Leaders in the Northern Territory

Anna Latz is Teacher in Charge at Anula Preschool and Anula Primary School on Larrakia Country (Northern Territory’s Darwin region).

After five years spent honing her skills and passion for teaching in the classroom, Anna Latz was keen to develop her leadership knowledge in order to support those around her to thrive.

Anna joined FLP in 2021 and said the program has supported her to become a more self-aware and culturally competent leader.

“I feel more confident to sit and listen, to withhold judgement, to have challenging conversations with respect, to be more aware and in the present, to help others see their strengths and to help others be the best teachers they can be.”

—Anna Latz

“I am more mindful in my work and my everyday life. I am achieving a better work-life balance, and am a better teacher and leader for it.”

Anna has been able to make a real impact in her school community through her FLP Innovation Project, which focused on supporting preschool students and their families to successfully transition from preschool to primary school.

A parent from Anula Preschool, whose son made the transition into primary school in 2022, said the process set her family up for success.

“They didn’t need me in his transition classroom as his parent at all, and whilst this is bittersweet, there truly is nothing better than knowing your child feels confident and happy when starting on a new venture.”

Anna said the most important thing she’s learned about herself as a leader through FLP has been how to harness her strengths as a leader, so she can develop the capabilities of others.

“Through the Future Leaders Program I’ve learned the importance of networking and building connections with other leaders. Leadership can be lonely but it doesn’t have to be.”

—Merwan Kassem

Fellow Spotlight: Merwan Kassem

Kicking Goals and Making Community Connections in Leonora

Merwan Kassem is Principal at Leonora District High School on Darlot Country (Western Australia’s Goldfields-Esperance region).

In 2021, Merwan Kassem made the decision to move his family from their home in Kalgoorlie and make the 273-kilometre journey to the very remote town of Leonora to take on the position of Deputy Principal at Leonora District High School.

He’s since won the Principal position at his school and said FLP equipped him with the contextualised support and confidence to take that next step in his career.

“I believe the effort that went into preparing pre-schoolers in their preschool year made a big difference to his approach to starting school,” the parent said.

“He didn’t need me in his transition classroom as his parent at all, and whilst this is bittersweet, there truly is nothing better than knowing your child feels confident and happy when starting on a new venture.”

“Across the cohort, we were able to connect and share our experiences with other leaders who, were able to understand each other’s issues and concerns.

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Fellow Spotlight: Danielle Larkin

Danielle Larkin is Deputy Principal at Kambalda-West District High School, located on Maripa Country (Western Australia’s Goldfields-Esperance region).

Danielle Larkin joined the 2021 Cohort of the FLP because she wanted to develop her impact as a new leader, particularly around embedding cultural competence and driving reconciliation across her school and community.

Danielle said the FLP has helped build her confidence and have a meaningful impact.

“I have won the role of Deputy Principal and been given the opportunity to mentor and grow teachers and future leaders,” Danielle said.

“I have had a hand in shaping school policy and improving outcomes for students.”

Through the program and with the support of her FLP leadership coach, Danielle led an Innovation Project that aimed to support students and staff to build their knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions, in turn increasing student understanding of Reconciliation.

Danielle recognises the value of a program that met her at her point of need and contextualised its approach to her leadership development.

“FLP was really well paced, offered an enormous amount of support and focused on what was relevant in my job/position,” Danielle said.

“It was well targeted to people in a regional setting as well, and I really enjoyed the cultural awareness of the program.”

“I informed a lot of the Reconciliation Action Planning at my school and the difficult conversations have assisted the way I approach many staff conversations.”

Danielle reflected that the most important thing she’s learnt about herself as a leader through the program is to listen, be data-driven and culturally responsive.

“The Future Leaders Program has taught me an abundance of skills and the most important lesson is to be receptive to change and new information because as leaders we are committing to being lifelong learners.”

—Danielle Larkin

“We had a cool NAIDOC Day this year and it feels like the school cares about all cultures.”

—Year 8 student
The Future Leaders Program is delivered with the support of the Department of Education.