



ARDS
ABORIGINAL
CORPORATION

LANGUAGE CENTRE - YOLŲU RADIO - COMMUNITY CONTROL

Position Description

Position title	: Community Development Djägamirr (Manager)
Reports to	: Chief Executive Officer
Employment type	: Full Time
Location	: Nhulunbuy
No. of direct reports	: 10 +
Date	: October 2026
Approved by	: CEO
Salary band	: \$133,556 - \$145,091 per annum FTE

Position Purpose

The Community Development Manager is responsible for the strategic and operational leadership of ARDS' Community Development programs, including the successful delivery of funded projects and the mentorship and support of a team of YolŲu and Balanda staff. The YolŲu word we use at ARDS to describe a manager is Djägamirr, which means caretaker. The role truly encompasses the concept of a caretaker, whether that be in relation to staff needs, budgets, contractual responsibilities, or implementing the Board's strategic plan.

The Community Development Manager reports to the CEO and is part of the ARDS senior leadership team. They work in partnership with a YolŲu Co-Manager who provides cultural authority, guidance and support in the facilitation of Community Development work. The YolŲu Manager co-leads the team alongside the Community Development Manager.

The role coordinates and supports a growing team of approximately 15 staff across Nhulunbuy, Darwin and four remote YolŲu communities. The Manager is responsible for supporting staff to undertake work that is suitable, meaningful and engaging, supervising project activities, ensuring compliance with funding and reporting requirements, contributing to strategic planning, role modelling best practice in line with the Board's expectations for cultural competency.

The work of the Community Development team focuses on applying YolŲu-led approaches to healing and strength. It encompasses projects relating to health & wellbeing, families, supporting YolŲu parenting, two-ways education and other YolŲu-led community development initiatives.

About ARDS

ARDS is a Yolŋu led cross-cultural specialist organisation that has operated across Northeast Arnhem Land communities and homelands for the past 50 years. Our approach is founded upon genuine and in-depth learning between Balanda and Yolŋu worldviews and incorporates a contemporary understanding of culturally competent practice. By combining this skilled cross-cultural practice with adept language work, ARDS is able to effectively facilitate meaningful communication across cultures.

ARDS' purpose is to increase Yolŋu control of all aspects of Yolŋu life through equal and genuine access to information, resources and decision-making. This work is delivered through five departments:

- **Community development & empowerment** - under the guidance of local ŋalapal (elders), we work to strengthen local capacity, confidence and control in areas such as health, social and emotional wellbeing, and parenting and families. We assist Yolŋu families and communities to navigate and negotiate with government and dominant culture institutions. We develop ways for Yolŋu and Balanda systems to work together.
- **Law and Justice** – we work to ensure that Yolŋu Rom (law and culture) is respected and recognised by dominant culture institutions. Our work includes first language mediation services, Law and Justice groups and community courts and youth diversion and restorative justice services.
- **Yolŋu region language centre** – our team supports local language custodians in keeping language strong. This includes intergenerational language transmission activities, resource development, language documentation, translation, training, and language advocacy.
- **Yolŋu Radio and Multimedia** – broadcasts to Yolŋu communities and homelands. We create a range of creative media products and activities that celebrate Yolŋu identity and strength and provide access to crucial information and stories in people's first languages.
- **Cultural Competency Training** – developed to meet high demand for accessible and practical training for organisations and individuals working in East Arnhem Land, with ARDS offering a range of training formats to suit different organisational and personal learning needs.

Responsibilities and Roles

1. **Staff management:** Provide culturally strong, relational and effective leadership to the Community Development team alongside Yolŋu Co-Djägamiŋ, including:
 - Planning & direction: Supervise and support staff to deliver work that is meaningful, in line with project goals, and responsive to community needs.
 - Day-to-day supervision: Provide regular check-ins and reflective supervision to staff.
 - Administrative support: Approval of timesheets and leave for staff, and support staff to be aware of, understand, and follow ARDS policies and procedures.

- **Performance Management:** Ensure direct reports meet the expectations of their role and address any issues identified.
 - **Communication & culture:** Foster a positive culture of two-way learning, reflective practice, and collaboration across the team.
 - **Recruitment & onboarding:** Identify recruitment needs and lead recruitment of new staff members with support from the ARDS Corporate Services team.
 - **Learning & Development:** Support professional development of team members, including through training opportunities, mentorship and annual reviews.
2. **Project management:** Provide strategic and operational oversight of ARDS' Community Development projects, including:
- **Strategic Planning:** Contribute to strategic planning and program development of the Community Development team.
 - **Project Oversight:** Support project leads to ensure projects are delivered in line with funding agreements, budgets, compliance and reporting obligations.
 - **Assist Project Delivery:** As needed, assist with project planning, logistics & organisation)
 - **Stakeholder Relationships:** Maintain and develop strong working relationships with Yolŋu community members, partner organisations, legal services, government agencies and other stakeholders.
 - **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Support high-quality monitoring, evaluation, and learning practices across the team.
 - **ARDS Methodology:** Ensure ARDS-ku buyu', methodology and two-way learning principles are prioritised and embedded in day-to-day practice.
3. **Grants and funding:** In collaboration with the Corporate Services Manager and other staff:
- **Funding opportunities:** Identify funding opportunities relevant to ARDS' Community Development work and prepare project proposals and grant applications. This includes co-design of project proposals, ensuring adequate Yolŋu staff and stakeholder input.
 - **Budgeting and grant management:** Support project leads to successfully manage grant requirements (reporting, acquittals and other compliance requirements), including by ensuring the work operates within budget, with income and funding sufficient to meet operational expenditure.
4. **Nhulunbuy Office Leadership:** Assist with office administration (e.g. supporting implementation of ARDS policies and procedures within the Nhulunbuy office, support staff transport, office supplies, office assets maintenance as needed)
5. **Organisational leadership:** Contribute as a member of the ARDS senior leadership team, including:
- Represent ARDS in meetings, forums, and community settings.
 - Contribute to organisational planning, policy development, and strategic direction.
 - Supporting culturally strong and relational ways of working across all teams at ARDS to ensure that all aspects of ARDS work upholds high standards of cross-cultural communication and cultural competency.

Candidate requirements

To effectively perform this position, the person will require the following:

Knowledge

- Demonstrated knowledge of NT and Australian Government policy directions, initiatives and programs relating to Indigenous Australians, and an ability to respond to policy settings;
- Demonstrated knowledge of the environment in which services are funded and delivered in remote NT communities, the ways in which Indigenous people interact with services and associated communication challenges;
- Knowledge of Yolŋu language and culture, or willingness and ability to learn
- Demonstrated knowledge of the community development principles in the Indigenous Australian context.

Experience

In Northeast Arnhem Land, or in another multilingual environment in Australia or overseas:

- At least three years' experience applying culturally competent communication skills in a working environment;
- At least two years' experience conducting community development fieldwork;
- At least two years' experience leading a multicultural team and managing direct reports;
- Demonstrated project management experience, (including project and funding application design; high-level stakeholder engagement; preparing oral and written reports; meeting timelines and managing project budgets)

Skills & Abilities

- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain positive and self-reflective cross-cultural relationships;
- Demonstrated ability to practice, build and articulate cross-cultural competency skills;
- High-level organisational abilities, including planning and coordinating multiple, complex projects and project work without close supervision, and in close collaboration with Indigenous colleagues and stakeholders;
- Demonstrated ability to support ongoing growth and development of staff (including staff learning about community development methodologies)
- Willingness to undertake additional professional development, including proactively learning about ARDS' methodology;
- Strong MS Office competency.

Qualifications

Tertiary qualifications in relevant fields (e.g. Social Work, International Community Development) are preferred but not required where candidates have equivalent professional experience in a directly relevant field.

Special requirements

- Whether based in Nhulunbuy and Darwin, the successful applicant will be required to undertake regular travel to Northeast Arnhem communities and homelands as required.
- The successful applicant will also be required to:
 - Hold a current NT Working with Children Clearance Notice (Ochre Card);
 - Undertake a Criminal History Check;

A criminal history check will not exclude an applicant from the position unless it is relevant criminal history.