

## **SETSCoP Working with Employers**

### **Summary of meeting**

#### **Videoconference – 10 November 2020**

Economic participation has become even more of a priority for settlement as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the Australian economy. On 10 November, SETSCoP held a Working with Employers Roundtable with SETSCoP Working with Employers sub-group members. The facilitated discussion focused on discussing barriers to working with employers, strategies used and how SETSCoP can continue to support the sharing of good practice moving forward.

#### **Strengthening relationships**

Attendees shared the value in developing and maintaining good relationships with employers to facilitate employment outcomes for clients.

Some strategies used by SETS providers in working with employers include:

- taking time to seek and secure employers who are open to employing newly arrived migrants and refugees
- targeting readiness activities to employers' needs
- matching job seeker skills to roles (e.g. agricultural experience overseas matched with farm roles)
- leveraging off corporate social responsibility
- facilitating work experience or volunteering for employers to have a trial with potential employees
- providing post-placement support for both the employer and employee
- providing cultural awareness training to employers
- engaging with migrant and refugee businesses owners

Some providers shared that at current, they do not work with employers at all but are keen to learn the skills to do so effectively.

There was also a discussion around overcoming some of the common barriers to employment for SETS clients which includes:

- limited English language skills
- recognition of overseas qualifications
- lack of local experience
- limited digital literacy skills
- impact of COVID-19 on labour market

#### **Employment skill set**

Attendees noted that to support clients with successful employment outcomes, requires unique employment skills such as selling the benefits of hiring newly arrived migrants and refugees, relationship-building skills and an ability to match job-seeker skills to employer needs. There was a general consensus that this specialist skill set is outside of the social work or community work skills generally seen in settlement professionals.

Some providers shared that they have hired employment specialists to build relationships with employers and support their clients into sustainable employment outcomes. However, many noted the challenge of funding such a role.

### **Continued support from SETSCoP**

Attendees shared of the value they see in SETSCoP supporting their continued work with employers through:

- sharing experiences of successful employer partnerships and collaborations
- sharing of best-practice
- assistance with developing skills to better connect with employers
- resource development to support day-to-day work with employers

### **Resources shared**

[Engaging business in refugee employment \(The University of Sydney Business School\)](#)