



Environmental Defenders Office

Solicitor (Country & Cultural Heritage) – Position Description

Job Title:	Solicitor (First Nations identified)
Reporting to:	Deputy Director, Country and Cultural Heritage Practice
Direct Reports:	N/A
Travel Requirements:	Travel will be required to fulfill this role

EDO relies on our people to use their skills and experience to provide the best possible support to our clients and other staff. While this job description aims to outline the fundamental reason the role exists, the role may evolve as EDO evolves.

If you see a way to play to your strengths in a way that achieves EDO outcomes, please don't be limited to this list. We have important work to do and need everyone to be operating at their best.

Special Requirements: This is an Identified Position. It is an occupational requirement that this position be filled by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

Position Overview & Purpose

Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) is the largest environmental legal centre in the Australia-Pacific region, dedicated to protecting our climate, communities and shared environment by providing access to justice, running ground-breaking litigation and leading law reform advocacy.

Since time immemorial, First Nations peoples have been taking care of their Country. Their deep understanding, knowledge and experience is critical to maintaining the health and vitality of Australia's unique wildlife and ecosystems. EDO respects this great knowledge and strongly believes that EDO cannot achieve a world where nature thrives without working alongside and on behalf of First Nations peoples.

EDO has established an Indigenous-led First Nations Program to support First Nations peoples to protect their Country in Australia and the Torres Strait Islands, and center understanding of and respect for First Nations perspectives in our work. This Program has also built the infrastructure within EDO to sustain, whilst continuously improving, culturally safe work practices for all team members, and specifically First Nations team members.

EDO understands that First Nations solicitors can bring both their professional legal skills, as well as their lived experiences as First Nations peoples to their work, which can help EDO provide better grounded legal representation to First Nations clients.





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Key Responsibilities & Duties

Key responsibilities of the Solicitor (Country & Cultural Heritage) include but are not limited to:

- Provide legal information, advice and representation on behalf of First Nations clients and communities concerning Country and Cultural Heritage, public interest environmental law issues, human rights, UNDRIP and related matters in a culturally competent and safe manner
- Develop resources and fact sheets and provide legal outreach to First Nations communities across Australia, building relationships and providing information to First Nations clients and communities on public interest environmental law and Cultural Heritage laws
- Assist with litigation and law reform concerning First Nations concerns and environmental law and policy, including participating in government policy processes where required
- Supervise the work of volunteers who undertake tasks such as legal research, document preparation, etc.
- Conduct litigation to achieve EDO's strategic outcomes
- Assist in development and implementation of EDO internal policies in relation to Best Practice Processes and Protocols in Country and Cultural Heritage matters including in respect of intake procedures for new matters
- Undertake more complex legal work as required
- be available to travel to assist EDO teams and clients across Australia in relation to matters on behalf of or involving First Nations

Key duties include:

- Comply with professional and legal obligations
- Comply with EDO's policies and procedures, including EDO's Guiding Principles for work for First Nations Clients and Communities
- Participate in practice management strategies under the supervision of the Managing Lawyer such as professional file management, participating in casework meetings and updating casework records
- Undertake other reasonable requests made by the Director, First Nations Program and/or Deputy Director, Country and Cultural Heritage Practice from time to time.

Essential requirements

- A practising certificate or entitlement to one
- A minimum of 2 years PAE desired Demonstrated experience in one or more of the following areas: legal outreach, legal education, administrative law, environmental law, native title, land rights and/or cultural heritage law.





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- Strong problem-solving skills and ability to make sound judgements and decisions based on consideration of different views
- Demonstrated ability to work productively, collaboratively and to deadlines
- Excellent oral and written communication skills suited to a range of audiences

Substantive experience

- Understanding of Cultural Heritage legislation and issues in multiple states, territories and at the Commonwealth level
- Experience in creating legal education materials for First Nations and/or bi-lingual communities
- Understanding of mechanisms First Nations communities can apply at the international level, including the United Nations
- Law reform or policy experience
- Demonstrated experience working with First Nations people or diverse communities and individuals

Core skills

- Ability to confidently exercise sound judgement and make decisions in high-pressure situations, while working effectively both autonomously and within a collaborative team environment.
- Strong written and verbal communication, file management, organisational and delegation skills.

General

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Develop and maintain a good knowledge of EDO's role and policies.
- Represent EDO in a positive and effective manner by actively demonstrating EDO Values.
- Attend and contribute actively and constructively at staff meetings.
- Actively engage with and contribute to EDO's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).
- Maintain appropriate records, assist with office administration, such as files, computer and precedent systems.
- Seek opportunities for personal and professional development, particularly related to the team and position's specific areas of responsibility.
- Respond to requests by clients and fellow staff in a knowledgeable, professional, constructive and respectful manner.
- Provide accurate and timely data and information for reporting, fundraising and communications purposes.





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Commitment to EDO's Values and Cultural Pillars:

All employees are expected to contribute to a workplace culture that reflects EDO's values and cultural pillars through their actions, behaviours and decision-making.

Thriving People & Professional Excellence

- Demonstrates professionalism, accountability, and commitment to continuous learning.
- Contributes to a safe, respectful, and supportive workplace where people can thrive.
- Delivers high-quality work and seeks opportunities to develop capability and expertise.

Shared Direction & Courageous Action

- Works collaboratively toward shared organisational goals and purpose.
- Demonstrates initiative, adaptability, and courage in addressing challenges and opportunities.
- Supports innovation and contributes positively to organisational change.

Grounded in Clarity, Strengthened by Trust, Driven by Ownership

- Acts with integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- Builds trust through respectful communication and follow-through on commitments.
- Takes ownership of responsibilities and contributes to effective decision-making.

Inclusive Impact

- Values and respects diverse perspectives, backgrounds and lived experiences.
- Demonstrates cultural competence and contributes to a culturally safe and inclusive workplace.
- Supports EDO's commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, including meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples and communities.

Purposeful Joy

- Contributes to a positive, connected, and respectful workplace culture.
- Supports the wellbeing of colleagues and celebrates achievements and contributions.
- Brings enthusiasm, curiosity and optimism to their work.

Supporting EDO Values

- Commitment – Working together to achieve environmental justice and positive outcomes for communities.
- Diversity – Respecting and valuing difference, inclusion and cultural safety.
- Integrity – Acting ethically, professionally and with accountability.
- Visionary – Embracing innovation, creativity and continuous improvement.

