

## **Research Coordination Manager**

Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner  
Taskforce



Information Pack for Applicants

## Research Coordination Manager

Join a Traditional Owner-led initiative driving systems change towards an empowered future for Healthy Reef and Healthy People!

Employment Type	Full-time
Location	Flexible – preference for Queensland within the Reef catchment. <i>Travel will be required for meetings &amp; events</i>
Tenure Period	Fixed term until 30 March 2028
Salary	\$115,000-\$125,000 + super (negotiable, depending on experience)
Direct Reports	Nil currently

*To perform this role, it is essential that the person is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. It is therefore a genuine occupational requirement under section 25 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991. Applications will only be considered from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people with a strong preference for suitably qualified and experience Reef Traditional Owners.*

### About ReefTO

The Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner Taskforce (ReefTO) is a Traditional Owner-led, grassroots initiative that honours the decades of work by Elders to assert their cultural authority and rights to sea country and to drive genuine partnerships across the Reef. In doing so, ReefTO aims to achieve Traditional Owners’ aspirations for the health, management and protection of the Reef and interconnecting Country.

We are guided by the [Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Implementation Plan](#) (TO Implementation Plan) – the first of its kind, developed by mob, for mob. A living document launched in November 2022, the TO Implementation Plan brings together actions from across the [Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan](#) into a cohesive framework for implementation. It outlines six critical work areas – climate change, land & coast, sea country, partnerships and capacity, knowledge systems and investment.

### The ReefTO Taskforce

Establishment of the ReefTO Taskforce is a key recommendation in the TO Implementation Plan. Operational since July 2024, the ReefTO Taskforce is responsible for overseeing delivery of the TO Implementation Plan. ReefTO has three key objectives over the next 2-3 years:

1. Engaging with Traditional Owners on **options for a Sea Country Alliance** (Reef-wide and regionally) and implementing the preferred option.
2. Overseeing the **delivery of strategic policy and capacity building actions** in the TO Implementation Plan while a Sea Country Alliance is being established.
3. **Monitoring and reporting on the delivery of Traditional Owner actions** in the TO Implementation Plan, including actions delivered by ReefTO and by other agencies.

In taking carriage of, and driving the actions in the TO Implementation Plan, ReefTO will amplify Reef Traditional Owner voices, elevate Reef Traditional Owner priorities and enhance Reef Traditional Owner participation and leadership in Reef governance, management and decision-making. In carrying out its functions, ReefTO will always be guided by, and act in the best interests of, Traditional Owners across the Reef.

ReefTO is hosted by Pollination Foundation until 30 June 2026 or until such time as a Sea Country Alliance (or similar) is established. As the Host Organisation, Pollination Foundation provides a range of corporate services and enabling conditions that support ReefTO in the interim.

## About the Team

The ReefTO Coordination Unit supports the ReefTO Taskforce in achieving its three key objectives. The Coordination Unit is led by a General Manager who works closely with the Taskforce Members and Co-Chairs, as well as with Pollination Foundation staff (as the Host Organisation), and ReefTO external partners.

As the Coordination Unit team grows, there is genuine excitement and optimism about how the work of ReefTO (and the future Sea Country Alliance) can play a part in bringing two cultures and knowledge systems together to build genuine partnership, drive systems-level change and support Traditional Owners in realising their aspirations for co-governance, co-decision-making and new Traditional Owner-led approaches to managing the Reef.

## About the Role

We have an exciting opportunity for a Research Coordination Manager to join ReefTO in this early phase to help drive transformational systems change for Reef Traditional Owners!

The Research Coordination Manager will report to the Director, Programs & Engagement. You will be responsible for developing and implementing a Reef Traditional Owner-led research agenda, fostering partnerships, and creating tools and processes that support Traditional Owner control over research on Sea Country.

## Key Responsibilities

You will lead the development and implementation of a Reef Traditional Owner-led research agenda, ensuring that research conducted on Sea Country aligns with the priorities and values of Traditional Owner communities. This includes mapping the current research landscape, engaging with stakeholders, and facilitating partnerships between research

institutions and Sea Country groups. The role requires a strong focus on ethical research governance, including the development of protocols, data-sharing agreements, and tools that support Traditional Owner control and knowledge protection.

In addition to strategic leadership, the Research Coordination Manager will coordinate community engagement efforts to identify research needs at both local and Reef-wide levels. You will oversee the creation of resources that promote two-way knowledge exchange and support Traditional Owners in managing research activities. The position plays a key role in fostering Indigenous research leadership, advocating for the integration of Traditional Knowledge in scientific research, and supporting initiatives such as scholarships or prizes to build capacity and recognition in the field.

- Lead the design and implementation of a Reef-wide, Traditional Owner-led research agenda.
- Convene and facilitate a roundtable of research partners to map the current research landscape.
- Engage with Traditional Owners (with support from the Programs & Engagement) to identify local and Reef-wide research priorities.
- Publish an agreed 5-year Research Agenda to guide investment in Reef-wide research on Sea Country.
- Broker relationships between research institutions and Sea Country groups, as required.
- Review and align with existing research frameworks (e.g., AIATSIS Code of Ethics, Our Knowledge Our Way).
- Develop and promote tools such as research protocols, data and benefit-sharing agreements, and ICIP management guidelines.
- Support the development of resources that enable Traditional Owners to manage and control research.
- Promote two-way knowledge transfer and co-authorship practices.
- Explore and implement initiatives such as a Reef Traditional Owner Research Scholarship or Prize.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place for Reef Traditional Owners to review and update their research priorities, as required.
- Track progress and report on outcomes to internal and external stakeholders.
- Facilitate internal workshops with ReefTO staff, the Taskforce, Traditional Owners, and key stakeholders to test and refine ideas before finalisation.

**Besides role-specific responsibilities, you will be part of a collaborative team working with others in ReefTO to do great work to benefit Reef Traditional Owners.**

- Foster a culture of collaboration among Indigenous leaders and key groups in a way that puts Traditional Owners in an empowered position with regards to research conducted on their Sea Country.
- Work with the Comms + Creative team to produce accessible, culturally appropriate communications products for diverse audiences.



- Manage the engagement and oversight of external advisors, consultants, or service providers supporting research-related, advocacy or campaign work, ensuring alignment with ReefTO values and objectives.
- Actively contribute to the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of ReefTO's Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocols, including data sovereignty, protection, and free, prior and informed consent processes.
- Champion a culture of learning and reflection by sharing insights, lessons learned, and emerging trends with colleagues across the organisation.
- Collaborate with teams across ReefTO to embed a data-informed, evidence-based approach to program design, policy development, and strategic decision-making.
- Support internal capacity-building by mentoring or coaching colleagues in policy analysis, data interpretation, or advocacy strategy, where relevant.

## What Does Success Look Like?

Success in this role means that Reef Traditional Owners are empowered to lead and shape the research agenda on their Sea Country. Within 12-18 months, you will have established a clear, widely endorsed Reef-wide research agenda that reflects the priorities and aspirations of Traditional Owner communities. This agenda will be launched at the Sea Country Summit in September 2026 and then will actively guide research investment and activity in Sea Country in the Great Barrier Reef region for the next 5+ years.

Strong, respectful partnerships with research institutions will be in place, and Traditional Owners will have access to tools and protocols that enable them to manage, negotiate, and benefit from research on their terms. Success will also be measured by the quality and impact of engagement with Traditional Owners, the uptake and use of developed tools and resources, and the visibility of Traditional Knowledge in research outputs.

Key indicators include:

- A published 5-year Reef Traditional Owner Research Agenda.
- Increased number of research projects aligned with Traditional Owner priorities.
- Documented use of research protocols, benefit-sharing agreements, and ICIP tools.
- Positive feedback from Traditional Owners and research partners on the engagement and development processes.
- Successful brokering of research partnerships and facilitation of knowledge exchange.
- Implementation of initiatives such as a Reef Traditional Owner Research Scholarship or Prize.
- Regular reporting and updates that demonstrate progress, learning, and adaptation.

Ultimately, success means that Reef Traditional Owners are in a stronger position to influence, lead, and benefit from research on their Sea Country.

## About You

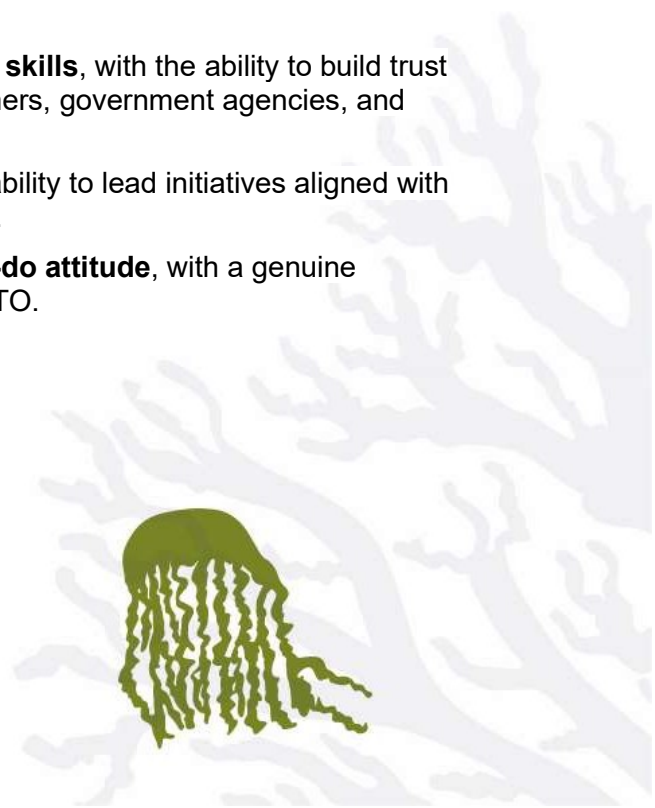
You are a strategic and systematic thinker and a skilled relationship-builder who is passionate about Indigenous-led research and the protection of Sea Country.

You bring a deep respect for Traditional Knowledge systems and a commitment to ensuring that research is conducted ethically, collaboratively, and in alignment with the aspirations of Traditional Owner communities. You're comfortable navigating complex stakeholder environments and have a track record of working across cultures with integrity and humility.

You have experience in research coordination, Indigenous engagement, or program management, and are confident leading projects from concept to delivery. You understand the importance of ethical research governance and are familiar with frameworks such as the AIATSIS Code of Ethics and Our Knowledge Our Way. You're also a strong communicator—able to translate complex ideas into accessible language and facilitate meaningful dialogue between Traditional Owners, researchers, and institutions. Most importantly, you are committed to supporting self-determination and building pathways for Indigenous leadership in research.

You should have:

- **At least 5-8 years' experience** in research coordination, Indigenous engagement, or program management.
- Strong understanding of **Indigenous research ethics and governance**.
- Demonstrated ability to **work collaboratively** with Traditional Owner groups and research institutions.
- Demonstrated experience in **developing strategic frameworks, tools, and resources**.
- **A deep understanding of Reef Traditional Owners' aspirations**, the research landscape affecting Sea Country, and existing relationships with key stakeholders in the research space.
- **Cultural competence and humility** — you listen deeply, respect Indigenous knowledge systems, and work in ways that uphold self-determination and cultural authority.
- **Excellent communication and interpersonal skills**, with the ability to build trust and collaborate effectively with Traditional Owners, government agencies, and partner organisations.
- **Strong project management skills**, with the ability to lead initiatives aligned with timelines, budgets, and reporting requirements.
- **A collaborative mindset and a positive, can-do attitude**, with a genuine commitment to the mission and values of ReefTO.



## The Workplace and Culture

We are fully committed to building a strong, agile team and to fostering a positive, flexible and supportive work culture. We are a small team – we think it is important to have each other's back and for us all to be aligned and working towards a shared vision and goals. To achieve this, we need different points of view, and we encourage the team to respectfully disagree and challenge one another with the aim of reaching the best possible outcome.

ReefTO supports flexible working arrangements. This includes consideration of working-from-home and/or in an office, job share arrangements, and of course, appropriate leave entitlements to enable team members to fulfil cultural and family responsibilities. What is important to you in terms of flexible working arrangements? Let us know!

ReefTO does not currently have a physical office presence, other than a small co-working space in Brisbane. This position is flexible and can be filled remotely with a preference for Queensland (within the Reef catchment).

Pollination Foundation (the ReefTO Taskforce Host Organisation) is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing a working environment that embraces and values diversity and inclusion. We encourage people of all backgrounds to apply. If you have any support or access requirements, we encourage you to advise us at the time of application. We will then work with you to identify the best way to assist you through the recruitment process.

## How to apply

Please apply by submitting a cover letter outlining what you bring to the ReefTO Taskforce (2 page maximum), and a short CV.

You must hold the right to work in Australia.

**Applications close: 12pm (noon) on Monday 23 June 2025**

*Due to the volume of hiring the ReefTO is currently doing, we don't have the capacity to handle individual enquiries about positions.*

---

*We respectfully acknowledge the continuing land, sea and sky country management and custodianship of the Great Barrier Reef by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners, whose rich cultures, heritage values, enduring connections and shared efforts continue to protect the Reef for future generations.*

---

