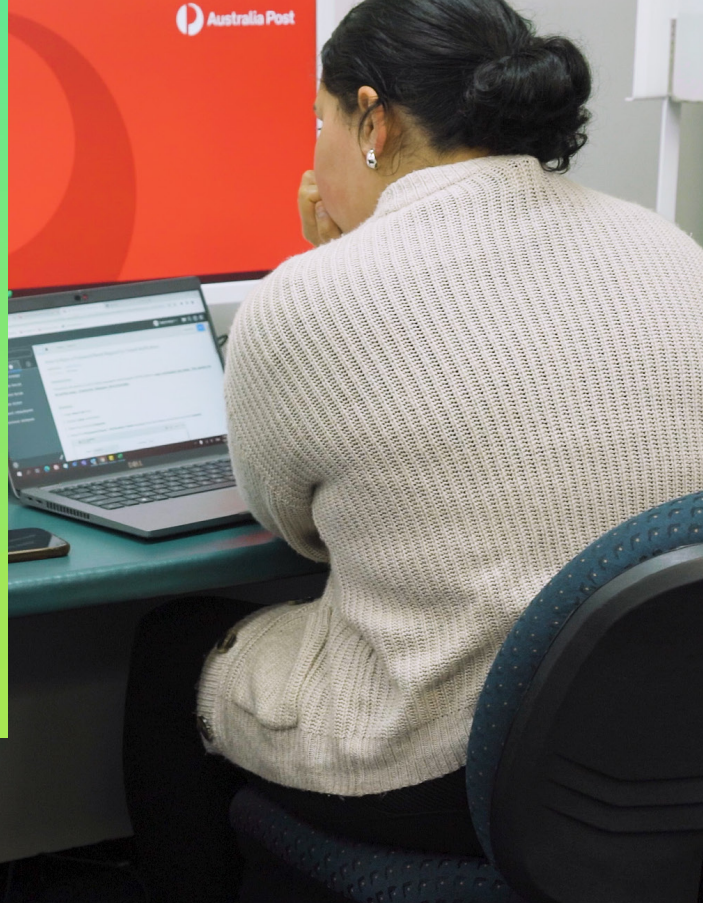




Australia Post

Driving digital inclusion in First Nations Communities



Increasing economic opportunities and independence of First Nations people through greater involvement in the innovation economy

Challenge

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, such as that in Cherbourg, have continued to demonstrate unmatched strength and resilience, and it's time this value is recognised by corporate Australia.

Fujitsu, together with the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and Community, hopes to grow and increase awareness of the value that First Nations communities have in the talent market.

Solution

Fujitsu, together with the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and Community, Queensland Department of Innovation, Tourism and Sport, and TAFE Queensland, opened the First Nations-led Cherbourg Digital Service Centre" to support the digital transformation of the Community.

Australia Post now uses 8 service centre workers to support its workforce, creating meaningful social impact and driving digital inclusion.

Outcomes

- Service Centre staff gain on-the-job training and work towards obtaining a Certificate III in Business from TAFE Queensland
- Fujitsu customers like Australia Post get the opportunity to contribute by opting to have their support calls attended by staff from the Cherbourg Service Centre
- The Cherbourg Community sees a route to sustainable employment.

"This partnership is a tremendous acknowledgment of our commitment to training excellence and is a great example of how we work closely with industry to develop training that enables people to change their lives and build lifelong careers."

Mary Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Queensland

Location:
Australia

About the customer

Located on Wakka Wakka Country in Cherbourg, an Aboriginal community town 260km north-west of Brisbane, the Service Centre is part of a three-year pilot program designed to boost the economic development of Queensland First Nations communities through digital skills training and employment opportunities.



8 service centre workers

Creating social impact through digital inclusion

Many Aboriginal Communities, face barriers to digital literacy and education due to their remoteness, which in turn exclude them from participating in much of Australia's economy. It is also common for these towns to have a history of segregation and systemic racism against First Nations people, as was the case in Cherbourg, a community town 260km north-west of Brisbane.

Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council decided to lead the way for the town to boost its employment rates and economy by working with Deadly Innovation, an initiative of Queensland Government, to create jobs and economic wealth for First Nations people.

"The Community at Cherbourg has been one of the most socially disadvantaged communities in Australia and what we are doing is trying to create hope," explains Duncan Kerslake, Project Manager at Deadly Innovation.

Investing and partnering with First Nation communities

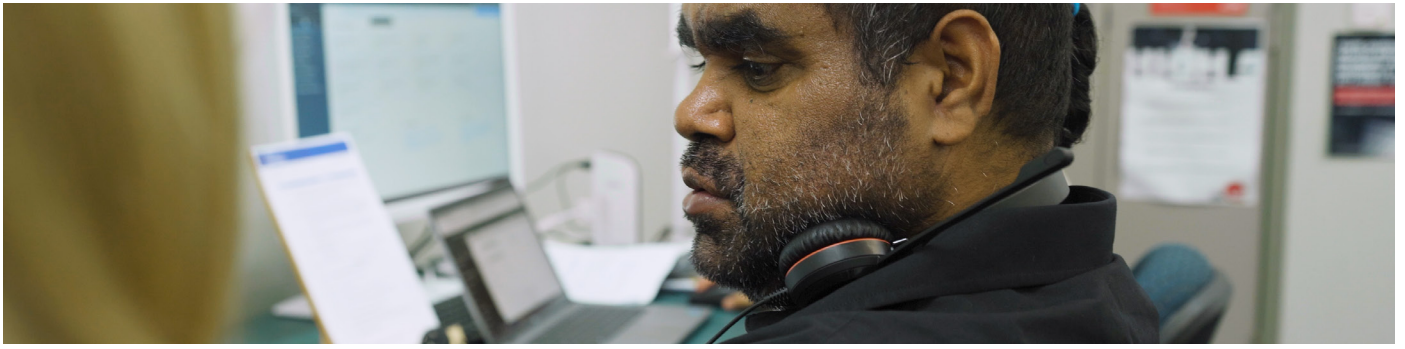
In early 2022, Fujitsu partnered with the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and Community, TAFE Queensland, and the Advance Queensland Deadly Innovation Strategy (Deadly Innovation). Now, Cherbourg has a fully operational Digital Service Centre which Fujitsu subcontracts to, employing locals as service desk representatives.

"At TAFE Queensland, we know that the training we provide, if developed in consultation with First Nations people, increases the opportunity for learning and lifelong prosperity," says Mary Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Queensland. "The Service Centre at Cherbourg is a great example of this and it's not only wonderful to see these students succeeding, but also the prosperity it has brought to the whole community.

A public-private partnership to drive a place-based inclusion model

The Service Centre needed a customer who shared the same vision for reconciliation, equity and inclusion as Fujitsu. Australia Post were quickly identified as the ideal customer that Fujitsu could subcontract service desk work to Cherbourg for.

"We felt the program aligned really well with what Australia Post are trying to do. Now we've got 8 agents working full time on Australia Post, performing a range of tasks like resetting passwords. That technology assistance helps our people get on with their job" Paul Graham, CEO, Australia Post explains.



Ensuring the pilot model becomes a competitive and permanent offering

Fujitsu donated equipment including laptops, keyboards, monitors and headsets, and provided digital literacy, proprietary training, and onboarding, as well as digital literacy training once Australia Post agreed to be the pilot customer.

“We were delighted to be involved with a community as progressive and as focussed as Cherbourg and we’re proud we have supported them to develop their digital skills.” says Graeme Beardsell, CEO, Fujitsu APAC.

Diversity without inclusion is meaningless – in this case, Cherbourg locals were consulted and heard at every step of the way, rather than asked to follow a Fujitsu-led plan. Each partner brought unique knowledge and motivations to the table, and each was instrumental in bringing success to the First Nations Service Centre – without any one of the participating organisations, it could not have happened.

“It’s not just about providing the service, it’s also understanding the role we play in servicing community and customers. The public-private partnership is where Fujitsu has set the benchmark” explains Paul Graham.

Recognising the value of partnering with First Nation communities

As a place-based inclusion model, this program charts a new way forward for how corporate Australia and government can work in collaboration with First Nations communities to develop capability building initiatives, work towards reconciliation and create social impact through digital inclusion.

“The quality of the service we’re getting fully meets our needs. We think there’s a great opportunity to look at how we expand that going forward and we’re working proactively with Fujitsu and the community to look at those opportunities.” Paul Graham adds.