

Neurodiversity at NAB program

With the strong support of the Chief Security Officer, the Neurodiversity at NAB program commenced in partnership with Untapped in May 2019 with six trainees, a fulltime Autism Spectrum Consultant (ASC) and a Technical Lead in the Identity Access Management (IDAM) team. The Neurodiversity at NAB oversight committee and Technology Careers team provided governance and oversight and promoted the initiative in the initial stages of conception. Their dedication and leadership created the foundation for a successful program.

In January/February 2022, NAB and Untapped expanded the neurodiversity program with a second intake of four trainees through NAB's Technology Careers program, who now sponsor Neurodiversity @ NAB.

"Untapped has presented to me an extraordinary opportunity with an internship at NAB. With the support I've received every step of the way, I'm in the best possible situation to achieve my potential"

Alex, Untapped Trainee

"It's been amazing to get an opportunity to work with Untapped and NAB. The support I've had through Untapped has been exceptional. It's great to be recognised for my skills and valued because I think differently."

Nicole, Untapped Trainee

Untapped recognise that much of the success we have achieved delivering sustainable autism employment programs can be attributed to:

- well researched and well-developed recruitment and assessment methodology
- on-going workplace support
- and the multifaceted role performed by the Autism Spectrum Consultant (ASC)

ASCs offer customised one-to-one workplace support, guidance, coaching, counselling, and training for successful workplace integration for the autistic trainees and the NAB staff teams working alongside them.

"My experience so far with NAB is everyone is not just promoting diversity but ensuring a culture of inclusivity within NAB, their teams and with their interns."

Shane Johnson, Untapped Autism Spectrum Consultant

Practical strategy-based Autism@Work training has been delivered across teams within NAB to a variety of stakeholders including immediate colleagues working with the trainees, wider teams with whom they may interact, mentors, buddies, supervisors, managers and executives.

“The autism awareness training provided for the entire team is really valuable, and whilst it is specifically designed to help everyone understand their neurodiverse colleagues experience and how they can adjust their approach and attitude, this again is extrapolated across the entire team and helps the team collaborate more effectively”

Vanessa Weaver, Head of Technology, Financial Crime Fraud

We recently asked Vanessa Weaver Head of Technology, Financial Crime Fraud at NAB for her experience working with Untapped interns:

What are the positives that the Untapped interns bring to the roles at NAB?

Hunter brings tenacity and attention to detail to his role addressing technical hygiene and governance across the platform. Nicole is new to the role and brings with her multiple technical skills including front end development where we have a gap at the moment. Joe is very methodical and makes sure everything he does is completed properly; he never leaves loose ends which is extremely valuable in his team. He has been formally recognised by his teammates for his tenacity and his determination to get things completed to a high quality and standard when we have deadlines and incidents.

What are the valuable autistic traits you have identified?

Hunter was originally earmarked as a developer however his focus and attention to detail made us rethink and give him an alternate role managing our technical hygiene and governance which require these skills in spades to address them properly. Although new to the team Nicole has already impressed with her technical knowledge. We are looking forward to working with her.

What are the benefits of the Neurodiversity@NAB program?

Having neurodiverse team members has helped me and my people leaders become better team leaders. Being a part of the Neurodiversity at NAB program, which includes the autism awareness training, has helped us to become more empathetic and mindful of individual needs. Not just for the neurodiverse team members, but for all team members – this has been reflected in high engagement scores. My people leaders have called this out themselves and expressed gratitude for the experience.

Our neurodiverse team members also make us aware of any gaps in our internal onboarding processes and with the help of Untapped, call it out when things aren't going well or if something is causing them angst. This helps us improve arrangements for all new starters.

