



MAINTAINING INTEREST AND MOMENTUM

AIATSIS – 165 staff

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is a world-renowned research, collections and publishing organisation. They promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, traditions, languages and stories from the past and present.

With their long-term commitment to creating a healthier workplace, the AIATSIS team understand what it takes to maintain the momentum of their health and wellbeing plan.

"The main challenge we face is that the same staff carry the activities," says Amit Barkay (pictured), Facilities Coordinator at AIATSIS. "This can be tiring and sometimes makes it hard to stay motivated, especially after the excitement of the first year."

"We try to overcome this by matching activities which are close to the hearts of our supporters."

This tailored approach ensures the coordinator of activities has the passion and enthusiasm to bring others on board.

Having plenty of people involved also helps to share the responsibilities and keeps everyone motivated.

"The number one piece of advice I would give is to find a way to engage as many helpers as you can," says Amit.

He also suggests talking with staff before you commence each plan to get their input about what they would like to see in the plan, and what they would actively participate in.

This year, the team focused on bike riding and swimming challenges, as well as mental health first aid training.

Their most successful programs are the AIATSIS Football Club, where a great team spirit has been established, as well as the creation of a keen cycling 'community'.

"Our expansion to a second location meant staff could commute between sites on their own bikes or our AIATSIS E-bikes," explains Amit. "We are seeing a slow yet steady increase in staff taking to cycling, so we're improving our cycling facilities and offering seminars."

The support from staff and management has kept AIATSIS committed to a healthier workplace for three years.

"We're keen to create a better working environment, a place where staff enjoy work, build friendships, and improve their physical and mental health," says Amit. "Since being part of Healthier Work, we have noticed an increase in staff morale, as well as a reduction in those who identify as smokers, overweight or depressed in our annual survey."

