

## Program Leader Position Description 2024

Mittagundi is an outdoor education centre established with the belief that young people, mountains, purposeful work, and challenges are natural partners. Mittagundi is situated on a 400-acre property near the old gold mining town of Glen Valley on the Upper Mitta Mitta River, north of Omeo, VIC. The main purpose of Mittagundi is to provide programs for young people (14 to 17) to explore Victoria's high country and learn about themselves. They spend time bushwalking, camping, abseiling from nearby cliffs, rafting the Mitta Mitta River, and helping to run the farm. The atmosphere at Mittagundi is simple, honest, and happy. There are no watches, no timetables, and no money. Instead, there is an opportunity for young people to live and work together in an environment where people matter more than anything else.

The staff team is made up of a variety of different people. People of various ages, various skills, various life experiences, and from various backgrounds.

The main requirement is that you are keen to work with young people and live as part of a remote community. Leaders are at the heart of Mittagundi's large community. They share a purposeful life and experience a year of professional development and personal learning. We are looking for applicants that have an interest or experience working with young people in an outdoor education and working farm environment. The position requires staff to lead young people on outdoor adventure activities (bushwalking, cross country skiing, rafting and abseiling) and farm-based projects (animal husbandry, gardening, fencing, building maintenance) in a well-supported environment.

Positions are voluntary in nature with a generous remuneration package. It is both meaningful and challenging. It is hard to aptly capture the experience of being a Mittagundi leader but here is a quote from a past leader and program manager:

"I feel the value of this for myself, and I have seen the value others find in such simplicity over and over again. Young people talk about how happy they feel here, how nice it is to have a break from their phone, their schoolwork and all the other complexities of high school life. This is a place where you can relax, not in a switched off or lazy way, but in a way that opens your eyes, your heart, and your mind. Mittagundi is a place where (to quote a young person) you can be 'as happy as a dog with three tails!' - Bec Wade 2011 & 2015



## KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

### Understanding of Mittagundi philosophy

Our philosophy is based on the importance of people and community, the value of living simply, working hard, being resourceful, and working alongside young people rather than above them. More info can be found on our webpage or in any of Ian Stapleton's books about Mittagundi's beginnings 'Something Small' and 'Amongst the Mountains' (note these books can be hard to come by).

### A keen interest or experience working with young people in the outdoors

Young people are the core purpose of our organisation. A significant part of your year will involve working with and supporting young people. Relationships are an important part of life at Mittagundi and it is this relationship based approach that forms the basis for our work - helping young people develop positive relationships with the people around them and the natural environment. There are very few 'indoor' places at Mittagundi and this exposure to a variety of activities in a variety of environments helps young people develop a connection to nature. Mittagundi is a supportive and professional outdoor education centre that provides opportunities and/or training for all staff to lead young people in the outdoors safely and effectively.

### Sense of maturity and initiative 'to have a go'

You will be part of a team who are responsible for the wellbeing of the young people that come to Mittagundi as well as key areas to keep the farm running. An ability to problem solve, display sound judgement, and seek clarity when needed is valuable. Like the young people that come, the leaders with often have many first-time experiences during their year at Mittagundi. You will be presented with many challenges and opportunities for developing practical and interpersonal skills.

### Commitment to working, living and learning as part of a team

Working at Mittagundi is committing to live as part of a small, tight knit community. We understand that conflict is a natural occurrence and part of the staff training involves setting up effective ways to communicate about and deal with issues as they arise. You need to be willing to live by Mittagundi's philosophy and to frequently welcome people into your home.



## Effective Communication Skills

Communication is key at Mittagundi. There are many people you will need to communicate with including young people, the people you live with and the broader community. We continue to improve on our communication throughout the year, through practice and specific training.

## Demonstrate a strong flexible work ethic & ability to take on increasing responsibility and autonomy in work

Our directors value the leaders as the engine of the organisation, solutions not problems, growth, community building, shared leadership and decision making. There is plenty of work and it changes frequently. There will be early mornings and late nights. The ability to take on responsibility and be autonomous in work areas over the course of the year is important.

## Ability to work through challenging times of stress and pressure

As well as the challenges young people experiencing while at Mittagundi, there can be challenging times for leaders as well. Leaders need to keep a calm head and make good decisions when the pressure is on. The challenges can be physical (cold, wet, tired) as well as social (sharing your life and home with so many others) and personal (being away from friends and family). The growth and learning from successfully meeting challenges is a key part of your year as a Mittagundi Leader.

## Other Requirements

- A driver's licence (manual) is a practical requirement for the work at hand, Drivers on their P plates and with auto licences will still be considered but preference will be for experienced drivers.
- All applicants are required to have a National Police Check and Working with Children Check (WWCC) to comply with the Mittagundi Child Safe policy and procedures.

## Key Responsibilities

- Leading and working alongside young people
- Creating a safe environment and learning opportunities for young people
- As a team, facilitating outdoor programs for young people. Including ten-day summer course, winter programs, and follow up programs throughout the year. This means you will be leading young people on bush walks and cross-country skiing abseiling and white-water rafting activities (no experience required – we will train you).
- Being part of a team working and living together, planning, and delivering projects and programs together.



## Responsibility for Property and Work Areas

In addition to their general responsibilities, each leader has a suite of job areas that includes one or a couple of areas from each of these four main regions below. It is a chance to contribute old skills and learn new ones:

- Animals (Cows, Horses, Chickens, Pigs, and various others)
- Property Areas (Garden, wood workshop, blacksmith forge and other areas)
- Administration (Newsletter and Merchandise)
- Events (Fundraising and programmed events)

## Remuneration Package

Mittagundi provides a package worth around \$25,000:

- Board and simple living expenses at Mittagundi
- Expenses such as food, postage, batteries and phone calls
- Loan of any outdoor gear for the year and good discounts at outdoor retailers
- An 'honorarium' (pocket money) of \$12,000
- Nationally Accredited training including (valued at over \$5,000):
  - Bushwalking Qualifications
  - Grade II Whitewater Qualifications
  - Swift Water Rescue Qualifications
  - Wilderness First Aid (80 hour) Course
  - Mental Health First Aid
  - Chainsaw Qualifications
  - Four Wheel Driving Qualifications
  - Defensive Driving Certificate
  - Food handling Certificate
- In house training in:
  - Group Management and Leadership in the Outdoors
  - Environmental Management
  - Forge and Joinery
  - Abseiling
  - Communication Training
  - Horse Handling
  - Animal Husbandry



# MITTAGUNDI

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

4385 Omeo Hwy  
Glen Valley VIC 3898  
03 5159 7238  
info@mittagundi.org.au

www.mittagundi.org.au  
ABN 41 005 502 625

## Practicalities

Positions generally start in January with training and orientation.

Our programs with young people begin in March and extend throughout the year. The position is a full time 'live in' position working weekends and weekdays. Please be aware that this is a full time, limited tenure, live-in role. Mittagundi will become your home and workplace for the duration of your contract. Consequently, the requirements of the role (specifically the living arrangements) are not suitable for families.

We have four weeks off in June, one week in September and one week for Christmas. Other days off are distributed by the Director(s) in the yearly calendar depending on program requirements.

For more information, please contact the Mittagundi Directors Michael and Danielle via email to discuss the position and let us know you're interested. Or arrange a visit to Mittagundi and check it out for yourself.

To apply, please email a CV and application letter addressing key selection criteria in this position description as well as answering these two questions: 'What can I offer Mittagundi?' & 'What can Mittagundi offer me?'

Applications are open until positions are filled.

Please email enquiries and applications to [director@mittagundi.org.au](mailto:director@mittagundi.org.au)

