

## **The Background to Golden Gurus**

Ernie Peralta, a mature age Australian living in Queensland, attended the Australia 2020 Summit in Canberra in April 2008. He proposed that a national community of 'Golden Gurus' be created by the Australian Government.

Ernie Peralta's plan was to activate retired and semi-retired skilled professionals to provide mentoring support to small business and the community.

Ernie Peralta's idea started as a 25-word essay in a contest conducted by Brisbane's Courier-Mail to select a worthy delegate to the 2020 Summit. Over a thousand submissions were received by the newspaper. His novel idea was chosen as a simple solution to help improve the nation's productivity.

Ernie Peralta's commitment to Golden Gurus is understandable. He says that he is living this dream based on an idea that parallels his own personal circumstances. Educated in the United States with an MBA from Stanford University, he spent his professional career with a global oil company until he brought his family to Australia in the mid 1970s. He spent some years as an international marketing consultant, then became a lecturer at an international university.

The Golden Gurus program now occupies his full-time interest. Ernie Peralta supports Volunteering Queensland, as this organisation implements the Queensland Government's Golden Gurus program.

The new program commenced on 1 January 2010 and is facilitated by a range of quality organisations across Australia, including NORTEC.

## **What is the Golden Gurus program?**

The Golden Gurus program harnesses the skills and experience of Australians aged 50 years and over by encouraging them to provide voluntary mentor support to community organisations and the people they assist, as well as small businesses.

The Golden Gurus program also encourages organisations that have a program in place that connects mature age people to volunteering or mentoring roles to apply to deliver their program as part of the national Golden Gurus community. NORTEC are a member of the Golden Gurus program and can put mentors in touch with start-up businesses or community organisations that could benefit from a mentor's experience and skills.

## **How does the program work?**

A range of quality organisations across Australia are ready to start connecting mature age people with opportunities to share their skills and experience with community organisations or small business owners.

NORTEC can connect suitably skilled mature age people with small business owners as small business mentors. A small business mentor will not work for the business but will help the business owner with networking, to identify areas for business improvement, or to support self-development and growth.

NORTEC can also pair a Golden Guru to a community organisation to help the community organisation to grow.

If you are 50 years and over and would like to become a Golden Guru, or if you are a small business owner, social enterprise or a community organisation that would like support, please contact Angie Reid at NORTEC on 02 6686 6077

## Who is expected to benefit from the program?

The national Golden Gurus program supports:

- **mature age people** who are retired, semi-retired or who are not working full time by providing opportunities for them to pass on their skills to the next generation; meet new people; develop social support networks; and make a difference in their communities
- **small businesses**, by connecting small business owners (including new business owners that have completed the Government's New Enterprise Incentive Scheme) with the support of appropriately skilled mature age people
- **community organisations**, by helping them to access capacity-building assistance, enabling them to more effectively help the community around them
- **not-for-profit organisations** that provide a service that matches mature age volunteers with volunteering opportunities, by providing them with promotional material and other resources to attract and support new mature age volunteers and to attract new small businesses or community organisations that are looking for voluntary support.

## Who can become a Golden Guru?

Golden Gurus is for mature age Australians (those aged 50 years and over) who are retired, semi-retired or not working full time. If you are a resident from Nambucca to Tweed Heads and are interested in becoming a Golden Guru, you can contact Angie Reid at NORTEC on 02 6686 6077 or email

[goldengurus@nortectd.com.au](mailto:goldengurus@nortectd.com.au)

