



Australian Government

Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

2025–29

| industry.gov.au/InclusionStrategy

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Acknowledgement of Country

Our department recognises the First Peoples of this Nation and their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters, seas, skies, and communities.

We Acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Custodians and Lore Keepers of the oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples.

Acknowledgement symbol: detail from DISR Journey 2024 by Chern'ee Sutton.

Photo: Serena Williams, Ngunnawal Elder, and Chief Operating Officer Casey Millward at National Reconciliation Week water ceremony 2025.



Secretary's foreword

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) helps government build a better future for all Australians by enabling a productive, resilient and sustainable economy, enriched by science and technology. As we deliver on this purpose, we strive to cultivate a workplace where everyone feels genuinely cared for, embraces curiosity, feels more connected with each other and our stakeholders, and collaborates openly.

Our Inclusion Strategy 2025–29 provides a framework for our ongoing journey to create a workplace, where everyone feels safe, valued and able to thrive.

As a department, we know that inclusion is not a one-time initiative or a box-ticking exercise. We also don't shy away from the real experiences and evolving expectations in our society, and within our workplace.

We commit to listen, learn and grow.

We all have a role to play in fostering an inclusive workplace and ensuring that we work with integrity and stewardship to uphold our obligations as Australian Public Service (APS) employees.

We know there is more to do, and that it takes courage, deliberate effort, honest reflection and shared responsibility.

It takes a community.

As a department, we will continue to foster a positive and inclusive workplace – and this strategy is just one step in a journey we take together. Each of us has a role to play. I invite you to commit personally and look for ways, big or small, to be a part of this community.

Meghan Quinn PSM

Secretary



Introduction

We are firmly committed to cultivating a workplace where everyone feels safe, valued and able to thrive. This journey is essential, not just because it is an extension of our values. It is also our belief that inclusion drives better outcomes for the people, sectors and communities we serve. We understand that an inclusive workplace is a place where everyone values and embraces diversity. It is a workplace that builds a sense of community across all our people and places.

The Inclusion Strategy 2025–29 reflects this commitment. It is our continued commitment to build a workplace that is inclusive by design and respectful in practice.

It affirms that everyone – regardless of background, role, location or lived experience – has the right to feel safe, be heard and contribute meaningfully.

We developed this strategy in close collaboration with Employee Diversity Networks and Diversity Champions. It builds on APS-wide plans, including:

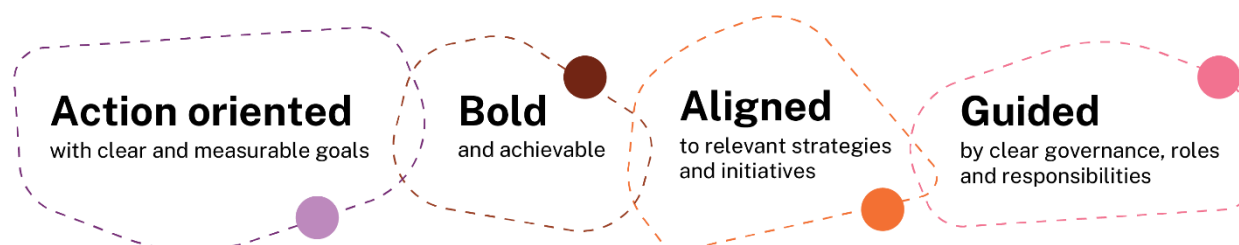
- Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020–24
- APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25
- APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26
- APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment Strategy and Action Plan.

Our inclusion strategy outlines 5 priorities for the next 4 years:

- capability uplift
- clear accountability
- employee support and recognition
- recruitment, retention and representation
- systems and processes.

These priorities form the foundation for our inclusion action plans with intersectional actions to be delivered. The action plans will be regularly monitored and adjusted to ensure relevance and impact.

We are committed to implementing actions that are:



Our achievements



Disability Affirmative Measures recruitment round applications



Increased disability representation
(12%, up by 4% from 2020)



Improved employment and WHS practices, procedures, tools and resources



More lunchtime language groups



Best in Class for ICT
Australian Disability Network's Access and Inclusion Awards



Breastfeeding friendly workplace accreditation



Full suite of inclusion training from SBS



Released the **Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–26**



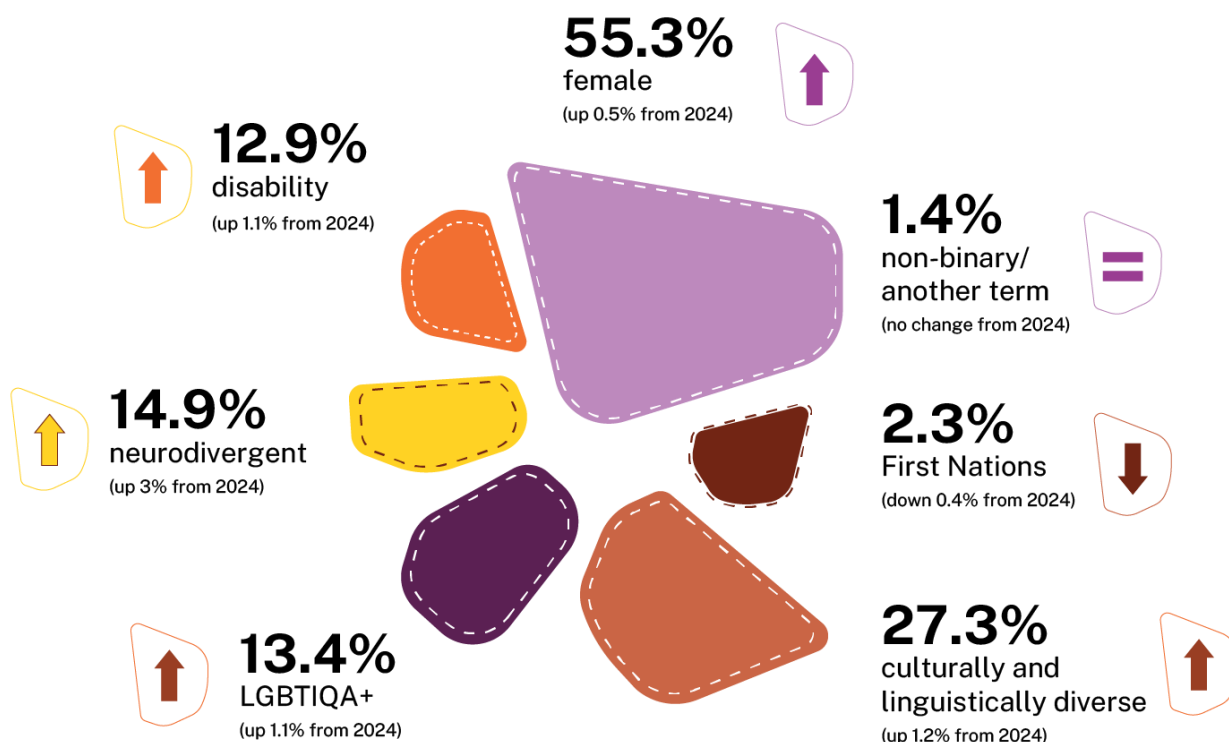
Refreshed Respite Room at Industry House

This strategy builds on what we achieved under the Inclusion Strategy 2021–23.

- Undertook a Disability Affirmative Measures recruitment round which received 663 applications from 349 unique candidates.
- Increased our disability representation, as reported in the APS Employee Census, from 8% in 2020 to 12% in 2024. This exceeded the 7% target in the APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25 and the 10% target in the department’s Accessibility Action Plan 2020–25.
- Partnered with JobAccess to review and make changes to the accessibility of our employment and WHS practices, procedures, tools and resources.
- Expanded our lunchtime language groups to include Cantonese, French, German, Mandarin and Spanish. These have also been opened to other agencies and have participants from CSIRO, Geoscience, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Finance and the Department of Health and Aged Care.
- Awarded Best in Class for ICT at the Australian Disability Network’s Access and Inclusion Awards for our digital accessibility capability uplift.
- Achieved accreditation as a breastfeeding friendly workplace through the Australia Breastfeeding Association.
- Continued to celebrate the rich diversity of our community on days of significance including Lunar New Year, International Women’s Day and the International Day of People with Disability.
- Purchased and promoted the full suite of inclusion training from the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS). In addition to cohort specific modules, such as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), First Nations and Disability, we now offer additional modules. These include Appropriate Workplace Behaviour, which covers Respect@Work legislation and Inclusive Recruitment.
- Launched our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–26 to detail our commitment to our First Nations staff and to Closing the Gap.
- Rebranded and promoted the Respite Room at Industry House to provide a low-sensory environment for any staff needing a break away from the larger open-plan office space. The room offers a quiet space to help staff manage their sensory or mental health needs.

Current state

The image below shows our diversity based on data from the 2025 APS Employee Census.



We aim to build a workforce that reflects the community we serve, where our people feel comfortable bringing their whole self to work.

Photo: CALD Network Executive Champion William Tan, Secretary Meghan Quinn and dancers Nga Man Amanda White and Derek White from Prosperous Mountain Dragon and Lion Dance, at Lunar New Year event 2024.



Connection to APS and DISR inclusion activities

Our inclusion actions connect to our overarching strategies, plans and values. Our Inclusion Strategy 2025–29 and associated inclusion action plans outline our priorities to make our department an inclusive workplace. All our diversity strategies and plans, including the [Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan](#), continue to be departmental priorities.

The table below identifies existing Commonwealth and internal strategies that relate to the specific diversity cohorts considered in this strategy.



Roles and responsibilities

We commit to go above and beyond our obligations in APS-wide standards, values and codes. Along with the [APS Values and Code of Conduct](#), we are committed to ensuring our staff and managers are supported, empowered and accountable in relation to their legal, moral and ethical obligations. This falls under legislation such as the:

- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment \(Respect at Work\) Act 2022](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988](#).

Each one of us has a role to play in building our DISR community. Our inclusive culture is built through everyday actions and behaviours.

The responsibility for raising awareness and education should not be placed on colleagues with lived experience. Leaders, managers and supervisors should take carriage of their own learning journey.

Senior Executives (SES)

- Actively promote and support inclusion in DISR
- Model inclusive behaviour and hold others to account
- Actively participate in inclusion events and initiatives
- Mentor staff from underrepresented groups to support a diverse pipeline of managers and leaders
- Promote diversity awareness in their business areas and foster an inclusive workplace culture
- Foster cross-departmental collaboration on inclusion and diversity.

Managers

- Model commitment to inclusion and diversity through actions and words, including participating in inclusion activities (e.g. attend events, undertake training, Employee Diversity Network contributions)
- Support and advocate for their team's participation in inclusion activities
- Attend training that will assist them in working with diverse staff
- Recognise and support any staff who are Network Committee members (e.g. Co-chairs)
- Be proactive in providing supportive workplace adjustments to staff
- Foster awareness and inclusion by encouraging conversations about inclusion and diversity within the team and as part of development and performance conversations.

All staff

- Demonstrate inclusive behaviours, including using inclusive language
- Speak up against discrimination, bias, racism, bullying and harassment
- Participate in inclusion and diversity initiatives, events and Employee Diversity Networks
- Seek diverse perspectives in day-to-day work practices
- Meaningfully engage in learning opportunities to develop their understanding of inclusion and diversity
- Maintain diversity details in Aurion ESS so we can better understand the workforce and tailor support.

Corporate teams

- Drive the delivery of actions under the inclusion strategy and APS-wide diversity-related strategies to foster a workplace culture where all employees are all valued and respected for their contribution
- Provide advice, guidance and training on diversity and inclusion, in consultation with Employee Diversity Networks where appropriate
- Develop and implement internal initiatives to benefit First Nations employees, including delivery of the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan
- Support the delivery of events for agreed days of significance alongside Employee Diversity Networks and sponsoring divisions
- Provide input into development or revision of human resources policies to ensure inclusive and equitable policies
- Seek opportunities to improve systems, processes and practices, and consider inclusion in everyday activities, planning and policy design
- Actively engage in projects to improve inclusion and accessibility for all employees.

Employee Diversity Networks and SES Champions

Employee Diversity Networks

- Provide network members with support, guidance and a safe space to share experiences
- Actively engage with People Branch to represent their members and to support the delivery of the inclusion action plans under this strategy
- Contribute to raising awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion in the workplace
- Maintain an allocated budget to deliver an annual Network Action Plan, such as specific events, products, conference attendance that directly benefit their members.

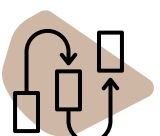
Network SES champions

- Actively promote networks at the senior executive levels, championing network initiatives and events, and increasing the visibility of the network across the department and the broader APS
- Contribute to Employee Diversity Network strategies and action plans and provide leadership to drive diversity-related initiatives and organisational change.

Photo: Deputy Secretary Helen Wilson and Akii Ngo at International Day of People with Disability keynote event 2024.

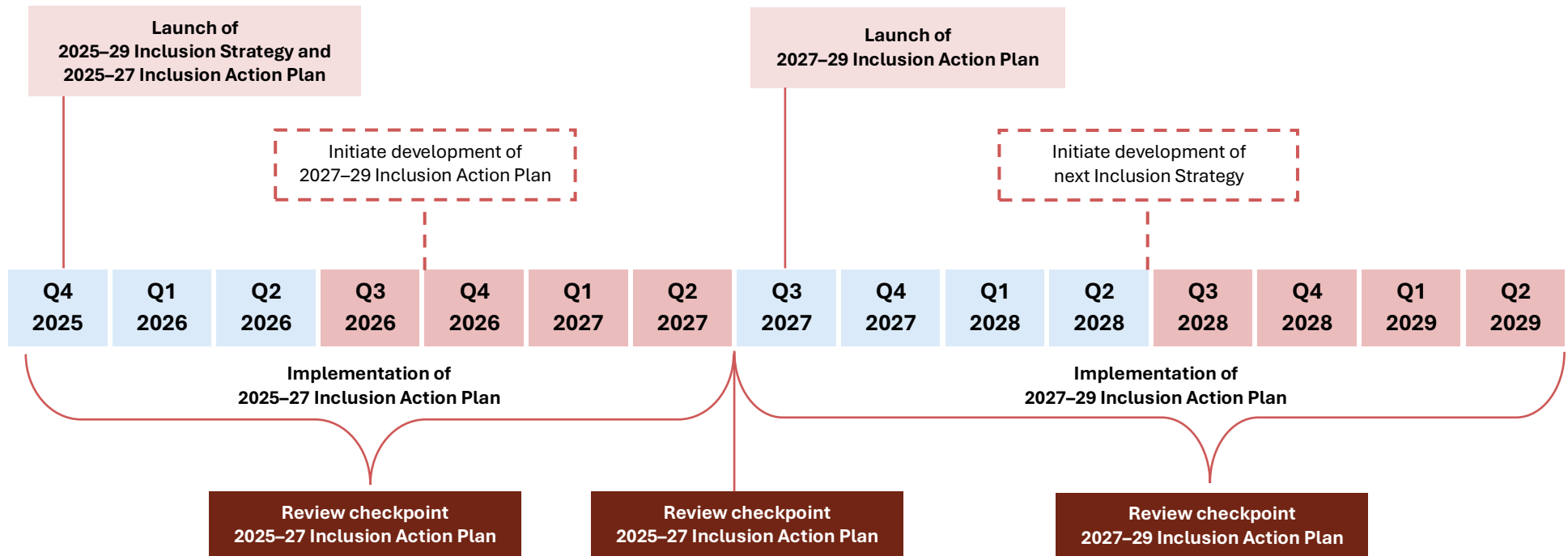


Inclusion Action Plan 2025–27

Focus	Strategic objective	Link to 4Cs	Supporting actions	Measures of progress	Measures of impact
 Capability uplift	We will grow a visible, capable, informed community of allies and supporters.	Curious We will be continuously curious and learn from each other.	Provide targeted training, events and engagement initiatives. Ensure education, tools and resources are available to empower allies and supporters.	Attendance and engagement at internal training, event or engagements.	Independent measures over time could include: • Australian Workplace Equality Index • APS Employee Census • Reconciliation Action Plan barometer • Australian Disability Network Access and Inclusion Index
 Clear accountability	We will elevate the influence of Employee Networks and Champions and raise the accountability of others.	Connected We will keep our people connected and work together to progress inclusion goals.	Ensure Employee Networks and Champions have structured access to decision-making forums. Embed early and ongoing consultation from the outset.	Committee items are presented. Committee papers are supported.	
 Employee support and recognition	We will strengthen the impact and sustainability of people from underrepresented and marginalised groups, allies and supporters.	Caring We will support staff wellbeing and foster an environment where our staff feel valued.	Provide targeted support and development opportunities to support Employee Networks to build capabilities and connections. Receive coordinated support from the Inclusion team, and key corporate areas, to enable Employee Networks to deliver impact. Implement proactive measures and supports via an operations centre to ensure the safety and wellbeing of underrepresented and marginalised groups during times of difficulty or crisis. Explore rewards and recognition options for Employee Network participation.	Communications messages and articles. Attendance at external training, event or engagements.	
 Recruitment, retention and representation	We will continue to build an inclusive workplace so that we reflect the community we serve.	Collaborative We will foster an environment that values diverse skills and experience and leverage our diversity when collaborating and problem solving.	Review outreach opportunities to attract candidates from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives. Review job advertisements and selection processes to reduce bias. Explore stay/exit surveys for departing staff. Facilitate a co-mentoring pilot between diverse staff and leaders.	Representation, retention and promotion data.	
 Systems and processes	We will embed accessibility and inclusion in our infrastructure, systems, policies and processes.	Collaborative We will address barriers that prevent our people from working effectively or being their authentic self at work.	IT, property and other corporate teams work closely to ensure accessibility and inclusion is at the core. Improve the accuracy and completeness of diversity data collection. Advance the development of APS-wide strategies and plans by developing internal implementation plans and leading conversations about the development of a LGBTIQ+ strategy.	Strategy development and implementation.	

Timeline

Each new action plan will be developed in consultation with Employee Diversity Networks and the executive team.



Reporting schedule

Q4 2025	Launch Inclusion Strategy 2025–29 and Inclusion Action Plan 2025–27.
Q3 2026	Report to People Safety and Culture Committee (PSCC) on progress against Inclusion Action Plan 2025–27.
Q4 2026	Commence consultation for Inclusion Action Plan 2027–29.
Q3 2027	Report to PSCC on progress against Inclusion Action Plan 2025–27. Launch Inclusion Action Plan 2027–29.
Q3 2028	Report to PSCC on progress against Inclusion Action Plan 2027–29. Initiate development of next inclusion strategy.
Q3 2029	Report to PSCC on progress against Inclusion Action Plan 2027–29. Launch next inclusion strategy.

