



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Strategy

Embracing diversity for global influence

2024–2027



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) acknowledges Australia's First Nations peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We recognise the ongoing custodianship of land, sea and sky and the perpetual spiritual connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people hold with Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to First Nations people throughout Australia.

Commitment to First Nations peoples

DFAT is committed to building a workplace that respects, values, elevates and includes First Nations people, and First Nations ways of being, knowing and doing.

DFAT will progress reconciliation through our Reconciliation Action Plan, applying co-design and partnership principles. We will engage responsibly, acknowledging the cultural load that can fall on First Nations staff through embedding the perspectives, experiences, and interests of First Nations people into Australia's international policy, relationships, trade and development activities.

DFAT will continue to work in partnership with First Nations people to bring First Nations knowledge and culture to the world, celebrating the achievements of First Nations people in the past, present and future.

About the artist

Nganawi mitji Brooke Rigney - My name is Brooke Rigney, or Rigney-Lively, and I am a proud Ngarrindjeri and Kaurna woman. I am a mother – ninkawi – a musician, an artist, and passionate advocate for our young people and community.

I am a graduate of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM). I have shared the stage with the likes of Uncle Archie Roach and No Fixed Address and performed at community events across the years with my father and our band.

For the last eight years, I have been working across government both alongside and on projects dedicated to the distinct rights and needs of our young people. My passion is to help empower our young ones in self and culture in the same ways that my mentors did for me, to be where I am today. Key to my identity and strength in culture is my music and art.

Growing up I was lucky enough to be surrounded by musicians, my language, art and culture through my father and various artists and musicians in our family. They were such strong examples of expressing culture and healing through those art forms. My art uses elements of Ngarrindjeri art techniques and is influenced by my Uncles, who share their art with family, as well as my sisters in community who have taken the time to sit with and guide me. This approach is woven together with more contemporary approaches both on canvas and in digital forms.

I paint my own stories, experiences and perspectives as a Ngarrindjeri and Kaurna woman living on Kaurna Yerta. Many of my pieces depict or represent my personal journey, family and connection to our country and waters.





About DFAT

DFAT promotes and protects Australia's international interests to support our security and prosperity. We work with international partners and other countries to tackle global challenges, increase trade and investment opportunities, protect international rules, keep our region stable and help Australians overseas.

With over 6000 staff located in Australia and overseas, we manage Australia's international presence with a network of over 120 embassies, high commissions, consulates-general and representative offices across five continents. We issue passports, provide travel advice, negotiate trade agreements, and support international development.

In addition to DFAT's 900+ Australian Public Service (APS) staff posted overseas, a further 1100+ APS staff from other government agencies are deployed across our global network, working alongside 4200+ locally engaged staff.

Our vision for inclusion, equity and diversity

'Embracing diversity for global influence'

Our vision is for an inclusive workplace that projects and values diversity. We strive for workplaces that are safe, where staff feel respected and valued, and where everyone has equitable access to opportunities.



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	1
Commitment to First Nations peoples	1
About the artist	1
About DFAT	2
Secretary’s message	5
Strategy at a glance	6
Understanding inclusion, equity and diversity	7
Our progress	8
Our workforce in 2024	10
Strategy pillars	12
Pillar one: Inclusive leadership and behaviours at all levels	12
Pillar two: Inclusive and equitable policies, systems and workplaces	13
Pillar three: Overseas posts that drive equal opportunity	14
Pillar four: A diverse workforce at all levels	15
Detailed Implementation Plan	16
Principles for prioritising DIP actions	16
Focus areas	17
Roles, responsibilities and supports	18
Governance	22
Measuring impact	22
Targets by end 2027	23
Appendix	25
Definitions	25
Legislation	28
APS policies	30

Secretary's message

I am proud to present DFAT's first overarching Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Strategy.

This strategy outlines what we will do to create a more diverse workforce at all levels, and more inclusive workplaces in Australia and across the globe. It is about living the values we promote globally, particularly those of human rights, and the inherent dignity of all individuals.

These efforts matter to DFAT, for the Australian community we serve and the international community we seek to influence. A department that is representative of Australia's peoples is stronger and better equipped to problem solve.

Our Women in Leadership initiative demonstrated our ability to build a culture, workforce and leadership that is more inclusive, equitable and diverse. The initiative improved women's participation, particularly in leadership roles, and we adopted more flexible working practices. We increased Head of Mission and Post leadership from 27 per cent women in 2015 to 52 per cent in 2024, and our Senior Executive Service from 34 per cent women to 50 per cent.



We are now looking to bring greater cohesion to our inclusion, equity and diversity work, building on our efforts and achievements to date. This strategy articulates a renewed vision and commitments across four lines of effort: inclusive leadership at all levels; inclusive and equitable policies, systems and workplaces; overseas posts that drive equal opportunity; and ultimately, a diverse workforce at all levels.

DFAT's unique role leading Australia's network of overseas embassies, high commissions and consulates presents an opportunity, and indeed an obligation, to build more inclusive workplaces in over 86 countries and 126 locations.

But in many cases, working to address cultural, attitudinal, physical and systemic barriers starts at home. It begins with acknowledging we don't all start on a level playing field, and additional measures, leadership actions and supports are required to promote equity.

This strategy takes a broad view of accountability and responsibility, recognising that inclusion, equity and diversity cannot be delivered 'for' the department by any one work area. Rather, it must be delivered 'by' the department, with each of our leaders and managers, and our entire workforce, responsible for building inclusive workplaces.

As we build on our previous efforts to create a more inclusive organisation, each of us needs to develop a greater appreciation of the diversity of Australia, and our workforce. If we're successful, we will see an increasingly diverse department in which staff from all backgrounds feel safe, respected, and valued.

Jan Adams AO PSM
Secretary

Strategy at a glance

‘Embracing diversity for global influence’

Our vision is for an inclusive workplace that projects and values diversity. We strive for workplaces that are safe, where staff feel respected and valued, and where everyone has equitable access to opportunities.



Pillar 1

Inclusive leadership at all levels



Pillar 2

Inclusive and equitable policies, systems and workplaces



Pillar 3

Overseas posts that drive equal opportunity



Pillar 4

A diverse workforce at all levels

Detailed Implementation Plan

Separate document with prioritised actions, responsible lead areas, timeframes, targets and indicators.

Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Subcommittee

Inclusion Champions, diversity network representatives, and enabling services to oversee the Strategy.

People Division

Policy owner for the Strategy.



Understanding inclusion, equity and diversity

The case for inclusion, equity and diversity is compelling and backed by extensive research. Organisations with mature approaches to diversity – characterised by inclusive cultures that value different thought patterns, experiences and abilities – are more effective at risk analysis, more creative and better at decision making.¹ Individuals who work in inclusive teams are ten times more likely to express very high job satisfaction, and report being 4 times more likely to believe that their work positively influences their mental health. Staff in inclusive teams are 3 times less likely to leave their organisation.²

For DFAT the benefits of inclusion, equity and diversity include:

- **Collaboration** – with inclusive teams 8.5 times more likely to collaborate effectively³, critical for international relations, trade and investment and whole-of-government posts.
- **Innovation** – with organisations leading their peers on inclusion, equity and diversity being 20 per cent more innovative⁴, DFAT can better problem solve and respond to increasingly complex global challenges.
- **Feedback** – with individuals in inclusive teams 2.5 times more likely to receive valuable feedback⁵, DFAT can increase its performance, decision making and impact.
- **Outcomes** – when we reflect Australia’s diversity, we will draw on a deeper understanding of what it means to be Australian. A more diverse and inclusive workforce will help us to advance our national interests abroad, by projecting a modern Australia to better connect with the world’s people.

Inclusion involves creating a sense of belonging, trust, respect and safety for all people. It is about making workplaces and systems accessible for everyone, and creating safe environments that are free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and racism. This can involve measures to improve leadership and capability, improve communications, identify harmful behaviours including racism and bias, and to consult staff in decision making.

Equity is about fairness and impartiality. Equity of treatment recognises that everyone starts with different and unequal advantages and privileges. It means some people need support to participate on an equal footing with others and to achieve equal outcomes. Examples of equity measures include affirmative measures in recruitment, workplace adjustments for a person with a disability, remote work for First Nations staff to maintain connection to Country, and quiet or private spaces in the workplace for people who may require them.

Diversity is the practice of including different people. Diversity attributes can include the unique mix of a person’s age, ancestry, culture, faith, language, place of birth, education, class, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, neurological difference and more. Diversity brings a depth of lived experiences, innovation, talent and ideas to the challenge of solving complex problems.

¹ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2018) Workplace gender equality: the business case.
Available at: www.wgea.gov.au/publications/gender-equality-business-case

² Diversity Council Australia (2023) The Case for Inclusion @ Work.
Available at: www.dca.org.au/research/case-for-inclusion-at-work

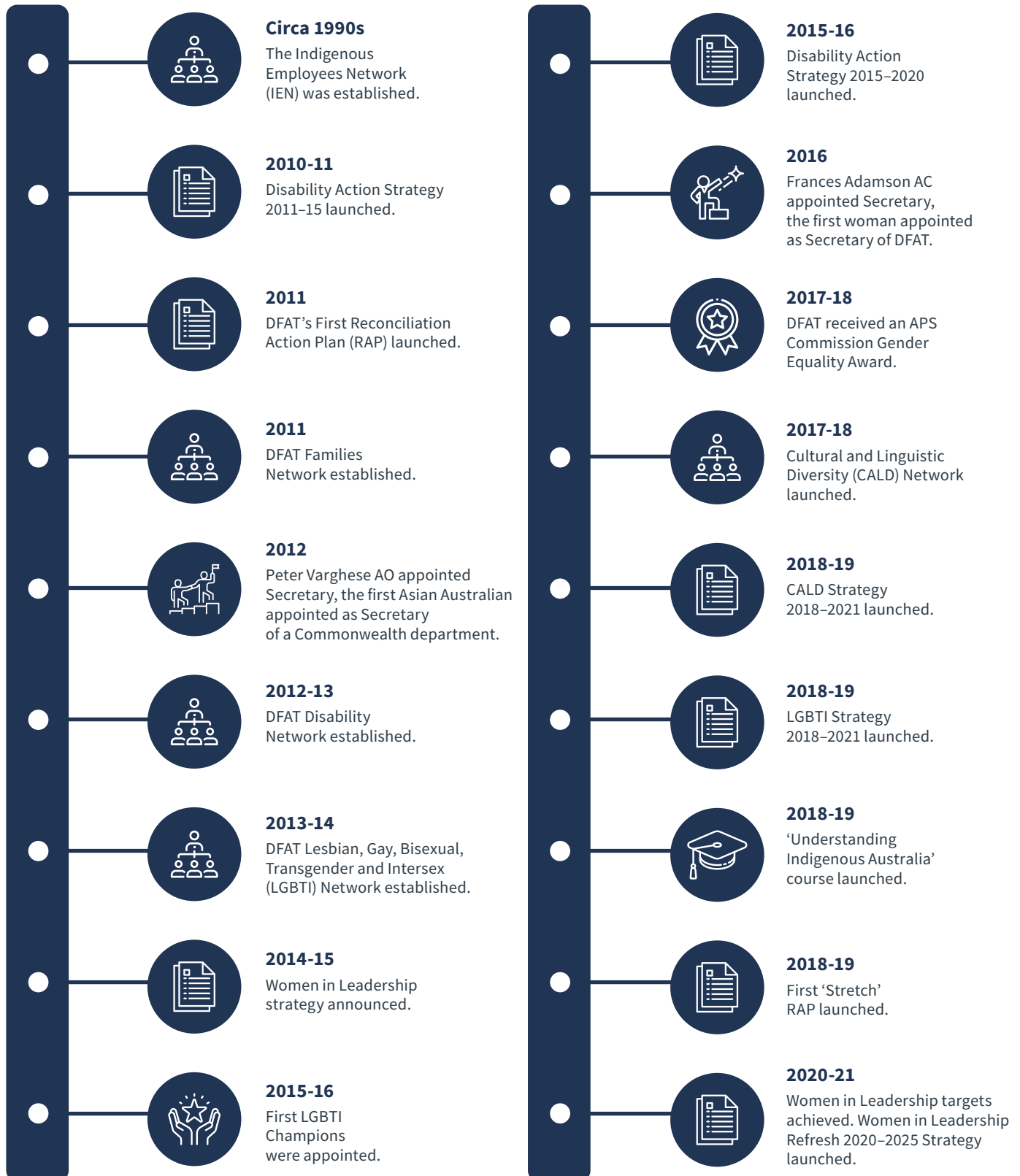
³ See footnote 2 above.

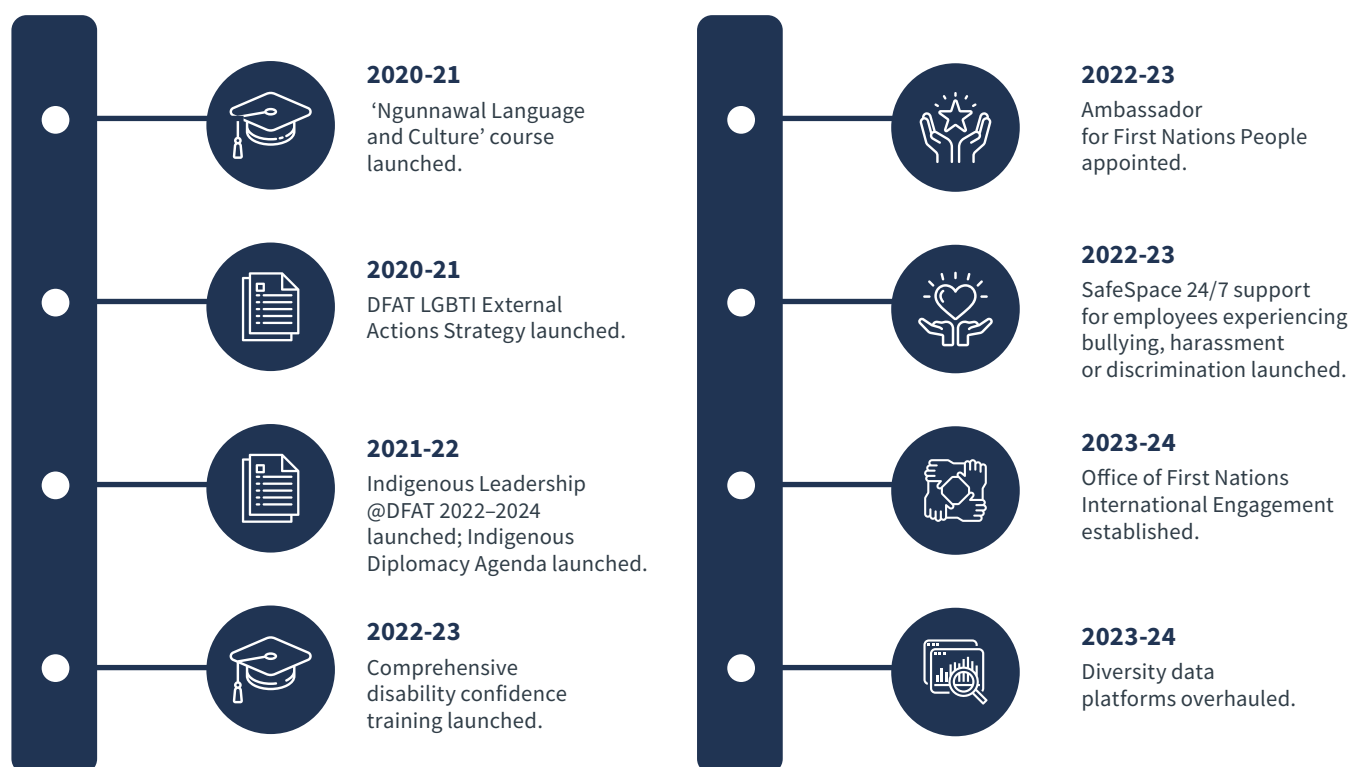
⁴ World Economic Forum Diversity, equity, and inclusion 4.0. A toolkit for leaders to accelerate social progress in the future of work. 2020. (World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland)

⁵ See footnote 2 above.

Our progress

DFAT's origins are the Department of External Affairs, one of seven departments of state established at Federation in 1901. Below is a snapshot of recent inclusion, equity and diversity milestones.





Australia Awards scholars in Adelaide with the SA State Director Jill Collins November 2023.

Our workforce in 2024

Our staff overall⁶

6900+



Total staff

3800+



APS staff
in Australia

900+



APS staff
overseas

2200+



Locally engaged
DFAT staff
overseas

DFAT's locally engaged workforce

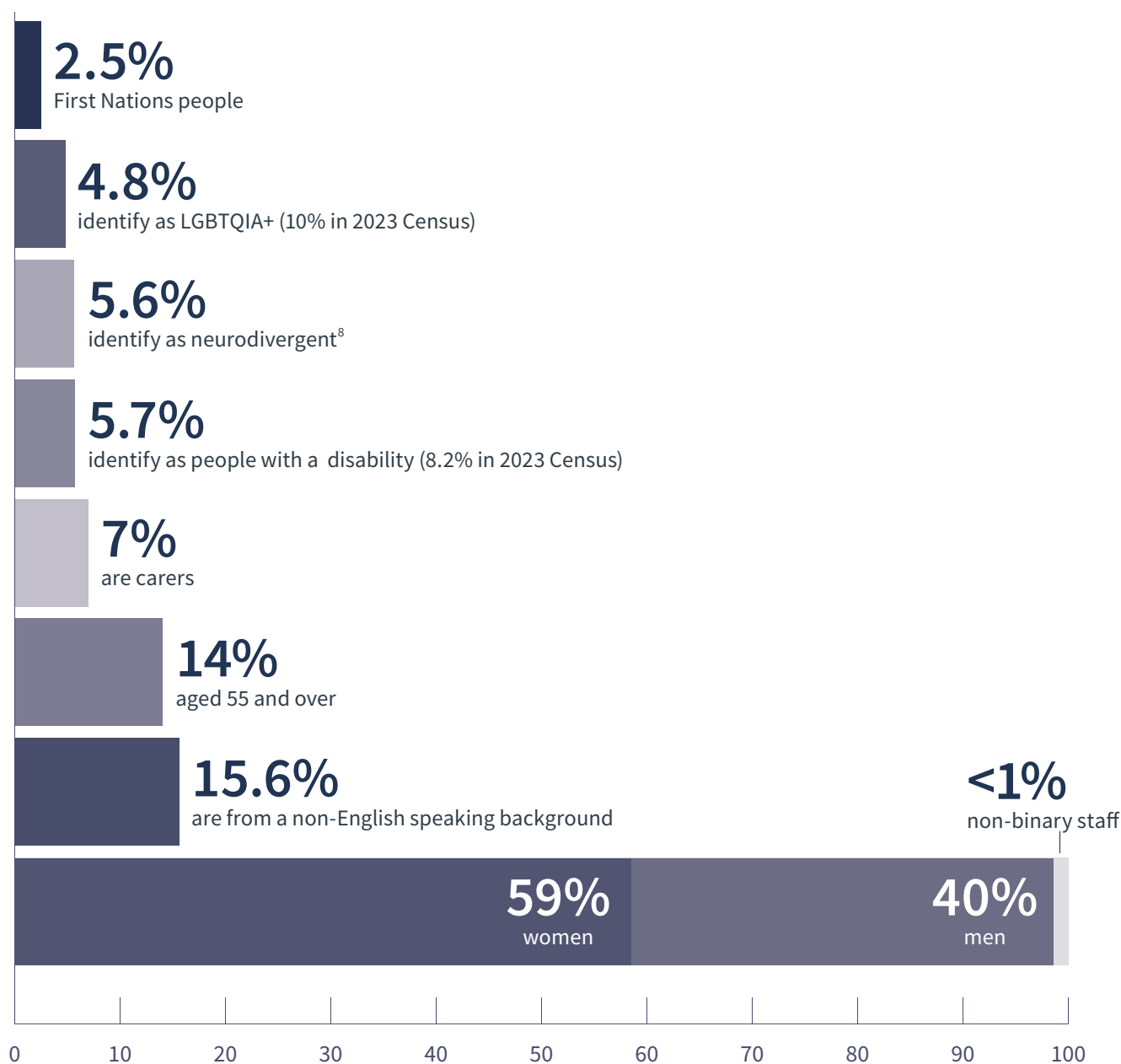
Over 2200 locally engaged DFAT staff are employed at our overseas posts, bringing professional expertise and local knowledge to promote, protect, and advance Australia's interests. Although diversity statistics are reported against our APS workforce, DFAT is proud of the rich diversity of our locally engaged workforce. Locally engaged staff are included in DFAT's vision for safe workplaces, where staff feel respected and valued, and where everyone has equitable access to opportunities.



New Delhi's Public Diplomacy team commissioned internationally acclaimed queer First Nations (Gumbaynggirr) artist, Aretha Brown to travel to India to complete a mural on the High Commission's external wall October 2022.

⁶ DFAT Annual Report 2022-23 [The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Annual Report 2022—23 \(dfat.gov.au\)](https://www.dfat.gov.au/annual-report)

Our APS (Australian) workforce⁷



⁷ Information from DFAT HR Database, January 2024, except where otherwise indicated. This data does not include locally-engaged employees. Our HR workforce database is our key source of information on diversity. New questions were introduced in 2023, and response rates range from 34% data completion on questions of carer responsibilities, through to 100% completion on gender. The DFAT APS Census 2023 responses found significant differences on the following categories: 8.2% of DFAT APS Census respondents had a disability, and 10% of respondents identified as LGBTQIA+. A question in the APS Census on caring responsibilities was not directly comparable to our HR database question.

⁸ Information from DFAT APS employee responses from APS Census 2023. This does not include locally-engaged employees.

Strategy pillars

Pillar one: Inclusive leadership and behaviours at all levels



Objectives

1.1 Leaders create safe and respectful environments

- Performance frameworks and reviews include safe and respectful behaviours.
- Visible leadership commitment through statements, actions, stories, and symbols.
- A workplace culture that prioritises health and safety, including mental health, of all staff.
- Peer networks educate and support individuals, and are consulted on decisions affecting staff.
- Reward and recognition frameworks are equitable and inclusive of all staff.

1.2 Business areas have the resources to build inclusive workplaces and benefit from team diversity

- Evidence-based resources help build inclusive workplaces.
- Robust processes help identify and eliminate harmful behaviours.

1.3 Staff value and model inclusive behaviour

- Inclusive language is adopted in all communications.
- Diversity is valued and celebrated throughout the organisation.
- Improved First Nations cultural knowledge and capability.
- Overall inclusion, equity and diversity capability is lifted, recognising the learning styles and needs of all staff.



DFAT staff member Josephine Julian speaking at the DFAT Disability Network's 'You Can't Ask That Panel' December 2023.

Pillar two: Inclusive and equitable policies, systems and workplaces



Objectives

2.1 Inclusive and equitable policies and processes

- Policies and processes are reviewed applying an intersectional lens.
- Changes are co-designed with impacted groups.
- Data capture and analysis is improved to identify and rectify points of potential bias and inequity.
- Transparency, certainty, equity and fairness are evident in policy and process.

2.2 Safe, accessible and inclusive workplaces in Australia and overseas

- Physical barriers to equity and inclusion at DFAT workplaces are addressed, including offices, facilities and accommodation.
- Consider how design and location attributes may contribute to psychosocial risk, including instances of bullying, discrimination, and harassment.
- Inclusive design principles are built into planning, design and procurement policies and key supporting documents.

2.3 Inclusive and equitable technology and systems design

- Improved accessibility of the DFAT intranet, internal communications and collaboration spaces, following inclusive and equitable technology design principles.
- Technology including digital platforms, systems, applications and hardware will be improved for accessibility.
- Assistive technology will be easier to access and integrate.



Australia's Ambassador for Gender Equality Stephanie Copus Campbell and DFAT Deputy Secretary Rod Brazier at the UN Women Australia 2024 International Women's Day Parliamentary Breakfast (7 February 2024).

Pillar three: Overseas posts that drive equal opportunity



DFAT's role in Australia's overseas network

DFAT has a unique role and responsibility in managing Australia's whole-of-government overseas network of embassies, consulates, high commissions and representative offices. These are workplaces where people from across government come to work, and in some places to live at co-located residences. By building inclusive posts, we can improve the experience of everyone who works at and visits our global missions, project Australia's diversity, and build common ground to influence global stakeholders.

Objectives

3.1 Equitable opportunity for overseas postings

- Post Reports and other information on posting conditions is inclusive and assists decisions by people from diverse backgrounds.
- Diverse groups experience fewer barriers to access posting opportunities.
- Decision-making processes are equitable.

3.2 Tailored and equitable support for overseas postings

- Staff and families have the information and support they need to navigate complex family status and partner recognition before and during posting, including for same-sex or gender diverse partners, people with disabilities, or diverse family structures.
- Process for accessing support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme for APS staff and family members is clarified and improved.
- Co-design of support processes and resources for specific groups.

3.3 Inclusive leadership extends to all people that interact with DFAT staff

- Guidelines and resources for building inclusive overseas posts are available, including template inclusion, equity and diversity plan for posts.
- All staff, including locally engaged and whole-of-government staff, supported to value and model inclusive behaviours at posts.
- Clear behavioural expectations regarding a safe workplace, including bullying, discrimination and harassment, set with all post staff.

Pillar four: A diverse workforce at all levels



Objectives

4.1 Targeted employee life-cycle support

- Diversity is considered from role advertisement and reach, through to recruitment, selection, development, progression, retention and exit.
- Effective use of affirmative measures and targeted professional development opportunities to address inequity and support career growth.
- Systematic approach to engaging and retaining staff, including from diverse backgrounds.

4.2 Best-practice data collection, analysis, use and reporting

- A culture where all staff feel safe to share their diversity information, striving to reach and maintain 80 per cent participation in diversity data.
- Diversity analytics reporting is valued by decision makers and drives action.
- A robust HR diversity data platform that enables complete and comprehensive intersectional analysis and is continually improved.

4.3 Diversity targets met at all levels

- Employer of choice for people from diverse and historically under-represented backgrounds.
- Diversity is valued and targeted at an individual team level, not just by overall role level.
- Measurable increase in recruitment panel diversity.
- Merit based decision making includes and values diversity of experience and thought.



DFAT Secretary Jan Adams, Gamilaraay man and performing artist Mitch Tambo, and First Nations Ambassador Justin Mohamed at the DFAT NAIDOC Reception 5 July 2023.

Detailed Implementation Plan

The strategy will be supported by a Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) that includes targets, actions, lead areas, and indicators for each pillar and objective.

People Division will monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategy, taking a continuous improvement approach that reflects the data and insights gathered through the targets and impact measurements.

Principles for prioritising DIP actions

These design principles for the scoping, implementation and measurement of actions included in the DIP support the prioritisation of actions and efficient and effective allocation of resources.



Evidence-led

Design based on evidence of what works, seeking out robust peer-reviewed studies wherever possible. In the absence of research, design interventions where target impact can be measured before rolling out at scale.



Co-design

Include and involve people from specific target groups and parts of our business that will be impacted throughout the design process.



Impact measurement

Measure progress through leading and lagging qualitative and quantitative indicators linked to the strategic benefits of diverse, inclusive and equitable workplaces.



Inclusive and equitable design

An evolution of Universal Design Principles that includes both physical structure design as well as technology and digital design. Inclusive and equitable design applies to both the design process and the end outcome.



System level

Focus on systemic barriers and themes to fix structures that create barriers for individuals.



Intersectionality

In designing and prioritising actions, recognise that exclusion and inequality compound when an individual identifies with two or more diversity attributes.

Focus areas

To successfully implement changes that support the diverse current and future workforce of DFAT, we need to co-design change. The following (non-exhaustive) priorities for target groups were identified through staff and peak body consultation, surveys and other feedback.

First Nations people

- A safe workplace where everyone has knowledge of First Nations history and cultures.
- A deliberative forum involving First Nations staff.
- Career development opportunities, particularly overseas.
- Recognition of cultural load and identity strain.

People with disabilities

- Accessible workplaces, including our physical environment, technology and systems.
- Improved career pathways and progression including for people with non-apparent disabilities.

Neurodivergent people

- Enhanced inclusion and value of neurological difference in the workplace.
- Improved awareness and capability for staff, particularly supervisors.

Carers

- Greater awareness and supports for carers.
- Improved education on mental health including risks, management and the role of carers.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/gender diverse, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, or another diverse gender or sexual identity (LGBTQIA+) communities

- An enabling environment for LGBTQIA+ staff to pursue postings opportunities, supported by Post and departmental policies.
- Support for intersex people and for trans, gender diverse and non-binary people.



Staff at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta celebrating Wear It Purple Day 2023.



Cultural and linguistic diversity

- Eliminate racism in the workplace, through initiatives such as the *Racism. It Stops with Me* campaign.
- Improved intercultural capability and awareness of all staff.

Gender equality

- Improve gender balance across business areas and job functions.
- Develop a gender equality approach informed by the experience of all women.
- Improved awareness and support for women's health including menopause, endometriosis and reproductive complications.

Age inclusion

- Respect, value and retain older workers.
- Support and protect younger workers who are known to be more vulnerable to bullying, harassment and racism.

Roles, responsibilities and supports

The success of this Strategy depends on everyone at DFAT contributing to a culture which supports and values inclusion, equity and diversity.

All staff

- Communicate and act in ways that are inclusive and respectful, comply with anti-discrimination legislation, and deepen knowledge and capability.
- Update diversity information in the HR system to enable us to better understand our workforce and develop impactful policies.
- **Supported through improved policies and systems, access to training, participation in diversity initiatives, departmental leadership and employee networks.**

Executive

- Champion the Strategy, lead by example, foster a safe workplace free from bullying, harassment and discrimination, and include diverse perspectives in decision making.
- Pursue opportunities to drive the inclusion, equity and diversity agenda, hold leaders and peers to account, and build DFATs reputation as an inclusive employer. Promote diversity in Senior Executive Service (SES), Heads of Mission (HOM), Heads of Post (HOP), Senior Administrative Officers (SAOs), Senior appointments or recommendations and selection panels.
- **Supported through data, insights and advice from People Division and Enabling Services Group.**

Inclusion Champions

- Support staff from diverse backgrounds, set the leadership tone and expectations for the department, shape an inclusive workplace in DFAT, advocate for staff from diverse, under-represented backgrounds, and sponsor diversity activities in the workplace.
- **Supported through data, insights and advice from People Division.**

HOMs, HOPs and SAOs

- Build inclusive workplaces overseas, ensure inclusive environments for APS staff and locally-engaged staff, ensure APS staff have access to relevant information on the post environment.
- **Supported through briefings, training and advice from People Division and Enabling Services Group.**

SES and Directors

- Champion inclusion and build diverse teams. Lead by example and set expectations for inclusive behaviour, respectful communication and empowering staff to contribute and thrive, including through performance agreements. Mentor and support team members from under-represented backgrounds. Address inappropriate behaviour. Complete diversity training including First Nations cultural capability training.
- **Supported through guidelines, training and support from their managers.**



CALD Champion Deputy Secretary Michelle Chan with the CALD Committee: From left to right: Raymart Walker, Justin Pereira, Divya Kaliyaperumal, Deputy Secretary Michelle Chan, Ramez Alhazzaa, Sonia Singh and Derya Koc-Mcdonald



The official launch of 'Let's Dance: A History of LGBTIQ staff in the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade' in the DFAT R G Casey Building 9 November 2023.

Employee diversity networks

- Provide safe spaces for staff to share experience and support peers. Help to identify concerns and advocate to reduce barriers affecting staff. Draw on lived experience to help make our workplaces more inclusive. Celebrate diversity.
- **Staff leading diversity networks will be supported by Inclusion Champions, line area supervisors and People Division.**

Diversity and Anti-Harassment Officers (DAHOs)

- Focal points for promoting and implementing this Strategy. Raise awareness of workplace diversity and promote events throughout the year. Provide support and information to staff about recourse mechanisms for bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
- **DAHOs will be supported by their supervisors and People Division, including with training.**

Mental Health and Wellbeing Officers

- Work with staff from diverse backgrounds in their business area to promote mental health and wellbeing.
- Know where to refer staff to supports appropriate to their background and identity.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Officers will be supported by their supervisors and People Division, including through training.**

People Division

- Enabling role to develop inclusive workplace guidelines and tools, including this strategy, its detailed implementation plan and governance mechanism, and DFAT's Reconciliation Action Plan. Provides advisory support to inclusion champions, supports Diversity and Anti-Harassment Officers and Mental Health and Wellbeing Officers.
- People Division will develop and maintain the DIP in consultation with the Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Subcommittee.



DFAT panel discussion for RU OK? Day 2023. Pictured from left to right: DFAT Mental Health Champion and Deputy Head Office of the Pacific Jamie Isbister; Lifeline Canberra Programs Manager Alisha Tarrant; Principal Psychologist and Director APS Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Unit Rachael McMahon; Coordinator Standby Support After Suicide Program, Wellways ACT Amanda Weber; and, Senior Psychologist DFAT Staff and Family Support Office Pieter Ruyters.

Governance

Oversight of the Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Strategy sits with the People and Culture Committee (PCC). The PCC may report to the Executive Board on progress, challenges and agreed solutions for implementing the strategy.

A new **Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Subcommittee** of the PCC will help to implement the strategy across the department. The Subcommittee will be chaired by Chief People Officer and will meet twice yearly to review progress. The Subcommittee will include each Inclusion Champion or their delegate, and a representative from each Diversity Network. People Division will formally report progress annually to the Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Subcommittee and People and Culture Committee and to all staff.



Measuring impact

For each action in the DIP, we will measure progress through leading and lagging, qualitative and quantitative indicators linked to the strategic benefits of diverse, inclusive and equitable workplaces. DFAT will prioritise and continuously improve initiatives following the Design Principles to focus efforts where they will have the greatest measurable impact.

A crucial element in measuring impact is accurate and comprehensive data on workforce diversity. This can be challenging to achieve beyond mandatory demographic information (gender and age). In 2023, DFAT improved its HR platform to provide clearer concepts and options for diversity attributes. We will continually improve and strengthen this platform, and demonstrate safe and ethical use of data, with the aim of reaching over 80 per cent participation.



Deputy Secretary Clare Walsh posting her International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW) #noexcuses pledge on the wall in the DFAT R G Casey Building, November 2023. The IDEVAW campaign encourages people to pledge to end gender based violence

Targets by end 2027

Inclusion

- **APS Employee Census:** all staff report a greater commitment to inclusive workplace culture; diversity groups trend towards higher overall satisfaction rates, closer to broader DFAT averages.
- **Bullying, harassment and discrimination:** greater participation in formal reporting mechanisms, APS Employee Census indicates a sustained downward trend of instances reported for all groups.
- Diversity Council of Australia Inclusive Employer.
- Voluntary turnover of diverse staff reflects the DFAT average.

Equity

- **APS Employee Census:** increased perceptions of technology as an enabler of productivity, rather than a barrier; health and wellbeing support is reported to meet the needs of the diverse DFAT workforce.
- Reduce and strive to eliminate the gender pay gap.
- DFAT policies are reviewed for equity, with changes co-designed with impacted groups.
- Overall trends in recruitment, postings and promotion outcomes reflect the diversity of applicants.

Diversity

APS staff

5%

First Nations People ⁹

7%

People with
Disabilities ¹⁰

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people: **To be aligned with APS-wide target**

DFAT APS at posts

5%

First Nations People

7%

People with Disabilities

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people: **To be aligned with APS-wide target**

SES

3%

First Nations People ¹³

7%

People with Disabilities

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people: **To be aligned with APS-wide target**

40%

Women ¹¹

40%

Men

20%

Any Gender ¹²

40%

Women ¹¹

40%

Men

20%

Any Gender ¹²

HOMs/HOPs¹⁴

40%

Women ¹¹

40%

Men

20%

Any Gender ¹²

Continue progress towards all posts having been led by a woman HOM/HOP ¹⁵

⁹Continuation of targets from the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024

www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-workforce/commonwealth-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-workforce-strategy-2020-2024

¹⁰Continuation of targets from the APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020-2025 <https://www.apsc.gov.au/publication/australian-public-service-disability-employment-strategy-2020-25>

¹¹Gender parity is a goal of the APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026. [Realising the benefits for all—APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26 \(apsc.gov.au\)](#).

¹²Gender parity is a goal of the APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026. [Realising the benefits for all—APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26 \(apsc.gov.au\)](#). A 50% target for women represents approximately equal representation of women based on population data (50.7% of the Australian population are women). 40% women / 40% men / 20% any gender target is consistent with DFAT's WIL Refresh 2020-2025. There is no APS -wide target for sexual or gender identity. 'Any gender' can refer to women, men, and people who identify as Intersex, X or Non-binary, or Trans.

¹³Continuation of the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024

www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-workforce/commonwealth-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-workforce-strategy-2020-2024

¹⁴Due to the small size of the HOM, HOP and STO Director cohorts and their public role, setting and reporting targets for other cultural, linguistic, sexual and gender attributes present a risk of disclosing a person's private information.

¹⁵8/126 posts have never had a woman HOM/HOP as of January 2024.



Appendix

Definitions

Accessibility

Accessibility is about improving access to goods, services, facilities, premises and information for people with disabilities. *The Disability Discrimination Act 1992* makes it against the law to discriminate against a person because of disability when providing goods, services, facilities, or access to public premises.

Carers

Carers are people who provide unpaid care and support to family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness, an alcohol or other drug issue or who are frail aged. ¹⁶ The term carers does not refer to parenting responsibilities except where consistent with this definition, and excludes care provided through volunteer roles.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)

CALD is a broad concept and there is no single definition. CALD can refer to people who identify as having a cultural background other than or in addition to Anglo-Australian culture and heritage, for example in their cultural or ethnic identity, language, country of birth, parent's country of birth, heritage or ancestry, religion, nation of origin, race, and/or colour. ¹⁷

Dignified access

The Australian Disability Network¹⁸ describes dignified access as the practice of designing physical environments for people with disability, to make workplaces navigable and a welcoming environment for everyone.

Disability

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities notes that disability results from the interaction between people with impairments and the attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Disability refers to any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months.

First Nations

First Nations people are the first peoples of the continent of Australia. First Nations people is increasingly seen as an inclusive term for the diverse range of identities, languages, cultures and communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. First Nations people in Australia are people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who identify as such and are accepted by their community. ¹⁹

¹⁶ [Who Is a Carer? - Carers Australia](#)

¹⁷ [Culturally and linguistically diverse | Respect@Work \(respectatwork.gov.au\)](#)

¹⁸ [See Designing an accessible workplace - Australian Disability Network](#)

¹⁹ [Indigenous Status Standard, 2014, Version 1.5 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)



Gender pay gap

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency ²⁰ describes the gender pay gap as a measure of how we value the contribution of men and women in the workforce. It is expressed as a percentage or a dollar figure and shows the difference between the average earnings of women and men.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/gender diverse, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, or another diverse gender or sexual identity (LGBTQIA+)

LGBTQIA+ refers to people are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/gender diverse, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, or another diverse gender or sexual identity. The ‘+’ sign recognises that language about gender and sexuality is dynamic and is not intended to be exclusionary. ²¹ ‘Pride’ and ‘Rainbow’ community are also terms that refer to diverse sexuality and gender identity.

People use a range of terms to describe sexual orientation, including gay, lesbian, gay woman, bisexual, pansexual, same sex attracted, queer, questioning and similar. These categories may not capture the diversity of expression of individuals in the community. Trans or gender diverse includes people with a trans history and people who are non-binary/gender fluid. Intersex is a term for people born with atypical physical sex characteristics covering more than 40 known genetic and other biological variations.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is an inclusive term for a range of neurological differences that have previously been stigmatised. The Public Sector Neurodiversity Community of Practice uses neurodiversity as an umbrella term to describe groups of people with neurological differences and diverse thinking or processing styles including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Autism, ADHD, and others. Neurodivergent individuals can experience challenges in the workplace, but with appropriate supports and work design their contributions can be invaluable. ²²

Non-apparent disability

Also known as ‘hidden disabilities’ or ‘non-visible disabilities’, these include physical disabilities such as chronic pain and diabetes, mental health conditions including depression and anxiety, neurological conditions such as epilepsy and some people who are neurodivergent.

Sex and gender

In the Australian Government context, sex and gender is defined within the [Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender](#). Sex recorded at birth refers to what was determined by sex characteristics observed at birth or infancy, and can include intersex characteristics, while gender is about social and cultural differences in identity, expression and experience. Language is constantly evolving, and a label or description may not capture the diversity across people and communities who have diverse gender and sexual identity.

²⁰ See [What is the gender pay gap? | WGEA](#)

²¹ See <https://www.dca.org.au/resources/lgbtiq/overview>

²² See [Six ways to support neurodivergent staff | Australian Public Service Commission \(apsc.gov.au\)](#)



Universal, inclusive and equitable design

Universal design is the design of an environment that can be used to the greatest extent by all people regardless of age, size, ability or disability, and without the need for adaptation or specialised design. It emphasises the end goal of the design.

Inclusive design processes enable and draw on the full range of human diversity, and include and learn from people with diverse perspectives.

Equitable design aims to resolve structural and systemic inequalities. Principles include clarity in language, goals and measurement, recognition of personal biases, the identification of situational and contextual challenges, actively seeking out points of exclusion and extending the benefits of a solution to everyone.

Workplace adjustments

Workplace adjustments, referred to as reasonable adjustments in DFAT, are any form of assistance or adjustment that is necessary, possible and reasonable to reduce barriers at work. Workplace adjustment can apply to all areas and practices of employment including recruitment, training, and career development, travel, postings, transfers and promotions (and their associated processes).



Legislation

Age Discrimination Act 2004

Protects people from age discrimination in employment, the provision of goods and services, education and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.²³

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

Protects people from discrimination in employment because of their religion, political opinion, national extraction, nationality, social origin, medical record, criminal record or trade union activity.

Australian Public Service Commissioner's Directions 2022

Sections 31-33 provide for affirmative measures relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, the RecruitAbility Scheme, and disability employment.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Seeks to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities and provide workplaces that are accessible for everyone.²⁴

Fair Work Act 2009

Sets minimum standards for fair work including maximum weekly hours, flexible working, parental leave, carer's leave, family and domestic violence leave and contracting arrangements.

Public Service Act 1999

The principal legislation governing operation of the APS, with objectives including provision of a legal framework for the effective and fair employment, management and leadership of APS employees.

Section 13 states that when acting in connection with APS employment, everyone must be treated with respect and courtesy and without harassment. Section 10 states that the APS respects all people, including their rights and heritage. Section 10a sets out the APS Employment Principles.

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Promotes equality before the law for all people regardless of race, colour or national or ethnic origin. It is unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.²⁵

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Protects people from unfair treatment on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, pregnancy and breastfeeding. It also protects workers with family responsibilities and makes sexual harassment against the law. The 'Respect at Work' Amendment (2022) to this Act introduces a positive duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment.²⁶



Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011 and associated regulations

WHS laws protect the health, safety and welfare of staff and other persons who are at, or come into contact with, a workplace. WHS regulations now prescribe how employers must identify and manage hazards and risks to workers' psychological health and safety.

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2020

Promotes gender equality including closing the gender pay gap, increasing female participation and ending gender discrimination.

Closing the Gap

National Agreement on Closing the Gap

Aims to close the gap in health and improve life outcomes for First Nations peoples. Priority Reform 3 aims to transform government organisations and the services they deliver to work better for First Nations people – including to eliminate racism and embed cultural safety.

²³ [See Legislation | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

²⁴ [See Legislation | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

²⁵ [See Legislation | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

²⁶ [See Legislation | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)



APS policies

APS Reform

Key elements include Outcome 6: The APS sets the standard for equity, inclusion and diversity; and Outcome 7: The APS sets the standard for First Nations employment and cultural competency.²⁷

Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020-25

Recognises the shared responsibility of all agencies to be employers of choice for people with disability. Agencies should improve inclusion of people with disability by addressing their workplace culture, recruitment and employee experience.²⁸

Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26

A commitment from all agencies and senior leaders to embed an inclusive and respectful workplace practices to enable women and people of all genders equality of opportunity and full participation.²⁹

Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-24

Notes that all Commonwealth agencies have a responsibility to contribute to economic development outcomes under Closing the Gap, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation.³⁰

Delivering for Tomorrow: the APS Workforce Strategy 2025

Aims for the APS to be inclusive and representative of the Australian community to position it for the future.³¹

²⁷ See www.apsreform.gov.au/about-aps-reform

²⁸ See [Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020-25 | Australian Public Service Commission \(apsc.gov.au\)](#)

²⁹ See [Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26 | Australian Public Service Commission \(apsc.gov.au\)](#)

³⁰ See [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024 | Australian Public Service Commission \(apsc.gov.au\)](#)

³¹ See [APS Workforce Strategy 2025 | Australian Public Service Commission \(apsc.gov.au\)](#)



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade