

Employing 100

Evaluation

Final Report

Prepared by the Centre for Social Impact Swinburne

February 2025

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Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, who are the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Centre for Social Impact Swinburne is located on in Melbourne's east, and pay our respect to their Elders past and present. We are honoured to recognise our connection to Wurundjeri Country, history, culture, and spirituality through these locations, and strive to ensure that we operate in a manner that respects and honours the Elders and Ancestors of these lands. We also respectfully acknowledge Swinburne's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, alumni, partners and visitors.

We also acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of lands across Australia, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures, and heritage, and recognise the continuing sovereignties of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations.

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Publisher:

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First published 2025

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Suggested Citation: Crosbie, J., Wilson, E., Anderson, J. & Riseley, E. (2025). *Employing 100 Evaluation, Final Report*. Centre for Social Impact, Hawthorn.

<https://doi.org/10.25916/sut.29095694>

Keywords: Disability employment, inclusive employment, employer confidence.

The Centre for Social Impact (CSI) Swinburne

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CSI Swinburne is focused on people and technology working together for a better world, exploring the intersection between social entrepreneurship and technology, in areas such as social enterprise, social business and social finance; community services innovation; employment access and equity; and impact and evaluation and measurement.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the assistance of Australian Disability Network and Employing 100 staff in preparing this report.

Disclaimer

The opinions in this report reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Centre for Social Impact or Australian Disability Network.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employing 100 is an initiative of the Australian Disability Network (AusDN) that aimed to successfully place 100 talented and suitably skilled jobseekers with disability into roles within four major employers. The Employing 100 project used an employer-led model to build organisational capability focused on building an inclusive workforce before linking organisations with selected talent providers who matched and supported applicants with disability through the recruitment processes. At the end of the two-year project, the Employing 100 project had exceeded its original goals, with 240 people with disability employed across the four organisations. Most importantly, the average retention rate for these employees across the partner organisations was 83 per cent.

The evaluation of the Employing 100 project identified four key elements of the program that contributed to its success. These were:

Focusing on the employer environment first

Employing 100 offered participating employers a ‘total package’ via its Employer Enablement Framework. An initial focus on building employer capability before expanding to talent providers and job matching was a key ingredient to the program’s success. It should be noted that embedding organisational change takes time and high-level commitment from organisations.

Providing a conduit between employers and talent pipelines

Employing 100 staff were critical to the success of the program, providing support to organisations and talent providers and acting as a central point of contact for all stakeholders.

Making jobseekers and disability visible

Participants employed through the Employing 100 program emphasised the important role that Employing 100 staff played in providing an extra connection between employers and jobseekers. Employees with disability felt supported during the process in a way that they had not experienced previously.

Knowledgeable and committed Employing 100 staff

Employing 100 staff were valued by employers and Disability Employment Services for their knowledge of and commitment to building disability confidence and increasing employment of people with disability.

The data from the evaluation of this project indicates that partner organisations experienced increased disability awareness and knowledge of barriers and enablers to employing people with disability as a result of the Employing 100 program. The employer-led focus of the program coupled with the support provided by Employing 100 staff in the role of intermediaries between employers and talent providers has achieved significant results, exceeding the original employment targets for the project.

It is important to note that sustaining organisational changes to recruitment practices will require continued commitment and a shift in inclusion mindset. Programs such as Employing 100 that support employers on their journey to more inclusive employment may be a way of embedding change in large organisations.

INTRODUCTION

Low levels of employment for people with disability are an entrenched problem that results in people with disability experiencing poverty and economic exclusion, employers missing out on talented employees and increased costs to governments. The unemployment rate for people with disability in Australia remains at 7.5 per cent – more than twice the unemployment rate for those without disability¹.

Low levels of employment for people with disability not only deprives them of meaningful employment, but also represents missed opportunities for employers. With high-growth industries experiencing high job vacancies and long placement times, tapping into this underutilised talent pool can address skill shortages, drive organisational success, and create inclusive workplaces, which are good for everyone.

Jobseekers with disability face numerous, often unintended, barriers when trying to secure meaningful employment. By making their employment programs inclusive and sustainable, employers can ensure they are attracting and retaining employees from the widest possible talent pool. Many employers want to be equipped to build their disability confidence to recruit, retain and promote people with disability within their own organisations.

Program overview

Employing 100 is an initiative of the Australian Disability Network (AusDN) and is funded by the Department of Social Services under the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Economic and Community Participation Program: [Building Employer Confidence and Inclusion in Disability](#) grant.

Over a two-year period, Employing 100 aimed to successfully place 100 talented and suitably skilled jobseekers with disability into roles within four major employers in the healthcare and social assistance, and food and accommodation industries in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. It aimed to build employer confidence and capability to employ people with disability and prepare jobseekers for identified roles. Unlike most disability employment

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release#disability> (accessed 31 January 2025).

programs, Employing 100 used an employer-led model, with the Employing 100 team working with the employers to first build organisational capability in relation to building an inclusive workforce. Participating employer organisations were then linked to a vetted talent provider with Employing 100 acting in an intermediary role. Job vacancies and candidates were then carefully matched and supported through inclusive recruitment processes.

Employing 100 aims to equip participating employers with the tools, resources and training to recruit people with disability in a sustainable way, using the Employer Enablement Framework – an evidence-informed model developed by the Australian Disability Network – to support employers to recruit people with disability.

The production of lasting resources is a final focus of the project in order to support the replication of the approach to other industries.

Objectives of the program

Employing 100 will support employers to:

- Raise awareness of the capabilities of people with disability
- Increase disability confidence of human resource managers and site managers
- Identify and remove barriers in policies and practices that prevent jobseekers with disability from getting through the recruitment process
- Increase the capability of participating employers to employ more people with disability

Employing 100 will support talent providers to increase outcomes for employers and candidates in the following ways:

- Talent providers will be able to make a good job match and refer candidates who understand and can perform the role
- Adjustments will be offered throughout the employee journey

Employer Enablement Framework

Australian Disability Network has developed an Employer Enablement Framework, which underpins the delivery of Employing 100. The Employer Enablement Framework includes four key phases, which are outlined below. The implementation of these phases is described further in the Key Findings section of the report.

Engage

- Demonstrate the business case
- Demonstrate success stories from other employers
- Create linkages and networks to other employers
- Demonstrate relevance through applying the Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10 (see Appendix A)
- Gain senior leadership commitment to the project

Equip

- Gain an understanding of the employer's workforce requirements and priorities
- Gain an understanding of the work environment and specific barriers to inclusion of jobseekers with disability
- Ascertain key skills and competencies required for selected/identified roles
- Use the Access and Inclusion Index deep dive on the 'Recruitment and Selection' component to identify barriers in recruitment services and make recommendations
- Make recommendations to the employer re relevant talent pools including for graduates with disability and semi-skilled jobseekers
- Provide training to line managers and human resources staff on managing and accommodating employees with disability
- Prepare a detailed job analysis that identifies essential role requirements
- Employing 100 also intermediated between employers and talent providers, including providing the following activities:
 - Identify relevant employment support services and ascertain interest in participation
 - Broker partnerships with suitable providers with clearly outlined roles and responsibilities

Deliver

- Provide work-ready candidates with high-level employability skills who are suitable for the roles identified
- Facilitate workplace adjustments
- Provide on call coaching support for supervisors and assist supervisors to solve any issues or challenges staff may experience

Review

- Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10

Participating employer organisations

Four major employers in the healthcare, social assistance and hospitality industries in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria participated in the project (called ‘partner organisations’ throughout this report). Organisations were typically large employers where their Australian-based business was only one location across multiple countries. Three of the organisations (Hospitality 1, Hospitality 2 and Health 1) were for-profit corporations and one (Health 2) was a large not-for-profit service provider. Table 1 provides a brief overview of their characteristics.

Table 1: Profile of Employing 100 partner organisations

Partner organisation code used in report	Industry sector	Company operational focus	Approximate Australian workforce
Hospitality 1	Hospitality – Restaurant chain	International	>100,000
Hospitality 2	Hospitality – Hotel chain	International	>5,000
Health 1	Health – Biotechnology	International	>3000
Health 2	Social Assistance – Community services organisation	Australia	>5,000

EVALUATION APPROACH

Evaluation Aims

The Centre for Social Impact (CSI) at Swinburne University of Technology was engaged to undertake an evaluation of the Employing 100 initiative. The evaluation has the following aims:

1. Assess the level of effectiveness of the project against its stated aims and success measures:

- Attainment of employment outcomes for 100 people with disability (i.e. identification of roles, employment placement, employment retention at 6 months)
 - Level of change in disability confidence and employment readiness of employers (CEO/disability champion, senior leadership team, hiring managers, recruiters etc.), including capacity to make adjustments
 - Increased capability of employment providers/recruitment agencies to match, prepare, place and support people with disability with employers.
2. Identify the factors and ingredients that contribute (positively and negatively) to desired outcomes (e.g. employer confidence, organisational readiness).
 3. Document elements of the model for further development, expansion and replication

Research methods

The evaluation drew on two main data sources: primary data collected by CSI (Table 2), and secondary data provided by Australian Disability Network (Table 3).

Primary Data

CSI researchers collected data from key stakeholders in the Employing 100 program through interviews and group discussions. Interviews were held with partner organisations (i.e. employers) and talent providers, as well as with a small number of employees with disability who were employed as a result of Employing 100.

Overall, this aspect of data collection was impacted by the longer than anticipated lead time of employer capability building prior to jobs being identified and filled. At the first data collection timepoint, only one employer had identified and filled a vacancy. However, interview data was obtained from all four participating organisations.

In the second data collection phase, interviews were conducted with personnel from all four participating organisations as well as several talent providers. Due to the project's approach to the recruitment into identified roles, it was difficult for participating organisations to easily identify staff members who had been recruited due to Employing 100 involvement and only two agreed to be interviewed. Overall, this meant that while interview data was rich, it was from a small sample of personnel in partner organisations, talent providers and candidates with disability.

Discussions to understand and inform the logic of program design and implementation were held between CSI researchers and Employing 100 staff. These discussions focused on what worked, what didn't, what changed e.g. recruitment policies, practices, job descriptions, what

was learnt, what were the key ingredients, systemic, programmatic or other barriers and enablers to outcomes, elements of organisational readiness that are essential before jobs emerge and placement occurs. These discussions were held in each year of the program.

Data is summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Primary data collection

Instrument/Data source	Anticipated data	Final data
Annual interviews with sample of personnel from participating employers e.g. key HR and recruitment team members, site managers/supervisors (those directly involved in hiring decision and supervision of identified job roles), disability champions	N=8 (min. of two from each of the four employers)	N=8 Time 1: N=4 Time 2: N=4
Annual interviews with talent providers	N=4-6	N=4 Time 1: N=1 Time 2: N=3
Annual interviews with people hired through the program	N =5	N=2 (All in year 2)
Logic discussions/meetings with Australian Disability Network project staff to document key ingredients, evolving logic of design based on grounded learnings from implementation	2 (of around 60 mins each, held online).	N=2 Year 1: N=1 Year 2: N=1

Secondary data

Data was collected by Australian Disability Network for program management purposes and provided to CSI researchers. This included: results from the diagnostic assessment of each organisation via the Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10 at the beginning and conclusion of the program; program documentation relating to organisation audits conducted by the Australian Disability Network, and data related to participant outcomes from training provided by Australian Disability Network. Details about secondary data are included in Table 3.

When using program data, that is, data that is collected primarily to inform program implementation, data quality and completeness is sometimes insufficient for evaluation purposes. In the main for this project, available data has been used to inform analysis of trends and to triangulate other data collected by CSI.

Table 3: Secondary data provided by Australian Disability Network

Instrument/Data Source	Analysis
AusDN Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10 at the commencement and conclusion of the project	Score per partner organisation Frequency of individual items
Summary of procedural audits such as review of Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedures and Recruitment review Report for each employer	Thematic analysis to identify key themes across 4 partner organisations
Measure of disability confidence change (e.g. pre- and/or post-training assessment)	Change in disability confidence
Employment and retention data	Proportion of jobs
Post-placement employee data (N=3)	Satisfaction with inclusive workplace

KEY FINDINGS

The Employing 100 implementation approach

The starting point of the Employing 100 approach (and the Employer Enablement Framework) is to strengthen the capability of employers to offer inclusive employment. This occurs prior to identification of job vacancies or roles and to matching potential employees. In the Employing 100 program, the first half of the project was heavily focused on employer engagement and capability building.

Partner organisations commenced at different times in the program and therefore reached different phases of the program at different times. However, regardless of start time, all partner organisations were engaged with activities across all four phases of the Australian Disability Network's Employer Engagement Framework. As an example of the implementation of the Framework, Appendix B outlines the employer interventions delivered by Employing 100 at a snapshot in time (approximately halfway through the program timeframe).

Below, we provide a discussion of the implementation of these phases in Employing 100 in order to capture the implementation model for future replication.

Phase one: Engage

Phase one of the Employer Enablement Framework is the Engage phase. Each of the participating four organisations were offered a package of support from the Australian Disability Network in return for committing to a target of employing 25 people with disability within their organisations by February 2025.

Employing 100 staff worked with partner organisations to gain senior leader commitment, sign a formal Participation Agreement, and appoint a disability champion within the organisation, sometimes referred to as a sponsor. Partner organisations reflected that this level of senior commitment was critical to success.

I think the critical part, I would say, is – because [partner organisation] is so big, it's the buy-in from the executives that we needed to start with. And so, the communication to them about what the Employing 100 is, how it works (Health 2).

So, I think that having the senior leaders having the Disability Confidence Training – because we really needed it to come down from them around people with disability – just opening that mindset around employing people with disability (Health 2).

An initial evaluation of each partner organisation was also undertaken by Employing 100 in this phase of the project by administering the Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10. A written report was then provided which identified areas of focus for each individual organisation. The outcomes of the Quick 10 for the four partner organisations are outlined on Page 25.

Partner organisations were asked to articulate their key reasons for joining the project. The provision of a package of support was a significant incentive.

It will be a real step-change, or just a real progress for how we're managing to recruit inclusively in the disability space. All of the support was very attractive in that sense, just knowing that we would have really good support around disability confidence, support around development of the workplace adjustment procedure, some dignified access reviews, the benchmarking index. So, the fact that there was a whole suite of support around this, as well as having support to employ 25 people with disabilities was something which helped, and made us think about, well, actually this will help us really progress quite quickly in a space where we need to. So, it was all of that packaged together which was attractive. And then, just having all of the different stakeholders agree to that, then it felt that we would make far better progress with the project's backing as well (Health 2).

There was interest in how Employing 100 would be different.

I'm really interested to see how it's going to work. I'm mindful that we have a variety of roles, with a variety of different kind of entry points, we're not making any assumptions about abilities. So, I'm just interested to see how it works, and where the source comes from as well (Health 2).

Australian Disability Network and partner organisations reported that it took longer than anticipated to complete this phase with each partner. While the timing of the commencement period (such as over Christmas/summer holidays) was identified as a barrier for some, delays were largely due to internal processes within the partner organisations that were required to be completed before formally agreeing to the project. One employer representative outlined the process:

We joined the Australian Disability Network early last year as a silver member, and we were looking as a recruitment team, but wider HR team, just to look at how we can improve our inclusive practice for people with disabilities. And then, we got some correspondence around the Employing 100, and we had some conversations with leadership. And after a lot of stakeholder engagement, we got the endorsement from our Executive Mission Council in December to go ahead with the project. We wanted to make sure that we had the commitment from different areas to employ people, before

going to our Executive ... So, we did a lot of the prework around that before it got endorsed, so reaching out to different areas to say, 'What's your appetite? Are you interested in this? Would you commit to so many roles?' And then, when we had the commitment that was more than 25, then that's when we put a paper in for endorsement (Health 2).

Partner organisations thought that the time taken internally to commit was not unusual – rather, it is expected that committing to initiatives such as Employing 100 takes time.

With any large organisation ... there is a lot of time it takes to get endorsement, and stakeholder engagement, and work around that. So, that's always going to be the case for a large complex organisation. It sometimes feels a bit slow, but it is just making sure that we have that endorsement, we have the understandings, and you need to have many conversations and coming back to it, and things like that. There's getting leadership endorsement, if you're getting endorsement from the CEO or a Chief Secretary, then it does take some time. You think this is a great idea. Okay, right, now how do you operationalise it? Right, it's going to take a bit more time (Health 2).

Once the partner organisation was engaged, individual champions were identified to drive the initiative internally. For one, the fact that they were the key internal driver of the program meant that they wanted it to be a success.

For me, I've got my name against this program. I want it to be successful. I'll do anything. Yeah, definitely I would do anything to see some success, to see us place some people, win those goals, and give people careers, like people that have been out of work, that want jobs (Hospitality 1).

The activities of the Employing 100 program commenced quickly once each partner organisation committed to the project. In particular, training, reviews and other activities were delivered quickly as they were required prior to the roles being identified and filled.

Phase two: Equip

Once the partner organisation had formally engaged in the project, Employing 100 staff began delivering the Equip phase activities. These included a recruitment review, the review or creation of a Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure and a dignified access review of the organisation's premises.

Employing 100 staff undertook a recruitment review with each partner organisation to identify barriers to the recruitment of candidates with disability. Key findings included that organisations had not trained key recruitment staff to be disability-aware or confident; they did not routinely

ask candidates about any accessibility requirements or adjustments to engage in the recruitment process; candidates with disability were not expressly encouraged to apply; information technology (IT) systems and documents were not accessible; and interview processes didn't take into consideration the access needs of all candidates.

I would actually say a really large barrier is misinformation and education around what disability is, from the training that we've delivered in person and virtually with all employers, in all the different levels (Employing 100 staff member).

You need to look at all processes and each touchpoint, because if you've made a barrier upon applying for a role, you're not going to get to the interview. If someone doesn't ask if you need adjustments, you're terrified (Employing 100 staff member).

Partner organisations identified the way that the scale of the organisation sometimes contributed to these poor processes.

Some of the things we had a challenge with is because we're a global company, I couldn't make some of the changes. For example, our recruitment ... it's global. And for example, there is a section in there – bear in mind we're a US company ... that had if you're applying in the US and you want to discuss accessibility, call this number. But for the rest of the world, nothing (Hospitality 2).

The recruitment review undertaken by Employing 100 prompted partner organisations to embark on a process of making changes to recruitment practices, a key outcome of engaging in the project.

Some of our talent acquisition team have already started changing wording in the adverts, and there's plans to change some of the questions in the process. In the background, we're developing a manager's toolkit for managing people with disabilities in the recruitment process. So, we have similar toolkits for say our First Nations candidates, and we've made some amendments, and enhancements to the process. At each stage, just stop and think what might be any barriers that we need to be aware of, to get rid of them, or to address those. So, that's the work that's happening, we're sort of building that out as a result of the [Australian Disability Network] feedback (Health 2).

Employing 100 also provided appropriate content for communicating with internal stakeholders in partner organisations about the project which was helpful.

I've been working a lot with our Internal Comms team. So, what's been helpful when we've done stuff around disability, because like separately we're building up a Disability Employment Network, and having some pre-made wording for comms was really helpful – just the sort of wording around comms for our different stakeholders and engagement

is helpful. Some of it has [come from Australian Disability Network], but some more would also be helpful, so you're not just starting from scratch going, 'How do we present this?' (Health 2).

This phase also focused on building disability-confident teams within the partner organisations. A disability-confident team welcomes people with disability and gives them the same opportunities to participate and thrive as others. Australian Disability Network provided training courses to build mentally healthy, disability-confident teams. Information about the training provided is in Appendix C. The Disability Confidence Training was often delivered in multiple separate sessions across each individual organisation.

It was considered important to have senior leaders attend the training and people from across all 'touchpoints' of the organisation who impact on recruitment of staff.

We had a variety of different leadership levels attend. We had some of our most senior, senior leaders on there, like vice presidents and senior vice presidents attending. And then we had some people that were at senior manager or director level but had some pretty strategic roles where they oversee large teams. There were a variety of people on there from across our four sites and all our business functions (Hospitality 1).

Recruitment, plus HR Business Partners, plus an MG, management, and WHS teams have attended the Disability Confidence Training (Health 2).

Employing 100 staff explained the delivery of the training to one partner organisation:

A perfect example is our primary employer that has finished most of their training, so it was called Disability Confident Managers, and it was a 90-minute training delivered virtually, face-to-face and they had 33 participants through from across their properties. So, there were representatives from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. The people that attended were their HR offices that are involved in recruitment. Recruitment in their organisations sits with the HR officers as well as some department leads. So, as an example, hiring managers for reservations, food and beverage safety, engineering, the different kind of areas in the hotel to come (Employing 100 staff member).

Partner organisations considered the training to be very important.

So, the big thing is the education piece that's been done. The education of hiring managers, HR leaders, senior leadership. The stats, like that education piece including the stats, including what is considered a disability – when we did our senior leaders, one of them watched it and ... he has epilepsy, and he's like, 'Oh my goodness, I have a disability' ... So that education piece has been really, really good for our organisation (Hospitality 2).

Phase three: Deliver

Once the Engage and Equip phases of the project were complete, companies began to actively identify suitable roles for people with disability for the Deliver phase.

We have got commitment from specific areas. So, the areas that we have commitment from is our social mission, so that's youth, family violence, alcohol and other drugs, and homelessness. So, all of those streams have made a commitment to this project, plus our community engagement, so that includes emergency services. And our head office departments have also made a commitment, so finance, IT, property, and communications, and our employment program as well has made some commitments too (Health 2).

Employing 100 also supported partner organisations to identify suitable roles for people with disability by undertaking job analysis, which was seen as fundamental to ensuring a good job match.

So, Employing 100 will do all the work. And they're going to come and work, and do job analysis, and understand exactly what are the elements of the role, to have some flexibility in there, and what the role's made up of. So, then they can make sure that the candidates are suitably qualified, and they're able to fulfil the inherent requirements (Health 2).

A key element of the Deliver phase was the establishment of a suite of trusted talent providers. Employing 100 provided information and connection for partnering organisations to a vetted Disability Employment Service (DES) or other talent provider so that the partner organisation could source suitable candidates. Employing 100 staff also acted as an intermediary between the partner organisations and the talent providers to ensure that the services provided met the needs of the partner organisations. This involved working closely with talent providers, including universities, to help them adjust to the Employing 100 model, which was a departure from their usual practices.

[There was a challenge in] converting that thinking with some of my DES providers who are quite used to the other model where they're very excited and they're very passionate and they have a portfolio of job seekers that they obviously want the best outcome for. So, I think that sort of drove a lot of those cold email resumes (Employing 100 staff member).

I wanted to avoid an influx of candidates and cold resumes being sent by very enthusiastic DES providers to my HR or talent acquisition contacts in the employers that might not be suited for vacancies that they had and but at the same time, I also wanted

to prevent confusion with multiple contacts across multiple branches and brands within the employers themselves (Employing 100 staff member).

Employing 100 staff felt that building relationships between partner organisations and talent providers was a key part of their role.

My role is delivery manager. I act as a middleman to assist with developing relationships between the employers and the DES providers (Employing 100 staff member).

In particular, talking to the HR and talent teams, I don't think there was actually a lot of knowledge around those sources [DES and other talent sources]. In some cases, they didn't even know those sources existed. Actually, when we came to the table and said, 'Did you know there are these agency-type providers that you can tap into, and it doesn't cost you anything?' (Employing 100 staff member).

In this process, a high level of triage was provided by all parties with the partner organisation identifying suitable roles (and modifying recruitment processes to be inclusive), the talent provider advertising roles and carefully matching applicants, and the Employing 100 staff further curating the match to ensure maximum alignment.

For the [company] roles we would look at the available roles, and then I would sit there with the participant or the job seeker that I was working with and say, 'Are any of these of interest to you? Can you see yourself in any of these roles?' Then, we would send the referrals straight through to [Employing 100] and say, 'This person is interested in these roles' (DES provider).

There was recognition of the need for time to develop and bed down new processes, with the end goal that DES providers would become a key recruitment partner of the partner organisation once Employing 100 pulled back.

The goal is that eventually, I'll be able to have direct contact with these employers once [Employing 100] have finished their educational piece and worked on the referral processes and everything. The idea is that we'll take on a little bit more of that towards the end of the project and we'll be a little bit more self-sufficient and self-running, rather than them [Employing 100] being so heavily involved (DES provider).

Initially, Employing 100 worked closely with Disability Employment Services providers across three states to build their capacity to become a source of talent for employers. Over time the talent pipeline was broadened to include a range of talent providers, including career consultants from the equitable learning services area of several universities, disability services organisations, as well as social enterprises. In addition, positions were directly advertised by employers, and a significant number of people with disability were employed by direct

application once barriers to recruitment processes had been addressed. The broadening of the talent pipeline was particularly important for partner organisations seeking applicants with high-level or specialised skills.

I think they go straight to the universities. I think universities have got a rich source of them [i.e. people with specific skills] (Hospitality 1).

One partner organisation that employs highly skilled staff felt that DES was not the place to source suitable candidates.

One of our employees said something to me: 'My son is neurodivergent but highly functioning and he wouldn't go through a DES, he would get a job himself, and he would never disclose that disability unless he was forced to disclose that disability.' So, I don't doubt that there are highly educated, talented, successful people out there, I just think they don't go through DES (Hospitality 1).

This assessment was shared by another talent provider who noted that jobseekers with disability within their organisation were not registered with DES due to poor experiences within this system.

Having a broad talent pipeline helped to overcome some of the challenges presented by working with DES providers only, including access to a larger talent pool given that not all jobseekers with disability are registered with a DES provider and DES providers do not service all geographical areas.

The final sources of talent, including the number in each category are in Table 4. The breakdown of talent sources utilised by each partner organisation is in Table 5.

Table 4: Sources of talent

Sources of employment	Number of organisations	Number of employees (N%)
DES provider	13	122 (51%)
Open market or careers website		104 (44%)
Social enterprise	3	8 (3.4%)
University	2	2 (0.8%)
Disability support organisation	1	1 (0.3%)

Source: AusDN final employment data

Table 5: Sources of talent accessed by partner organisation

Partner organisation	Source of employment	Number of employees (N%)
Health 1	DES provider	1 (1%)
	Open market or careers website	78 (98%)
	Social enterprise	0
	University	1 (1%)
	Total	80
Health 2	DES provider	8 (28%)
	Open market or careers website	20 (69%)
	Social enterprise	0
	University	1 (3%)
	Total	29
Hospitality 1	DES provider	99 (99%)
	Open market or careers website	0
	Social enterprise	0
	University	0
	Disability support organisation	1 (1%)
	Total	100
Hospitality 2	DES provider	14 (45%)
	Open market or careers website	9 (29%)
	Social enterprise	8 (26%)
	University	0
	Total	31

Source: AusDN final employment data.

Once all activities in this stage were complete organisations then were able to ‘green light’ the new recruitment process. Some organisations wanted to build momentum by formally launching the project.

Our TA [Talent Acquisition] Team, and our HR [Human Resources] Business Partner Teams have met with the Project Team, and we've got comms ready to go – I think they

might be going out next week to all of the hiring managers, and all of our leadership, just to say, 'This is the actual kick-off.' So, I think there will be some energy there. There have been discussions with all of the areas as well, to say, if a role comes up now, and you want to progress it, we can go ahead and work on it now (Health 2).

Phase four: Review

In the final Review phase of the model, the Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10 was repeated to measure organisational change. The results of this activity are discussed on Page 25.

Employment outcomes for people with disability

Attainment of the level of employment placements

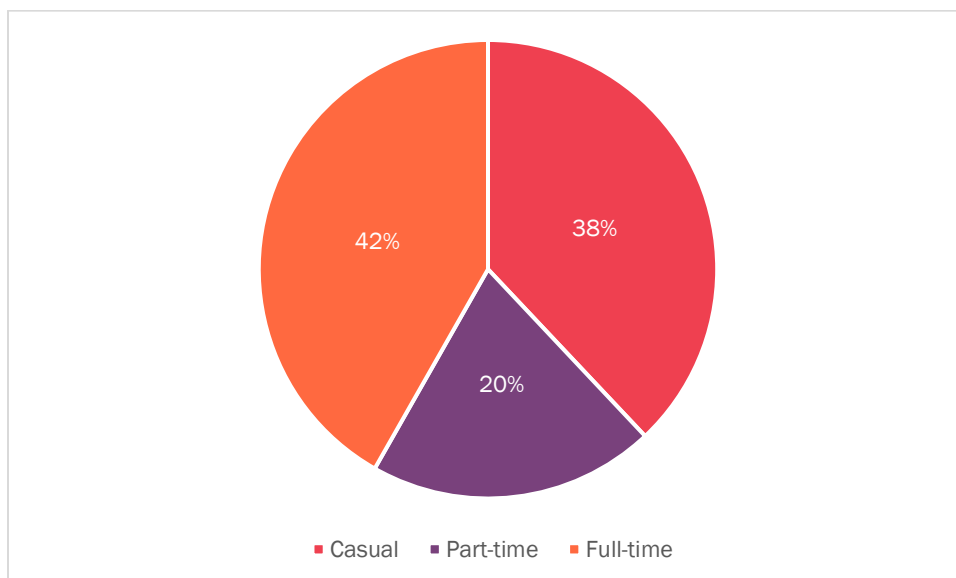
In total, Employing 100 created 240 employment outcomes within the four partner organisations as at 31 January 2025. This far exceeded the initial aim of the program to create 100 employment outcomes for people with disability. The breakdown of employment by work type is in Table 6 and Figure 1 below.

Table 6: Employment by work type

Work type	Number of employees N (%)
Full-time	102 (42%)
Casual	90 (38%)
Part-time	48 (20%)
Total	240

Source: AusDN final employment data.

Figure 1: Employment by work type



As partner organisations commonly offered employment across Australia, employment outcomes were attained in different states. Operations in three states were targeted and the outcomes are reported in Table 7.

Table 7: Employment by state or territory

State or territory	Number of employees N (%)
Victoria	115 (48%)
New South Wales	94 (40%)
Queensland	31 (13%)

Source: AusDN final employment data.

It is important to note that almost all of the 240 employment outcomes were attained in the second half of the project, with only one placement being made prior to this. This is due to the critical but extended employer capability building phase of the project. It should also be noted that participating organisations did not keep records of every placement of a person with disability in their organisation, because responsible hiring managers did not always recognise the connection between a new employee and the Employing 100 program. This indicates that the program had created change within the participating organisations that is likely to be sustainable beyond the life of the project.

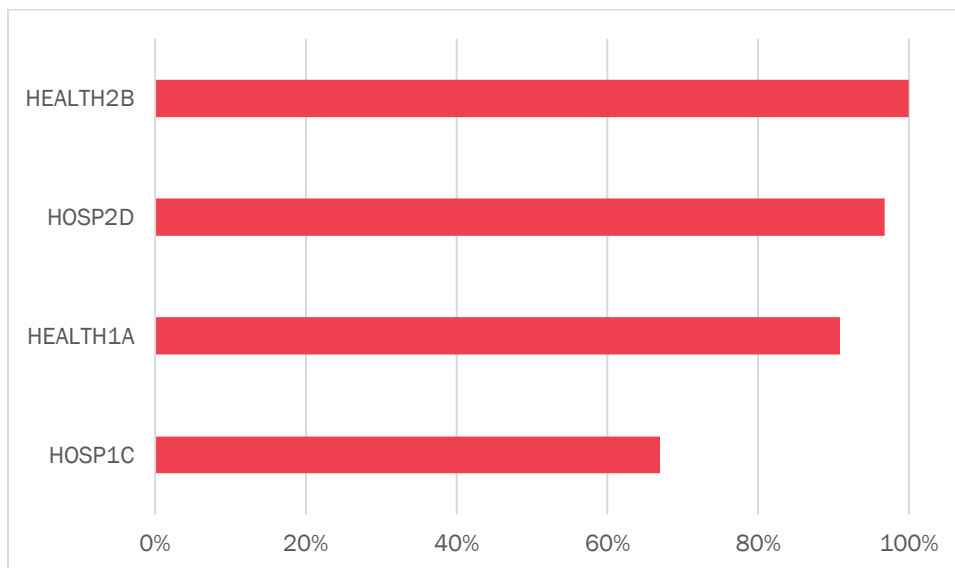
Data was collected at the end of the project regarding retention rates for people employed throughout the project. This data is found in Table 8 and Figure 3 below. As noted above, employees commenced in the second year of the project and at different time points, with some employing organisations not commencing recruitment until late in the project. This makes it impossible to determine level of retention of jobs at 26 weeks.

Table 8: Employee retention rates as at 31 January 2025

Organisation	Total number employed through the program	Still employed as at 31 January 2025	Retention rate (%)
Health 2	29	29	100%
Hospitality 2	31	30	97%
Health 1	80	73	91%
Hospitality 1	100	67	67%
Total (average)	240	199	83%

Source: AusDN final employment data.

Figure 2: Employee retention rates as at 31 January 2025



One of the partner organisations had a relatively lower retention rate than the others, possibly because this organisation traditionally employs a lot of young people in their first jobs and mainly employs staff on casual contracts.

Table 9 offers a breakdown of the types of roles that were filled through the Employing 100 program for each partner organisation.

Table 9: Breakdown of roles filled for each partner organisation

Partner organisation	Types of roles	Number of employees (N%)
Health 1	Commercial roles	3 (4%)
	EHS and HR	7 (9%)
	Engineering, trades & manufacturing roles	9 (11%)
	Logistics	3 (4%)
	Medical	2 (3%)
	Multifunctional roles	40 (50%)
	Quality and R&D roles	16 (20%)
Health 2	Administration	3 (10%)
	Cleaning	1 (3%)
	Communications and marketing	4 (14%)
	Employment services	5 (17%)

Partner organisation	Types of roles	Number of employees (N%)
	Finance	1 (3%)
	Food and beverage roles	2 (7%)
	Retail services	8 (28%)
	Support services	5 (17%)
Hospitality 1	Food and beverage roles	87 (87%)
	Logistics	3 (3%)
	Maintenance	8 (8%)
	Operations	2 (2%)
Hospitality 2	Finance	2 (6%)
	Food and beverage roles	20 (65%)
	Front of house services	4 (13%)
	Management	2 (6%)
	Porter services	3 (10%)

Source: AusDN final employment data. Health 1 N=77; Health 2 N=29; Hospitality 1 N=100; Hospitality 2 N=31.

Satisfaction with inclusiveness of employer by new employees

As part of this evaluation, two people who had been successfully employed through the Employing 100 program were interviewed about their experience. In addition, three people with disability employed through the program completed a post-placement survey. The post-placement survey completion rate was low, as most employees did not respond to requests to provide feedback.

Survey respondents were asked questions about the level of support they had received in their jobs, and their level of comfort in asking for help. Respondents ranked their answers from 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all and 5 is to a great extent for questions one and three, and 1 is poor and 5 is very high for question 2. The results are displayed in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Employees' levels of satisfaction post-placement

Survey question	Average ranking from 1 to 5
Have you been supported in your role (i.e. training provided, buddy allocated, access to your manager, shown your duties?)	3.3
How is your level of wellbeing in relation to your role?	3.7
Do you feel comfortable asking for help?	4.1

Source: AusDN post-placement survey (N=3)

Survey respondents were also asked about their experiences regarding a range of workplace adjustments and their responses are noted in Table 11.

Table 11: Level of satisfaction with workplace adjustments

Survey question	Yes	No	Not applicable
Have you been offered the following adjustments?			
Start/finish times	2	1	
Preferred communication methods	2	1	
IT or ergonomic tools	2		1
Seating or working location	3		
Working from home			3
Lunch/break options	2	1	
If yes, have you received the adjustments you requested? (N=2)			
Start/finish times	2		
Preferred communication methods	2		
IT or ergonomic tools	1	1	
Seating or working location	3		
Working from home			3
Lunch/break options	2		

Source: AusDN post-placement survey (N=3)

Among this small sample (5), employees with disability employed through the Employing 100 program were happy with their experiences of being offered workplace adjustments in their roles.

[They asked] If [I] need anything. And I said, 'No, I've got my subtitles with the Teams and whatever.' 'Do you need any assistance at the face-to-face interview?' Which was really just a getting to know you sort of thing. And I said, 'If you need to wear a facemask, that can't work for me, because I need to hear. And if you could seat me with a wall or some glass behind me, so the sound doesn't go past, [that would be fine]'. Then, when I was offered the job, 'Do you need anything?' Almost desperate to get me something. And I said, 'I just need this.' So, they moved one person around so that I could have the wall at the back. And that's really it. That's all I needed (New employee).

They've offered if I can think of anything – there are a couple of things. They're forever having parties, which is fantastic. But they also do a lot of videos. And I've just recommended that they do subtitles. And then when we go into a room for a Teams meeting, I'm happy to sit in the room, but can I have my own screen, so I've got my subtitles there (New employee).

They have been very accommodating in terms of going to medical appointments and stuff like that. They are very happy for me to do all of that, which is the same as just about any other job, but I don't know, they are really relaxed about it. And they have also helped me with my home office set up. They have helped me get a sit-stand desk so I can be more comfortable for long hours of work and all that sort of stuff. So, I think it's more a matter of asking, but I try not to take too much advantage of people either (New employee).

Increased capability of employing organisations

Starting from a low base of inclusion capability

A key goal of Employing 100 was to build the organisational capability of participating employers. Each partner organisation undertook the Australian Disability Network's Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index at the commencement of the project. The purpose of the Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index is to provide feedback to partner organisations about their current progress in developing inclusive practices and provide ideas and information to help organisations make progress.

Quick 10 categories are equally weighted at 10 points each. An organisation scores 10 points if they respond in the affirmative ('yes', 'partially' or 'underway') and zero points for responding 'not yet' to each question. Organisations received an overall score out of 100 based on their responses. These results informed analysis of the areas of capability organisations most needed

to build. Overall, despite being large or very large businesses, all organisations had significant capability gaps on commencement.

The Quick 10 was repeated at the end of the project. At the commencement of the project, the four organisations had a range of workplace and accessibility and inclusion policies and practices in place, partially in place or underway, and their scores ranged from 20/100 to 40/100. At the end of the project, all four organisations had made considerable progress in several of the index areas, leading to an overall improvement for all organisations ranging from 25 per cent to 100 per cent improvement on the initial scores. The scores at both time points are provided in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Organisational scores on Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index on commencement and conclusion of the Employing 100 project

	Health 1	Health 2	Hospitality 1	Hospitality 2
Quick 10 Index score at T1	20/100	25/100	20/100	40/100
Quick 10 index score at T2	40/100	45/100	40/100	50/100
Improvement to the Quick 10 index score over project period	100%	80%	100%	25%

Source: AusDN Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index. T1 = between September 2024 and January 2024; T2 = January 2025

Table 13 contains the Australian Disability Network Access and Inclusion Quick 10 responses from the four partner organisations at the commencement (T1) and completion (T2) of the project. At the commencement of the project the indicators related to ‘adjustments within the workplace and during the application process’ were the indicators that companies most frequently reported they had in place. These included ‘having a current and standalone written Workplace (Reasonable) Adjustment Policy that supports the provision of adjustments for candidates and existing employees’, and ‘actively inviting candidates to request adjustments throughout the online application process, at phone screen, and when organising interviews and testing or assessment.’

At the completion of the project, all four organisations had changed their practices to ‘provide regular training and resources to employees in customer facing roles in providing accessible and inclusive customer experiences.’ In addition, all organisations ‘actively invite candidates to request adjustments throughout the online application process, at phone screen, and when

organising interviews and testing or assessment' and were aware of the accessibility of our entire property portfolio & are progressing towards full accessibility.' However, none of the organisations had established disability employee networks or initiatives specifically designed to support career development for employees with disability. Finally, none of the organisations had yet put formal processes in place to ensure the accessibility of all internal and external communication and marketing materials and events.

Table 13: Australian Disability Network Access and Inclusion Index Quick 10 responses

Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index questions	Health 1		Health 2		Hospitality 1		Hospitality 2	
	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2
Q1. We have a current Access and Inclusion Plan / Disability Action Plan which outlines our commitment to access and inclusion for people with disability as employees, potential employees, customers, and stakeholders.	Not yet	Not yet	Partially	Partially	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet
Q2. We are aware of the accessibility of our entire property portfolio & are progressing towards full accessibility.	Not yet	Yes	Partially	Yes	Partially	Yes	Yes	Yes
Q3. We have a formal process that requires products and services to be accessible for all procurement categories.	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet
Q4. We have a current and standalone written Workplace (Reasonable) Adjustment Policy that supports the provision of adjustments for candidates and existing employees.	Yes	Yes	Underway	Yes	Underway	Yes	Underway	Yes
Q5. We actively invite candidates to request adjustments throughout the online application process, at phone screen, and when organising interviews and testing or assessment.	Yes	Yes	Not yet	Yes	Not yet	Yes	Yes – room for improvement	Yes
Q6. We have a Disability Employee Network or Employee Resource Group who progress access and inclusion for people with disability within our organisation.	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet

Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index questions	Health 1		Health 2		Hospitality 1		Hospitality 2	
Q7. We have an initiative/program specifically designed to support current employees with disability to develop their career.	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet
Q8. We provide regular training and resources to employees in customer facing roles in providing accessible and inclusive customer experiences.	Not yet	Yes	Not yet	Yes	Not yet	Yes	Not yet	Yes
Q9. We have formal processes in place to ensure that all internal and external communication and marketing materials and events are accessible and inclusive.	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet
Q10. We have formal processes in place to ensure that information technology (IT) is accessible for staff and customers with disability.	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Not yet	Yes	Yes

Source: AusDN Quick 10 Access and Inclusion Index. T1 = between September 2024 and January 2024; T2 = January 2025.

Broad organisational change

The package of activities provided to partner organisations enabled them to recognise the need to better understand their workforce and take steps to improve accessibility and support for people with disability. For some, this was seen as the beginning of broad organisational evolution.

This is the start of the evolution of how do we support people with disabilities (Health 2).

The Quick 10 enabled organisations to recognise that changes were required across the organisation.

I've got a 'TA' [Talent Acquisition officer] in my team who reports to me, and she is working through that plan, and then looking to where, because it's different [internal] stakeholders we need to be talking with as well. So, we've had discussions with our IT Systems Team to look at how do we make any changes to our Workday – which is the recruitment software – so we're kind of chunking it out into the different areas, and then having to go through the approval process to implement some of these changes (Health 2).

One partner organisation found that the dignified access review had been particularly impactful for their organisation as they underwent a renovation of their head office.

Similarly, the dignified access review for our office and our restaurant was really impactful for the business. It was really opportune timing, because we're undergoing a renovation of our head office in Sydney, so we undertook the review as part of that. And then, we were able to implement most of the findings that were provided to us through the report into the build, which is fantastic (Hospitality 1).

At the time of completion of the program, partner organisations were reporting structural changes in their processes and practices in response to the Employing 100 program.

We've had a launch of a new global careers website. So, I sent all of Employing 100's recommendations to the US to say, 'Hey, this is what's being recommended.' And I can see that ... some of those things have been implemented (Hospitality 2).

... we talked about systems and procedures that, again, a huge part of the project for us, looking at – we're very much still in progress – the reasonable adjustments procedure and process. We currently don't have it at national level ... so we're building that, but that is taking us time, because it needs to work within our technology and our platforms and our frameworks. But again, just being able to understand the opportunities, and we've consulted with employees by nature of the project, we're really clear on what

needs to be done. So, yeah, we very much have taken a lot away from the project (Hospitality 1).

Change in recruitment practices of employing organisations

Overall, partner organisations reported a change in the way they evaluated their recruitment practices following their involvement in the Employing 100 program.

We have an online global [recruitment] platform. And looking at it back then, I would have said ... anybody can apply, and they'll be contacted, and they go through an interview, and there's an assessment. So, I would have thought 'no [there are no issues]'. And then now I have had realisations on workplace adjustments and adjustments during the interview process and things like that. So, I would have said 'no', [but] now I'd say looking back, 'yes [there are accessibility barriers]' (Hospitality 2).

The questions that we were asking weren't bad but maybe worded a little bit differently so that we get more information out of – if we're checking someone's reference or if we're doing a phone screen, that type of thing ... Asking the question beforehand when you're doing a phone screen, 'Is this convenient for you to have a phone screen? Or ... is Teams better for you?' You know? Just that type of thing where we think, 'Oh, I'll text them first and I'll say, "Can you do a phone screen at this time? Is that convenient for you?"' thinking that's sufficient. But maybe the phone's not the best thing [and we should be checking that] (Health 2).

The recruitment review was found to be useful in identifying areas for action.

I've [had] really good feedback around training, really good insightful feedback around the recruitment review (Health 1).

... the recruitment review that we undertook through the project really allowed us to identify where our opportunities were. And unintended barriers, things that we didn't actually realise were stopping or preventing people with disability to apply. So, just being made aware of those barriers has really enabled us to understand how we can address them and work towards breaking them down as a system (Hospitality 1).

Partner organisations reported a range of activity to improve their recruitment approach.

[We've] done more work around setting up our hiring managers for success in the recruitment process, I think. A little bit more around the education to support people with disability through the hiring project (Hospitality 1).

I think now we're starting to see the world through a different lens when we got on board with this program and we're attending a lot more inclusion seminars wherever we can find them and if we've got the time we'll jump online to webinars and we'll learn about it and things like providing an interview guide a week before the interview. That's something that was previously unheard of (Hospitality 1).

Workplace adjustments support employees to undertake their role more effectively. Formal processes support applicants and employees to request workplace adjustments at any time. Accessible workplaces can often be developed with relatively small changes in different areas of an organisation's operations, such as:

- Adjusting business processes and procedures to place accessibility at the centre
- Making changes to physical environments
- Providing ergonomic equipment and assistive technology
- Enabling flexible working hours and locations

Several organisations reported that making access to workplace adjustments 'business as usual' was an important part of inclusive recruitment.

[Asking about any adjustments] – that's something that's come out of the recruitment review. And we know that there's a lot we needed to do, not only for recruitment. And that's something, we have a lot of staff who are really keen to get this progressed. But we recognise also that you could have a really inclusive recruitment approach, but it also needs to be inclusive for employees, staff ongoing as well. So, it's working alongside our teams to make sure that we have a really great inclusive recruitment, but also our workforce feels they have ... an ability to request adjustments, and things like that. We're working on the workplace adjustment procedure, and that's something that's, it's been on the horizon for some time, so this again is just having that support, is really helpful to progress this, yeah (Health 2).

That will evolve from the development of the workplace adjustment procedure, and the work around that, around what support can we offer? Or signposting staff and managers around where they can support around adjustments. So, my thinking is we'll align the workplace adjustment procedure with a wider comms piece around, 'This is the procedure, this is the toolkit, this is all of this.' (Health 2).

Partner organisations interviewed at the end of the program were enthusiastic about the changes they had made to their recruitment processes around workplace adjustments.

Because what we're in the process of doing is revising our whole recruitment flow and what we're going to mandate putting into job ads, and it's going to be things like that.

Yeah, probably overall just working through the various checklists and things that we did with Employing 100 was really – made us look at okay, what can we do differently? (Hospitality 2).

Organisations were ‘mainstreaming’ the approach developed in Employing 100 into ‘business as usual’ across the organisation.

And so, it's kind of said to them – it's just a normal recruitment process. That's it. And you ask this to everybody. It's not just this particular program that that's how we're running our interviews. [You ask everybody]: 'Is there anything we can assist with if you were successful for the role, or do you – would you require any workplace adjustments to be successful in this role?' (Health 2).

Disability confidence of staff

An important activity of the Equip phase of Employing 100 was Disability Confidence Training for partner organisation staff. Information about the training content is in Appendix D. Disability Confidence Training was provided to partner organisations prior to roles being developed and filled. Prior to attending the Disability Confidence Training, participants were asked to rate their disability confidence on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is totally confident. After the training, staff were asked to respond to a statement about their skills and knowledge of disability as a result of the training on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. The results are presented in Table 14 below. Overall, participating organisations started the project recording a disability confidence rating of ‘slightly confident’ to ‘somewhat confident’. While we cannot directly calculate the increase in disability confidence before and after the training, as participants were asked different questions, participants reported an overall increase in their disability skills and knowledge following the training with three of the four reporting a level of ‘very confident’.

Table 14: Average disability confidence pre- and post-training by organisation

Partner organisation	Pre-training disability confidence average (How disability confident do you feel?)	Post-training self-reported disability confidence average rating (My skills/knowledge has increased as a result of the training)	Increase in disability confidence after training (%)
Health 1	2.5	3.9	35.9%
Health 2	2.9	4.0	27.5%
Hospitality 1	2.7	4.0	32.5%
Hospitality 2	2.8	4.3	37.2%

Source: AusDN survey data. Number of training sessions where this data was collected: Health 1 N=7; Health 2 N=8; Hospitality 1 N=2; Hospitality 2 N=5

Providers of disability employment services observed the impact that a lack of disability confidence has on employers:

There is such a stigma around disability, so you have the employers that are hesitant for whatever reason because maybe they fully don't understand what disability means. I think people would automatically have an idea in their mind when they hear that word, but don't really fully understand the whole scope of it. I think sometimes the employers can feel like they're not really getting someone to do the role per se. I think that's a lot of what [Employing 100 staff] and I call 'myth-busting', in terms of getting started initially (DES provider).

In addition to the question about their disability confidence, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement (on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) with the statements that the training had changed their attitudes and beliefs, and that they would be able to apply the training in their workplace. They were also asked whether the training activities were engaging and useful (see Appendix C for further information).

The scores presented in Table 15 give an indication of improved attitudes, skills and behaviours following the training.

Table 15: Post-training disability confidence by partner organisation

Partner Company	Health 1	Health 2	Hospitality 1	Hospitality 2	Average score
My attitudes and beliefs changed as a result of the training	3.8	3.3	3.9	4.3	3.8
I will be able to apply this training in my workplace	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.3

Source: AusDN survey data. Number of training sessions where this data was collected: Health 1 N=7; Health 2 N=8; Hospitality 1 N=2; Hospitality 2 N=5

Overall, participants reported that the training had contributed to them having changed attitudes, increased knowledge and skills, and that what they learnt would be able to be applied within their employment setting. In particular, participants reported that the training was practical and provided information that would be applicable within their own workplace.

A common theme was that of increasing an understanding of what 'disability' entails, as described by organisational representatives.

I think before this program I wasn't clear about what is a disability. Not everyone needs a guide dog or a wheelchair. 98 per cent or 95 per cent of disabilities, you can't see them and so I think that what's coming through to us, is that disability takes a wide range of shapes and sizes, and it might not be permanent for the rest of their life, it might be a temporary disability for a little bit. Because I think when you say 'disability' you automatically think someone's in a wheelchair and that's what you just think to yourself, but [while] that's sometimes the case, it's more often than not, not the case (Hospitality 1).

I think perception is that you say disability, and there's a physical disability. 'Oh, well then they can't work in that place because there's no lifts,' or there's no – you know? So, it's automatically just – it's an automatic discrimination, I suppose you could say, in that instance (Health 2).

Others emphasised the need for education to overcome misunderstandings about disability.

And that's where we need to get our general managers educated. And then they've got to accept the fact that they're not going to say the wrong thing, or they might say the wrong thing but it's okay because we sometimes do say the wrong things. So how do we rectify, and what do we do? (Hospitality 2).

The training provided opportunities to address these issues where none had been available before.

So, I think – in particular, for a couple of them [current staff], ... they actually never had ... a person with a disability be part of their team. So they loved the training, and the whole process, they were really happy with the support they got. Because I think they were just nervous. I think they were nervous about what to say, what to do ... (Health 2).

Several partner organisations reported that the training had led to some people in their organisation disclosing their own disabilities. This is important in the context of a lack of understanding of the composition of their existing workforce in relation to disability, as identified in employer interviews.

And we've had people disclose because they've seen we're doing this work. We've had people disclose. And I think a lot of it is that neurodivergent group (Hospitality 2).

The final question asked participants how engaging and useful the training activities had been. Table 16 outlines the data by organisation.

Table 16: Engagement and usefulness of training activities by organisation

Partner Company	Health 1	Health 2	Hospitality 1	Hospitality 2
The training activities were engaging and useful	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.9

Source: AusDN survey data. Number of training sessions where this data was collected: Health 1 N=7; Health 2 N=8; Hospitality 1 N=2; Hospitality 2 N=5

Scores of between 3.9 and 4.1 out of 5 indicate that participants found the training to be engaging and useful, and this aligns with the data from Table 15 (above) where participants reported high confidence about their ability to apply the training in their workplace. Comments from attendees were also positive.

The training has been amazing, I've really good feedback around training (Health 2).

I think the Disability Confidence Training has really helped to address that [myths about adjustments] and dispel some of the myths there (Health 2).

I really think the critical part is the communication and then the training. So, we really – getting those senior leaders trained first – so even before we even started, senior leaders and the whole of HR got the Disability Confidence Training, which I think was great (Health 2).

Employment readiness

The data outlined above indicates that delivery of the Employing 100 project activities had increased the readiness of the partner organisations to employ people with disability. In particular, they reported an increased awareness about what constitutes ‘disability’, increased knowledge about barriers to inclusive workplaces, and specific strategies to increase the inclusiveness of workplaces through targeted strategies such as implementing workplace adjustment policies and changing recruitment practices. Importantly, partner organisations had an action plan to increase employment of people with disability within their workplaces and had commitment from senior management which meant that the focus on inclusive workplaces had increased.

Throughout the program, all four partner organisations had undertaken an internal process to engage with the project that resulted in a heightened awareness of the issue of employment for people with disability within senior levels of the organisation and the development of policies, processes and strategies to onboard 25 employees with disability. Disability Confidence Training had increased knowledge about what disability is, particularly so-called ‘hidden’ disability, and raised awareness about the need to have structured workplace adjustment policies in place in order to attract, recruit, onboard and retain employees with disability. The tools utilised in the project were highly regarded by the organisations.

One partner organisation described the impact of their engagement with Employing 100:

[Prior to Employing 100] I could see there was really a real nervousness to even talk about that issue. There's now such an opportunity for us to be able to have the conversations and feel okay to have the conversations, because without those, there's no way we can progress. So, what I'm noticing [is] much more openness, that willingness to ask, that willingness to engage in conversation. We've come a long way (Employer).

At the midpoint of the project, a number of partner organisations had recently completed the suite of activities in the Engage and Equip stages of the Employer Enablement Framework, and were ready to move into the Deliver stage, including identifying roles and recruiting candidates via delivery partners including DES providers. This component was seen as critical due to the large volume of vacancies the partner organisations generate.

There's a lot more opportunity in those larger businesses. The small businesses I work with, while they're fantastic, they might only be able to hire one or two people a year. The larger businesses have so much more capacity to bring people on board (DES provider).

We hire 250 to 300 people a month, so it's quite high volume (Health 2).

At the end of the program, partner organisations reported an increased sense of confidence to employ people with disability as they applied their learnings from Employing 100.

I think it will take time, but certainly there is a level of confidence being built at a management level. And I think also at a system level, we've identified opportunities where – because we're all online, for example – there's ways which we're going through now, changing a couple of pieces of the online application form to make that more accessible and more inclusive as well, which we learnt through the recruitment review. And we learnt also – not just the recruitment review – I think we learnt by closely seeing and watching the candidates apply through Employing 100, see how they go, and see what we could have done better (Hospitality 1).

One partner organisation appreciated the role that Employing 100 had played in introducing their organisation to a potential new talent pool.

I think the appetite's been really positive to support this, because there is an understanding we can get really skilled people from communities we might [not] have tapped before, or relationships we may not have accessed before (Hospitality 1).

Employers were enthusiastic about the changes that they'd seen as a result of their involvement in the project.

I think we always have a really positive view and openness to employ people with disability. I think, potentially, we've changed attitudes or understanding of what disability is. So, there's probably assumptions around what a disability is, and we've really helped to – through the project – been able to educate around what the definition, what it means, and by that nature, I think that will change attitudes (Hospitality 1).

One partner organisation explained that the way that the project had been structured was crucial to its success.

... the structure of the project and the compartmentalisation of the project into different areas of impact. I think trying to tackle this all in one, or without that methodical approach, would have not given us as much success. By nature of being a really complex organisation, it helps us to break things down and understand where we can have the most impact and prioritise (Hospitality 1).

All four partner organisations developed a workplace policy and procedure following their involvement with the program. This development further opens pathways to employment for people with disability in several ways. For example, adjustments in recruitment and onboarding

procedures to make them more inclusive for everyone may encourage more people with disability to apply for roles.

Increased capability of talent providers

A key focus of Employing 100 is to build capability of talent providers (i.e. Disability Employment Services providers and others) to match, prepare, place and support people with disability with employers. Data was collected from two DES providers and two other talent providers, one social enterprise and one university, to explore outcomes for this stakeholder group and key contributors to these.

Employing 100 acted as an intermediary between talent providers, including individual DES providers, and the partner organisations. Part of this role was to raise the 'standards' of talent provider activity to better meet the needs of the partner organisations. One partner organisation representative described what he needed from employment service providers:

It's about having a good provider who provides strong resumes, and then setting it up for success with being very supportive around the types of questions we're going to ask, making sure the interview's a very comfortable, quiet space so they feel safe, nurtured, and then setting up that first day for success, so there's a nice induction, uniforms fitted and provided, there's a point of contact and then some training (Hospitality 2).

Employing 100 staff felt that they were successful in raising standards of talent providers and influencing practice and process improvement.

We definitely held them [the DES providers] a bit more accountable. Because of my background, I knew the standards, I knew the standards of service delivery that they were meant to be providing. So, when I was receiving something that I thought was not to quality, I would push back and say, 'No, I need something better for my employer' (Employing 100 staff member).

DES providers were selected based on their willingness to work collaboratively with Employing 100 to ensure that employers needs were met. The relationship between the Employing 100 and talent provider staff was critical to ensuring well matched candidates were provided to partner organisations. Talent providers gave positive feedback about the establishment of these productive relationships.

I think the relationship that she [Employing 100 staff] has with whoever she's working with is really important. I find for me, [Employing 100 staff] and I worked really well together because I feel she really played to our strengths. To my knowledge, I think we're one of the [talent] providers that she's worked more closely with, because we do focus

on not just referring every single person on our caseload. We do look at skill matching and things like this. If I do put forward someone who perhaps doesn't have maybe the experience, I'll really stress why I put them [forward] and explain to her what my thoughts were behind the referral, rather than just saying, 'Here's 50 resumes for you' (DES provider).

A component of the Employment 100 approach is that the employment service is actively 'recruiting' to partner companies with jobseekers on their caseload. This has created opportunities for jobseekers to hear directly about job opportunities within the partner companies.

Recently, we [i.e. DES provider] have run what we call an 'Employable You' day. It was an opportunity where [we] invited some of our jobseekers along to meet with some potential employers. [Employing 100 staff] were able to attend that. That was really fantastic. It was a great opportunity for our jobseekers to have a bit of a chat face-to-face, find out a little bit more directly from them about the project as well and what roles were available with which of the employers (DES provider).

There are so many roles that a lot of people don't know about. If you think of a hotel, you think of a concierge person. You might think of a couple of other people, but you don't really understand the full scope of all the different roles and variations they had. To start with, I spent a lot of time just going through [roles] so I had a bit of an idea, so that if I was working with anyone, I could say, 'These are the options they have. These are the skills you have, and then these are some of the roles that could match that. What are your thoughts?' The roles that I had people into before this month were a handyman, a welcome desk attendant, and a food and beverage attendant (DES provider).

Both Disability Employment Services that were interviewed reported that involvement in Employing 100 had been a positive experience, recognising that the employer-facing work undertaken by Employing 100 was a significant additional element.

I think when you take into account too all the work that [Employing 100 staff] have to put in before the employers are even advertising, it takes up so much time. Like I said, there was a bit of a rocky start, but I really feel like we've learnt a lot and grown a lot and I'm really excited to see what the next half [of the project] will bring (DES provider).

In particular, Employing 100 had introduced new processes to streamline communication between the partner organisations and the talent provider. These processes meant that jobseekers, via the talent provider, had a more direct route to the hiring managers and other decision makers and all parties were kept up to date.

I think as a whole, the employer, [Employing 100 staff] and myself have all just been trying to work out the best way to streamline that. I think we're definitely on the right track now by having that one point of contact. That person then organises the interviews. They communicate back to us and that's worked quite well in terms of getting feedback and everything too, so that we're all on the same page (DES provider).

The Employing 100 staff fulfilled a vital function as intermediaries between the employers and talent providers, which was appreciated by both groups.

So yeah, so with [Employing 100], the communication's been fantastic, and that's been the number one, I think, takeaway from this. The communication and the linkage to the available vacancies come through [Employing 100 staff member], there's one point of contact. I then send resumes directly to her, and she divvies them back to the employers in whichever fashion she needs to. And from that, in that sense, it's worked really well (DES provider).

One partner organisation noted that a particular DES staff member with relevant experience in hospitality had become an important asset in their talent acquisition process. He noted her ability to screen candidates appropriately for hospitality roles and that the candidates put forward were well suited to the roles on offer.

Employing 100 staff anticipated that publication of the Employer Enablement Framework, anticipated for the end of the project, would additionally support talent providers to increase their role around employment engagement and capability building.

When we get out our Framework, it's really important to make sure we share it with the recruitment provider community as well, because the more we empower, the more change happens (Employing 100 staff member).

Key elements contributing to creating outcomes

Focusing on employer environment first

The Employing 100 approach is 'employer-led', that is, starting with a focus on the employer and actively building their capability to create an inclusive workplace, then expanding to talent providers and finally to job matching. Employers valued the 'total package' of the Employer Enablement Framework delivered by Employing 100 and the framework was felt to be a key element of this.

The framework gives people a tangible path to follow that isn't too complicated, because we know that you can't just have training without process improvement,

you can't have process improvement without training. You need that senior leader engagement. I feel like the framework actually gives people the confidence to be able to do it (Employing 100 staff member).

It's not scary when you've got a map (Employing 100 staff member).

However, Employing 100 staff stressed that embedding attitude change was crucial in addition to changes to policies and procedures for employers.

It's interesting the two things that people have latched onto are paper, their process and procedural. They're not person changes, they're not attitude changes, and it's attitude changes, above everything else [that's important]. With the right attitude, you know, to implement and you know that you need to continue doing the work. It's not a tick-and-flick exercise (Employing 100 staff member).

Training's great but you need to keep reinforcing it, you've got to have that conversation regularly, that workplace adjustment. When we help the employees create them. We did have to say, 'But it isn't just for candidates that we know live with disability. You should be asking everyone and taking that step further into mainstream' (Employing 100 staff member).

The two year project highlighted the need to allow sufficient time to gain high-level organisational commitment and to build organisational capability among participating employer organisations, In this project, across four large organisations, this took at least 12 to 18 months, with the majority of job placements occurring at speed in the last six months of the project once employers had attained employment readiness and the talent provider process was in place.

Providing the conduit between employers and talent pipelines

Employing 100 staff acted as an intermediary between the partner organisations and the talent providers. Employing 100 activated both ends – acting as a conduit in the middle. They enhanced what talent providers, such as DES, can provide to an employer, by encouraging good practice including a strong focus on good role fit and only putting forward suitable candidates. Therefore, the company does not get resumes sent to them that are inappropriate, and this builds trust with partner organisations and keeps them engaged in the approach.

Several key elements of the intermediary process were identified as important. These include a central point of contact for all parties, and clear role delineation (at least initially) between employer-facing roles and candidate-facing roles.

A central point of contact at the partner organisation and at the DES has been one strategy to streamline the relationship and build trust.

We've been working with a lady who's the HR for three of their hotels. It's been good just to have that one point of contact, knowing that if I have any questions or need any feedback or anything, that she's the person that will get back to me in regard to that. I think that's been working really well because I find when you're constantly going to lots of different people, it's really hard. No one's really on the same page having that one point of contact for each. It'd be like if I had all of my consultants reaching out to that same employer. I'm the one that works with employers. I take responsibility for that because otherwise it just gets too messy. I'm hoping that moving forward, I can form that relationship with [person] so that if she is ever looking for staff, she can reach out to me and say, 'Hey, I'm looking for this role. Do you have anyone?' Ideally before they even advertise it externally. But even if they are advertising externally, just knowing that maybe we just require a small adjustment in terms of the interview process or something like that (DES provider).

The intermediary process required each party to hold clear roles as a mechanism to streamline activity and minimise confusion. Typically, Employing 100 staff were employer-facing while the talent provider was candidate-facing. In this respect, project partners played to their strengths.

That's why it's worked quite well the way that [Employing 100 staff] and I have been doing it, because she's been working mostly with the employer to start with. I've been working with the jobseeker. We still come together. The employer knows who I am. I know who they are. We've really just played to our strengths in that area, and I think that once the employer gets to know the participants that we're putting forward and really understands the strengths and assets that they can add to their team that I think that would be a lot more streamlined. I don't think we would've had the same success if it wasn't run this way (DES provider).

In their employer-facing role, Employing 100 staff have acted in a triage role. This has included working first to further curate the candidate selection as well as coordinating work across all parties to refine application and interview processes, and ensure these expectations are consistent across the recruitment pathway from talent provider to employer.

We've just had another round of candidates go through and we've found that this has just been a lot more efficient. We've been working with just one person. [Employing 100 staff] met the people that I'm referring directly face-to-face, and I feel like it's just worked really, really well. [Employing 100 staff] will refer them directly to the employer, but I get cc'd into all the information. We had three interviews after we had our face-to-face meetings with [Employing 100 staff]. They went straight into three interviews with the [company]. We had that one point of contact and she's been fantastic. She's let us

know when the actual interviews were. We have been told that one person was unsuccessful and two are in the reference check stage (DES provider).

[Employing 100 staff] and I are just trying to streamline the interview processes a little bit more by working with the employer on what they'd like to see in the resumes.

[Employing 100 staff] are working directly with those employers at the moment to find out exactly what they're looking for. We're working on a bit of a guideline for the resumes and how we can then deliver that so that the employer can really see what they're looking for (DES provider).

Eventually it is expected that Employing 100 will withdraw its support, with the talent provider and the company having established a relationship that can be ongoing and enable and effective supply of suitable candidates.

The idea is that we'll take on a little bit more of that towards the end of the project and we'll be a little bit more self-sufficient and self-running, rather than them being so heavily involved (DES provider).

As part of the intermediary role, Employing 100 also acted as a coordinator across talent providers. This was a unique role that coordinated both visibility of job vacancies across diverse talent providers as well as applications received via them.

I think what the Employing 100 did very well was that collaborative approach across [three talent providers]. So traditionally, we [talent provider] wouldn't refer to [another talent provider], because they are competition, essentially. But going through the AusDN and having that platform to do it worked really well, and we were able to give our candidates opportunities that we wouldn't ordinarily (DES provider).

Making jobseekers with disability visible

Participants in the Employing 100 program appreciated the additional connection that the program provided between employers and jobseekers. This heightened the visibility of individual jobseekers in the process and more actively joined the dots between role and jobseeker.

Just the fact that I had someone on both ends of the spectrum, one with a job [to offer] and one was looking for a job for me and helping me with that rather than me just doing it by myself. I am not sure how I would have gotten in contact with [Employing 100] and said, in terms of this role that we're looking for a specific person for to give them an opportunity, you might fit it. I am not sure where that connection would have come from (New employee).

One jobseeker felt empowered by the process and the willingness of employers to consider them for subsequent and more suitable roles, noting that this was not their usual experience of jobseeking.

The fact that I didn't get the first job and then they still came back and actually said, 'You interviewed great. We think you might fit this role better' and gave me that opportunity. That's something that's actually never happened before, despite companies saying, 'We'll take your resume onboard and call you next time'. It's more, well, it's always been in the past that I have had to chase those opportunities up. So being approached again felt great. It was good feedback and, yeah, it made me feel better about the whole process for sure (New employee).

Successful applicants were positive about the role that the Employing 100 program had played in them getting a job.

Yeah, just about as any other job. Just that this particular one [Employing 100] had a middleman connection, so the recruiter I would describe. I got in touch with her, but she also helped me out with getting some information for some interviews and stuff like that so I could prepare well, which I think made a big difference (New employee).

I am not sure how I would be able to put myself out there for [Employing 100] to have found me just if I was put in with a stack of thousands of others' resumes (New employee).

Overall, participants with disability were complimentary of the Employing 100 program.

I will advocate for this to continue to happen because I think if other people got the opportunities that I have got, that would make me happy. And I think the employers would be happy by it and it will do a lot of good (New employee)

Knowledgeable and committed Employing 100 staff

Employing 100 staff were considered to be knowledgeable about, and committed to, increasing employment of people with disability, and this built trust with the partner organisations and Disability Employment Service providers alike.

... they've [Employing 100 staff] been absolutely amazing, really responsive, really insightful, really flexible. I have only good things to say about how they've partnered with us. They've been really, really good when they've met with the team, they've been really engaging, and giving us a sense of like feeling safe that they're really know what they're talking about, and know what they're doing, so really credible (Health 2).

They were kind of a little bit behind the scenes, helping – if they weren't getting the answers that they needed, letting me know and to see how I could support, or letting the big environment that we operate in help to move all of that around. Yeah, that's been really excellent. I think, certainly, for me in my role, I couldn't be across every one of those relationships, and the time that's needed to do that. That's been really valuable (Hospitality 1).

In terms of doing all the education that's necessary, fielding all of those questions and everything, having someone with [Employing 100 staff]'s background as well has been really, really beneficial (DES provider).

One of the aspects of 'background' that was seen to be critically important (as above, and as endorsed by Employing 100 staff) was that of being a person with disability leading the program and presenting the training.

I do think that, when you're running a program or something like this and the interactions and the relationships that we build, it really helped that within our team we have people with disability and people that are not afraid to say they have disability. Because myth-busting-wise and what I was saying at the start around just really blowing out of the water what people traditionally think disability looks like and what types of jobs they can do, like you cannot get better than hearing it from the horse's mouth (Employing 100 staff member).

Employing 100 staff's passion and commitment stood out.

Honestly, I think it's been [Employing 100 staff]'s passion for what she does. She's been amazing to work with. If we've ever had days where something hasn't worked out or anything, she's been really fantastic at problem solving and I feel like she never takes 'no' for an answer. She's looking for another option or another opportunity. She's such a strong advocate for people with disabilities. I think if we didn't have someone like her really representing the program, then I don't think it would be the success that I can see it will be. I've really appreciated how she has been such a strong advocate while still looking at the fundamentals of the role and making sure that she's working with the employer to fill those roles with suitable people but also getting them to see the strengths and assets of the people that she's putting forward (DES provider).

Employing 100 staff described the change that they saw as a result of delivering the Disability Confidence Training.

... the biggest thing that I really know noticed that seemed to be the lightbulb moment across the room was really when the learners were having the awareness of just how

broad disability is, even to the point where I think there was possibly some people in a room realising that they have a disability and that many people that they know also do (Employing 100 staff member).

Common and ongoing barriers to outcomes

Time lag and poor communication in recruitment processes

Both partner organisations (employers) and talent providers identified ongoing issues in relation to the timeliness of recruitment activities as well as problems with communication and feedback. To a large extent, this reflects the complicated process of recruitment which often is plagued by delays and poor communication mechanisms between all parties. While project stakeholders provided examples where such issues had been overcome, many examples persisted.

Accessing sufficient and timely talent

In the earlier stages of the project, some partner organisations reported some issues with accessing talent pipelines. Despite providing Employing 100 with roles, some partner organisations did not receive the volume of candidates they expected, nor candidates that were well suited to the roles on offer.

A barrier or something that we're struggling with in this program is finding candidates that can do the jobs. We've given them [Employing 100] about eight roles, and we've had about two candidates presented to us. And none of the CVs really – one of them, he was presented and then they withdrew him because they found out that you needed to be standing and he had a back issue, so then were like, 'No, he can't do the job' (Hospitality 1).

[Employing 100 staff] get the roles and she gives them to the various Disability Employment Services, whoever she thinks might have the best people, but then nothing was happening (Hospitality 1).

But, for us, we're just not seeing that [placement]. Look, we could be doing more as well internally. We've got a meeting with the team tomorrow so 'what roles do you have, what can we send to Employing 100?' I'll make sure that they're getting weekly roles from us (Hospitality 1).

Time lag and lack of feedback from employers

Despite significant uplift in organisational accessibility and inclusion capability, talent providers were experiencing significant delays when engaging about vacant roles. In some instances, significant time-lag was experienced between recruitment phases.

It's been a little bit of a rocky start. [Employing 100 staff member] has been absolutely fantastic, but it's just been really tricky, I guess, going through all the different processes of having myself referring jobseekers I'm working with to [Employing 100 staff member], and then trying to get them to even an interview stage. Initially, we were finding that the turnaround was quite long. One of the first people we had referred, I think it's about two to three months after we referred him, he got an interview. It was just taking a really long time to hear back in regard to how he'd progressed and everything (DES provider).

A common set of obstacles were those centred on lack of follow up and responsiveness to candidates and their talent providers.

I got an email from them a month ago saying, 'We've got this perfect opportunity for these two people, we're going to contact them for an interview.' Great, so I've told them to expect a phone call. That phone call hasn't been made (University).

But this is probably pretty typical of my experience with the Employing 100 program, is just this lag that happens. So, saying 'We're really interested', and then taking a long time to organise an interview (University).

For this talent provider, this experience called into question the partner organisation's commitment to the Employing 100 program.

It can't be process-driven from the organisations. If it took them this long to employ anyone, they'd never employ anyone. You know what I mean? So, I think it gets back to their commitment towards the Employing 100 program. I know that the Employing 100 program are trying to get things moving as quick as they can. And often as well, I know this is dictated from the employers but the deadline for these opportunities is very narrow so you might only have a week to provide. And this is from my experience in any affirmative-measure programs that exist, it's always a last-minute thing that, 'Oh, we haven't filled – this will help us with our D&I space, so we'll make the window really short, and at least we've tried.' (University).

At the end of the program, talent providers offered feedback on the program, noting that one area that could be improved upon was in relation to this aspect of communication.

And this has been a back and forth by a large multinational that has said, 'We're active'. They've got sponsorship from executives to say that this is something ... that they want

to move on. And their communication, whilst it's been reasonable ... has been very flippant and we continue to miss the mark in reminding them that there is a human being with a disability or lived experience behind this narrative (DES provider).

I've had so many conversations with people where they're really excited at the start and then they just ghost you afterwards. So, there has to be some form of – there has to be something set at a higher level that holds people accountable to actually achieving the goals (Social enterprise).

I think just remembering from the candidates' perspective, I've felt like a lot of the trust in my services has been broken with some of the people that I've been referring, going 'I've got this great opportunity that's only come through me. There's been limited people applying for it so you're going to be a really good chance', and then just not hearing anything back. And really having to push for those things and after all that, not getting the role, and being given feedback which maybe doesn't align with what they knew about the opportunity (University).

Lack of flexible approach to roles

Employing 100 worked with employers to identify suitable job vacancies to fill via the project. This placed the focus firmly on available roles rather than adapting or customising roles for people with disability. Some partner organisations felt that this unnecessarily restricted their approach, especially when they were keen to innovate in order to attain the outcomes for people with disability.

I think if they [Employing 100] came to us and they said, 'We've got these great candidates and they're based in [area], do you think you have any roles that could fit them?' we maybe might look at it and say, 'You know what? They don't have all the skills, but we can make a compromise and give this person an opportunity'. We could do that and that's something that one of our business leaders said, 'Well, why can't we see some of these profiles and maybe we'll even merge some roles for them, or we'll change the roles around'. And I said, 'But that's not how this program is run. The program is supposed to be employer-led. We give them the brief and they give us the candidate based on the brief that we send them' (Hospitality 1).

Similarly, some talent providers could see opportunity for more flexible thinking in relation to some roles that were identified. In some cases, talent providers felt that there was a lack of flexibility when considering candidates for roles that had remained unfilled for some time on the basis that they did not completely fit the role description.

I think setting that expectation much clearer with them about what it takes to be able to properly source – like any recruiting, you need a reasonable window to be able to go out to market to get the appropriate candidates. So, I think having patience with it. Especially, for example, [partner organisation] seemed to choose roles that they'd struggled to fill over a long time. So again, if they've struggled to fill it, and then coming to us and saying that there's not a right fit, there's got to be a bit of understanding that they're not filling it anyway. This candidate might not be ticking every box but they're in front of you, you've signed up for this program, you've said that it's a good entry level role (University).

Continued workplace barriers to inclusion

Employing 100 commenced with high-level executive commitment to increasing employment for people with disability within each partner organisation. However, despite this high-level endorsement for inclusive recruitment, this may not be receiving adequate support across all the arms of the business.

Because I think the biggest systemic barrier is that you have to have organisations who are actually being forward thinking and being able to – so with [partner organisation], from my observations, you have a top-down strategy, where the organisation overall – the brand overall is saying, 'This is what we're doing. Now, hotels, sort yourselves out and make it happen.' (DES provider).

At both senior and other levels of organisation, a range of perceived difficulties related to inclusive employment remain. Some partner organisations discussed how there remains, in some parts, a perception that workplace adjustments are expensive and difficult.

'I think there's probably, it's that disability confidence for leadership, or having preconceived ideas about what adjustments are required. So, the pushback around, 'How much is this going to cost?' Can be something that requires a bit more discussion that needs to get overcome. So yeah, I think there's just some established ideas around adjustments, 'Oh, this is going to be hard' (Health 2).

I'm not sure if it's widely known [availability of funding for adjustments], because that was the feedback around, 'Who's going to pay for adjustments if we need to make adjustments? (Health 2).

Access to partner organisation's premises remains a potential barrier for people with disability. Some partner organisations acknowledged that this is a barrier for them.

Oh, some buildings are [not accessible]. I mean, the portfolio is quite huge, in terms of the number of locations that we have, so I would imagine some may have accessibility issues. Obviously, our new builds and everything are really compliant, so that may be an issue for some (Health 2).

We've got lots of old buildings ... With no lift. But there is a lift that can go down there, but you have to enter the front of the hotel, which normally, employees can't enter. So, there would – it's possible, but adjustments would need to be made (Hospitality 2).

Similarly, partner organisations identified that the location of their premises could present a barrier to employment. Transport to the workplace was one issue raised. One partner organisation has sites that are difficult to access without a car.

We've got free onsite parking at [location], and I think probably [location] too, it's hard to get to by public transport. There's a train and then you have to get a bus and not every train station gets you to [location] train station, so you have to get into [city] depending on where you live and then get the train line to [location], get off at that station and then get the bus or walk four blocks down to get there. It's not easy. And [location] is the same (Hospitality 1).

Another partner organisation observed that roles available in some areas are hard to fill.

Some roles we struggle. We struggle in our rural and remote areas a lot, so regional can be much more challenging than metro areas (Hospitality 1).

One provider of disability employment services suggested that some of the challenges around location could be mitigated by ensuring that candidates were informed about the possibility of needing to travel to take up a new role early in the recruitment process.

So, if we're saying to people at the point of inception, when they're coming into our pre-employment program, that these are the sorts of opportunities that are available for you at the end, it likely will be in a hotel or in a larger environment that's city-based, that's what you're setting yourself up for (Social enterprise).

Even where improvements had been made to recruitment processes, some talent providers noted that further work is needed to make these fully inclusive.

Whereas I have a little bit of nerves with [partner organisation] because they've said to me, 'Oh, we follow the STAR [Situation; Task; Action; Result] method in our interviews,' and I was like, 'Oh, that's not going to work. That's not going to work for us.' (Social enterprise).

When reflecting on the biggest barrier remaining to inclusive employment, an Employing 100 staff member identified the need to shift the initiative (and the related changes made) into business as usual.

One of the conversations that I had on repeat quite regularly with many people was 'this is business as usual' and you asking if someone needing adjustments at interview point isn't now a tick-box and that's now done for that person. You need to be asking them next time you meet them, next time you book time with them, next time you have a performance review, next time you do a development meeting. So, trying to embed that accessibility and inclusion should just be part of business as usual, was definitely a challenge (Employing 100 staff member)

Barriers within Disability Employment Services

From commencement, partner organisations identified interest in learning more about suitable talent providers. Yet barriers remain in relation to the availability of suitable Disability Employment Service providers for partner organisations.

The structure of the Disability Employment Services system was seen to create challenges for large employing organisations. One issue raised was the national or cross regional coverage of many large employing organisations, which does not align with DES as it has been built around employment services servicing identified geographic areas. Therefore, it is not 'wired' to work with large businesses who seek a larger reach. Additionally, talent providers raised the issue of competition between each other (such as between different DES providers). This means that there is no incentive to share vacancies when a provider cannot fill them. Even within a single provider, vacancies may not be visible to all talent provider staff. While Employing 100 was able to bridge this competitive divide with information and opportunity sharing, its scale remains limited.

CONCLUSION

The Employing 100 project vastly exceeded its initial aim of employing 100 qualified candidates with disability across four partner organisations. Completing the necessary groundwork with the partner organisations led to a considerable lag in commencing recruitment, however the program eventually filled 240 existing roles across the four organisations with an average retention rate of 83 per cent.

Throughout the program, Employing 100 project staff delivered a range of activities including:

- Supporting partner organisations to identify inclusion barriers across the organisation and to implement the changes needed to create an accessible and dignified workplace
- Building disability-confident teams within the partner organisations through the provision of training
- Supporting partner organisations to identify suitable roles for people with disability within their organisation
- Acting as an intermediary between the partner organisations and the talent providers to ensure that the services provided met the needs of the partner organisations

The qualitative and quantitative data indicates that the interventions have supported the four partner organisations to increase their awareness about disability and employment barriers and enablers and their confidence and knowledge to act to reduce barriers within their own organisations. Importantly, this has enabled an organisation-wide focus on employing people with disability within the partner organisations, and a commitment from senior management to implement policies and practices that have been recommended by Employing 100 staff during the assessments undertaken.

The Employing 100 approach is an example of employer-facing capability building with the added element of an intermediary role between the employer and the talent provider, such as Disability Employment Services. This combination of activities achieved significant results. The total grant amount awarded to Australian Disability Network through the Building Employer Confidence grant round was \$664,193 (ex-GST). Therefore, the cost per employment outcome for this project was \$2,802.50. While this cost is in addition to the cost of the talent provider role (which may be funded by other Commonwealth funding programs, such as Disability Employment Services), it suggests that targeted investment in organisational change for large employers is achieved for a relatively small additional cost.

Finally, this report covers the life of the project across a period of two years. While the signs are encouraging in that organisations appear to have made some embedded changes to their

employment practices, it is unclear if these will be sustained. A note of caution was sounded by Disability Employment Service providers in the project, who noted that the sustainability of organisational approaches, and the new relationships between employers and talent providers, are put at risk by high staff turnover.

We saw that with one of the employers that now, that a whole lot of people had the training, and then they all left, because one of these particular industries has very high turnover of staff (DES provider).

Additionally, Employing 100 staff highlighted the need to now shift the inclusion mindset into a 'business as usual' approach across organisations rather than focused largely on recruitment.

Given these ongoing barriers to inclusive employment practice described in this report, it is likely that a level of ongoing employer-facing activity, such as Employing 100, will be required for some time to come. Employing 100 offers a significant track record of both employment outcomes and employer change.

APPENDIX A: AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY NETWORK ACCESS AND INCLUSION INDEX QUICK 10

Questions	Yes or Not yet
1. We have a current Access and Inclusion Plan / Disability Action Plan which outlines our commitment to access and inclusion for people with disability as employees, potential employees, customers, and stakeholders.	
2. We are aware of the accessibility of our entire property portfolio & are progressing towards full accessibility.	
3. We have a formal process that requires products and services to be accessible for all procurement categories.	
4. We have a current and standalone written Workplace (Reasonable) Adjustment Policy that supports the provision of adjustments for candidates and existing employees.	
5. We actively invite candidates to request adjustments throughout the online application process, at phone screen, and when organising interviews and testing or assessment.	
6. We have a Disability Employee Network or Employee Resource Group who progress access and inclusion for people with disability within our organisation.	
7. We have an initiative/program specifically designed to support current employees with disability to develop their career.	
8. We provide regular training and resources to employees in customer facing roles in providing accessible and inclusive customer experiences.	
9. We have formal processes in place to ensure that all internal and external communication and marketing materials and events are accessible and inclusive.	
10. We have formal processes in place to ensure that information technology (IT) is accessible for staff and customers with disability.	

APPENDIX B: EMPLOYER INTERVENTIONS COMPLETED AT 31 JANUARY 2025

This table offers a guide to the spread of work activities provided by Employing 100 as part of the Employer Enablement Framework. It represents a snapshot in time at the end of the project (31 January 2025).

	Hospitality 2	Health 1	Hospitality 1	Health 2
Engage				
Senior Leader commitment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participation agreement signed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disability Champion Appointed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Initial evaluation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equip				
Recruitment review	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure created or reviewed	Yes	Yes	Underway – will be finalised post-project	Underway – will be finalised by project end

	Hospitality 2	Health 1	Hospitality 1	Health 2
Premises Reviewed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Deliver				
Disability Confidence Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Check				
Final Evaluation	29/31 (93.5%)	73/80 (91%)	67/100 (67%)	29/29 (100%)

APPENDIX C: DISABILITY

CONFIDENCE TRAINING

The Disability Confident Management bundle contains three modules for people managers or emerging leaders.

You will learn about workplace adjustments and how they help remove barriers during the recruitment process, how to hold productive conversations with confidence and how to guide employees through the key phases of the employment lifecycle so that every individual feels supported and has an equitable opportunity to develop a fulfilling career.

This bundle contains the following modules:

- About Disability and Accessibility
- Disability Confidence is Good Business
- Inclusive Communication
- Creating Enabling Environments
- Workplace Adjustments
- Disability Confident Conversations
- Facilitating Positive Employment

APPENDIX D: DISABILITY CONFIDENCE INSTRUMENT FOR EMPLOYER PARTNERS

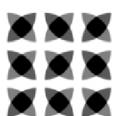
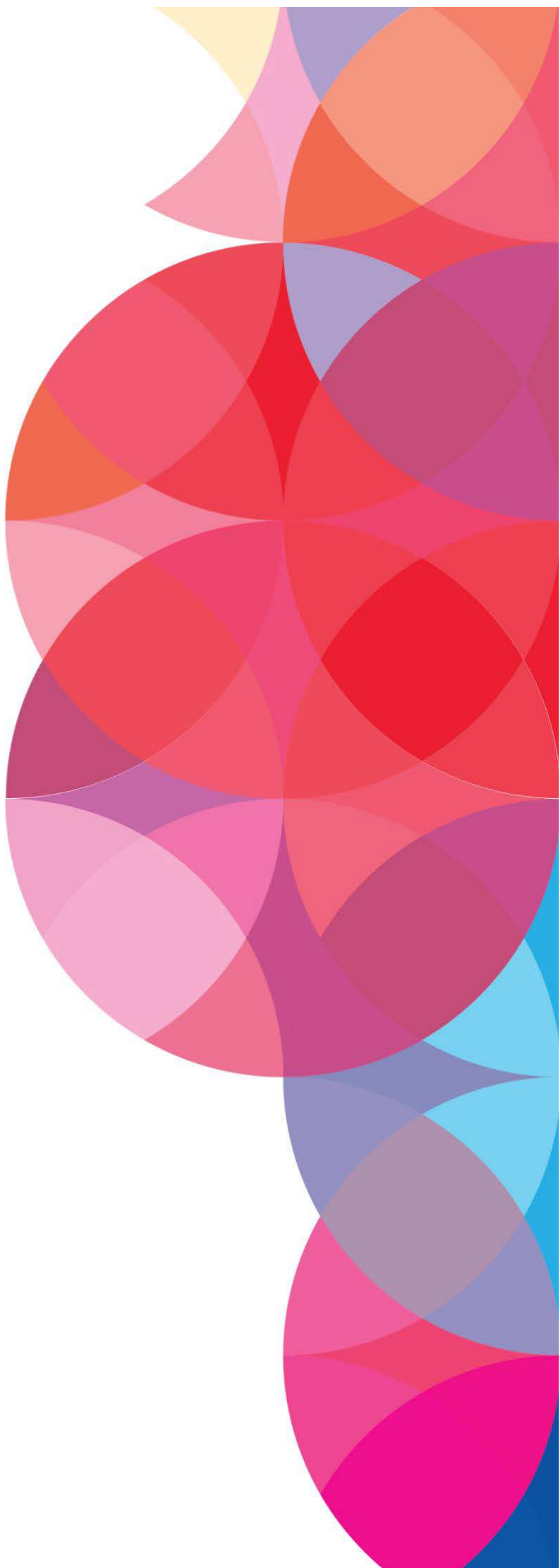


Before Training – How disability confident do you feel? 1 being not at all, 5 being totally confident

	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Weighted Average
Disability Confidence							

After Training – To what extent would you agree with the following statements? 1 being Strongly disagree, 5 being Strongly agree.

	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Weighted Average
My attitudes and beliefs changed as a result of the training							
The training activities were engaging and useful							
My skills/knowledge has increased as a result of the training							
I will be able to apply this training in my workplace							



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