

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy

Easy English

This document includes photos of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It may contain images of people who have passed away.

[ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)



How to use this document

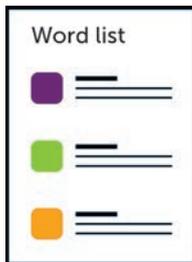


This information is written in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas.



This document has been written by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

When you see the word 'we', it means NDIA.



Some words are written in **bold**. We explain what these words mean. There is a list of these words on page 45.



This Easy Read document is a summary of another document – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy.



You can find the other document on our website at www.ndis.gov.au



You can ask for help to read this document.
A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this document?

About this Strategy	4
Creating this Strategy	7
Our commitment	10
Key principles	13
Engaging in the 'proper way'	16
Our approach	27
How we will talk with people	31
Our priority areas	33
Word list	45
For more information	47

About this Strategy



We run the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



The NDIS is a new way of helping people with disability and their families get the supports and services they need.



Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy explains how we plan to work with you to deliver the NDIS across Australia.

In this document we call it the Strategy.



We want people with disability from every community to get the supports and services they need.





We found out Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want there to be a different way for us to work together.

You want us to:



- show respect for your culture



- show understanding for the way you do things



- do things in new and better ways



Creating this Strategy

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people helped us create the Strategy, including:



- people with disability



- families



- carers



- communities



- organisations that work in communities.



They helped us understand the things that affect how you can find and use supports and services through the NDIS.



We want you to be included and help us achieve good things.

We want to:



- find a way to work with you so we can meet your needs



- do things in a way that matches how you live your life



- make sure we understand what each community needs



- help communities find their own good ways to solve the problems they face



- find ways we can support training, jobs and the economy in communities.

The Strategy shows that people with disability have different needs depending on what type of area they live in:



- **urban** – close to a big city



- **rural** – regional cities or towns, country areas



- **remote** – far away from cities or towns.

Our commitment

We will help our staff to show respect for your:



- language



- heritage



- culture

We will give your community all the information so people can:



- understand their rights and needs for disability support



- get ready for the NDIS.

NDIA staff will:



- listen – to what people tell us



- learn – from how things have been going in areas where the NDIS has started



- build – on the strengths the NDIS and other support services already have



- deliver – make sure people get the supports and services they need.



We want the NDIS to be successful.

We need to build good relationships with people with disability in your community.

Good relationships play a big part in how services and people:



- connect
- build trust.



To do that well takes time.
We want to support you.



We want to get involved with your community
and its leaders.



We will work with people and services you
know and trust.



We want to increase the number of service
providers who can support your community in
the right way.



Key principles



We have important ideas that are a key part of the Strategy.

We call these ideas ‘**principles**’.

The key principles are:



- we think about country, culture and community when we make decisions



- you have the same rights as everyone else



- including people with disability in mainstream services is just as important as including them in disability services

- mainstream services are services for everybody to use, such as:



- health
- schools
- public transport
- childcare.



- we believe governments need to think about the impact of disability whenever they make decisions that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people



- people with disability are at the centre of everything we do



- getting more information about what life is like for people with disability from your community will help us keep making things better.

Engaging in the 'proper way'



The **proper way** is a way that works with each community's:

- values
- customs.



We know that we need to earn your trust if we want to work with you.

How we plan to do things is important.



People who had bad experiences with government or services in the past might expect the same thing to happen again.



What people know about disability is different from one community to the next.

Some traditional languages don't have a word for disability.



Some people have negative ideas about people with disability.



Some people with disability don't want other people to see them that way, so they won't try to get support or use services.



Because people have different ideas about disability and support, we need to find different ways to do things.



We need to:



- communicate with respect



- know as much as we can about your community



- focus on what people with disability really need



- provide services that meet those needs



- show you we can find new ways to do things if we need to.

We know that people who live in different areas will need different things.

This includes:



- urban areas



- rural areas



- remote or very remote areas

Urban areas



People in urban areas don't always live with their:

- family
- language group.

It can sometimes be hard to find Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.



It's important to use the networks people have to tell them about the NDIS.

Rural areas



People with disability who live in rural areas might need to travel a long way to use supports or services.

It is important we help to:



- provide services where people live

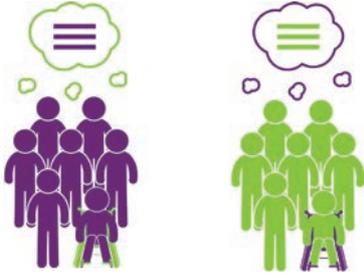


- make sure people can get the services they need



- make sure the services are provided by the right people.

Remote or very remote areas



Every remote community has different needs.



It is important for us to get more information about what each remote community needs.

Why it is important to do things the ‘proper way’



To understand what you need.



Some people might not want to use supports or services because they had a bad experience before.



We want to make sure we do things in a way that is right for you.



We will keep track of things that work well so we can use those ways to help more people work with the NDIS.



We will make sure our staff know about the ‘proper way’.

We’ll think about ways we can find and keep staff who best understand people who use the NDIS.



We’ll make sure people who work in your community:

- are from the community
- understand the people who live there.



We’ll also make sure service providers know about the ‘proper way’.

Understanding country, culture and community

People with disability have the right to:



- be included



- feel healthy and safe



- feel connected to their
 - country
 - community
 - culture.



We know community and culture are important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Culture can be shown in:



- music and dance
- art
- lore
- stories.

Why communication is important



We need to think about the way we communicate so we show respect for country, community and culture

We understand that language is an important part of culture.

We will:



- use translators to help people when they need it



- train our staff to communicate well with people who don't speak English



- make sure people can tell us what they think about the NDIS, even if they don't speak English.

We need to think about how we communicate, including:



- posters in your language or English that is easy to understand



- talking face-to-face.

We need to think about the right way to talk with people, including:



- if we should make eye contact



- when we should sit and listen.

The importance of language

Umpugarla
Giimbiyu Djeragan
Greater Pama-Nyungan
Tiwi Bunaban Laragiya
Daly Limilngan
Wororan Yirram Nyulnyulan
Yiwaidjan Garawa West Barkly
Gunwinyguan

We know that language is very important. There are over 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island language groups.



It would be hard for us to put our information into all those languages.



We think your community can help us translate our information and add your own stories and culture.

It will help your community understand the information better.



We will keep communicating with you so you know what is going on with the NDIS.



If you tell us something is wrong, we will tell you what we are going to do about it.

Our approach

Our approach to building a relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

Phase 1
Introduction



- Phase 1 – Introduction

Phase 2
Initiate



- Phase 2 – Initiate

Phase 3
Invitation



- Phase 3 – Invitation



Phase 1 – Introduction



A trusted member of your community introduces us.



The leaders of your community get to know us and our staff.



We talk about our goals and what we want to achieve.

Phase 2 – Initiate



We make contact with you again to show we are committed to doing things that will help your community.



You can ask questions about how the NDIS will work.

Phase 3 – Invitation



You invite us to come back to your community.



This shows us you trust us enough to start working with you.



How we will talk with people



We are learning the best way to:

- get to know people
- talk with them.

We have been given some advice about things we should remember:



- be flexible – communities can be very different from each other



- be a good listener – practice sitting and listening, especially with Elders



- avoid tricky words and language



- avoid direct questions – ask questions that give people a chance to tell their story



- respect local ways – let people do what they need to do, the way they like to do it



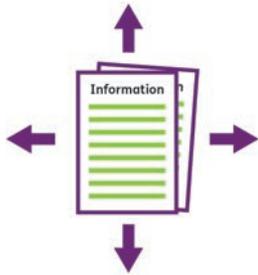
- learn from people who have done it well before.

Our priority areas



There are 10 areas we think are really important.

We call these our **priority areas**.



- Communicating and sharing information



- Knowing and understanding culture



- Sharing the best way to do things



- Solve problems using things that are near where people live



- Making people with disability the centre of what we do



- Supporting providers from your community



- Working with others who are doing things well



- Encouraging cultural leadership



- Looking at how we do things at the NDIA



- Tracking our progress

Communicating and sharing information



We want to make sure you find out what you need to know about the NDIS.

We want to teach everyone how to:



- join the NDIS



- find and use supports and services.



The way we communicate needs to show respect for different communities and cultures.



Knowing and understanding culture



We want to work with you in the way you like.

We want to show we understand there is a lot of difference in your:



- experiences
- beliefs
- culture
- history.

These differences can affect what taking part in the NDIS is like for you.



We want all our staff to show they understand these differences.

We want people who work with us to show they understand these differences.

Sharing the best way to do things



We want you to tell us when our staff are doing things the ‘proper way’.

We want to tell our staff about the best way to do things.



We will make sure there are different ways for you to give us feedback and tell us about what works.

We know that one way might be right for one community but not right for others.

Creating local solutions

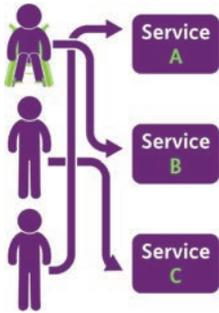


We want communities to find their own ways to do things that work for them.

It is important for us to support communities by:



- talking with them about what the problems are



- making connections between different services and people



- helping to get things started.



We want to give all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the best opportunities through the NDIS.

We will think about how we can support:



- jobs



- training



- local economies.

Making people with disability the centre of what we do



We want Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to help us work out the best ways for the NDIS to be run.

We want to know:



- what your life has been like



- what experiences you have had trying to find and use supports.

We will use what we find out to help us:



- do things in a way that is right for you



- work in places where you feel:
 - welcome
 - connected



- recognise you have things you need to do to support your:
 - family
 - culture
 - community



- give you information that:
 - works with your culture
 - uses language you understand.

Supporting providers from your community



We want to support providers to give you the right services in the right places and in the 'proper way'.



We have a chance to be a leader in the communities where we work.



We can do this by supporting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations who provide the services we need.

Work with others who are doing things well



We need to look at what other people are doing that can help us be better at the proper way’.

We might need to work with:



- community organisations



- other government agencies.

Encouraging cultural leadership



We need to look at ways our leaders can show others how to do things the ‘proper way’.



Our teams need to know when and how to do things the ‘proper way’.

We need to show that we understand your culture and what you need from us.

We need to support others to do things the ‘proper way’ for the community they work with.

How we do things at the NDIA



We need to make sure we do the right things so we can do things the ‘proper way’.

Tracking our progress



We need to know if the Strategy has been successful.



We will collect information about our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It will help us know what:



- worked well



- needs to be improved.

Word list



Mainstream services

Services for everybody to use, such as:

- health
- schools
- public transport
- childcare.



Principles

Important ideas that are a key part of the Strategy.



Priority areas

Areas we think are really important.



Proper way

A way that works with each community's:

- values
- customs.



Remote

Far away from cities or towns.



Rural

Regional cities or towns, country areas.



Urban

Close to a big city.



For more information

Contact us for more information:



www.ndis.gov.au

nt.gov.au/community/interpreting-and-translating-services



1800 800 110

For people with hearing or speech loss

TTY – 1800 555 677



Indigenous interpreting services:

Western Australia, Kimberley region – 08 9192 3981

Darwin – 1800 334 944

Alice Springs region – 08 8951 5576

Queensland – 131 450

South Australia - 1800 334 944



Speak and Listen – 1800 555 727



For people who need help with English

Telephone Interpreting Service

131 450



NDISAus



@NDIS



This Easy Read document was created by the Information Access Group using PhotoSymbols, stock photography and custom images. The images may not be reused. For any enquiries, please visit www.informationaccessgroup.com

For more information, please contact:

National Disability Insurance Agency



1800 800 110



www.ndis.gov.au



www.nt.gov.au/community/interpreting-and-translating-services

For people with hearing or speech loss



TTY: 1800 555 677



Speak and Listen: 1800 555 727

Indigenous Interpreting Services



Alice Springs region: 08 8951 5576



Darwin region: 1800 994 944



Kimberley region: 08 9192 3981



Queensland: 131 450



South Australia: 1800 334 944

For people who need help with English



TIS: 131 450

This report can be accessed online at www.ndis.gov.au



Find us on Facebook/NDISAus



Follow us on Twitter @NDIS