



# Participant Employment Strategy

2024-2026





## Acknowledgement of Country

The NDIA acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation and the Traditional Custodians of the lands across which our Agency conducts our business.

We pay our respects to the custodians of the land on which we work as well as their ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.

The NDIA is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, seas and their rich contribution to society.

Artwork 'Belonging' by Charmaine Mumbulla.

# Participant Employment Strategy 2024-2026

---

## Contents

1. Message from the CEO	4
2. Shaping the way forward	6
2.1 The NDIS is part of a broader disability employment strategic framework	6
2.2 There is significant reform in the wings	7
2.3 The NDIS is part of a broader disability employment support system	8
3. Approach to the refresh	9
3.1 Learning from research and engagement	10
3.2 Setting our priorities	11
3.3 Making a commitment	12
4. This is our Action Plan	13
4.1 Focus area one: Quality planning	14
4.2 Focus area two: Efficient and effective employment supports	16
4.3 Focus area three: Supporting more employers to employ NDIS participants	18
4.4 Focus area four: An integrated eco-system of employment support	20
5. How will we measure and report?	22
Employment outcomes and pathways	23
Aspiration for work	24
Planning	24
Plan implementation	24
Provider performance	24
Leading by example	25
Participant satisfaction	25

---

Cover photo: Krystal is thriving in her chosen profession while balancing the demands of full-time work, parenting, and having a disability. [Read Krystal's story on the NDIS website.](#)

# 1. Message from the CEO

In August 2022, the Honorable Bill Shorten, Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Government Services, made a promise to NDIS participants. He promised the NDIS will build explicit discussion about employment as a goal into the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) planning process and ensure participants who want to work, have support through their plans and other government services.

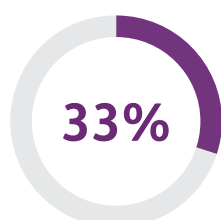
## We will keep this promise.

Our [Corporate Plan 2023-2027](#) sets an agency target of 26% of participants in paid work. With our employment rate sitting at 23%<sup>1</sup>, the refreshed NDIS Participant Employment Strategy 2024 to 2026 (the Strategy) includes a new set of actions to help more participants

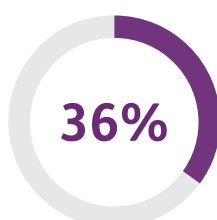
find and keep a job. You told us we needed to keep the focus on better planning and the quality of provider support. You want more employers to tap into the NDIS talent pool. You also want us to make it clear how we work with other government employment services.

---

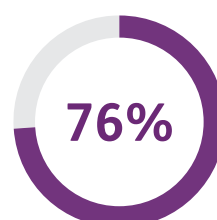
The actions taken during the 2019 to 2022 Strategy made headway in important areas<sup>2</sup>.



of participants with a work goal are in paid employment.

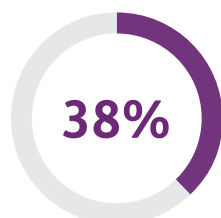


of participants say they want a job.

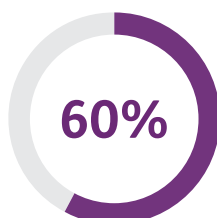


of participants in paid employment work in open employment.

(Open employment is when people with and without disability work together in the same workplace).



of all working age participants have a work goal.



of young participants aged 19 – 24 have a work goal.

<sup>1</sup> [Q4 2022-23 Performance Dashboard](#) NB Includes participants in the Scheme for 2 or more years.

<sup>2</sup> Participant Employment Strategy Quarterly Dashboard as at 30 June 2023, incorporating NDIS Short Form Outcomes Framework Survey Result Data.



## 1. Message from the CEO

But there are things we need to improve.

- Many participants with capacity building for employment in their plans did not use it
- Many participants with an employment goal say they are not assisted to get a job
- Many participants who are employed reported they did not get the support they needed to do their job
- You told us some things are creating hurdles to getting a job or increasing hours, for example the interaction of wages and the Disability Support Pension.

---

In this new Strategy, we will act on what we heard. We will improve our practices and those of NDIS providers. We will also advocate for change outside of the NDIS to improve participant experience and outcomes for employment.

We will also keep pace with broader reform, including the recommendations from the [NDIS Review](#). The [Disability Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with disability](#) has delivered its final report. While a formal response from the government is not expected until 2024, we didn't want to delay the release of our new Strategy. You will see placeholders in our Action Plan that respond to the Commission's recommendations, while we get on and deliver what we already know needs changing.

Rebecca Falkingham PSM  
Chief Executive Officer





## 2. Shaping the way forward

### 2.1 The NDIS is part of a broader disability employment strategic framework

[Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#) (ADS) is Australia's national disability policy framework. It is driving action at all levels of government to improve the lives of people with disability. The ADS reminds us that employment allows people with disability to have more control over their lives, be financially independent and have a better standard of living. Paid employment also leads to better mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Under the ADS the Australian and State governments have established a Targeted Action Plan (TAP) to drive outcomes in specific areas, including economic participation. The Employment TAP sets out key actions to improve paid employment outcomes for people with disability with the following objectives:

1. Increase employment of people with disability
2. Improve the transition of young people with disability from education to employment.

---

Photo above: NDIS participant Jonathan makes a splash through finding the right supports.  
[Read Jonathan's story on the NDIS website.](#)

## 2. Shaping the way forward

The Department of Social Services (DSS) holds the policy responsibility for disability employment and administers [Disability Employment Services \(DES\)](#). The Government have released the [Employ My Ability – Disability Employment Strategy 2021-2031](#). This was developed in association with ADS 2021-2031 and includes the Vision of “Inclusive workplace cultures where people with disability thrive in their careers”.

These strategies are the guiding framework for governments, employers, and the broader community, towards a workforce that values diverse talent and where people with disability can reach their full potential.

### 2.2 There is significant reform in the wings

The Government is replacing the *Disability Services Act 1986*. The new Act will provide a framework for supports and services based on human rights and the inclusion of people with disability. The reform of supported employment (support for people with disability who need extra support at work), led by DSS, is underway, and Disability Ministers in all jurisdictions have agreed to a [set of guiding principles for the future of supported employment](#).

DSS is introducing a new disability employment model in July 2025. The Government has announced a phased approach to the reform of DES beginning with extending the current program by 2 years and introducing a quality framework. The government has also announced the development of a National Autism Strategy. The Strategy will cover key reform areas including access to services, healthcare, education, and employment. The Employment White Paper, released in September 2023 acknowledges that “people with disability may need additional supports to fulfil their potential”.

---

**We must be nimble in how we respond to these reforms and ensure the interests of NDIS participants remains front and centre.**

## 2. Shaping the way forward

### 2.3 The NDIS is part of a broader disability employment support system

There are a range of employment supports available to participants both through the NDIS, mainstream and disability specific employment services. Disability specific services include DES and the Employment Assistance Fund, for workplace modifications.

The NDIS funds three capacity building supports including:

- Employment Assistance
- School Leaver Employment Support
- Employment Related Assessment and Counselling.

The NDIS also funds Supports in Employment, an everyday support to maintain employment.

It's critical that participants receive the right level of support at the right time. We need to consider the difference between the supports available in the NDIS and other government programs, along with how they work together, to assist participants find and keep a job.

#### Case study

#### NDIS employment supports help Ian prepare for and find work

Palmerston NDIS participant Ian Fraser said having employment supports in his plan is what helped him to secure paid work at Bunnings.

In his last few years at school, the now 20-year-old was able to engage Northern Territory service provider YouthWorX NT to help him build his life and employment skills.

‘When I left school I really didn’t know what job I wanted to do,’ Ian said.



Through tailored employment coaching and work experience Ian built connections and his confidence. ‘If I didn’t have my school, my NDIS planner and my employment coach Keidan helping me out, I wouldn’t have been able to get a job on my own,’ he added.

[Read Ian’s story on the NDIS website.](#)





### 3. Approach to the refresh

The *NDIS Act 2013* reminds us that people should have the chance to participate in and contribute to social and economic life to the extent of their ability. It commits the NDIS to provide reasonable and necessary supports to develop and support the capacity of people with disability to undertake activities that enable them to participate in the community and in employment. With this backdrop, we maintain our vision that NDIS participants have the same opportunities to work as other Australians and the confidence, support, and skills to take advantage of those opportunities.

We recognise the diversity of participants and employment. We have participants working in every industry, mostly in open employment. Some are in paid jobs, and some are gaining experience on the pathway to work, including volunteering. Some are in supported employment settings, and some are self-employed. We have apprentices and interns, highly skilled tradespeople, and professionals.

We have employees with lots of experience and those who have never worked but want a job. We have young people starting their working life and others wishing to progress their careers.

We embrace this diversity and will ensure that every participant with an employment goal gets the right service, at the right time, to achieve their potential.

---

Photo above: NDIS participant Chelsea is being supported to learn skills to help her achieve her chosen career, cabinet making. [Read Chelsea's story on the NDIS website.](#)

### 3. Approach to the refresh

## 3.1 Learning from research and engagement

The NDIS undertook a research project in 2022 called [Pathways to employment for NDIS](#) participants with intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder and psychosocial disability. This group was the focus of the research as two thirds of all NDIS participants have a cognitive and/or psychosocial disability.

The research told us about the attitudinal, system and personal barriers to employment. The findings indicate the following should be built into employment supports for people with disabilities:

- Holding high expectations of the jobseeker and the employer
- Building capability by focusing on the needs of the individual
- Considering different needs at different life stages
- Getting support as early as possible
- Creating a line of sight to a job at all points on the jobseeker's employment pathway
- Tailoring supports to the individual's functional capabilities
- Educating the employer/workplace to meet expectations.

We also conducted research to better understand the impact of changes to NDIS supports in employment and employment capacity building funding. The project aimed to understand how providers (for example, Australian Disability Enterprises or ADEs) support participants to attain or transition to open employment. The research identified predictors, barriers, and enablers to attaining open employment. Most of the barriers identified are modifiable with support to build NDIS participants' capacity, the capacity of open employers, and natural supports in open employment settings.

We also reviewed how School Leaver Employment Supports funding was working. The [School leaver participant survey outcomes report](#) outlined findings related to the effectiveness of School Leaver Employment Supports and improvements that could be made. This work is informing how we improve supports for young people.

Importantly, we learnt a lot from both our own consultation and others, for example the consultation that informed the Employ My Ability – Disability Employment Strategy 2021-2031. In Section 4 of this Strategy, you can read about what we heard and the things you wanted us to keep focusing on or change.

### 3. Approach to the refresh

## 3.2 Setting our priorities

Considering the broader policy framework, what we heard from you, and our place in the employment eco-system, it is clear there are things that the NDIA can **do** and there are things we must **influence**.

**The things we can do** are activities that the NDIA has control over and are accountable to deliver.

**The things we can influence** are things we don't have control over but are critical to success.

#### **The things we can do include:**

- Improving how we discuss and plan for employment, including ensuring we talk to you about the opportunities of working in open employment
- Having better data collection to track progress and outcomes
- Improving the quality of support and provider accountability in helping you achieve your goals
- Being an employer of choice and role model in employing people with disability
- Giving you what you need to make informed choices
- Better understanding and linking with other government employment services
- Through our own experience and provision of supports and information, help employers understand how the NDIS can work with them to employ more participants.

#### **The things we can influence include:**

- Supporting measures to remove perceived or real disincentives for Disability Support Pension recipients to participate in work
- Challenging attitudes that create barriers to employing people with disability
- Improving the eligibility, access, and quality of support for NDIS participants in the DES program and the reform of the disability employment support model
- Ensuring NDIS participants have access to supports and programs that tackle barriers to employment, for example employer incentives and fully supported work experience.

## 3. Approach to the refresh

### 3.3 Making a commitment

The refresh is a three-year plan, with actions intended to sharpen our focus and support systemic change. There are four areas of focus, and within each area we are committing what the NDIA **will do**, what we **will influence** and the **outcomes we expect**.

#### Focus area one: Quality planning

- Employment conversations will happen at every planning meeting for working age participants and focus on aspirations, building capacity, getting a job and careers
- Important life stage transitions will be planned for, and the ecosystem of supports will be aligned with transition points.

#### Focus area two: Efficient and effective employment supports

- Providers will offer outcomes focused, customised support to help participants prepare for work, navigate the pathway to employment, stay in work and develop their career in jobs of their choice.

#### Focus area three: Supporting more employers to employ NDIS participants

- Employers will understand how to support participants at work and understand the pathway to recruit NDIS participants.

#### Focus area four: An integrated eco-system of employment support

- Participants who want to work will have a seamless connection to the broader employment eco-system.

#### Case study



#### Niki takes great strides as a NDIS participant and NDIA employee

Newcastle local Niki Williams lost the lower part of her right leg in a car accident 20 years ago. Since then, Niki has dedicated herself to disability advocacy and breaking down barriers and stereotypes.

Now, keen to do even more to support people with disability, Niki has landed a job at the NDIA in its Co-Design and Engagement team.

Niki says she is hoping to share her lived experience of disability to help make the NDIS the best it can be.

[Read Niki's story on the NDIS website.](#)





## 4. This is our Action Plan

The Action Plan, presented by focus areas, describes 16 priority actions over the next three years. Also listed are the system, policy, and practice issues outside of the Agency control, that we will influence.

We also describe our expected outcomes. Progress against these outcomes will be measured throughout the Strategy, (see [Section 5](#)). The final year of the Strategy will focus on continuous improvement measures and embedding successful change. We will also redirect or redesign actions that have not realised the expected outcomes.



Focus area one:  
**Quality planning**



Focus area two:  
**Efficient and effective employment supports**



Focus area three:  
**Supporting more employers to employ NDIS participants**



Focus area four:  
**An integrated eco-system of employment support**

Photo above: Peter draws on his own experiences to help individuals and organisations achieve their full potential. [Read Peter's story on the NDIS website.](#)

## 4. This is our Action Plan



### 4.1 Focus area one:

## Quality planning

Throughout our consultations we heard that quality planning remains a priority. You want a conversation around your passions and interests and be supported to convert this to a job, including planning the steps along the way.

When setting an employment goal, you asked for clarity around support available, both within and outside the NDIS. We heard the importance of young people talking about employment before reaching working age, just like their nondisabled peers. You agreed that taking a life stage approach would help planners and Local Area Coordinators (LACs) include the right supports, at the right time, to progress towards employment (including self-employment), maintaining employment, and supporting career progression.

**In 2024 and 2025** there will be five headline activities to foster quality planning:

1. **Build and measure staff capability:** We will refresh staff training, guidance, and resources. We will support participants' desire to work and ensure informed choice in where people work, and who supports them. We will establish further capability and quality measures for LAC and planning staff around employment conversations, planning decisions and support for plan implementation.

2. **System improvements:** We will design and implement the new system (PACE) to improve data collection, increase access to knowledge bases and apply system triggers to focus NDIS staff and partners on employment.
3. **Planning across life stages:** We will develop and implement best practice guidance for LACs and NDIA staff on planning for employment across life stages, with a focus on supporting participants into open and integrated employment settings.
4. **Focus on early intervention for young people (aged 14 to 25):** We will implement a revised Youth Employment Framework with stronger collaboration with schools and education providers to pave a path to inclusive employment and further education.
5. **Focus on inclusive employment:** We will incorporate the recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission, NDIS research findings and policy guidance from DSS on the Future of Supported Employment and ensure staff understand, and plan for, inclusive employment opportunities.

**In 2026** we will consolidate the changes by embedding intelligent business and knowledge systems to further support and measure staff capability. We will continually monitor plan quality and introduce new opportunities to gain insights into the participant experience, outcomes, and satisfaction levels.

## 4. This is our Action Plan / 4.1 Focus area one

### What we will influence over the three-year Action Plan

- Improved access to and responsiveness of the [Employment Assistance Fund](#) (EAF) for NDIS participants
- Advocate for NDIS participants to ensure responsiveness and quality outcomes from their engagement in the broader employment eco-system, especially DES
- Active participation in the development of the [Autism Strategy](#), specifically any planned measures to improve economic participation.

### The outcomes we expect

- Participants will have more opportunities to talk about work and plan for employment
- Participants will have real choice and control in where they work and who supports them, ensuring choices to work in open employment are supported
- Planning decisions will be consistent, and consider individual circumstances, evidenced based practice, building work aspiration, and fostering inclusive employment outcomes.

### Case study

#### From lost soul to First Nations artist, Travis turns his life around

Travis is thriving, surrounded and inspired by the country and people that nurture his talent and walk beside him on his cultural journey. Travis is emerging as a gifted First Nations artist. He is slowly building a promising career, supported by a team of people, family, and the NDIS.

Travis was introduced to Red Centre Enterprises, a First Nations owned business with the health and wellbeing of their community at its heart. Founder and Elder Yuandamarra was happy to take Travis under his wing and share his cultural knowledge. Travis now sells his original paintings, coasters, and greeting



cards at a number of retail outlets including the Sydney Botanic Gardens Shop, Opera House and the Southern Providore at the Adelaide International Airport.

Travis aspires to become a recognised First Nations artist and role model for other young First Nations people with disabilities by encouraging them to take up art and walk a good journey.

[Read Travis's story on the NDIS website.](#)

## 4. This is our Action Plan



### 4.2 Focus area two:

## Efficient and effective employment supports

We heard it was sometimes hard to find good providers, or you just did not know where to start. That may be part of the reason some participants do not use their employment funding.

You told us you want providers to take an individualised approach and tailor your supports. You also said some providers need to upskill their staff to work with a range of people with disability and ensure evidence-based practice is used, especially around customised employment.

Getting useful information on provider performance was important, both in choosing a provider and for the NDIA to deal with poor performance. You wanted providers to be more transparent about how and why they claimed your plan funds and to share responsibility for achieving outcomes.

**In 2024 and 2025** there will be four headline activities to foster efficient and effective employment supports:

1. **Improve provider practice:** Using research, data, and other evidence, we will set expectations for quality service including key indicators, milestones, and practice standards in the delivery of support.
2. **Better outcomes for young people:** With DSS, we will design and implement a blended payment model for school to work transition. We'll evaluate the model to see what changes can be made to improve employment outcomes for participants.

3. **Measure provider performance:** We will publish provider performance data against indicators and outcomes in forms that are relevant, timely and easy for participants to access.

4. **Support reform of disability enterprises:** We will foster a more comprehensive service offering that promotes inclusive employment outcomes, for example transitioning to open employment or development of innovative and inclusive social enterprise models.

**In 2026**, we will consolidate by embedding improved practice and providing the right incentives to drive quality supports and service. We will use the outcomes of the blended payments trial, performance data and evidenced based practice to improve provider practice and embed performance measures. We will ensure participants of all ages have access to the right supports, interventions, and provider expertise to obtain and sustain work in a setting of choice.



## 4. This is our Action Plan / 4.2 Focus area two

### What we will influence over the three-year Action Plan

- Ensure the NDIS Commission Workforce Capability Framework leads to improved quality of staff delivering NDIS employment
- Work collaboratively with DSS on the development of the Centre of Excellence on Disability Employment, to ensure the needs of NDIS participants and providers are considered in the design
- Support the development and implementation of the initiatives underpinned by the DSS policy on the Future of Supported Employment.

### The outcomes we expect

- Participants will have access to more consistent, and better quality services and supports
- Young people will receive age appropriate employment supports with the right incentives to drive increasing rates of inclusive employment and further education
- Participants will have better access to information to make informed choices about providers.

### Case study

#### Tamina walks tall in life and business, thanks to NDIS supports

Mildura cafe owner and business manager Tamina, 39, was born with spina bifida, a condition that affects the spine and spinal cord.

Until she joined the NDIS, Tamina lived with chronic and debilitating pain.

Tamina reached out to the NDIS – and the decision changed her life.

Because of the NDIS, and the supports Tamina receives, she can now maintain a regular routine of appointments.



Tamina is now enjoying married life, while juggling co-parenting 3 children and a busy career. She and husband Peter employ several staff at Geo Origins Cafe and Roastery in Red Cliffs.

[Read Tamina's story on the NDIS website.](#)

## 4. This is our Action Plan



### 4.3 Focus area three:

## Supporting more employers to employ NDIS participants

We heard it was important to build employer confidence and capability, and specifically identify gaps that might present a barrier to employing NDIS participants. Education on inclusive workplaces was important and people expressed concern that, without education, employers could regard people with disability as a liability, not an asset. Employers told us they are worried about insurance risks, employee safety and discrimination issues in the workplace.

Employers said they did not really understand how the NDIS can help participants get the support they need at work, especially participants who might need a highly customised job and regular support at work. Having flexible workplace arrangements was important for people with the chance to start off slowly and build confidence over time. The importance of good support during the early stages of employment was apparent.

We agreed that more employers would consider employing a NDIS participant if they were shown how it could be done, especially how the NDIS can support job customisation and dealing with challenges if they arose.

**In 2024 and 2025** there will be four headline activities to support more employers to employ NDIS participants.

1. **Activate employers:** We will provide targeted information for employers on customised employment, how to tap into the NDIS talent pool and what support NDIS participants can use at work.
2. **Demonstrate success:** We will partner with selected employers and expert providers, in a demonstration pilot, to show how to recruit and employ NDIS participants, using a customised employment approach.
3. **Lead by example:** We will establish the Agency as an employer of choice through industry leading inclusion and diversity practices co-designed with NDIA staff.
4. **Leverage purchasing power:** We will set targets for disability employment, including through procurement contracts, third party, LAC partners, and preferred provider arrangements.

**In 2026**, we will consolidate the changes by having external ‘Champions of Change’ who will disseminate learnings and raise expectations in the broader employer community. We will use the experience and outcomes of the demonstration pilot to transfer knowledge and insights into practical tools, and encourage broad target setting for employment of NDIS participants.

## 4. This is our Action Plan / 4.3 Focus area three

### What we will influence over the three-year Action Plan

- Support reform in the supported employment sector to upskill supported employees, build the capacity of their support workforce, or implement innovative business models
- Advocate for NDIS participants having equitable access to employer incentives and other government programs that support pathways to inclusive employment.

### The outcomes we expect

- There will be an improved understanding of the barriers and enablers for inclusive employment
- More employers will express confidence to attract and retain NDIS participants
- More people with disability will be employed in inclusive employment
- Those who receive NDIS revenue will be accountable for employing people with disability in their workforce.

### Case study

#### Plenty of growth in Scott's new business and his social life

Scott is the perfect example of how the NDIS is designed to work. NDIS funding has allowed the 28-year old, who has a moderate intellectual disability build employment and social skills.

Scott works 3 days a week for CPL, a supported employment service. 'CPL has taught me a lot about gardening – all the equipment and plants,' he said.

Now Scott is starting his own gardening business, which will see him work a full week. The new business opportunity came about when people heard about his impeccable work ethic and the meticulous way he maintained gardens.



It wasn't too long before word of mouth spread, and people were chasing him for quotes. New to running his own business and all the paperwork that comes with it, Scott said his support worker plays an integral part helping him to learn to run his business. Scott's mum Michelle said she's so proud of her son. 'It's been beautiful to watch Scott's growth and development and it's incredible to look back and see how far he, and we as a family, have come'.

[Read Scott's story on the NDIS website.](#)

## 4. This is our Action Plan



### 4.4 Focus area four:

## An integrated eco-system of employment support

We heard that understanding who is responsible for what, and where to get supports is confusing. You asked us to focus on the best way to integrate (but not duplicate), other government employment supports.

You told us that DES and other mainstream employment services were sometimes unable to meet your needs, and yet you were unsure how the NDIS could help. You wanted the NDIS and DES to work together, take a whole person approach, and believe in your capability. You wanted better flexibility in the way you were supported, for example being able to start your employment journey with volunteering, quality work experience or just working a few hours each week. You wanted support to build your skills and understand how the NDIS, DES and tertiary education could work together to help you gain meaningful qualifications.

While you agreed that better data sharing would help make sure people got the right supports at the right time, you asked us to be careful about privacy when sharing personal information.

You told us you were worried about losing the Disability Support Pension (DSP) if you got a job or increased your hours. You wanted reassurance that the safety net of the DSP would always be there.

**In 2024 and 2025** there will be three headline activities to streamline navigation of the employment ecosystem.

1. **Improve data collection:** We will design NDIA business systems to include mandatory data collection on participant aspiration (goals), funding utilisation, work status and outcomes.
2. **Test new collaboration approaches:** We will participate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the DSS Employment Pathways pilot. This pilot is intended to improve collaboration between the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Disability Employment Services to ensure different employment services work cohesively to deliver supports and employment outcomes for NDIS participants.
3. **Embed seamless access to supports:** We will use the outcomes of the Employment Pathways pilot to ensure participants understand and connect to the right supports, at the right time and have better information on how the Disability Support Pension (DSP) interacts with their wages.

**In 2026**, utilising data insights, participant experience and pilot outcomes, we will consolidate an evidence base on successful pathways and supports to employment across the employment ecosystem. The pathways will include how the NDIS and other government employment services are supporting participants to prepare for work, get a job, maintain employment, and progress a career.



## 4. This is our Action Plan / 4.4 Focus area four

### What we will influence over the three-year Action Plan

- Support the establishment of the [National Disability Data Asset](#) (NDDA) to promote data systems that support reporting of participant status and links to other relevant government services
- Advocate for NDIS participants in the design of the new DES model to ensure the needs of NDIS participants are heard
- Advocate for the perceived or real disincentives to work be addressed for people on the Disability Support Pension.

### The outcomes we expect

- There will be integrated employment supports across government, ensuring the right supports at the right time
- Shared data and analysis will provide insights of the steps participants are taking to achieve outcomes
- Participants on the DSP will have surety of income support and confidence to work to their potential.

### Case study

#### Daniel's booming business gives him confidence to help others

With his father Ivan by his side, Daniel started his t-shirt business, 9 years ago. His business website boasts an impressive line-up of international stars rocking his quirky and unique t-shirt designs.

Today, Daniel is personally supported by the NDIS, giving him the capability to run his business and live his best life.

Daniel, 29, lives with cerebral palsy. An NDIS support worker helps Daniel with the physical demands of running the business, like setting up pop-up shops at markets and shopping centres around Perth most weekends.



'I appreciate the support I get through the NDIS to help me with the physical part of the business. It has changed my life,' Daniel says.

Daniel's success in business has given him the confidence to know he can achieve his goal of living independently.

[Read Daniel's story on the NDIS website.](#)



## 5. How will we measure and report?

The refresh is a three-year plan, with actions intended to sharpen our focus and support systemic change to increase employment rates for NDIS participants.

The [NDIS Corporate Plan](#) target for participants in paid work for 2023-24 is 26%. While acknowledging that work can take different forms, the NDIS definition of paid work broadly aligns with the definition of employment used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) hold in that we record a person as being employed if they work one or more hours per week. This is a standard definition used internationally to allow comparison with other countries.

There are limitations in the current measures, including a comprehensive understanding of the rate of employment, primarily related to the frequency that this information is collected.

The introduction of our new computer system is an opportunity to improve data collection and establish new baseline<sup>3</sup> measures.

Information on employment and progress towards a job will be gathered more often to give greater visibility of where participants are on the employment journey and to ensure the right supports are in place.

---

Photo above: NDIS participant Grant serves up success in an Australian Open first as Tennis Australia's first ever deaf chair umpire. [Read Grant's story on the NDIS website.](#)

<sup>3</sup> In this Strategy, “baseline” refers to a point in time (for example, 31 December 2022) from which progress against the strategy will be measured. In some other NDIA reporting, “baseline” refers to the time at which a participant enters the Scheme.

## 5. How will we measure and report?

The Agency is developing a new outcomes framework, co-designed with participants and the sector. The new framework will make use of linked data such as the NDDA.

Having better data collection and reporting capabilities will better establish baseline data and allow greater opportunities for setting future targets against important outcomes areas.

Data will be gathered across the following Participant Employment Strategy (PES) domains.

### Employment outcomes and pathways

**PES 01** will measure employment outcomes and differentiate employment in Disability Enterprises (where only people with disability are employed) and open, inclusive employment settings.

#### PES 01 Baseline data

- As at June 2023 the participant employment rate was 23%<sup>4</sup> against a target of 26%
- Of these, 76% of participants worked in open employment and 24% worked in an Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE)<sup>5</sup>.

**PES 02** will measure the outcomes of young people who access NDIS employment supports when transitioning from school to work or further education.

#### PES 02 Baseline data<sup>6</sup>

As of December 2022, 7,419 young participants aged 15-24 either had school leaver employment support included in their NDIS plan or had claimed school leaver employment supports between 1 January and 31 December 2022.

Providers reported on 5,700 unique participants who received school leaver employment supports between 1 January and 31 December 2022.

1,420 participants were reported to exit school leaver employment supports during the same period. Outcomes recorded for these participants are (percentages are rounded and do not add up to 100%).

- 31% achieved open employment
- 4% achieved supported employment
- 15% went on to further study or volunteer work
- 49% of participants exited without an employment outcome
- 2% did not record a final outcome.

<sup>4</sup> [Q4 2022-23 Performance Dashboard](#) NB Includes participants in the Scheme for 2 or more years.

<sup>5</sup> Participant Employment Strategy Quarterly Dashboard as at 30 June 2023, incorporating NDIS Short Form Outcomes Framework Survey Result Data.

<sup>6</sup> All data for PES02 is sourced from [Provider quarterly report - School leaver employment January - December 2022](#).

## 5. How will we measure and report?

**PES 03** will measure the engagement with Disability Employment Services and the outcomes for those participants.

### **PES 03 Baseline data**

A once off data integration of NDIS participants and the DES caseload occurred in March 2022. The NDIA will work with the Department of Social Services to provide ongoing reporting of NDIS participation and outcomes in Disability Employment Services.

## Aspiration for work

**PES 04** will measure how many participants express a desire to work and are setting employment goals.

### **PES 04 Baseline data<sup>7</sup>**

As of June 2023:

- 36% of working age participants stated they were not working but would like to, and 64% of these participants had a work goal
- 38% of working age participants had an employment goal in their plan
- 60% of participants aged 19 to 24 had an employment goal in their plan.

## Planning

**PES 05** will establish performance and quality indicators for developing plans for people who express a desire to work or set a work goal.

**PES 06** will assess planning decisions at key transition points, for example when leaving school or transition to open employment.

**PES 07** will look at reasonable and necessary decision information, including decision to support access to other government employment supports.

**Baseline data to be established.**

## Plan implementation

**PES 08** will monitor how Local Area Coordinators are supporting participants to implement their employment supports and/or access to other government employment services.

**Baseline data to be established.**

## Provider performance

**PES 09** will measure employment services, supports and outcomes delivered by providers.

**PES 10** will publish provider performance data.

**Baseline data pending for recipients of School Leaver Employment Supports only. Broader expansion to all recipients of employment supports to be established.**

<sup>7</sup> Participant Employment Strategy Quarterly Dashboard as at 30 June 2023.



## 5. How will we measure and report?

### Leading by example

**PES 11** will measure the number of staff with disability working at the NDIA.

#### **PES 11 Baseline data**

The NDIA Corporate Plan 2023-27<sup>8</sup> target for NDIA staff with disability (both APS and labour hire) is 19% for 2023-24 and 12% for Senior Executive staff. This is higher than the Australian Public Sector (APS) target (7%).

- APS employees with disability have increased over the last two years from 815 (20%) in 2022 to 925 (21%) in 2023
- For all staff (APS and labour hire), those who identify with disability have increased from 910 (18%) in 2022 to 1,082 (19%) in 2023
- SES (APS) Officers with disability is 21% (Census 2023) and for all SES with disability this was 20% (Census 2023).

Results are sourced from the Annual APS Census Survey conducted by the Australian Public Service Commission.

**PES 12** will measure the employment of people with disability in our partners.

The current employment target for partners is 15 to 20%.

#### **PES 12 Baseline data**

As of December 2022, the rate of employment of people with disability for local area coordinator partners was 15.7% and 5.7% for early childhood partners<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> [NDIA Corporate Plan 2023-2027](#).

<sup>9</sup> [NDIS Participant Employment Strategy 2021-22 Final Report](#).

### Participant satisfaction

**PES 13** will monitor participant satisfaction across the employment journey. We will learn about participant experiences in thinking about work, developing a plan, implementing supports and services, finding, and keeping a job, and career progression.

**Baseline data to be established.**



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

#### National Disability Insurance Agency



Telephone 1800 800 110



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

#### Follow us on our social channels



#### For people who need help with English



TIS: 131 450

#### For people who are deaf or hard of hearing



TTY: 1800 555 677



Voice relay: 1800 555 727



National Relay Service: [relayservice.gov.au](https://relayservice.gov.au)