

NDIS Participant Employment Strategy

2019 – 2022



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A message from the Minister

Stuart Robert

The Honourable Stuart Robert MP
Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

I have great pleasure in presenting the NDIS Participant Employment Strategy 2019–2022.

This Strategy describes how the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) will take action to make sure more NDIS participants achieve meaningful participation in our economy. It is all about giving more people with disability, who have the desire and capacity to work, greater choice and access to the right supports to achieve their employment goals. The government is working to tear down barriers to employment for Australians with disability—with this Strategy particularly focusing on the barriers experienced by NDIS participants.

Overall, at June 2019 only 24 per cent of working age participants were in paid work. We know that having a job brings significant social and wellbeing benefits and economic independence. Recognising this, the Australian Government has made a commitment to improve the delivery of the NDIS so that at least 30 per cent of working age participants achieve their goal of employment by June 2023.

The Strategy sets out the practical steps the NDIA will take to achieve this goal. It is based on feedback from stakeholders, analysis of participant outcomes and insights from research—all of which help inform our collective understanding of the complex landscape of disability and employment.

The Australian Government is committed to improving employment outcomes, including increasing employment of all people with disability across the Australian Public Service (APS). This commitment will see the introduction of a new seven per cent

employment target for people with disability across the APS by 2025. Development of a broader approach to disability employment, and a strong new model for national disability policy, will also support the rights of all people with disability to equal access and opportunity in all areas of their lives.

In 2018, the Australian Government brought together the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the NDIA to form a taskforce to make a difference to economic outcomes for NDIS participants. Since January 2019, the NDIS Participant Employment Taskforce has met with more than 500 people across Australia to understand the barriers people with disability experience when seeking to achieve employment.

Based on the findings from this consultation, the Australian Government will drive significant changes to develop employment opportunities for people with disability, including simplifying the intersection between the NDIS and other employment supports funded by government.

The NDIS is a major reform—but it cannot increase the employment of people with disability without the commitment, ingenuity and action of many people. The low employment rate of people with disability is a challenge that has persisted for decades. Solving it will require the concerted effort of many people across sectors, inside and outside government.

The Government looks forward to working closely with people with disability, public sector leaders, and businesses large and small to drive the change that is required to increase employment for all NDIS participants.



A message from the CEO

Martin Hoffman

CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency

The NDIS Participant Employment Strategy 2019-2022 marks an exciting phase for the NDIA. There has been extraordinary progress since the start of the NDIS. In rolling out the NDIS, we need to ensure we are doing all we can to improve the employment outcomes for our participants.

This Strategy comes from talking with, and more importantly, listening to, the people who will benefit the most from the actions of the NDIA over the next three years. We want you to know, we have heard you.

The purpose of the NDIS is to enable improved social and economic participation. This Strategy will guide the steps to increase employment outcomes. We know that economic participation means so much more than just getting a job, it becomes part of our identity and sense of belonging. Working can unlock the door to becoming truly independent and we all have a right to seek independence through work.

Change starts with our NDIA planners and Partners in the Community. We want to help our NDIS participants who have not dreamed of work to build their confidence to explore what work might look like for them. We want to support those people who may acquire a disability later in life to continue to work. We want to help NDIS participants who are looking for change in employment to receive the support they need to try something new.

We recognise that the NDIS is just one part of a broader disability employment ecosystem and that achieving employment outcomes for NDIS participants involves many factors outside the NDIA's direct control. This includes employers, education providers, other government employment programs and the service provider market. To deliver big change to the lives of NDIS participants and their families, our efforts will need to align with and require many different parties to take action, learn and innovate, and operate in new ways.

Because we put NDIS participants at the centre of everything we do, we are designing supports and stewarding the market to better serve their career development needs and goals. We are also working across the disability and employment sectors to build positive relationships and partnerships to strengthen the collaborative approach needed to continue to improve the lives of Australians living with disability.

We are ready to work together with you, participants, providers, partners, and the community to enable more NDIS participants to achieve their employment goal.

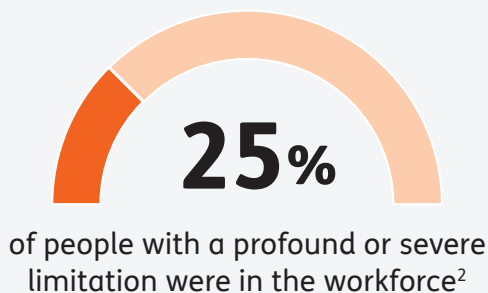
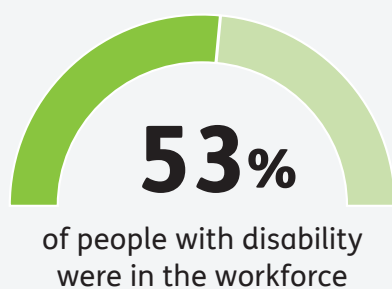
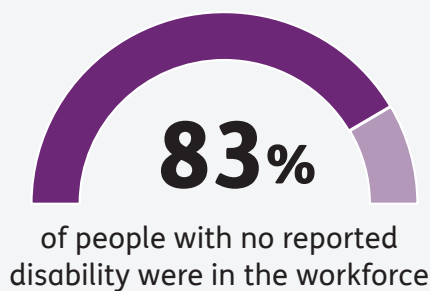
The background

The rates of employment for people with disability are not where they should be

People with disability not only have the right to work, but they have the right to work in workplaces that are inclusive, equal, accessible and freely chosen.¹

But while Australia is enjoying job growth, the unemployment rate is growing for people with disability.² Further, people with profound or severe limitations are even less likely to be employed.

Working age people in the workforce in 2015:



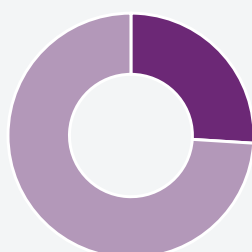
People with disability face well known barriers to employment³

Barriers to employment for people with disability:

- Lack of accessible infrastructure, such as buildings and transport
- Overly complex legislative and policy frameworks
- Perceived disincentives in the income support system
- Government programs not working well together
- Lack of suitable transition supports, for example, leaving school or changing jobs
- Lack of access to high quality employment and disability support services
- Poor customisation of jobs to match skills and abilities
- Sense of isolation in workplaces
- Disability support needs unable to be met at work
- Need for assistance from other systems, such as health
- Lower education attainment or access to inclusive education
- Limited opportunities for supported work experience and training.

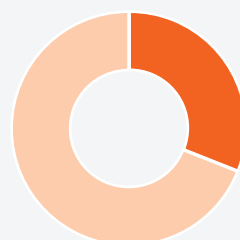
The Australian Government continues to lead the change needed to address the barriers to employment for people with disability. This includes:

- The recent reform of Disability Employment Services (DES) to improve the overall performance of the program to help more people with disability, injury or a health condition⁴
- Providing information and assistance to improve skills and readiness for work of all people with disability, and employer confidence and capability through the Job Access website.



24%

of participants of working age are in paid work



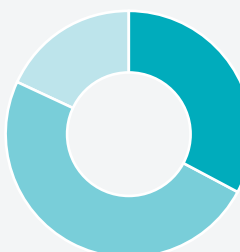
31%

of working age participants have a work-related goal in their plan



41%

of participants aged 15-24 were in employment with full award wages, 35% were in Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) and 24% had other employment⁺



33%

of participants aged 25 and over were in open employment with full award wages, 49% were in ADEs and 18% had other employment⁺

⁺'Other' includes open employment with less than full award wages, Australian Apprenticeships, self-employment and other employment.

This infographic draws on data from the NDIA Quarterly Performance Report (30 June 2019) and Participant Outcomes Report (30 June 2018).

NDIS participants can face additional challenges that need to be addressed

The NDIS is a catalyst for change. At 30 June 2019, there were close to 300,000 NDIS participants. Approximately 170,000 are of working age (between 15 and 64 years of age).

The barriers to employment can be amplified for NDIS participants. In the past, our culture, policy and systems have contributed to low employment aspirations or limited choice and control for people with permanent and significant disability. NDIS participants, their families and carers have told us this continues today, including:

- People have a perception that NDIS participants can't work
- Employers think it is too difficult to employ NDIS participants
- When NDIS participants are working, employers often limit their role to menial work
- NDIS participants are under employed in very limited work hours, or feel there are limited options.⁵

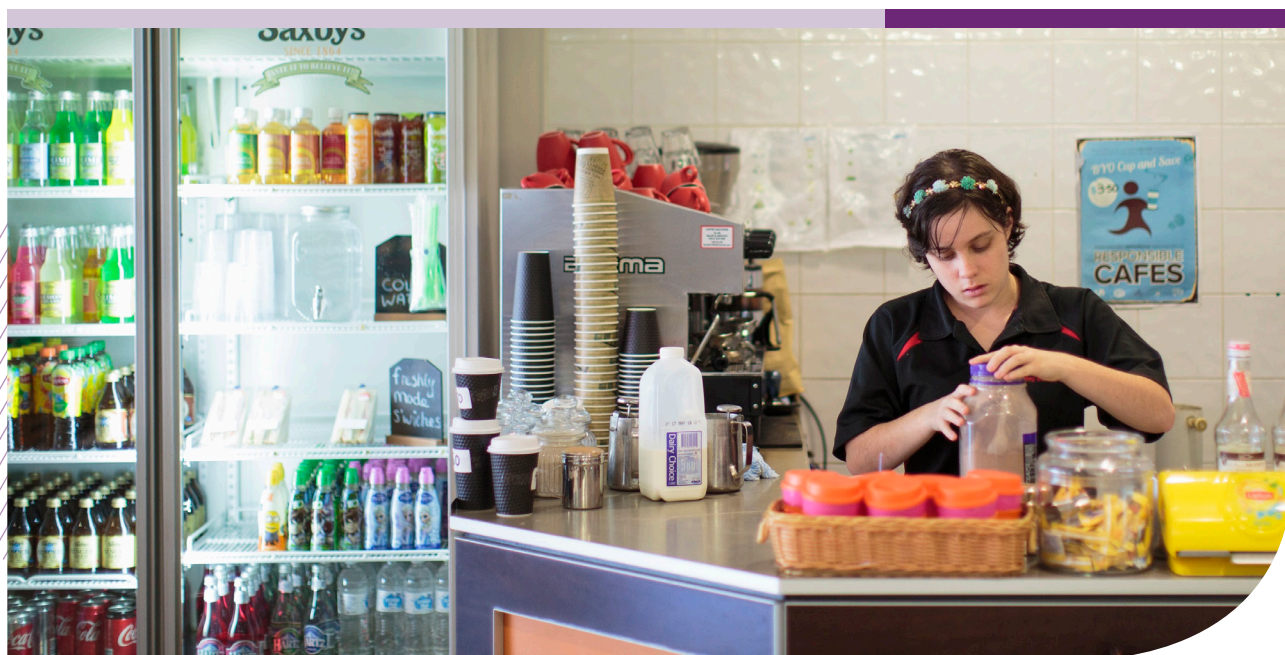
There are different challenges for people with different disability support needs

NDIS participants, their families and carers also told us there are specific challenges in employment relating to sensory, physical, intellectual, autism, neurological or psychosocial disability support needs. For example:

- People with physical disabilities report that inaccessible transport prevents them from getting to work
- NDIS participants with intellectual disabilities are the least likely to be in open employment⁶.

The NDIS puts people with disability at the centre of decision making. A person-centred approach means that NDIS participants will have choice and individualised options when planning for, and engaging in work.

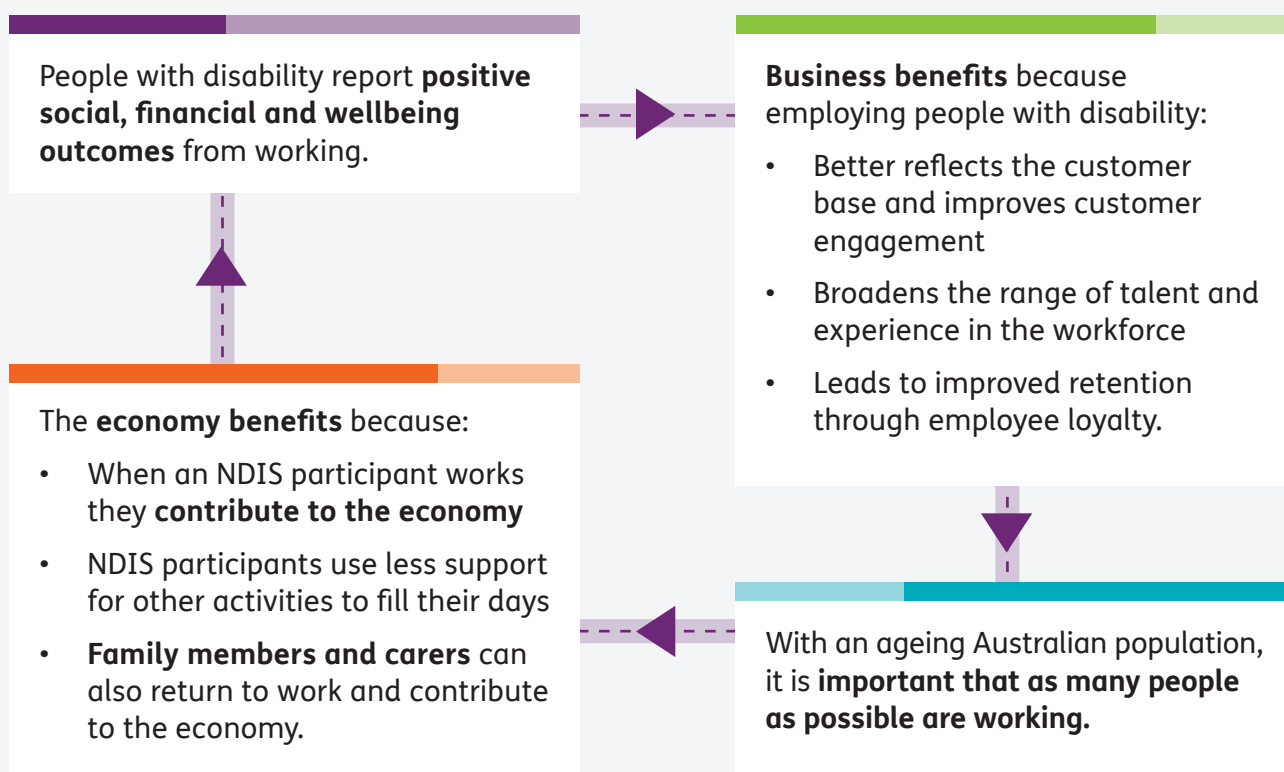
Greater choice and control for NDIS participants will allow them to access the extra supports for all types of employment including private and public employment, family business, micro-enterprises and ADEs.



Employment for NDIS participants has benefits for everyone

In 2011, the Productivity Commission highlighted increased economic participation for people with disability as one of the expected long-term benefits of the NDIS.

There are many benefits of NDIS participants working. These include:



Everyone has a role, ours is clear

Changing the rate of employment for NDIS participants needs everyone to be involved.

The role of the NDIA is to:

- **Lift the aspirations** of NDIS participants, their families and carers, by supporting participants to develop and achieve their employment goals
- **Support NDIS participants who wish to work** by reforming the planning process to focus on employment and the NDIS supports that people need to prepare, find and keep jobs.
- **Be the steward of an innovative market of supports** to enable new and wider employment opportunities, this includes setting the prices of NDIS supports
- Work with Commonwealth departments **to increase employers' awareness** of the additional workforce of NDIS participants and the ways they can be supported at work
- Lead by example and work with government to improve opportunities for NDIS participants and their **wider inclusion in employment initiatives.**

Increasing employment requires change and transformation, beginning in the early years

Change and transformation starts by increasing demand. Children with disability and their families should expect expanded opportunities to achieve an “ordinary life”, including greater participation in social, sport and learning activities.

This starts from pre-school years so that families can begin their child’s education with an expectation of inclusion and progress towards employment. Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) partners can make a big difference in enabling families to see the future of their child as a valued and employable adult.

Improving educators’ awareness of NDIS employment supports will also be important to progress participants’ employment aspirations. This will help influence how schools engage with NDIS participants and their families to better support skill development and career goals.

Transformation requires greater choice and control

Participants need greater choice in the use of their supports to enable individualised employment approaches that achieve their vocational and employment goals. The aim is to ensure:

- Their interests and strengths are understood
- Their skills and independence are built over time
- They remain in the workforce, with access to the right workplace supports, including NDIS funding, to grow skills and capabilities during their employment journey
- They have options in their career that can include self-employment, a micro enterprise, or a range of small, medium or large employers.

While greater aspiration and tailored supports are required, NDIS participant employment and career progression also rely on more employers understanding the value of a diverse workforce. Employers must have the confidence and the right supports to employ and retain people with significant, lifelong disability.

This is our Strategy

This is our Strategy



Our vision

Our vision is that NDIS participants have the same opportunities to work as other Australians, and the confidence, support and skills to take advantage of those opportunities.



Our goal

Our goal is to enable 30 per cent of participants of working age to be in paid work by 30 June 2023⁷.



Our plan

This Strategy guides us to enable NDIS participants to achieve their employment goals, by raising the aspiration of NDIS participants, their families and carers, increasing choice of providers and improving the way NDIS works with other systems.

Strategy timeframe



We know things change quickly in the NDIS. We will review our progress before the end of each year to ensure the next year's plan is up-to-date and incorporates any improvements to planning and the NDIS market of supports and services.

Five key focus areas



1 Participant employment goals and aspirations in NDIS plans

In the future, NDIS participants will be supported in their aspirations for work and to plan their pathway to participating in the workforce. Planners and Local Area Coordinators (LACs) will discuss employment goals and career development at each NDIS planning meeting so the participants' supports match their stage of life, changing work needs and aspirations.

Year 1

- Ensure employment goals and the right supports are in NDIS participant plans for every participant who has an aspiration to work.
- Run an information campaign for NDIS participants, their families and carers, about how the NDIS can assist people to achieve their employment goals and greater economic independence.
- Change NDIA systems and planning procedures to prompt and record employment discussions and ensure the right supports are in NDIS participant plans.
- Deploy Regional Employment Champions to provide advice in the planning process and ensure effective supports are included to support employment goals.
- Focus on employment related supports for participants aged 14-25, acknowledging the importance of intervening early for every participant who has an aspiration to work.
- Develop a targeted engagement initiative with schools and education departments, for students and their families, to expand their understanding of NDIS supports as a pathway to work.

Year 2

- Ensure at least 35 per cent of working age NDIS participants have employment or pre vocational goals in their NDIS plan.
- Deliver a series of community forums and webinars that highlight and explore how NDIS participants of different ages and disability support needs get ready for work, find work and continue to thrive at work.
- Develop and deliver cohort specific responses to employment challenges for NDIS participants, such as people with intellectual disability, autism, acquired injury or psychosocial disability.

Year 3

- Ensure at least 40 per cent of working age NDIS participants have employment or pre-vocational goals in their NDIS plan.
- Host a national conference promoting tailored employment support and improved outcomes for NDIS participants, their families and carers.
- Create a central, online resource centre for NDIS participants, providers and employers to promote employment initiatives, success stories and links to further information.

2

Participant choice and control over pathways to employment

In the future, NDIS participants will find it easier to identify what they need to build their skills and be ready for work. NDIS participants will be empowered to choose the right supports to explore work and build their skills in the workplace. This includes better connection and inclusion in mainstream and community activities.

NDIS participants, their families and carers will understand the link between developing everyday social skills through community participation and building a pathway to employment. NDIS participants will have access to useful information to make choices about their NDIS supports and understand which providers can assist them to build capacity, navigate the pathway to employment, stay in work and develop their career.

Year 1

- Provide information to NDIS participants, their families and carers about employment supports, at different life stages, with a focus on key life transitions (like school to work).
- Where needed, include support coordination to assist NDIS participants with more complex employment support needs to take the steps to achieve their goals.
- Publish clear information about how the NDIS and DES will work better together.
- Publish success stories about NDIS participants in paid work, and the supports and services that assisted their achievements.
- Investigate cohort specific employment challenges (for example, people with acquired brain injury) to inform how we meet specific information and support needs.
- Build awareness of the mainstream Employment Assistance Fund or other assistive technology to assist more people to achieve work goals.

Year 2

- With our Partners in the Community, increase efforts to present and engage in career fairs held in cities and regional locations.
- Create a public clearinghouse for research and practice that focuses on what supports are likely to help NDIS participants achieve their employment goals.
- Publish annual employment results that include data split by industry, disability type and age.
- Publish an annual guide to the available government employment programs and promote these to NDIS participants.
- Expand our networks with the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program and local education initiatives to promote the role of the NDIS.

Year 3

- Review NDIS participant reported outcomes, provider practice and participant feedback to build a comprehensive understanding of “what works” to inform future planning.
- Evaluate and address information gaps to ensure NDIS participants have useful information to assist with choosing their NDIS supports to find and keep a job.

Case Study



Justin

Getting 'work ready' with school leaver supports

“I love working at the school. I get the bus there and everyone is nice. I have a staff uniform and name badge.”

- Justin

When Justin finished school, he set an employment goal in his NDIS plan and started using his funding to build his confidence and skills to become ‘work ready’.

With the support of his employment provider, Jobsupport, Justin gained enough confidence to travel independently on public transport.

Justin now provides administration support at Glenwood Public School doing important everyday jobs that save teaching staff valuable time.

3

Market developments that improve the path to paid work and support the career development of NDIS participants

In the future, NDIS providers will deliver individualised employment pathways that lead to more NDIS participants working the number of hours they want in their choice of employment. This will include opportunities for NDIS participants across different age groups, with different disability support needs and living in any location.

NDIS participants will be empowered to direct service provision to achieve the steps in their employment pathway and be supported to continually grow their skills and independence.

Year 1

- Drive improved provider practice through market engagement. This will include the release of demand data by location and showcasing leading practice by age group and response to differing disability support needs.
- With the Australian Government Department of Social Services:
 - Complete the transition of funding for supported employees of ADEs to the NDIS. This will include a review of the pricing of supports in NDIS participant plans
 - Publish clear information for providers about how NDIS funding and DES can work together to better support NDIS participants.
- Promote examples of individualised employment pathways for NDIS participants to providers. This will start with success stories of people with intellectual disability and autism.
- Run an “innovation challenge” about supporting transition (e.g. school to employment, changing jobs) and growth of NDIS self-employment or micro enterprises.

Year 2

- Review NDIS supports for finding and keeping a job for people with complex support needs, to ensure the right supports exist, and have been tested, for success in achieving employment goals.
- Explore, with other relevant government agencies, initiatives about building the future workforce to include the employment of NDIS participants. This will have a particular focus on regional, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities.
- Extend NDIS social media and other communications to include a wide range of new employment-related content for NDIS participants of different ages, disability support needs and locations.
- Convene industry specific events targeting professions and sectors that are growing or can provide flexible employment (such as legal or financial services).

Year 3

- Hold a conference to showcase innovation and broader employment options for NDIS participants and providers.

Case Study



Trish

Learning new skills with the Brike project

Trish works at Brite – an ADE that takes a person-centred and holistic approach to employing people with disability.

With Brite, Trish has the opportunity to take part in a project to design, build and assemble a new assistive technology, the 'Brike'. Trish will be supported to become a qualified bike mechanic, which will create new open employment opportunities.

Trish says, "I really like working at Brite because I've met lots of new people. I'm working towards open employment."

"Everyone has ability and it's about finding that right fit for an individual and that job."

- Nick MacHale, CEO Brite

4 The confidence of employers to employ NDIS participants

In the future, employers will be increasingly ready to employ NDIS participants. Regardless of industry and location, employers will understand how NDIS participants are an asset to their workforce and understand how the NDIS and mainstream employment services enable employment. The barriers to employment will be reduced.

With an enhanced market of providers and changed employer behaviour, NDIS participants will be employed in a wide range of sectors. This will include private and public employment, social or disability enterprises, micro-enterprises and self-employment.

NDIS participants will have a better experience because the NDIA will be working in partnership with governments and the private sector to support increased long-term employment opportunities for NDIS participants.

Year 1

- Develop and start delivering a targeted engagement strategy to promote the education-to-employment pathway, and relevant transition supports, to build the confidence of employers to employ NDIS participants.
- Promote with DSS the *Employ Their Ability* initiative to improve understanding of employment potential of NDIS participants.
- Encourage ADEs to provide integrated employment supports in a range of employment settings, including transition to other employment and self-employment.
- Publish success stories about how disability confident employers addressed barriers to employment for an NDIS participant and their reflections on the challenges and benefits.
- Publish information targeted at small to medium enterprises about the NDIS supports available to NDIS participants to assist them in the workplace, including on-the-job supports, capacity building and career development.
- Run the next ILC Economic and Community Participation Program round.

Year 2

- Champion disability employment opportunities through NDIA commissioning of Partners in the Community and Information, Linkages and Capacity. This will include the encouragement for a seven per cent target of employees with disability.
- Promote the NDIA as a Disability Confident Employer (DCE) and share knowledge about our experience.
- Encourage the expansion of 'host employers' across all types of employment to assist NDIS participants' access to early vocational opportunities and experiences.

Year 3

- Seek feedback from providers and government involved in the first two years so that future planning builds on success stories, the emerging evidence and data analytics.

Case Study



Paul

A family affair at P&G Bakery

Paul Field and his father opened the P&G Bakery in Geelong to support their sister and daughter Kristy, who has Down syndrome.

The business has since grown to three locations and employs 14 people with a disability.

“We started this business to try and change the community’s perception of people with disabilities in employment,” Paul says.

“We try to be inclusive and we have a lot of customers that come to our cafes because of what we do.

“This is the reason I’m in business, to provide this service and opportunities to people with disability.”

“The results, the pride, the way we see people improve and grow and increase their contribution to society, that’s why we do this.”

- Paul



NDIA leading by example as a government employer

In the future, we will be recognised as a leading employer of people with disability. We will share learnings with other employers to boost their confidence to employ people with disability, with a specific focus on NDIS participants. We will continue to employ people with disability across all levels of the organisation, meeting the support needs of employees, and offering tailored career and leadership development opportunities. Seventeen per cent of our workforce will identify as people with disability.

We will also work with Commonwealth, state and territory governments and agencies on how to engage NDIS participants in work, increase their skills, and develop their careers. The NDIA will draw on the Australian government commitment to introduce a new seven per cent employment target for people with disability across the Australian Public Service (APS) by 2025 with consideration to inclusion of NDIS participants.

Year 1

- Deliver awareness and capability training initiatives for all NDIA managers and leaders to recognise the barriers, challenges and solutions for effectively managing employees with diverse abilities and how they can put reasonable adjustment provisions in place.
- Launch an internal campaign to build capability in developing accessible communications.
- Support the development of the future APS Disability Employment Strategy, including exploring opportunities for NDIS participants.
- Establish a leadership development program for NDIA employees who are also NDIS participants.
- Support employees to feel safe having conversations about workplace adjustments and using the NDIA Workplace Adjustment Passport.

Year 2

- Develop an organisation-wide training program on the benefits of employing people with disability at the NDIA and in partner organisations (staged over 12 months) and showcase how this can be achieved.
- Expand the *Stepping Into Internship* Program and develop a work experience program for people with disability seeking to work in the NDIA.
- Refresh the NDIS Disability Employment Strategy for the NDIA to address the needs of NDIS participants.

Year 3

- Establish a program for real career advancement of people with disability and opportunities to develop professionally into leadership roles.

Case Study



Maryanne

A leader in government

Maryanne Diamond AO GAICD is General Manager, Stakeholder Engagement at the NDIA as well as the organisation's Disability Champion. Maryanne sponsors, supports and champions activities that make the workplace more accessible and inclusive of people with disability.

“My aim is for us to be an organisation where we are encouraged to talk about our disabilities and, for those who do not live with a disability, to learn from us and become champions of inclusion,” Maryanne says.

The NDIA regularly submits a self-assessment to the Australian Network on Disability (AND) Access and Inclusion Index, an assessment and benchmarking tool that measures organisational access and inclusion maturity. In April 2019, the NDIA was ranked third out of 23 participating organisations behind IBM and Medibank.

“I am proud of the work we are doing here at the NDIA to attract and employ people with disabilities – to be an employer of choice.”

"I urge employers, business and industries to make their workplaces more inclusive so that they can harness the untapped potential of Australians with disabilities."

- Maryanne

Information, Linkages and Capacity Building

The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Investment Strategy commits over \$398m from 2019-20 to 2021-22. We will be targeting funding through the Economic and Community Participation Program that aims to:

- Connect people with disability to activities, employment and community supports and opportunities
- Help communities and employers to be inclusive and responsive to people with disability needs, locally and nationally.

In July 2019, \$19.57m in funding was awarded to build the capacity of Australian businesses and organisations to employ people with disability under the ILC Economic Participation program.

Sixty-four organisations across Australia were awarded 12 months of funding for community projects and activities that:

- Grow employment opportunities for people with disability
- Build self-employment capabilities for people with disability
- Increase the capacity for people with disability to participate in work.

Up to \$58m over three years will also be awarded under the Economic and Community Participation Program in 2019-20.



Our journey to date

Our journey to date

The Australian Government created the NDIS Participant Employment Taskforce to make a difference to employment outcomes for NDIS participants

The Taskforce members are from the DSS and the NDIA. The Taskforce works on changes which could positively impact employment of NDIS participants. This includes improving the intersection between the NDIS and other employment supports funded by government.

As part of the Taskforce, the NDIA also works on what needs to change in the NDIS market, define the right supports for NDIS participants to find and keep a job, reduce barriers to employment, and assist employers to reach a level of confidence to employ NDIS participants.

Since January 2019, the Taskforce has met with more than 500 people across Australia. This includes NDIS participants, their families and carers, NDIS providers, employers and peak body representatives.

People told us there are key changes needed to increase NDIS participant employment, including:

The NDIA needs to improve the experience of NDIS participants, including increasing planner and LAC capability to talk about work goals and getting the right supports in plans.

There needs to be more **provider capability to work across sectors**, including employment services and NDIS supports.

Pre and post vocational support and guidance is required to build confidence and motivation of NDIS participants to enter and stay in the workforce.

Delivering sustainable outcomes requires an **individualised approach** that includes a good understanding of participants' needs, interests, capacity and ability.

NDIS participants need less complexity; there needs to be a reduction in gaps between the NDIS and mainstream employment services.

For NDIS participants to have informed choice, they need **greater awareness of policies, programs and services**. We need to tell people about this in ways they can understand.

Success stories are a key motivator in **building the aspirations for employment of NDIS participants** and breaking down the barriers.

Employers must be **willing, confident and able to employ** people with disability. This is really important for NDIS participants.

NDIS participants with more complex needs require a **support coordinator specialised in employment** as a coach and guide on their employment journey.

Case Study



Gerard

A Bold and Beautiful career

Gerard's long-term goal is to be an actor on *The Bold and the Beautiful*.

With the support of the NDIS, Gerard works with Bus Stop films to build his confidence, literacy skills and life ready skills so that he can participate in the film industry.

Gerard first appeared in the 2009 Tropfest winning film, *Be My Brother* and his first feature film *Red Christmas* has toured nationally.

"With every movie I've made with Bus Stop, I have improved as an actor and learned so much," he says.

"I have a mentor and she helps me a lot. She gets paid by the NDIS.

We do vocal warm-ups, monologues. She's helping me with my speech."

- Gerard

Implementing this Strategy

Our aim of increasing employment of NDIS participants to 30 per cent is not just about the numbers

Most importantly, it's about changing the way we do things every day to encourage people to talk about work, identify their support needs for work, deliver better services, and improve choice and control for NDIS participants.

This isn't an easy thing to do. Our work over the next three years will include many internal initiatives and actions within the NDIA, and will require strong collaboration with Australian and state and territory governments, and the private sector to significantly increase employment opportunities for NDIS participants.

We will be guided by our Principles for Change

- 1 NDIS participants have the opportunity to work in jobs that are freely chosen, in workplaces that are inclusive, equal and accessible (Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).
- 2 Employment contributes to NDIS participants' independence, wellbeing and social inclusion and to the NDIS's financial sustainability.
- 3 With the right encouragement, support, and opportunities, most people with disability want to work and can work.
- 4 The NDIS takes a 'whole person' approach to employment, recognising that life-skills training, community participation and assistive technology can all contribute to a person's employability.
- 5 Orienting young people with disability to the world of work while they are still at school increases their likelihood of securing employment as an adult.
- 6 The NDIS puts people with disability at the centre of decision-making, giving choices about employment pathways and options, as well as access to information about the quality and effectiveness of different supports and services.
- 7 The NDIS works closely with the Disability Employment Services (DES) and other service systems, complementing, but not duplicating them.
- 8 Local collaboration to bring NDIS participants, providers and employers together is a key to increasing the probability of successful employment outcomes for participants.
- 9 NDIS participants should experience the employment journey as seamless, at all stages, even if they receive support from multiple service systems.

Measuring our progress

We will be measured by our progress



We are committed to measuring and reporting on our progress. You will see these measured in:

- Our report card of the NDIA Corporate Plan
- NDIS Quarterly Reports
- NDIS Participant Outcomes Report

This strategy will be underpinned by a detailed internal NDIA Implementation Action Plan.

We will make sure this is appropriate for everyone



We will work collectively across the NDIA to connect with other strategies for change, including:

- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Strategy⁹
- Rural and Remote Strategy¹⁰
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy¹¹
- Assistive Technology Strategy¹²
- NDIA Disability Strategy & Action Plan 2018-20.¹³



We need to work with others

The NDIA will continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders and government agencies to resolve issues and put NDIS participants at the centre of why we are creating change

There are many programs funded by Australian, state and territory governments that contribute to improving employment outcomes for people with disability in Australia. We want NDIS participants to know about and access these services.

We will continue to lead the change to enable more NDIS participants to aspire to work, to understand their pathways to employment and achieve their employment and career goals. This needs the right supports at the right time.

We will also work with DSS as the lead agency on creating an all-inclusive approach to disability employment to improve supports and outcomes for people with disability, including NDIS participants as well as millions of other Australians with disability, that can and do want to work, to gain and sustain a good job. This includes development of a new model for national disability policy to replace the National Disability Strategy when it finishes at the end of 2020.

Governments across Australia are working together and engaging with people with disability to develop the new model for national disability policy. The new model will respond to changes over the past 10 years, including the implementation of the NDIS.

Developing a strong new model for national disability policy will help support the rights of all people with disability to equal access and opportunity in all areas of their lives. Opportunities for people with disability to work can be improved by addressing broader barriers they can encounter in the community for example through provision of accessible transport, housing and the built environment and through inclusive education.

National commitments

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

National Disability Agreement 2009

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Relevant legislative frameworks

Disability Services Act (Commonwealth) 1986

Reasonable adjustment and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013

Other employment programs, departments and initiatives

Disability Employment Services (DES)

Job Access

National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC)

jobactive

Australian Government Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business initiatives

The Community Development Program (CDP)

State and territory employment initiatives

Appendices





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Glossary

Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs)

Australian Disability Enterprises are not-for-profit organisations. They offer a wide range of occupations and industries ranging from packaging and printing to gardening and furniture assembly. ADEs can provide ongoing employment or they can act as a stepping stone, enabling people with disability to gain the skills and confidence they need to try other forms of employment.

As One: Making it Happen, the APS Disability Employment Strategy 2016-19

The As One: Making it Happen, APS Disability Employment Strategy 2016-19 aims to increase the representation of employees with disability across the APS, including Indigenous people with disability. At its core, the Strategy seeks to offer people with disability multiple pathways into the public service, enable existing employees with disability to have better career opportunities and increase the representation of employees with disability in senior leadership positions.

Assistive technology

Assistive technology is the software or hardware support provided to people with disability to help them perform their role in the workplace.

Department of Social Services (DSS)

The Department of Social Services is responsible for a diverse range of policies, payments, programs and services that improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia. The department works in partnership with other government and non-government organisations to ensure the effective development, management and delivery of these initiatives. DSS fund services and payments that assist families, children

and older people, provide a safety net for those who cannot fully support themselves, enhance the wellbeing of people with high needs, assist those who need help with care, and support a diverse and harmonious society.

Disability

Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions (*The Disability Discrimination Act 1992*).

This describes a person's impairment of body or function, a limitation in activities or a restriction in participation when interacting with their environment.

Disability confidence

Disability confident means a person is at ease communicating, socialising and working with people who experience disability. They have appropriate techniques and strategies to connect with people with disability.

Disability Employment Services (DES)

Disability Employment Services help people with disability find work and keep a job.

An initiative of the Department of Social Services. Through Disability Employment Services, people with disability, injury or health condition may be able to receive assistance to prepare for, find and keep a job.

Disability Employment Services has two parts:

- Disability Management Service is for job seekers with disability, injury or health condition who need assistance to find a job and occasional support in the workplace to keep a job
- Employment Support Service provides assistance to job seekers with permanent disability to find a job and who need regular, ongoing support in the workplace to keep a job.

Disability Employment Services Providers (DES Providers)

Providers of Disability Employment Services are called DES providers for short. DES providers are a mix of large, medium and small, for-profit and not-for-profit organisations that are experienced in supporting people with disability as well as providing assistance to employers to put in place practices that support the employee in the workplace.

Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC)

The activities that will be supported by the NDIS to promote the social and economic inclusion of people with a disability.

Local Area Coordinators (LACs)

Local organisations working in partnership with the NDIA, to help participants, their families and carers access the NDIS.

Mainstream services

The government systems providing services to the Australian public e.g. health, mental health, education, justice, housing, child protection and employment services.

National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)

The Australian Government organisation that administers the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The new national insurance approach for providing support to Australians with disability, their families and carers.

National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commissions

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission regulates NDIS providers including the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services in participating jurisdictions.

NDIS participant

A person who meets the NDIS access requirements.

NDIS plan

A written plan worked out with the participant that states their goals, needs and the reasonable and necessary supports the NDIS will fund for them.

NDIS provider

A disability support provider that has met the NDIS requirements for qualifications, approvals, experience, capacity and quality.

NDIS support for finding, keeping and changing jobs

The wide range of funding provided to NDIS participants, including:

- Capacity building supports to develop greater skills to get a job and achieve maximum independence at work
- Day to day supports, if needed, to be safe at work, engage with others and complete job tasks
- Information and assistance provided by NDIA planners and LACs about services available in the community, like Disability Employment Services (DES) or volunteering opportunities
- NDIS supports and services, such as assistance with community participation or building skills, such as catching public transport, meeting new people or learning how to manage money.

NDIS Supports

Services that help a person undertake daily life activities and enable them to participate in the community and reach their goals.

Paid work

Self-reported by a NDIS participant as part of the outcomes framework.

RecruitAbility

RecruitAbility is a scheme aiming to attract and develop candidates with disability and also facilitate cultural changes in selection panels and agency recruitment. RecruitAbility can be applied to all vacancies across the APS. Candidates with disability who opt into the scheme, and meet minimum vacancy requirements advertised under the NDIS, are advanced to a further stage in the selection process.

Stepping Into Internship Program

The Australian Network on Disability *Stepping Into Internship* program is a paid internship scheme, matching talented university students with disability with roles in leading Australian businesses. Students are placed for a minimum 152 hours, which can be worked as a four-week block or flexibly across a semester concurrent with studies.

Support Coordinator

A type of NDIS support in participant plans. A Support Coordinator will support NDIS participants to understand and implement the funded supports in the plan and link to community, mainstream and other government services. A Support Coordinator will focus on building skills, self-direction and connecting to providers.

Workplace adjustments

Workplace adjustments are modifications made within the workplace to enable an employee to:

- perform their job role
- participate in selection processes and be considered for transfer, promotion, training or other employment opportunities
- access workplace facilities
- participate in work-related programs such as staff development and training.

Workplace Adjustment Passport

A Workplace Adjustment Passport is a document, allowing employees with permanent or temporary disability, psychosocial condition, illness, injury or medical condition to outline agreed workplace adjustments in place and detail accessibility and inclusion requirements so they can do their job. A Workplace Adjustment Passport ensures any workplace adjustments agreed to are recorded and readily available should the passport holder change line manager, job role, or transfer to another area. The option to have a Workplace Adjustment Passport is voluntary and the Passport holder chooses with whom the document will be shared.

Workforce participation

When someone is employed, or looking for work.



For more information about this Strategy, please contact:

National Disability Insurance Agency



Telephone 1800 800 110

For people with hearing or speech loss



TTY: 1800 555 677



Speak and Listen: 1800 555 727

For people who need help with English



TIS: 131 450

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