

Co-design Advisory Group Terms of Reference (January 2025)

This document outlines the Terms of Reference and ways of working for the Co-design Advisory Group. This is an update of the original Terms of Reference developed in 2021, to reflect the evolving approaches to co-design in the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

1. Purpose

The Co-design Advisory Group provides strategic advice to the NDIA on the approach, process and implementation of co-design with the disability community to improve the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This includes incorporating lessons learned and supporting continuous improvement to co-design approaches.

2. Principles

Members of the Co-design Advisory Group are guided by the following principles in their work together and the advice they provide

1. People with disability must be at the centre of decision-making as partners in the ongoing design and implementation of the NDIS.
2. People with disability should be represented in NDIS governance, in the leadership of the NDIA, and in the delivery of the NDIS.
3. Engagement must be honest, transparent and respectful.
4. Changes to the NDIS need to be co-designed in collaboration with people with disability, our families and our representative organisations.
5. Australia's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) underpin our co-design and engagement.

The Co-design Advisory Group will also support the application of principles outlined in the [Joint Statement on Co-design](#) (June 2024) for the NDIA to be:

- Honest and transparent
- Accessible and inclusive
- Timely
- Ready to learn

3. Outcomes

Co-design Advisory Group members will work collaboratively and constructively to:

- Provide strategic advice on the NDIA approaches to co-design and other engagement processes.
- Ensure appropriate disability community representation and expertise is included in co-design initiatives.
- Build a consensus on the current and emerging priorities for co-design and consultation including decision making in relation to co-design priorities.
- Identify emerging opportunities for co-design not covered by the existing Co-design Working Groups.
- Work with their networks to seek input on co-design processes.
- Be part of the communication approaches to highlight and share success stories.

4. Membership

The Co-design Advisory Group comprises representation from Disability Representative and carer Organisations (DRCOs), the Independent Advisory Council (IAC) and NDIA staff with responsibility for co-design strategy. This includes:

- 4 (four) DRCO representatives
- 4 (four) IAC members
- Up to four NDIA staff members (including secretariat)

A representative from the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) will also be invited to attend.

DRCO and IAC members are nominated by their respective bodies to speak on behalf of and report back to their communities. Membership is reviewed annually by each member group. This process was last undertaken in January 2025.

Current membership (January 2025)

NDIA membership

- General Manager, Co-design and Engagement
- Branch Manager, Co-design
- Director, Co-design Capability
- Participant Advocate, Office of the Participant Advocate
- Additional representatives from the NDIA invited as required.

DRCO membership

- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
- Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)
- Inclusion Australia

IAC membership

- Leah Van Poppel (IAC Principal Member)
- Sharon Boyce
- Leighton Jay
- Samantha Paior

DSS membership

- Branch Manager, NDIS Governance, Policy and Legislation

Quorum

A minimum of six CAG members are required for decision-making purposes. This must include a minimum of two members from the IAC and two from the DRCOs.

The CAG can meet without a quorum but can only undertake discussions and strategic advice to assist in progressing matters and cannot make any decisions.

Conflict of interest

Members are required to declare any perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

5. Meeting Frequency

The CAG will meet **bi-monthly** or at least **six times** per year.

The NDIA secretariat will schedule and advise members of meeting dates, venue, and times in advance. Secretariat will align meetings to schedules of the IAC and DRCO to support gathering of feedback in the already established meeting schedules.

- Meetings will typically be held online via MS Teams.
- At least one meeting will be held in person annually. Hybrid arrangements will be made for those unable to attend.

Out of session meetings may be considered to progress key programs of work. These will be determined at the discretion of the CAG.

6. Processes

Chairing

The chair role will rotate across members. The sequence for rotating the chair is: NDIA, DRCOs, and IAC members.

Agenda items for discussion will be developed in consultation with CAG members.

Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by the NDIA Co-design Branch. This includes:

- note taking and meeting summaries
- calendar invitations and liaison with members re availability for meetings
- seeking agenda items.

Strategic advice and decision-making processes

The primary purpose of the CAG is to provide strategic advice on developing co-design practices, sequencing and evaluation of co-design activities from the CAG. In the case of decision making, we will use a consensus model.

Where a consensus is not achievable and clear decisions are required – for example priorities for co-design - voting may be used to confirm the group's position. If voting is required, each CAG member in attendance has one vote and voting will be by show of hands (including electronic hands). Any NDIA invited guests will not be included as a

vote when there is one. The meeting Chair does not have a casting vote, in addition to their individual vote.

Continuous improvement

We will use a continuous improvement approach to reflect on the operations of the CAG and suggestions on ways to improve our operations. This will be incorporated into the agenda for each meeting.

7. Accessibility

The NDIA will ensure appropriate adjustments are made so that meetings are accessible to all participants and is committed to providing fully accessible documentation in Plain English. To ensure accessibility requirements are met, a meeting may be postponed until appropriate adjustment can be made.

8. Payments

Remuneration

All non-NDIA and DSS members of the Co-design Advisory Group will be remunerated for their attendance

- IAC members are remunerated as per the Remuneration Tribunal Decision. Participation and membership of any additional meetings should be discussed with the IAC Principal Member.
- DRCOs are remunerated as per the terms agreed via contract.

Travel expenses

Where a face-to-face meeting is agreed by members, NDIA will discuss the reimbursement of travel expenses with each member individually.

9. Feedback, complaints or conflict resolution

Conflict or complaints should be raised directly with either:

- General Manager, Co-design and Engagement, or
- Branch Manager, Co-design

Where the issue is unable to be resolved it will be escalated to the Deputy CEO, Service Delivery and Improvement (SDI).