18 July 2023

Introduction

What is a communique?

A communique is an official and public announcement to provide information.

What is the purpose of this communique?

The purpose of this communique is to share a summary of the First Nations Advisory Council meeting, which took place on Gadigal Country (Sydney) over two-days on Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 July 2023.

What is the First Nations Advisory Council?

The First Nations Advisory Council is co-chaired by Damian Griffis, CEO of First Peoples Disability Network, (FPDN) and Rebecca Falkingham, CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

The First Nations Advisory Council brings together First Nations people with lived experience of disability with First Nations disability sector representatives.

The purpose of the First Nations Advisory Council is to work together with the NDIA to guide initiatives that will improve outcomes for First Nations people with disability.

The First Nations Advisory Council will meet regularly to support:

- the co-design of the First Nations Strategy and action plan
- opportunities to improve outcomes for First Nations people with disability and
- other relevant NDIA or FPDN projects as needed.

Meeting summary

The first day opened with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony led by Brendan Kerin from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The co-chairs acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land (Gadigal Peoples of the Eora Nation), paying respect to their Elders, past and present.

Ganggar Wati (Brenden Moore) gave a didgeridoo performance on the second day.

The aim of the First Nations Advisory Council meeting was for members to:

- give feedback on the updated draft Terms of Reference, including the principles and ways of working for the First Nations Advisory Council
- give feedback on the draft First Nations Strategy stakeholder engagement plan.

Members also connected informally before, during and after official meeting time.

Discussion on the draft Terms of Reference

The First Nations Advisory Council discussed the draft Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference is a document that outlines how the First Nations Advisory Council will work together as a group, as well as with the NDIA and other relevant project governance groups.

First Nations Advisory Council members suggested that the Terms of Reference should have a vision statement at the start of it.

A vision statement would set out the purpose and goals of the First Nations Advisory Council.

Members suggested the following additional themes should be included in the principles section of the First Nations Advisory Council's Terms of Reference:

- sharing decision-making and working in partnership to remove power imbalances between government and community
- putting heart and dignity at the centre of everything the First Nations Advisory Council does
- recognising intersectional ways of thinking to address anti-racism and anti-ableism. Intersectionality means understanding how different parts of a person's identity and the communities they belong to can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination
- knowledge sharing, including First Nations data governance, management and sovereignty
- data governance refers to the right of First Nations peoples to decide what, how and when First Nations data is collected, accessed and used
- data management refers to the practice of safely collecting, storing and protecting First Nations data
- data sovereignty refers to First Nations peoples having ownership over their data.

The First Nations Advisory Council and the NDIA acknowledge that more conversations are needed to agree on the decision-making model for the First Nations Advisory Council.

The NDIA is committed to being transparent about how recommendations from the First Nations Advisory Council will be addressed or considered going forward.

Discussion on the draft stakeholder engagement plan

The NDIA asked the First Nations Advisory Council for feedback on the draft stakeholder engagement plan for the First Nations Strategy.

The stakeholder engagement plan outlines the NDIA's proposed plan to meet with First Nations people with disability and sector representatives to co-design the First Nations Strategy.

The First Nations Advisory Council support compensating First Nations community members for their time to meet with the NDIA to co-design the First Nations Strategy.

The First Nations Advisory Council will continue to meet to inform the draft stakeholder engagement plan and co-design approach for the First Nations Strategy.

Other matters

The First Nations Advisory Council emphasised the need to shift away from Western constructs of poverty, acknowledging the wealth of First Nations communities may be defined by their connection to family, community and Country

Closing and next steps

The NDIA and FPDN will continue to work with the First Nations Advisory Council to finalise the Terms of Reference and resolve questions around shared decision-making.
The next virtual out-of-session and in-person meetings will aim to be held in September and October 2023 respectively.

The next virtual out-of-session meeting will focus on briefing members on the policies that are relevant to the First Nations Advisory Council's work. This includes the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and Australia's Disability Strategy.

The next in-person meeting will focus on the co-development of a workplan for the First Nations Advisory Council, together with the NDIA and FPDN.

The workplan and ways of working for the First Nations Advisory Council must be informed by the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Australia's Disability Strategy and the Disability Sector Strengthening Plan.

The workplan and ways of working must also consider other relevant Australian and international agreements, strategies and policies that focus on the rights and outcomes of First Nations people with disability.
The NDIA is committed to prioritising the accessibility of all First Nations Advisory Council meetings.

If you have any feedback or questions about the First Nations Advisory Council, please email:

- The NDIA at firstnationsstrategy@ndis.gov.au or
- FPDN at fnac@fpdn.org.au.

Attendee list

The following co-chairs and members were in attendance.

Co-chairs

- Damian Griffis, CEO, FPDN
- Rebecca Falkingham, CEO, NDIA

Members

- Tess Moodie, Multiple Organisations / Independent Consultant, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Victor Djungadi Patrick, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Suzy Trindall, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Justen Thomas, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Gi Brown, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Jennifer Cullen, Equity and Inclusion Reference Group Co-chair, Independent Advisory Council (IAC)
- Liz Reid, Member, IAC
- Dr Scott Avery, Senior Lecturer, Western Sydney University
- Karly Warner (Chair, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS))
- Donna Murray, CEO, Indigenous Allied Health of Australia

- Jodi Cassar, Branch Manager (Australia's Disability Strategy), Department of Social Services
- Anna Dorney, Acting Branch Manager, National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Munatji McKenzie, Disability Royal Commission Project Officer, NPY Women's Council
- Thea Dunkley (Proxy), NDIS Manager, National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)
- Kate Thomann, Assistant Secretary, First Nations, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Joanne Goulding (Proxy), Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC)
- John Burton (Proxy), SNAICC

Apologies

- Louisa Uta, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Stephen Sereako Treloggen, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- June Riemer, Deputy CEO, FPDN
- Joanna Agius, Deadly Deaf Mob, Lived Experience Representative / Advocate
- Catherine Liddle, CEO, SNAICC
- Jody Broun, CEO, National Indigenous Australians Agency

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Date
18 July 2023
Category

- First Nations Advisory Council communique

First Nations Advisory Council May 2024 meeting

Date
28 August 2024

Category

- Co design advisory group communique

Co-design Advisory Group August 2023

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