



**Australian Government**  
**Productivity Commission**



Human Resources

# Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

## 2019 – 2022

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## Statement of Commitment

The Productivity Commission (the Commission) has an inclusive workplace culture that values people with different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

As an Australian Public Service (APS) agency, we are committed to employing, supporting and developing people from all walks of life – regardless of disability, ethnicity, religious beliefs, age, gender or sexual orientation – and to creating a work environment that respects, and reflects, the diversity of the Australian community.

Our Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is consistent with the Commission's [Corporate Plan](#) in seeking to attract and retain high calibre staff – we seek to attract and retain a diverse workforce. Our workplace will:

- value Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promote flexibility for all staff, including those with caring responsibilities and disability
- allow employees to be themselves freely without fear of discrimination
- ensure a safe, supportive work environment to meet the diverse needs of staff.

As a small agency, this means focusing our diversity and inclusion efforts on certain priority elements, as well as supporting staff-led initiatives, and encouraging staff participation in diversity initiatives more broadly, to build and maintain external networks.

In doing so, we demonstrate our commitment to workplace diversity and inclusion through fostering a supportive, respectful and engaging environment for all staff. I welcome and encourage ideas and input from staff, to promote and support our workplace diversity.

Michael Brennan  
Chair

## Elements of the Strategy

Our Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will focus on the following key elements:

- Disability employment
- Indigenous employment and awareness of Indigenous cultures
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) / multicultural employment

More broadly, the Commission is committed to **workplace flexibility** for all staff. The Commission offers staff a wide range of flexible work and leave arrangements to assist in work/life balance, while meeting our operational needs. Our workplace flexibility arrangements include options in relation to working hours, patterns of work and location of work.

We adopt a 'flexible by default' approach. All employees may work flexible hours, with employees and their managers working together to manage workloads and working hours. Managers will take into account employee preferences regarding hours of attendance, subject to operational needs.

The Commission will make all reasonable attempts to accommodate requests to work flexibly, although arrangements must suit the type of work performed and operational requirements. Our *Flexible Working Arrangements Guidelines* outline the range of flexible work options available, and how staff may access them.

As a small agency, we also encourage staff to collaborate with other agencies and organisations on diversity-related matters, such as via participation in APS-wide networks and working groups, and attendance at relevant external events.

## Responsibilities

Everyone at the Commission has a responsibility for creating and contributing to an environment that embraces and celebrates the differences and similarities that people bring to the workplace.

Commission management, including Human Resources (HR), have additional responsibilities to ensure that our practices contribute to a safe workplace which values diversity, and does not discriminate (either directly or indirectly) against a person on the basis of their personal attributes (including their gender identity, race, colour, religion, age, ethnicity, mental or physical disability, sexuality, marital status, family or carer responsibilities, pregnancy, political opinion, national extraction or social origin).

Our people management practices (such as workforce planning, recruitment and selection, case management and performance management processes) will also be sensitive to the needs of staff from diverse backgrounds.

## Disability Employment

The aim of the Disability Employment element of the strategy is to remove barriers to, and encourage the participation of, people who have identified as having a disability, to enable us to respond more capably to the needs of the community, and to provide a fair and equitable workplace for all staff.

Consistent with the [APS Disability Employment Strategy 2016-19, As One: Making it Happen](#), we are committed to expanding the range of employment opportunities for people with disability, investing in developing the capability of employees with disability, increasing representation of employees with disability in senior roles and to fostering inclusive cultures in the workplace.

## Indigenous Employment and Awareness of Indigenous Cultures

The aim of the Indigenous Employment element of the strategy is to prioritise and increase representation of Indigenous employees within the Commission by offering entry pathways and career development opportunities. We also seek to raise the awareness of staff and Commissioners of Indigenous cultures.

Consistent with the [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy](#), we seek to increase Indigenous representation and are committed to expanding the range of Indigenous employment opportunities, investing in developing the capability of Indigenous employees, and increasing the representation of Indigenous employees in senior roles.

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse / Multicultural Employment

We aim to increase the representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, to value and embrace their skills, perspectives and experiences to build a more energetic and engaged workforce that reflects the diversity of Australian communities.

We will celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity of our people and provide a culturally safe and inclusive work environment, in line with the [Government's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy](#).

## Planned Activities and Actions

Some planned initiatives to support this strategy are set out at Attachment 1.

This not an exhaustive list – further actions and activities will be identified and implemented as opportunities arise, including based on ideas from staff, subject to management endorsement and with consideration to resourcing and operational requirements.

Commission management is committed to considering and supporting staff-led events, initiatives and networks.

## Monitoring and Reporting

We will monitor our progress and provide progress reports to the Management Committee at the end of each financial year.

The Assistant Commissioner, Corporate Services will provide:

- annual reports on progress to the Management Committee
- input into the Australian Public Service Commissioner's State of the Service Report
- relevant material for inclusion in the Productivity Commission's Annual Report
- all other reporting as required by the Government.

The effectiveness of this strategy and supporting activities will be reviewed by 31 December 2022, and an updated version put in place.

## DRAFT – Planned Actions and Activities to Support Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

Some planned actions and activities to support workplace diversity and inclusion are listed below for each of the elements of our strategy.

There are also some actions that apply across elements, including:

- Reviewing recruitment practice, including actively promoting inclusivity in external recruitment and advertising, and addressing unconscious bias in recruitment.
- Providing training and/or developing resources to support diversity.
- Participating in APS-specific or community-wide diversity networks and events.
- Supporting staff-led diversity initiatives.

### Disability Employment

- Ensuring recruitment and selection teams are disability aware and confident, and address unconscious bias.
- Including disability awareness principles in induction materials and management development.
- Ensuring workplaces are accessible.
- Providing support for managers and colleagues of staff with disability.
- Making reasonable adjustments in a timely manner, and as guided by medical advice.
- Developing and implementing a workplace adjustment policy and procedure.
- Exploring opportunities to participate in APS-wide and broader disability employment initiatives.

### Indigenous Employment and Awareness of Indigenous Cultures

- Offering Cultural Capability training to all staff.
- Including cultural awareness principles in induction materials.
- Pursuing opportunities for engagement and conversations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including around occasions such as Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, and participation in relevant conferences / events, with attendees sharing their experience with colleagues.
- Including an Acknowledgement of Country (as per our guidelines) when hosting Commission events and meetings with external participants.
- Supporting employee participation in programs such as the Jawun APS Secondment Program, and the APSC's Indigenous Employment Programs.
- Expanding the number of pathways into the Commission, including by:
  - secondments and transfers, including participating in structured mobility initiatives for Indigenous APS employees
  - working with Indigenous employment service providers to reach Indigenous job seekers
  - potential use of internships and/or cadetships for Economics students
  - participating in whole-of-Government Indigenous recruitment programmes to give Indigenous applicants the opportunity to be considered across a range of Commission positions (such as Corporate).
- Supporting development of networks of Indigenous staff.

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse / Multicultural Employment

- Celebrating significant cultural days.
- Providing access to tools and resources to support multicultural capability, awareness and understanding.
- Continuing to maintain our register of staff who speak a language other than English – noting that this is not designed to replace the need for accredited interpreters, but will enable staff to assist with some translation tasks.
- Ensuring our EAP provider is culturally competent (e.g. access to counselling in languages other than English).
- Maintaining reflection rooms for staff to use for personal reflection, prayer or meditation.