



## Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020 - 2023

### Introduction

IPEA has established a diverse and inclusive environment, where all employees are valued and respected.

This strategy reflects our values-based leadership and our commitment to a diverse and inclusive culture. It builds on IPEA's existing values of building an organisational culture based on:

- confidence to raise difficult issues
- collaboration to make best use of our resources
- opportunities to develop, and
- the benefits associated with being a diverse and inclusive agency.

While the strategy provides the necessary framework to build our culture and practices of diversity and inclusion, it will be further supported by action plans that will focus on more specific diversity components which will be developed over the next three years.

### What is diversity and inclusion?

Diversity is about our individual differences and acknowledging the unique blend of knowledge, skills and perspectives employees bring to the workplace.

Diversity can include characteristics such as cultural background and ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, language and education. Diversity also includes characteristics such as professional skills, working style, location, and life experiences.

An inclusive culture is one where everyone feels valued and respected and is able to fully contribute. It is about removing barriers to make sure everyone can fully participate in the workplace and have equal access to opportunities. Inclusion is about empowering employees to contribute their skills and perspectives for the benefit of organisational performance and business outcomes.

### Vision

IPEA is a place which embraces difference and fosters an environment of inclusion and regard for others. We want our employees to feel included, valued and respected and have access to equal opportunity, which supports full participation at work. We want to develop and retain the diverse talent in our workforce and support our employees to maintain a long and productive working career. Understanding the benefits of diversity, and ensuring inclusiveness, is at the heart of our core values and work culture.

Ultimately, we want to unlock the value that diversity brings to our business. To achieve this we continue the culture shift from traditional ways of thinking and towards practices which address the

needs of a contemporary workforce, maximise talent and embrace the use of technology and innovation. We must be bold in our approach and committed to action.

Everyone in IPEA has a role to play in supporting a diverse, accessible and inclusive workplace.

### Commitment

We are committed to maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment where all employees are valued and respected in order to build a highly capable, innovative and adaptive workforce to achieve our purpose. Diversity and inclusion is everyone’s right and responsibility, in particular:

- IPEA Executive – driver of culture and values
- middle management – lead by example
- all employees – responsibility to uphold

### Why is diversity and inclusion important?

For Our Employees	For IPEA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It promotes equal opportunity for all employees.</li> <li>• It supports our employees to be their best.</li> <li>• It supports the health and wellbeing of our employees.</li> <li>• It ensures our employees are happy and engaged.</li> <li>• It ensures our employees are valued and included.</li> <li>• It increases employee satisfaction and retention.</li> <li>• It is the right thing to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It fosters innovation and creativity.</li> <li>• It increases productivity.</li> <li>• It improves performance and outcomes.</li> <li>• It builds IPEA’s reputation as a socially responsible organisation.</li> <li>• It increases employee satisfaction and engagement.</li> <li>• It ensures safety and wellbeing.</li> <li>• It develops better problem-solving abilities and improved decision-making.</li> <li>• It ensures we are reflective of the Australian population.</li> </ul>

### The Strategy

IPEA’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aims to:

Objectives	Initiatives/actions	Outcomes
Promote broad awareness of the benefits of having a diverse and inclusive culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee engagement, presentations, guest speakers.</li> <li>• Sharing of success stories and acknowledging achievement.</li> <li>• Celebrate and promote key events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A positive and cohesive work environment.</li> <li>• Increased workforce capability.</li> </ul>
Create a diverse and inclusive culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection of inclusion in our values and recruitment activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased employee retention and recruitment.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive language and inclusive listening.</li> <li>• Leadership conversations.</li> <li>• APS initiatives and collaboration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees feel valued and respected with access to equal opportunities.</li> </ul>
Empower employees to build inclusive teams and harness diversity of thought.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of relevant training including unconscious bias and inclusive leadership.</li> <li>• Ongoing communication and engagement with employees.</li> <li>• Mentoring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viewed as an employer of choice.</li> <li>• Increased corporate citizenship.</li> </ul>
Build a safe and healthy work environment free from bullying and harassment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of relevant training.</li> <li>• Employee Assistance Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate behaviour is eliminated.</li> </ul>

### Our commitment to action

We have committed to a range of actions designed to build upon our inclusive workplace culture, retain our diverse workforce for the benefit of performance and productivity and support our employees to have long and productive working careers.

We aim to:

- Foster a workplace environment and culture where all employees can feel free to be themselves without the need to guard or self-edit their conversations, and without fear of bias, labels or negative behaviour.
- Create a workplace which is fair, safe and inclusive of all employees regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.
- Eliminate or reduce barriers which prevent full participation at work and provide an accessible workplace which supports employees with disability to fully contribute.
- Retain our mature age employees and recognise the wealth of corporate knowledge they bring to the workplace and the role they play in passing on this knowledge to support improved performance and succession planning in IPEA.

We acknowledge that employees may identify across a number of diversity groups. This has been addressed by outlining our commitments to action in the following plans:

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (Multicultural) Employee Plan 2020–23
- Gender Equality Plan 2020–23
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-23

These actions will be implemented in the context of IPEA’s business operations and achievement of government outcomes.

# Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employee Plan 2020-23

## Our aim

We aim to increase the representation of employees from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in our workforce and to value and embrace their skills, perspectives and experiences for the benefit of providing culturally appropriate and improved services to the Australian community.

We aim to celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity of our employees, provide a culturally safe and inclusive workplace and have a positive impact on social cohesion.

This plan supports the government’s Multicultural Access and Equity Policy.

## Our commitment to action

<b>RECRUIT—Our workforce reflects the diversity of the community we serve</b>		
1	We will review our HR policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	Dec 2021
<b>INCLUDE—Our culture fosters access and inclusion</b>		
2	We will celebrate cultural days of significance such as Harmony Day and Refugee Week.	Annually
3	We will implement internal communication activities to promote cultural and linguistic diversity and inclusion.	Continuing
4	We will ensure our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are culturally competent.	Continuing
<b>DEVELOP—We provide opportunity for growth</b>		
5	We will promote the completion of Respectful Workplaces training in LearnHub.	

# Gender Equality Plan 2020–23

## Our aim

We aim to create a workplace which provides equal opportunity and advancement in employment regardless of gender, where workplace flexibility arrangements support both women and men to balance family and caring responsibilities and work participation, and gender balance supports improved business decision-making, merit and performance.

We will also harness the expertise and experience of our mature age employees, and create a workplace which is fair, safe and inclusive of all employees regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

## Our commitment to action

RECRUIT—Our workforce reflects the diversity of the community we serve		
1	We will review our HR policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	Dec 2021
2	We will continue to ensure appropriate gender balance in selection panels.	Continuing
INCLUDE—Our culture fosters access and inclusion		
2	We will review our HR policies, guidelines and procedures to ensure a flexible workplace which supports operational requirements and considers the individual needs of employees.	July 2021
3	We will review our HR policies and resources to ensure they reflect the requirements of the Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender (Gender Guidelines).	Ongoing
4	We will promote days of significance such as International Women’s Day, International Men’s Day, White Ribbon Day, National Carer’s Week, Wear it Purple Day.	Annually
5	We will implement communication activities to promote gender equality, including promoting the take-up of flexible working arrangements by men, and the benefits of a carer-friendly workplace.	Continuing
6	We will promote a flexible workplace environment to support work-life balance for parents and carers and which promotes the role men play, including male leaders and managers, in supporting employees to have an active career along-side an active parent role.	Continuing
DEVELOP—We provide opportunity for growth		
8	We will implement training to build manager capability in effectively supporting employees before, during and after return from parental leave, and to manage a flexible workplace which benefits both the employee and business outcomes.	December 2020
	We will promote e-learning programs in LearnHub on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bullying and Harassment</li> </ul>	Ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disability Awareness</li><li>• Diversity and Discrimination</li><li>• Respectful Workplaces.</li></ul>	
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# Definitions

## Carers

Carers have responsibility for the care of a child of school age or younger or provides personal care, support and assistance to someone in need of support due to disability, medical condition, terminal illness, mental illness or is frail and aged.

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

Cultural and linguistic diversity refers to those parts of our identity which stem from where our parents were born and the languages they speak, where we were born and the languages we speak, our ancestries and our religious identity. For data purposes the definition is usually employees whose first spoken language was not English.

## Disability

A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible.

The definition of disability includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological, and
- Learning disabilities, as well as
- Physical disfigurement, and
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

## Gender Equality

Gender Equality refers to creating workplaces where everyone is afforded equal opportunities and employment conditions irrespective of their gender.

## LGBTI

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Intersex (LGBTI) includes those employees who are same sex attracted, attracted to both men and women, identify as a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth and those that have biological characteristics that are not typically male or female.

## Mature Age

Whilst being of mature age is not defined to a specific age bracket, for data collection purposes the definition of mature age refers to employees aged 50 or over.