

Inclusion Strategy 2024–26

Vision: A safe and inclusive workplace that fosters a culture of respect, celebrating diverse perspectives, and recognising them as essential to our collective growth and innovation.

Purpose: To develop and support an empowered workforce which reflects the diversity that exists in the Queensland community we serve.

What success will look like

An inclusive workforce culture that embraces difference and provides everyone with the resources to contribute their unique skills and ideas, and perform to the best of their ability. A place that people are proud to work and want to stay because they feel they belong.

An environment where all employees feel safe, valued, supported and respected within the workplace. They feel empowered to speak up with questions, share their concerns and ideas, and advocate for their own needs and those of others.

A workforce whose diversity more closely aligns with the diversity of the communities we serve. The complexity of identities and their intersectional nature are recognised and respected when considering the needs of our colleagues and clients.

How we'll get there

Lead: Build leadership capabilities to develop and model inclusive, authentic and compassionate leadership.

Advance: Learn together and raise awareness of ways to advance the department's ability to foster an inclusive work environment, from recruitment to retirement.

Value: Support our staff through collaborative design, implementation and review of strategic solutions which value and leverage the advantages diversity provides.

The department

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services was formed in mid-2023. It brought together two distinct cohorts of frontline workers and their support structures. In December 2023 Multicultural Affairs Queensland joined the department.

As the department adheres to the Queensland Government commitment to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, the department has a strong focus on employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with lived experience of disability, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The department is committed to supporting our diverse workforce to bring their whole self to work, supporting people across the spectrum of cultural backgrounds (including race, religion and country of origin), languages, sexualities and genders, disability, age, neurotypes and lived experience.

The department has an Inclusion and Diversity Champion who is a member of the Board of Management and chairs the Inclusion and Diversity Reference Group. The Reference Group represents most diversity groups and areas of the department, and helps to implement the Equity and Diversity Plan which is reviewed annually to help us achieve our vision.

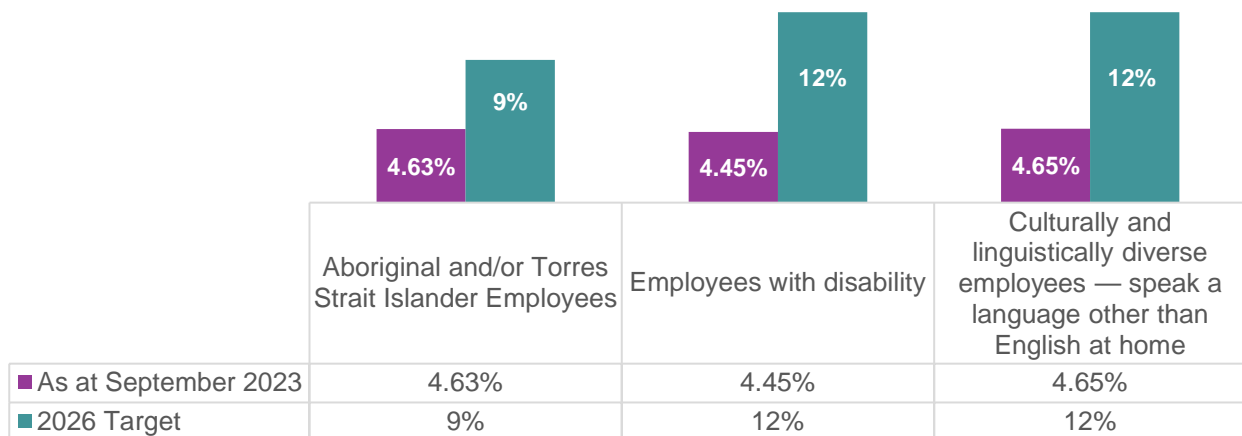
Where we are now

Results from the 2023 Working for Queensland survey helped us to understand the experiences of people who identify as part of our diversity groups. For instance, employees who report feeling culturally safe at work include 77% of people who identify as Australian South Sea Islander, 67% of Torres Strait Islander employees and 62% of Aboriginal employees. Only 57% of people who identify as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people report feeling culturally safe at work.

While the majority (79%) of people who identify as LGBTIQ+ feel safe and respected at work, that drops to 64% for people who identify as nonbinary, agender or gender diverse. Only 50% of the gender diverse cohort knows of allies in the organisation they can approach for support and only 39% believe their gender does not hinder their success in the organisation.

The responses also help to identify where the intersections of these identities may be causing further marginalisation. We see that 65% of people who identify as living with disability report feeling safe and respected at work, but that figure drops to 47% for Aboriginal people living with disability. There is therefore a need to consider inclusion activities through an intersectional lens.

In pursuit of the department’s commitment to reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve, we set representation targets for certain diversity groups as outlined in the table below. We also track the percentage of women in leadership positions, with a target of 60% — as at 30 September 2023, the departmental percentage was 73.8%. This data is sourced from Minimum Obligatory Human Resources Information (MOHRI) reporting, which does not record LGBTIQ+ status.



It’s worth noting that the Working for Queensland responses suggest a much higher proportion of people with disability than appears on this official data. The department has identified the need to work towards increasing reporting rates through the Diversity Census, which will indicate an increase in people feeling safe to disclose.

Working together

Staff at all levels have a role to play in fostering a safe and respectful workplace. We share responsibility for inclusive behaviour across the organisation and can all lead by example. Staff can get involved in building this culture through simple acts and behaviours:

- Act in a respectful and friendly manner and learn how to be an active ally to colleagues.
- Call out or report behaviours that may be disrespectful or actively discriminatory to help shape a safe and supportive culture.

- Embrace diversity of thought through collaboration and co-creation. Be aware of how your own experiences have shaped the way you think — seek out diverse voices, create connections, and be open to giving and receiving feedback.
- Take an active part in inclusion activities and seek out new knowledge to help improve cultural capability and understanding of the lives of the diverse people we work with and serve.
- Consider whether disclosing your individual needs would allow workplace adjustments to help you reach your full potential.
- Consider contributing to the confidential Equity and Diversity census through Aurion ESS to help the department's reporting and planning processes.

How we will measure success

Improvement in Working for Queensland survey results, tracked annually on:

- Fair and equitable treatment
- Respect and psychological safety
- Cultural safety
- Employee engagement
- Leadership
- Social support
- Flexible work.

Increased results in the following measures:

- proportion of staff from diverse backgrounds employed in decision making roles — June 2024
- number of job applicants from diversity target group — tracked quarterly
- retention rate of staff in diversity target groups — tracked quarterly
- percentage of women in leadership aligns with total proportion of women — tracked annually
- progress towards departmental diversity targets — tracked quarterly.

Links to other plans and strategies

This plan has links to the following department and whole of government documents, which shape the way we work towards a more inclusive workforce.

- [DCSSDS Strategic Plan](#)
- [DCSSDS Disability Service Plan 2023–2026](#)
- [Yangaa Dahqu — Mekem Gen: Reframing the Relationship Roadmap](#)
- [Respectfully Journey Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Plan](#)
- [Strategic Workforce Plan 2023–2026](#)
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan 2024–2028](#)
- [Queensland Public Sector Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021–2025](#)
- [Disabling the barriers to employment in the Queensland public sector Implementation Plan 2023](#)
- [Queensland's Disability Plan: Together, a better Queensland 2022–2027](#)
- [Queensland public sector LGBTIQ+ Action plan 2023–2025](#)
- [Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2022–23 to 2023–24](#)
- [Queensland Women's Strategy 2022–27](#)



Equity and Inclusion Plan 2024–25

The Equity and Inclusion Plan draws on the findings of the annual Equity and Diversity Audit to identify areas for improvement. The audit takes into account staff diversity survey responses, EEO Census data, exit survey data and Working for Queensland survey responses, as well as outlining the achievements of the previous Equity and Diversity Plan. The plan supports the [Public Sector Act 2022](#), which provides a modern, employee-focused legislative framework to ensure Queensland’s public sector is fair, responsive, inclusive and a leader in public administration.

This plan provides the foundations for future work. These actions will be reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate to the changing needs of the department.

| Goal | Actions | Outcomes | Led by |
|--|---|--|--|
| Lead — Build leadership capabilities to develop and model inclusive, authentic and compassionate leadership. | | | |
| L1 Share responsibility for inclusive behaviour across the organisation, and lead by example. The principles of inclusion should underpin all that we do and set the tone for our work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed inclusion into the departmental culture, ensuring that the diverse needs of our workforce and clients are considered in planning processes. • Develop and promote a resource to help embed inclusion, equity and cultural safety considerations into workforce and strategic planning. • Engage with equity and diversity industry partners and peak bodies, and participate in available index and/or accreditation programs to ensure our workplace practices, policies and programs are appropriate and contemporary. • Support the executive Inclusion and Diversity Champion to lead the equity and diversity agenda and promote the importance of fostering inclusive workplaces. • Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural capability activities into performance plans. • Support managers to use performance conversations as an opportunity to ensure staff feel empowered, enabled and encouraged to pursue their career goals. Build discussions about workplace adjustments and flexible working options into these conversations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All key strategies and Workforce Plans contain inclusion, equity and cultural safety considerations • Performance conversations incorporate inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole department • People and Culture |
| L2 Leadership demographics more closely align with demographics of the department. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve diversity census response rate by improving communication about the data privacy and purpose of collection, to better understand the demographics of the department. • Investigate the causes of lower representation of some diversity groups in higher salaried roles, including intersectionality considerations, and identify potential barriers for progression. • Prominently promote available workplace flexibility, including in senior roles, in job advertisements and on careers web page. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Diversity Census response rate • Better representation of our diversity in senior leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture |
| Advance — Learn together and raise awareness of ways to advance the department’s ability to foster an inclusive work environment, from recruitment to retirement. | | | |
| A1 Provide equitable and accessible training and development opportunities to help all staff thrive. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff induction and onboarding that is comprehensive and accessible to all. • Ensure our leadership and career progression programs are inclusive and accessible to our diverse workforce. • Review the accessibility of learning and development resources to help employees achieve their career goals. • Identify and promote programs for skills development and career advancement across staff diversity groups. • Scope the viability of embedding an accessible communication specialist in the department to help improve the accessibility of our documents, messaging and training both internally and externally. • Promote learning opportunities for managers and staff on various aspects of diversity, disability and access needs, and the concept of intersectionality. • Reduce barriers for inclusion by identifying and improving systems and processes that create barriers. • Communicate the grievance resolution process to strengthen staff understanding of and confidence in the process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and developmental opportunities can be accessed by all staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture • Whole department |
| A2 Recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity that exists in the Queensland community we serve. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed inclusion, equity and cultural safety considerations into Recruitment strategies. • Investigate the application and appointment ratios across classification levels to identify ways to disrupt the status quo, i.e., attracting younger people to RCO roles and people with disability to CSO roles. • Develop attraction strategies that attract talents from diverse backgrounds and groups. • Embed inclusive recruitment practices, allowing all candidates equal opportunities to showcase their relevant skills and lived experience. • During recruitment, provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to contribute to a healthy, inclusive workplace culture. • Implement tools to determine access needs of applicants during recruitment to streamline onboarding process. • Explore available traineeship programs for students from diverse backgrounds to help scope alternative career entry pathways. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in inclusive recruitment and hiring practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture |

| Goal | Actions | Outcomes | Led by |
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| Value — Support our staff through collaborative design of strategic solutions which value and leverage the advantages diversity provides. | | | |
| V1 Embrace and celebrate diversity and leverage the advantages it provides. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and promote a diversity and inclusion calendar of events; actively provide opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of diversity in all its forms, and encourage and empower staff to celebrate difference. • Harness the expertise, experience and interest of the Inclusion and Diversity Reference Group and other Employee Resource Groups to advise on and drive initiatives. • Create communication, consultation and support channels and networks with staff and stakeholders from relevant diversity groups. • Celebrate and promote inclusion and diversity through the Staff Excellence Awards and actively increase focus on positive initiatives across the department. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased nominations for the Diversity and Inclusion category of the Staff Excellence Awards — July 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture • Disability, Seniors, and Carers |
| V2 Ensure all staff feel included and supported to do their best work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve understanding of and access to workplace adjustments by promoting the Workplace Adjustment policy and associated tools. • Promote access to flexible working arrangements for all employees in roles where flexibility is possible. • Explore EAS providers who can appropriately support our diverse employees. • Reinvigorate the department's use of the Racism. It Stops With Me campaign materials, and consider establishing a multicultural employee resource group. • Ensure inclusion resources on the intranet are accessible, practical and contemporary. • Develop a resource for older workers considering a transition to retirement, including knowledge transfer strategies. • Implement the relevant workforce actions in the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural Capability Action Plan ○ DCSSDS Disability Services Plan ○ Multicultural Action Plan ○ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustments promoted • Intranet resources reviewed and updated. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture • Whole department |