

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY 2025-29

CONTEXT

The Independent Commission Against Corruption acknowledges and values diversity and inclusion in the way it delivers its statutory functions.

Understanding diversity in the South Australian community is important to create an inclusive workplace for employees and for communicating with people who come into contact with the Commission.

This strategy focuses on diversity and inclusion in our workforce.

The Commission's diversity and inclusion strategy aligns with its Strategic Plan 2025-2028, specifically **Priority Four**:

- Build an efficient, skilled and resilient workforce
 - Promote diversity, inclusion and fairness in the workplace.

It also supports the South Australian Public Sector Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26.

DEFINITIONS

Diversity is the mix of people who work in the Commission. It refers to all the ways in which we differ. More detail about diversity is provided in the following section, and throughout this strategy.

Inclusion is getting this mix of employees to work. It occurs when diverse employees feel respected, connected to their colleagues and the organisation, and that their work is meaningful and contributes to organisational success.

Identity refers to a sense of knowing who we are as individuals and a member of social groups. It also refers to our sense of how we may be perceived and labelled by others.

Leaders in the Commission, are those who manage and guide employees to achieve organisations goals. Leaders include the Commissioner, Chief Executive Officer, Directors and Managers.

An **Employee** is a person employed (either directly or through labour hire) by the Commission.

Socio-demographic characteristics are those of a population or a specific group of individuals, including age, gender, social class and ethnicity.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity relates to the mix of socio-demographic characteristics, professional skills and life experiences that are represented in our workforce. For example, diversity includes differences in gender, age and social class of employees. It can also include employees who identify as:

- having a disability or disabilities
- First Nations
- neurodiverse
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual, or otherwise have a diverse sexual orientation or gender identity
- coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse and/or marginalised background
- a carer.

It is important that all Commission employees, including those who may identify differently to the majority of their colleagues (for example, in relation to one or more of the points above) feel included in the Commission.

Inclusion is fostered when individuals:

- feel equally valued and respected for who they are (regardless of how they identify on the characteristics listed above)
- feel connected and accepted
- have equal opportunities
- can contribute their full talents
- feel safe to freely talk about their physical and mental health.

BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY

Individuals' identities, life experiences, backgrounds and skills influence what people know and how they think and work. This diversity of knowledge and ways of working is valuable to the Commission.

Research consistently shows that well-managed workplace diversity improves organisational performance and effectiveness through enhanced decision-making, access to greater talent pools, greater employee satisfaction and productivity, improved workforce wellbeing and reduced employee turnover.¹

Understanding and valuing diversity assists in building a more inclusive workforce, which delivers a range of positive organisational, team, and individual outcomes.

¹ Udin Sri Handayani, Ahyar Yuniawan Suharnomo, Sugeng Wahyedi & Tri Wikaningrum (2017) 'A systematic literature review of managing workplace diversity for sustaining organisational and competitive advantage' *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering and Technology*, 8(12) 398;

Ayman Alshaabani, Khadija Aya Hamza Aya & Ildikó Rudnák (2021). 'Impact of Diversity Management on Employees' Engagement: The Role of Organizational Trust and Job Insecurity'. *Sustainability*. 14;

Bharati Sethi, Rosemary Vito and Vanessa Sonia Ongbanoueken 'Organizational culture, diversity, and employee's health in social/human services: A systematic review'(2021) *International Health Trends and Perspectives* 1(1) 74.

DIVERSITY STREAMS

In this strategy, diversity includes a mix of various socio-demographic characteristics. These are referred to below as diversity streams.

The strategy focuses on the following diversity streams: gender identity, LGBTIQA+, disability, First Nations, neurodiversity, culturally and linguistically diverse and/or marginalised, age diversity, carer status, and social class. It is important to acknowledge that an individual employee's identity can be influenced by a complex interaction of these streams (for example, gender identity, age, cultural background and LGBTIQA+ identity).

Regardless of how an employee identifies on any of these diversity streams, the Commission is committed to ensuring they are valued at work, treated equally and with respect, and to providing an inclusive workplace where employees are supported to reach their full potential at work.

Gender identity

Gender refers to the characteristics, behaviours, social norms, and roles that are typically associated with being a man or a woman (and similarly, identities that are understood as male or masculine or female or feminine). However, some people identify in ways that do not conform with either male or female (cisgender) identities (also see below LGBTIQA+ section).

LGBTIQA+

LGBTIQA+ is an evolving acronym that acknowledges a diverse array of sexual orientations, gender identities, and/or sex characteristics. The letters recognise lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual identities. The '+' sign acknowledges sexual orientations and genders outside of the letters in the acronym. The term LGBTIQA+ is used in an effort to be as inclusive as possible, although it is recognised that people identify with other terms.

Disability

Disability refers to a long-term condition that affects a person's physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory abilities, or a mix of these. These conditions, combined with various barriers, can make it harder for a person to fully participate in society like everyone else.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity refers to the idea that people experience and interact with the world in many different ways, and there is no one 'right' way of thinking, learning, and behaving. It refers to diversity in cognition, sensory processing, motor abilities, social comfort and focus.

Neurodiversity is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder and other neurodivergent conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia or sensory processing disorders. A neurodiverse approach does not see people with these conditions as having 'disorders' but rather having particular skills and challenges that are different from people without those conditions.

First Nations

First Nations people in Australia refer to the first people of Australia, otherwise known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Both terms are umbrella descriptions for a large array of different nations, each with their own culture, language, beliefs and practices. Current estimates suggest First Nations people have lived in Australia for upwards of 60,000 years prior to colonisation.

In Australia, First Nations people have experienced, and continue to experience, harm arising from colonisation. Examples include the ongoing negative impacts arising for stolen generations in addition to discrimination and racism.

Culturally and linguistically diverse and/or marginalised

South Australia is home to people from more than 200 culturally and linguistically and diverse backgrounds. The term 'culturally and linguistically marginalised' acknowledges that some communities have experienced, and may continue to experience, harm as a result of discrimination and racism.

Age diversity

Australians continue to have long life expectancies when compared to other countries. Workers are remaining active in the workplace for longer than previous generations, and workplaces can have a mix of older, middle aged and younger workers.

Carer status

Many people have significant caring responsibilities outside of work that demand their time, energy and resources. This can involve caring for children and adults. Support and flexibility can assist employees to manage these responsibilities effectively alongside work.

Social class

Social class refers to social categories which people identify with (or are labelled by others) referring to their social and economic status in society. This includes wealth, level and type of education, level of prestige in their occupation, cultural tastes and behaviours.

The majority of Australians identify as either 'working' or 'middle' class. However, Australian research suggests at least five or six class groups of different types of 'affluent' 'middle' and 'working' classes.² It also suggests that many people are aware of their own class identity, and that social class is a meaningful socio-demographic characteristic in contemporary Australia.

² Researchers at the Australian National University analysed Australian population data to identify social class groupings in 2015 and 2017. In 2015, five groups were identified: established affluent, emergent affluent, mobile middle, established middle, and established working. Research published in 2017 retained the same affluent and middle class groupings, however 'established working' was replaced by: precariat, ageing workers, and new workers. Jill Sheppard and Nicholas Biddle 'How many classes does it take to describe Australians? The answer may surprise you' *ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences* (news article, 29 October 2015) <[How many classes does it take to describe Australians? The answer may surprise you | ANU College of ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES](#)>

Nicholas Biddle and Jill Sheppard, 'Class, Capital and Identity in Australian Society' (2017) 52(4) *Australian Journal of Political Science* 500.

PROFILE OF THE COMMISSION'S EXISTING WORKFORCE

The Commission, through its Diversity and Inclusion Committee, undertakes regular internal surveys to measure the diversity in our workforce and employee perceptions of inclusion.

The results of previous diversity and inclusion surveys show that the Commission workforce is comprised of a majority of employees born in Australia, who only speak English, and rate themselves as medium or high on a scale of socioeconomic status. All employees identified as either male or female. In 2024 approximately half the workforce was female and half male. A slightly larger proportion of the workforce is aged 40 and over as compared with 39 and under. Over half had caring responsibilities.

Small percentages of the workforce identified in any of the following categories: First Nations, having a disability, LGBTIQ+, speaking a language other than English, and rating themselves as low on a scale of socioeconomic status.

While this profile may change over time, this data is important to understand diversity in our workforce, which can inform actions to promote inclusion.

PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

The Commission's diversity and inclusion strategy has three foundation principles that describe the priorities to be achieved by the strategy.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRINCIPLES

1. Value diversity and foster inclusion.
2. Build diversity and inclusion knowledge and capability.
3. Be accountable for diversity and inclusion.

The following statements articulate the Commission's commitments to diversity and inclusion. The commitments describe the behaviours by which the principles will be achieved. The commitments directly align with the Commissioner's values of accountability, collaboration, excellence, independence, integrity and respect.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITMENTS

1. Foster a culture of support, belonging, meaningful engagement and wellbeing.
2. Respect and value every individual for the diversity of skills and experiences that they bring.
3. Aim to be an employer of choice with the best people attracted, recruited, developed and retained.

4. Treat each other respectfully, fairly, justly, reasonably and equitably without discrimination.
5. Hold each other accountable for enabling an inclusive culture and practices.

GOALS

The Commission has established the following goals aligned to the diversity and inclusion principles articulated above.

Principle	Goals
1. Value diversity and foster inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure recruitment practices are equitable, inclusive and made with an awareness of bias • Encourage employment and retention of people with diverse backgrounds and experiences • Ensure the workplace is safe, supportive and that the contribution and perspectives of all employees are valued • Continue to demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion through workplace events and initiatives • Ensure employees have access to flexible working arrangements
2. Build diversity and inclusion knowledge and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support a Diversity and Inclusion Committee • Increase collaboration and sharing of diversity and inclusion initiatives with other agencies • Increase awareness and understanding of how to create an inclusive workplace • Commit to increase reconciliation knowledge and capability in the workplace
3. Be accountable for diversity and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor, measure and report on diversity and inclusion • Ensure leaders are accountable to embed and foster an inclusive culture • Ensure leaders are role models for all employees

CONCLUSION

Diversity and inclusion underpin our ability to build and maintain a contemporary and innovative agency, improving our capability to effectively deliver our statutory functions.

Fostering, valuing and embedding diversity and inclusion in the Commission is the collective responsibility of all employees at all levels.