



Workplace Gender Equality Agency Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

2019-2021

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Part One – Our commitment

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (the Agency/WGEA) is committed to providing an inclusive work environment which is supportive of difference and encourages full participation of all employees in contributing to the achievement of our business objectives. We recognise that the differences our people bring to the workplace add to its strength.

Diversity encompasses differences in gender, age, language, cultural background, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and ability. Diversity also refers to the many ways we are different in other respects such as educational level, job function, socio-economic background, geographic location, thinking style and whether or not one has family responsibilities. The Agency's Workplace Diversity Action plan has been designed to include all of these factors and to focus on a number of key areas that have been identified for action.

Our objective is to reflect the diversity of the Australian working age population, whilst maintaining our quality of service to clients, and to work in an environment where individual differences, skills, talents and views are valued and everyone is encouraged to learn, develop and share their knowledge.

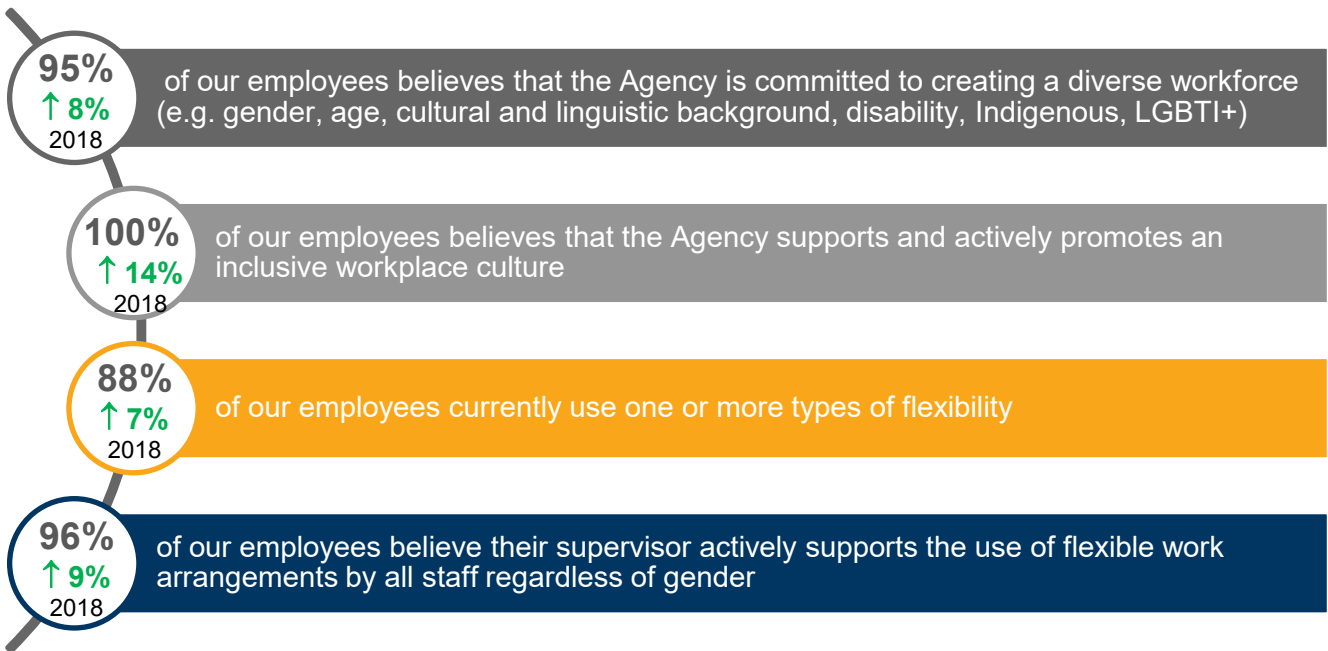
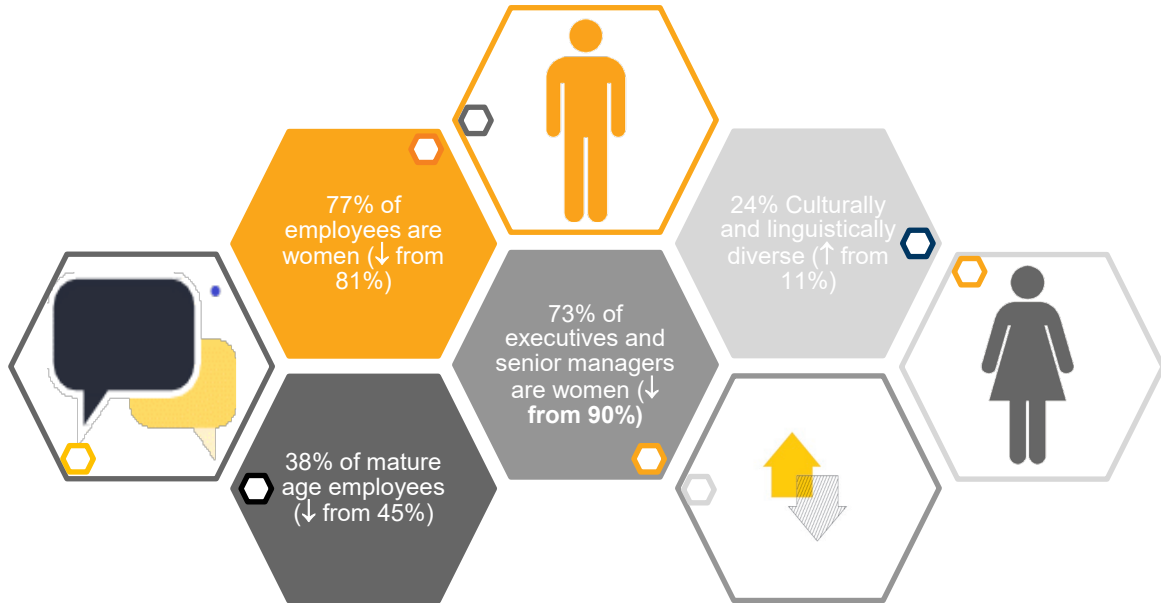
This Plan:

- applies to all Agency employees and contractors,
- aligns with WGEA's Enterprise Agreement 2015-2018 and Determination 2019/1
- is supported by initiatives in our Corporate and Strategic Plans, and
- aligns with the Australian Public Service Multicultural Access and Equity Policy and the Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy.

The Agency will report on diversity outcomes in our Annual Report and this Plan will be in place for three years. The Agency will achieve its commitments by linking its objectives to five focus areas.

Focus area	Objective/s
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → WGEA actively seeks out opportunities to increase the representation of people from diverse backgrounds in the workplace. → WGEA puts in place measures to ensure the selection and promotion process is fair for all applicants
Working arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → WGEA has a framework that supports flexible working arrangements including part-time and job sharing arrangements for those who require it.
Workplace Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → WGEA values the experiences and the contributions made by people from diverse backgrounds and there is staff engagement in diversity and inclusion initiatives → WGEA encourages all staff to participate on Agency working groups and consultative processes.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Diversity initiatives and events are regularly held and communicated to all staff. → Different communication models in team and staff meetings are piloted and Diversity inclusive language is used.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The WGEA executive team promotes and models diversity and inclusion in the workplace → Diversity training is part of the training and development schedule and is available to all staff.

Diversity profile as at 30th June 2019 (compared to 30th June 2018)



Part Two – Our priorities

Gender Equality			
Gender equality refers to creating workplaces where everyone is afforded equal opportunities and employment conditions irrespective of their gender. We seek to make the most of the talents and skills of all employees as a contemporary and leading organisation in Gender Equality.			
Focus area	Actions	Measure of success	When
Recruitment	→ Review recruitment advertising and language to encourage applications from all genders	→ Target of 35% male in management team informed by current workforce composition and turnover projections.	→ By 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Continue to ensure gender balance on selection committees → Seek gender diversity in contractors, secondees, interns and consultants → Review recruitment advertising and language to encourage applications from all genders 	→ Improved gender balance in job roles (including contractors and advisors)	→ Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ensure all job advertisements promote our flexible work arrangements and other relevant employment benefits → Ensure unconscious bias training is part of our learning and development suite 		
	→ Research the options on reporting capability tools to monitor the gender profile of applicants and employees over the employment lifecycle	→ Options for reporting tools researched and presented to executives	→ By Dec 2020
Working arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provide support for flexible working arrangements by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementing desktop anywhere technology; • ensuring ergonomic assessments for remote working and supportive equipment; and • increasing the effectiveness of communication technology to support remote communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Regular reporting demonstrates a broad variety of arrangements in place. → Maintain or increase the level of positive responses >96% with leadership (SES and supervisors) actively supporting the use flexible work arrangements by all staff measured by the annual APS Employee Census 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ongoing → Annual review of Census results
	→ Breast feeding friendly workplace in place and policy promoted	→ Facilities in place to manage breast feeding requirements.	→ Ongoing

Workplace Culture	→ Flexible working arrangements, promoted and supported	→ Annual reporting and APS Census results support perception of supportive culture.	→ Annually
	→ Implement a program of volunteering opportunities for staff that support our diversity and inclusion priorities	→ Annual opportunity for staff to volunteer for a day or part-day at a related charity or organisation.	→ Ongoing
	→ We will promote days of significance such as International Women's Day, International Men's Day and National Carer's Week	→ Annual promotion of at least one significant day relating to gender/gender equality	→ Annually
Communication	→ Improve return to work experiences from parental/carers leave with a keep in touch program and a welcome back program maintained.	→ Re-induction program developed and implemented within 12 months.	→ Feb 2020
		→ Positive feedback from employees after two months of returning from parental leave on the transition.	→ Regular review as per parental leave applications
Leadership	→ Promote the take-up of flexible working arrangements	→ All applications for flexible working arrangements are given due consideration	→ Regular review
		→ Maintain or increase the percentage of the APS census results with leadership (SES and supervisors) actively supporting the use flexible work arrangements by all staff	→ Annual Census results
	→ Participate in external events where there is gender balance on panels → Promote the inclusion of males in panels.	→ Feedback provided to event organisers about the importance of diverse voices in gender equality events.	→ Ongoing

People with Disabilityⁱ

The Australian Public Service Commission has developed [a definition for APS agencies](#) to use when considering inclusive measures for people living with a disability. Persons are considered to have a disability if they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities.

Focus area	Actions	Measure of success	When
Recruitment	→ continue to use RecruitAbility for all externally advertised vacancies	→ Increase in the level of people with disability applying for positions in our Agency.	→ Ongoing
	→ Reasonable adjustment provided during interview process	→ Information included in all application packs & on our website	→ Ongoing
	→ Offer internship opportunities for university students with disability	→ Research finalised on internship opportunities and implemented accordingly	→ By Jun 2020
Working Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provide a dynamic and inclusive work environment for people with disability by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable adjustment managed centrally • Accessibility in layout and facilities → Introduce a buddy system for employees with disability 	→ All workplace adjustment requirements are met.	→ Ongoing
Workplace Culture	→ Increase staff awareness of workplace issues around disability	→ Training readily available for staff	→ Ongoing
	→ Mental health awareness training as part of our learning and development suite	→ Maintaining or increasing the number of employees stating that the Agency genuinely cares about employees being healthy and safe at work measured by the annual APS Employee Census	→ Ongoing
	→ Membership of Australian Network on Disability	→ Maintain membership with the Australian Network on Disability.	→ Annually
	→ Implement a program of volunteering opportunities for staff that support our diversity and inclusion priorities	→ Annual opportunity for staff to volunteer for a day or part-day at a related charity or organisation.	→ Annually
	→ We will promote/celebrate days of significance such as International Day of People with Disability, R U OK? Day and World Mental Health Day.	→ Annual event held with 50% staff attendance and participation at event.	→ Annually
	→ Having trained Mental Health First Aid Officers	→ Maintaining the First Aid Mental Health certifications	→ Annually
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Increase the number of employees who disclose a disability → Use and promote the National Relay Service 	→ Increase in reporting of diversity information	→ Ongoing
	→ Ensure WGEA website is accessible	→ Website is WCAG 2.0 compliant.	→ Ongoing
Leadership	→ Training readily available for managers of people with disability	→ Training undertaken by executive team and refresher training continued and related resources promoted and made available	→ Ongoing

Indigenous Australians

An accepted definition of an Indigenous Australian proposed by the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the 1980s and still used by some Australian Government departments today is; a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.

Focus area	Actions	Measure of success	When
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Attract indigenous employees with all vacant roles advertised on “Our Mob” job board → Review recruitment activities to engage more applicants from indigenous Australians 	→ Increase in the level of interest from indigenous community groups	→ Ongoing
	→ Work with Indigenous Australian Government Development Program (IAGDP) team and explore and develop a plan to engage indigenous graduate	→ Having indigenous student or graduate engaged with WGEA	→ by end of 2021
Workplace Culture	→ Recognise the importance of indigenous culture and provide access to cultural awareness training.	→ 80% of staff have completed cultural awareness training	→ by end of 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Organise an event each year to celebrate Reconciliation week and/or NAIDOC week → Retain indigenous artwork throughout the office 	→ Annual event held with 65% staff attendance and participation at event.	→ Annually
	→ Implement a program of volunteering opportunities for staff that support our diversity and inclusion priorities	→ Annual opportunity for staff to volunteer for a day or part-day at a related charity or organisation.	→ Annually
Communication	→ Acknowledgement of country at all events and speaking engagements including internal meetings	→ Occurs as standard practice.	→ Ongoing
Leadership	→ Support access to employee leave provisions for cultural purposes	→ Flexible working arrangements and or leave available for accommodate cultural requirements.	→ Ongoing

Cultural Diversity

WGEA comprises people from a wide range of cultural, ethnic, religious and national backgrounds. We leverage the diverse experience, views and talents of our workforce to deliver better outcomes for the community. The cultural diversity of our workforce enables the WGEA to utilise a broad range of skills and contributions, varied experiences and perspectives. We recognise that diverse and inclusive teams are sources of innovation and productivity.

Focus area	Actions	Measure of success	When
Recruitment	→ Ensure all job advertisements welcome applicants from key diversity groups and explain why we value diversity and inclusion	→ Census diversity demographic measures increase	→ Ongoing
Workplace Culture	→ Celebrate the cultural diversity of our workforce	→ Run Harmony Day events annually	→ Annually
	→ Support quiet space for devotion and reflection	→ Quiet space utilised by staff	→ Ongoing
	→ Implement a program of volunteering opportunities for staff that support our diversity and inclusion priorities	→ Annual opportunity for staff to volunteer for a day or part-day at a charity or organisation.	→ Annually
Communication	→ Utilise specialist company to assist with use of plain English for reference guide to enhance accessibility for clients	→ Reference and other public documentation reviewed and available and accessible	→ Ongoing review
	→ Ensure Website accessibility for CALD	→ Website WCAG 2.0 compliant	→ Ongoing
Leadership	→ Make cultural awareness training available for all staff	→ Training and refresher training part of mandatory training suite for new and existing staff.	→ Ongoing
	→ Support access to employee leave provisions for cultural purpose	→ Maintain or increased number of employees believe that the Agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce measured by the annual APS Employee Census (95% in 2019)	→ Annual review of Census results

Mature Age Employeesⁱⁱ

Mature age employees are recognised as individuals over the age of 50. The number of WGEA employees recognised as mature age will likely increase with the changing economic conditions and legislation meaning employees will on average, work to a higher age than at any other time in history.

WGEA values the unique skills, knowledge and experiences that all employees bring to the workplace. As an Agency we seek to attract and retain mature age workers and offer a working environment in which all employees can flourish professionally while balancing other priorities in their lives.

We value employees of all ages and recognise the benefits of having a workforce diverse in age. There are options available including flexible work arrangements in place to ensure workers of all ages are empowered and accommodated.

Focus area	Actions	Measure of success	When
Recruitment	→ Promote an age inclusive culture and position WGEA as an 'ageless employer' our workforce is based not on age, but on talent, skills, experience and willingness to work.	→ WGEA is seen as employer of choice	→ Ongoing
Working Arrangements	→ Discuss ongoing flexible working arrangements with mature aged workers annually to accommodate individual needs	→ Flexible working arrangements and or leave available for accommodate requirements.	→ Annually/or as needed basis
Workplace Culture	→ Promote external transition to retirement programs	→ Number of attendance of mature aged workers in programs.	→ Annually
	→ Implement a program of volunteering opportunities for staff that support our diversity and inclusion priorities	→ Annual opportunity for staff to volunteer for a day or part-day at a related charity or organisation.	→ Annually
Communication	→ Communicate entitlements for mature aged employees by providing advice on superannuation and retirement information sessions.	→ Number of advice provided and attendance of mature aged workers at sessions.	→ Annually
Leadership	→ Encourage mature aged worker to participate in internal mentoring to facilitate passing of corporate knowledge of younger employees.	→ Mentoring occurring as a component of employee learning and development.	→ Annually as part of individual development plans discussions

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI+)

WGEA is committed to fostering a culture where employees with diverse sexuality and/or gender feel respected, valued and empowered. The LGBTI+ acronym is intended to extend to all those who are part of the wider diversity of bodies, genders, sexualities, relationships and identities.

Focus area	Actions	Measure of success	
Recruitment	→ Review recruitment activities to ensure LGBTI+ inclusive culture is promoted	→ WGEA is seen as employer of choice	→ Ongoing
	→ Train recruitment panel members on how to make assessment decisions that are free from bias	→ A training solution is research and implemented	→ by Dec 2020
Working Arrangements	→ Ensure that the opportunity to identify as a gender other than male or female in forms and records is available and easily accessible for those who require it.	→ All official documents and require gender identification are reviewed and edited to include the classification X for Indeterminate, Intersex and Unspecified gender.	→ Ongoing
Workplace Culture	→ Hold an event to engage staff members in LGBTI+ discussions	→ Level of staff engagement at event.	→ Annually
	→ Implement a program of volunteering opportunities for staff that support our diversity and inclusion priorities	→ Annual opportunity for staff to volunteer for a day or part-day at a related charity or organisation.	→ Annually
Communication	→ Organise one occasion each year to celebrate the LGBTI+ community.	→ 65% staff participation in occasion.	→ Annually
Leadership	→ Lead by example in promoting LGBTI+ equity in the workplace. → Support access to parental and carer's leave and flexible working arrangement's as needed	→ Agency policies are reviewed for inclusive language.	→ Ongoing

Legal framework

The legal framework applying to agencies that employ staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* reflects the expectations of the Government and the community about a fair, inclusive and productive public service. The general legal framework is as follows:

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004* – makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age.
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* – provides an avenue of redress for those alleging discrimination and provides for the rights of these persons.
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* – makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of disability (including a disease).
- *Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987 (Commonwealth Authorities)* – includes the requirement to collect statistics for four target employment groups: women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and people with disability.
- *Fair Work Act 2009* – provides a safety net of minimum terms and conditions of employment through the National Employment Standards (NES).
- *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* – all employers and employees must maintain a secure, healthy and safe working environment. An employer must take practicable precautions to prevent harassment.
- *Public Service Act 1999, Public Service Regulations 1999 and Public Service Commissioner's Directions* – defines the scope and application of the APS Values, Code of Conduct and also, require Agency Heads to establish workplace diversity programs and report on these annually.
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* – makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin.
- *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* – sets out the safety requirements for employers in respect of their employees and also provides for compensation and rehabilitation for employees injured in the workplace.
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* – relates to discrimination on the ground of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding or family responsibilities or involving sexual harassment.

ⁱ *The Australian Bureau of Statistics' Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. [4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015](#) and [4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015 - Disability Groups](#) (from 1 September 2017 the definition of 'disability' used for employment-related purposes, other than Discrimination, in the APS is based on the above)*

ⁱⁱ *The Australian Public Service strategic workforce analysis and reporting guide*, Australian Public Service Commission (2012) recognises employees aged 50 years and over as “approaching retirement age”. This definition is used as an indicator for likely age retirement and potential loss of corporate knowledge, skills and experience.