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# diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging commitment

## why diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEI&B) matters

A workplace functions better when it includes people from various backgrounds – different races, genders, abilities, socio-economic positions, and life and work experiences. Diversity Council Australia research shows that including a broader range of people with different backgrounds in the workplace boosts employee wellbeing, promotes innovation, improves productivity and, most importantly, leaves staff feeling positive and satisfied with their workplace<sup>1</sup>. Together, these values shape a workplace that reflects the vibrant society we serve.

## our commitments

Our commitments go beyond policy to practice. By embedding diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging into every aspect of our culture, operations and leadership, we aim to remove systemic barriers faced by individuals and create sustainable change. Recognising and valuing the unique lived experiences of our staff creates stronger connection and engagement between our people and the work we do – bringing to life the rich and diverse stories of Australia through compelling objects, ideas and events.

### inclusion

We foster a workplace where every voice matters. Through inclusive leadership, psychological safety and active listening we create an environment where everyone can belong and contribute.

### equity

We commit to fair treatment, access and opportunity for all. We stand firmly against discrimination and systemic barriers and we actively design policies and processes that foster equitable outcomes. To achieve fairness in the workplace we need to recognise that people start in different places and have different requirements. This often requires providing adjustments to ensure everyone can achieve similar levels of success and engagement.

### innovation

We embrace diverse perspectives to spark creativity, improve decision-making and remain relevant. Inclusion powers innovation – it broadens our thinking and can lead to bold, impactful ideas.

<sup>1</sup> [Diversity and Inclusion Research – Diversity Council Australia](#)

## **performance**

A diverse and inclusive culture drives performance. Staff who are given the opportunity to participate and feel connected and heard go the extra mile and deliver work that aligns with who we are as an organisation. We value the richness that diversity brings to the Museum's work and support every employee to thrive – professionally and personally.

## **our actions**

We embed a focus on lived experience into recruitment, leadership, learning and workforce planning to ensure everyone can access and understand each other on an equal basis. We hold ourselves accountable through measurement and continuous improvement.

## **employee engagement**

This is a shared journey. Every voice matters. We encourage staff at all levels to participate in co-creating the culture we aspire to.

Our vision is to create a culture where every employee feels valued, has equal access to opportunity and can contribute to their fullest potential.

Together, we will create a museum that celebrates all voices and reflects the rich tapestry of our nation. This is more than a commitment – it is a call to action. Our Executive Leadership is united in leading this work with courage and purpose.



**Katherine McMahon**

Director,  
National Museum of Australia

# introduction

People are diverse in countless ways. These differences shape the opportunities we encounter and how we are treated.

At the Museum we recognise diversity as a source of strength. By respecting people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, ages, abilities, religions, socio-economic backgrounds and perspectives, we create with our staff a strong sense of belonging, connecting to who the Museum is and the work we deliver.

Our approach is designed to ensure that everyone – regardless of who they are – has the opportunity to work, develop and feel a sense of belonging. An inclusive workplace enables people to thrive, creates a dynamic working environment and drives the Museum's success.

To demonstrate our commitment, we have developed five action plans alongside clear measures of progress, building the foundations for a workplace that is diverse, equitable and inclusive.

# understanding the language we use

Words matter. Language is a powerful tool for building inclusion (or exclusion) at work. The Museum respects everyone's right to describe themselves in the way that feels right for them. In this strategy, we use words that help explain the issues and focus attention on where improvements are needed.

# definitions

Clear and shared definitions provide a common foundation for dialogue, policy and practice, helping to ensure consistency, accountability and lasting impact.

Concept	Our definition	Why is it important?
<b>Diversity</b>	Diversity is the outcome of recognising and valuing the range of identities, perspectives, lived experiences and contributions that people bring to the workplace. It acknowledges that each person's unique combination of social and professional identities shapes how they see the world and their work.	Supporting diversity means understanding that people may hold multiple, intersecting identities and that this requires thoughtful, individualised approaches to meet their needs. By doing this, we foster an environment where everyone can participate and contribute to the Museum's outcomes.
<b>Inclusion</b>	Inclusion means actively creating spaces, environments and contexts where everyone is respected, valued and made to feel that they belong. This requires ensuring that all voices are heard and that everyone can participate fully and succeed. To foster true inclusion, we must use respectful, accurate and relevant language and avoid assumptions based on appearance or stereotypes, affirming the value of every unique lived experience.	Supporting diversity alone is not enough – people must feel valued, heard and empowered to contribute. True inclusion enables full participation, collaboration and growth, strengthening communities and driving better outcomes for all.
<b>Equity</b>	Equity is ensuring that everyone receives fair treatment and access to opportunities. It recognises that people start from different points, may face systemic biases and so require different levels of support or resources to achieve similar outcomes.	By providing tailored resources, support and opportunities, we address disparities, create a fairer environment and enable everyone to succeed and contribute to collective success.
<b>Belonging</b>	Belonging refers to the emotional experience of feeling accepted, valued and included within a group, environment or community. It is the sense that you are not just present, but that your presence is recognised, respected and meaningful.	Belonging is considered a key pillar of inclusion because people can be hired (diversity) and treated equally (equity), but without a sense of belonging they are unlikely to prosper or stay long-term. It directly impacts engagement, productivity and overall wellbeing.
<b>Intersectionality</b>	Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how different aspects of a person's identity – such as race, gender, class, sexuality, disability – connect and interact to shape their lives.	Intersectionality reinforces understandings that different aspects of a person's identity impact their lived experience. Instead of looking at identity factors in isolation, intersectionality shows how they overlap and create unique forms of advantage or disadvantage.
<b>Class diversity and inclusion</b>	Class inclusion at work means recognising that people's socio-economic backgrounds can shape their opportunities, experiences and perspectives.	By breaking down barriers linked to education, financial means or social status, we ensure that talent and potential – not background – determine success. Acknowledging class diversity helps us build fairer opportunities, strengthen collaboration and reflect the broad communities we serve.

# creating a culturally safe environment

Creating a culturally safe environment means fostering a space where individuals from all cultural backgrounds feel respected, accepted and valued. It requires going beyond tolerance to actively engaging with diversity in ways that promote inclusion and equity.

This involves recognising and addressing power imbalances, challenging stereotypes and being mindful of cultural differences in communication, values and practices.

A culturally safe environment encourages open dialogue, where people can express their identities without fear of judgment or discrimination. It requires continuous education, active listening and a commitment to ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities to contribute, learn and grow. Ultimately, such an environment nurtures trust, belonging and collaboration, allowing diverse perspectives to shine.

## why this strategy?

Having a diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging strategy is essential for building a fair, innovative and high-performing agency. A well-defined strategy ensures that efforts to attract, support and retain diverse talent are intentional, measurable and aligned with the Museum's mission and our core values of:

- Honesty and integrity
- Mutual support and openness
- Inclusion, fairness and equity
- Innovation and efficiency
- Excellence and leadership
- The quality of our welcome.

Research consistently shows that diverse and inclusive organisations are more innovative, adaptable and financially successful. A study by McKinsey & Company – spanning 1,265 companies, 23 countries and six global regions – found that companies in the top-quartile of gender and ethnic diversity had a 39% greater likelihood of financial outperformance than their peers in the bottom-quartile.<sup>2</sup>

A DEI&B strategy also supports compliance with legal and ethical responsibilities, enhances brand reputation and strengthens relationships with customers, employees and the wider community.

<sup>2</sup> [Diversity matters even more | McKinsey](#)

# how we will get there

We are focusing on four key areas to create a more inclusive, equitable and diverse workplace:

## **1. improve representation**

We will review and redesign our recruitment and hiring processes to attract and retain people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and identities. This includes building partnerships with diverse talent pipelines, eliminating bias in selection processes and setting clear goals for representation at all levels.

## **2. create a safe workplace**

We will provide training for all staff and leaders to reinforce a culture of respect and accountability. We are committed to creating space for inclusive conversation and communication, whatever that looks like. We will strengthen our reporting systems, ensure confidentiality and protection for those who speak up, and take swift, fair action when concerns are raised.

## **3. make the workplace more accessible**

We will improve physical accessibility, flexible working arrangements and inclusive policies that support the diverse needs of our workforce – whether that's through assistive technologies, adjustments to working hours or support for neurodivergent employees and carers.

## **4. build a culture that celebrates diversity**

We will embed inclusion into our workplace culture by raising awareness, hosting events and learning opportunities and encouraging open dialogue. We want everyone to feel comfortable and supported in bringing their full selves to the workplace.

# our approach

We are committed to a collaborative and informed approach to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Our actions will be shaped by insight, partnership and evidence. To achieve this, we will:

## **engage with our people**

We will listen to staff, volunteers and community members to gather meaningful perspectives on how we can create a more inclusive and equitable working environment together.

## **collaborate with specialist organisations**

We will seek advice and support from experts in diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and cultural safety to help shape and strengthen our action plans.

## **apply evidence-based best practice**

Our strategies and activities will be grounded in current research and proven approaches, adapted thoughtfully to suit the unique context, purpose and values of the Museum.

Our approach will be driven by a continuous process of learning, adapting and improving – ensuring that our DEI&B efforts are relevant, impactful and sustainable.

These commitments are not one-time actions – they are part of an ongoing journey. We will measure our progress, listen to our people and continuously adapt our approach. By staying accountable and intentional, we will create a workplace where diversity is not only welcomed but also prospers.

# our action plans

## 1. First Nations

**Goal:** Demonstrate leadership in advancing First Nations inclusion and reconciliation.

We will actively create pathways for employment, development and leadership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, while respectfully recognising, valuing and embedding their histories, cultures and contributions.

## 2. cultural diversity and inclusion

**Goal:** Foster a workforce that reflects and embraces Australia's multicultural society.

We will respect and support cultural and faith practices, embed inclusive policies and practices across the agency, and celebrate the strengths and insights that diverse cultural perspectives bring.

## 3. diverse genders and sexualities

**Goal:** Create a workplace that is equitable, inclusive and welcoming for people of all genders, sexuality and gender identities.

The Museum is a leader in gender pay equity and is committed to advancing gender diversity in all areas of the organisation, and providing inclusive supports such as equitable parental leave, safe, accessible and gender-neutral facilities, and environments where everyone feels respected.

## 4. disability and accessibility

**Goal:** Be a genuinely inclusive employer that enables people with disabilities to thrive.

We will ensure our workplaces, systems and practices are accessible, provide tailored supports, and foster a culture that values and includes people with both visible and non-visible disabilities.

## 5. neurodiversity and accessibility

**Goal:** Create a workplace that recognises, values and supports neurodiverse staff.

We will design our spaces, systems and policies to accommodate diverse cognitive and sensory needs, ensuring that every employee feels understood, supported and empowered to succeed.

# how we will measure success

Our approach is to measure representation (diversity), fairness (equity), experiences (inclusion), and accountability (leadership action). We will use both hard numbers and employee voice, report progress regularly, and continuously refine based on evidence.

To ensure our diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging efforts are meaningful and accountable, each action plan includes clear, measurable goals. We'll track progress regularly using data, employee feedback and real outcomes – not just intentions. Some key indicators of success will include:

## **greater diversity in leadership roles**

We aim to increase the representation of under-represented groups in senior and decision-making positions across the agency.

### **MEASURES**

- • Broaden the diversity of people in leadership roles
- • Increase number of DEI&B goals in performance reviews
- • Progress against DEI&B targets reported.

## **improved employee feedback on inclusion and respect**

We will monitor staff APS Employee Census survey results and provide feedback channels to assess how people feel about belonging, cultural and psychological safety and being valued at work.

### **MEASURES**

- • Australian Public Service Employee Census results (e.g., “I feel respected at work, “I can be my authentic self at work”)
- • Psychological safety scores via surveys such as the census.

## **policies and environments that reflect diverse needs**

Success means that our workplace – both physical and virtual – supports a wide range of abilities, identities and life circumstances, through inclusive policies and accessible design.

### **MEASURES**

- • Proportion of diverse candidates in hiring
- • Equitable access to training, mentorship and leadership programs
- • Audit of policies (e.g., parental leave, accessibility, reasonable adjustments and accommodation).

## **increased representation across the workforce**

We'll work to ensure our hiring, retention and promotion practices are leading to a more diverse team that reflects the communities we serve.

### **MEASURES**

- • Increase numbers of employees by demographic group (gender, race/ethnicity, age, disability, genders and sexuality) at different levels (entry, management, executive)
- • Recruitment, promotion and retention rates for under-represented groups
- • Pay equity analyses (gender/racial pay gaps).
- These indicators and associated metrics will be reviewed regularly, reported transparently and used to guide ongoing improvements. Our progress will be shared with staff, leadership and stakeholders to ensure accountability at every level.

## **collect and analyse data**

- • Quantitative: Aurion data, payroll, recruitment pipeline data, performance reviews, exit interviews
- • Qualitative: focus groups, storytelling, feedback from employee networks
- • Benchmarking: compare against industry standards and peer organisations.

## **evaluate action plans**

- • Track completion of specific initiatives (e.g., unconscious bias training, diversity programs)
- • Assess effectiveness (e.g., did training increase awareness and did behaviour change?).
- • Review budget allocation to DEI&B programs and return on investment.

## **report progress transparently**

- • Provide dashboards with metrics (quarterly/annually to Council, the Executive Management Group and the Corporate Management Group).

## **continuous improvement**

- • Adjust strategy and action plans based on feedback and results
- • Celebrate successes and recognise champions
- • Identify barriers and implement corrective actions.