

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

2024 to 2027



Our Passion is social inclusion for people with disability.

Our Purpose is to build extraordinary lives, supporting people with disability to be well, have a home, choose a career, learn new skills, participate in their community, and enjoy a full life.

We live our Principles of Living inclusion, Elevating voices, Engaging practice, Growing capacity, and Valuing resources.



Acknowledgement to Country

Achieve Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise the enduring relationship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with Country and that sovereignty was never ceded.



A message from our CEO and Chair of the Board



Inclusion is integral to the success of Achieve Australia (Achieve) and is reflected in our Passion, Purpose, and Principles.

We are fortunate to have welcomed many talented people with disability to roles throughout our organisation from our frontline to managerial roles, through to our Board of directors. We want to continue to do this by becoming a more accessible workplace.

Achieve's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) outlines our commitment and strategy to improve accessibility for employees with disability across our physical spaces, the technologies we use, and our communications. It also outlines how we engage with our stakeholders to ensure the needs of all employees are met.

Our DIAP links to our strategic initiatives to achieve impact as a diverse and inclusive organisation with a great culture and strong brand, and to build an engaged, professional, and contemporary workforce.

This is our inaugural DIAP. We are excited to be building solid foundations around three key pillars of work – Our People, Our Places and Our Voices – to support the inclusion and employment of people with disability.

Our thanks to all those who provided their ideas and guidance in developing the DIAP including people with disability in a range of roles, other employees, and our inclusion partner, the Australian Disability Network.

Our journey to date



In 2021 Achieve created the Quality Champions Program to evaluate our services and identify what we can do better.

The Quality Champions Program elevates the voices of people with complex disability to have a direct say in the way services are delivered to them.

Those gathering their feedback have lived experience of disability. This peer-to-peer approach involves a Quality Champion teaming with a Quality Champions Partner to meet with people we support to gather feedback.

We have developed a Governance and Operational Management Procedure and Governance Framework which stipulate the requirement for the appointment of people with lived experience of disability to our Board.

Achieve received our Disability Confident Recruiter employer status in 2022 and 2023 and received the Disability Confident Recruiter Award from the Australian Disability Network for our inclusive recruitment practices.

In 2023 we took part in the PACE Mentoring program run by the Australian Disability Network. This saw five of our employees, including Executives, mentor young people with disability.

We redeveloped our external website in 2021 to be accessible to site visitors using assistive technology. Changes included adjusting our brand, fonts, contrasts and adding a text to speech feature.

We are taking part in The Achieve Foundation's Disability Employment Catalyst program with Life Without Barriers and Yooralla to employ people with lived experience of disability at scale in the disability services sector.

Currently 2% of our workforce share that they identify as a person with disability.

We have already enhanced our recruitment practices to be more inclusive in our job advertisements and offer support during the interview process.

Since 2016 we have championed and worked to support a cohort of people with disability to work across Sydney as a labour hire team. We have built on this success by supporting a group of employees with disability from AchievAble Enterprises completing a year-long course delivered by a Registered Training Organisation on site. Nine employees graduated to receive a MSM30116-Certificate III in Process Manufacturing.

We also have championed employing people with disability through open employment in our The Sewing Basket retail stores.

Championing diversity

We started work on our first Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Achieve with a particular focus placed on people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

In 2023, we began work on a Reconciliation Action Plan to develop the framework for Achieve to contribute to reconciliation and promote greater inclusion of First Australians in all areas of our shared society.

We continue to ensure our staff increase their Cultural Competence through staff learning and development. We have enhanced the ways we express social inclusion included in our customer value promise and employee value promise.



Welcome to the Achieve Australia Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

The definition of disability is broad and encompasses medical and social models of disability. Protections for people with disability in Australia are covered in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities represents a social model of disability. Achieve upholds the social model of disability that sees disability as socially constructed, with limiting attitudes and inaccessible physical spaces acting as barriers to inclusion.

We recognise that people with disability bring a wealth of diverse experience, skills, knowledge, and perspectives to the workplace. We also acknowledge people with disability are a talent underrepresented in the Australian workforce and that they experience challenges and unnecessary barriers to employment.

Feedback from people with lived experience has helped us to understand that for some people, sharing information about their disability in a workplace setting can make them feel unsafe, and working in an inaccessible workplace can be exhausting and frustrating.

Achieve is currently implementing various strategic workforce initiatives to actively address barriers to employment and inclusion for people with disability (PWD) in the disability services sector.

Our workforce is open to all people, including those with disability or who identify with disability and are looking for employment opportunities in a variety of roles.

Some of Achieve's workforce initiative goals are to:

- Create employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Reduce the unemployment and underemployment of people with disabilities.
- Reduce the skills shortage within the disability services sector and in various client-facing roles at Achieve.
- Reflect the communities we serve by resourcing our organisation with more people with disability to work with and support clients with disabilities.
- Reach a strategic target of 15% workforce participation of people with disability at Achieve across all levels of the organisation. This aligns to one of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

Our DIAP is the pathway to increase workforce participation and it outlines our strategy to improve inclusion and accessibility for people with disability and create an experience of belonging. Achieve will be able to meet or exceed our goals for employment by also focussing on the relevant action areas within this DIAP.

DIAP Consultation and development

Our DIAP has been developed through extensive consultation with people with lived experience of disability, their carers, allies and those who provide services and supports.

From March to December 2023 consultation was conducted with employees, clients, family members and internal functional departments across Achieve to gather feedback and input for development of the DIAP.

The consultation undertaken included:

- Interviews with employees.
- Employee survey using written and verbal mediums.
- Focus Groups with employees with lived experience of disability and our Quality Champions.
- Input from the DIAP Reference Group, representing cross functional areas of the business.
- Functional Area consultation with internal departments such as learning and development, customer and practice, operational service delivery, procurement, people and culture, premises and facilities, IT and digital, recruitment, communications, safety, and wellbeing.

Supported by the Australian Disability Network (ADN), Achieve received 193 responses, which provided 69 key observations and recommendations for improvement. This feedback was collated and presented to the DIAP Reference Group, and Senior and Executive Leaders.

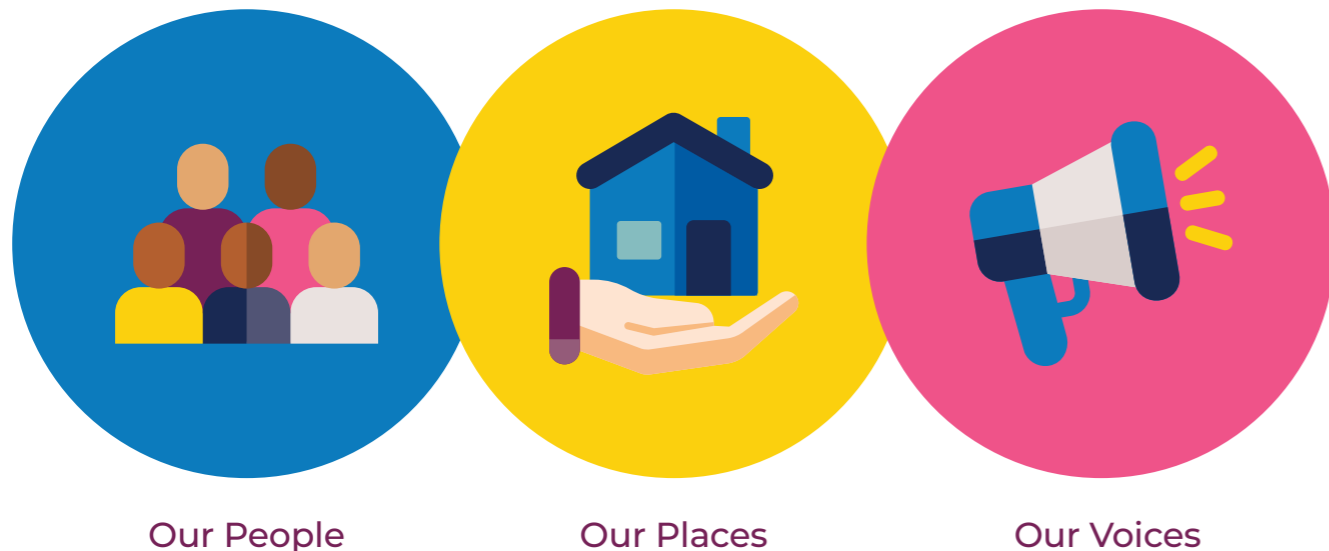
The next phase was reviewing the feedback and recommendations to help us formulate a plan for our key focus areas. Through further analysis and consultation with the DIAP Reference Group, three focus areas emerged - Our People, Our Places and Our Voices.

These focus areas were endorsed by the DIAP Reference Group, and Senior and Executive Leaders to become the guiding pillars of our working group activities and DIAP initiatives.

The pillars will form the basis of the work Achieve will undertake over the next three years to bring the DIAP to life and improve accessibility and inclusion of people with disability in our workplace.



The three pillars of the DIAP



Our People

Our Places

Our Voices

Our People

Our People pillar represents those areas of inclusion and accessibility that directly impact our people, that being candidates and employees.

Work aligned to this pillar focuses on reducing barriers to inclusion experienced by people with disability regarding access to recruitment and selection processes, workplace adjustments, diversity awareness, training, continuous improvement, and feedback mechanisms.

Our Places

Our Places pillar represents those areas of inclusion and accessibility that directly impact the internal and external places our people work and visit.

The consultation process highlighted barriers and challenges experienced by people with disability regarding physical accessibility, the built environment, and access to internal and external places. It also highlighted the need for increased awareness of barriers to inclusion for internal and external meetings and events.

Our Voices

Our Voices pillar represents the mechanisms we use to communicate within our teams and community.

In this pillar, recommendations centred on barriers and challenges experienced by people with disability regarding access to a wide variety of communication platforms, information technology, and mechanisms for interacting within internal and external teams.

In short, the Achieve DIAP is about making it easier for people with disability to access our workplace, to feel comfortable to share information about their disability and request any adjustments needed to bring their best selves to work, feel safe at work, and have no barriers to belonging at Achieve.

Our first DIAP



Achieve began our inclusion journey with a Diversity and Inclusion Capability Development Plan. This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is the next step in that journey.

These plans have helped us improve our understanding of inclusion and the principles that create an accessible environment and workplace that supports individuals to achieve their full potential. Our goal is to be an organisation that is inclusive of diverse communities and people.

The feedback from the consultation process of the DIAP identified challenges and barriers for people with disability across the employee journey.

The employee journey describes the steps and time an employee undertakes whilst working in a company. The experience navigating this journey impacts employee engagement, career development, organisational brand, and reputation.

At Achieve, we have nine steps in our employee journey. Each step will be incorporated into the DIAP.

The three pillars

From 2024 to 2027, we will undertake various actions to bring our DIAP and commitments to life in the three pillars of Our People, Our Places and Our Voices.

Our People commitments

Our goal is to make it easier for people with disability to join, learn, contribute, develop, and belong to our community.

To achieve this goal, the following actions will be undertaken:

1. Review and improve the nine steps of the employee journey at Achieve to be more accessible and inclusive.
2. Ensure external delivery partners and services engaged across the employee journey are accessible and disability confident.
3. Review and improve the accessibility of our recruitment and selection practices to improve engagement, attraction, and utilisation by people with disability.
4. Promote our commitment to employ people with disability and improve our visibility as a Disability Confident Recruiter.



5. Maintain our Disability Confident Recruiter status with Australian Disability Network and ensure new talent team members complete this training.
6. Develop awareness initiatives to encourage and promote candidates and employees to share information about their disability.
7. Support the development of a Disability Employee Network (DEN) to provide a voice for employees with disability and ongoing inclusion and accessibility guidance to the business.
8. Develop and promote Workplace Adjustment policies, procedures and practices that are easy for employees and managers to access and implement across the employee journey.
9. Review and improve our onboarding and orientation practices, to enhance accessibility and employee experience.
10. Review and improve learning and development initiatives to ensure they are accessible, inclusive, build capability and support diverse employee needs.
11. Develop awareness learning initiatives to improve disability understanding and confidence.
12. Review and update Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing initiatives to improve the support provided to employees with disability.
13. Ensure Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) are documented and maintained as a part of adjustments and the ownership is clearly defined.

Our Place commitments

Our goal is to make it easier for employees to access and move around the places where they work and visit and provide an inclusive environment.

To achieve this goal, the following actions will be undertaken.

14. Develop and implement property accessibility guidelines for Achieve.
15. Conduct a dignified access review at all Achieve sites to identify and minimise barriers to inclusion.
16. Identify gaps and opportunities to improve accessibility of Achieve properties.
17. Identify and eliminate environmental factors within the workplace to improve the productivity and belonging of premises for people with non-visible disability and neurodivergent people, through lighting, noise and clutter reduction and inclusion of quiet spaces.
18. Develop and implement accessibility guidelines for the selection of external venues.
19. Ensure new properties are assessed and refurbished with relevant accessibility requirements.
20. Develop a heat map of site accessibility features and methods of communication.
21. Ensure all procured goods and services are assessed for accessibility.
22. Source suitable partners who can assist Achieve to better support employees with physical, technology, sensory or digital accessibility needs.



Our Voices commitments

Our goal is to ensure that all communication with and within our teams is inclusive, easy to understand, and enables everyone to interact without barriers.

To achieve this goal, the following actions will be undertaken.

23. Develop and implement an accessible communication strategy. This includes the development and implementation of guidelines on how to create accessible content, language, imagery, documents, policies, procedures and templates.
24. Identify opportunities to utilise assistive technology features within existing and future systems and technology.
25. Review and update policies, procedures, and guidelines for purchasing accessible hardware and software.
26. Improve accessibility of Achieve's policies, procedures, guides, and quick reference materials.
27. Conduct a digital accessibility review of internal and external digital platforms and software applications, remediating where possible.
28. Develop and implement communication accessibility training for relevant internal stakeholders.
29. Communicate with employees using accessible communication methods and media.



Governance

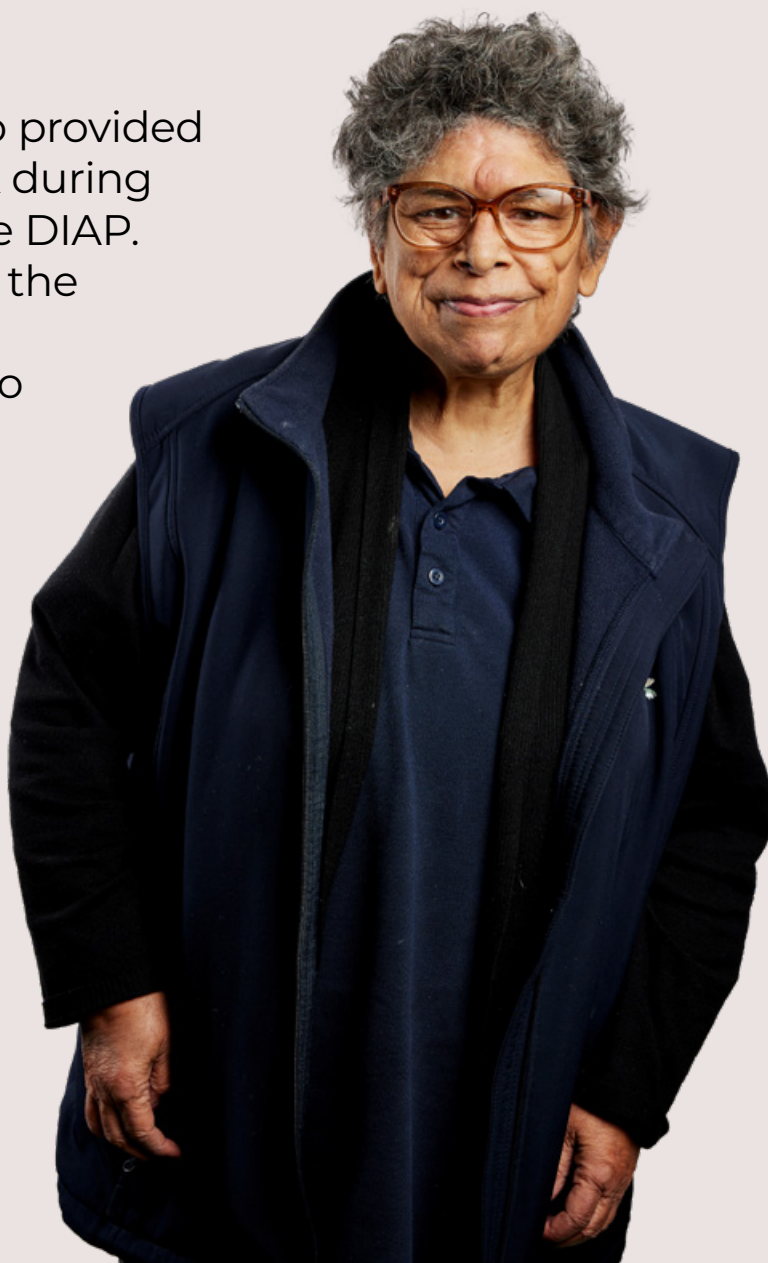
The Achieve Board has endorsed this Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). Detailed project plans supporting this DIAP will be monitored and presented to the Board. Regular reports and updates will be made available to Achieve's Board, Executive, Senior Leaders, relevant governance committees and employees.

Measuring our impact

Each pillar of the DIAP is supported by a comprehensive project plan outlining actions to be taken and their corresponding measure of success. Achieve will monitor and communicate the success and effectiveness of our People, Places and Voices Pillar initiatives.

Our thanks

Achieve thanks all those who provided their thoughts and feedback during the consultation phase of the DIAP. We are committed to raising the voices of people with lived experience of disability and to work with our employees to bring this DIAP to life over the next three years.



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