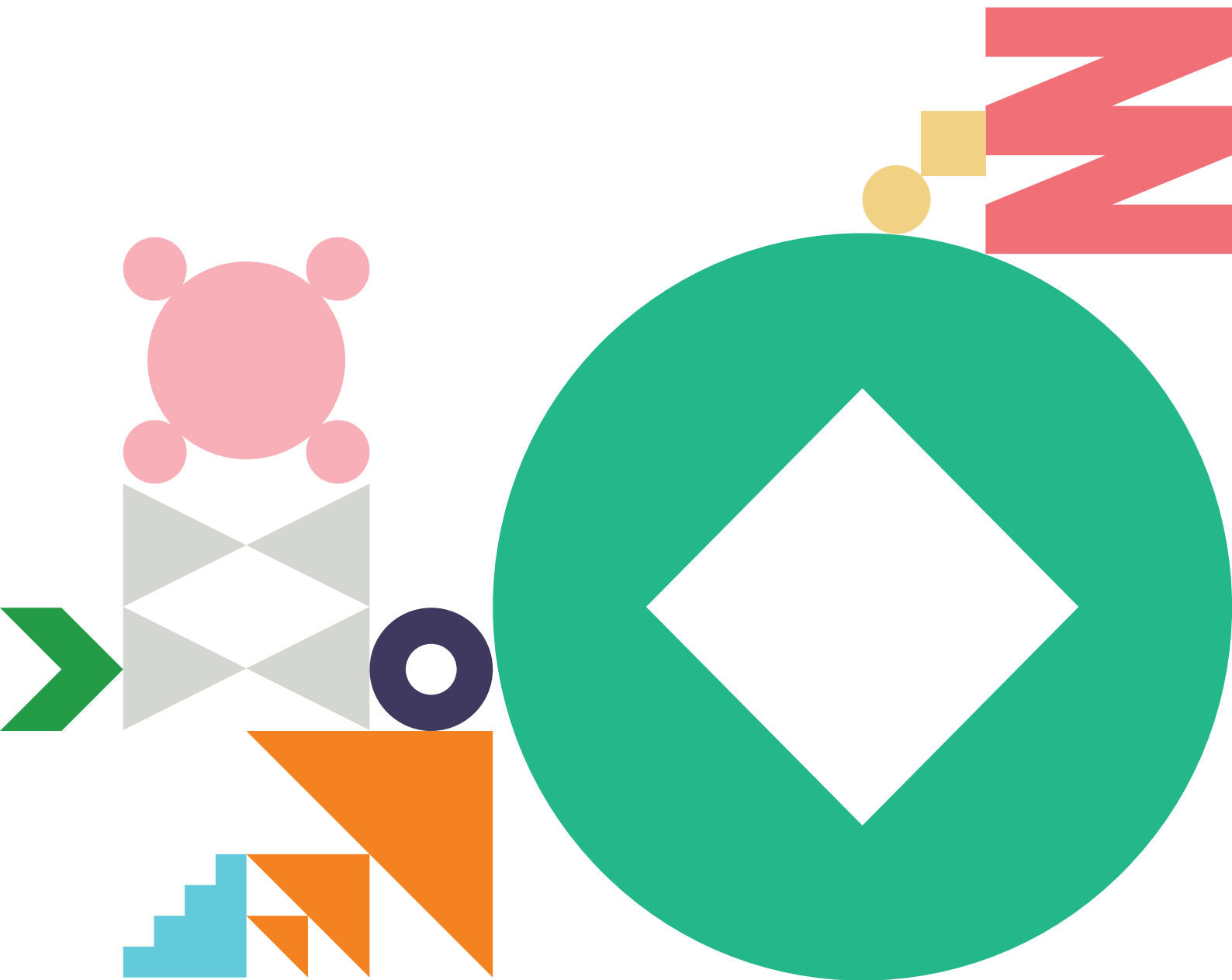


# Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People

Action Plan to Improve WA Public  
Sector Employment Outcomes

2020–2025





We acknowledge the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay respect to their cultures, and to elders past and present.

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# From the Minister

Our State is characterised by remarkable cultural and linguistic diversity, from our First Peoples and those born in Australia to migrants from more than 190 countries who have made WA their home.

As a Government we have committed to equitable participation in civic, social, economic and cultural life in this State through the Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework.

Cultural diversity is one of our greatest strengths, and the benefits can be seen through increased innovation, creativity, productivity and economic returns.

Supporting diversity in the workplace is vital, particularly for the public sector. We want to increase the representation of Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds employed in the sector and support inclusive work environments.

By bringing together the diverse perspectives and capabilities of people from different backgrounds, the sector is able to be more responsive and deliver services that best meet the needs of our communities.

As the State's largest employer, the sector must lead by example and show the true benefits of a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce, providing an enriched sector, government and community.



**Paul Papalia MLA CSC**  
**Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests**

# From the Commissioner

Workforce diversity is not only about everyone being treated with dignity and respect, it's key to improving productivity and innovation in organisations.

It's also important for our workforce – our people – to have diversity of thought. This means different and more expansive thinking beyond our worldviews.

To shift the focus of diversity from compliance to workforce imperative, we have to change gears. We must move from a singular focus on awareness raising to deliberate action and intervention – and see this move as both a personal and collective responsibility.



This action plan is part of the Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025. The twin goals of the strategy are to increase the representation of people from different backgrounds at all levels across our sector, and to ensure all staff in the sector experience a sense of belonging and inclusion in the work environment.

Like this action plan that focuses on culturally and linguistically diverse people, there are also action plans for women, youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, youth, people with disability and people of diverse sexualities and genders.

There is no suggestion that achieving greater workforce diversity and inclusion is easy. However, we must do more to take full advantage of the opportunities that having more culturally and linguistically diverse people across the sector represent in our work to deliver services to the community of Western Australia.

Sharyn O'Neill  
Public Sector Commissioner

# Aspirational target for culturally and linguistically diverse people

This plan aims to increase the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people employed in the public sector to 15.5% and support inclusive work environments.

While this target is aspirational – and ambitious – progress is achievable over time if it is driven from the top.

The current definition and measure of cultural and linguistic diversity in the public sector is limited to country of birth only. In other jurisdictions the definition encompasses other characteristics.

The target of 15.5% has been set using existing methodology. However, this plan includes an action for the Public Sector Commission to work with stakeholders to contemporise the definition.

Representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people in public sector employment has been increasing slowly in recent years. In 2020, it was at 13.9%.

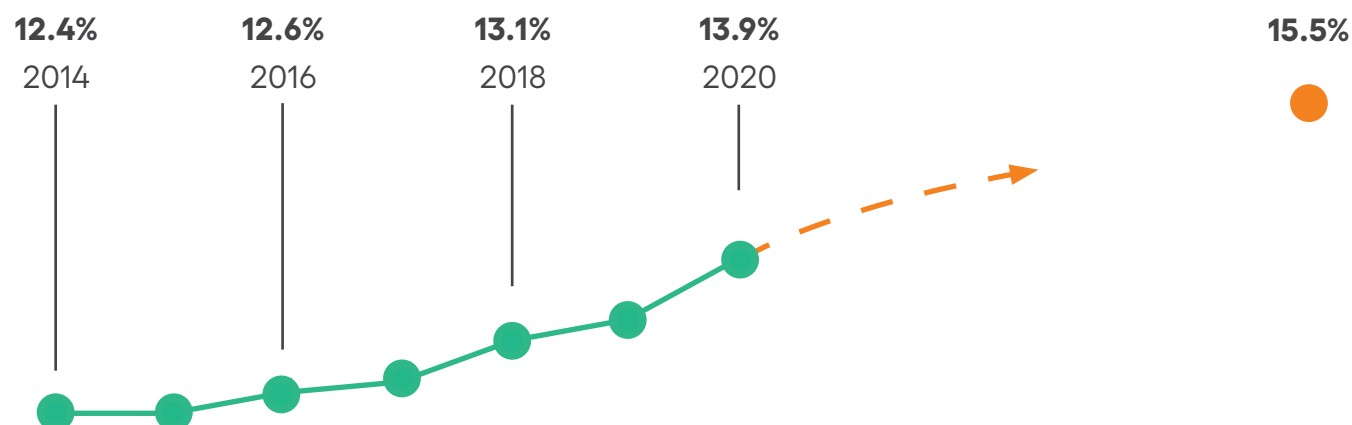
Focused effort is needed to accelerate this trend. It will take time to see an increase as actions are implemented and employment outcomes improve.

Data reform work across the sector (see the Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for more details) includes reviewing collection, definitions and methods applied to diversity groups. This work will be used for the ongoing refinement and implementation of the strategy.

At the same time, the next Australian Bureau of Statistics Census in 2021 will provide more contemporary population data and projections.

Workforce diversity targets, including targets for culturally and linguistically diverse people, will be reviewed in line with the data reforms and new Census data.

Such reforms are critical to develop a complete picture of the workforce and changes over time to better shape workforce strategy, policy and practice.



# Key actions to achieve the target

Increasing the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people employed in the sector requires sustained effort, a different way of doing things and stronger accountability.

All agencies are responsible for working towards the aspirational target. Actions taken also require collaboration with culturally and linguistically diverse people whose ideas and participation are essential in making our sector as inclusive as possible.

Actions for the Commission are described in this plan, together with a suite of actions for agencies to implement.

Most value can be gained by considering actions across the four improvement areas, rather than actions in just one or two areas.

As agencies have differing needs and contexts, they should adopt those actions appropriate to their circumstances in ways best suited to their needs.

**This action plan has four key areas for improvement that flow across the strategy and other action plans:**

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## 1

### Educate and empower

A knowledge and capability uplift is a priority consideration in workforce planning for culturally and linguistically diverse people.

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## 2

### Attract and develop

Recruitment and development practices proactively identify and support the talent of culturally and linguistically diverse people.

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## 3

### Lead and build

There is deliberate leadership to build organisation cultures where all people are treated fairly and respectfully.

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## 4

### Account and celebrate

Responsibility is taken for improving the representation and inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse people in public sector employment.



# 1 Educate and empower

## Actions for the Commission

### Provide tools

- 1.1 Work with culturally and linguistically diverse people to provide evidence-based tools to increase knowledge of and confidence in inclusive recruitment and retention.
- 1.2 Supply agencies with equity index data, where available, to better understand their workforce profile.
- 1.3 Develop a guide to ensure managers and staff are aware of and promote the use of flexible working opportunities.

### Encourage sharing of diversity status

- 1.4 Design safe and culturally appropriate ways to encourage staff to share information about their cultural identities.

### Recruit for diversity

- 1.5 Provide guidance on the use of provisions in the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* to specifically target employment of culturally and linguistically diverse people.

### Use data analytics

- 1.6 Provide agencies with comparative data to support greater insight into performance and workforce planning.

### Build cultural capability

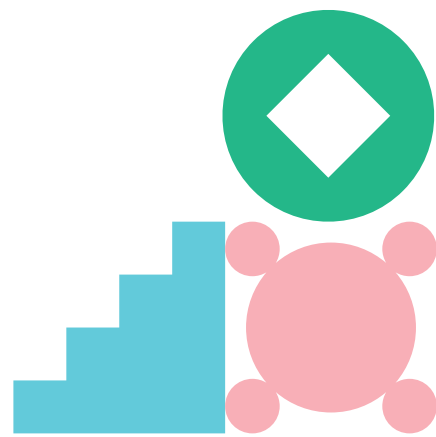
- 1.7 Review and promote cultural capability training across the sector.
- 1.8 Investigate the introduction of mandatory cultural capability and diversity training for all staff.
- 1.9 Introduce cultural capability training as an essential criterion for CEO and SES recruitment.

### Partner for greater impact

- 1.10 Support implementation of the Multicultural Policy Framework.

### Build employee networks

- 1.11 Promote and leverage existing multicultural networks to inform policy and practice.





# 1 Educate and empower

## Actions for agencies

### Make better use of data

- 1.1 Use public sector culturally and linguistically diverse workforce and community representation data to set specific agency targets, and to inform recruitment and workforce planning.

### Promote cultural capability

- 1.2 Implement cultural capability training and shared learning to improve awareness and understanding for staff, including mentoring programs.

### Learn to target

- 1.3 Trial the implementation of section 51 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* to target recruitment and development opportunities to increase representation and progression of culturally and linguistically diverse people in public sector employment.

### Encourage sharing of diversity status

- 1.4 Explore different avenues (such as inclusive messaging, induction, mentoring and surveys) to provide regular opportunities for staff to share information about their identity.

### Establish agency networks

- 1.5 Consider establishing an agency network for culturally and linguistically diverse staff for collegial support, and to contribute to the review and design of practices that impact employment outcomes.

### Establish community links

- 1.6 Consider establishing links with culturally and linguistically diverse community groups to improve service outcomes.



# 2 Attract and develop

## Actions for the Commission

### Strengthen the rules

- 2.1 Remove opportunity for discriminatory practices to occur when reviewing recruitment, selection and appointment legislation, instruments and policies.
- 2.2 Provide agencies with information on inclusive practices to promote the retention of culturally and linguistically diverse staff.

### Partner to extend reach

- 2.3 Partner with Jobs and Skills Centres and specialist employment service providers and networks to attract culturally and linguistically diverse jobseekers.

### Work towards removing bias

- 2.4 Work with agencies to provide guidance on initiatives that name and remove bias such as de-identified job applications.

### Set targets for talent pools

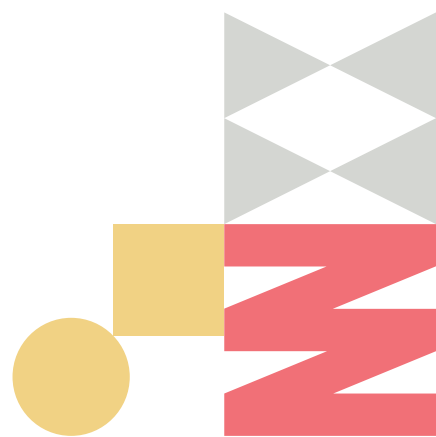
- 2.5 Ensure new sector-wide talent pools include culturally and linguistically diverse people.

### Strengthen talent pipeline

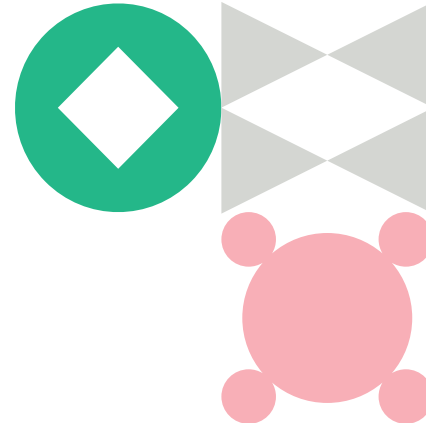
- 2.6 Expand numbers in vocational training (cadetships, traineeships and other employment-based training pathways and programs) for culturally and linguistically diverse people through examination of alternative funding models.
- 2.7 Partner with education institutions to provide opportunities for students to undertake work experience and internships.

### Promote the sector

- 2.8 Promote the public sector as an employer of choice for culturally and linguistically diverse people.



# 2 Attract and develop



## Actions for agencies

### Identify barriers and develop solutions

- 2.1 Examine agency job applicant data and information to identify and address any barriers to the recruitment and progression of culturally and linguistically diverse people.
- 2.2 Promote the use of specialist employment service providers and networks to attract job seekers.

### Work towards removing bias

- 2.3 Develop initiatives to remove unconscious bias in recruitment, training and workforce practice.

### Support and recognise culture

- 2.4 Work with employee assistance program providers to ensure programs are culturally appropriate.

### Advertise opportunities broadly

- 2.5 Distribute all advertised positions through Jobs and Skills WA and other culturally and linguistically diverse employment providers, networks and on social media.

### Expand opportunities

- 2.6 Proactively give culturally and linguistically diverse people opportunities to participate in mobility and development programs such as peer mentoring, university placements, secondments, internships, work experience and projects.

# 3 Lead and build

## Actions for the Commission

### Lead from the top

- 3.1 Conduct an annual review for the Public Sector Leadership Council to consider progress against the aspirational target.

### Update definition

- 3.2 Work with stakeholders (including the Office of Multicultural Interests) to review the definition of culturally and linguistically diverse people, and ensure a revised definition is adopted across all information systems and platforms.

### Target executive decision making

- 3.3 Increase the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people on boards, committees and other decision making forums.

### Build diversity into planning

- 3.4 Provide model workforce and diversity plans for agency use that feature strong measures for increasing employment and progression of culturally and linguistically diverse people.

### Model flexibility

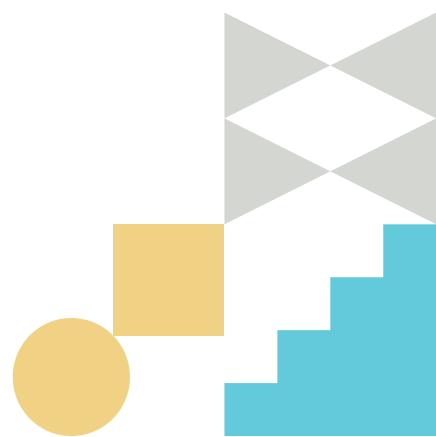
- 3.5 Give guidance to agencies on contemporary workplace flexibility practices that support culturally and linguistically diverse staff to observe their cultural traditions and obligations.

### Improve culture

- 3.6 Crowdfund innovative ideas for improving employment outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse people.

### Promote respect

- 3.7 Explore the development of a respectful relationships program to support the sector.



# 3 Lead and build

## Actions for agencies

### Lead change

- 3.1 Deliberately plan for culturally and linguistically diverse people in workforce and diversity planning activities, and link strategies to business and operational plans.
- 3.2 Reinforce zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment, and provide a clear complaints pathway for staff to feel confident in raising issues.

### Challenge inappropriate behaviours

- 3.3 Ensure senior leaders act as role models, demonstrating respectful behaviour and challenging inappropriate language and attitudes.

### Target executive decision making

- 3.4 Increase the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people on boards, committees and other decision making forums.

### Respect culture

- 3.5 Support culturally and linguistically diverse staff to observe cultural traditions, and community and family obligations.
- 3.6 Keep informed of any relevant multicultural policies that impact on the agency.

### Sponsor

- 3.7 Identify executive champions to promote the importance of culturally and linguistically diverse people in the workforce, and give visibility to the commitment of executive.

### Review policies and practices

- 3.8 Ensure policies and practices do not discriminate against culturally and linguistically diverse people, and published materials are inclusive.

### Support staff

- 3.9 Ensure access to flexible work arrangements for all staff, including those returning to work and those with family and carer responsibilities.
- 3.10 Implement actions in the Safe Spaces guide for staff who may be experiencing family violence, and ensure an adequate number of staff are trained as contact officers.

### Build an inclusive workplace

- 3.11 Build a safe environment so staff can identify as culturally and linguistically diverse.

# 4 Account and celebrate

## Actions for the Commission

### Listen and respond

- 4.1 Introduce a requirement for agencies to include staff perceptions of workplace inclusiveness in annual reports.

### Set targets

- 4.2 Establish targets to increase the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people, and monitor sector and agency progress.

### Aim higher

- 4.3 Require agencies to set goals to shift the equity index for culturally and linguistically diverse staff to ensure they are increasingly represented in mid to high salary groupings.

### Account for progress

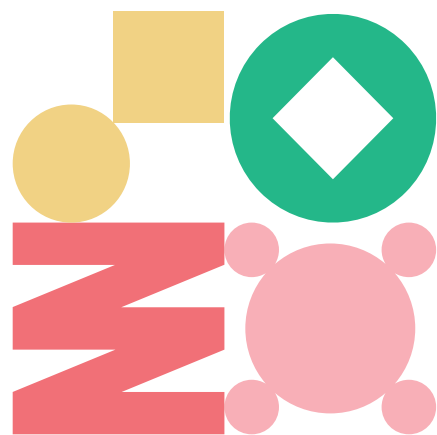
- 4.4 Add diversity targets for culturally and linguistically diverse staff into the CEO Delivery and Performance Agreement and annual reporting guidelines.
- 4.5 Identify opportunities for agencies to report on innovative initiatives that promote the inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse staff such as the use of flexible working arrangements.

### Improve use of data

- 4.6 Review qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies to ensure the best information about the employment of culturally and linguistically diverse people is gathered and used to inform improvement.

### Share good stories

- 4.7 Publish stories and share initiatives about better employment and inclusion outcomes across a range of communications channels.



# 4 Account and celebrate

## Actions for agencies

### Work towards targets

- 4.1 Set explicit expectations across the agency to work towards the aspirational employment target for culturally and linguistically diverse people.
- 4.2 Set a target to improve the equity index, ensuring culturally and linguistically diverse staff are increasingly represented in mid to high salary groupings.

### Report progress

- 4.3 Monitor and report progress against the aspirational employment target for culturally and linguistically diverse people, including in the CEO Delivery and Performance Agreement.

### Celebrate

- 4.4 Host or partner with other agencies to celebrate Harmony Week and other key cultural events.
- 4.5 Develop a calendar of significant dates that celebrate and promote multicultural events.
- 4.6 Commit to proactively seeking nominations for State and national awards to celebrate the achievements of culturally and linguistically diverse staff.

### Share success

- 4.7 Highlight positive stories and achievements of culturally and linguistically diverse staff through internal and external communications, including annual and other reports.



# Principles, monitoring performance, data and definitions

## Principles

Sustainable improvement in workforce diversification is driven by four principles guiding agency actions.

### Leadership

Public sector leaders are visible advocates who take strong and deliberate action to drive improvements in workforce diversification, and lead a zero tolerance approach to discrimination and harassment.

### Collaboration

Public sector agencies work together to improve diversity employment outcomes and share best practice.

### Accountability

The head of each public sector agency is accountable for improving workforce diversification.

### Cultural inclusion

The public sector has culturally inclusive workplaces where staff are supported and valued for their contribution, and where managers are diversity aware.

## Monitoring performance

Equal employment opportunity and diversity related information collected by the Commission will continue to be used to monitor progress against the targets and action plans. Outcomes will be reported through the state of the sector report and other workforce reporting.

Under the strategy, the Commission will work with key stakeholders to identify and refine reporting obligations currently required across multiple agencies for identified diversity groups.

## Data

All public sector data used in this strategy and the supporting action plans are based on the March point in time series.

There are further [data definitions and methods](#) on our website.

## Definitions

The terms used in this strategy and the action plans are defined below.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

People who identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

### Culturally and linguistically diverse people

People who are born in identified countries which are not mainly English speaking.

### People of diverse sexualities and genders

People of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics.

### People with disability

People who have a mild or moderate core activity limitation.

### Women in the SES

Women who are part of the Senior Executive Service.

### Youth

People who are aged 24 years and under.

