

Leap in!



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All information, reference material and links are correct at the time of publication. All reasonable endeavours are made to ensure it remains current. The most recent version can be found under 'Resources' at leapin.com.au.



What is the NDIS?

The **National Disability Insurance Scheme** (NDIS) provides support to Australians, their families and carers.

It is designed to support eligible people with permanent and significant intellectual, physical, neurological, sensory, cognitive or psychosocial disability.

The NDIS takes a lifelong approach to funding supports and services. It also provides early intervention supports for children and their families.

The scheme is now available for people with disability in every Australian state and territory who meet the eligibility criteria.

The Essential NDIS Guide has been created by the Leap in! Orew to help you navigate the NDIS and make the most of your NDIS Plan.

If you're just getting started with the NDIS and haven't yet completed an access request, we recommend starting with another ebook in our series, *Accessing the NDIS: A guide to eligibility and how to apply.*

Keep reading to find out more!



Some facts and figures.



5 most common disabilities currently funded by the NDIS:

35% are autistic

17% of people have an intellectual disability

10% of people have a psychosocial disability

10% of people have a developmental delay

4% of people are deaf or hard of hearing.



Improved outcomes.

Participants in the scheme for 2 years show significantly improved outcomes.

个62%

increase in social and community participation for participants aged 15-24.

159%

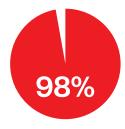
of adults aged 25 and over say their involvement with the NDIS improved their health and wellbeing. **173%**

increase in independence from children from starting school to 14 years.

184%

of adults aged 25 and over say the NDIS has helped them with daily living activities.

87% rated the planning process as good or very good.



said the person from the NDIS was respectful.



said their NDIS Plan was helping them to achieve their goals.



said the person from the NDIS understood how disability affected their life.

In 2022-2023 to date, 27% of funding went unspent.

Unspent funding doesn't roll over at the end of your plan, so it's important that you make the most of your budgets each year. Plan management can help you track and manage your funding.

Statistics sourced from the NDIS Quarterly Report, March 2023.



What is 'reasonable and necessary'?

If you're just starting your NDIS journey, you may find yourself wading through a sea of new information. On the way, you'll probably come across the phrase "reasonable and necessary" – but what exactly does this mean?

Simply put, **reasonable** is something that is fair and **necessary** is something you need because of disability. Having a good understanding of reasonable and necessary helps you use your NDIS funds in a way that meets the NDIS guidelines.

What are reasonable and necessary supports?

The NDIS funds "reasonable and necessary supports" relating to disability to help you live an ordinary life and achieve your goals.

During your planning meeting, your NDIS Planner will gather information on what supports are reasonable and necessary for your situation.

To be considered reasonable and necessary, a support must:

- · Be related to your disability needs
- Help you pursue your goals and aspirations
- Help you do activities that will improve your social and economic participation (like social activities and work or study)
- Be value for money (see below)
- Be likely to be effective and beneficial (considered best practice and will likely work for you)
- Complement (not replace) other informal supports including those provided by family and the community; and formal supports like health and education
- Be the responsibility of the NDIS to fund (not another organisation or government service).



Some examples of supports that may be approved include:



Support workers to help with personal care activities



Therapeutic supports like speech and occupational therapy



Aids and equipment



Home modifications



Mobility equipment.

Things that your NDIS Plan won't cover.

NDIS funding doesn't cover general everyday living expenses that people without disability would be required to pay, such as train travel, rent, groceries, mobile phone or movie tickets.

Every person is different so it's important that you are prepared to demonstrate why a request should be deemed reasonable and necessary in your situation.



What is a goal?

A goal is something you want to learn, develop or achieve. Services and supports funded by the NDIS may help you pursue your goals and overcome any barriers encountered along the way.

Goals are an essential part of the NDIS planning process. Having an idea of what you want to achieve helps the planner and the NDIS understand what is important to you.

Keep in mind that setting goals doesn't automatically mean the NDIS will provide funding. However they will consider funding supports to help you achieve your goals. You may need supports from both the NDIS and other organisations or services to help you achieve your goals.

Goals usually fall into two categories:

- Short term goals: These goals can usually be achieved in under 12 months. Think about what you would like to achieve, why you would like to achieve it and when you would like to achieve it by.
- Medium to long term goals: These goals may take a number of years to achieve but it's important to identify the steps towards achieving them and work on them by taking small steps over time.

Where to start?

Take the time to consider each of the aspects of your life to determine which are most important to you. These could include:

- · Independence in daily living
- · Improving relationships and communication
- · Finding and keeping a job
- · Doing more social and recreational activities
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Confidence in managing money
- · Learning something new
- · Where you want to live.



Next...

It's good to know that there is a link between what's important to you, your goals and the supports you need. With this in mind, the easiest way to set goals is to break the process down into four steps.

Step 1: Think about what's important to you.

For example:

- I like participating in activities at my local community centre
- I want to improve how I communicate.

Step 2: Work out your goals.

For example:

- · To increase my ability to access the community for social activities
- To improve my ability to speak clearly.

Step 3: Break each goal down into steps.

For example to increase your ability to access the community:

- Research and find some community activities where there are people with similar interests
- Organise a support worker to pick me up and accompany me to the activity

Step 4: Write down the supports you need.

For example:

- Occupational therapy to build my muscle strength and coordination so I can learn to cook
- A support worker to help me get to my local community centre.

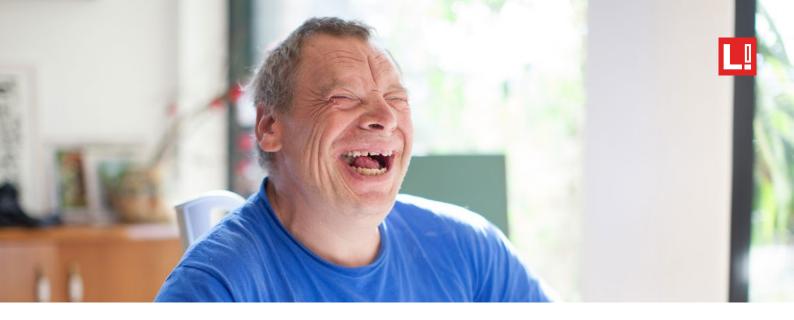


Need some inspiration?

We often we hear from our Members that identifying and working on goals can be challenging.

To help, we've created a special section in the Leap in! app that has a comprehensive list of **Goals** and **Goal Steps** that can be filtered to suit your condition and life stage.

Check out our Guide to the Leap in! app on page 27 to find some great ideas to get you started.



What types of supports are funded?

The funds in an NDIS Plan can go a long way if you have a good understanding of how the NDIS works and the types of supports and services you can purchase.

It's a great idea to learn about the various supports the NDIS funds and things you need to consider before choosing how to spend money in your plan.

If you're not sure if a support you'd like will be funded, keep reading! We've got it covered.

What will the NDIS fund?

Your NDIS Plan will be individual and specific to you and your life. Your funded supports will be reasonable and necessary for you and your disability and will help you to live an enjoyable life.

The supports that you request must:

- Be related to your disability
- · Help you pursue your goals
- Help you do activities that will improve your social and economic participation (like social activities, work or study)
- · Be value for money
- · Be likely to be effective for you
- Take into account support you receive from family, carers, community and other government services
- Be the responsibility of the NDIS to fund.

The types of supports that the NDIS may fund include:

- · Daily personal activities
- Transport to enable participation in community, social, economic and daily life activities
- Workplace help to allow you to successfully get or keep employment in the open or supported labour market



- Allied health supports such as psychology and physiotherapy
- Assistive technology
- Capacity building supports to help you learn new skills and become more independent
- Therapeutic supports such as occupational therapy and speech therapy
- Help with household tasks to allow you to maintain your home environment
- Help by skilled personnel in aids or equipment assessment, set up and training
- · Home modification design and construction
- Mobility equipment
- · Vehicle modifications.

Remember that to be approved, supports requested should be related to the goals you have set in your NDIS Plan.

What doesn't the NDIS cover?

- Everyday items such as toiletries and cleaning products
- Food or groceries
- Medications
- Diagnosis
- Mental illness early intervention
- · School, TAFE or university fees
- · Rent or mortgage payments
- Ongoing repairs or home maintenance
- Motor vehicles (though it may fund modifications to motor vehicles)
- Entry fees to cinemas or attractions
- Supports provided by other government or mainstream services such as hospital care, community mental health services, unemployment benefits and child care
- Items that are likely to cause harm to you or other people.



NDIS budget categories explained.

Your NDIS budget will likely be broken up into three main budget categories or 'support budgets', which can all be used to help you achieve your goals throughout your NDIS Plan.

Depending on your individual needs, you may receive funding in one or more of these categories. These are:



Core supports



Capital supports



Capacity Building supports.

You can see how much funding is allocated to each category in your NDIS Plan in the Leap in! app if you are a Leap in! Member, or in the myplace NDIS portal.

Good to know.

- Some support categories are flexible, which means you can spend the money from that category on any reasonable and necessary support that meets NDIS criteria
- In some cases, you can only purchase specific supports that are stated in your plan
- Some supports may require a quote or supporting documentation from a treating professional like a doctor or occupational therapist.



Core supports.

Core supports are the main NDIS support category, funding the things that help you in your day-to-day life.

This budget is the most flexible. It is provided as a lump sum with funding able to be used across any of the four categories.

Anything that you use or do that helps you in your daily life could be included as a Core support in your NDIS Plan.



 Assistance with Daily Life funds support with everyday personal activities that assist you to live as independently as possible at home and in the community. For example, personal care, cooking, cleaning and assistance with making household decisions.



2. Assistance with Social and Community Participation covers supports that improve your ability to participate in community, social and recreational activities.

This includes things like support to attend community-based activities and assistance to participate in social groups.

The activities may take place in a range of locations such as in the community, in a centre or at a sporting venue.



3. Consumables helps you cover everyday items and services relating to disability. These could include interpreting and translating services as well as continence and nutrition related items.



4. Transport helps to cover costs associated with specialised schooling or education programs, reaching your place of employment or participating in recreational or community activities.



NDIS Plan budget categories explained.

Capital supports.

A **Capital** support provides funding for equipment, home or vehicle modifications.

The NDIS is very specific in what this funding can be used for and it must be used as it is allocated. There are two types of Capital supports:



1. Assistive Technology (AT) covers any device that allows you to do something that you wouldn't be able to do without it or increase the ease or safety of things you do.

AT may be simple such as modified cutlery or more complex like a custom made wheelchair. The NDIS classifies assistive technology as either low risk (meaning the item is readily available, easy to set up and less likely to cause harm) and higher risk (more complex items or those that require professional advice or installation). This category also covers vehicle modifications.

There are three categories of AT based on cost:

- Low cost: Under \$1,500 per item. This might include items such as modified cutlery, walking sticks and non-slip bath mats.
 These are considered a Core support and can be purchased with your Core > Consumables budget.
- Mid cost: Between \$5,000 to \$15,000. Providing you have the relevant evidence and the funding in your plan budget, the NDIS will automatically approve funding for AT items up to \$15,000. No quote is required.
 - However, you do need to obtain a letter or report from an AT advisor outlining the item, how it will assist and why it is the best value for money.
- High cost: Over \$15,000 per item. All high cost AT purchases need an assessment by a professional AT advisor or assessor



and a quote. You may also have to demonstrate that you have trialled the item and it has shown to be effective for you.



Home Modifications are any changes you need to make to the structure, layout or fittings of your home to ensure you can move around safely. These can range from simple handrails to complex structural changes.

This is also where funding for Specialist Disability Accommodation will appear for people who need specialised housing because of a disability.

Capacity Building supports.

Capacity Building funding is set aside for activities that will support you in learning new skills.

These skills may be related to achieving your goals like living independently, finding a job, or getting help with your NDIS plan management.

There are nine sub-categories for Capacity Building funding:

- 1. Choice and Control
- 2. Daily Activity
- 3. Employment
- 4. Health and Wellbeing
- 5. Home Living
- 6. Lifelong Learning
- 7. Relationships
- 8. Social and Community Participation
- 9. Support Coordination.



How do I know that plan management is right for me?

Plan management is one of the options you have for managing the money in your NDIS Plan. Plan management gives you choice and control over how you use your NDIS budget but with the support of a "plan manager" who helps manage your funds and pays your bills.

When you're plan managed, the NDIS pays someone you choose to help you manage your NDIS funding and pay your provider invoices. You won't have to worry about record keeping and paperwork, and the NDIS actually adds extra funds in your plan to cover the cost of your plan manager.

There are many benefits of being plan managed.

- · You have complete control of your funds
- You can choose any provider to help you meet your goals, whether they are NDIS registered or not
- · You have the power to approve each payment from your plan to providers
- · Billing issues and questions are all resolved for you
- · No book-keeping or financial tracking
- No upfront costs
- · No separate bank account required.

When you are plan managed by Leap in!, you get all the good parts of being self-managed without having to worry about all of the above.

With Leap in! you'll also get monthly **Budget Health Checks** in addition to statements, connections to providers near you matched to your available budgets and great advice from a team who knows the NDIS.



Is plan management right for you?

- Do you want to buy supports from non-registered providers (like a lawn-mowing service, a local cleaner, your regular non-NDIS registered OT or an individual support worker or community group who hasn't registered for the NDIS)?
- 2. Would you like the freedom and control of self-managing your budgets without the paperwork and financial obligations?
- 3. Would you like someone to help you find supports, track your goals and make the most of your budgets and NDIS Plan?

If you answered 'yes' to all three questions, working with an NDIS plan manager like Leap in! will be a great option. Plan management is also ideal for families who have multiple members on the NDIS.

Have I chosen the right plan manager?

If you've signed up for plan management but you're not 100% sure if you've chosen the right plan manager, ask yourself these five questions:

- 1. Are they an NDIS registered provider?
- 2. Is my personal information secure and protected?
- 3. Do they have a digital platform where I can log in and check my claims, payments and service agreements?
- 4. Do they help me track my goals?
- 5. Do they provide me with a support team?

If you answered 'yes' to all these questions, you can rest assured that you've chosen a plan manager that will work for you.



NDIS Plan meeting checklist.

It can be hard to get your head around everything you need to remember before your NDIS Plan meeting.

We've put together a quick checklist to ensure you have everything covered.

Step 1: Decide on the details for your NDIS Plan meeting.

Before you confirm your meeting have you thought about...

- 1. What type of meeting you would like? For example, face-to-face or over the phone?
- 2. Where would you like to be for the meeting? For example, in your house, in your local area coordinator's office or other?
- 3. If you have a preferred time for the meeting? For example, morning, afternoon or evening?
- 4. Who would you like to be involved in the meeting? For example, a family member, close friend, your partner or a person who supports you (someone you know and can trust)?
- 5. Do you need communication or assistive aids for the meeting?

6. Do you need a translator?

Notes	

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Step 2: For your NDIS Plan meeting.

Use the checklist below to ensure you have everything you need for your NDIS Plan meeting. You may not need all of this information or you may have other things you'd like to include as well.

Leap in! Plan Ready Summary

View, print or share this summary that you can find on the menu of the My Profile section in the Leap in! app. Click here to find out more about how the Leap in! app can help you.

Assessments and reports (where relevant)

- · Diagnosis from specialists
- · Home modification assessment
- Medication charts
- · Mental health reports
- Care needs assessments
- · Occupational therapist and speech pathologist reports
- Neuropsychological assessments
- Incontinence assessments and management plans
- · Physical condition/accessibility needs
- Other

Notes

My community and mainstream supports

- Current support plan from my service provider/s listing all supports
- List of drop in (ad hoc) support services
- Quote from provider/s for supports or equipment that you would like covered in your new NDIS Plan (not compulsory)
- All your unpaid/unfunded supports from family and friends and supports from community groups. If you have the Leap in! app, these are included in the Orew section.



Frequently asked questions.

At Leap in! we're always ready to help. Here are some quick answers to some of our most commonly asked questions.

What is the difference between the NDIS and NDIA?

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is an independent statutory agency whose role is to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

What does the NDIS cover?

The NDIS funds reasonable and necessary supports, services and equipment that a person with disability needs. The funding helps you to pursue your goals and aspirations; increase your independence; participate in social and economic activities (such as work) and to develop your capacity to take part in the community.

What doesn't the NDIS cover?

NDIS funding doesn't cover general everyday living expenses that people without disability would be required to pay, such as train travel, rent, groceries, mobile phone or movie tickets.

How does NDIS funding work?

Funding under the NDIS is individualised, based on goals and outcomes. Your plan is developed following a planning meeting and can be reviewed as your goals change.

Is NDIS funding means tested?

Assistance from the NDIS is not means tested which means the value of your assets are not taken into account when determining eligibility. NDIS funding does not impact income support such as the Disability Support Pension or Carer Allowance.



What does 'reasonable and necessary' mean?

In order to be considered reasonable and necessary, a support must:

- · Be related to your disability
- Represent value for money
- Be likely to be effective and beneficial
- Take into account any informal supports given to you by your family, friends, support crew and the community.

Day to day living costs unrelated to your disability support needs cannot be funded by the NDIS.

What types of supports are funded?

Your NDIS Plan will be individual and specific to you and your life.

The types of supports that the NDIS may fund include:

- · Daily personal activities
- Transport to enable participation in community, social, economic and daily life activities
- Workplace help to allow you to successfully get or keep employment in the open or supported labour market
- Therapeutic supports
- Help with household tasks to allow you to maintain your home environment
- Help from skilled personnel in aids or equipment assessment, set up and training
- Assistive technology
- · Home modification design and construction
- Mobility equipment
- · Vehicle modifications.



Who will my NDIS Plan meeting be with?

Planning meetings can either be conducted by an NDIA planner or through a local area coordinator (LAC).

What will my meeting be like?

You can request a face-to-face or over the phone planning meeting.

The meeting is an opportunity to talk through your goals and needs and the types of supports the NDIS may fund.

Use our NDIS Plan meeting checklist (on page 19) to help you prepare.

Can I choose who attends the Plan meeting with me?

Yes. You can ask a family member, close friend, your partner or a person who supports you (someone you know and can trust).

Do I need to include the cost of items in my plan?

It's not necessary to include the cost of the item in your plan. However, some items require a quote before purchasing.

You can review the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits.

What is a goal?

A goal is something you want to learn, develop or achieve. Services and supports funded by the NDIS may help you pursue your goals and overcome any barriers encountered along the way.

Goals are an important part of developing your NDIS Plan. They give the NDIS information about what's important to you and what you want to do in life.

For an NDIS Plan to be approved, it must include at least one goal. Each goal should include details about the supports required to get there. It's a good idea to have a combination of short term and long term goals.



How long will my NDIS Plan last?

An NDIS Plan may last for anywhere between one and three years. You will usually receive a shorter plan if your needs are likely to change in the next year or two.

People who are new to the NDIS will usually receive a shorter one year plan. This allows an opportunity to see how the NDIS meets your needs and make adjustments at your first plan reassessment.

People whose needs are unlikely to change and who are confident in using their funding to pursue their goals may request a plan duration of up to three years.

What is a stated support?

A stated support is a support or service specifically listed on your NDIS Plan. Funding for stated supports can only be used to purchase the specified item.

The funding cannot be swapped out or used to purchase a different item or a different version of the stated item, without approval from the NDIS.

Some stated supports require a quotation to be supplied and will be listed in your NDIS Plan at the exact amount quoted by the provider.

Stated supports are referred to as "stated items" in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Pricing Limits (previously called the NDIS Price Guide).

Examples of stated supports include plan management, support coordination, linen service, individualised living options (ILO) and specialised transport.

What if I don't agree with my plan when I receive it?

You can request a plan variation or plan reassessment at any time. If you request a plan variation, the NDIS may decide to vary your existing plan or do a full plan reassessment. If the NDIS does a variation, you will receive a copy of the varied plan within seven days.



Reviewable decisions include whether your access request is approved and the provision of reasonable and necessary supports in your plan.

What is a plan reassessment?

A plan reassessment is the process of reviewing your NDIS Plan when it has almost expired to see if any changes need to be made. This is usually done with a local area coordinator (LAC), NDIS planner or early childhood partner.

You can find the official reassessment date in your current NDIS Plan. They can also occur when complex changes are required to your existing plan.

What can I do if I don't agree with a decision made by the NDIS?

You can request an internal review of a decision made by the NDIS. Reviewable decisions include whether your access request is approved and the reasonable and necessary supports in your NDIS Plan.

You can request an internal review of a decision by:

- Submitting a written request to the Chief Executive Officer National Disability Insurance Agency, GPO Box 700, Canberra ACT 2601
- Talking to someone at an NDIA office by calling 1800 800 110
- Sending an email to enquiries@ndis.gov.au.

When you ask for a review, explain why you think the decision is incorrect. There is also a Request for a review of a decision form on the NDIS website that can help you prepare the right information.

What happens when I ask for an internal review?

A review will be conducted by an NDIS staff member who was not involved in the original decision making. They will reconsider the facts, law and policy of the original decision and determine if it was accurate. They may also be able to consider any new information available.



I haven't spent all of the funds from my current plan and it's time for my plan reassessment. What happens to my unused funding?

Any unspent funds are returned to the NDIA. Your funds do not roll over to your next plan.

What happens when I turn 65?

If you are currently receiving funding under the NDIS and you turn 65, you can either choose to remain with the NDIS or you can transition to the aged care system.



How can Leap in! help?

Leap in! is a NDIS registered plan manager and we put people before profit. Our focus is on continuously improving services for our Members. We're here to help Members get the best value from their NDIS Plans and achieve their goals. We never treat you like a number and promise to keep you at the heart of everything we do.

All Members get access to our Member Benefits Club.

It's one of a number of ways we give back to Members. The discounts and offers available in the Members Benefit Club can save you money on loads of everyday items – groceries, homewares, electronics and more. There's also offers on disability-related products and services.

Guide to the Leap in! app.

The Leap in! app, available for mobile, tablet and desktop, is your one stop shop to prepare, plan and manage your NDIS budgets. It keeps all your information in one simple, easy to access place.

Keeping track of your **personal information** including health, crew, supports and goals is made easy with the Leap in! app. You can find these sections under **My profile**. From there, you can view or update each section, see your plan summary, plan management options, NDIS meeting checklist and saved documents.

Take a look at a demonstration profile now.

To take a look at a demo version, including the **My Budgets** section (only available to plan managed Members), follow these instructions.

Visit the Leap in! web app login and click on **Explore the app**. Then select a demo profile to explore and take a look around.

Alternatively download the app for Apple or Android, click on **Explore the app** then select a demo profile to explore and take a look around.



About me and Crew sections of the Leap in! app



Setting and managing your **goals** is an important part of being prepared for your Plan reassessment. Click into your **Goals section** to see all your goals and track, edit or update them as you go.

The Leap in! app also makes it easy to track your **budgets**. You can find out how much you've spent and how much you have left in each of your budget categories by clicking into the **My budgets** section in your app. This section lets you:

- See NDIS budget categories in real time
- View graphs showing what funds are available and what funds have been spent
- Drill down on individual budget categories and spend summaries with support providers
- View the **Spend tracking** feature which provides alerts if spending is off track.

You can also view your **Plan summary** any time in the **My Profile** section to find all your information in one place.

These are only a few examples of what you can do with the Leap in! app. It is a great way to manage all of your information in one place so you can keep on top of all the details you need for your NDIS Plan and manage your budgets.

Would you like to check out the app? We have demo profiles that you can explore. You'll find the details for how to access the demo profiles on the bottom of page 27.



Goals and Budgets sections



My Plan Summary



Connect with providers.

Leap in! can help connect you to the right service provider to suit your needs and meet your goals.

View the Leap in! Provider Network Directory.

Connect with us.

Contact us to book a free NDIS pre-planning session or sign up to Leap in! NDIS plan management today.

There are many ways that you can contact us to start working on your NDIS Plan and achieve your goals.

We understand that there are different ways that you might want to talk to us or find out more information, so we have a range of options to suit your needs:

- Call us: 1300 05 78 78
- Visit our website: www.leapin.com.au
- Chat with us online: Available on our website, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
- TY voice call: 133 677
- Speak & listen: 1300 555 727
- SMS Relay: 0423 677 767
- If you need an interpreter: call 131 450 and ask them to call Leap in! on 07 3724 0368
- Email us: crew@leapin.com.au
- Contact us via post: GPO Box 1744, Brisbane QLD 4001

Our office hours are 9am to 5pm AEST, Monday to Friday.

Leapin





Reapin.com.au



Download the award-winning Leap in! app.











The Leap in! crew acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.



At Leap in! we commit to being a safe and welcoming place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and gender diverse (LGBTQIA+) people to work and to live as their authentic selves, without judgement, without discrimination and free from harassment.