

Leap in! ebook series

A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied in a bun, smiling warmly at a young child with Down syndrome. The child is also smiling and looking towards the camera. They are outdoors, with a swimming pool and green foliage in the background. The woman is wearing a black halter-neck top, and the child is wearing orange swim trunks.

The Essential NDIS Guide:

An introduction to NDIS basics.

Leap in!



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What is the NDIS?

The **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)** is the new way of providing support to Australians with disabilities, their families and carers. It is revolutionising the way you identify the supports you need to live your life.

All Australians under the age of 65 who have a permanent and significant disability are provided the reasonable and necessary supports they need to live an enjoyable life through the NDIS.

A permanent and significant disability is a disability that is likely to be lifelong and have a substantial impact on your ability to complete everyday activities. This can be intellectual, physical, sensory, cognitive or psychosocial.

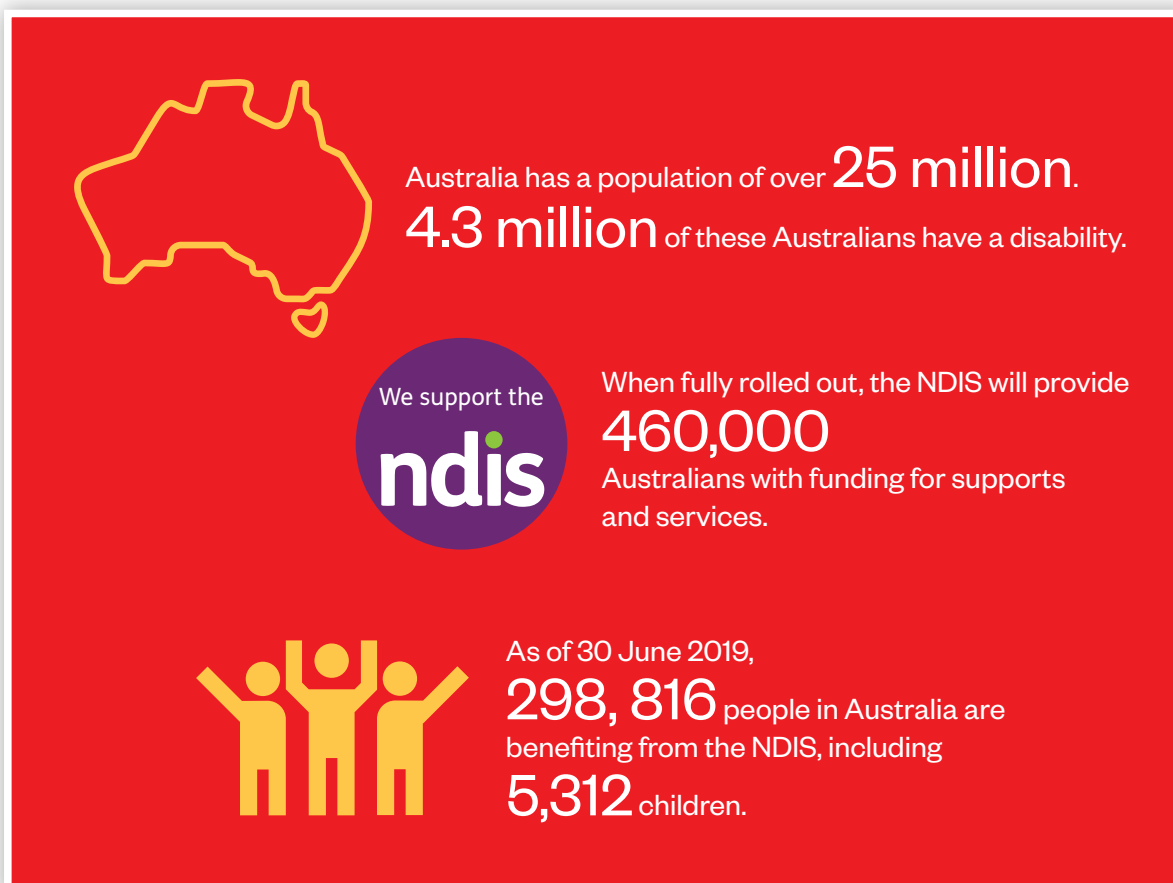
The NDIS takes a lifetime approach to supporting people with disabilities, with early intervention giving them choice and control over their lives and helping them to achieve their goals.

To help you understand the NDIS and how having an NDIS Plan can help you, the Leap in! Crew has put together this 'Essential NDIS Guide' to help you navigate your NDIS journey.

Keep reading to find out more!



Some facts and figures.



5 most common disabilities currently funded by the NDIS:

30% of participants have **autism**

26% of participants have an **intellectual disability**

9% of participants have a **psychosocial disability**

5% of participants have **cerebral palsy**

5% of participants have other **neurological disabilities**.



Improved outcomes.

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

↑11%

increase in social and community participation for participants aged 15 and over.

↑9%

increase in independence for children aged 7 to 14 years.

↑7%

increase in assistance with daily living participants aged 15 to 25.

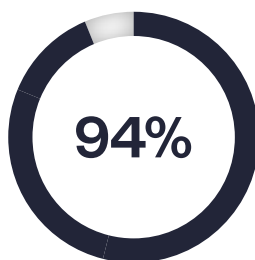
↑7%

increase in choice and control for participants aged 25 and over.

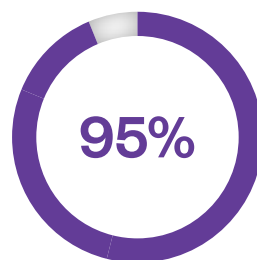
Overall, NDIS participant satisfaction is high at 90%.



said their planner listened to them.



said they had enough time to tell their story.



said their planning meeting had gone well.

Last year (2017/2018), 31% 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 NDIS Plan each year. Plan management can help you track and manage your funding.



What is ‘reasonable and necessary’?

If you’re transitioning to the NDIS or starting your NDIS journey, you may find yourself wading through a sea of new information. On the way, you’ll probably keep coming 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 your disability.

What are reasonable and necessary supports?

The NDIS funds ‘reasonable and necessary supports’ relating to your 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 by evaluating whether a support request is:

- Related to your disability and support needs
- Good value for money
- Likely to be effective and beneficial to you.

Your NDIS Planner will also consider the unpaid, informal supports you receive from family, friends and your support crew (including support workers, support networks and the community).



Some examples of supports that may be approved include:



Support workers to help with personal care activities



Therapeutic supports like behaviour support



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 'fair and reasonable' in your situation.



What is a goal?

Goals describe what you want to learn, develop or achieve in your life. When you're setting each goal for your NDIS Plan, it's important to remember that they should relate to the Plan you are requesting.

For your NDIS Plan to be approved, the supports you ask for should be related to the goals you have set. "Supports" means services, aids or assistance that help increase your independence, do tasks more safely or live a more normal life.

NDIS goals are broken into short, medium or long-term goals depending on how long they will take to achieve.

If you're not sure where to start, don't worry! We've put together a quick guide to setting your goals to make sure you're ready for your NDIS Plan meeting.

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
- Finding and keeping a job
- Doing more social and recreational activities
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Learning something new
- Improving communication
- Confidence in managing money
- 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 three 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: Work out what you need to achieve these goals.

For example:

- A support worker to help me get to my local community centre
- A speech pathologist to help me improve my communication.

Need some inspiration?

So often we hear from our members 'that you don't know, what you don't know' and working on goals can be challenging.

To help, we've created a special section in the Leap in! app which 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 25](#) to find some great ideas to get you started.



What types of supports are funded?

Getting the NDIS to work well for you can be challenging.

This involves researching the supports available and how you can make the most of them in your Plan.

It is important to understand what supports are available to you so that you can be fully prepared when it comes to your NDIS Plan Review meeting.

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
- Represent value for money
- Be likely to be effective for you
- Take into account the support you receive by your family, carers, network, community and other government services.

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 including behaviour support
- 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.

These supports will help you to:

- Achieve your goals
- Become more independent
- Participate more in your community and workplace
- Increase your capacity to actively participate in the community.

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?

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
- Movie tickets.

If the support or service is not related to your disability, is unlikely to be effective or does not represent value for money, it will not be covered by the NDIS.



NDIS budget categories explained.

We understand that the different categories in your NDIS Plan can be confusing. Budget categories, what they mean and what they cover can be complicated.

Your NDIS budget will likely be broken up into 3 main budget categories or 'support purposes' which can all be planned to help you throughout your NDIS Plan.

These are:



Core supports



Capital supports



Capacity Building supports.



Core supports.

NDIS **Core** supports are activities that help you in your everyday life. This area of your NDIS Plan has 4 budget categories which can be flexible to accommodate your individual needs.



1. Assistance with daily life includes making household decisions, looking after your personal care, cooking and cleaning.



2. Assistance with social and community participation can include activities or courses that help you connect and socialise with others. Art classes, sports coaching or vacation camps that have mentoring, skill development, peer support or Capacity building components are covered here.



3. Consumables helps you cover everyday items and services. 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, which are split into 2 budget categories.

The NDIS is very specific in what this funding can be used for and it must be used as it is allocated.



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 is split into 4 levels to describe the complexity of the equipment so that you can identify, find and access the AT you need:

- Level 1: Simple, low-risk
- Level 2: Standard AT
- Level 3: Specialised AT
- Level 4: Complex AT solutions.

Depending on the complexity of your AT, you may be required to undergo an AT assessment before you can access NDIS funds for the equipment.



2. **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.



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 8 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.**

If required, support coordination can also be included in your Capacity Building budget.



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

When you're plan managed, the NDIS pays someone you choose to help you manage your money and pay your bills. You won't have to worry about budgeting, 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 still 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
- No audits.

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

If you're wondering if plan management is right for you, we can help you arrive at an answer. We've put together three questions to ask yourself below, which will help you determine if you should try plan management or not.



Ask yourself:

1. 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 a NDIS plan management provider like Leap in! will be a great option for your first NDIS Plan.

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 5 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 on 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 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 Crew 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 support and equipment that a person with disability needs. The funding supports you to pursue your goals and aspirations; increase your independence; increase your social and economic participation 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 and has no impact on income support such as the Disability Support Pension and Carers 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 (including support workers, support networks and the community).

They can’t include any day-to-day living costs that aren’t related to your disability support needs.

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 including behaviour support
- 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.



Frequently asked questions.

When is the NDIS rolling out in my area?

The NDIS is rolling out progressively throughout Australia and is expected to be fully rolled out by 2020.

Find out when the NDIS will be available in your region by selecting your state or territory below:

- [Australian Capital Territory](#)
- [New South Wales](#)
- [Northern Territory](#)
- [Queensland](#)
- [South Australia](#)
- [Tasmania](#)
- [Victoria](#)
- [Western Australia](#)

Who will my Plan meeting be with?

Planning meetings can either be conducted by an NDIA Planner or through a Local Area Coordinator (LAC). An LAC can be an NDIS staff member or they can be a team member of a not-for-profit organisation who is acting on behalf of the NDIA.

What will my meeting be like?

You can request a face-to-face meeting planning meeting when the NDIS planner calls you.

When someone from the NDIS calls you, ask them what the purpose of the phone call is: ask whether it's to check your eligibility or whether it's for your NDIA Planning meeting.

Use our [Plan meeting checklist \(on page 18\)](#) to help you prepare.

**Can I choose who attends the NDIA 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, you can familiarise yourself with the NDIS Price Guide [here](#).

What is a goal?

We recommend you think about two short term and one long term goal to be included in your first plan (although there is no limit to the number of goals you can have).

It may be that one of your short term goals is to retain your current level of supports.

A good place to start is to think about what you'd like to achieve in the next year or two. This can be something simple e.g. 'learning to cook for myself' or to make new friends'. Longer term goals could be 'finding a job that's right for me' or learn to live more independently'.

Will I get to see my Plan before it is finalised?

Generally, no.



Frequently asked questions.

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

You can request a review of your Plan with the NDIA (this must be made within three months of receiving your Plan).

You can make the request by:

- Calling the NDIA on 1800 800 110
- Writing to the CEO of the NDIA at GPO Box 700, Canberra ACT 2601
- Emailing to a request to enquiries@ndis.gov.au
- Visiting an NDIS office or
- Completing the application for review of a decision form on the NDIS myplace participant portal.

What happens when I ask to have my Plan reviewed?

Your review will be conducted by an NDIA staff member who was not involved in the original decision making. They will reconsider the facts, law and policy aspects of the original Plan and determine if it was accurate. They are also 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 Review. What happens to my unused funding?

Any unspent funds are returned to the NDIA.

What happens when I turn 65?

If you are over 65 at the time your area rolls out the NDIS, you will transition into the aged care system.

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 registered charity and NDIS-registered plan manager.

Here at Leap in! we're working on a vision to bring the National Disability Strategy to life by making it easy to navigate the NDIS and implement personal goals and plans.

Leap in! offers a unique, digital-based platform that connects Australians with disabilities, providers and the community groups who support them, all in one delightfully simple place.

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 budget. 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 the demo version, including the My Budgets section (normally only available to plan managed members), follow the instructions below.

1. Go to <https://app.leapin.com.au>
2. Enter the following email address: democrew@leapin.com.au
3. Enter the following password: leapindemo
4. Click Log in



My Profile and About me sections of the Leap in! app



Setting and managing your **goals** is an important part of being prepared for your Plan review meeting. 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 budget accordingly.

If you'd like to see more of the app before you decide to join, you can find login details to our demo account on the web app [here](#).



Goals and Budgets sections



My Plan Ready Summary



Connect with providers.

Leap in! partners with trusted service providers across the disability sector. We can help connect you to the right service provider to suit your needs and meet your goals.

You can find our Provider Network Directory [here](#).

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:** <https://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:** connect@leapin.com.au
- **Contact us via post:** GPO Box 1744, Brisbane QLD 4001

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

Leap in!



1300 05 78 78



crew@leapin.com.au



leapin.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.