

# Reimagining Accessible Employment

PwC Australia's access and inclusion plan 2020-2022

# A message from our CEO



At PwC Australia our purpose is to build trust in society and solve important problems. One of the biggest problems facing people with disability is finding sustainable, long-term and meaningful employment opportunities. I believe that Australian businesses like PwC have a critical role to play in helping to solve this problem. This Access and Inclusion Plan demonstrates our commitment to reimagining accessible employment, and helping build accessible and inclusive workplaces across Australia.

Since launching PwC Australia's *Access & Inclusion Plan 2016-2018* in 2015, I am very proud of what we have achieved, including:

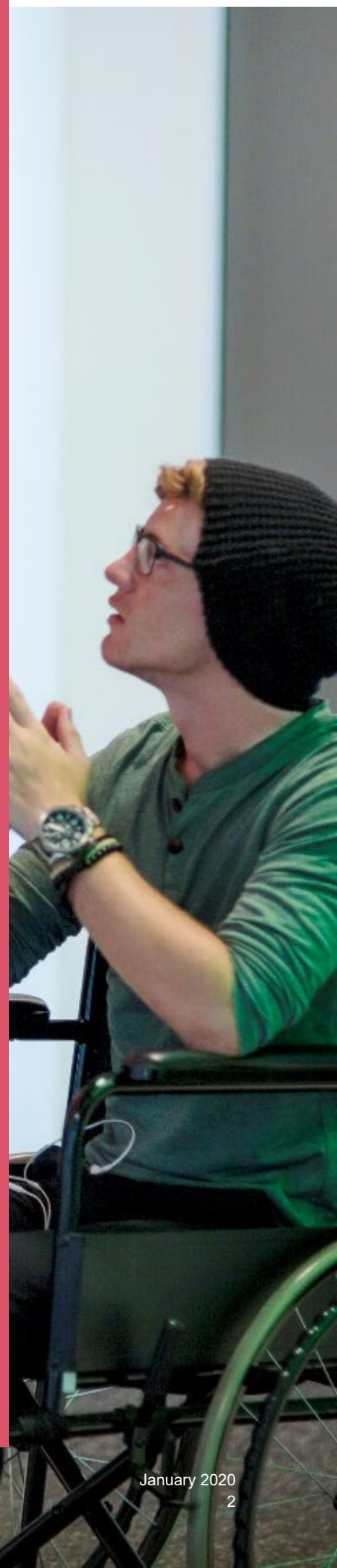
- Creating leading accessible environments for our people and clients by moving to new office locations across Australia which exceed the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (**DDA**).
- Increasing the comfort of people with disability at PwC Australia to disclose their disability at work, increasing by 18 percentage points from 2018 to 2019 to 58 per cent.
- Actively engaging our people in conversations about mental health, reducing stigma and encouraging people who need support to seek it, through our Green Light to Talk initiative.
- Appointing a dedicated Disability expert to lead our internal strategy and support our client work

In particular, I want to acknowledge the incredible passion of the many people across PwC Australia who volunteer their time with our Ability@PwC employee network. Thanks to the efforts of the Ability@PwC team we are breaking down the stigma people with disability face in the workplace by delivering disability confidence training firmwide, raising the visibility of people with disability and celebrating role models across the whole firm.

These are great achievements but we must not be complacent. We will continue to challenge ourselves to ensure our people represent the diversity of our clients and society, and foster inclusion so all our people can thrive.

At PwC Australia we know that engaging people with disability in meaningful employment brings better outcomes for our business, and to society more broadly. It's time we reimagine accessible employment.

**Luke Sayers**  
CEO, PwC Australia





# A message from our Ability@ PwC Network Partner Sponsor

My brother was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at age 26. For six years leading up to his diagnosis, he experienced symptoms including vision problems, numbness in his legs, and bladder and bowel issues. Finally, his diagnosis came through - which was a shock to myself and my family, but also a relief in a way, to finally know the source of his symptoms. He has now lost his feeling from his waist to his toes, and uses a walking cane or wheelchair.

His experiences have shaped my passion for supporting people with disability, especially in regard to finding meaningful employment opportunities which draw on their strengths.

Across my 21 years at PwC Australia, I'm continually impressed at the responsiveness of the firm to meet the needs of staff with disability and proud of the progress we've made towards becoming a more inclusive employer.

The Ability@PwC Network continues to go from strength to strength, building a community of people with disability, carers of people with disability and allies to raise awareness and continue to push the firm to progress its ambitious goals.

Thank you to all our Ability@PwC team members for volunteering their time to continue to advocate for and support people with disability across the firm. We have much to be proud of and I look forward to furthering this agenda together.

**Sophie Langshaw**  
Ability@PwC Partner Sponsor



Act with integrity



Make a difference



Care



Work together



Reimagine the possible

# Our PwC values



Our purpose is why we exist.  
Our values define how we behave

At PwC, our purpose is to build trust in society and solve important problems. Our values define who we are, what we stand for, and how we behave. While we come from different backgrounds, our values are what we have in common. They guide how we work with our clients and each other, inform the type of work we do and hold us accountable to do our best. They govern our actions and determine our success.

Our purpose and values underpin our commitment to increasing the representation and inclusion of people with disability at PwC and solving employment challenges for people with disability in society more broadly.



“Ability@PwC is a terrific network raising our awareness of those with disability, and the contribution they make. I’ve seen personally the contribution and the appreciation that happens when we get this inclusivity right. It’s amazing.”

**Sean Gregory**  
Chief Operating Officer

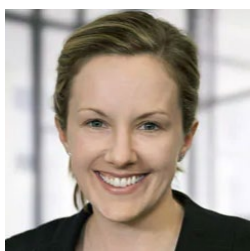
## Every day, all our people will feel valued for what they bring, thrive and inspire others

At PwC, we respect and value differences because we know when people from different backgrounds and with different points of view work together, we create the most value – for our clients, our people and society.

That is why one of our strategic goals is a diverse and inclusive culture. A diverse culture where our people reflect the diversity of our clients and the Australian community. And an inclusive culture which expects and rewards behaviours that support all our people to reach their full potential.

This starts with having a values-led culture that encourages each of us to bring our full selves to work. PwC Australia has a demonstrated track record on diversity and inclusion, including:

- Launched one of Australia's best parental leave policies with 18 weeks paid leave inclusive of adoption, surrogacy, foster care, kinship care and stillbirth, which can be taken flexibly in a way that best suits our people (and with no minimum service requirements). We also provide superannuation contributions for up to 12 months for employees on parental leave (paid and unpaid), and 3 weeks of co-parent leave.
- Adopted an 'All Roles Flex' policy which means we are open to discussing and implementing a flexible approach to all roles across the firm.
- Launched a domestic and family violence policy, including unrestricted paid leave to find safety and reorganise personal affairs, financial assistance and support for people experiencing violence. We also provide 10 days paid leave for our people supporting a friend or family member who is experiencing domestic and family violence.
- Focussed heavily on equity in remuneration, through conducting gender pay gap audits, adding inclusion consciences in performance moderations, and reviewing performance ratings, pay, incentives and promotion for equity.
- Conducted periodic surveys of our people to understand our progress towards a diverse and inclusive culture, and to track the diversity demographics of our people.
- Provided training for our people to raise awareness and lift the standard of behaviour, including inclusive leadership workshops for leader, 'Leading Inclusive Teams' for all our people, Sticks and Stones LGBTI awareness, cultural diversity awareness, First Nations cultural awareness, and disability confidence workshops.
- Launched a Transitioning/Gender Affirming Support policy for any person who chooses to transition and affirm their gender while working at the firm. This includes 15 days paid leave, unrestricted unpaid leave, a clothing allowance and a support team to assist you with developing a plan.
- Launched jointly with PwC's Indigenous Consulting our first Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan which outlines our commitment to reconciliation towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.



"Diversity and inclusion is fundamentally about our people's wellbeing and sense of psychological safety and belonging. It's about our people feeling their contributions are valued and being comfortable raising ideas and concerns, to bring out the best, most productive versions of themselves."

### Julie McKay

Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer



## Our approach to diversity and inclusion



## Inspiring leadership

- Over 1200 of our people participated in inclusive leadership training workshops
- 5246 employees have completed the 'Open mind' eLearn module on inclusive leadership
- People with disability at PwC selected to participate in 'Future Shapers' leadership development program
- Green Light to Talk initiative launched encouraging our people to speak up about mental health and seek support
- 'Billable' time code introduced for any of our people who volunteer in our grassroot employee-led Ability@PwC network



## Accessible and inclusive workplace

- All new office locations exceed DDA requirements
- Accessibility requirements question introduced as standard on all registration forms
- Closed captioning introduced to all webcasts (digital events)
- Reasonable adjustment process streamlined through PwC's Wellness team



## Employment and culture

- Comfort levels of people with disability to disclose their disability within the firm increased, year on year
- More than 500 people trained in disability confidence, including over 120 Partners
- New pathways to employment including Paralympic Workplace Diversity Program, Australian Network on Disability's 'Stepping Into' program; JobSupport's 'Transition' program and Project Dandelion
- Participated in Australian Government's 'Employ their Ability' campaign
- Appointed a dedicated disability SME to implement our internal strategies and assist our clients in progressing their disability inclusion agendas
- Appointed a 'diverse hires' resource in our Talent Acquisition team to focus on employing more people with a disability and candidates from an indigenous background
- Developed extensive resources on internal intranet for our people to increase awareness and understanding of disability



# Our key achievements since launching our 2015 Access & Inclusion Plan



## Accessible technology and information

- Web accessibility training provided to staff across Diversity & Inclusion, Communications and DigiTech
- Introduction of gamified recruitment software for Campus Recruitment with built-in adjustments for several conditions including colour blindness, ADHD and dyslexia
- Google Suite utilisation with built-in accessibility functionality such as closed captions

While we made some important progress during our previous access and inclusion plan, our 2020-2022 plan includes an uplift in addressing the systemic barriers to increasing both the representation and active inclusion of people with disability within our firm and more broadly in society.

At PwC Australia we are working to create a workplace and culture which enables all our people with disability, and our carers of people with disability, to reach their full potential.

To achieve true cultural change and equal opportunity for people with disability, we must acknowledge disability is not about a person's medical condition or limitations. It results from the environmental barriers that hinder full and effective participation on an equal basis and seek to remove these barriers. We know that focusing internally alone will not affect the level of change our firm aspires to create and will focus on supporting our clients disability inclusion journey in addition to our own, to influence systemic change in disability employment.

At PwC Australia, there are three focus areas for Reimagining Accessible Employment:

- An inclusive workplace for people with disabilities
- Increased employment of people with disabilities
- Beyond PwC Australia, influencing disability employment rates in Australia



# Our Reimagine Accessible Employment plan

Under each of these focus areas, we have listed proposed interventions PwC Australia will implement to reimagine accessible employment.



“Working at PwC has been a great experience. Everyone is so helpful, supportive, friendly and understanding, especially my team members and Managers. They have been great at supporting me in any way possible and I am very grateful for that.

I remember in our old office, I used to struggle getting into meeting rooms with my big power chair as the doors were narrow. However, my colleagues had always supported me without any hesitation so that I was able to contribute to the important meetings by moving around chairs and tables so that I could sit comfortably.

Our new office in Sydney has been designed as an accessible and inclusive workplace. It's an open space which allows me to move around each floor in my power chair quite comfortably and easily. The lifts have been made so that whichever floor I swipe my card to go to, the particular lift letter would light up, make noise and stay open for longer until I get inside the lift. The kitchen bench has been designed to my height so that I can reach the microwave, biscuits, sink and the bin comfortably. I have a permanent desk, which has my scanners set up (as my work involves scanning important documents everyday for our team in Manila).

I feel very proud and fortunate to be working at such a prestigious firm like PwC and love coming into work each and everyday!”

**Nabilla Laskar**  
Accountant, Assurance

# An inclusive workplace for people with disabilities

Item	Opportunity	Initiative
1	Conduct a 'current state review' of the experience of people with disability at PwC Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the experiences, barriers, challenges and successes of people with a disability within the firm</li> <li>Review policies and procedures considering their accessibility and utility</li> </ul>
2	Increase awareness of existing disability supports and activity at PwC Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the promotion of workplace adjustment process and case management services</li> <li>Promote access to available resources for preventative wellness support and programs, including mental health</li> <li>Provide access to good quality and informative materials to demystify and destigmatise disability</li> <li>Build disability confidence firmwide through the roll out of disability confidence sessions by our grassroot employee led Ability@PwC network</li> </ul>
3	Identify and rectify accessibility gaps in our core – our systems, processes and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build internal capacity to access and implement accessibility into all web based applications</li> <li>Ensure accessibility is built into product development</li> <li>Ensure all firmwide communications are accessible or can be provided in accessible format</li> <li>Ensure all events are accessible (internal and external) for the attendees, including accessible technology and documents as required</li> <li>Incorporate accessibility into brand guidelines</li> <li>Provide accessible communication training to key communication and marketing teams</li> <li>Engage PwC's supply chain to develop and promote minimum accessibility standards</li> </ul>
4	Improve the comfort and safety for declaration in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are committed to supporting the Ability@PwC Network, to increase their presence and improve the safety of disability conversation and declaration</li> <li>Promote and support the role of our carers, including a review of the Carers Leave policy and available supports</li> <li>Build leadership role models through sharing of personal stories or experience with disability</li> <li>Feature people with disability consistently in internal and external firm communications, and increase the visibility of disability aligned with success</li> </ul>
5	Support the progression of our talent with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide mentoring opportunities for our talent who identify as having a disability</li> <li>Sponsor participation of PwC staff in the Disability Leadership Institute's 'FutureShapers' leadership development training program</li> <li>Increase engagement between staff with disability and PwC OnBoard program</li> <li>Ensure Team Leaders are provided with disability confidence training, aware of supports available to assist with managing someone with disability and are actively monitoring talent who have identified disability to ensure they are not disadvantaged through the performance process</li> </ul>
6	Maintain a highly accessible office environment for staff, clients and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceed DDA requirements at each PwC office location and continue to learn from and implement leading practice in other organisations</li> <li>Ensure hearing loop available at each PwC office location</li> <li>Review timings of automatic bathroom doors</li> </ul>
7	Review accessibility of preferred travel and accommodation options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove providers who do not comply with PwC Australia minimum accessibility requirements and/or develop a secondary list of accessibility approved suppliers</li> <li>Ensure people with disability are not inhibited in accessing travel opportunities</li> </ul>
8	Review utilisation and enhance promotion of workplace adjustment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure our people have a clear understanding of PwC's Reasonable Adjustment Policy and how to access support</li> <li>Ensure people who have disclosed their disability are supported</li> <li>Develop and maintain clear, consistent and streamlined process for requesting, recording and managing reasonable adjustments throughout recruitment and during employment</li> </ul>





“I was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in 2008. I still manage the condition today and my life currently revolves around a cycle of 4 ‘active days and 3 days bedbound.

The greatest benefit I have experienced at PwC is an institutional willingness to have ongoing dialogue about how reasonable adjustments can be made to support my career. This has enabled me to achieve success in my professional life; while managing the severe impact that working places on my personal life.

I have been especially fortunate throughout my time at PwC as I have been supported by my colleagues; with some people going far above and beyond to help me achieve success. I can confidently say that without the proactive support of my colleagues and the flexibility afforded to me, my level of contribution at PwC would have been substantially diminished.”

**Matthew Ryan**  
Senior Accountant, Assurance

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“I am profoundly deaf (90% hearing loss) and although I have a very helpful cochlear implant, am heavily reliant on lip-reading. Communication is obviously key in our work environment so steps are taken to ensure I am able to effectively follow and contribute to meetings. When the meeting is large and where we might also have on-line participators, I make use of live remote captioning. This is when a 3rd party types out what others are saying and the words come up on my laptop. I need to pre-book this support.

More recently I have started to utilise AI speech-to-text capabilities that come as standard in Google Meet and on Google's Pixel phone. This technology removes the need to book support in advance and is remarkably fast with an 80% accuracy rate. As a result, my fear of missing out on key discussions has fallen dramatically. Additionally, as awareness improves, my PwC colleagues have gone out of their way to ensure I follow discussions e.g. repositioning themselves in meetings so their lips are visible or switching their camera on during video conferences. All this makes for a very inclusive working environment.”

**Niall Betteridge**  
Director, DigiTech

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# Employment of people with disabilities

Item	Opportunity	Initiative
1	Increase the representation of people with disability at PwC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the representation of people with disability through the establishment of employment goals and enhanced culture of safety to disclose</li> <li>• Increase the participation in programs including: Paralympic Workplace Diversity Program, Australian Network on Disability's 'Stepping Into' program; JobSupport's 'Transition' program, Impact21 and Specialisterne's Autism Employment program</li> </ul>
2	Our goal is to become an employer of choice for candidates with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run targeted recruitment campaigns and connect with universities through disability support services on campus</li> <li>• Participate in external disability employment campaigns, media and speaking opportunities</li> <li>• Increase accessibility at all stages of recruitment, and on-boarding including mandatory disability confidence training for recruiters</li> <li>• Continue to provide support and training for our people conducting interviews with candidates with a disability, for example disability confidence training and unconscious bias training</li> <li>• Encourage people with disability to disclose their disability and any reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process (and throughout their employment)</li> </ul>



“From day 1 working at PwC, I have felt well and truly part of the PwC 'family' with my disability never being a focus point of 'negative difference'. Rather, it has been a platform to grow conversation around disability and shift the focus to experiences in my life and how I have adapted myself to suit the situation!

In the initial stages of my time at the firm, I met with our Human Capital team, Facilities and the Welcome Crew all about any workplace adjustments that were required; with all requirements attended to instantaneously and with ease. Since then I have had regular interactions and check-ins with the various teams to ensure my needs are being met. I have also felt really supported by the Wellness team and had conversations to ensure I am supported to perform my best work whilst also providing me with a safe space to speak if I feel I can't.

With my own day-to day-colleagues, I have never felt they interact with me any differently than other PwC employees; I am given tasks with expectations placed that match my role and grade, never what they may 'assume I can do'.

My disability at PwC has never ever been viewed as a negative viewpoint on my day to day role or my inclusion into anything in the firm that I have wanted to be involved with. It's been a pleasure and a workplace that I continue to advocate externally as being one that champions Access & Inclusion.”

**Katrina Porter**

Resource manager, Consulting

## SPOTLIGHT: PwC Australia's Project Dandelion

The PwC Australia Dandelion Program is designed to provide skilled employment for people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Over 80% of people with autism are unemployed or underemployed, despite nearly half of those diagnosed with autism having above-average intelligence and possessing skills such as excellent visual perception and the ability to remain highly focused in certain situations.

PwC's Melbourne Cyber Security team lead the pilot of Project Dandelion. Over a three week period, the Cyber Security team ran a recruitment process, similar to PwC's other graduate recruitment campaigns but over a longer period of time. This provided candidates the opportunity to meet with the Cyber Security team and learn more about the work as well as all the Cyber Security team to observe candidates working in teams and tackling individual challenges. At the close of the three week recruitment, three candidates were offered positions within the team. The three new team members quickly adapted to the team – working on national client projects, participating in training and development and are confident in putting forward their ideas.

“Project Dandelion has been a great initiative for the firm and has demonstrated the many benefits of accessing neurodiverse talent. Not only do neurodiverse talent have exceptional skills, they bring new perspectives on how to create and recognise value, which has been important for our clients and our firm..”

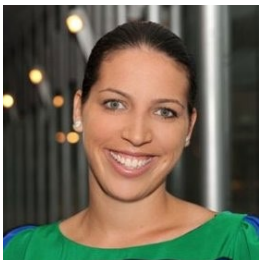
### Shad Sears

Partner, Risk Assurance



# Beyond PwC Australia, influencing disability employment rates in Australia

Item	Opportunity	Initiative
1	Work collectively to lift opportunity and rates of employment for people with disability in Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are committed to connecting with key stakeholders and like-minded organisations to lead a disability employment summit with a difference, to enhance and promote the talent of people with disability</li> </ul>
2	Become a market leading voice on disability employment and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide support or sponsor events related to disability employment</li> <li>Continue to work towards creating strong partnerships with prominent and innovative disability organisations</li> </ul>
3	Contribute to the building of a pipeline of talent with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work alongside TAFE and vocational institutions to enable people with disabilities to be 'workforce ready' including traineeships with top graduates</li> </ul>
4	Work towards building and shifting cultural norms and beliefs about people with disability and the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and publish thought leadership around people with disability and the world of work to increase data available on the economic and societal benefits of increasing the employment rates of people with a disability</li> </ul>
5	Leverage influence with clients to advance disability employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the business benefits of increasing representation of staff with disability through client interactions</li> <li>Invite clients to participate in events and forums focussed on disability employment</li> </ul>



"PwC has been a great support for me and my family. My son was diagnosed with Dyspraxia and sensory modulation disorder a year ago. As many other carers of people with a disability know, along with a diagnosis comes many appointments. PwC's 'all roles flex' policy has enabled me to meet my work requirements while also being able to take my son to appointments and spend time with my family. One of the things that has been most positive is the attitude of my team and team leader – that I don't need permission to work flexibly. My team trust me to get my work done and support me to be work flexibly, which enables me to perform at my best. Knowing that support options, such as our CARE program (EAP), are easily accessible has been a great support."

## Danielle Zemek

Senior Manager, Clients and Markets

## SPOTLIGHT: TOM Melbourne MAKEATHON

TOM: Tikkun Olam Makers is a global movement of innovators dedicated to creating affordable solutions for neglected needs of people living with disabilities, and other disadvantaged individuals and communities around the world. PwC Australia was proud to sponsor TOM Melbourne in May 2019, a 36 hour makeathon event that aims to solve real world problems for people living with a disability.

PwC was pleased to host a breakfast launch event in our Melbourne office ahead of the makeathon event, featuring a panel discussing the intersection between technology solutions and disability employment. People from PwC attended the makeathon event and received a VIP tour of the Tom tech centre.

“I think we need to flip the script. I think we need to talk less about what people can’t do and more about what they can do – what their superpowers are, how they can contribute and how they can make a difference in a business, in the community, in society.”

### **Jon Chadwick**

Partner, Consulting





# Acknowledgements

In developing our access and inclusion plan (2019-2021) we consulted widely with stakeholders including:

- Sean Gregory and the PwC Executive Board for their challenge, support and encouragement.
- Members of Ability@PwC
- Key internal stakeholders and representatives from: Wellness, Talent Acquisition, Corporate Affairs, National Events Team & Digitech
- External stakeholders including the Australian Human Rights Commission, Disability Employment Australia (DEA), Get Skilled Access (GSA), Alastair McEwin and Graeme Innes

This plan is strengthened by the input, passion and ideas of each of these people to assist us in creating an accessible and inclusive workplace at PwC



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