

The PHN Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Strategy

2022 – 2025



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“One of the things I love about working here is that I have independence, autonomy and freedom to manage my work and take time out as required. This is a HUGE selling point for the organisation as it’s built trust between my Manager and I.”

— FRANCESCA, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

“Implementation of this strategy highlights the importance of giving people in our organisation the courage and opportunity to share their lived experiences and stories which builds an environment of trust and connection. We can use our differences as our strengths, which can inform the great work the PHN does for minority groups in our communities.”

— CHARLES, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

VISION

As part of the PHN vision of Healthy People and Healthy Communities we believe in a workplace where everyone is respected, connected, contributing and progressing to ensure our PHN is sustainable, relevant and improving the health and wellbeing of our communities.



“Creative people in the workplace bring an ability to think differently, take risks, speak up and offer new ideas or solutions. Creative ideas can be unconventional and unorthodox. That can make people uncomfortable. But sometimes a fresh approach is exactly what is needed.”

— MARGUERITE, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

“Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace is recognising, respecting, and valuing our differences, and having an environment where people feel comfortable and supported to contribute diverse skills, ideas and experiences. It involves removing barriers to participation to ensure everyone can contribute and has equal access to opportunities. When embedded in workplace culture, Diversity and Inclusion can result in outcomes such as greater collaboration and engagement, greater employee retention and improved employee wellbeing.”

— STEPH, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

FORWARD

At our PHN we value diversity and have focused on making this a core part of what makes us great. The 2022-2025 Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy is critical to delivering our community, workforce and cultural objectives, aligning to our PHN strategic purpose of “keeping people well in our communities through innovation, performance, collaboration and local engagement”. The Diversity Inclusion and Belonging strategy is a key deliverable within our PHN People & Culture Strategy 2020-2023 that has been informed by the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, our PHN Values, our capability framework and our people. We are challenging ourselves to ensure that diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our workforce, our culture and our actions.

The Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging strategy has been developed with significant contributions from our employee working group and diversity networks. We acknowledge and thank those involved for their ongoing commitment to achieving inclusive employment outcomes. Our strategy provides a three-year strategic guide to assist the PHN to further develop an inclusive culture by defining goals, actions and targets.

Diversity helps us to approach the world curiously and create greater innovation, creativity, resilience and adaptability to change.

At our PHN we know inclusion is the key to unlocking our potential. By being inclusive, our employees will feel safe to share their ideas, trusted to take considered risks without fear and ultimately, be themselves.

By valuing workplace inclusion and diversity as strategic priorities we can;

1. Support our PHN in the delivery of our strategic plan
2. Increase innovation, productivity and creativity
3. Improve cultural awareness
4. Meet our responsibilities as a regional employer
5. Enhance our positive reputation
6. Increase engagement
7. Support our PHN to be an even better place to work – become an employer of choice
8. Sustain our PHN into the future.

I am proud of what we have already achieved and proud to lead our PHN to deliver on this. With visible leadership and accountability, our ultimate goal is to make diversity and inclusion part of everything we do.

Richard Nankervis

“I am excited to be working towards creating a place where people feel accepted as they are, safe, respected and valued. An environment where difference is respected and actively leveraged can challenge us to be better.”

– KIRBY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

“Beyond labels and distinctions lies a serene place which is void of stereotypes and judgements, there is absolute connectedness – this is where we should meet each other.”

– MARY-ANNE, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

A diverse workforce is critical to achieving our vision of Healthy People and Healthy Communities. Fostering diversity, inclusion and belonging will enhance the PHN's ability to meet our purpose of keeping people well in our communities through innovation, performance, collaboration and local engagement. The PHN Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Strategy 2022–2025 has been developed as an initiative from the People and Culture Strategy and is informed by our PHN Values, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and The PHN Capability Framework, and is our guide to delivering on these cultural objectives.



DEFINITIONS

The Diversity Council of Australia define **diversity** as the mix of people in an organisation – that is, all the differences between people in how they identify in relation to their:

- **SOCIAL IDENTITY** e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability status, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, and socio-economic background.
- **PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY** e.g., profession, education, work experiences, organisational level, functional area, division/department, and location.

These aspects come together in a unique way for each individual and shape the way they view and perceive their world and workplace – as well as how others view and treat them.¹

¹ DIVERSITY COUNCIL AUSTRALIA, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION DEFINITION, SYDNEY, DIVERSITY COUNCIL AUSTRALIA, 2017. RETRIEVED FROM [DIVERSITY & INCLUSION EXPLAINED | DIVERSITY COUNCIL AUSTRALIA \(DCA.ORG.AU\)](https://www.dca.org.au/diversity-inclusion-explained)

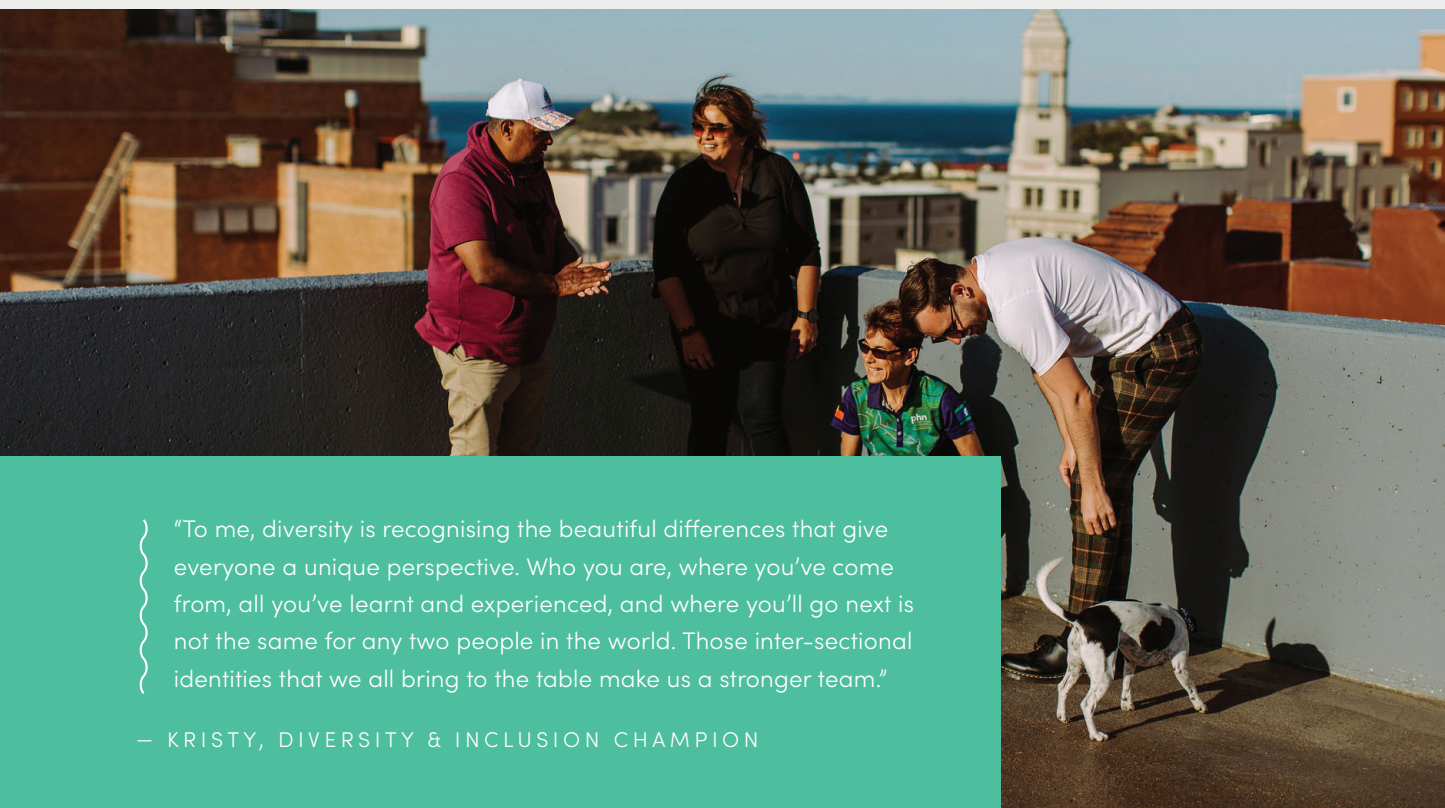
Inclusion is defined by the Diversity Council Australia as getting the mix of people in an organisation to work together to improve performance and wellbeing. Inclusion in a workplace is achieved when a diversity of people (e.g., ages, cultural backgrounds, genders, perspectives) feel that they are:

- **RESPECTED** for who they are and able to be themselves;
- **CONNECTED** to their colleagues and feel they belong;
- **CONTRIBUTING** their perspectives and talents to the workplace; and
- **PROGRESSING** in their career at work (i.e., have equal access to opportunities and resources).

It is only through inclusion that organisations can make the most out of diversity.

“To me, diversity is recognising the beautiful differences that give everyone a unique perspective. Who you are, where you’ve come from, all you’ve learnt and experienced, and where you’ll go next is not the same for any two people in the world. Those inter-sectional identities that we all bring to the table make us a stronger team.”

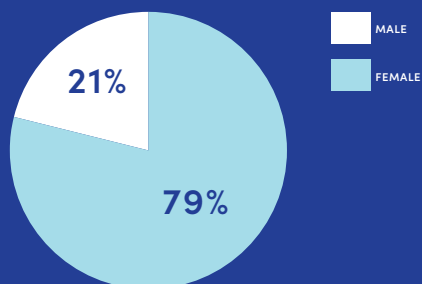
– KRISTY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION



OUR PROFILE

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR DIVERSITY PROFILE

Gender



Country of Birth



4.7% participants in Employee Engagement survey identified as being born outside of Australia

First Nations Employees



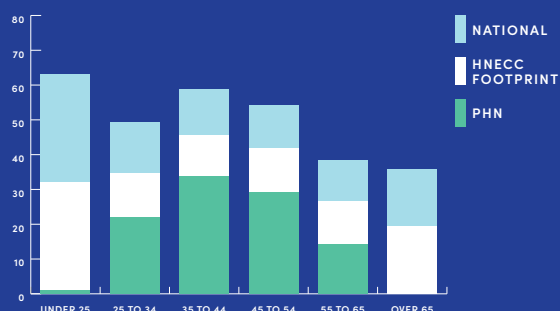
First Spoken Language



First Nations Staff in Leadership Roles



Staff per Age Group



Key Female Management Personnel (Executive Roles — WGEA 2021)

75% Female in WGEA 2021 for Key Management personnel (Executive roles)



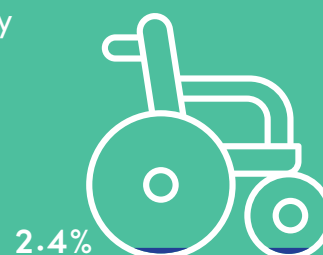
LGBTQIA+ Community

4.8% identify within the LGBTQIA+ Community from 2021 Employee Engagement survey



Living with a Disability

2.4% of staff identified as living with a disability.



EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY DIVERSITY & WELLBEING METRICS

Employee Happiness



87% of staff say it's a truly great place to work, with 40% of those people said it was because of the 'flexibility'.

Workplace Safety

The organisation provides a safe working environment for me

0% disagree



I have a strong sense of feeling safe at work to 'speak up' when required

2.2% disagree



Workplace Harassment

My workplace is free from harassment

0% disagree



My workplace is free from sexual harassment

0% disagree



Workplace Frustrations

Employee Frustrations with their Current Work Arrangements

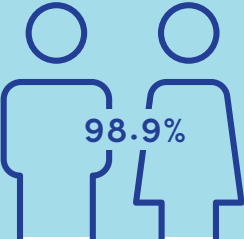
During the pandemic 11% felt isolated



Workplace Discrimination

My workplace is free from gender-based discrimination

1.1% disagree



OUR JOURNEY

2016-2017

- Face to face cultural awareness training at all office sites.
- Acknowledgement of Country included in meeting agenda template.

2018

- Implementation of capability framework with a core personal attribute to “value diversity”.
- 2017-2018 PHN Cultural Audit Report.

2020

- Establishment of Winanga-li working group & review of cultural competency on boarding program and implementation of Cultural intelligence training “CORE” by AIATSIS.
- Commencement of Workplace Gender Equity reporting.
- New corporate branding launched with photography showcasing our PHN staff and region’s diversity.
- Introduction of a diversity values statement within all advertising.
- Development of significant days calendar led by our Aboriginal Health Access team to recognise culturally significant days.
- First Nations maps displayed at all PHN sites.
- PHN voluntarily completed Workplace Gender Equity Agency Report.

2019

- Introduced online cultural awareness training delivered by the Centre For Cultural Competence Australia.

2021

- Commence the development of our first internal diversity and inclusion strategy.
- LinkedIn learning pathway created to foster continuous learning and improving of cultural intelligence.
- PHN cultural branding launched, with artwork by Dennis Golding, Kamilaroi/Gamilaraay artist based in Sydney.
- PHN completed second Workplace Gender Equity Agency report.

FOCUS DIVERSITY STREAMS

We will continue to challenge ourselves and focus on improving the representation and employment experiences of colleagues in our key diversity groups. This includes a continued focus on;

First Nations Australians: The PHN has key priorities to engage with First Nations communities, partner to improve care, and build First Nations cultural responsiveness. The contribution and cultural diversity that Australia's First Peoples bring to our workforce is highly valued. The PHN continually strives to be a culturally safe responsive workplace that is committed to supporting First Nations employees.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse: The PHN aims to create work environments where every employee's cultural identity is recognised, valued and respected. The PHN have defined culturally and linguistically diverse as people who

- are born in a non-English speaking country
- do not speak English as a first language
- have at least one parent born in a non-English speaking country.

Disability & Neurodiversity: Disability, in relation to a person, includes long-term physical, psycho-social, intellectual, cognitive, neurological or sensory impairment, or a combination of any of these impairments. Supporting the access and inclusion of people living with disability is a key focus for the PHN and employees living with disability should feel valued and be treated equally, and with respect. The experience and knowledge of employees living with a disability plays an important role in the design and delivery of PHN commissioned services.

Age: With a focus under 30 & over 50, challenges entering or re-entering the workforce impact younger and older workers in different ways. Age inclusion is beneficial in terms of the unique backgrounds and perspectives that each generation brings and it improves team performance.

LGBTQIA+: The PHN is committed to creating an environment where people who identify as LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/gender diverse, queer, intersex, asexual +) are welcome, able to participate fully in an environment free from discrimination and prejudice. LGBTQIA+ refers to the diverse sex, sexual orientation and gender identities represented in the community. LGBTQIA+ is used in an effort to be as inclusive as possible, though it is recognised there are many more terms.

Gender: Workplace gender equality is achieved when people are able to access and enjoy the same rewards.¹ At the PHN we see a range of measurable benefits due to having a gender diverse workforce and want to continue to be a leader in this space.

Carer: people who provide personal care, support and assistance to another individual in need of support due to youth, disability, medical condition, including terminal or chronic illness, mental illness or is frail and aged.²

Providing support for carers not only is supporting our HNECC community but also has significant benefits for the PHN, including staff retention, improved productivity and job satisfaction.

1. WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY AGENCY

2. CARERS NSW (RECOGNITION) ACT

THE INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS SET OUT IN THIS STRATEGY FOCUS ON FOSTERING AN INCLUSIVE WORK CULTURE AND PRACTICES FOR EVERYONE. OTHER DIVERSITY MARKERS, SUCH AS AGE, GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, ARE ALSO VERY IMPORTANT TO THE PHN. OUR PHN WANTS TO CREATE A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN BELONG AND THRIVE.

STRATEGY

We will achieve our vision of a diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone is respected, connected, contributing and progressing by focusing our efforts on four strategic pillars:

1. REFLECT OUR COMMUNITIES

Goal/priorities

- Attract diverse candidates
- Strengthen pathways for minority groups
- Ensure recruitment practices are equitable, inclusive and bias free
- Increase the employment of people with diverse backgrounds or experiences to ensure that diversity streams are represented in the PHN
- Ensure the workplace is inclusive, safe, psychologically safe, supportive and that the contribution and perspectives of all employees are valued
- Continue momentum in gender equality initiatives to support equality.

3-year action plan

- Create pathway by placing and supporting one First Nations Australian annually into a traineeship followed by ongoing employment (closing the gap target 7 & 8)
- Create PHN employment pathways for underrepresented groups by partnering with tertiary education providers and disability employment services
- Reconsider employment being based outside of office location within HNECC footprint to enhance community engagement e.g. mid north coast, rural, remote
- Workplace accessibility review
- Inclusion of EEO, recruitment and selection training within leadership development program.
- Compliance training for leadership and those involved in recruitment
- Develop preferred language charter
- Ensure current systems support gender identity
- Introduce pronouns to email signature
- Participation in annual Workplace Equality reporting.

} “Benefits of inclusion also include representation of diverse communities to enable our organization to truly consider differing perspectives, thus allowing us to potentially better understand our external stakeholder and community needs.”

– SARAH, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

} “Diversity and inclusion is ensuring that we listen to and include the voices of all First Nations people not just a few.”

– TONI, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

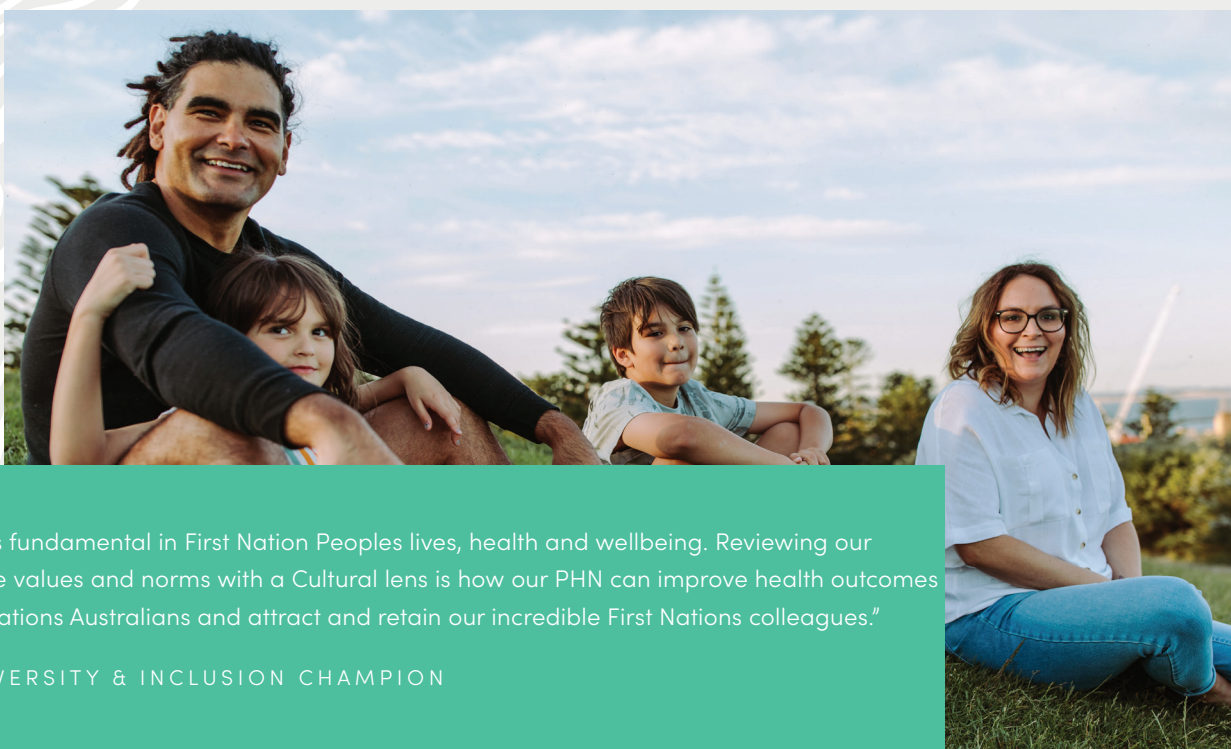
2. BUILD CAPABILITY

Goal/priorities

- Provide resources and development opportunities to build capability and confidence of existing employees to harness an inclusive and diverse workforce
- Support the development of individuals and the organisation to enhance capability of diversity and inclusion giving the confidence to harness it
- Promote and increase awareness of the importance and value of diversity and inclusion
- Increase awareness and understanding of how to create inclusive workplaces Increase awareness
- Improve retention and development outcomes of employees from diverse backgrounds.

3-year action plan

- Development of a PHN Diversity & Inclusion capability training program for all staff e.g., unconscious bias training
- Development of LinkedIn Learning Pathways for Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Delivery of psychological safety training (closing the gap target 14) via SWEET
- Support minimum one First Nations Australian staff member annually to complete a tertiary qualification (Certificate III and above) (closing the gap target 6)
- Continue to support all staff through cultural intelligence training
- Consider the development of a mentoring program, bringing together experienced employees with more junior team members who are looking to develop their skills and careers
- Continue to include cultural immersion opportunities to staff at every all-staff event
- Provide development opportunities for upward mobility for our diverse talent to improve retention
- Support training for Family & Domestic Violence for all Employees and Managers.



“Culture is fundamental in First Nation Peoples lives, health and wellbeing. Reviewing our workplace values and norms with a Cultural lens is how our PHN can improve health outcomes for First Nations Australians and attract and retain our incredible First Nations colleagues.”

– LISA, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

3. CELEBRATE DIVERSITY, CONNECTION AND BELONGING

Goal/priorities

- Role model and showcase inclusive behaviours
- Continue to champion flexibility
- Celebration of diverse groups
- Encourage staff to connect/belong and support each other
- Promote the value of a diverse and inclusive workplace including the value of diverse ideas to improve outcomes
- Recognise individuality and belonging.

3-year action plan

- Ensure a minimum of one diverse speaker at all staff events
- Create PHN sponsored opportunities for diversity specific internal communities of practice/employee network groups of safe spaces to share stories, enhance belonging and lead initiatives
- Celebrate a minimum of two key cultural and diversity events annually through SWEET wellbeing calendar.

4. BE ACCOUNTABLE

Goal/priorities

The PHN will;

- Be committed to the successful delivery of this strategy and willing to take responsibility for the outcomes
- Ensure our actions are meaningful by setting clear objectives, measuring our success and failures and measuring the impact of our strategy
- Ensure leaders are accountable to embed and foster a culture of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging and are role models for their colleagues.

3-year action plan

- Commence collection of diversity demographic data for each focus area. Track the recruitment, engagement and retention impact of any initiatives.
- Development of diversity representation goals/targets for the PHN demographic
- Increased diverse group representation in leadership positions from previous year and set goal targets with the Executive and Board
- Overall progress against the goals and targets in this strategy will be reported bi-annually to PHN Leadership Team and to the Governance, Board Development and Culture subcommittee
- Incremental progress in employee opinion survey regarding trust, respect & wellbeing index and diversity questions.

“There is no one action to be used in all situations, just as what seems obvious to one person, may not cross another’s mind. By empowering Diversity and Inclusion, you increase the probability that someone with lived experience will be at the table, that they will have the confidence to speak up when it matters, and share that detail that only comes from the life they have lived.”

– LIAM, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHAMPION

 PRIMARY
HEALTH
NETWORK

 **phn**
HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
AND CENTRAL COAST

An Australian Government Initiative