

# Inclusion and Diversity Strategy

2023-2027

Belonging is a core  
Australian Red Cross  
experience





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## Acknowledgement

Australian Red Cross acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Owners and Custodians, valued Australians in the heart of humanity. We pay respect to them; to Elders past and present and to those who come, for you hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sovereign people across this country. Australian Red Cross recognises it is best placed by the leadership, wisdom, and contribution of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleagues, members, volunteers, clients, partners, and communities to play its part for a fair and just future, built on care, dignity, integrity, and respect.



# A message from our Interim CEO and Head of Inclusion and Diversity

We are excited to launch the first Australian Red Cross Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.

Enshrined in our Fundamental Principles, inclusion and diversity through unity, are at the core of what Australian Red Cross stands for. We know that achieving our ambitions for diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging at Australian Red Cross will require us to get uncomfortable and have courageous conversations.

We aim for Australian Red Cross people at all levels and in all ways people engage with us, to represent the population. Diversity of cultures, thinking and experience will enable better decision making, better outcomes, and make us a more inclusive organisation.

Our recent progress rests on strong foundations:

- establishment of an Inclusion and Diversity team
- Director of First Nations Centrality appointed to the Executive team
- first stage of an inclusion and diversity change program, where a deep listening process was undertaken to better understand our diversity, and how our people experience the systemic, structural and cultural barriers of the organisation.

Insights from this deep listening exercise have enabled us to set a clear aspiration for this Inclusion and Diversity Strategy for the next four years – that belonging become a core Australian Red Cross experience.

As the organisation moves through a period of significant change to increase our focus on our core areas of expertise, we aim to build a culture steeped in inclusion and diversity.

Thank you for joining us and we look forward to sharing our progress as we work towards making Australian Red Cross a leader in this space.



**Penny Harrison** (she/her)  
Interim CEO



**Fiona Davies** (she/her)  
Head of Inclusion & Diversity

## Remembering Kym Pfitzner, former CEO

Kym had a clear vision for diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging, and was instrumental in establishing strong foundations for this work at Australian Red Cross.

He held a strong belief that everyone in the organisation plays a role in creating a culture which is representative of diverse lived experiences, and where everyone feels welcome, valued and has opportunity to thrive.

He also believed that by role modeling an inclusive culture with diversity of identities and lived experience, we are best placed to help the people we serve who are experiencing vulnerability.

Kym was an attentive and active contributor to development of this Strategy. Its successful delivery will be his legacy.

Vale Kym Pfitzner.

# Voices of Australian Red Cross people

A diversity of Australian Red Cross employees, volunteers and members share what belonging means to them.



**Sam Hardjono** (he/him)  
Board Director, Chair Audit and Risk Committee, Co-Chair I&D working group  
**Location:** Warrane/Sydney, NSW

Belonging is the essence of Australian Red Cross. It's a sense of inclusion, and community and empowers individuals to evolve and contribute to the journey. I've never felt a greater sense of community than I have within Australian Red Cross – once you volunteer for this organisation it becomes part of your life. The collective humanitarian impacts across Australia, are underpinned by the organisation's seven principles.



**Jenny Brown** (she/her)  
Director – First Nations Centrality  
**Location:** Mulubinba/Newcastle, NSW

Being part of a large humanitarian movement that cares for people, diversity is respected and lived experience valued. My aspiration is for an environment where cultural safety and respect are practised, where people can feel comfortable in their own identity, and share their culture, free from judgement or harm. This is where we need to be to belong.



**Sabeeha Nihad** (she/her)  
CALD Network Co-Chair, Employee  
**Location:** Garamilla/Casaurina, NT

As CALD Network Co-Chair, I'm dedicated to fostering an environment where every voice is heard, every perspective is valued, and together, we weave a stronger, more inclusive humanitarian fabric. Embracing the rich tapestry of cultures within Australian Red Cross, our commitment to belonging as a core experience resonates deeply.



**Henry Carter** (he/him)  
Volunteer  
**Location:** Boorloo/Mount Hawthorn, WA

Embracing LGBTQ+ inclusivity as a core Australian Red Cross experience symbolises our commitment to weaving a vibrant tapestry of belonging. Every unique thread, woven together, strengthens the fabric of our diverse humanitarian community, fostering resilience, respect, and unity.



**Ruth Fleming** (she/her)  
Member  
**Pronouns:** she/her  
**Location:** Naarm/Melbourne, VIC

I got involved in Australian Red Cross because of the work we do and because everyone is included. Being included makes me feel appreciated and accepted. I think it's really simple – it's who we are and what we do.



**Elijah Buol** (he/him)  
CALD Network Co-Chair, Employee  
**Location:** Meanjin/Milton, QLD

The ingredient which makes us great and a successful story in the world is our diversity and within that diversity, we are all equally Australians who desire to belong and live in peace and harmony. It is a strength that Australian Red Cross holds to its core values as it allows us to belong and create a safe space where we share our stories and successes.



**Thomas Phillips** (he/him)  
Pride Network Committee, Employee  
**Location:** Tarndanya/Adelaide, SA

To show up to your workplace, to bring your entire self and be comfortable expressing your internal rainbow, is a remarkable way of being. I can truly shine, and that reflects in the work I am able to achieve.



**Alicia Vayro** (she/they)  
Disability Network Chair, Volunteer  
**Location:** Naarm/Melbourne, VIC

Many workplaces strive to be accommodating, but few genuinely foster a sense of feeling welcomed. The Disability Network promotes safety and belonging by amplifying the voices and experiences of people with disabilities. By increasing awareness of the challenges faced by people with disabilities and advocating for inclusion, we strive to ensure everyone feels valued at Australian Red Cross.



**Debra Moyle** (she/her)  
First Nations Leadership Team member  
**Location:** Tarndanya/Adelaide, SA

I am very privileged to be a respected First Nations Leadership member. We are in the space of growing cultural leaders, built on the foundations of mutual respect, perseverance and strengths. This will create culturally safe places for everyone – that's the place where I belong.

## Who we are

Australian Red Cross is a volunteer-based organisation that exists to reduce human suffering. With 110 years' experience and a community of 20,000+ members and volunteers, we act locally and connect globally to deliver what's needed, when it's needed most.

Together with the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), we are the world's largest humanitarian network of 16 million volunteers in 191 countries that help those facing disaster, conflict, health and other social problems.

### Purpose

Bringing people and communities together in times of need and building on community strengths. We do this by mobilising the power of humanity.

### Vision

Trusted as the leading humanitarian organisation making a genuine difference in the lives of people and communities.

### Values

We respect. We aspire. We collaborate. We stand up. We deliver.

## Inclusion and diversity vision

By embracing the diverse identities and lived experiences of employees, volunteers, members and the communities we serve, we will continue to strengthen an inclusive and welcoming culture where every person is respected and valued, feels safe to be culturally confident, and where belonging is a core Australian Red Cross experience.

## Inclusion and diversity goal

If the diversity of Australian Red Cross people is representative of the diversity of Australia's population, we will understand our communities better and together, deliver better programs and activities to meet their needs, and become a more inclusive organisation for all.

The purpose and vision of Australian Red Cross are only attainable if belonging becomes a core Australian Red Cross experience.

## Our unique strengths

Of all of the unique strengths of Australian Red Cross, these ones are particularly relevant to the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.

### Fundamental Principles

Our Fundamental Principles of Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality, guide us in all our activities. Humanity centres the need to act to prevent and reduce human suffering. Respect for human dignity and helping people, regardless of who they are, is critical to who we are and what we do.

### Australian Red Cross people

Australian Red Cross people consist of 1,560 employees and 18,450 volunteers and members across the country, delivering vital activities and services to their local communities. They are critical to our success, and it is the high ratio of volunteers and members to employees which differentiates Australian Red Cross from other organisations.

### Community presence

Being part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement gives Australian Red Cross impressive reach across 191 countries and into hundreds and thousands of communities. This presence is through local members, volunteers and programs addressing local needs.

# First Nations Centrality

We work with and for First Nations people, placing cultural knowledge, leadership, values and perspectives at the centre of our organisational strategy. This approach is known as First Nations Centrality. It ensures our work and organisational practices address the issues that matter to First Nations employees, volunteers, members and communities of interest, and that our programs, services and work environments are culturally safe and welcoming to all First Nations people.

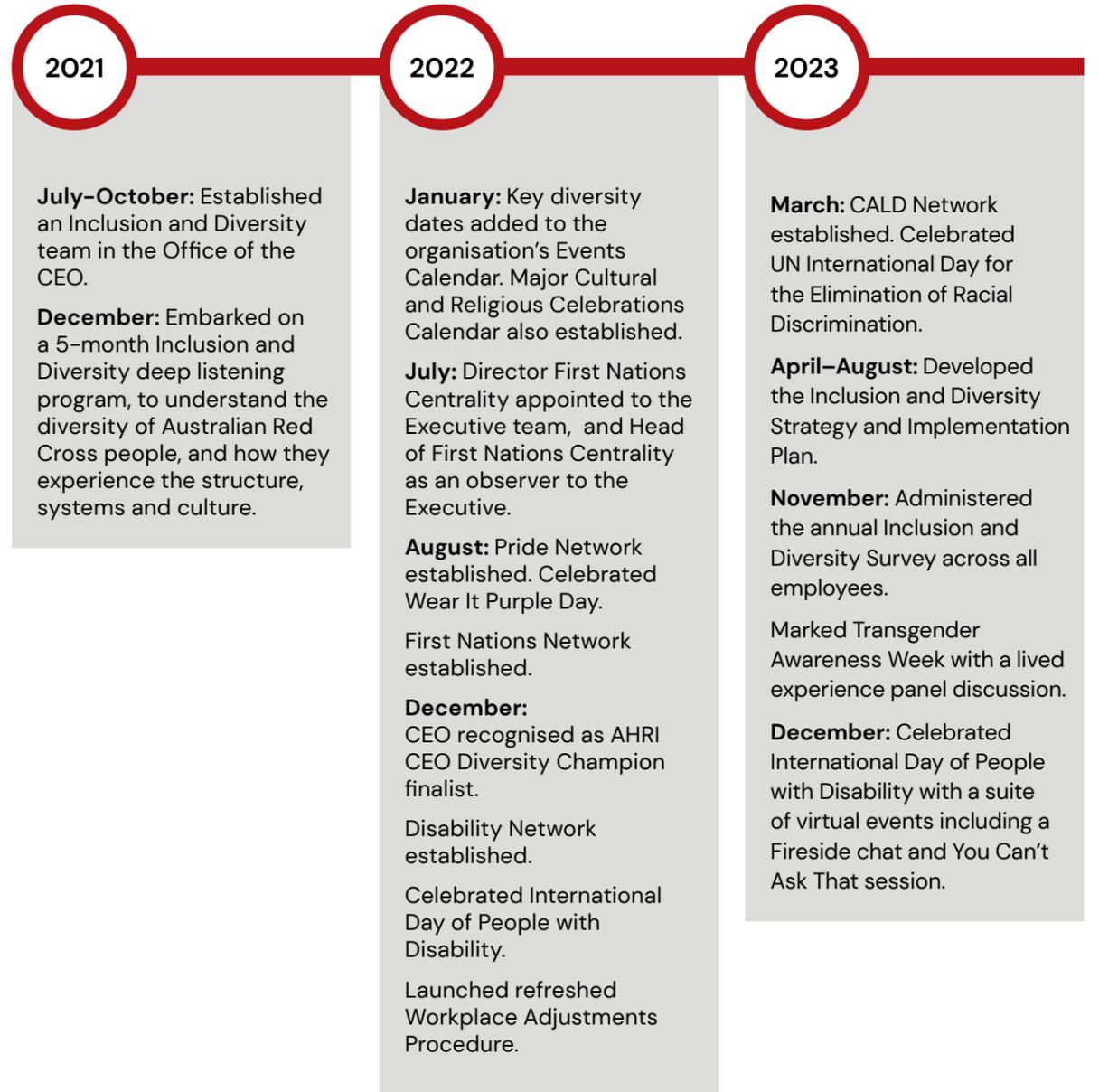
Our emphasis on First Nations Centrality represents our ongoing commitment to:

- achieve true reconciliation, inclusion and diversity
- work together with First Nations people in the purpose of Australian Red Cross
- position our organisation as an authentic ally and advocate
- build deep, reciprocal relationships with First Nations people and communities.

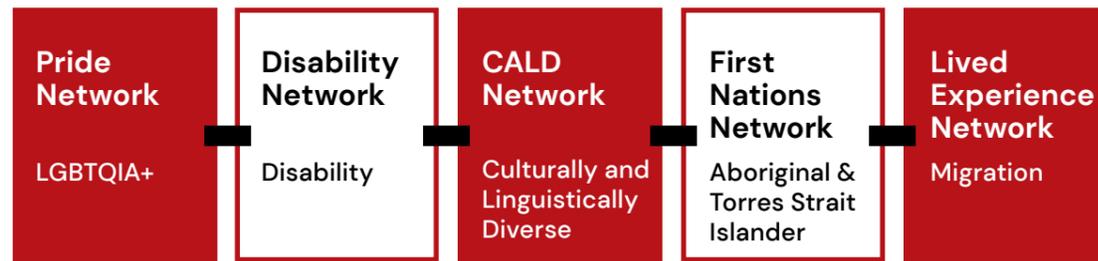


# Our recent journey

Australian Red Cross has provided humanitarian support for 109 years. Countless wonderful inclusion and diversity initiatives have been delivered including Reconciliation Action Plans, Disability Action Plans, and internship programs to name a few. This most recent timeline shares achievements of the Inclusion and Diversity team, established to lead an organisation-wide approach to inclusion and diversity.



## Inclusion networks



Networks are for employees, volunteers and members who identify as part of focus communities, as well as allies, and will evolve over time. The purpose of the networks is to build visibility and understanding of challenges experienced, with a focus on the enablers needed to create an inclusive organisation. Networks provide internal advocacy on relevant issues, a connection point and safe space for all Australian Red Cross people.

Australian Red Cross also has a First Nations Network, a virtual platform for First Nations employees, volunteers and members, to cultivate connections throughout the organisation. A Lived Experience Network is for people who have a lived experience of either forced or voluntary migration to Australia.

## International networks



Australian Red Cross actively supports the Global Network for Women leaders in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, seeking sustained gender and diversity balance at all levels.

## Memberships



## Development of this strategy

### What we did.

Australian Red Cross began the first stage of a broad ranging inclusion and diversity change program in late 2021. The purpose was to improve itself, and become a more inclusive organisation for employees, members, volunteers and the communities it works alongside.

A deep listening exercise was undertaken to understand who its people were and how they experience Australian Red Cross structures, systems and culture.

All Australian Red Cross people were invited to participate, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and culturally and linguistically diverse people an initial priority.



To make sure the process was independent, Australian Red Cross engaged Myriad International Consulting Services (now Myriad Kofkin Global) for their deep experience facilitating consultations with culturally and linguistically diverse stakeholders, and ability to build safe environments.

To bring First Nations Centrality to life and enable the voices of First Nations colleagues to be included in the process, Australian Red Cross partnered with the Healing Foundation, a peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisation, to collaboratively facilitate a series of culturally safe consultations. These consultations took the form of Knowledge Circles, modelled on traditional practice of yarning.

**During the five-month consultation, 2281 Australian Red Cross people participated in the following ways:**

- 149 people engaged in 52 individual interviews, 39 in focus groups, 36 in world cafes, and 22 written submissions.
- 55 First Nation colleagues from 14 language groups participated in 5 Knowledge Circles.
- 2077 people responded to an anonymous Inclusion and Diversity survey.
- The findings and voices of these Australian Red Cross people directly informed development of this Strategy.

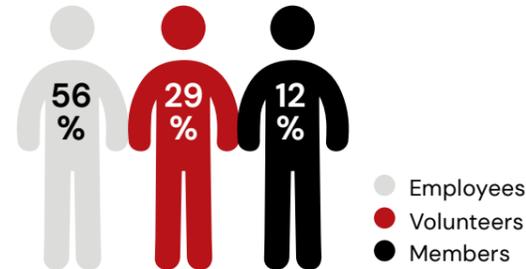
# Our diversity dimensions

## Who responded

By the end of April 2022, 9.3%<sup>2</sup> of all 22,427 Australian Red Cross people had responded to the Inclusion and Diversity survey.

Australian Red Cross comprises 9% employees, 56% volunteers, and 35% members.

## Of the survey respondents<sup>1</sup>



## Of the survey respondents<sup>1</sup>

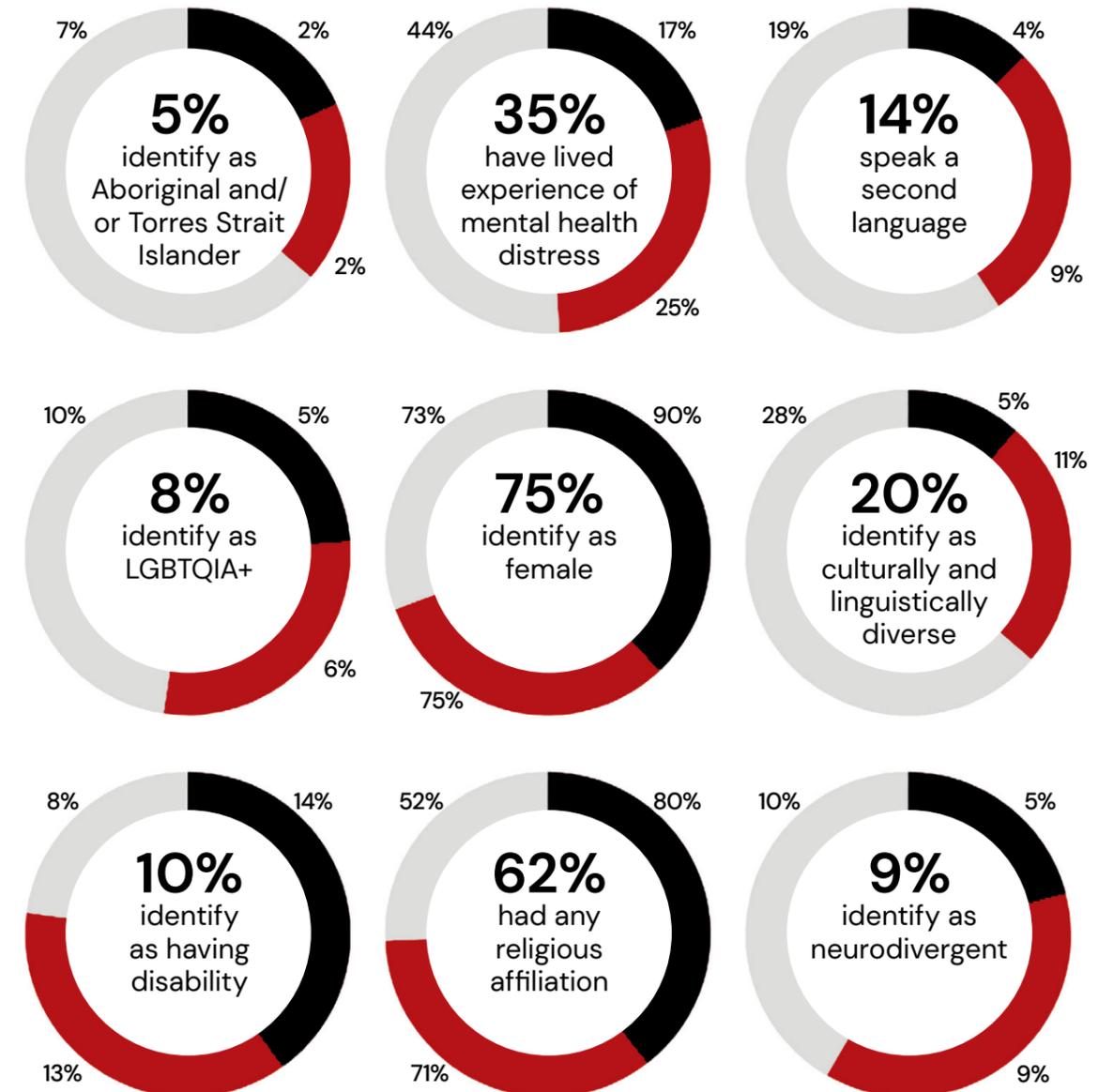
	<20	20-30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	NA	All
Male %	<1	1	4	3	4	3	3	1	<1	1	20%
Female %	<1	5	12	11	10	14	13	4	1	5	75%
Non-binary or self-describe %	0	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	0	0	0	<1	1%

## Every generation engaged<sup>1</sup>



## How our people compare across diversity dimensions

● Employees ● Volunteers ● Members



1. Approx 4% of respondents did not complete all questions. Some rounding of numbers. Some approximations have been used when sample size is small.  
2. Sample size = 2077

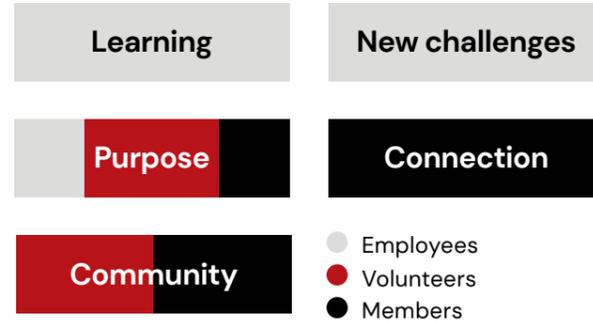
# What matters to us

Feeling respected, valued, 'seen' and included

That our differences are valued and 'celebrated'

Connecting with the organisations' values and each other

## Benefits of engaging with Australian Red Cross



## Ways that we are the same

 We share a vision for a genuinely inclusive organisation – where a sense of belonging is a core experience, supporting personal wellbeing, performance, work satisfaction, and connection.

 91% of us agree that Australian Red Cross people should reflect the diversity of the Australian community.

 80% of all Australian Red Cross people agree that they feel a sense of belonging, security and acceptance for who they are at Australian Red Cross.

## Ways we can do better



20% of all Australian Red Cross people need the organisation to do more to feel a sense of belonging, security and acceptance for who they are within the organisation. Especially Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people 35%, people with disability 26%, people who identify as LGBTQIA+ 25%, and those with lived or living mental health distress 23%.



Better acknowledge our member and volunteer contributions and communicate the impact of their contributions.



Improve access to systems, processes and resources to improve communication and connection. Especially in regional areas.



Continue to expand diversity. Improve employment and volunteer pathways for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and culturally and linguistically diverse people. Embrace diversity of experience and thought among our people.



Develop and communicate a plan to grow our volunteers that leverages our diversity to ensure relevance in Australia and the Movement.

# Inclusion and diversity strategy

Our Inclusion and Diversity Strategy aims to deliver our Inclusion and Diversity vision and goal. Aligned to the organisational strategy, the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy has four strategic goals with nine pillars.

Strategic Goals	Pillars
<p><b>1. Impact through Inclusion</b></p> <p>Inclusion and diversity practices will be a golden thread running through the organisation and strategic focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Adaptation, Emergency Services and Disasters</li> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Community Activities and Programs</li> <li>• International Programs</li> <li>• International Humanitarian Law.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Division Support</b></p>
<p><b>2. Inclusive People</b></p> <p>Inclusive communications and networks of empowered people, will build the inclusion capability of all Australian Red Cross people, so that achieving belonging as a core Australian Red Cross experience is everyone's responsibility.</p>	<p><b>Belonging Experience</b>  <b>Build Capability</b>  <b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>  <b>Communications</b></p>
<p><b>3. Equitable Structures and Systems</b></p> <p>We will increase the diversity of Australian Red Cross people. We will be vigilant about identifying biases and barriers in our systems, structures and culture, so they can be removed and enable everyone to thrive.</p>	<p><b>Diversity of People</b>  <b>Recruitment</b>  <b>Systems and Structures</b></p>
<p><b>4. Connection through Inclusion</b></p> <p>Australian Red Cross will be known by all stakeholders as an inclusive and welcoming organisation, and an Inclusion and Diversity leader.</p>	<p><b>Inclusion and Diversity Leader</b></p>

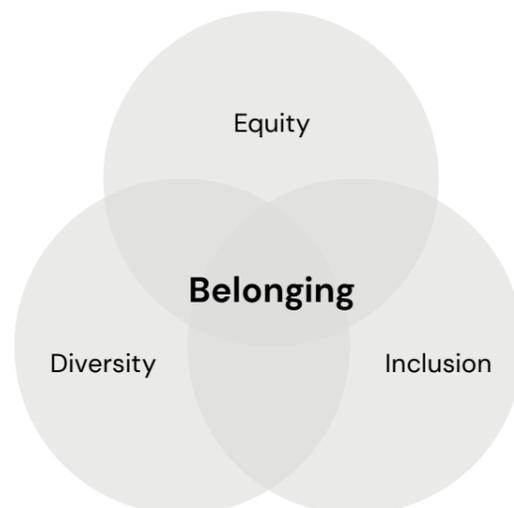
# Strategy roadmap

The Inclusion and Diversity Strategy roadmap can be described in three horizons.

Pillars and actions	Outcomes	Timeline
<b>Horizon 1. Build foundations</b>		Jul 2023 – Dec 2024
<p><b>System and Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a measurement framework</li> <li>• Develop an Inclusion and Diversity Policy</li> </ul> <p><b>Diversity of People, Belonging Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capture diversity of our people</li> <li>• Monitor experiences of belonging</li> </ul> <p><b>Inclusion and Diversity Leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish cross-sector Community of Practice</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications</b></p>	<p><b>Belonging Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Red Cross people understand basic diversity, equity and inclusion concepts</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems and Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundational inclusion and diversity elements established</li> </ul>	
<b>Horizon 2. Establish targets and report progress</b>		Jan 2025 – Jun 2026
<p><b>Systems and Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurement framework to track progress and drive accountabilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Diversity of People, Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set diversity targets and actions to achieve</li> <li>• Recruitment systems and practices inclusive</li> </ul> <p><b>Build Capability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Plan being implemented with targeted</li> </ul>	<p><b>Belonging Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Red Cross people are committed and capable of increasing diversity and creating a more inclusive organisation</li> </ul> <p>Continual incremental increase in belonging particularly for First Nations, CALD, Disability, LGBTQIA+, Neurodivergent</p>	
<b>Horizon 3. Innovate for belonging</b>		Jul 2026 – Dec 2027
<p><b>System and Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolve maturity of measurement framework to produce insights to drive direction</li> </ul> <p><b>Diversity of People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore other strategies to increase the diversity at all levels</li> </ul> <p><b>Inclusion and Diversity Leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete periodic benchmarking and accreditations to drive improvement</li> </ul> <p><b>Stakeholder Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive practices throughout the organisation itself</li> </ul>	<p><b>Belonging Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Red Cross people hold themselves and each other accountable to creating belonging, and belonging is a core Australian Red Cross experience</li> </ul> <p><b>Division Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-design ways to be more inclusive across systems, policies, processes and programs</li> </ul>	

# Definitions

- **Belonging** at Australian Red Cross is a feeling of connection to place, home and country. It means that each person is celebrated for who they are and the unique qualities they possess. It is the presence and collaboration of diversity, inclusion and equity which facilitate belonging.
- **CALD:** The population includes many people who were born overseas, have a parent born overseas or speak a variety of languages. Together, these groups of people are known as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people.
- **Disability:** Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory conditions who may require environmental, social or physical adjustments to support them in the workplace.
- **Diversity** is the mix of people and all the ways in which a person is unique.
- **Equity** is the understanding that we don't all start from the same place. At Australian Red Cross, equity means ensuring our people have what they need to thrive. Equity is taking action to make systems, structures and cultures enabling and barrier-free.
- **Inclusion** is how well the mix works together. Inclusion is celebrating each person's lived experiences for the richness they bring, enabling everyone to feel respected and valued.
- **LGBTQIA+:** An acronym used to signify lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual people and more.
- **Neurodivergent:** refers to variation in the human brain regarding sociability, learning, attention, mood and other mental functions in a non-pathological sense that is not considered typical.
- **Workplace (or Reasonable) Adjustment:** a change to a work process or environment that removes a barrier to a person with a disability performing their duties. e.g., a person with a vision impairment may need magnification of their computer screen.





The Inclusion and Diversity team  
welcome your feedback.

Please contact  
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