



DIVERSITY
COUNCIL
AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay our respect to the Custodians of this land, Elders, past and present.

We acknowledge the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have made an important contribution to this land and community and continue to do so.

At DCA, we express our ongoing solidarity with First Nations Australians, as we acknowledge the outcome of the Voice to Parliament referendum with enormous disappointment.

DCA is committed to supporting truth-telling and meaningful actions that contribute to achieving a just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

Artwork: Buranbaa Ngarran (New Dawn) by artist Kirsten Gray for DCA Innovate RAP 2024–2026.



DCA took part in SBS' National Reconciliation Week event in 2024. Our efforts continued throughout the year, guided by DCA's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel – an external group that provides guidance and advice on DCA's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation activities.

Contents

6 A message from our Board Chair

7 About us

- 8 Our Purpose and Vision
- 8 Our work
- 9 A word from our new CEO

10 Our year in review – 2024

11 Our 2024 performance

16 Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

- 17 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
- 19 Internal Disability and Accessibility Group
- 20 Internal D&I Advisory Panel
- 20 Regular internal pulse surveys

21 Our leading voice

- 22 Our groundbreaking research
- 26 Advocacy
- 37 DCA Speakers Bureau
- 38 Knowledge Programs
- 39 Communications

42 Our inspiring events

- 44 Delivering inclusive and accessible events
- 44 Our flagship event
- 46 D&I Insights Program
- 48 Gender Equality Insights
- 49 First Nations Insights
- 50 Case Study Conversations
- 51 CEO D&I Roundtables
- 52 Research release events and updates

55 Our engaged member network

- 56 Expanding impact and growing membership
- 56 Building a connected and engaged member community
- 57 Our 2024 Key Contact events
- 57 Gaining deeper member insights to strengthen support
- 58 Digital innovation to enhance member experience
- 58 AskDCA service 2024 relaunch
- 58 Members sharing insights

59 Our collaborations and partnerships

- 60 Our 2024 strategic alliances
- 61 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index
- 62 The RISE project
- 64 Thank you to our members, partners and sponsors

65 Our team

- 66 DCA employee diversity overview
- 67 Strategically aligned for success
- 68 Our External Advisory Panels
- 69 Our governance

75 Our financial results

A message from our Board Chair

It is my pleasure to present the Diversity Council Australia (DCA) Annual Report for 2024. Stepping into the role of Board Chair mid-year, I have had the privilege of witnessing DCA in action, its continued growth and impact firsthand.

This year, we broadened our reach and supported members in driving meaningful change across Australian workplaces. These achievements reflect the dedication of our team, the commitment of our members, and the strength of our research and advocacy.

With over 1,300 member organisations, our community has never been stronger. This year, we delivered 34 member events – providing opportunities to learn, connect, and take action. Our flagship IAG and DCA Diversity Debate tackled a pressing question: Is polarisation holding back diversity and inclusion? This discussion sparked critical conversations across the sector.

DCA's research continues to set the standard for evidence-based diversity and inclusion practices. In 2024, we launched six major research projects, including our Inclusion@Work Index, 'Disability Data at Work', and 'Centring Marginalised Voices at Work' – each offering fresh insights to drive workplace change and enhance innovation, productivity, and organisational resilience. We expanded our Knowledge Programs, released the 'Inclusive Teams at Work Toolkit', and continued advocating for policy reform. The growing participation in the Inclusive Employer Index reflects the increasing recognition of workplace inclusion as both a business and moral imperative.

Our media presence continued to grow, reinforcing DCA's position as a trusted voice. DCA's influence in policy and advocacy also strengthened. We made 11 submissions to policy and legislative reviews, ensuring workplace inclusion remains at the forefront of national conversations.

A major milestone in 2024 was welcoming Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, as DCA's Patron. We were also proud to advocate globally at the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW68) in New York, ensuring Australian workplace inclusion perspectives were represented on the world stage.

In recent months, policy changes in the US have created scrutiny and discussion in Australian workplaces and our broader society about diversity and inclusion measures. Ultimately, these conversations are a healthy catalyst, creating opportunities to reflect, evolve and re-commit. Our members tell us they remain committed to inclusion



and stand firm in their commitment to building safe, equitable and inclusive workplaces. The most inclusive workplaces are not built overnight – they require ongoing effort and action. The evidence remains clear: inclusion fuels innovation, collaboration, business success, and productivity. Together with our members and partners, DCA remains dedicated to supporting our members to build fairer, stronger workplaces for all.

In the coming year, we proudly mark DCA's 40th anniversary – an opportunity to celebrate progress, reflect on our journey, and reaffirm our commitment to positive change. As we enter this new era, we are delighted to welcome Catherine Hunter as our CEO. With over 30 years of leadership in corporate and not-for-profit sectors, Catherine brings a deep commitment to diversity, inclusion, and social impact. Her expertise and passion will guide DCA into its next phase.

None of these achievements would be possible without our dedicated team, Board, members, and supporters. I extend my gratitude to Ming Long AM for her leadership as past Board Chair, which further strengthened DCA's position as the leading voice on workplace diversity and inclusion. I also thank outgoing CEO Lisa Annese, whose vision and passion have shaped DCA for over a decade.

As we step into 2025, we do so with purpose and determination. We will continue working with our members and partners to build a more inclusive and equitable future.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, belonging to Sunita Gloster AM.

Sunita Gloster AM

Chair, Diversity Council Australia Board

About us

Diversity Council Australia (DCA) is the nation's leading independent peak body for diversity and inclusion.

We are a member-based, not-for-profit, with a strong network of over 1,300 member organisations, including some of Australia's largest employers. For over 40 years we have been at the forefront of helping shape more equitable workplaces, contributing to a stronger economy and fairer society.

Our evidence-led approach is centred on lived experience, and our research consistently shows that inclusive organisations are more innovative, productive, and resilient in changing environments.

Through groundbreaking research, practical tools, events, advocacy, education and training, we provide expert guidance and advice across a spectrum of diversity dimensions to employees, leaders, policymakers and the broader community.

We equip organisations with the tools and insights they need to champion the undeniable benefits of diversity and inclusion.

Workplace inclusion is achieved when all employees feel they are respected, connected, contributing, and progressing at work.

Our Purpose and Vision



Our **purpose** is to enable more diverse, inclusive and equitable workplaces for a better Australia



Our **vision** is to create a just and equitable Australian society where people in all their diversity can thrive



Our **values** are:

- Inclusion
- Fortitude
- Growth mindset
- Excellence
- Collaboration

Our work

We provide leading-edge research, insightful events and education programs, and practical resources to support our members across a range of diversity dimensions. In 2024, we maintained a strong membership base, reaching over 1,300 organisations.

Our members span private, government, and not-for-profit sectors, representing workplaces of all sizes. Explore the full list of [DCA's current members](#).

As a not-for-profit, our charitable purpose is to promote and advance diversity and inclusion (D&I). We do this through the creation of more diverse and inclusive workplaces, benefiting individuals, organisations and the broader community.

Our focus is on individuals that have been historically disadvantaged or underrepresented in the labour market.

DCA operates independently and does not receive government funding, with one exception – our landmark RISE project (Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise.), focused on creating pathways to leadership for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women. Our funding primarily comes from membership fees, sponsorships, services provided to businesses and employers, and occasional donations.

We harness our insights and expertise to deliver the following benefits to our members:

- **Unique research** – Full access to our cutting-edge Australian research with practical tools to drive business improvement and meaningful change.
- **Inspiring and informative events** – Free or discounted events and roundtables exploring the latest insights across a range of diversity dimensions, designed for D&I practitioners, HR and people managers, employees and CEOs.
- **Curated resources** – Access to our members-only online library of D&I resources covering a spectrum of diversity dimensions. These are outlined in more detail on page 14 of this Annual Report.
- **Access to experts** – Access to our team of experts for valuable guidance across all diversity dimensions to help organisations get the most out of their D&I activities.
- **Learning options** – A range of instructor-led workshops or self-paced video eLearning on various D&I topics to help organisations engage and educate their teams.
- **Opportunity to influence** – DCA advocates on D&I in the workplace with government, regulators, business and in the wider community.
- **Member community of practice** – A peer-to-peer networking and knowledge exchange for the dedicated D&I professionals from DCA member organisations.
- **Opportunity to showcase commitment to D&I** – Demonstrate commitment to D&I through DCA membership, enhancing their brand as an employer of choice.

A word from our new CEO

“It's a privilege to have joined Diversity Council Australia as CEO in 2025, and to now lead an organisation dedicated to advancing inclusion and equity across Australian workplaces.

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, I want to acknowledge the significant progress driven by my predecessor, Lisa Annese, whose leadership over more than a decade helped shape DCA into the influential voice it is today – alongside the contributions of the DCA team, Board and members.

Looking ahead, I am committed to building on this momentum – supporting our community of members as they continue to drive evidence-based, practical initiatives that make a tangible difference in workplaces and beyond.”

Catherine Hunter (she/her) joined DCA as its new CEO in early 2025.



In 2024, DCA's membership base reached 1,353 organisations.

Our year in review – 2024



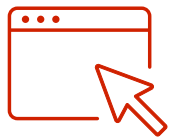
6 new research projects focused on workplace inclusion experiences across a range of diversity dimensions



34 DCA member events held



11 submissions to policy and legislative reviews



53% increase in total website users, and a **9.4% increase** in website page views



222 education programs and speaking engagements delivered

62



Inclusive Employers recognised for 2024–2025

519



organisations participated in DCA's third **Inclusion at Work Week**



19%

increase in media articles referencing DCA



over **20,000** registrations to DCA events



16% increase in participation for **Inclusion at Work Week 2024**, with nearly **three times** the number of non-members engaging compared to last year



80%

increase in uptake of the **2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index**

14%



increase in LinkedIn followers reaching **over 50,000**



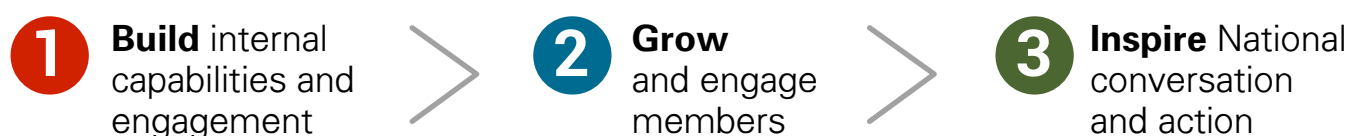
1,353

Australian organisations are now DCA members

Our 2024 performance

In 2024, our Strategic Plan focused on three key strategic goals and supporting pillars, to guide our work towards achieving DCA's purpose and vision.

Our goals for 2024 were:



In 2024, we made significant strides across our strategic goals and supporting pillars.

The following table highlights our key strategic pillars and details our performance against each of them.

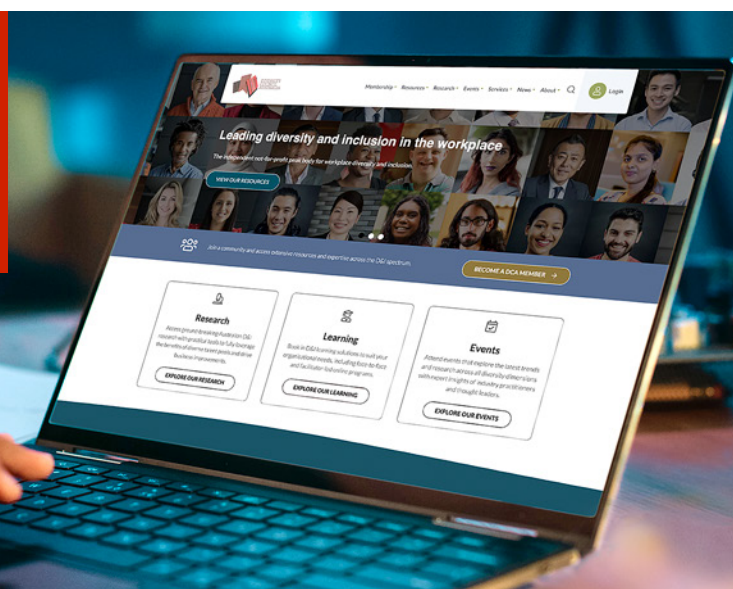
Supporting pillar	2024 performance
Build our digital capability to optimise our new systems and website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened our cyber security preparedness across our people, processes and technology. Embedded and enhanced our new digital platforms. Increased digital learning and expanded our digital team. Improved our data breach, cyber incident and IT disaster recover planning. Expanded our digital reporting capabilities, building on the insights drawn from our new Customer Relationship Management System, website and other data.
Develop and maintain cutting edge, high impact resources for our members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Released six research reports and evidence-based guidelines. These are outlined in more detail in the 'Our groundbreaking research' section of this Annual Report on page 22. <p>We also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index enabling organisations to comprehensively assess and monitor the state of diversity and inclusion (D&I) in their workforce. Reviewed major Knowledge Programs (KPs) and delivered 143 KPs alongside 66 speaking engagements and 13 eLearning programs. Ensured DCA's website content reflects the latest leading practice, with 19 D&I Planning website pages updated, and four new topic pages created. Continued the collaborative RISE (Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise.) project between DCA, Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women, funded by the Australian government, to build pathways to leadership for women from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds. Presented on the RISE project at the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York.
Increase active/engaged members and reduce passive members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved growth in member attraction, retention and engagement, reflected by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% increase in member revenue 53% increase in total website users, and a 9.4% increase in website page views our 'Inclusive Teams at Work Toolkit' had over 1,200 registered event attendees and over 2,000 downloads in the subsequent month 15% increase in revenue from the KPs we delivered 80% increase in organisational uptake of the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index, compared with the comparable Index in 2022–2023 16% increase in participation for Inclusion at Work Week 2024, with nearly three times the number of non-members engaging compared to last year. Delivered 34 events exploring leading thinking and practice on many D&I topics, with more than 20,000 registrations. Responded to over 100 member enquiries across a wide variety of topics to help them implement successful D&I strategies and programs.

Supporting pillar	2024 performance
Create a workplace, that is inclusive, supportive, productive and continually learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and refreshed all our People & Culture policies. Embedded the strengths-based team development framework. Increased employee learning and development. Continued to score highly for employee engagement and psychological safety metrics in our quarterly pulse surveys. Engaged a new employee assistance program for unique wellbeing issues. Engaged with internal advisory groups on D&I and on disability and accessibility to review our policies and programs. Continued to enhance risk management, including enhancing standard operating procedures and Business Continuity Planning.
Focus beyond members to contribute to our charitable purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published a calendar of important D&I days of celebration, solidarity, commemoration and awareness, designed to promote and advance inclusion and diversity in the workplace. Delivered on our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan commitments. Continued to contribute to the public dialogue on D&I, and significantly increased media coverage, with the total number of media mentions up 19%. Amplified DCA's work and impact via social media, achieving double digit growth in key channels, reaching a following of over 50,000 on our priority channel, LinkedIn. Provided input to 11 government or regulatory inquiries on policy and legislative reviews, outlined in more detail in the 'Advocacy' section of this Annual Report on page 26. Developed a proactive policy briefing on intersectionality at work. DCA was actively sought by government to participate in D&I-related advisory groups, roundtables and other forms of consultation. Gave evidence at three Senate hearings and Joint Parliamentary enquiries to actively pursue policy reform. Published and presented our work in prestigious research publications and at conferences. Progressed the Global Inclusion & Diversity Alliance, a community of practice for peak D&I organisations from around the world, acting together to make workplaces across the world more equitable. Laid the groundwork for creating DCA's first social impact report.

53%

increase in total
website users

9.4%

increase in
website page views

Our diversity dimensions

DCA's work covers a spectrum of diversity dimensions, providing the knowledge and tools to foster more inclusive workplaces.

We aim to guide best practices, inform inclusive policies, and support organisations in driving meaningful change. For each dimension, we provide insights into leading practices, the case for action, research, and practical resources.

The diversity dimensions we cover are: **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Age, Culture and Religion, Disability and Accessibility, Family and Domestic Violence, Gender, LGBTIQ+, Mental Health, Parental Leave and Race.**

In addition, our work considers intersections across these diversity dimensions. Intersectionality is central to our approach, recognising how different aspects of a person's identity can overlap, leading to unique experiences of discrimination or marginalisation. By understanding this, workplaces can create more effective and inclusive diversity and inclusion strategies.

More information on these dimensions is available under the [Resources](#) section on DCA's website.



DCA equips organisations with the tools and insights they need to champion the benefits of diversity and inclusion.

What is diversity?

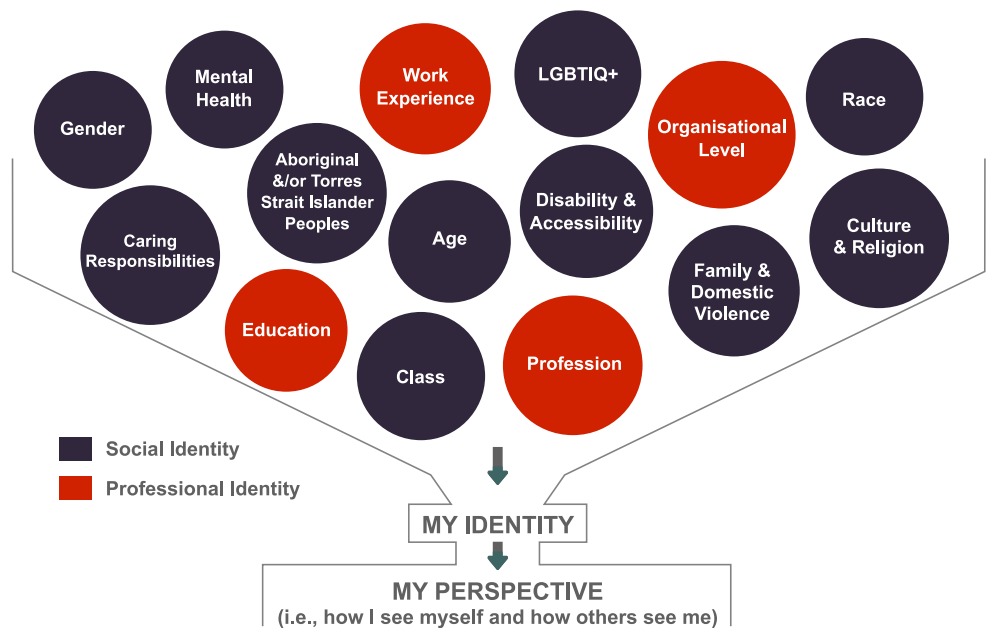
Diversity refers to the mix of people in an organisation – that is, all the differences between people in how they identify in relation to their:

SOCIAL IDENTITY:

e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, gender, caring responsibilities, LGBTIQ+ status, culture or faith.

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY:

e.g., profession, education, organisational level, location.



These aspects come together in a unique way for each individual and shape the way they view and perceive their world and workplace.

DCA's diversity definition is **identity-based**, as it recognises that the starting point should be how each of us identifies ourselves, rather than just how others categorise or label us.

This diversity definition also takes into account multiple **intersecting** diversity dimensions. A person's identity is often influenced by multiple dimensions. For each individual, these different dimensions come together or 'intersect' to form their particular identity.

For example, an individual may not just identify as a woman, but also someone with a trans history who comes from a culturally diverse background.

Learn more about [DCA's definition of diversity](#).

What is inclusion?

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
- **PROGRESSING** in their career at work (i.e. have equal access to opportunities and resources).

Learn more about [DCA's definition of inclusion](#).



Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

As an organisation dedicated to advancing diversity and inclusion nationally, we are committed to practicing these principles within our own workplace, ensuring that our work environment is reflective of the safe, fair and inclusive organisations we aim to help shape.

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

In January 2024, Diversity Council Australia (DCA) launched the second iteration of its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2024–2026.

This updated version enables us to deliver more substantial and significant outcomes, while continuing an aspirational and innovative approach to our commitment to true reconciliation.

DCA remains committed to delivering our actions by being an agile workplace with the ability to pivot our approach to the ongoing changing environment.

We also aim to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices continue to be centred in discussions around recognition, reconciliation and truth-telling.

Our vision

Our vision is for an Australia where:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are central in any discussions around recognition and reconciliation
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel valued and respected
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to opportunities and resources
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can contribute their perspectives and talents to workplaces across the country.

We achieve this through supporting Australian organisations to develop their capacity to create inclusive workplaces that understand and respect the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories, and provide safe, welcoming and culturally competent environments for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to work.

Our activities

Our Innovate RAP is a framework for working together to develop leading-practice strategies that ensure the self-determination and inclusion of First Nations People in our workplaces.

We review our work regularly – as individuals and as an organisation – to ensure we continue to improve.

The RAP has four key focus areas:

1. Relationships
2. Respect
3. Opportunities
4. Governance.

Relationships

This focus area holds some of the most meaningful actions for DCA as an organisation. Through DCA's sphere of influence we endorse key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days and events of significance via our social media and newsletters.

We work with Elders of the Community, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, First Nations' businesses, as well as First Nations people and leading industry practitioners, to share knowledge through our events that profile leading practices in attracting, retaining and promoting First Nations talent.

Our work also promotes understanding of First Nations cultures and helps build organisational capability.

In March 2024, Simone Empacher Earl, Aboriginal Advisor and RAP working Group Chair, attended a one-day Reconciliation Action Plan Leadership Forum in Sydney.

This forum was a dedicated gathering for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RAP contacts, providing time for collaborative planning and examining what reconciliation leadership looks like in the months and years to come.



Artwork: Buranbaa Ngarran (New Dawn) by artist Kirsten Gray for DCA Innovate RAP 2024–2026.

We held an online webinar on the next iteration of the landmark research project Gari Yala ('Speak the Truth') led by UTS Jumbunna Institute of Indigenous Education and Research.

We also showcased Bunnings' program aimed at sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities and leadership pathways, alongside their other key priorities for First Nations community engagement.

Throughout the year, we held an additional three events as part of our First Nations Insights program, which align with our RAP deliverables:

- Staying the Course for Meaningful Reconciliation – February 2024
- First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property – June 2024
- The Power of First Nations Leadership – September 2024

As best practice, we endeavour to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as guest speakers at all DCA events.

During 2024, DCA team members attended over 20 different cultural events and educational programs and training, and met with member organisations to collaborate and discuss RAP deliverables.

Respect

As an organisation, we are committed to creating a significant difference by showing our support and increasing our knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. We are dedicated to fostering a more diverse and inclusive workforce and establishing good working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations.

Our 2024 actions in this focus area included:

- Revising and communicating our cultural protocol document to all DCA employees, including protocols for Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country and correct use of language.
- Continuing to invite Local Traditional Owners or Custodians to provide a Welcome to Country at DCA events.
- Ensuring the ongoing inclusion of an Acknowledgement of Country before all broader team meetings, events and presentations.
- Improving our cultural learning strategy for DCA employees by participating in on-Country self-guided tours, First Nations exhibits, First Nations-led informative on-Country tours and various cultural training programs.
- Encouraging all DCA employees and member organisations to participate in Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events, and other days of significance.
- Offering our team the choice to swap the public holiday on 26 January, in line with DCA's Flexible Public Holiday Policy.

Opportunities

All recruitment procedures and policies have been updated to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. We also reviewed our recruitment and selection practices to ensure they are inclusive of and align with best practice for the recruitment and selection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This process was undertaken in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and DCA's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel to strengthen our strategy with recruitment, retention and professional development.

We continue to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees' requirements to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. We reached out to other RAP organisations, who are leading the way in this space, to gain further direction on how to implement best practice in this area.

DCA met with Supply Nation to explore membership options, which will be incorporated into our 2025 budget. We remain committed to increasing our procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and aim to actively engage them whenever possible.

Governance

We publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings each year in our Annual Report, and regularly present our progress to our employees and senior leaders.

We review our Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group annually to ensure this is kept up to date with the changing environment at DCA.

Our RAP Working Group meets monthly and provides feedback to our RAP champions quarterly and presents an update on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group to continue centring voice and lived experience to help guide and shape our deliverables. Every year an annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire is submitted to Reconciliation Australia to drive and monitor the RAP implementation to make certain we are reaching our milestones.

Next steps

We have successfully completed the first year of our current RAP commitments and are tracking well to complete all deliverables by the end of 2025.

Next year we will reach out to Reconciliation Australia to investigate whether DCA is able to move to a Stretch RAP or continue at the Innovate stage for a further two years. The Stretch RAP has very specific targets and measurements in place, and we need to ensure DCA is well positioned to successfully achieve these targets.

Learnings

Through the second iteration of our Innovate RAP, we have been able to strengthen our current position by creating more substantial and significant deliverables.

We remain committed to delivering our actions by staying adaptable and responsive to the evolving environment we operate in. We will ensure that we continue to centre Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander voices, and their lived experience is included in discussions around recognition, reconciliation and truth-telling.

Read more about our [Innovate RAP](#).

Internal Disability and Accessibility Group

DCA’s Internal Disability and Accessibility Group is dedicated to fostering a disability-inclusive workplace by centring lived experience.

With over 29% of our team identifying as having a disability, this group plays a crucial role in enhancing DCA’s internal and external accessibility and raising disability awareness and capability within our team.

The current focus is on developing a Disability and Accessibility Action Plan to guide and strengthen our efforts over the next two years.



Internal D&I Advisory Panel

DCA's Internal D&I Advisory Panel plays a key role in centring lived experiences and D&I expertise in organisational decision-making.

It serves as an advisory body to both the wider DCA team and management. The Panel's purpose is to honour and reflect the intersectional identities and diverse lived experiences of DCA's workforce, aiming to create a more equitable and inclusive workplace.

The goal is to foster an environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and able to thrive.

The Panel's focus is on issues, themes, or ideas brought forward by DCA, its employees, or Panel members.

It provides advice on:

- creation, implementation, and maintenance of people processes and policies
- ways of working together
- team events
- initiatives that promote wellbeing, engagement, and psychological safety
- prioritisation of the above areas.


Learn more about the DCA team in the 'Our team' section of this Annual Report on page 65.

Regular internal pulse surveys

Our internal pulse surveys, conducted every quarter, provide valuable insights into employee engagement, wellbeing, psychological safety, and any key challenges being experienced by employees within our organisation.

By regularly gathering feedback, we can identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. These surveys play a crucial role in shaping our workplace culture and ensuring we continue to foster a supportive and inclusive environment.

We also undertake an annual diversity data survey and conduct our Inclusion@Work Index internally, to measure and track our team's diversity and inclusion data on an ongoing basis.



At DCA, we regularly engage our team to gather insights that drive continuous improvement in both culture and operations.

Our leading voice

Diversity Council Australia (DCA) is a leading voice advancing diversity and inclusion in workplaces. Through our cutting-edge research, impactful advocacy, expert speakers and tailored knowledge programs, we empower organisations to create more inclusive and equitable working environments.

Our external communications work ensures that DCA's insights and expertise are amplified, reaching both our members and a broader audience across Australia.

Our groundbreaking research

In 2024, DCA released six major research projects on workplace diversity.

DCA collaborates with members, national experts and academia to produce market-leading research translated into guidelines and resources.

We also provide invaluable infographics and summaries for a broad audience, while delivering value for our members with our detailed research reports, guidelines, resources and related events.

To read more about our research events go to the 'Our inspiring events' section of this Annual Report on page 42.



Centring Marginalised Voices at Work Guide: Lessons from DCA's Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) Women in Leadership Research

This practical guide from DCA provides organisations and diversity and inclusion (D&I) change agents with advice on how to effectively centre the voices of people with lived experiences of marginalisation when undertaking D&I work. Centring voice means listening to and prioritising what marginalised people tell us about the systemic barriers they face, ensuring that these perspectives form the foundation of D&I initiatives focused on them.

The guide clarifies what it means to centre voice, why it is important, and offers a step-by-step process for how organisations can do so. It draws on insights from DCA's [2023 research report](#), 'Culturally and Racially Marginalised Women in Leadership', and provides a robust how-to approach that can be applied to centre the voices of any marginalised group.

The guide covers:

- what 'centring voice' means
- what 'centring voice' isn't
- why it is critical to centre the voices of people with lived experiences of marginalisation when trying to address the workplace inequities they experience
- how organisations can use a four-step collaborative process to centre the voices of people with lived experiences
- how individual employees can centre marginalised voices.

[Learn more about the research.](#) DCA members can log in to access the full report.



Disability Data at Work Report: How organisations can capture disability data safely and respectfully

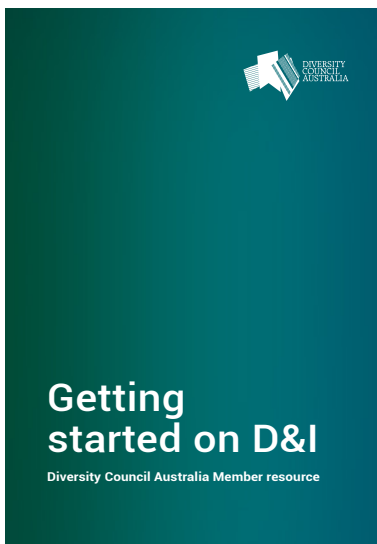
Disability status data is a powerful tool that helps organisations make informed decisions about their policies and strategies, monitor progress and drive positive change for people with disability within their organisations. But disability data collection is often not prioritised by all employers, and many employees with disability feel unsafe in sharing their status. This is why DCA and Australian Disability Network partnered to produce the research report 'Disability Data at Work: How organisations can capture disability data safely and respectfully'.

The report provides evidence-based recommendations for organisations wanting to create environments where people with disability feel safe to share their disability status.

The research report includes:

- a state-of-play of employment of people with disability
- a strong case for change to create disability-inclusive workplaces
- a lock-and-key approach to creating safe and inclusive environments for employees to share their disability status.

[Learn more about the research.](#) DCA members can log in to access the full report.



Getting Started on D&I Guide

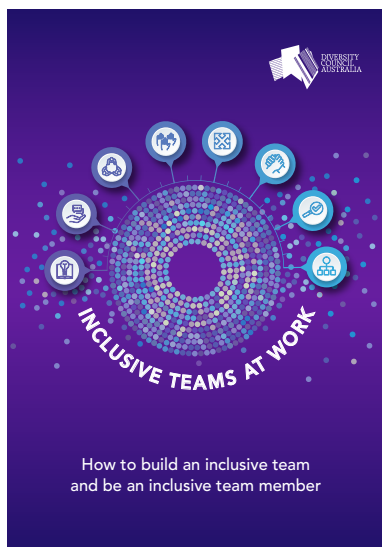
This guide is designed for those leading, implementing, or supporting D&I work within their organisation. It helps D&I change agents get the basics right, identify priority areas, and design and implement initiatives to address them. The guide also directs users to DCA resources that can support their efforts and maximise their membership.

The guide is structured around the '5 Ps of D&I'—five key areas for D&I action:

- Preparation
- People
- Policy
- Priorities
- Practice.

Many DCA members are new to D&I or to implementing D&I in their organisation, and they often struggle with where to start. This guide has been developed to assist those who are new to D&I work, new to their current organisation, or part of an organisation just beginning its D&I journey.

[Learn more about the research.](#) DCA members can log in to access the full report.



Inclusive Teams at Work Toolkit: How to build an inclusive team and be an inclusive team member

We all contribute to creating an inclusive (or exclusive) team every day. This toolkit provides practical steps and actions for all employees to create an inclusive team for everyone. The toolkit outlines eight levers for creating inclusive teams. Each lever provides practical steps and actions for all employees. They are:

- Building D&I literacy
- Inclusive communication
- Inclusive meetings
- Inclusive team events
- Flexibility
- Allyship
- Inclusive recruitment
- Inclusive leadership.

[Learn more about the research.](#) DCA members can log in to access the full report.



Inclusive Meetings at Work Guide: How to hold inclusive meetings

Inclusive meetings are crucial for fostering collaboration and ensuring all voices are heard.

They allow diverse perspectives to be shared, leading to better creativity, problem-solving, and decision-making. Inclusion can also help team members feel a sense of belonging, which can improve job satisfaction and mental health, and reduce turnover.

This guide includes practical strategies and tools that help everyone be inclusive in meetings, whether in-person, online or hybrid and whether you are meeting chair, facilitator or participant.

[Learn more about the research.](#) DCA members can log in to access the full report.



Inclusion@Work Index Report 2023-2024: Mapping the state of inclusion in the Australian workforce

DCA's Inclusion@Work Index is a survey of 3,000 nationally representative workers in Australia that tracks the state of inclusion in the Australian workforce to:

- Encourage organisations to actively pursue D&I and achieve inclusion in their workplaces for better worker wellbeing and business outcomes.
- Biennially track Australia's progress in creating Inclusion@Work.
- Broaden the focus of workplace inclusion to include factors such as age, cultural background, caring responsibilities, disability status, Indigeneity, sexual orientation, and more, rather than just gender.

In its fourth iteration, the Index investigates the state of inclusion in the workforce post-pandemic, mapping inclusion in Australian organisations and providing the business case for inclusion. It shows that workplace inclusion boosts performance, wellbeing, satisfaction, and innovation, and is key to future-proofing businesses as we adapt to new ways of working.

Key findings in 2023–2024 included:

- Worker experiences of exclusion increased post-pandemic.
- Sense of connection and contribution decreased post-pandemic.
- First Nations workers reported significantly higher experiences of discrimination and/or harassment at work (59% versus 22% for non-Indigenous workers).
- Reports of non-inclusive teams and managers were the highest since the Index began.
- Support for organisational D&I action declined post-pandemic, especially among younger men.

[Learn more about the research.](#) DCA members can log in to access the full report.



The RISE project

In 2024, we also continued our 3.5-year partnership with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women to implement the federally funded RISE (Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise.) project, which builds pathways and addresses barriers to leadership for CARM women in middle management.

You can read about the RISE project's progress this year in the 'Our collaborations and partnerships' section of this Annual Report on page 59.

Advocacy

DCA has a vital advocacy role with government and business leaders on behalf of our members and the broader community.

We provide evidence-based advice to key influencers, decision and policymakers to advance the D&I agenda and advocate for more diverse and inclusive business practices, for the benefit of all Australians.

Our advocacy work is also pivotal to our charitable purpose as outlined in the 'About us' section of this Annual Report on page 7.

2024 advocacy overview



Submitted to government and/or regulatory authorities on **policy and legislative reviews**



Participated in **public hearings, consultations and roundtables**



Continued our commitment to **Environmental, Social and Governance**



Reaffirmed our commitment to **international engagement**



Supported the **UN's Sustainable Development Goals and targets**



Promoted **inclusive language**

During 2024, DCA's advocacy efforts focused on a range of critical policy submissions related to diversity and inclusion.

Submissions to government and/or regulatory authorities on policy and legislative reviews

Throughout 2024, DCA made significant contributions through 11 written submissions, including:

- Response to Strengthening the Indigenous Procurement Policy through reform – February 2024.
- Response to the Inquiry into Right Wing Extremist movements in Australia – March 2024.
- Response to the Inquiry into the Issues related to menopause and perimenopause – March 2024.
- Response to Strategic review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System – April 2024.
- Response to the draft Australian Medical Association Anti-Racism Statement – May 2024.
- Joint submission on the 5th Edition of the ASX Corporate Governance Council Principles and Recommendations – May 2024.
- Response to the Draft National Autism Strategy – May 2024.
- Response to Australia's Disability Strategy Review Discussion Paper – August 2024.
- Response to Discussion Paper: National Carer Strategy – September 2024.
- Response to Australia's Draft Ninth periodic report under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – September 2024.
- Response to Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Setting Gender Equality Targets) Bill 2024 – December 2024.

We have expanded on several of these submissions below:



Submission spotlight

Inquiry into right wing extremist movements in Australia – March 2024

DCA provided a response to the inquiry into right wing extremist movements in Australia.

Our position was that it was important to highlight the workplace environment as a key site for many opportunities to build resilience through targeted information and education as well as positive engagement and support. They are important environments for creating and supporting a sense of belonging and engagement and preventing isolation. All these benefits can work against the appeal of extremist narratives and can help build social cohesion. The importance of D&I initiatives in this regard cannot be underestimated.

[Read our full submission](#) to the inquiry.

Inquiry into the issues related to menopause and perimenopause – March 2024

In this submission, DCA emphasised the importance of recognising the complexity and diversity of the lived experience of individuals experiencing menopause and perimenopause, particularly those who are additionally marginalised, such as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and racially marginalised (CARM), and people with disability. We also highlighted the economic consequences of menopause and perimenopause, including their impact on workforce participation and retirement outcomes, and stressed the need for increased awareness within the workplace.

[Read our full submission](#) to the inquiry.



Submission spotlight

Supporting people with autism – May 2024

DCA provided a response on the Draft National Autism Strategy. We welcomed its overall approach to the use of language and the Neurodiversity Paradigm, which aligned well with our position in relation to a person's right to describe themselves in a way that feels most comfortable. We strongly supported a paradigm that centres the lived experience of people with autism.

We offered support for all the draft strategy's commitments under Social Inclusion. We highlighted the importance of the workplace as an ideal site for raising awareness and improving our understanding of autism, as well as a location for social connections and peer support. We also offered support for all the strategy's commitments under Economic Inclusion. Given the statistics quoted by the strategy point to Autistic people being eight times more likely to be unemployed than the general population, these commitments are extremely important.

In this submission, DCA recommended support for the Australian Government's Draft Autism Strategy and that they provide appropriate resourcing to ensure implementation of commitments. We also recommended a monitoring and evaluation component to ensure data is collected on the impacts of commitments.

[Read our full submission](#) on the Draft National Autism Strategy.

Supporting people with disability – August 2024

DCA provided a submission in response to Australia's Disability Strategy Review Discussion Paper. We commended the Australian Government's vision for an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fully participate as equal members of the community, particularly at work. In our submission we highlighted the importance of the workplace as a key site for inclusion. We strongly supported the priority in the strategy for addressing employment barriers and related challenges faced by people with disability across Australia. Citing our research, DCA's submission pointed out that fewer employees with disability feel connected and able to contribute at work compared to those without disability. Our findings also showed less favourable employment experiences for people with disability overall.

In response to a key issue identified, which was the importance of disability status data, DCA partnered with the Australian Disability Network to develop practical guidelines that can help organisations create environments where people with disability feel safe to share their disability status data with their employers. With better data, organisations can make evidence-based decisions about their policies and programs in relation to disability inclusion and monitor progress.

[Read our full submission](#) on supporting people with disability.



Submission spotlight

Advocating for greater board diversity – May 2024

DCA provided a joint submission to the consultation on the 5th edition of the ASX Corporate Governance Council Principles and Recommendations, in partnership with the University of Sydney Business School and the University of Technology Sydney Business School/Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research. Our submission focused on several consultation questions relating to gender balance and diversity as well as other relevant diversity characteristics.

We communicated our belief that all Boards – ASX, private, community/NGO and sporting – should take meaningful action to be more diverse and reflect the communities they seek to represent and serve. By referencing evidence from around the world, as well as our own research, our submission put forward a solid case to support the recommendation to raise the measurable objective for women to 40% women (40% men and 20% any gender). We supported the proposed disclosure of any other relevant diversity characteristic in addition to gender, including but not limited to cultural, ethnic and racial diversity and referred to expertise from other organisations regarding LGBTIQ+ and people with disability.

We also supported the disclosure of an entity's D&I practices. DCA's commitment to board diversity remains strong despite recent news that the ASX Corporate Governance Council's proposed new governance rules to increase D&I requirements did not receive the broad member support needed for adoption.

[Read our media release](#) on the joint submission.

Advocating for carers – September 2024

DCA provided a response to the Department of Social Service's discussion paper on the National Carer Strategy. Once again, we welcomed the Australian Government's commitment to appoint, and be guided by, the lived experience of a Carer Advisory Committee. Our response focused on issues carers face at work when they are balancing unpaid caring responsibilities with paid work and/or when they return to paid work after a period of full-time unpaid caring. DCA also highlighted the experience of discrimination and/or harassment at work and the importance of a 'carer-inclusive' workplace. In our submission we provided comment on the stigma of flexible work and the impacts of unpaid caring – especially for women, First Nations people and other diverse groups – on their economic and social futures.

[Read our full submission](#) on the National Carer Strategy.

Policy briefing on intersectionality at work

In 2024, DCA developed a policy briefing on intersectionality at work for Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance, Women, and the Public Service.

Our briefing called for an intersectional approach to be applied to all gender equality policy matters.

We also called for increased support, especially funding, for the Workplace Gender Equality Agency to collect intersectional data.

[Read our policy briefing](#) on intersectionality at work.

Participation in public hearings, consultations, forums and roundtables

Members of the DCA team are regularly invited to participate in a range of other consultations/roundtables, on topics such as: gendered violence, artificial intelligence, Positive Duty, and workforce participation of migrants and refugees.

Throughout 2024, DCA gave evidence at public hearings on early childhood education and care, paid parental leave and issues relating to menopause and perimenopause.

We also participated in several ongoing expert advisory forums including:

- The Attorney General's Respect@Work Council
- LGBTIQ+ Expert Advisory Committee (Australian Bureau of Statistics)
- National Anti-racism Framework
- Gender Economic Equality Study Advisory Committee
- Australian Academy of Science Advisory Committee
- The Voluntary Artificial Intelligence Safety Standard.

In addition, we supported several advocacy campaigns to promote employment opportunities for skilled migrants and refugees, and in relation to Human Rights legislative reform.



DCA's CEO Roundtables in 2024 provided an exclusive group of DCA member organisation CEOs and Managing Directors, the opportunity to discuss D&I challenges, successes and areas of interest, in a supportive environment.

Commitment to Environment, Social and Governance

DCA is dedicated to helping Australian organisations integrate inclusive and equitable approaches across Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) areas.

As a trusted advisor to business, we focus particularly on the social and governance pillars of ESG, empowering businesses to demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility and robust governance practices.

In addition to this, we recognise the growing connection between diversity, inclusion, and the environment. Climate change, for example, is expected to impact job sectors and workforce demographics, and these changes will not be experienced equally across all groups. As businesses plan for transition, mitigation, and adaptation, DCA supports organisations in ensuring that these shifts consider the diverse experiences of different groups and engage employees as key stakeholders in the process.

In the evolving landscape of work, flexibility offers new employment opportunities for people in remote locations.

DCA continues to guide businesses in fostering organisational culture in this digital age, encouraging more inclusive, flexible work environments.

We lead by example, utilising our position as a trusted advisor to influence Australian businesses to commit to ESG goals, particularly in connecting the social and environmental pillars. While many organisations have addressed environmental factors, the integration of social aspects into ESG strategies is often overlooked.

This is where DCA can provide unique value, offering trusted advice and resources to help businesses make this crucial connection and achieve their Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) aspirations.

We focus on transparent communication about our own environmental impact and contributions to the SDGs, while also advocating for vulnerable groups affected by climate change.

Our work also includes providing research and guidance on the social aspects of ESG and the links between overlapping issues through the SDGs.

Commitment to international engagement

Internationally, DCA reaffirms its commitment to the UN Global Compact and its Ten Principles, particularly Principle 6, which calls for the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.

In 2024, DCA proudly joined a cohort of Australian representatives to participate in the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW68) in New York from 11– 22 March.

Our involvement in UNCSW68 was an important opportunity to share our research and gather learnings that we can apply to our work and share with our members.

DCA directly contributed to two key sessions exploring how organisations can provide more inclusive workplaces for CARM women.

On 13 March, DCA, in collaboration with Settlement Services International and African Women Australia Inc., presented a session on the RISE project.

On 18 March, DCA CEO Lisa Annese (she/her) and DCA's Dr Virginia Mapedzahama (she/her), alongside Global Inclusion & Diversity Alliance partners, shared insights from DCA's 'Centring Marginalised Voices at Work' guidelines, highlighting strategies for advancing inclusion and diversity in the workplace.

Our work in 2024 also included planning for our involvement in the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW69) in March 2025, also in New York. The focus of UNCSW69 is to review and appraise the implementation of the Beijing Declaration, addressing current challenges in achieving gender equality globally.

[Read more DCA insights from UNCSW68.](#)



In March 2024, DCA joined a cohort of Australian representatives at UNCSW68 in New York.

Support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and targets

The United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 'provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future'¹.

DCA is already taking action to support several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets and has identified some areas where we have an opportunity to build our influence.

Our 2024 activities supported several targets that underpin the UN SDGs, as we describe over page.



1. United Nations (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Sustainable Development (n.d), [The 17 goals](#), UN, accessed 12 April 2024.

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our work
<div data-bbox="150 342 405 412"> 5 GENDER EQUALITY </div> <p data-bbox="150 427 392 539">Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p data-bbox="443 342 740 454">5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>	<ul data-bbox="810 342 1442 1039" style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting Australian organisations to create more gender-equal workplaces remains a key priority in much of our work. • Our work to address gender inequality takes an intersectional perspective so that we ensure all women and girls can prosper. • In 2024, we developed the innovative 'Centring Marginalised Voices at Work' tool to provide practical guidance on how organisations can centre the voices of people with lived experience of marginalisation. This resource was based on the findings of our 2023 research which examined the challenges and systemic barriers facing CARM women progressing to leadership positions in organisations. • In 2024, our advocacy included written submissions and consultations responding to: <ul data-bbox="839 880 1385 1039" style="list-style-type: none"> – the National Carer Strategy – an inquiry into issues relating to menopause and perimenopause – a Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System. <p data-bbox="810 1059 1356 1115">For more information on our 2024 submissions see page 27 of this Annual Report.</p> <ul data-bbox="810 1137 1436 1458" style="list-style-type: none"> • We also conducted events on: <ul data-bbox="839 1178 1436 1458" style="list-style-type: none"> – rising backlash and resistance to gender equity – progress in relation to the Respect@Work report – sex discrimination – family and domestic violence – women's economic equality – pathways to leadership for CARM women, and – centring CARM women's voices when creating workplace diversity and inclusion change. <p data-bbox="810 1478 1406 1563">For more information on our 2024 events see the 'Our inspiring events' section of this Annual Report on page 42.</p>
	<p data-bbox="443 1603 759 1989">5.4 Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate</p>	<ul data-bbox="810 1603 1436 1877" style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024, our advocacy on access to paid parental leave and universal childcare continued to highlight how caring for family and workforce participation both impact the gender pay gap. <p data-bbox="839 1727 1426 1877">We responded to the draft National Carer Strategy and advocated for reforms to promote sharing the responsibility and care of children and other family members, challenging gender norms and ensuring greater economic security for women.</p>

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our work
<p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p> <p>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p>5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We promoted women's leadership through our research, advocacy and member education. • In 2024, DCA delivered a policy briefing to the Minister for Women on intersectionality at work. This briefing called on the government to apply an intersectional approach to all gender equality matters, including addressing barriers to leadership. • DCA, in partnership with University of Sydney Business School and University of Technology Sydney Business School/Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research provided a joint submission on the review of ASX corporate governance principles focussing on enhancing diversity on boards. • In 2024, the RISE project continued working with 25 organisations to identify and address systemic and implement real change. See the 'Our collaborations and partnerships' section of this Annual Report on page 59 for details on the RISE project's progress this year.
<p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p>Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all</p>	<p>8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024, our research led to the development of tools to support organisations to have more inclusive meetings and teams. • We also developed a guide for collecting disability data at work safely and respectfully, acknowledging the importance of accurate data to develop inclusion strategies and monitor progress. • We continued to focus on addressing the challenges and systemic barriers facing CARM women in leadership, through the RISE project and related advocacy. • Our advocacy on unpaid carers, people with disability, women experiencing menopause and perimenopause symptoms at work and people with Autism also contributed to the goal of decent work for all.

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our work
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is our mission to encourage and enable Australian organisations to create diverse and inclusive workplaces. We advocated for this in all our submissions throughout 2024. This year we provided a policy briefing to the Minister for Women, which called for an intersectional approach to be applied to all gender equality policy matters. We advocated for reduced inequality for people with disability and Autism in the workplace, and people experiencing menopause/perimenopause symptoms. We also advocated for unpaid carers balancing caring obligations with paid employment, greater diversity on ASX Boards and for Indigenous procurement policy reform.
	10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024, we advocated for legislation, policies and action to address discrimination in workplaces and our community. We advocated for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ and Intersex people in the 2026 census, and we participated in the Australian Bureau of Statistics LGBTQ+ Expert Advisory Committee throughout the year.

Next steps

We've identified specific areas for future focus. Over the next year, we will work on the following:

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our 2025 focus areas
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will develop a policy for sustainable procurement at DCA.

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our 2025 focus areas
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024, we established a Disability and Accessibility External Advisory Panel. In 2025, we will continue to advocate and support, inclusion and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and take direction from our Expert Advisory Panel on specific initiatives. <p>Wherever an issue may impact on either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and/or people with disability, we will seek guidance and advice from our expert advisory panels to ensure we truly hear their voices in developing our advocacy and policy positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will include relevant SDGs in the case for action in DCA research releases. We will communicate to our members about how DCA membership can support their work towards their ESG goals.



Promoting inclusive language

Our advocacy work involves taking positive action such as promoting inclusive language practices and challenging the use of exclusionary language in organisational and public discourse.

Following the disappointing result of the Voice to Parliament referendum in 2023, DCA reaffirmed its commitment to working with our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Expert Advisory Panel to centre the voices and perspectives of Aboriginal and/or

Torres Strait Islander people around the workplace experiences that affect them.

In 2024, we highlighted and contributed our insights and expertise to a range of important issues impacting D&I.

CARM vs CALD:

An indicator of the extent of DCA's impact is that we continue to have influence on the use of more accurate language that recognises the significance of race and racism in people's lives.

The term CARM (culturally and racially marginalised), coined by DCA in 2022, continues to be used widely by our member organisations and beyond. The term CARM, coined by DCA in 2022, continues to be used widely by our member organisations and beyond. It is increasingly apparent that terms like: 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD), 'multicultural' or 'culturally diverse' do not adequately capture or reflect the lived realities of people who experience racial marginalisation.

DCA Speakers Bureau

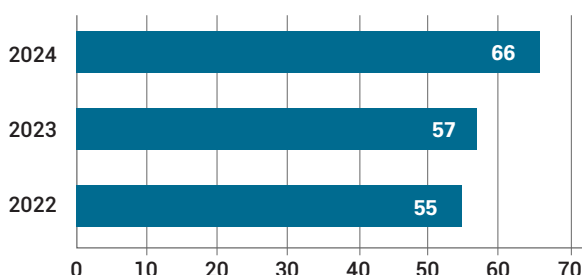
DCA's senior leadership team, board members and advisors are highly regarded speakers and panellists both within Australia and internationally on a broad range of diversity and inclusion issues.

DCA speakers regularly present at member events, as well as at public forums and engagements, providing key insights and expert opinions on all key diversity areas.

Throughout 2024, we were delighted to speak at events and conferences for **66 organisations, an increase of 16% compared to last year.**

Explore our [Speakers Bureau](#).

Number of DCA Speakers Bureau events delivered year-on-year



Top right: DCA's Sheetal Deo (she/her) and Dr Jane O'Leary (she/her) presented at the 3rd Public Sector Women of Colour Leadership and Allyship Summit in 2024.

Above: In 2024, DCA CEO Lisa Annese was a guest panellist at the Carlton IN Business Inclusion and Diversity Luncheon, presented by Fujitsu Asia Pacific.

Knowledge Programs

DCA's Knowledge Programs continue to be popular and impactful with DCA members and non-members alike. DCA delivered 143 Knowledge Programs in 2024, with a 15% increase in income from the previous year.² Of these, 77% were delivered online and 23% were delivered in-person.

All DCA's Knowledge Programs are delivered by our highly skilled external facilitators with strong subject matter expertise and lived experiences of various diversity dimensions.

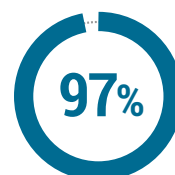
They continue to receive strong, positive feedback as demonstrated in the graphic in the column to the right.

DCA's Education Team completed the first major review and update of our Knowledge Programs in 2024, with the updated programs launched in July.

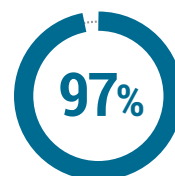
Interest in DCA's 'Understanding Anti-Racism at Work' Knowledge Program continues to be high, especially for leadership audiences. DCA partnered with a state government department to deliver this training to the entire leadership cohort, in a partnership that is extending into 2025.

DCA also held its first 'Open Knowledge Programs' as part of Inclusion at Work Week 2024, with programs open for individual registrations. Interest in these programs was exceptionally high, with all three sessions selling out within two weeks of launch and over 2,000 website page views on the event pages.

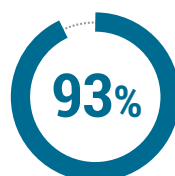
Explore all our [Knowledge Programs](#).



Participants found DCA Knowledge Programs to be **engaging**



Participants found DCA Knowledge Programs **educational**



Participants felt more **confident in understanding** the subject matter of the knowledge program attended

2. A change in reporting method results in a lower represented number of DCA Knowledge Programs in 2024 as compared with 2023 (262). This is because each 'Racism at Work' program is now being reported as one program, rather than three individual sessions as it was previously.



DCA Knowledge Programs are open to all workplaces – DCA members and non-members alike. Any organisation can book sessions for their teams. DCA member organisations also enjoy generous discounts on program fees.

Communications

Driving impact and engagement

In 2024, DCA delivered high-impact communications, promoting research, resources, events, Knowledge Programs, advocacy efforts, and key D&I days and dates.

Throughout the year, our efforts included media and communications support for the national Inclusion@Work Index 2023–24, DCA's RISE project communications, 'Centring Marginalised Voices at Work', the launch of the 'Disability Data at Work' report and a new D&I planning guide and resource, as well as promoting awareness and uptake for the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index. We ensured strong communications for the 2024 Diversity Debate, and important outreach for the [social class inclusion survey](#). Our communications activities contributed to the public dialogue on D&I by ensuring timely media commentary on key issues and topics. Our efforts also included curating and amplifying DCA's popular D&I calendar throughout the year, and proudly announcing **Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia**, as DCA's Patron.

DCA's communications work also actively engages our members in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander diversity and inclusion initiatives, supporting the objectives outlined in our Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.

DCA's annual **Inclusion at Work Week** (held from 18 – 22 November 2024) was again a huge success, with over 500 organisations across Australia taking part.

Media and digital engagement efforts also drove remarkable results. DCA's research and advocacy secured over 1,200 media mentions in 2024, marking a 19% increase from 2023. DCA's media reach saw notable coverage across television, radio, print, and digital platforms. Social media engagement remained strong, with significant growth on key channels.

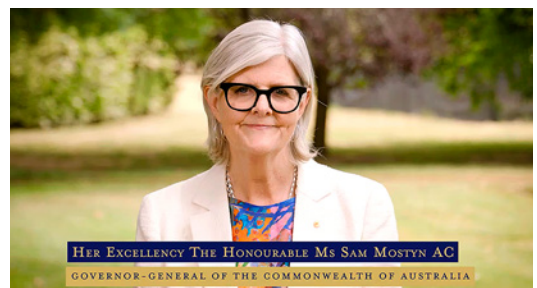
Our fortnightly eNews, **Inclusion Matters**, showcases our latest research and thought leadership and explores the latest in D&I news. It has a significant reach with over 40,000 subscribers.

During the year, we successfully transitioned to a new platform and introduced ongoing refinements that saw an increase in our open rates and readership.

As we move into 2025, DCA's communications function remains focused on optimising digital engagement, and continuing to strengthen our ability to proactively respond and contribute to the public dialogue on D&I issues.



From left: DCA CEO Lisa Annese, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC and DCA Board Chair Sunita Gloster AM.



Watch the video of the announcement of Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, as DCA's Patron.



DCA's eNews, Inclusion Matters, reaches over 40,000 subscribers.

Website

We are continually working to improve the user experience and accessibility of our website, in line with the available and emerging standards and guidelines.

In 2024, we built on the successful launch of our new website in late 2023, delivering significant content design improvements and updates – all in accordance with our WCAG AA accessibility rating achieved from launch. We ensure our other communications channels and outputs are accessible by:

- providing alternative text for images
- thoroughly testing the colour contrast and graphical elements in all our research publications to ensure these are also in line with WCAG guidelines.

The DCA website performed well this year, with a 53% increase in total users and a 9.3% increase in page views from the previous year. Our membership hub continues to offer our members an improved user experience when accessing the very latest D&I information and resources. It features a comprehensively updated and expanded [Resources](#) area covering a spectrum of diversity dimensions.

During the year, we significantly updated website content in the following areas:

- Disability & accessibility
- Parental leave
- Business case for D&I action
- Communicating D&I
- Compliance
- D&I allyship & champions

- D&I councils
- Example D&I policies, strategies & plans
- Flexibility
- Get your baseline D&I data
- How to analyse and report on your D&I data
- Inclusive bathrooms
- Inclusive language, leadership & recruitment
- Intersectionality
- Supplier diversity.

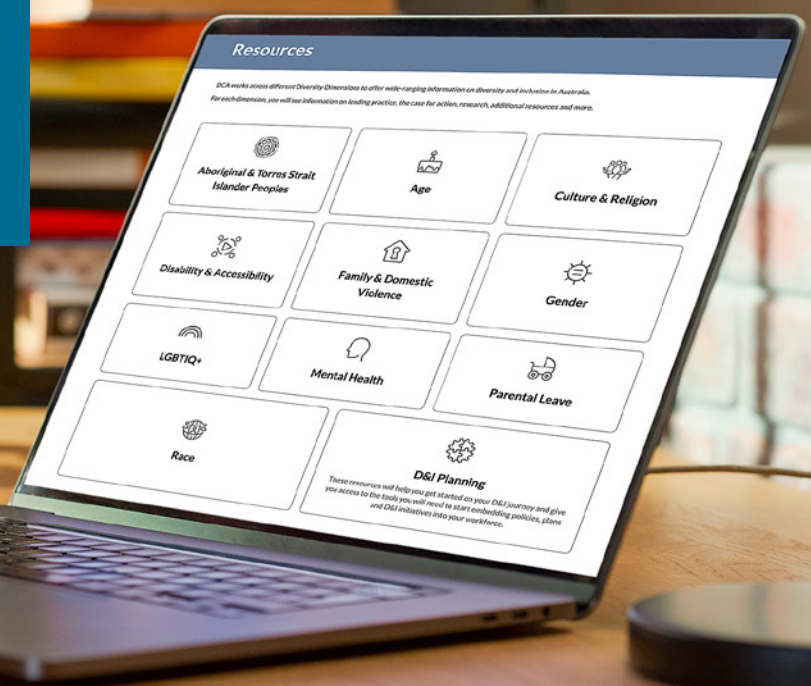
DCA members now have improved access to detailed member content, analysis and best practice for each dimension. The most popular research pages were:

- The Inclusion@Work Index Hub
- Gari Yala (Speak the Truth) – led by UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research
- WordsAtWork – Building inclusion through the power of language
- Racism at Work
- Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) women in Leadership Research.

Other popular web resources were the D&I days and dates calendar, What is Diversity & Inclusion, our blog on employer gender pay gaps, Inclusion at Work Week, the RISE project, our media release on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees facing increased discrimination and cultural load, and our individual resources pages.

Visit the [DCA website](#).

Throughout 2024, DCA's website was consistently enhanced to ensure it remained user-friendly, accessible, engaging, and relevant to the needs and interests of our audiences.



Media coverage

We continued to grow our profile and reputation, with our research and activities seeing a 19% increase in media coverage in comparison to the previous year.

Notably, DCA's organic media enquiries and interview requests grew by 59.6%, highlighting our place as a sought-after voice in the Australian media landscape.

	2024	2023	2022
Number of articles about DCA activities	1,207	1,016*	983
Advertising value equivalency (AVE)	\$15.1 million	\$10.3 million*	\$8 million

*2023 figures adjusted to reflect a cleanse of Meltwater's data for the previous years, deleting duplicates and articles that were irrelevant to DCA.



THE AUSTRALIAN



The Guardian

The Sydney Morning Herald

Coverage breakdown:

Radio – including ABC Radio National, SBS Radio and syndications across the Australian Radio Network and Southern Cross Austereo stations among others	25 dedicated stories and 540 mentions (including repeat news bulletins and syndications)
TV – including ABC News, SBS World News and SBS Insight among others	10 TV appearances, 94 mentions (including repeat news bulletins and syndications)
Online and print media – including Australian Financial Review, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian, the Guardian and many more	217 total mentions (including 20 exclusive interviews and three opinion pieces published)
Media releases distributed	19
Total estimated editorial reach	1.02 billion potential viewers

Some of the key stories in 2024 included:

- [Disabled employees struggle to find workplace wellness](#), The Daily Mail
- [Gender, sexuality reveal plan for boards should go further: advocates](#), Australian Financial Review
- [Despite it all, we're still committed to diversity in Australia](#), The Australian
- [Is Australia a racist country? We asked 5 experts](#), The Conversation
- [How the back-to-office transition can harm diversity, inclusion, and worker performance](#), SmartCompany
- [Menopause at work: a holistic approach is essential for effective support](#), Women's Agenda
- Our Senior Project Manager (RISE project), [Sheetal Deo's appearance on SBS's Insight](#)

Social media

Our social media audiences and engagement grew across all platforms, apart from X (formerly Twitter) where we are no longer focusing resources. On LinkedIn, our key social media platform, we increased our followers by 14% and reached a following of over 50,000.



Followers	2024 (Dec)	2023 (Dec)	% +/-
LinkedIn	53,950	47,431	14%
Twitter	8,270	8,678	-4.70%
Facebook	4,956	4,861	1.95%
Instagram	3,004	2,682	12.01%

Our inspiring events

In 2024, we delivered 34 inspiring events, receiving an impressive 92% satisfaction rate from attendees.

These events, including our flagship event – the Diversity Debate, as well as the D&I Insights Program, Gender Equality Insights, First Nations Insights, Case Study Conversations, CEO D&I Roundtables, and Member events and webinars, explored the latest trends across various diversity dimensions.



DCA's flagship event in 2024 was the DCA and IAG Diversity Debate held in Sydney.

We also launched and shared new and existing research at events across the country, providing attendees with valuable insights into the ongoing developments in the field of diversity and inclusion (D&I).

Members had access to a vibrant community of industry practitioners and thought leaders, with the opportunity to hear from individuals with a wide range of lived experiences, all of which helped to expand their D&I knowledge and capabilities.

.....

Some 72% of DCA event attendees reported they were likely or very likely to do something different because of the insights gained.

.....

Delivering inclusive and accessible events

DCA takes the following steps to ensure our events are inclusive and accessible:

- Ensuring all in-person event venues are fully accessible (including bathrooms and amenities, wellness spaces, entrance foyers and event spaces).
- Providing live captions during events.
- Providing Auslan interpreters when requested by attendees.
- Providing event recordings, transcripts and resources after the event.
- Ensuring event collateral, including marketing and presentation materials, is accessible.



DCA provides Auslan interpreters when requested by attendees (image from the 2024 DCA & IAG Diversity Debate).

Our flagship event: The 2024 DCA and IAG Diversity Debate

On Tuesday 22 October 2024, DCA and major sponsor IAG hosted one of the most anticipated diversity and inclusion events of the year in Sydney – the 2024 Diversity Debate.

Business leaders, industry experts, and entertainers gathered as two outstanding debate teams engaged with this year's topic: **Is polarisation holding diversity and inclusion back?**

To an audience of over 350, the affirmative team raised concerns about the increased division seen in today's public discourse, noting that polarisation often creates barriers to empathy and inclusive action.

In contrast, the negative team contended that polarising perspectives can spark meaningful dialogue and drive change, bringing attention to issues that might otherwise be overlooked.

Following the exciting and insightful debate, our audience members voted and crowned the affirmative team as winners of the 2024 Diversity Debate. One thing was unanimous: the work of our members and community as the everyday champions of diversity and inclusion in the workplace is critical.

Watch the [Diversity Debate highlights video](#).



The winning affirmative team (from left): Michael Hing (he/him), Dee Madigan (she/her), Thomas Mayo (he/him).

See overpage a collection of images from the 2024 Diversity Debate.





“ Regardless of which side prevailed, diversity and inclusion is the true winner in this debate.”
Patricia Karvelas, 2024 Diversity Debate Master of Ceremonies (pictured top right)

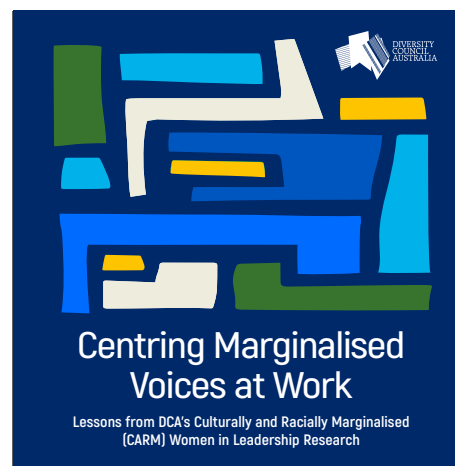
D&I Insights Program

We delivered five events as part of DCA's D&I Insights Program. These events each investigated cutting-edge topics across a range of diversity dimensions.

Centring Voice When Creating Workplace D&I Change

In March 2024, immediately following International Women's Day, former DCA Chair Ming Long AM moderated a webinar with a panel of expert speakers who shared their lived experience as culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women in Australian workplaces and their experiences of racialised gender discrimination.

The discussion also canvassed the research findings from DCA's new resource on how organisations and D&I change agents can centre CARM women's voices when trying to address the workplace inequities they experience.



Increasing Pathways and Opportunities for People with Disability in the Workforce

With DCA Major Partner
Gilbert + Tobin

The final report of the Disability Royal Commission made a series of recommendations on how to increase the pathways and opportunities for people with disability in the workforce.

At our event in March 2024 at Gilbert + Tobin in Sydney, Christina Ryan, CEO and Founder of the Disability Leadership Institute shared invaluable insights from her extensive leadership experience to unpack the Royal Commission's recommendations for inclusive employment.

Christina spoke alongside an expert panel with lived experience and expertise on how employers can play a key role in making purposeful change for workplace inclusion.



What do bathrooms have to do with inclusion?

In June 2024, DCA brought together a diverse panel to discuss how access to comfortable, safe and inclusive bathrooms and related products impacts everyone and can contribute to a more inclusive workplace. Accessible and inclusive bathrooms have become more important than ever in the workplace as employees today rightly expect to have their health and wellbeing accommodated in a variety of ways.

Allyship – an International Perspective

In August 2024, DCA combined with its Global Inclusion Diversity Alliance (GIDA) partner countries to delve into what allyship looks like in different parts of the world.

GIDA partners act together to make workplaces more equitable, and they provide a community of practice for peak D&I organisations from around the world.

Guest speakers came together in a special video presentation featuring the perspectives of the four different communities that make up the GIDA partnership: DCA, Diversity Works NZ, Community Business (Asia) and the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion. The webinar concluded with expert commentary from the live panel giving perspectives on Australian and New Zealand workplaces.



Our expert panel included (from left): Maretha Smit (she/her), Chief Executive, Diversity Works New Zealand, Sheetal Deo (she/her), Senior Project Manager (RISE project), DCA, Christina Ryan (she/her), CEO, Disability Leadership Institute and member of DCA's Disability and Accessibility External Advisory Panel and Professor Peter Anderson (he/him), Director Indigenous Research Unit, Griffith University and member of DCA's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel.

Why is Burnout an Inclusion Issue?

With DCA Major Partner
Gilbert + Tobin

The final D&I Insights event in November 2024 featured an expert panel who considered emerging data on the increased incidents of burnout at work. The discussion explored how a focus on workplace inclusion and flexibility can help protect against burnout by integrating both inclusion and flexibility to support wellbeing at work.



Our expert panel included (from left): Anna Sparkes (she/her), Chief People Officer, Gilbert + Tobin, Dr John Chan (he/him), Managing Director, Infinite Potential, DCA CEO Lisa Annese (she/her), Dr Clinton Schultz, Director of First Nations Strategy and Partnerships, Black Dog Institute.

Gender Equality Insights

This year DCA continued to partner with KPMG to present our popular Gender Equality Insights held quarterly.

Plan to Drive Women's Economic Equality

Our April 2024 event discussed the Australian Government's Women's Economic Equality Taskforce report: *'Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality'*.

The event looked at why women still face deep and broad-ranging gender inequality. The invited guest panel of practitioners examined how employers can practically contribute to closing the gender pay gap and address the broader community and workplace attitudes and bias that prevent women's full economic participation across a lifetime of work.

In Conversation with Sex Discrimination Commissioner Dr Anna Cody

At our June 2024 event, Sex Discrimination Commissioner Dr Anna Cody (she/her) shared with DCA members her goals, priorities and focus areas, including approaching gender, sex and LGBTIQ+ issues with an intersectional lens.

Rising Backlash and Resistance to Gender Equality

Our final event in this series was staged at KPMG Melbourne offices in December 2024 and explored Plan International Australia's Gender Compass. This first-of-its-kind research project resulted in a unique analysis that segmented the broader Australian public into six groups according to their beliefs about the state of gender equality within Australia.

We discussed how this information can help reshape conversations about gender equality, addressing backlash and resistance effectively.



DCA's final Gender Equality Insights event was held at KPMG Melbourne in December 2024.

First Nations Insights

DCA's First Nations Insights (formerly the Indigenous Network) hosted three events in 2024. In response to the disappointing result of the 2023 Referendum, the series emphasised the need to listen actively to First Nations Australians and take proactive steps to support reconciliation and bring about real, tangible outcomes.

Staying the Course for Meaningful Reconciliation

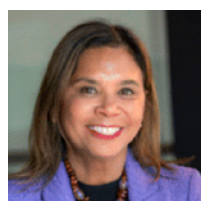
At our February 2024 webinar, DCA focused on what's next for reconciliation. Sponsored by DCA member BAE Systems Australia, the event brought together key voices in the reconciliation space, including Kate Russell (she/her), CEO of Supply Nation; Professor Peter Anderson (he/him), Director of the Indigenous Research Unit at Griffith University; and Karen Mundine (she/her), CEO of Reconciliation Australia.



Together, they explored how workplaces can redouble their efforts by centring First Nations' voices, lived experiences, naming and addressing racism, and recognising truth-telling. During the event, DCA also announced the launch of their new Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), underscoring our commitment to these important principles. You can read more about DCA's Innovate RAP in the 'Our commitment to diversity and inclusion' section of this Annual Report on page 16. [Watch the event here.](#)

First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property

In June 2024, our event featured Dr Terri Janke (she/her), a Wuthathi, Yathaigana and Meriam woman, who is a globally recognised expert on Indigenous cultural and intellectual property, and Solicitor Director of Terri Janke and Company. Together, we unpacked the essential concepts behind understanding and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and intellectual property.



Dr Janke was joined by other guest panelists, Mr Justin Mohamed (he/him), Ambassador for First Nations People, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Mikaela Jade (she/her), CEO and Founder of Indigital. The webinar also explored practical strategies for how organisations can engage respectfully and ethically.

The Power of First Nations Leadership

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders have preserved ancient laws, traditions, and knowledge for tens of thousands of years. Knowledge sharing is networked between leaders from different nations, kinship groups, extended families, and other cultural leaders. This sharing plays an integral role in preserving and strengthening cultural knowledge.



Our final event in September 2024, staged in partnership with our new sponsor of the First Nations Insights event program, ANZ, focused on the power of First Nations leadership and how we can understand, nurture, and celebrate this leadership in the workplace. DCA's Member Education Director, Dr Virginia Mapedzahama (she/her), led a panel discussion with distinguished speakers: Professor Deen Sanders OAM (he/him), Partner at Deloitte Australia; Jordyn Payne (she/her), Principal Aboriginal Community Relationships at Water Corporation; and Abbey Wright (she/her), Learning and Development Coordinator at the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI). Together, they explored how First Nations leadership can be supported and celebrated in professional environments.

Case Study Conversations

DCA's Case Study Conversations are a lunch and learn style online event, one hour in duration, that take a deep dive into what DCA members are achieving by showcasing leading practice in D&I. In 2024, DCA hosted four Case Study Conversations:

Family and Domestic Violence



Our May 2024 case study with **CommBank** demonstrated how they implemented innovative, wide-ranging policies and programs to support employees impacted by family and domestic violence.



This conversation included (from left): DCA CEO Lisa Annese (she/her) and Ryan Burke (he/him), Head of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Commonwealth Bank.

Successful Employee Resource Groups



Our June 2024 case study featured **HSBC Bank Australia** and showcased their new approach to unite their five thriving and engaged employee resource group (ERG) networks.



This conversation included (from left): Kim-Don Pham (she/her), Employee Resource Group (ERG), HSBC Bank Australia and Alycia Hatt (she/her), Ability Australia ERG Co-Chair, HSBC Bank Australia.

First Nations Inclusion at Bunnings



Our July 2024 case study showcased key learnings on how **Bunnings** has evolved from empathy-based acknowledgment of First Nations people in the workplace to delivering meaningful action through sustainable employment programs, pathways for leadership and centring the voices of First Nations people.



This conversation included (from left): Michelle Matthews (she/her), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Manager, Bunnings Group and Jessica Otter (she/her), Coordinator – In the Home, Bunnings Group.

Hotel Etico's Independence Program



Our December 2024 case study with **Hotel Etico** shared how they facilitated a world-class training and live-in program for people with disability by creating a work setting where people with disability thrive.



This conversation included (from left): Quinn Jones (he/him), Hotel Etico graduate, Apprentice Chef, and Saraya O'Connell (she/her), General Manager, Hotel Etico Australia.

[Learn more about these conversations.](#) DCA members can log in to access full insights.

CEO D&I Roundtables

DCA's roundtable discussions with top tier member organisation CEOs and Managing Directors were well attended in 2024. The five events this year were led by DCA's Chair and CEO and involved high-level D&I discussions and continued to foster strong and collaborative relationships.

Sydney event – February 2024

In partnership
with HSBC Bank

Leaders from Logicalis Australia, Custom Fleet, Supply Nation, Department of Parliamentary Services, The Adecco Group Australia & New Zealand, Salvation Army Australia, Mutual Trust, Great Places to Work, Coca-Cola Europacific Partners Australia and HSBC Bank Australia discussed topics such as creating diverse and inclusive workplaces, gender equality, disability, First Nations reconciliation and building capability amongst leaders. DCA's shared its important work on the impact of social class, inclusive recruitment, building inclusion at work, using a theory of change to execute D&I strategies and how to engage men on gender equality.

Brisbane event – April 2024

In partnership
with The Star
Entertainment
Group

Leaders from Hudson RPO, Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC), Act for Kids, Centre for Inclusive Design, Stantec, Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts, BDO and The Star Entertainment Group attended, and discussion centred around the multifaceted challenges of advancing D&I in organisations, acknowledging varied lived experiences and addressing pushback and backlash. DCA shared the work in hand to foster inclusivity amidst global crises, strategies for promoting inclusive recruitment, the engagement of men in advancing gender equality, building workplace inclusion, and examining the influence of socioeconomic class on inclusion.

Melbourne event – July 2024

In Partnership
with Allens

Leaders from Mercy Health, Project Rokit, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Bega Group, Metro Trains Melbourne, BreastScreen Victoria, u&u Recruitment Partners, Australian Red Cross Lifeblood, Royal Melbourne Hospital and Allens discussed topics such as creating inclusive workplaces and DCA shared its work on fostering inclusion in the workplace in the face of global crises, exploring the state of inclusion in the Australian workforce, examining the influence of socioeconomic class on inclusion, and addressing misconceptions of domestic and family violence at work and workplace sexual harassment. We also introduced new DCA Chair Sunita Gloster AM and farewelled outgoing DCA Chair Ming Long AM. All attendees were encouraged to keep a dialogue with DCA to support positive change in their workplaces.



Leaders gather for DCA's Brisbane CEO Roundtable event in April 2024.

Perth event – September 2024

In partnership with Clough Webuild Group

Leaders from Southern Cross Care WA, Pawsey Supercomputing Research Centre, Subsea, TechnipFMC, Mineral Resources, Synergy, City of Stirling and Clough Webuild Group attended. DCA shared the work being done on workplace inclusion through our Inclusion@Work Index, Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines, our developing research on Class at Work and an upcoming Inclusive Teams at Work Toolkit.

Canberra event – October 2024

In partnership with University of Canberra

The final roundtable was held in Canberra and included leaders from Aboriginal Hostels Limited, Northrop Grumman Australia, National Disability Services, Comcare, Australian Federal Police, IP Australia, Engie Australia and University of Canberra. Much of the sharing revolved around DCA's Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines and Inclusive AI in Recruitment as essential tools to reduce bias in hiring. Discussions on DCA's Change at Work and Future-Flex research explored strategies for fostering cultural change and making flexible work accessible for all employees.

Research release events and updates

In 2024, DCA launched four of its new evidence-based guidelines at events and revisited past reports for interstate members. These launch events featured member panel practitioners to bring the research and its practical applications to life.

RESEARCH RELEASE EVENTS

Inclusion@Work Index 2023–2024

New research released in February 2024

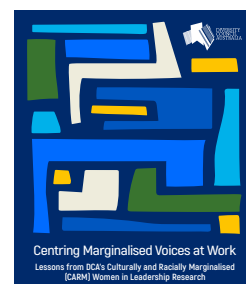
DCA shared findings from its fourth Inclusion@Work Index that surveyed a nationally representative sample of 3,000 Australian workers. The findings showed once again that inclusion matters to workers, and that inclusive environments foster worker wellbeing and performance. DCA developed the first Inclusion@Work Index survey in 2017 and since then, has repeated the survey biennially to track workplace inclusion over time. This fourth and latest Index was uniquely positioned to capture post-pandemic Australia and provide a cohesive picture of how the pandemic had impacted workplaces.



Centring Voice When Creating Workplace D&I Change

New research released in March 2024

DCA hosted an International Women's Day 2024 event to launch a new evidence-based guide on deliberately prioritising and centring culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women's voices in creating diverse and inclusive workplaces. This practical guide from DCA also explores how D&I change agents can effectively centre CARM women's voices when addressing the workplace inequities they experience.

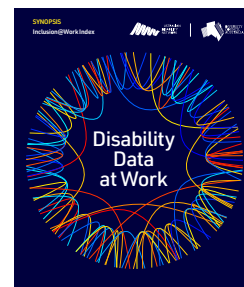


Disability Data at Work: How organisations can capture disability data safely and respectfully

New research released
in August 2024

DCA partnered with Australian Disability Network to create 'Disability Data at Work', an evidence-based report highlighting the critical role that capturing disability data has in cultivating inclusive workplaces where all employees can thrive.

The report also explored the lived experiences of people with disability and essential strategies for fostering workplace environments where employees feel safe to share their disability without fear of repercussions.



DCA's Inclusive Teams at Work Toolkit

New research released
in November 2024

During DCA's Inclusion at Work Week 2024, this webinar investigated how everyone plays a role in fostering team inclusion each day. The 'Inclusive Teams at Work Toolkit' provided valuable insights and practical tools for enhancing team inclusion, with a focus on running inclusive meetings, organising inclusive team events, and fostering effective, inclusive communication and leadership.

The project demonstrated that inclusive teams not only improve employee wellbeing, but also drive innovation, performance and overall success, and the evidence-based levers offered a practical approach for creating lasting workplace change.



[Learn more about our research.](#)

RESEARCH UPDATES PRESENTED INTERSTATE

Inclusive AI in recruitment in Brisbane – April 2024

DCA's CEO Lisa Annese and Research Director Dr Jane O'Leary, presented a special in-person research update on the findings of DCA's research on Inclusive AI in recruitment, which was originally released in November 2023.

DCA's three-phase project on AI in Recruitment, was conducted in partnership with Monash University and sponsor Hudson RPO, and included employer guidelines to help leaders and practitioners understand how to use AI recruitment tools inclusively.

The event was presented in partnership with JobsBank and hosted by The Star Entertainment Group in Brisbane. The guest panel discussed how AI recruitment tools can be a double-edged sword if they are used without caution – without mindful design and deployment these tools can be just as likely to harm workforce diversity as help it.



Inclusion@Work Index in Perth – September 2024

DCA's CEO Lisa Annese presented on DCA's Inclusion@Work Index to Perth Members at an event held by Gold Fields Australia.

Event host and emcee Shaheen Hughes, Lead Specialist: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Gold Fields invited Lisa to present the report findings alongside guest speakers Tracy Al Saidi, Director, People & Culture, Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA and Sam Le Page, Senior Community Development Officer, City of Stirling.

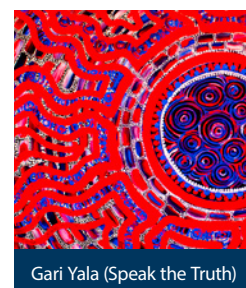
The practitioner-based panel brought the findings to life and provided practical examples of how inclusive workplace environments foster wellbeing and performance, while revealing that businesses need to do better in some areas when it comes to D&I post-pandemic.



Gari Yala 2.0 and Trends in First Nations Employment – September 2024

The Gari Yala 2.0 research, led by UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research, was promoted at an online event in September 2024.

The initial report, released in 2020, revealed invaluable firsthand insights into the diverse experiences of First Nations employees.



Inclusive AI in recruitment in Canberra – October 2024

DCA's CEO Lisa Annese presented in-person on the findings of DCA research on Inclusive AI in Recruitment, which was originally released in November 2023.

DCA's three-phase project on AI in Recruitment, was conducted in partnership with Monash University and sponsor Hudson RPO, and included employer guidelines to help leaders and practitioners understand how to use AI recruitment tools inclusively.

Lisa outlined DCA's T.R.E.A.D. (Team Up, Reflect, Educate, Acquire, Decide) framework for more inclusive AI in recruitment, giving practical recommendations for employers eager to deploy AI tools. Hosted and emceed by University of Canberra's Employee Engagement Officer, Deborah Poulton, guest speakers discussed how the framework and practices can impact D&I inside organisations.



Our engaged member network

Throughout 2024, we continued to serve and add value to our member community of over 1,300 organisations. We are proud to partner with our members and support them with our insights, tools, events, education and advocacy as they strive to shape more equitable organisational cultures where every employee can thrive.

In 2024, members accessed more services than ever before, as evidenced by:



increase in participation for **Inclusion at Work Week 2024**, with nearly three times the number of non-members engaging compared to last year



increase in organisational uptake of the **2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index**, compared with the comparable Index in 2022–2023



increase in revenue from **DCA Knowledge Programs** delivered



158,366

website sessions by members, and **30,346** total member website users

Expanding impact and growing membership

In 2024, DCA's membership initiatives focused on increasing the impact and reach of our member base, while also attracting new member organisations for sustainable, long-term growth.

Some of the ways we did this included:

- Leveraging digital tools and developing new systems and processes to enhance efficiency and service delivery.
- Establishing a dedicated membership acquisition function to expand our reach and recruit new members.

Building a connected and engaged member community

A key focus in 2024 was further developing DCA's D&I Community of Practice to meet a consistent need expressed by members for greater peer connection and knowledge-exchange.

This was delivered through DCA-hosted in-person and virtual networking events, including state-based key contact events and monthly virtual key contact forums, outlined in further detail below.

These provided our members with professionally relevant, and capability building experiences and have also enabled DCA to gather critical insights to continuously refine and enhance our member value proposition.

Our 2024 Key Contact events

Member Key Contact networking events

In 2024, DCA introduced a new networking forum exclusively for member Key Contacts.

The objective of these small group networking events is to provide a platform for Key Contacts to build relationships with each other, exchange ideas, learn from other D&I practitioners, and deepen the connection to the DCA Team while gaining a better understanding of the wide-ranging membership benefits.

Held in the following capital cities, these events proved very popular and highly effective in strengthening member engagement with DCA:

- Sydney: **Hosted by HSBC Bank Australia** – February 2024.
- Melbourne: **Hosted by Allens** – July 2024.
- Brisbane: **Hosted by Hatch** – August 2024.
- Perth: **Hosted by Clough Webuild Group** – September 2024.

Gaining deeper member insights to strengthen support

The following efforts also provided deeper insights into our members – who they are, what they need, and how we can better support them. This understanding has been critical in delivering greater membership value today while shaping future offerings to retain and attract members.

Key initiatives included:

- Our Member Survey conducted in February 2024, which provided insights into member demographics, needs, and priorities.
- Pulse satisfaction surveys, implemented throughout the year to gather ongoing member feedback.



DCA Member Education Director, Dr Virginia Mappedzahama, shares her insights at our Melbourne Key Contacts event, hosted by Allens.

Digital innovation to enhance member experience

Digital tools played a pivotal role in strengthening relationship management, helping to ensure that all members – regardless of their organisation type or stage in their D&I journey – felt supported. New touchpoints helped to better articulate the full range of available benefits.

Key initiatives included:

- Targeted, automated email campaigns to streamline onboarding and enhance the overall member experience.
- Enhancements to the Member Hub, launched September 2023, expanding resources to support members with internal promotion of DCA member benefits.
- Resumption of virtual membership tours, inviting all login holders to explore available resources – proving highly popular following our new website launch.
- Relaunch of the **AskDCA** service, offering expert guidance on D&I practice, with strong positive feedback from members.

Together, these initiatives strengthened our service delivery and enhanced the overall membership experience, positioning DCA for continued growth and impact.

AskDCA service 2024 relaunch

Our AskDCA service – a key member benefit providing written responses to queries on all aspects of D&I practice – was relaunched in June 2024 following a temporary pause in 2023. Now integrated into DCA’s new Customer Relationship Management System, the service offers enhanced functionality and improved data capture.

Since the relaunch, many of the enquiries are focused on the following key themes:

- **Strategy and Policy:** D&I strategy development, policy reviews, and action plans.
- **D&I Implementation:** Inclusive recruitment, flexible working, dress code policies, employee resource groups, targets and quotas, committees, inclusive language, and correct name pronunciations.
- **D&I Data:** Collecting, leveraging, and reporting on D&I data.
- **Inclusive Workplaces:** Inclusive bathrooms, quiet rooms, accessibility, workplace adjustments, and celebrating diversity days and dates.
- **Diversity Dimensions:** Gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, LGBTIQ+, neurodiversity, race, culture and religion, disability, and accessibility.

Most queries were addressed by our Research Team, with additional support from the Member Relations Team, which also administered and triaged incoming enquiries.

Members valued the in-depth, tailored guidance provided by DCA’s subject matter experts, who offered leading practice insights to address specific challenges.

AskDCA continues to be an important resource, offering valuable insights into member needs and identifying gaps in existing resources. These insights will inform future resource development and strategic planning.

Continuous improvements will ensure AskDCA remains a high-value resource for members, while optimising internal processes for greater efficiency.

Members sharing insights

A highlight of DCA’s events program is the opportunity for our members to showcase the incredible progress they are making in many areas of diversity and inclusion.

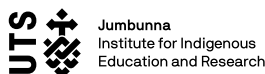
Through engaging panel discussions and insightful case study conversations, members shared their experiences, challenges, and successes. These events not only celebrated achievements but also inspired and equipped other DCA members with practical strategies to drive change within their own organisations.

Our collaborations and partnerships

We continued to grow our strategic alliances and partnerships on key diversity and inclusion topics throughout 2024, broadening our sphere of influence through collaborations with like-minded organisations.

Our 2024 strategic alliances

- Our CEO, Lisa Annese, continued her position on the Board of Amnesty International Australia, the University of Sydney Business School, Work and Organisational Studies Advisory Board, the Attorney General's Respect@Work Council and the NSW Women's Advisory Council.
- DCA continues to have strong relationships with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) and the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). We regularly communicate research, insights and other relevant information from WGEA and AHRC to our audiences, including our members, and have their representatives speak at DCA events.
- DCA was proud to partner with UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research, who led a research presentation on Gari Yala 2.0. We were also pleased to contribute to a joint submission as part of consultation on the 5th Edition of the ASX Corporate Governance Council Principles and Recommendations. The submission was made along with University of Sydney Business School and UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research.
- We strengthened our relationship with Reconciliation Australia through ongoing engagement and our work towards reconciliation.
- We partnered with Australian Disability Network to produce the research report 'Disability Data at Work'. The report provides evidence-based recommendations for organisations wanting to create environments where people with disability feel safe to share their disability status.
- We collaborated with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Community Business and Diversity Works New Zealand to continue our work on the development of the Global Inclusion & Diversity Alliance (GIDA), a community of practice for peak D&I organisations from around the world. Included in this collaboration was the delivery of a parallel session at the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSCW68) in New York, a joint webinar on 'Allyship – An International Perspective' and a resource sharing initiative which has provided access for our members to a number of partner resources on our websites.



2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index

The Inclusive Employer Index was once again offered in 2024 by DCA, in partnership with Diversity Atlas.

Participation in the Index enables organisations to assess and track the state of diversity and inclusion within their workforce. The Index is an invaluable tool that helps organisations understand:

- The diversity demographics of their workforce.
- Employee experiences of inclusion and exclusion.
- Inclusion and exclusion patterns by demographic.
- The impact of inclusion on employee performance.



In 2024, 70 organisations participated in the Index, marking an 80% increase in organisational uptake of the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index, compared with the comparable Index in 2022–2023. Of those, 62 organisations met the assessment criteria and were recognised as Inclusive Employers during Inclusion at Work Week (18 – 22 November 2024), celebrating their commitment to fostering diverse and inclusive workplaces.

To make the list, organisations must demonstrate their dedication to diversity and inclusion by having employees complete a detailed survey on the state of inclusion within the organisation. They must also achieve results that exceed national benchmarks across several key measures.

Read [the full list](#) of DCA 2024–2025 Inclusive Employers.

“ We are immensely proud to feature in the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index, serving as a testament to Asuria's unwavering commitment to fostering a diverse and supportive workplace for all. That so many of our team members say they are proud and inspired to be part of inclusive teams is not only a welcome validation of our efforts, but further motivation to help other businesses across Australia to achieve their Diversity and Inclusion goals.”

Nicole Grainger-Marsh, Asuria Australia CEO



Inclusive Employer Index webinars in 2024

Two webinars were held in support of this key DCA program in 2024:

DCA 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index – May 2024

At this webinar, DCA Research Director Dr Jane O’Leary, Senior Research Manager Dr Rose D’Almada-Remedios, and our partner Diversity Atlas explained why organisations should participate in the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index. The webinar offered attendees the opportunity to see how participating in the Index will enable them to map and track the state of D&I in their workforce, compared against national and leading practice benchmarks. The webinar outlined the key components of the Index, including the benefits to participating, Index survey content, administration information, how members receive results and data privacy, and provided opportunity for interaction and questions about the Index.

Making the most of your data – September 2024

This webinar explored how organisations participating in the 2024–2025 Inclusive Employer Index can best use the dataset from the Index, interpret data tables and graphs, and use these insights to inform their D&I work. DCA’s Research Team provided practical and useful tips and answered questions about the Index.

The RISE project

In 2024, we continued our 3.5-year partnership with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women to implement the federally funded RISE (Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise.) project, which builds pathways and address barriers to leadership for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women in middle management.



RISE is a groundbreaking project that applies an intersectionality lens to build pathways and address barriers to leadership for CARM women in middle management. The project is funded by the Australian Government Office for Women through the Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) and will continue until 2026.

The RISE project is working with 25 organisations across Australia, and up to 15 women in each of those organisations (375 women in total), to identify systemic and organisational barriers for CARM women accessing executive/senior roles (through the ASSESS to RISE diagnostic tool for gendered racism), and support organisations to start implementing organisational change interventions that will help address barriers.

Key work undertaken by the CARM women-led DCA RISE project team included the following:

- **A communications campaign to generate interest from organisations to participate in Phases 1A, 1B, 2 and 2B**
- **Recruited and onboarded the following organisations across these phases:**
 - **Phase 1A:** Accenture Australia Pty Ltd, Gilbert + Tobin, HCF – Hospital Contributions Fund of Australia, Telstra, Uniting NSW.ACT and Woolworths Group.
 - **Phase 1B:** Crown Resorts, Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, ANU College of Systems and Society and University of Sydney.
 - **Phase 2:** ACON Health Limited, Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), Aurecon, BHP, EnergyAustralia, Jesuit Social Services, Navitas Pty Ltd, The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), Russell Kennedy, The Star Entertainment Group and Westpac Group.
 - **Phase 2B:** Anglicare Victoria.
- **Deployed the ASSESS to RISE tool, an intersectionality diagnostic tool to identify gendered racial systemic barriers in organisations**
 - Deployed to all Phase 1A, 1B, 2, and 2B organisations which included a total of 22 organisations (3 pilot organisations deployed the tool in 2023).
- **Debriefed participating organisations on the systemic barriers identified from the ASSESS to RISE tool with organisations**
 - Debrief sessions were held with organisations executive leadership teams, DEI councils, project team members, and participants to unpack and socialise the findings from the ASSESS to RISE Tool.



RISE project participants from Spectrum Migration and DCA RISE Project Manager, Shalani Tharumanathan.

- **Educated organisations on how to apply the centring voice framework to co-design the 12-month RISE Action Plan with CARM Women**
 - Bi-weekly check-in meetings were held with project team members to educate and support organisations with every step of the centring voice framework which included the co-diagnosing of systemic barriers, co-design of the 12-month action plan, co-implementation of initiatives within the action plan, and co-evaluation of the effectiveness of the action plan.
 - The project team participated in and facilitated Centring Voice Focus Group sessions with organisations to ensure CARM women's experiences and voices were central to the design of the action plan.
- **Reviewed organisational action plans and provided recommendations**
 - The project team reviewed Action plans and provided recommendations on phrasing, feasibility, and effectiveness.
- **Held events to build racial literacy, gendered racism (intersectionality) literacy and increase understanding on the need for access to social capital (mentorship, sponsorship and coaching) for CARM women:**

Total event attendees:

<p>165 Across eight Community of Practice Sessions</p>	<p>• • • • •</p>	<p>1,090 Across eight Networking Sessions</p>	<p>• • • • •</p>	<p>41 Across four Expert Panel Meetings</p>
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- **Presented insights and emerging findings to amplify the impact of the RISE project**

The RISE project team presented aspects of the project at the following events:

 - The sixty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York.
 - The Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association Conference on the Gold Coast.
 - A RISE project update webinar to DCA members providing a recap of the project's objectives, insights into common themes emerging from the ASSESS to RISE tool, and details on how organisations can apply for Phase 2, the final phase of the project.

[Learn more about the RISE project.](#)

“RISE has not only fostered a profound sense of solidarity with my peers encountering similar challenges but reinforced my belief in the power of cultivating a growth mindset and inclusive leadership.”

Jeanne Arona, RISE Project Lead, Seniors Services Quality Improvement Specialist, Sydney Central, Uniting NSW.ACT



“The RISE program was an empowering journey that provided invaluable insights into overcoming barriers and unlocking our full potential. Through engaging workshops, meaningful connections, and hands-on experiences, I gained the confidence to grow both personally and professionally.”

Harsha Gopinath, RISE participant from Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, Spectrum Migration



Thank you to our members, partners and sponsors

We sincerely thank all members, partners and sponsors for their valuable support of DCA. We acknowledge the support of the following DCA members in 2024:

Major partners

Thanks to IAG, Gilbert + Tobin, HSBC Australia and KPMG.



DCA event and other sponsors and supporters

Thanks to the following members for event sponsorship and support:

- IAG – Major Sponsor of the Diversity Debate, Suncorp – Supporting Sponsor, and Telstra – Associate Sponsor.
- KPMG – sponsor/host of the Gender Equality Insights event series.
- BAE Systems Australia – outgoing sponsor/host of the First Nations Insights event series.
- ANZ Bank – incoming sponsor/host of the First Nations Insights event series.
- Gilbert + Tobin – sponsor/host of D&I Insights event series.
- HSBC Australia – sponsor/host of D&I Insights event series and other events.
- Star Entertainment Group, Allens, Hatch, Clough Webuild Group, Gold Fields, University of Canberra, and Ashurst – host of other DCA events.

Research sponsors and partners

Disability Data at Work

Thanks to partner Australian Disability Network for collaborating with DCA to produce the research report 'Disability Data at Work'. The report provides evidence-based recommendations for organisations wanting to create environments where people with disability feel safe to share their disability status.

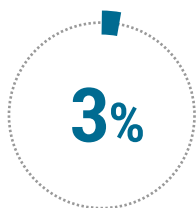
RISE project

Thanks to RISE project partners, Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women, and to project funding body the Australian Government Office for Women.

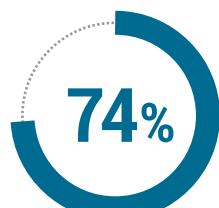
Our team

Our experienced and dedicated team is passionate about diversity and inclusion in Australia. DCA's outstanding team is representative of many diversity dimensions.

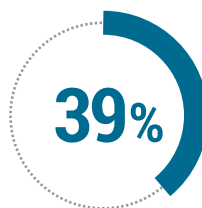
DCA employee diversity overview



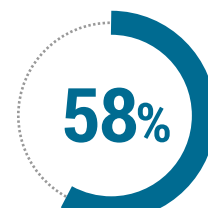
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
3% of our team identify as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



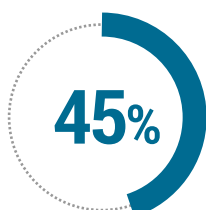
Non-Main English-Speaking Background
74% of our team report having one or more non-English speaking cultural backgrounds



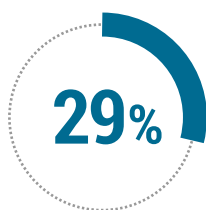
CARM
39% of our team are a person from a culturally and racially marginalised (CARM)¹ group



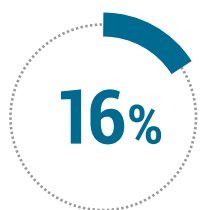
Multilingual
58% of our team are multilingual



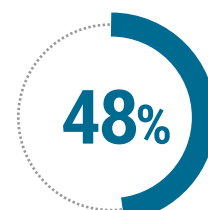
Born Overseas
45% of our team were born overseas



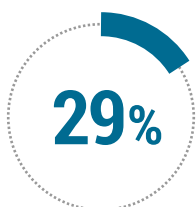
Non-Christian Religion
29% of our team have a non-Christian religious affiliation



Christian Religion
16% of our team have a Christian religious affiliation



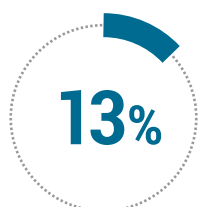
Caring Responsibilities
48% of our team have caring responsibilities



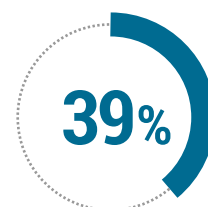
With Disability
29% of our team have a disability



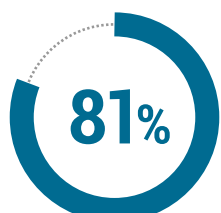
Younger Workers
13% of our team are under 30



Older Workers
13% of our team are over 55



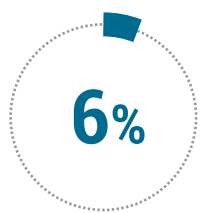
LGBTQ+
39% of our team describe themselves as LGBTQ+



Women
81% of our team describe their gender as a woman



Men
10% of our team describe their gender as a man



Non-Binary
6% of our team describe their gender as non-binary

1. Culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) people in Australia who are typically racialised as Black, Brown, Asian, or any non-white group, who face discrimination or marginalisation due to their race and/or racialised religion. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) is a much broader category than CARM, as it includes people who are typically racialised as white, are from a non-Anglo Celtic cultural background, and may not use English as their main language (themselves, their parents, or ancestors). For example, a Ukrainian migrant or someone who is born in Australia from Ukrainian parents.

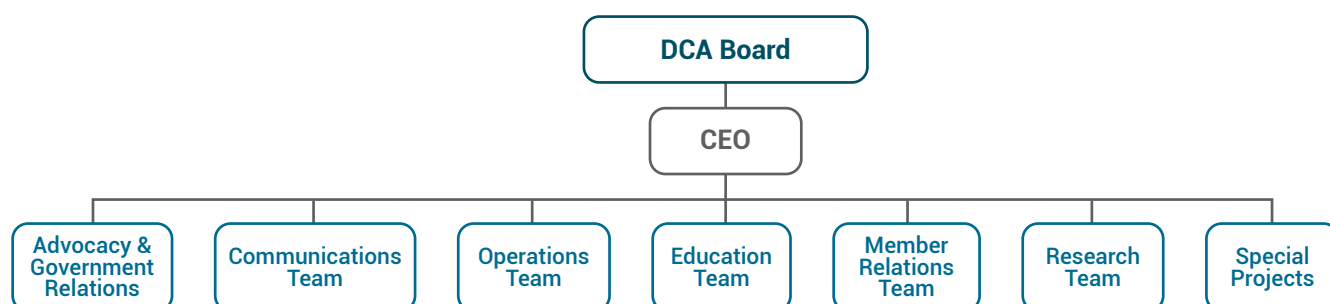
Strategically aligned for success

DCA's team structure is designed to effectively advance our vision and work by leveraging our own diverse expertise across the organisation.

Our CEO reports directly to the DCA Board of Directors, ensuring strategic alignment and providing valuable guidance in line with DCA's objectives with best practices. Reporting to the CEO, our expert teams work collaboratively to implement the work we do towards our strategic vision, deliver exceptional value to our members, and enhance DCA's standing as a leading voice for diversity and inclusion.

Explore [individual team bios](#) on our website to learn more.

Team overview:



Advocacy and Government Relations:	Facilitates DCA's engagement with policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders to influence legislation and workplace policies that advance diversity and inclusion.
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Communications:	Shapes and delivers DCA's messaging and campaigns across digital, media, and stakeholder channels to amplify the impact of our work and thought leadership.
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Operations:	Manages DCA's internal systems/IT, website and digital platforms, finance, governance, and people & culture to ensure smooth and efficient organisational functioning. Our Events Team sits within this function.
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Education:	Translates findings from our cutting-edge research into practical, evidence-based, lived experience-informed training and resources to support organisations in building inclusive workplace cultures.
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Member Relations:	Engages with future, new and current DCA member organisations, supporting them in maximising the membership value to help them embed leading practice diversity and inclusion strategies.
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Research:	Conducts leading-edge, evidence-based research on workplace diversity and inclusion to inform policy, practice, and public discourse.
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Special Projects:	<p>Drives strategic initiatives that address emerging challenges in workplace diversity and inclusion, with a strong focus on racism, racial equity, anti-racism, and intersectionality. This area strengthens DCA's thought leadership, bridging gaps in workplace research and practice where no dedicated peak body exists.</p> <p>Within Special Projects, DCA's RISE project team works to create pathways to senior leadership for CARM women.</p>
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Our External Advisory Panels

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel

DCA's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel is made up of respected Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members across Country, with representatives throughout Australian states and territories. Panel members provide expertise, cultural knowledge and lived experience to DCA about our direction and activities regarding Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employment, community engagement and supplier diversity. The primary focus of this work is to encourage a better labour market engagement and recognition of the talents and untapped potential of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The panel meets two times per year to support and advise DCA on advocacy work and guide us on our internal policies and our Reconciliation journey as an organisation. They also provide direction and commentary throughout the year on an ad hoc basis.

Our vision and work is underpinned by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and we continue to affirm this Declaration. We support the appropriate recognition of the unique status of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples in this country's history by ensuring their voices and lived experience is central in any discussions around recognition and reconciliation.

Learn more about the [Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel](#) and its members.

Research External Advisory Panel

DCA's Research External Advisory Panel is a group that oversees DCA's research. Members include leading academics and researchers with knowledge of D&I theory and practice.

The panel meets approximately four times a year to provide strategic direction to DCA's Research function. It assists DCA to deliver on its research vision to work in partnership with members to generate groundbreaking diversity research that enables Australian organisations to leverage the benefits of D&I fully. Panel members provide expert guidance to DCA about our direction and collaborations with the industry.

More specifically, this involves:

- Reviewing DCA research vision, research priorities and research projects.
- Identifying 'ahead of the curve' research topics and emerging issues for possible future research projects.
- Assisting in identifying appropriate research partnership and sponsorship opportunities..

Disability and Accessibility External Advisory Panel

DCA's Disability and Accessibility External Advisory Panel is comprised of respected leaders in the disability and accessibility community, representing a wide range of lived experiences. This helps to ensure a diversity of perspectives is reflected in the Panel, as well as in the work we produce. On behalf of our members, DCA seeks to promote and facilitate greater inclusion of people with disabilities in the Australian labour market and recognition of their talents and untapped potential. As part of this, we are committed to ensuring that the voices of people with disability are centred in any discussion or work related to accessibility and disability.

To help us achieve this, the EAP meets regularly throughout the year to assist DCA to promote and facilitate accessible inclusive workplaces, including better labour market engagement and recognition of the talents and untapped potential of people with disability.

Specifically, the role of the EAP is to:

- Provide guidance and advice to DCA on processes and positions regarding how to best create inclusive workplaces for people with disabilities.
- Provide support and advice to ensure DCA's services are as accessible as possible, including on advocacy work, research projects, communications, and events.
- Advise DCA on leading practice for providing an inclusive and accessible workplace for DCA team members with disability.

Learn more about the [Disability and Accessibility External Advisory Panel](#) and its members.

Our governance

The DCA Board of Directors

DCA has a distinguished Board of Directors, listed below, comprising leaders from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, and with extensive experience in business, media and marketing, technology, human resources, management, risk & finance.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Ming Long AM, former DCA Board Chair, for her exceptional leadership and significant contributions to DCA. Ming concluded her term on the DCA Board in June 2024. [Read Ming's final address as Board Chair.](#)

We also thank outgoing Board Directors Abbie Wright, Harry Rolf, Kate Russell and Manisha Amin for their invaluable service and dedication to DCA. Their expertise, vision and commitment have greatly contributed to our success.

Additionally, we express our appreciation to Company Secretary Karla Dunbar, who concluded her tenure in 2024, for her dedication and support.



Sunita Gloster AM **Chair, DCA Board**

Sunita (she/her) is an experienced Non-Executive Director combining current board and governance experience with a career spanning over 30 years in the professional services sector in Australia and internationally.

Sunita was appointed the Chair of DCA in May 2024, she also serves as a Non-Executive Director for Maurice Blackburn Lawyers and the UN Global Compact Network Australia, the principal sustainability initiative for business in Australia. Additionally, she is a Fellow for the Federal Government's Centre for Australia-India Relations and a Senior Advisor at Accenture. She has also served as an advisor to UN Women Australia.

Sunita has worked in non-executive, advisory and CEO/C-Suite roles with listed companies, private companies, government bodies and not for profit entities. She has extensive executive and board experience with member associations in regulated arenas including safeguarding community standards. Honoured as a Member of the Order of Australia for her contributions to the media and marketing industry and gender equality, Sunita is an experienced director and globally recognised leader in creating value through customer led strategy, digital and technology platforms and stakeholder management.

Sunita has held a consistent position in Australia's B&T Women in Media Power List for ten years and is currently ranked first. She is an active member of Chief Executive Women and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Beyond her Board and Advisory work, she is a sought-after keynote speaker, commentator, and guest panellist on ABC TV's Gruen.



Chris Lamb
Deputy Chair, DCA Board

Chris (he/him) recently completed a 4-year term as Deputy Commissioner at the NSW Public Service Commission. His role included leadership of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging for the Commission which oversees the largest workforce in Australia.

Prior to this, Chris spent 12 years at Lendlease and served at different times as the HR Director – Australia, Global Head of Organisational Development and Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer. During his career, Chris has held HR Executive roles across Asia Pacific, the UK and Europe and driven inclusion programs across the globe.

Chris previously served on DCA's board from 2010 – 2019 and was a foundation member of the Pride in Diversity (PiD) Advisory Board in 2010, serving until 2020. In 2015 Chris received AHRI's Diversity Champion Award and in 2018 he completed further postgraduate education in Aboriginal Studies. Chris is also a Non-Executive Director of Netball NSW and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Chris is a registered psychotherapist and sees clients in private practice several evenings each week to play his part in increasing access to mental health support services.

He lives in Sydney with his wife of 30 years, and they have two adult children.

Chris is also the Chair of the People & Culture Committee of the DCA Board.



Julie Canepa
Director Digital Transformation & CIO Advisor, Customer Experience,
Cisco Asia Pacific, Japan, and China

Julie Canepa (she/her) leads Cisco's Digital Transformation and customer experience strategy across the Asia Pacific, Japan, and China region. Julie is a seasoned business partner for Cisco's customers, bringing her extensive experience as a chief information officer across eight years to help businesses unlock their technology to drive desired business outcomes and strategy.

Working as a CIO Advisor, Julie draws on her 28 years of industry experience to help organisations drive, and thrive, with their digital transformation initiatives – focusing on technology, process, and people. Currently, Julie counts many companies in the ASX as part of her remit, along with strategic regional customers across a diverse range of industries including finance, public sector, service provider, retail and more.

Prior to this, Julie was the Chief Information Officer for Cisco across Asia Pacific, Japan, and China. In this role she led Cisco's internal enterprise transformation focusing on growth, productivity, and user experience across a broad technology portfolio and by leading digital IT initiatives throughout APJC. Her strong commitment to operational excellence and aptitude for partnering cross-functionally resulted in great synergies between business and IT. Julie is proud to be named as one of the top 50 CIOs in Australia by CIO Magazine for five years running in recognition of the large-scale transformations she has led in the areas of Commerce, CRM, cloud, hybrid work and data/analytics. Julie shares her passion for technology through active involvement in the IT industry including keynote speaking and media engagements.

With a special interest in promoting STEM education and championing diversity, equity, and inclusion, Julie is executive sponsor for 'Women of Cisco' Australia and New Zealand. She has supported key programs during her tenure, including 'Mentor Me', an annual program which provides over 1,100+ university women with access to mentors through a structured program, and she has championed Cisco's top talent program which has accelerated women in the organisation into leadership roles. She established, and is executive sponsor of, Cisco's Cancer Support Network for Asia Pacific, and is active with Cisco's First Nations Allies Network and ANZ Sustainability.

Julie proudly serves on the Board of Directors for Diversity Council Australia and is Chair of the IT Committee. Julie mentors many young professionals in the IT industry, including women looking for practical guidance and support, and has served as a member of the Industry Advisory Board at the University of Sydney's School of Computer Science. Julie is a mother to three children and lives in Sydney.



Peter Chun
Chief Executive Officer, UniSuper

Peter (he/him) joined UniSuper as CEO in September 2021, bringing more than 30 years' experience in financial services. His leadership is instrumental in helping shape the future for one of Australia's largest super funds, with more than 650,000 members and over \$149 billion in funds under management (as at 31 December 2024).

Migrating from Hong Kong to Australia at age eight, Peter's experience of integrating into a new culture instilled in him a passion for diversity and inclusion.

Peter promotes inclusion across both business and community. At UniSuper, he is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace, seeing his role as a way to improve the world for today and for future generations.

He's an active sponsor and advocate of gender and cultural initiatives. He is passionate about the business benefits of inclusion and how it contributes to improved outcomes for UniSuper's members, creates strong organisational culture, and better business performance. By fostering an environment where diverse perspectives are valued, people can drive innovation and achieve greater success.

Peter is a qualified Actuary with a Bachelor of Economics from Macquarie University. He holds Graduate Diplomas in Applied Finance and Investments and Financial Planning from the Securities Institute of Australia; and has undertaken the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School (Boston, USA). Peter is a Member of the ASFA CEO Advisory Committee and the Australian Chamber Orchestra Finance Audit & Risk Committee.

Peter also serves on the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee of the DCA Board.



Ian Goshko
Global Head of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Telstra

Ian (he/him) is the Global Head of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) at Telstra, Australia's leading telecommunications and technology company operating in 30 countries. He works with leaders to ensure equitable practices and outcomes, increase diverse representation, and create an environment where everyone is valued and respected. Prior to this current role, he served as the Regional Head of DEI at Macquarie Group for Australia & New Zealand.

Before embarking on his DEI career, Ian had a tenured career in management consulting specialising in change management, IT and HR transformation, and employee experience. Ian worked with global clients in retail, telecom, tech, oil and gas, and mining. He started his career in recruitment, initially in executive search at Odgers Berndtson and then in talent acquisition at Deloitte.

Ian received an Honours in Business Administration (HBA) from the Ivey Business School in London, Canada and is a Certified HR Leader (CHRL) with the Canadian HR Professionals Association. In his spare time, Ian volunteers with Out for Australia and the Canadian Australian Chamber of Commerce (CACC) and sits on the Board of Queer Screen. He also enjoys spending time with family, travelling, and playing tennis.

Ian also serves on the People & Culture Committee of the DCA Board.



Elizabeth Hristoforidis
Partner, Ashurst Risk Advisory

Liz (she/her) is a partner in Ashurst's Risk Advisory practice and, as a regulatory risk and engagement expert, brings a unique perspective and insight from 'inside the regulator's mindset' on governance, accountability, strategy, culture, risk management, conduct, compliance, regulation, supervision and enforcement. Committed to improving organisational and sectoral capability in a way that is aligned with good practice and stakeholder expectations, Liz delivers transformation programs that effect change sustainably, leveraging diversity of thought to inform decision-making.

Across banking, superannuation and wealth management sectors, Liz has shaped major law reform and guidance, and assessed operational readiness and implementation, through a range of previous roles with the conduct regulator, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and the Macquarie Group over almost two decades. She played a pivotal role in establishing ASIC's enhanced supervisory approach, leading the supervisory teams responsible for the 'close and continuous monitoring' of two of Australia's Big Four banks and another major institution.

Liz has a clear appreciation of good governance frameworks informed by her previous experience as an Associate to the Honourable Justice Neville Owen at the HIH Royal Commission and more than 15 years of applied governance practice as a non-executive Chair and Director in the for-purpose sector. A former Board Director of KU Children's Services and Chair of the KU Marcia Burgess Foundation Committee, and former Board Chair of Shopfront Arts Coop and Ensemble Offspring, Liz has recognised inclusion and diversity as a pillar of good governance and sustainability throughout her career and is proud to serve Diversity Council Australia and its membership as a Board Director.

She holds a Master of Laws and Management, Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Commerce (Marketing) and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Liz is Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee of the DCA Board.



Craig Mutton
Former Chief Digital Officer and Vice President Digital, University of Canberra

Craig Mutton (he/him) was most recently Chief Digital Officer and Vice President Digital at the University of Canberra. A member of the University executive, he was responsible for championing digital and innovation capability uplift, technology and engineering delivery, and ultimately reimagining the student and staff digital experience.

Craig's career spans more than 25 years across the private, public, and higher education sectors. He possesses deep skills in business, corporate, and digital strategy, digital and information technology, enterprise transformation, cyber security, data analytics, and data science, as well as service design and enterprise agility.

Craig has held previous non-executive director roles at Hepburn Health Service (2016–2019) and Castlemaine Art Museum (2016–2023). At Hepburn Health, he was Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, as well as a member of the Clinical Governance and Credentialing Committee. At Castlemaine Art Museum, Craig was Chair (2018–2022), and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee. Craig is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).

Craig holds a Bachelor of Computing (CompSc) from Monash University, a Master of Project Management from RMIT University, and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Melbourne Business School. Craig lives in Canberra.

Craig also serves on the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and IT Committee of the DCA Board.



Annie Pettitt
Director, NSW Treasury

Annie (she/her) is currently the Acting Director of NSW Treasury's Women's Economic Outcomes Team, where she is responsible for providing specialist advice, developing strategic policy initiatives, and collaborating across government to improve women's economic outcomes and gender equality.

Annie has led the delivery of the NSW Government's annual Gender Equality Budget Statements as part of the State Budget since 2022. Annie has also overseen NSW Treasury's First Nations Expenditure and Outcomes Budgeting reports, and has been Co-Chair of NSW Treasury's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Network since 2021.

Prior to joining NSW Treasury, Annie held executive leadership roles in the non-government and public sectors and led her own consulting practice supporting organisations to improve their diversity and inclusion and employee wellbeing policies. Annie worked for seven years in senior leadership roles at the Australian Human Rights Commission, where her work focused on integrating human rights and diversity and inclusion into school curricula, and public service, vocational training and business sector policies and processes.

Annie previously served as a board member of the Women's Rights Action Network Australia for five years, during which time she was also Co-Convenor of the Women's Rights (CEDAW) Report Card to the United Nations.

Annie holds a PhD in Criminology (human rights and policing), which she completed at Monash University in 2009. Annie lives in Sydney with her wife and their two young children.

Annie also serves on the People & Culture Committee of the DCA Board.



Louise Monger
Vice President Digital Energy, Schneider Electric

Louise's (she/her) leadership credentials and diverse experience characterise her passion for advancing how people and technology perform in the rapidly changing environments in which we live today.

Her expertise comes from 20 years spent working in diverse sectors; including energy management, technology, real estate, and facilities management.

Louise began her career as an electrician in the mining industry, which is where her interest in advocating for diversity and inclusion began. Today, she proudly continues this work as a board member of the Diversity Council Australia.

Louise joined Schneider Electric in November 2020 and leads a 350-person team delivering energy management and automation solutions across all industries.

Previously, Louise was Program Director for Technology and Innovation at AMP Capital. Here she led the real estate division's digital and innovation team to ensure maximum client and business value was derived from technology investment. Louise has also held senior roles in property management, operations, and facilities management.

Louise is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a member of Chief Executive Women, holds a Masters of Facilities Management, and remains a qualified electrician.

Louise also serves on the IT Committee of the DCA Board.



Laura Raymer
Company Secretary

Laura (she/her) commenced as DCA Company Secretary in June 2024.

Laura is the Managing Director and Founder of CFO Strategic, a specialist chartered accounting firm comprising of experienced Chief Financial Officers and Company Secretaries.

Laura began her career in corporate evaluation and business turnaround working for Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (Australia), and PricewaterhouseCoopers (UK). Following that she worked in senior finance executive roles including Finance Director and Operations Director of AOLI7, and CFO of IGT (Australia) Pty Limited.

Since founding CFO Strategic in 2004 Laura has been engaged as CFO, company secretary and operations director and committee chair and governance consultant by clients including ASX listed companies, private companies, start-ups, and not for profit organisations.

Laura has also volunteered as a non-executive director, and committee chair, for not-for-profit organisations including Discovery Australia, Artspace, Relationships Australia NSW and the War Widows Guild NSW.

Laura holds a Bachelor of Business from Queensland University of Technology. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Our 2024 financial results

The following tables outline DCA's statement of comprehensive income and financial position for the 2024 financial year. These should be read in conjunction with the full Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024, which are available on our website at www.dca.org.au.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE FINANCIAL PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue	5,429,660	5,119,839
Other Operating Income	947,921	929,418
Employee Benefits Expense	(4,061,396)	(3,350,103)
Depreciation and Amortisation Expense	(163,196)	(135,249)
Other Expenses	(1,894,997)	(1,977,497)
Operating Surplus for the year	257,992	586,408
Finance Income	117,430	95,253
Finance Cost	(10,704)	(10,704)
Net Finance Income	106,726	84,549
Surplus for the year	364,718	670,957
Other Comprehensive Income	—	—
TOTAL SURPLUS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	364,718	670,957

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,305,809	2,526,620
Trade and Other Receivables	469,442	490,878
Other Financial Assets	4,560,956	3,851,091
Other Current Assets	64,692	64,692
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	7,400,899	6,933,281
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment	166,643	186,992
Intangibles	11,825	24,393
Other Non-Current Assets	146,142	199,284
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	324,610	410,669
TOTAL ASSETS	7,725,509	7,343,951
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and Other Payables	271,367	190,270
Current Provisions	185,711	264,123
Unearned Income	3,031,879	3,016,002
Lease Liability	138,227	143,246
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	3,627,184	3,613,641
Non-Current Liabilities		
Non-Current Provisions	52,117	39,930
Lease Liability	—	8,889
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	52,117	48,819
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,679,301	3,662,461
NET ASSETS	4,046,208	3,681,490
EQUITY		
Accumulated Surplus	4,046,208	3,681,490
TOTAL EQUITY	4,046,208	3,681,490



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