

Annual Report 2025



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Acknowledgement of Country

Diversity Council Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Owners of the unceded lands on which we all work and live, and pay our respect to the Custodians of this land, Elders, past and present.

We embrace and celebrate one of the oldest continuing cultures in the world and acknowledge the extraordinary contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have made, and continue to make, to land and community.

We express our ongoing solidarity with First Nations communities and remain 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.



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A message from our Board Chair

In a year defined by renewed national focus on productivity, Diversity Council Australia (DCA) has marked a significant milestone: 40 years of advancing inclusion in Australian workplaces.

Our work at DCA continues to insert the importance of people into the productivity narrative – of equal importance to capital, technology and policy reform. In an economy where churn and disengagement carry real costs, inclusion is not a “nice to have”, it is a core economic lever.

But diversity and inclusion (D&I) are more than just tools for productivity. They are a manifestation of Australia’s long-standing legal and moral commitment to fairness, dignity and equal participation in work. Reaffirming this matters. Because when inclusion is grounded in a rights-based framework, aligned with our anti-discrimination laws and international human rights obligations, it ensures that workplace practices are not only effective, but also just, lawful and enduring.

This was well understood at the founding of DCA. Emerging from the reforming spirit of the 1980s, alongside the Sex Discrimination Act and the Affirmative Action pilot, industry leaders came together to establish what was then the Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment.

Forty years on, our members remain steadfast in their commitment to DCA, and their founding intent remains both our legacy and our mandate.

In 2025,
DCA celebrated

40 years

of advancing inclusion
in Australian workplaces



Founding members including ANZ, AMP, AXA, BHP, Boral, Coles, IBM, Myer, Orica, Rio Tinto and Westpac recognised a simple but powerful truth: fully utilising the nation’s talent is essential to economic prosperity and our society.

What began as a time-bound initiative became enduring and remains our mission. Forty years on, our members remain steadfast in their commitment to DCA, and their founding intent remains both our legacy and our mandate.

In 2025, we celebrated this history while positioning DCA for the future. We welcomed Catherine Hunter as CEO, refreshed our brand, and advanced a strategy designed to ensure inclusion remains the powerful lever it is for workplace performance and productivity.

One of the great privileges of my role as Chair is the opportunity to engage directly with our members through roundtables, forums and ongoing dialogue. These conversations provide unfiltered insight into the challenges our members are facing, they also reinforce a fundamental truth: a member organisation thrives on two-way dialogue.



Diversity and inclusion are more than just tools for productivity. They are a manifestation of Australia's long-standing legal and moral commitment to fairness, dignity and equal participation in work.

Our role is not to prescribe from a distance, but to listen, learn and respond, ensuring our work and our product are grounded in the day-to-day realities of our members.

Through these interactions, I know we are clear on our shared purpose, and maintaining an open dialogue will be key to helping our members build stronger and fairer workplaces.

Importantly, as recent D&I scrutiny and backlash have shown, approaches to diversity and inclusion that are perceived as performative or exclusionary risk undermining trust and impact in the workplace. A principled, rights-based approach grounded in fairness, transparency and accountability provides a more enduring foundation. It shifts the narrative from optics to outcomes, from compliance to commitment, and ensures that inclusion is understood not as preference, but as participation from all.

This is a strategy supported at the highest levels of national leadership. At the 2025 Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I, our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, reinforced a powerful message: D&I are not peripheral issues, but central to our nation's prosperity.

On behalf of DCA, I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Board for their continued commitment, stewardship and leadership in advancing our purpose during this pivotal period.

As you read this report, I leave you with these considerations. In an environment where every investment is scrutinised for return, how are you optimising your investment in your people? How are you ensuring that every individual in your organisation, regardless of background, has the right to a safe, respectful, and equitable workplace where they can thrive?

Forty years ago, inclusion was understood as a driver of national prosperity. Today, it remains unfinished business and one of the most significant opportunities for business leaders.

Sunita Gloster AM (she/her)

**Board Chair
Diversity Council Australia**

A message from our CEO

The past year was one of significant progress for DCA, coinciding with our 40th anniversary and my first year as CEO. This milestone provided an opportunity to both celebrate our legacy and reaffirm our commitment to shaping the future of D&I across Australia.

In 2025, we delivered a range of significant initiatives, providing great member value. We held 36 events reaching some 18,000 people, alongside close to 200 education programs and speaking engagements. Participant feedback consistently confirmed the practical value of our work.

Our research agenda remained a cornerstone of our impact, with landmark releases including Class Inclusion at Work, D&I Data at Work, and Applying Intersectionality at Work. This year we focused on increasing member engagement, strengthening relationships through forums, roundtables and personalised conversations.

The RISE Project, developed in partnership with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women, continued to advance intersectional and anti-racist change with more than 300 culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women participants across 25 member organisations, alongside mentoring, leadership initiatives and networking. In 2026, RISE will shift its focus to consolidating impact, finalising action plans and sharing a landmark report with the sector.

Inclusion at Work Week and the announcement of DCA's Inclusive Employers highlighted the strength of our community and the committed work of our members. Around 500 organisations participated in Inclusion at Work Week, and over 80 were formally recognised as Inclusive Employers. Anniversary highlights included our celebration at Admiralty House and the Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I delivered by our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

In 2025, we delivered a range of significant initiatives, providing great member value.

These events reflected both our significant history and our responsibility to continue leading with courage, evidence and integrity.

In late 2025, we commenced work on our next Strategic Plan. This represents a deliberate evolution of DCA's role and is built around three pillars: leading the national conversation with courage and credibility; strengthening organisations through trusted, evidence-based guidance; and elevating the D&I community of practice through partnership and convening power.

Further detail, including priorities, milestones and success measures, will be shared in 2026.

Looking ahead, we will expand our research and practical tools with the fifth Inclusion@Work Index, Neurodiversity Data at Work in partnership with Amaze, a report on sexual harassment and inclusion, and a toolkit supporting inclusion across the employee lifecycle.

Our research agenda remained a cornerstone of our impact, with landmark releases on class, intersectionality and data collection.



The evidence remains clear: when workplaces are inclusive, its people are more engaged, productive, collaborative and innovative, and experience lower rates of discrimination and harassment.

Age inclusion will be a key focus of a collaborative project with the Australian Human Rights Commission. We will broaden learning opportunities through an Inclusive Leadership Fundamentals Knowledge Program, enhanced eLearning, and expanded member engagement initiatives, before concluding the year with Inclusion at Work Week and the announcement of the 2026–2027 Inclusive Employers.

This progress has occurred against a challenging global and national backdrop. Meanwhile, many Australian organisations have deepened their commitment, reinforcing that Australia will chart its own course.

However, geopolitical unrest, increasing social tensions, economic pressures, and the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence, have created unprecedented complexity for workplaces and leaders.

In response, DCA is evolving how we support members. We are adopting a more member-centred account management approach, investing in education programs and delivery, and developing practical tools to help organisations assess maturity and embed inclusion across every stage of the employee lifecycle.

While uncertainty remains, maintaining our relevance as a trusted adviser and strategic partner is our clear focus.

At a time when society feels increasingly polarised, inclusive workplaces matter more than ever. The evidence remains clear: when workplaces are inclusive, its people are more engaged, productive, collaborative and innovative and experience lower rates of discrimination and harassment.

I extend my deep thanks to the dedicated team at DCA. In a year of considerable organisational change and external headwinds, their commitment to our work has been unwavering.

Thank you also to our members, partners and supporters for your continued engagement throughout this milestone year. Together, we are strengthening practice, deepening impact, and building workplaces across Australia where everyone feels a sense of belonging.

Catherine Hunter (she/her)

**Chief Executive Officer
Diversity Council Australia**

About us

Diversity Council Australia 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 1,200 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 D&I.

This work also supports our charitable purpose, which is to promote and advance D&I in workplaces for the benefit of individuals, organisations and the broader community, with a focus on individuals that have been historically disadvantaged or underrepresented in the labour market.

Purpose, vision and values

Our purpose:

To enable more diverse, inclusive and equitable workplaces for a better Australia

Our vision:

To create a just and equitable Australian society where people in all their diversity can thrive

Our values:



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 2025, we maintained a strong membership base of over 1,200 organisations.

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

DCA operates independently and does not receive government funding, with one exception – our landmark project Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise. (RISE), a partnership project with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women 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 leaders, employees and CEOs.



Curated resources – Access to our member-only online library of D&I resources covering a spectrum of diversity dimensions.



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 on various D&I topics to help organisations educate their teams and build their D&I literacy.



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 in 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.

2025: Our year in review

5 new research projects



focused on workplace inclusion experiences across a range of diversity dimensions



36 member events held



430,000+
total website users



190+
education programs
and speaking engagements delivered

80+

Inclusive Employers recognised for 2025–2026



nearly **500**

organisations participated in Inclusion at Work Week

In 2025, our team delivered 36 impactful events:
81% of attendees said they were 'likely or very likely' to do something differently as a result of attending a DCA event.

29% 

increase in media reach
for articles referencing DCA

1,200+

organisations
were DCA
Members



6% 

increase in LinkedIn
followers reaching
57,000



over 140

new and returning
members

over
18,000

registrations
to DCA events



over
30% 

increase in organisational
uptake of the 2025–2026
Inclusive Employer Index
compared with the previous Index
in 2024–2025

Our 2025 performance

In 2025, our Strategic Plan focused on three key strategic goals and supporting pillars, to guide our work towards achieving DCA's purpose and vision.





In 2025, we continued to progress our strategic goals, placing member engagement at the heart of our efforts.

Our goals for 2025 were:

- 1**

Build internal capabilities and engagement
- 2**

Grow and engage members
- 3**

Inspire national conversation and action

Negative global sentiment about diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), increasing polarisation and a difficult economic climate in Australia, meant 2025 was a challenging year for many of our members, resulting in a decline in membership numbers and revenue.

Despite these challenges, we continued to progress our strategic goals, enhancing the member experience and demonstrating the value of membership.

In late 2025, DCA began developing its next Strategic Plan, marking the next stage in our ongoing evolution as a national leader in D&I. The plan is structured around three interconnected pillars:

- leading the national conversation
- strengthening organisations through D&I
- elevating the D&I community of practice.

In the coming year, we will share further details on our priorities, key milestones, and measures of success as we implement this next chapter of our work.

The table overleaf highlights our 2025 strategic pillars and details our performance against each.

Measure	2025 performance
<p>Build our digital capability to optimise our new systems and website</p>	<p>Enhanced our digital platforms, including launching a rebranded website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieving a 2.3% increase in website users and higher page views in the second half of 2025 compared with the previous year • adding a new Accessibly Widget and introducing other changes to improve accessibility across the site. <p>Developed a data strategy and maintained our data breach, cyber incident and IT disaster recovery planning.</p> <p>Expanded our digital reporting capabilities, building on the insights drawn from our CRM, website and other data.</p> <p>Replaced ageing IT hardware.</p> <p>Significantly strengthened cyber security preparedness across our people, processes and technology, achieving a minimum Maturity level of one in all key areas of cyber security under the Australian Signals Directorate’s Essential Eight.</p>
<p>Develop and maintain cutting-edge, high-impact resources for our members</p>	<p>Released five research reports and evidence-based guidelines including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&I Data at Work: designed to assist organisations in understanding the mix of employees in their workforce, and which inclusion areas to prioritise. This helps guide organisations to create meaningful D&I business strategies • Applying Intersectionality at Work: provides five keys for good practice for using intersectionality as a tool in D&I work • Class Inclusion at Work: provides a strong case for creating class-diverse and inclusive workplaces, for employees and organisations • The Case for Inclusion@Work: highlights evidence that all workers benefit from workplaces with an inclusive organisational climate • Linguistic Bias at Work: a guide for managers and supervisors who want to learn about linguistic bias in the workplace and how to recognise and avoid it. <p>Ensured DCA’s website content reflected leading practice with new or updated content, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the link between D&I and Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives • how employers can support inclusion for employees with all kinds of caring responsibilities • class inclusion, following the release of our research • the Getting Started on D&I guide • restructured the D&I planning section that is now called ‘Strategy, practice & tools’. <p>Continued the collaborative Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise. (RISE) 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 (CARM) backgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 organisations completed the ASSESS to RISE Tool – a self-assessment tool aimed at uncovering and addressing systemic barriers hindering CARM women from advancing into leadership roles – and began implementing priority actions • 300+ CARM women accessed mentoring and leadership initiatives. <p>Presented on the RISE Project at the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW69) in New York City.</p>

Measure	2025 performance
<p>Increase active/engaged members and reduce passive members</p>	<p>Negative global sentiment on diversity, equity and inclusion, increasing polarisation and a difficult economic climate in Australia, together led to a drop in memberships and engagement compared with 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3% decrease in member revenue and 10% decrease in member numbers. <p>Achieved positive member engagement through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 140 new organisations and returning members joining the DCA community • delivering 150 knowledge programs, more than the previous year, and 43 speaking engagements • almost 500 organisations taking part in Inclusion at Work Week 2025, and digital engagement significantly increasing with webpage views up 28%, knowledge program event pages up 139%, and media release views up 80% • a 31% increase in organisational uptake of the 2025–2026 Inclusive Employer Index, compared with the previous Index in 2024–2025 • 80+ organisations recognised as Inclusive Employers • 98% of event attendees reporting they were satisfied/very satisfied with our events, and 81% reporting they were likely/very likely to apply new knowledge or make changes in their approach to D&I at work. <p>Delivered 36 events exploring leading thinking and practice on many D&I topics, achieving more than 18,000 registrations. This included two special events with our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia (40th anniversary celebration at Admiralty House and the 2025 Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I).</p> <p>Responded to around 120 member enquiries across a wide variety of topics to help members implement successful D&I strategies and programs.</p>
<p>Create a workplace, that is inclusive, supportive, productive and continually learning</p>	<p>Consulted extensively with employees to develop new strategic pillars, organisational structure and operating model, aimed at making our work more sustainable, collaborative and member-focused.</p> <p>Embedded a new outsourced People & Culture function.</p> <p>Continued employee learning and development.</p> <p>Continued to measure employee engagement and psychological safety metrics in our regular pulse surveys.</p> <p>Engaged with internal advisory groups on D&I and on disability and accessibility to review our policies and programs.</p> <p>Continued to enhance risk management, including the development of a Risk Management Framework.</p>

Measure	2025 performance
<p>Focus beyond members to contribute to our charitable purpose</p>	<p>Delivered a curated, fortnightly e-newsletter, Inclusion Matters, to a database of over 40,000 subscribers, sharing the latest on DCA and broader D&I news.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Delivered on our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) commitments.</p> <p>Continued to contribute to the public dialogue on D&I, with a 6% increase in the total number of media mentions and a 28% increase in Advertising Value Equivalency of media coverage.</p> <p>Amplified DCA's work and impact via social media, achieving strong growth in key channels, reaching over 57,000 followers on our priority channel, LinkedIn.</p> <p>Provided input to three government or regulatory inquiries on policy and legislative reviews including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Victorian Government's plan to introduce working from home legislation • the Government's Economic Reform Roundtable and its consultations to improve productivity, build economic resilience and strengthen budget sustainability • the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Setting Gender Equality Targets) Bill 2024 (submitted December 2024) where our Interim CEO, Chris Lamb, gave evidence supporting our submission in early 2025. <p>Released a survey sharing the major parties' positions on key issues affecting workplace D&I, in the lead-up to the 2025 Federal Election in May.</p> <p>Actively sought by government to participate in D&I-related advisory groups, roundtables and other forms of consultation.</p> <p>Published and presented our work in prestigious research publications and conferences.</p> <p>Progressed the Global Inclusion & Diversity Alliance (GIDA), a community of practice for peak D&I organisations from around the world, acting together to make workplaces across the world more equitable.</p>

Drawing on the progress and challenges of recent years, our 2026 Strategic Plan centres on strengthening both internal and external engagement and capabilities.



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

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
- Caring
- Class
- Culture and Religion
- Disability and Accessibility
- Family and Domestic Violence
- Gender
- LGBTIQ+
- Mental Health
- Neuroinclusion
- Parental Leave
- 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 and compounded experiences of discrimination or marginalisation.

By understanding this, workplaces can create more effective and inclusive D&I strategies.

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

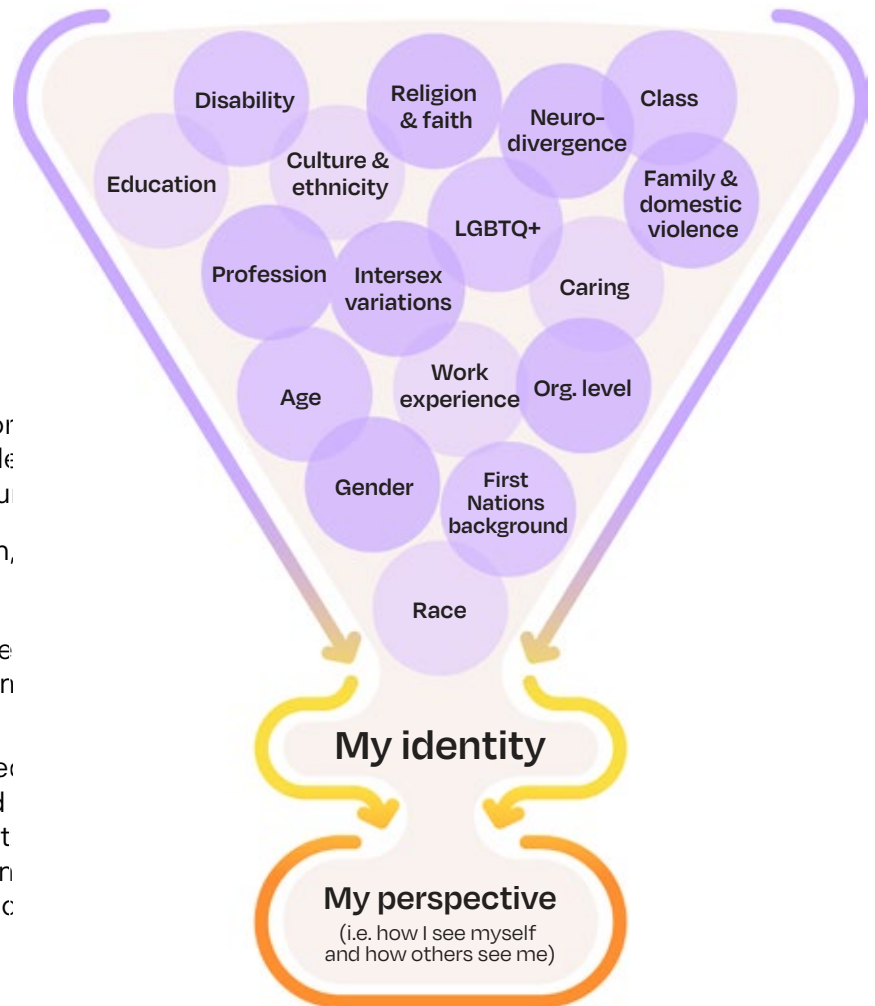
What is diversity?

DCA defines diversity as the mix of people in an organisation – that is, all the differences between people in how they identify relating to their:

- **social identity** – e.g. Aboriginal and/or Strait Islander background, age, gender responsibilities, LGBTIQ+ status, culture
- **professional identity** – e.g. profession, organisational level or location.

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

DCA's diversity definition is identity-based recognises that the starting point should of us identifies ourselves, rather than just categorise or label us. This diversity definition takes into account multiple intersecting 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 as someone with a disability who comes from a culturally diverse background.

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 definitions of diversity and inclusion.](#)



Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

As an organisation dedicated to advancing D&I 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

DCA completed the second iteration of its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2024–2026, enabling a focus on meaningful and impactful outcomes while maintaining an aspirational and innovative approach to reconciliation.

During 2025, organisational changes provided opportunities to reflect further on our approach and strengthen areas for continued growth. These reflections have informed improvements in the delivery of our RAP initiatives.

Our vision

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, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to workplaces across the country.

We achieve this through supporting Australian organisations 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 safeguard the self-determination and inclusion of First Nations people in our workplace. We regularly review and reflect on our work, from challenges and successes to policies and procedures, to support continuous improvement and ensure alignment with our vision.

The RAP has four key focus areas:

- 1 Relationships**
- 2 Respect**
- 3 Opportunities**
- 4 Governance**

Relationships

This focus area drives DCA's most impactful actions. We highlight key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days and events through our communications and collaborate with Elders, Land Councils, First Nations businesses, and industry leaders via our event series, the First Nations Insights Program. This series showcases leading practice in attracting, retaining, and promoting First Nations talent, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest speakers at all events.

We worked with Commissioner Katie Kiss and Yoorrook Justice Commission Deputy Chair Travis Lovett on national truth-telling, and with Reconciliation Australia CEO Karen Mundine to share 2024 Reconciliation Barometer results. We also highlighted Our Watch's beginner's guide to safe workplaces for First Nations women.

In September 2025, Simone Empacher Earl (RAP Chair) and Clea Newson attended the First Nations Women Leadership & Legacy Summit in Sydney, supporting leadership, economic opportunity, and systemic change. Throughout the year, DCA participated in 19 cultural events and training sessions as part of our RAP deliverables.

[Read more about our First Nations Insights Program.](#)



DCA's final First Nations Insights Program of the year, *Creating safe and respectful workplaces for First Nations women*, on 8 December 2025 in Melbourne.

Respect

DCA is committed to increasing knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce, and building strong relationships with First Nations people and organisations.

In 2025, our actions included:

- updating and sharing our cultural protocol document with all employees, covering Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country, and correct language use
- continuing to invite Local Traditional Owners or Custodians for Welcome to Country at events
- including an Acknowledgement of Country at all team meetings, events, and presentations
- enhancing cultural learning through on-Country tours, First Nations exhibits, and training programs
- encouraging participation in National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, and other significant days
- offering staff the option to swap the 26 January public holiday under our Flexible Public Holiday Policy.



Opportunities

DCA updated its recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates and ensure practices reflect leading standards. We engaged recruitment agencies and other RAP organisations to support First Nations employees' recruitment, career growth, and professional development. DCA also joined Supply Nation to increase procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and actively engage them wherever possible.

Governance

DCA reports on RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings annually in our Annual Report and regularly to employees, leaders, and the Board to drive reflection and improvement. The RAP Working Group meets monthly and provides quarterly feedback to RAP champions, with Terms of Reference reviewed annually. We submit an annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia and meet regularly with them to track progress and address challenges. The operation of our external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory panel is also reviewed to ensure alignment with organisational needs.

Next steps

A new First Nations Workplace Reference Group will be established in 2026 to share insights from First Nations member voices and guide DCA's priorities and inform actions on improving diversity, inclusion, and cultural safety for First Nations employees, customers, and stakeholders. Following consultation with Reconciliation Australia, we will remain at the Innovate RAP stage for two more years to strengthen deliverables and build a foundation for a future Stretch RAP. During this transition, we will continue to adapt to our evolving environment and centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and lived experience in recognition, reconciliation, and truth-telling discussions.

[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 people with disability, this group plays a crucial role in enhancing DCA's internal and external accessibility capabilities, and raising disability awareness and capability within our team.

In 2025, the group focused on establishing 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, while creating a more equitable and inclusive workplace where everyone feels safe, valued, and able to thrive.

The panel 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 on page 60.](#)

Our leading voice

Diversity Council Australia is a leading voice advancing D&I in Australian workplaces. Through our cutting-edge research, impactful advocacy, expert speakers and tailored education offerings, we empower organisations to create more inclusive and equitable working environments.



DCA works in partnership with members to generate groundbreaking diversity and inclusion research that enables Australian organisations to fully leverage the benefits of a diverse talent pool.

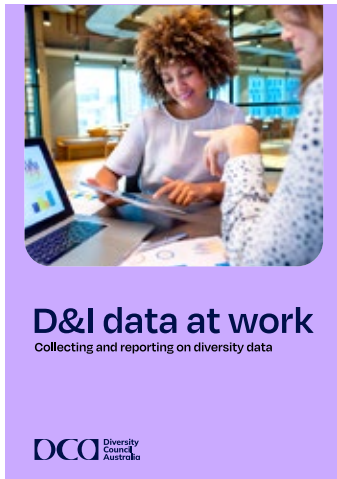
Our groundbreaking research

DCA released five major research projects on workplace D&I in 2025.

We collaborate with members, national experts and academia to produce market-leading research translated into practical guidelines and resources.

We also provide invaluable infographics and summaries for a broad audience across Australia, while delivering specific value for DCA Members who can access our detailed research reports, toolkits, further resources and related events.

To read about our research events go to '[Our inspiring events](#)' (page 42).



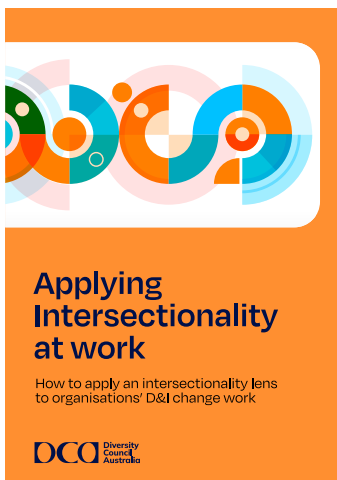
D&I Data at Work

D&I data is a powerful tool for organisations to understand their current state and set a future direction for their D&I and business strategies.

Yet, many organisations don't capture or use D&I data. Some D&I and HR practitioners may have limited training in how to collect, analyse, report on, and use D&I data in their decision-making.

This guide helps organisations collect and use D&I data respectfully, safely, accurately and effectively. It includes guiding principles, a four-step process to making the most of data and driving meaningful change, and question and response options for capturing data.

[Learn more about the guide.](#)



Intersectionality at Work

Intersectionality refers to how different aspects of a person's identity expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination that greatly increase their marginalisation.

Applying intersectionality in our D&I work helps us ensure our initiatives address the experiences of people who face overlapping forms of discrimination and so are the most marginalised at work.

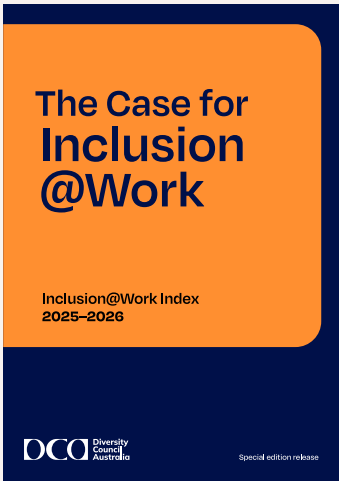
Intersectionality at Work provides five keys for good practice for using intersectionality as a tool in D&I work. This guide helps experienced D&I practitioners to:

- build critical foundational knowledge about what intersectionality is (and is not), who has more and less power and privilege in the organisation, and how to centre the voices of those most marginalised at work
- take practical steps to ensure no-one is left behind in your organisation's D&I change work.

[Learn more about the guide.](#)



DCA projects use expert panels, focus groups, think tanks and surveys to make people with lived experience central to the project findings.



The Case for Inclusion@Work 2025–2026

This special edition release is based on findings from the 2025–2026 Inclusion@Work Index.

It highlights evidence that shows how all workers benefit from workplaces with an inclusive organisational climate – that is, organisations where employees trust they will be treated fairly, where diversity is valued and respected, and top leaders demonstrate a genuine, visible commitment to D&I.

[Learn more about the guide.](#)



Class Inclusion at Work

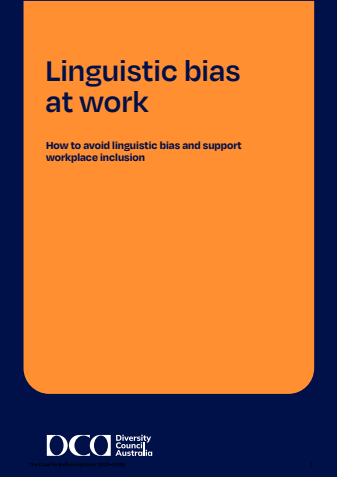
Class refers to a person’s social standing compared to other people in Australia, based on factors such as their wealth, income, education, occupation, connections, networks, hobbies and leisure activities.

Class Inclusion at Work shows that someone’s social class can be a barrier to their access to employment, socialising, networks, career development, and leadership opportunities. The guide provides five organisational locks and keys to help organisations build foundational knowledge on social class, make the case for change in their workplaces, and take practical steps towards class inclusion.

[Learn more about the guide.](#)



DCA projects generate leading diversity thinking and practice that speak to Australia's unique and distinctive institutional, cultural and legal frameworks.



Linguistic Bias at Work

Linguistic bias is a preference for or against someone based on assumptions or stereotypes relating to their use of language (e.g. accent, enunciation, vocabulary). It occurs when someone is treated unfavourably because of their linguistic traits, such as their accent, pitch, enunciation, vocabulary, grammar, or syntax (the arrangement of words and phrases in a specific order).

This guide explores:

- what linguistic bias can look like and how it can play out at work
- why people experience linguistic bias at work
- ways to challenge linguistic bias in the workplace, including during recruitment and selection, performance evaluations, promotion and leadership opportunities, and client-facing interactions.

[Learn more about the guide.](#)



The RISE Project

In 2025, we continued our four-year partnership with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women to implement the federally-funded Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise. (RISE), a project which builds pathways and addresses barriers to leadership for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women in middle management.

You can read about the RISE Project's progress this year in ['Our collaborations and partnerships'](#) (page 53).

Advocacy

DCA's advocacy work is central to our charitable purpose and we play a vital role with government and business leaders on behalf of our members and the broader community.

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

DCA submits recommendations to government and decision-making bodies, provides testimony at public inquiries and hearings, engages with government and key decision-makers, and participates in consultation processes, including roundtables, committees, and working groups.

In all our work, we focus on how employer and government policy can enable inclusive, equitable, and socially responsible workforce participation.

In 2025, some of our key advocacy work included the following:

Pre-election survey – April 2025

DCA is committed to ensuring that D&I remain a national priority. In advance of the 2025 Federal Election in May, DCA invited major political parties to answer a pre-election survey and outline their commitments around a range of focus areas for D&I.

The pre-election survey examined specific workplace challenges like childcare, parental leave, the gender pay gap, workplace sexual harassment, and industrial segregation.

An informed vote is a powerful tool in shaping a fairer, more inclusive society, and our aim was to equip Australian workers and organisations with insights into how each party planned to support workplace D&I.



Submissions and public hearings

DCA makes submissions to government and regulatory authorities on key policy areas and legislative reviews. In 2025, this included the following.

Public hearing regarding Workplace Gender Equality Amendment Bill – January 2025

DCA had previously provided a submission on the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment Bill 2024. The purpose of this Bill is to introduce a 'world-first' targets scheme to accelerate action on gender equality in the workplace. In January 2025, DCA's interim CEO, Chris Lamb, presented evidence at a public hearing where the Senate Committee heard directly from organisations and individuals who had contributed written submissions on the Bill.

Submission to the Government's Economic Reform Roundtable – July 2025

DCA contributed a written submission to the Government's Economic Reform Roundtable and its consultations to improve productivity, build economic resilience and strengthen budget sustainability.

Our submission outlined how workplace inclusion aligns with, and advances, the Government's five-pillar productivity agenda, in particular: 'Building a skilled, adaptable workforce' and 'Creating dynamic and resilient economies'. We also reaffirmed that inclusion is one of Australia's greatest economic opportunities. [Read the submission.](#)

Support for reforms to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act – August 2025

DCA submitted a formal letter of support to the NSW Law Reform Commission as part of its 2025 review of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW). In this, we expressed general support for reforms that strengthen protections against discrimination and harassment in the workplace, promote substantive equality, and modernise legislative language in line with contemporary standards and lived experience. We also encouraged an intersectional approach to law reform and further consultation with communities most impacted by discrimination. [View the letter of support.](#)

Response to the Victorian Government's plan to introduce working-from-home legislation – October 2025

We provided a written submission on the Victorian Government's plan to introduce working-from-home legislation. Our submission provided details that support the case for working from home, and how legislation around this is beneficial for productivity, participation, the economy, employee wellbeing, sustainability and employee retention and attraction. The Victorian Government has since implemented the legislation, reflecting consultation feedback. From 1 September 2026, Victorian law will give employees in roles that can be performed remotely the right to work from home for at least two days per week. [Read the submission.](#)

Other advocacy activities

Supporting the Activate Australia's Skills Campaign

DCA joined Australian leaders calling for fairer rules for skilled migrants. The Activate Australia's Skills campaign is a non-partisan alliance campaign of businesses, unions, social services, and community organisations working to improve skills and qualifications recognition policy in order to address skills shortages in Australia. The campaign is convened by Settlement Services International (SSI).

DCA has supported Activate Australia's Skills from the outset, as we believe that unlocking the skills of 620,000 permanent migrants will not only address skills shortages and boost economic security, but is also a vital inclusion strategy.



DCA's contribution to the ABS Census 2026 LGBTIQ+ Expert Advisory Committee

In 2025, DCA contributed to national data reform through our involvement in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census 2026 LGBTIQ+ Expert Advisory Committee, providing two formal submissions and participating as a member of the Advisory Group.

Through this process, amendments were made to the Census and Statistics Regulation 2016 to introduce new Census topics on sexual orientation and gender for people aged 16 years and over.

DCA advocated for the inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity and variations of sex characteristics (intersex status), aligned with the ABS Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables, while also recognising the importance of expert guidance on the use of gendered language in Census design.

We also advocated for replacing the current ancestry question with our core cultural diversity measure from our [Counting Culture](#) work.



We carry out our advocacy work by submitting recommendations to government and decision-making bodies, providing testimony at public inquiries and hearings, and engaging with government and key decision-makers.

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.

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 Six, which calls for the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.



United Nations
Global Compact

In 2025, DCA proudly joined a cohort of Australian representatives to participate in the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW69) in New York in March.

Our involvement in UNCSW69 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:

- *Uniting Across Borders: Global Allyship in the Face of Resistance and Polarisation*, with our Global Inclusion and Diversity Alliance (GIDA) partner, the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion.
- *Women and Intersectionality at Work: Inclusive Approaches to Organisational Leadership*: a panel bringing together leaders in gender equality and inclusion to explore how workplaces can adopt inclusive leadership practices that empower women from diverse backgrounds.

[Read more DCA insights from UNCSW69.](#)

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'.

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

Our 2025 activities supported several targets that underpin the UN SDGs.



Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our work
<p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p> <p>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>	<p>Assisting Australian organisations to create more gender-equal workplaces remains a key priority in much of our work.</p> <p>Our work to address gender inequality takes an intersectional perspective so that we ensure all women and girls can prosper.</p> <p>In 2025, we developed a new guide on applying intersectionality at work. It provides five keys for good practice for using intersectionality as a tool in D&I work.</p> <p>During the year we conducted five events on many aspects of gender equality, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accountability in action: does going public improve diversity and equity? • taking an intersectional approach to gender equality • setting targets for gender equality • combatting tech-facilitated sexual harassment at work, and • creating safe and respectful workplaces for First Nations women. <p>For more information on our 2025 events see the ‘Our inspiring events’ section of this Annual Report on page 42.</p>
	<p>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>	<p>DCA has long been an advocate for providing workers with the flexibility they need to manage work and other commitments, whether it be flexibility in where, when and how they do their job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our advocacy on the Victorian Government’s plan to introduce working-from-home legislation supported the right to do so at least two days a week for Victorians who can reasonably do their job from home.
	<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>	<p>We promoted women’s leadership through our research, advocacy and member education.</p> <p>In 2025, the RISE Project, in partnership with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women, continued working with 25 organisations to identify and address systemic barriers to leadership and implement real change for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women.</p> <p>See the ‘Our collaborations and partnerships’ section (page 53) for details on the RISE Project’s progress this year.</p>

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our work
<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>	<p>Our new D&I Data at Work guide helps organisations to create meaningful D&I business strategies based on evidence. This data can help an organisation understand the mix of employees in their workforce and which inclusion areas to prioritise.</p> <p>We contributed to the Government's Economic Reform Roundtable and its consultations to improve productivity, build economic resilience and strengthen budget sustainability. We argued that inclusion enables organisations to tap into the full spectrum of talent and skills available in Australia, including those often overlooked or underutilised due to bias or exclusion.</p>
<p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> <p>Reduce inequality within and among countries</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>It is our mission to encourage and enable Australian organisations to create diverse and inclusive workplaces. We advocated for this in all our work throughout 2025.</p>
	<p>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</p>	<p>In 2025, we advocated for policies and action to address discrimination in workplaces and our community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Linguistic Bias at Work guide was developed for managers and supervisors who want to learn about linguistic bias in the workplace and how to recognise and avoid it. • Our Case for Inclusion@Work, highlighted evidence that all workers benefit from workplaces with an inclusive organisational climate. • Our Class Inclusion at Work research explained how organisations can recognise and respond to classism and bias in the workplace.

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our work
<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> <p>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities</p>	<p>In 2025, we held a special event for our members on the role of inclusion in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), and we heard how leading organisations are making D&I a core pillar of their ESG strategies.</p> <p>We also created an ESG Hub on our website, outlining the link between D&I and ESG initiatives.</p>

Next steps

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

Sustainable Development Goal	Target	Our 2026 focus areas
<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>	<p>We will publish a report in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission on age inclusion at work.</p>
<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> <p>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities</p>	<p>A First Nations Procurement policy and strategy was developed and will be rolled out in 2026.</p>
<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p>	<p>In 2026, we will continue to advocate and support inclusion and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through our new First Nations Workplace Reference Group, and our new Reconciliation Action Plan.</p>

Education

DCA Speakers Bureau

Drawing on DCA's industry-leading research, practical resources and lived experience, DCA speakers deliver tailored insights and expert perspectives across key D&I areas to meet your organisation's or event's needs. They are highly regarded experts and sought-after speakers on D&I, both in Australia and internationally.

In 2025, subject matter experts from DCA's leadership team delivered nearly **50 speaking engagements** across business and the wider community.

[Explore our Speakers Bureau.](#)

Knowledge Programs

DCA's knowledge programs continue to be popular and impactful with DCA Members and non-members alike. **DCA delivered 150 knowledge programs in 2025**, both online and in person, a slight increase on programs delivered in 2024. The knowledge programs continued to receive strong, positive feedback, with 95% of respondents finding the program informative and educational, and 97% finding the content relevant.

In response to direct requests from members for more ways to engage in anti-racism training, DCA launched its new **Anti-Racism Fundamentals Knowledge Program** in March 2025. The program was received very well by participants, with 96% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement 'The knowledge program was informative and educational.'

During **Inclusion at Work Week 2025**, DCA offered members the opportunity to attend three open knowledge programs to mark the week: 'Preventing Gendered Violence at Work' in partnership with Our Watch, 'D&I Fundamentals' and 'Inclusive Leadership Fundamentals'. The Inclusive Leadership program will be introduced into our standard lineup of knowledge programs in 2026.

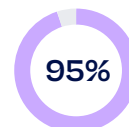
All our knowledge programs were delivered by our highly skilled external facilitators with strong subject matter expertise and lived experiences of various forms of marginalisation.

The overwhelmingly positive feedback on DCA's knowledge programs remained consistent throughout the year.

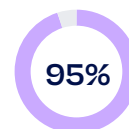
eLearning

DCA partnered with Acorn PLMS to launch our new eLearning platform and host our **D&I 101 eLearning Program**. In 2026, we will explore ways to provide a better eLearning experience for our members through diverse, engaging, interactive and inclusive programs.

[Explore our education offerings.](#)



Participants who found DCA Knowledge Programs to be engaging



Participants who found DCA Knowledge Programs to be educational

DCA's education offerings are open to all workplaces – DCA Members and non-members alike. Any organisation can book sessions for their teams. DCA Member organisations enjoy generous discounts on program fees.

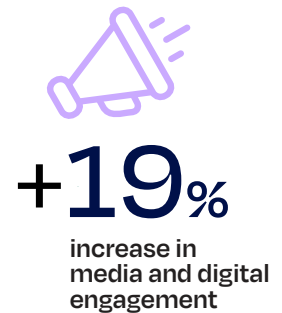
Communications

Throughout 2025, DCA's communications supported the delivery of major research, advocacy, events and brand activity, while strengthening engagement with members, partners and the broader business community. Our work focused on translating evidence into practical workplace action, helping organisations navigate resistance to D&I, and amplifying DCA's leadership across key national moments.

Our communications also contributed to the public dialogue on D&I through timely commentary in the media and through DCA's own news articles, blogs, opinion pieces and statements.

Our fortnightly eNews, **Inclusion Matters**, showcases our latest research and thought leadership and explores key developments in D&I. It reaches more than 40,000 subscribers.

Media and digital engagement helped drive DCA's impact. Our research and advocacy secured 1,141 media mentions in 2025, a 19% increase from 2024 with strong coverage across television, radio, print, and digital platforms. Social media engagement also grew across key channels.



Key communications in 2025

Communications throughout the year included the Inclusive Employer Index campaign, support for the RISE Project (a partnership with Settlement Services International and Chief Executive Women), and the ongoing curation of DCA's widely used D&I calendar.

We engaged our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable **Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia**, in key activities during the year.



We were pleased to have our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, launch the 2025 Inclusion at Work Week.

DCA's annual **Inclusion at Work Week** (17–21 November 2025) was again a major success, with close to 500 organisations across Australia participating.

Communications also supported major research launches such as Class Inclusion at Work, promoted **DCA Knowledge Programs**, strengthened awareness of our policy advocacy, and improved website content and user experience.

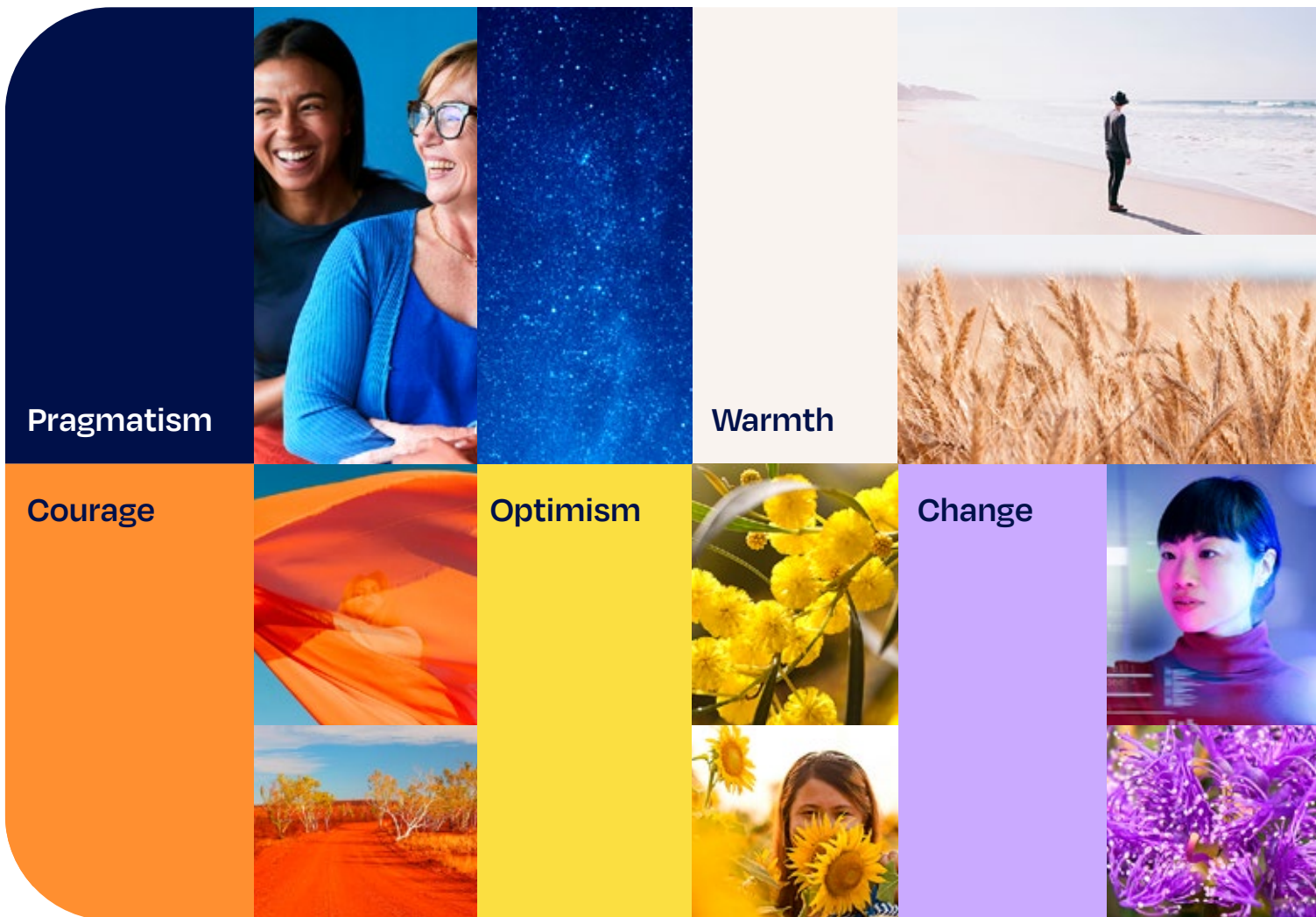
DCA's communications work continues to support member engagement in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander inclusion initiatives in line with our Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.

Celebrating 40 years of impact with a bold new brand

In 2025, DCA proudly marked 40 years of impact, and this anniversary coincided with the culmination of a major project to deliver **a bold new brand for DCA**. Members, partners, peers and our team – including people with lived experience of marginalisation – contributed insights that shaped every stage of the process.

Accessibility and inclusivity were embedded throughout the rebrand, influencing design choices, colour contrast, typography and digital functionality to better support the diverse needs of our audiences.

Our new visual identity is clear, contemporary and designed for today's digital landscape. It reinforces DCA as a trusted partner, equipping Australian organisations with tools and insights to champion the benefits of D&I.



Inspired by Australia's natural environment, DCA's new brand colours represent optimism, strength, and the diverse communities DCA serves.

Website

DCA's website remains the central hub for members to access our research, resource library, news, events, recordings and education offerings.

In 2025, website traffic remained strong, with over 1.3 million page views and a 2.3% increase in total users. During the year, DCA published over 60 timely news articles for our members and community, and launched three new resource pages on Caring, Class, and Environment, Social and Governance (ESG).

Accessibility remained a priority. A new dedicated accessibility page and built-in accessibility widget were introduced, alongside other improvements to ensure the site continues to meet and exceed emerging accessibility standards.

[Visit the DCA website.](#)

 **1.3 million** DCA web page views

 **2.3%** increase in total users

Media coverage

In 2025, media coverage of DCA's research and activity were comparable with 2024 in terms of total mentions, while achieving significantly higher reach and Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE), suggesting a higher quality of coverage compared with previous years.

We introduced Catherine Hunter as the new CEO of DCA and a key voice in D&I, generating close to 200 media mentions, including 14 interviews and attributed statements across major outlets such as AFR, ABC and SBS.

 **1,141** articles about DCA activities

DCA further strengthened media engagement around major events and launches, with journalists representing The Guardian, AAP, AFR and SBS attending key events throughout the year.



THE AUSTRALIAN



The Guardian

The Sydney Morning Herald

Leading the national conversation through media coverage



Radio – including ABC Radio National, SBS Radio and syndications across the Australian Radio Network and Southern Cross Austereo stations among others

18 radio stories | **155** radio mentions



TV – including ABC News, SBS World News and SBS Insight among others

6 TV appearances | **73** TV mentions



Online and print media – including Australian Financial Review, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian, The Guardian and many more

254 stories published

872 total online media mentions

Total estimated editorial reach:
580 million potential viewers

Media highlights in 2025 included:

- [Confronting the backlash against diversity and inclusion \(D&I\)](#), The Australian
- [Why Trump-style attacks on workplaces haven't worked in Australia](#), ABC
- [Should artificial intelligence be used in job recruitment?](#) SBS
- [Factoring intersectionality into workplace DEI efforts](#), HR Leader
- [For women of colour, the workplace still comes with its own set of challenges](#), Vogue Australia
- [Employers prefer candidates from 'elite' universities, survey reveals](#), The Guardian
- [The class signals that decide who gets promoted in Australia](#), AFR

Social media

Social media activity generated over 11,000 impressions and 2,500 video views, with LinkedIn engagement reaching 36%.

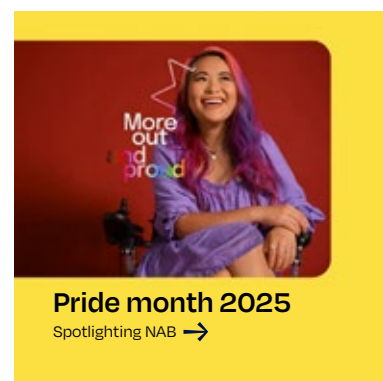
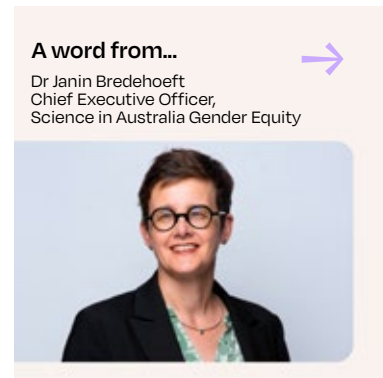
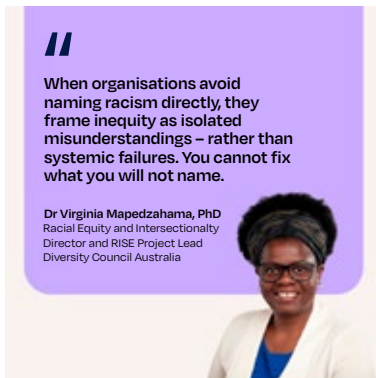
Our audiences and engagement grew across all key platforms. On LinkedIn, our primary social media channel, followers increased by 6% bringing our total audience to over 57,000.



11k+
social media impressions



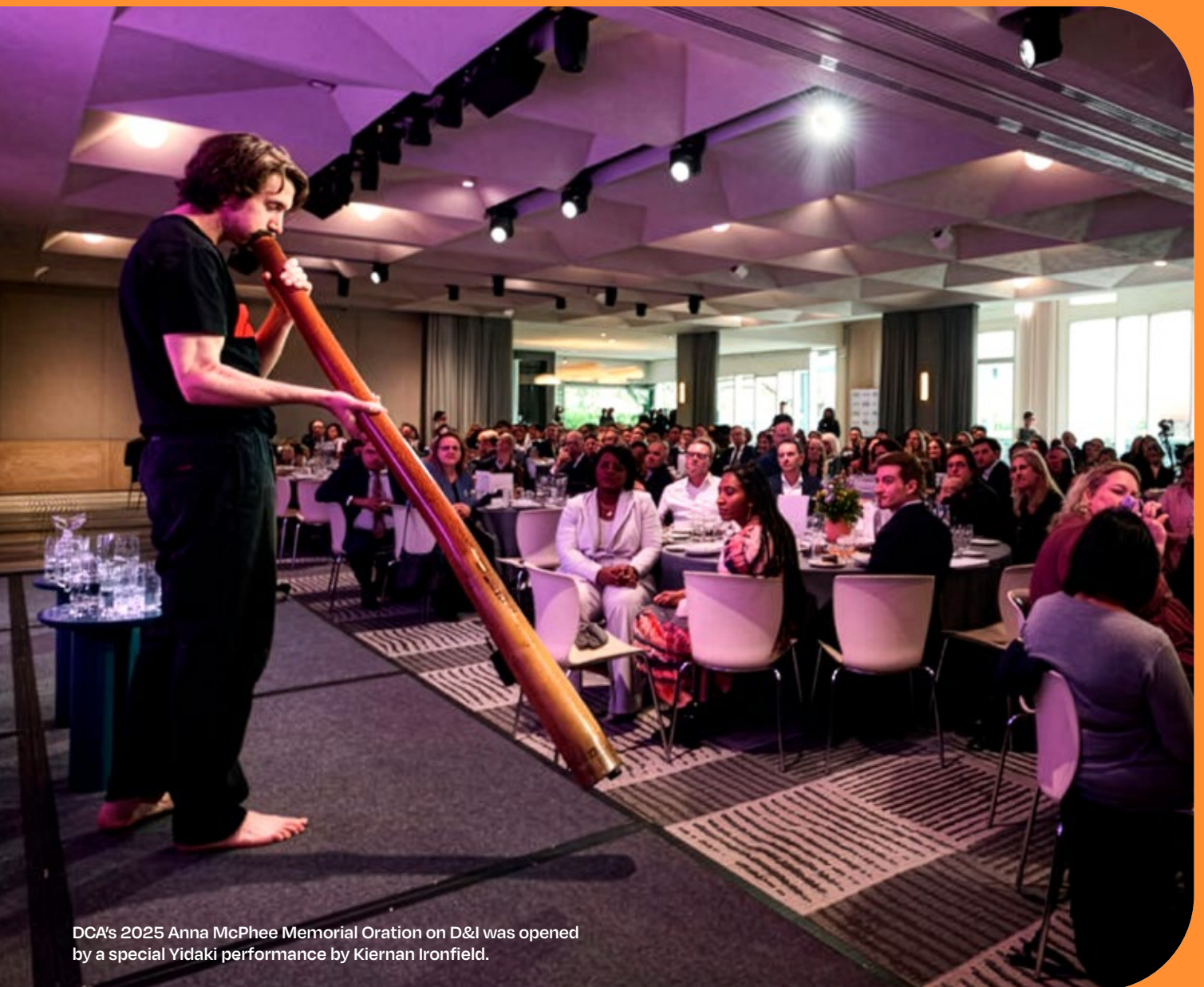
+6%
LinkedIn followers (over 57,000)



DCA regularly highlights diverse perspectives and inclusion-focused topics through its social media platforms.

Our inspiring events

In 2025, DCA delivered 36 inspiring events, receiving an impressive 95% satisfaction rate from attendees.



DCA's 2025 Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I was opened by a special Yidaki performance by Kiernan Ironfield.

Some 81% of DCA event attendees reported they were likely or very likely to apply new knowledge or make changes in their approach to diversity and inclusion at work due to the insights gained from attending a DCA event.

Our flagship Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I and our regular event forums – D&I Insights, Gender Equality Insights, First Nations Insights, and Case Study Conversations – explored the latest trends across various diversity dimensions.

We launched and shared our research at events in a variety of state capitals, providing attendees with valuable insights into the latest developments in the field.

We held roundtables and forums with member CEOs, CPOs and Key Contacts, which provided opportunities for face-to-face networking, sharing and learning.

These events gave members access to a vibrant community of industry practitioners, thought leaders, and individuals with a wide range of lived experiences.

Delivering inclusive and accessible events

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

- ensuring fully accessible venues, including bathrooms and amenities, wellness/quiet spaces or prayer rooms, entrance foyers and event spaces for all in-person events
- providing access to live captions during events
- providing Auslan interpreters when requested by attendees
- providing access to an event recording, transcripts and resources after each event
- ensuring event collateral, including marketing and presentation materials, are accessible.

Our flagship event: DCA's Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I

In August 2025 Melbourne's Zinc at Fed Square hosted the 6th Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I, sponsored by Ashurst. The biennial Oration honours the late Anna McPhee, former DCA Chair and passionate advocate for D&I.

Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, delivered the Oration, championing care, kindness, and respect as central values that will drive a more inclusive and fairer nation.

As Patron of DCA, the Governor-General underscored the importance of working toward an Australia where everyone can feel respected, seen, and heard. She reflected on her first year in office, meeting, listening to, and learning from communities across the country and spoke of the optimism she feels about Australia's future, grounded in its diversity and united by shared values.

Following the Governor General's address, a guest panel discussed the leading work DCA is doing on workplace class inclusion in the moderated conversation.

[Watch the Oration highlights video.](#)



DCA's 2025 Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I commenced with a warm Welcome to Country by Stacie Piper.



D&I Insights Program: Building connection and reducing workplace loneliness

November 2025

From left: Associate Professor Michelle Lim (she/her), CEO and Scientific Chair of Ending Loneliness Together (on screen), Chris Gambian (he/him), Executive Director, Australians for Mental Health, Dr Shea Fan (she/her), Associate Professor, Deakin Business School, Anna Sparkes (she/her), Chief People Officer, Gilbert + Tobin and DCA CEO Catherine Hunter.

D&I Insights Program

We delivered seven events as part of DCA's D&I Insights Program.

These events each investigated cutting-edge topics across a range of diversity dimensions.

Getting started on D&I – February

The event profiled DCA's new 'Getting started on D&I' guide, designed for people who lead, implement, or support D&I work in their organisation. We discussed how to get the basics right and provided tips on the '5 Ps of D&I': Preparation, People, Policy, Priorities and Practice.

The D&I climate and responding to resistance – March

Our event with member Key Contacts discussed the growing polarisation on the topic of D&I and how our members are responding to D&I resistance and making positive change.

The role of inclusion in ESG – May

In partnership with Gilbert + Tobin. DCA's new CEO Catherine Hunter invited leading practitioners in corporate social responsibility to talk about how businesses are making D&I a core pillar of their Environmental, Social and Governance strategies.

Beware of myth-busting: how to maximise impact and address misinformation – June

We explored the risks of myth-busting, why it often doesn't work and how D&I practitioners can achieve more positive impact without reinforcing divisive misinformation about D&I.

Talking LGBTQ+ workplace Inclusion with Pride in Diversity – September

In partnership with HSBC Bank Australia. We talked with Pride and Diversity and industry leaders about how employers can build workplaces that attract, retain, and promote inclusion for LGBTQ+ people.

Build connection and reduce workplace loneliness – November

In partnership with Gilbert + Tobin. We marked the start of DCA's 2025 Inclusion at Work Week and featured leading experts discussing loneliness at work – what it looks like, why it matters, and how workplaces can build knowledge and skills to develop and maintain meaningful social connections at work.

Mind the age gap: rethinking workplace bias – November

The final event investigated evidence-based strategies and practical takeaways designed to address bias at both ends of the age spectrum.

Gender Equality Insights

This year DCA continued to partner with KPMG Australia to present DCA's popular Gender Equality Insights event program.

Accountability in action: Does going public improve diversity and equity? – April	Mary Wooldridge, CEO of WGEA, discussed the publication of gender pay gaps and WGEA's aim to increase transparency, encourage conversation and accelerate change.
Taking an intersectional approach to gender equality – June	Alongside a panel of experts on gender equality and intersectionality, Dr Virginia Mapedzahama, PhD, Racial Equity & Intersectionality Director at DCA, presented new DCA resources to help understand concepts of intersectionality, power, and marginalisation, and how these can be practically applied to enhance gender equality initiatives in workplaces.
Setting targets for gender equality – July	DCA invited Dr Leonora Risse to share her research on the effective use of targets. Mary Wooldridge, CEO, WGEA, shared their new requirements on targets, and what resources and tools were available to assist employers in implementing change, and HCF discussed how their gender equality targets are being applied.
Combatting tech-facilitated sexual harassment at work – October	We spotlighted the work of the eSafety Gender and Tech team and their new ANROWS research investigating workplace technology-facilitated sexual harassment.

Case Study Conversations

DCA's Case Study Conversations are a lunch-and-learn webinar in a compact 60-minute format, that profiles what DCA Members are achieving in D&I. In 2025, DCA hosted three Case Study Conversations.

Case Study Conversation with Telstra – Building racial literacy – March	We showcased how Telstra has leveraged innovative communication strategies to embed meaningful D&I change and enhance the organisation's racial literacy.
Case Study Conversation: Inclusive Employer – City of Sydney – May	The City of Sydney shared insights on their D&I journey and the role diversity data has played in achieving change for their organisation.
Case Study Conversation: Autism & neurodiversity at EY – June	EY shared insights on how they championed autism and neuroinclusion by taking a strategic approach to deliver D&I change that works.

[Learn more about these conversations.](#)

First Nations Insights Program: Creating safe and respectful workplaces for First Nations women

December 2025

From left: Dr Paola Balla (she/her), Principal Research Fellow, Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Centre, Victoria University, Rory Smeaton (he/him), First Nations Talent Manager, Yamagigu Consulting, Karla McGrady (she/her), Special Advisor, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Strategy, Our Watch, Cass Tratt (she/her), Head of First Nations Talent and Culture, ANZ, Regan Mitchell (she/her), Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy at Our Watch, DCA CEO Catherine Hunter and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder Uncle Colin Hunter Jnr (he/him).



First Nations Insights

DCA's First Nations Insights Program featured three events in 2025, sponsored by ANZ. This series encourages organisations to take proactive steps to support reconciliation and bring about real, tangible outcomes. They are also an important part of DCA's RAP deliverables.

A pathway to national truth-telling – February

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Katie Kiss shared her insights and plans for First Nations communities. A panel explored the role of truth-telling in addressing past and present injustices, shaping a just future, and centring First Nations voices on the path to reconciliation.

Bridging now to next: The State of Reconciliation in Australia – September

Karen Mundine, CEO of Reconciliation Australia, shared findings from the 2024 Australian Reconciliation Barometer, and the Workplace Reconciliation Barometer 2024 survey.

Creating safe and respectful workplaces for First Nations women – December

In collaboration with Our Watch, we showcased their new resource: Creating safe and respectful workplaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women – A beginner's guide.



CEO Roundtable event: Melbourne

July 2025

Our Melbourne CEO Roundtable, hosted by BHP, brought together CEOs from McKinsey & Company, Access Health & Community, Sigma Healthcare, JB HiFi Group, Maddocks, SGH Ltd, FrontierSI, Sacred Heart Mission Inc, NRI ANZ, Cleanaway, UniSuper, Viva Energy and Brotherhood of St Laurence.



CEO Roundtables

DCA's roundtable discussions with top-tier member organisation CEOs and Managing Directors were well attended in 2025. These five events were led by DCA's Chair and CEO and involved high-level D&I discussions that continued to foster strong and collaborative relationships

Brisbane event – April

In partnership with Inclusivee. Member CEOs attended from: Endeavour Foundation, Australian Disability Network, Accessible Transport Network, Department of Transport and Main Roads, BDO Australia, WorkCover Queensland, Department of Housing and Public Works, Queensland Treasury Corporation, and the Inspector-General of Emergency Management (IGEM).

Sydney event – May

In partnership with Accenture. Member CEOs attended from: ALDI Stores Australia, NRMA, Vocus, Adobe ANZ, Sydney Opera House, Hachette ANZ, Ampol, Pinterest ANZ, IKEA ANZ and Accenture ANZ.

Melbourne event – July

In partnership with BHP. Member CEOs attended from: McKinsey & Company, Access Health & Community, Sigma Healthcare, JB HiFi Group, Maddocks, SGH Ltd, FrontierSI, Sacred Heart Mission Inc, NRI ANZ, Cleanaway, UniSuper, Viva Energy and Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Perth event – September

In partnership with Compass Group. Member CEOs attended from: Edith Cowan University, Royal Flying Doctor Service WA, South32, Clough Webuild Group, and Synergy.

Canberra event – October

In partnership with Northrop Grumman Australia. Member CEOs attended from: Aspen Medical, Canberra Cyber Hub, Ronald McDonald House Charities ACT, Workplace Reform, Diversity at the Australian Public Service Commission, KPMG Australia, Karralika Programs Inc, Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Research update: Disability Data at Work

Canberra, November 2025

From left: Dr Rose D'Almada-Remedios (she/her), Head of Research, DCA, Amy Whalley (she/her), CEO, Australian Disability Network, Wayne Herbert (he/him), Director Progress and Property, LEAD and Molly Saunders (she/her), Research Associate, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU College of Law, Governance and Policy.



Inaugural CPO Roundtable

Our Chief People Officer (CPO) Roundtable is a new event bringing together CPOs and HR Directors from DCA Member organisations.

Guests participate in a Chatham House Rule discussion, sharing peer insights and practical leadership conversations on the D&I challenges shaping workplaces right now, and hearing how DCA can support members to navigate these complex times and support their D&I efforts.

**Sydney event –
August**

In partnership with **Accenture**. We launched the first CPO Roundtable in partnership with Accenture and guest CPOs who attended were from Mirvac, Cochlear, Team Super, SDN, Hi Pages Group, Seven West Media, SGH LTD, Canva, National Intermodal, Challenger and Accenture.

Research release events and updates

In 2025, DCA held launch events for its new evidence-based guidelines as well as events highlighting past research reports. These featured member panels with experienced practitioners to bring the research and its practical applications to life.

**Class Inclusion
at Work launch**

In partnership with **Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer in Sydney**. Our new Class Inclusion at Work report was launched in Sydney in October, building on DCA's previous Class at Work research. The event presented new findings, illustrating that there is a clear class inclusion gap, with class-marginalised workers far less likely to feel included and far more likely to face barriers to networks and advancement.

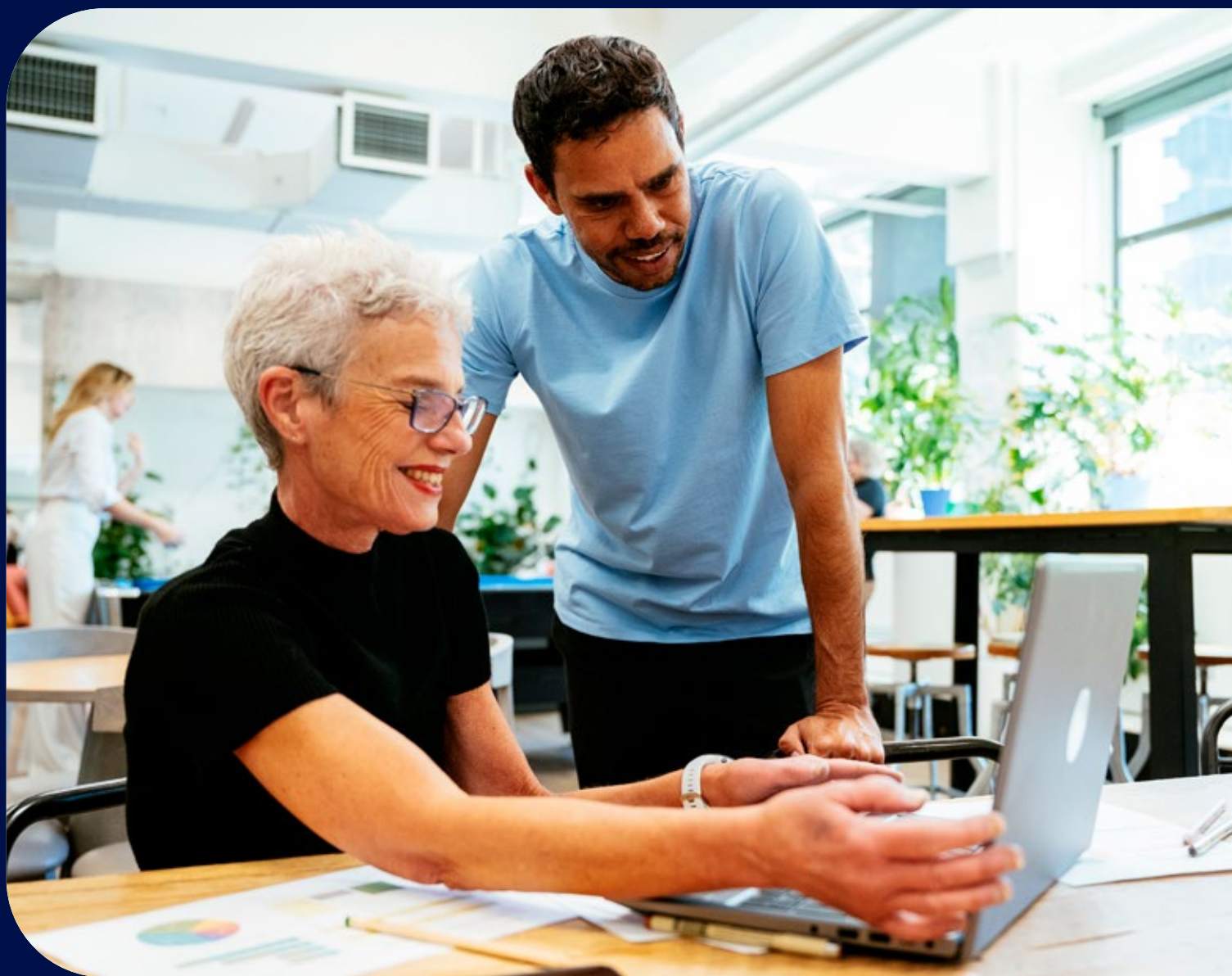
Research update: Disability Data at Work

DCA shared the Disability Data at Work report with members in person in Brisbane, Perth and Canberra. This groundbreaking report, released by DCA in partnership with Australian Disability Network in 2024, investigated how organisations can collect disability status data safely and respectfully. We shared new input from contributing speakers that included D&I practitioners and speakers with lived experience.

Brisbane's event was hosted by Great Southern Bank, Perth by Edith Cowen University and Canberra by the Australian Digital Health Agency.

Our engaged member network

Throughout 2025, DCA supported over 1,200 member organisations with research, tools, events, learning and advocacy to help build fairer, more inclusive workplaces.





Member Key Contacts convene at our Key Contact Networking Event in Melbourne, hosted by DCA founding member BHP.

Expanding impact and growing membership

In 2025, we deepened engagement with current members, attracted new organisations, and reconnected past members with DCA's insights and resources.

DCA proudly marked 40 years of impact, celebrating our evolution from a pioneering advocate to Australia's leading evidence-driven voice on workplace D&I.

To celebrate this milestone, an event was held at Admiralty House, hosted by our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. We also recognised DCA's founding members who, 40 years ago, led a bold, business-driven effort to advance equal opportunity – a legacy DCA continues today in championing diversity, equity and inclusion.

Building a connected and engaged member community

Strengthening DCA's D&I community of practice remained a priority, responding to feedback for deeper peer connection and knowledge exchange.

We expanded engagement through in-person and virtual forums, including Key Contact events and CEO Roundtables, enabling members to share challenges, explore emerging issues and build capability.

A highlight was our inaugural Chief People Officer Roundtable, convening senior leaders to discuss D&I, organisational performance, risk and workforce trust, elevating strategic dialogue within our community.

Looking ahead, we will maintain a focus on strengthening member connections by expanding our events to engage a broader range of senior leaders and decision-makers, and continuing to reinforce DCA's role as a trusted thought leader and strategic partner in driving D&I.

The DCA member community represents a broad range of industry sectors spanning Australia and New Zealand. They are part of a dynamic network of D&I professionals, with regular opportunities to connect through events and forums.



Member Key Contacts convene at our Key Contact Networking Event in Canberra, hosted by DCA Member ANU College of Systems & Society.

Our 2025 Key Contact Networking Events

DCA continued hosting Key Contact Networking Events, further strengthening connection, peer learning and engagement. These forums give Key Contacts space to build relationships, share ideas, and deepen understanding of DCA benefits.

Hosted by our members in many capital cities, the events continue to be highly valued and effective in strengthening member engagement:

Sydney: Hosted by PwC Australia – February 2025

Brisbane: Hosted by Great Southern Bank – May 2025

Melbourne: Hosted by BHP – July 2025

Perth: Hosted by Kinetic IT – September 2025

Canberra: Hosted by ANU – October 2025



Deepening member engagement and insights to strengthen support

In 2025, we focused on gaining deeper insights into our members to strengthen support, refine our service model, and ensure they receive maximum value from DCA resources.

The member survey conducted in March 2025 highlighted a desire for more proactive engagement, so we reviewed and updated how our team works to better meet those needs. We continue to listen, monitor, and adapt to improve our offerings.

These critical insights into member demographics, priorities and needs help us tailor resources, programs and engagement to deliver greater value today, and shape future offerings that retain and attract new DCA Members.



AskDCA service

Our AskDCA service is a key member benefit. DCA's subject matter experts provide in-depth, tailored responses to member queries on all aspects of D&I practice.

Widely used by members, AskDCA provides practical learnings that support members in their day-to-day work. It also offers DCA valuable insights into member needs, helping us identify gaps in existing resources and shape and refine our organisation's offerings.

The most frequent themes enquired about in 2025 were:

- diversity data collection & survey design
- inclusive policies & practices
- employee resource groups (ERGs) & networks
- cultural competency & First Nations inclusion
- gender, disability, and LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

Showcasing member success

In 2025, over 80 organisations were recognised and celebrated by DCA as Inclusive Employers for 2025–2026, reflecting their outstanding progress in advancing D&I.

We actively profile member insights and successes through events, panel discussions, case studies, and dedicated blogs highlighting key initiatives and D&I progress.

This not only showcases member achievements, but also inspires and equips other organisations with practical strategies to drive meaningful change. By embedding member insights across our programs, communications, and thought leadership, we ensure that the voices of our member community continue to shape DCA's work and the wider D&I landscape.



Future Leadership were recognised as one of DCA's 2025–2026 Inclusive Employers.



Our collaborations and partnerships

We continued to grow our strategic alliances and partnerships on key D&I topics throughout 2025, broadening our sphere of influence through collaborations with like-minded organisations.

Our 2025 strategic alliances

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.

We continued our important relationship with Reconciliation Australia through ongoing engagement and our work towards reconciliation.

In 2025, DCA commenced work on the Neurodiversity Data at Work guide, a partnership with Amaze, as well as a project focused on age inclusion, in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission, both for release in 2026.

DCA was part of a cohort of Australian representatives participating in the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW69) in New York City where we contributed to two key sessions. We collaborated with our Global Inclusion and Diversity Alliance (GIDA) partner, the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, on a session tackling the challenges of allyship in an increasingly polarised world, and our Racial Equity and Intersectionality Director, Dr Virginia Mapedzahama, PhD, led a session on the significance of applying an intersectionality lens in gender equality work.

We were also a proud Community Partner of the 2025 Australian Human Rights Awards celebrating individuals and organisations who are working hard to promote and protect human rights across the country. The awards acknowledge, congratulate and share the important work of individuals and organisations who are making valuable contributions to advancing human rights in Australia.





2025–2026 Inclusive Employer Index

The Inclusive Employer Index was once again offered in 2025 by DCA, in partnership with Cultural Infusion. The Index enables organisations to assess and track the state of D&I within their workforce, offering insights on:

- 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 2025, 92 organisations participated in the Inclusive Employer Index, marking a 31% increase in organisational uptake of the 2025–2026 Index, compared with the previous year.

To participate, organisations administer DCA’s comprehensive D&I survey among their workforce and view their results via Cultural Infusion’s state-of-the-art dashboard. The dashboard allows organisations to explore, compare and analyse their data, providing invaluable insights to guide decision-making, identify strengths and opportunities, and support the case for D&I.

DCA also assesses participants across six key inclusion focus areas, with those exceeding the national benchmark in five out of six areas being recognised and celebrated as Inclusive Employers.

In 2025, over 80 organisations met the assessment criteria and were announced as Inclusive Employers during DCA’s national campaign, Inclusion at Work Week (17 – 21 November 2025), celebrating their commitment to fostering diverse and inclusive workplaces.

[Read the full list of DCA’s 2025–2026 Inclusive Employers.](#)



“ We know that an inclusive workplace enables us to be a better organisation. Supporting more people, finding new ways to help and strengthening trust with the communities we work alongside. Being recognised as a DCA Inclusive employer is a great achievement for Orange Sky, but we know that real inclusion is a lifelong journey and not a destination. ”

Lucas Patchett OAM, Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Orange Sky Australia



Inclusive Employer Index webinars in 2025

DCA held two webinars, in partnership with Cultural Infusion, in support of this key program in 2025.

The first webinar took place in May and outlined the benefits to participating, survey content, comparisons with national and leading-practice benchmarks, and data privacy, and provided opportunity for interaction and questions.

The second webinar aimed to support participating organisations. It detailed how to interpret data tables and graphs, and use the Index dataset and insights to inform their D&I work with our speakers answering participant questions live.



The RISE Project

In 2025, we continued our four-year partnership with Settlement Services International (SSI) and Chief Executive Women (CEW) to implement the federally funded RISE (Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise.) Project.

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

The RISE Project has been 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 and supporting organisations with implementing organisational change interventions that address said barriers.



RISE Project team members, participants and mentors at the RISE Melbourne networking event, sponsored by Russell Kennedy.



RISE Project team members, participants, mentors, consortium and sponsors gathered at the RISE Melbourne networking event, sponsored by Russell Kennedy.

Organisational transformation and systemic change

Throughout 2025, the project team worked closely with organisations to develop tailored organisational change models, frameworks, and methodologies based on systemic priorities identified through the ASSESS to RISE organisational diagnostic tool for gendered racism.

The project team also supported organisations with socialising their ASSESS to RISE results through internal briefings, executive leadership briefings, and stakeholder communications. This was followed by co-facilitated focus group sessions with CARM women, using DCA's Centring Marginalised Voices at Work guidelines to define the priority outcomes needed to address identified gaps and inequities. This ensured that the proposed priorities, interventions, and outcomes reflected the lived experience and needs of CARM women.

The project team supported organisations with critical expertise and evidence-based interventions and strategies to implement changes to organisational systems, digitisation across Human Resources Information System (HRIS) platforms, and track impacts and outcomes.

Intersectionality and racial literacy

A consistent priority identified was the need to strengthen organisational intersectionality capability and racial literacy to enable responses to structural inequities that were sustainable and informed by lived experience and evidence. The project team worked closely and collaboratively with organisations to deliver nine Understanding Anti-Racism at Work Knowledge Programs, three Foundations of Anti-Racism sessions, and four speaking engagement sessions.

Organisational peer support networks

Driving organisational change across 25 organisations can be complex. Structured peer support networks helped to build capability and foster sustainable change at scale. The project team delivered five Community of Practice sessions for participating project leads, including sessions by DCA's Racial Equity & Intersectionality Director, Dr Virginia Mapedzahama, PhD, who is a critical race scholar and intersectionality expert, workshops on the Racial Dignity Framework led by Dr Kathomi Gatwiri, and an Ethical Storytelling session delivered by Our Race. Approximately 20 practitioners participated in each session across five Community of Practice sessions.

Advocacy and events

Both virtual and in-person networking forums were key to advancing advocacy efforts, strengthening intersectionality and racial literacy, fostering community connectivity, and accelerating organisational-wide transformation. The events were led by SSI and supported by the DCA project team.

Online networking events

Approximately 80–100 attendees participated in eight networking events designed to foster community among RISE participants and centre CARM women’s voices. Each session featured a guest speaker on professional development, career support for CARM women and focus group discussions that enabled attendees and speakers to engage meaningfully with one another.

In-person networking events

The RISE Project delivered two in-person networking events, in Sydney and Melbourne, to advance advocacy, strengthen cross-sector relationships, and centre the lived experiences of CARM women in workplace reform conversations. These events were designed not only as networking forums, but as structured spaces for truth-telling, policy dialogue and institutional accountability. Across both cities, demand was high, and attendance outcomes exceeded expectations by reaching 80+ attendees.

The Sydney event featured testimonies from CARM women on systemic workplace barriers and responses from sector leaders and practitioners, including Sex Discrimination Commissioner Anna Cody.

The Melbourne event included a panel dialogue with RISE participants, mentors and executive sponsors and centred the question: “What really needs fixing?” in relation to structural and systemic barriers. DCA’s Dr Virginia Mapedzahama, PhD, was one of the featured speakers at the event.

Conferences

Further to this, the project team presented insights and emerging findings to amplify the impact of the RISE Project at the following events:

- the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York City (CSW69)
- the Science in Australian Gender Equity Conference in Sydney.

Outcomes and overall impact

The Sydney networking event format generated significant engagement and emotional resonance. Participants reported feeling seen and validated, and feedback indicated a strong appetite for continued in-person forums of this nature. The event strengthened cross-sector relationships and positioned lived experience at the centre of workplace reform discussions.

The Melbourne event deepened policy-to-practice conversations and expanded RISE’s Melbourne network across legal, policy and social impact sectors. High demand and turnout reinforced the value of in-person convening as a mechanism for advocacy and community engagement.

Collectively, the Sydney and Melbourne events demonstrated strong demand for structured, in-person spaces that centre the voices of CARM women. They strengthened consortium visibility, deepened stakeholder relationships, and advanced RISE’s advocacy objectives by linking lived experience with policy and organisational reform conversations.

The conferences gave us the platforms to socialise the RISE Project amongst fellow academics, peers, professionals, practitioners, and more.

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 2025:

Major partners

Thanks to Gilbert + Tobin and KPMG.



DCA event and other sponsors and supporters

Thanks to the following members for event sponsorship and support:

- Ashurst – Major Sponsor of the Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on D&I
- KPMG – sponsor/host of the Gender Equality Insights event series
- ANZ Bank – sponsor/host of the First Nations Insights event series
- Gilbert + Tobin – sponsor/host of D&I Insights event series and DCA Major Partner
- HSBC Australia – outgoing sponsor/host of D&I Insights event series and DCA Major Partner
- Accenture, ANU, Australian Digital Health Agency, BHP, Compass Group, Edith Cowen University, Great Southern Bank, Inclusive, Kinetic IT, Northrop Grumman, PwC Australia – as hosts of other DCA events.

Research sponsors and partners

Class Inclusion at Work

Thanks to Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer, host and partner presenting the research launch event of DCA's Class Inclusion at Work report in Sydney (and online) in August 2025.

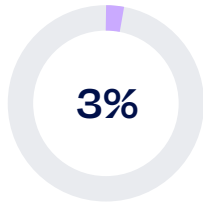
RISE Project

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

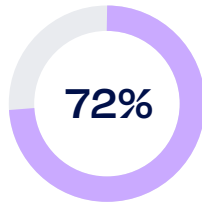
Our team

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

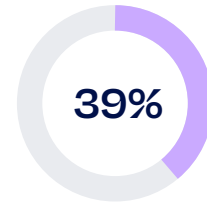




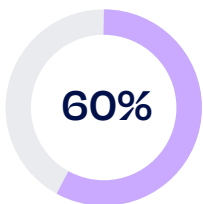
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
3% of our team identify as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



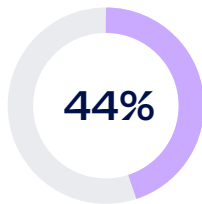
Non-Main English-Speaking Background
72% of our team report having one or more non-main English-speaking backgrounds



CARM
39% of our team are a person from a Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM)¹ group



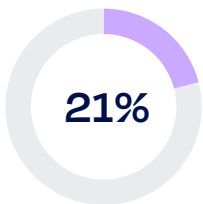
Multilingual
60% of our team are multilingual



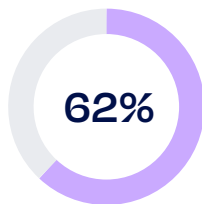
Born Overseas
44% of our team were born overseas



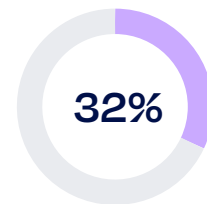
Non-Christian Religion
10% of our team have a non-Christian religious affiliation



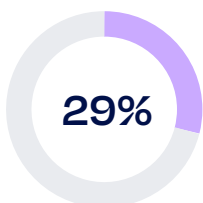
Christian Religion
21% of our team have a Christian religious affiliation



Caring Responsibilities
62% of our team have caring responsibilities



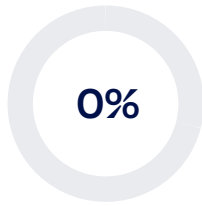
With Disability
32% of our team identify as a person with disability



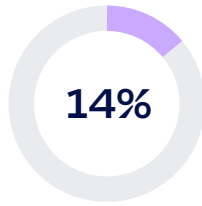
Neurodivergent
29% of our team identified as neurodivergent and/or have lived experience of cognitive differences

DCA understands and celebrates that our strength as a team lies in our diversity of lived experience and expertise that we bring to the group.

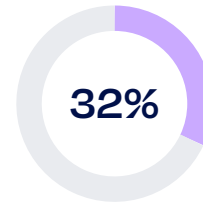
1. CARM people in Australia are people who are typically racialised as Black, Brown, Asian, or any non-white group, who face discrimination or marginalisation due to their race and/or racialised religion.



Younger Workers
0% of our team are under 30

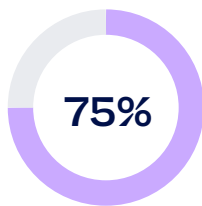


Older Workers
14% of our team are over 55

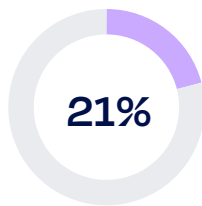


LGBTQ+
32% of our team describe themselves as LGBTQ+

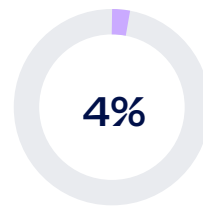
Gender



75% of our team describe their gender as **a woman**

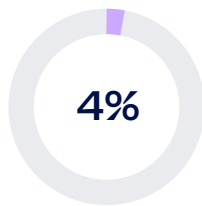


21% of our team describe their gender as **a man**

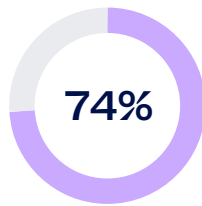


4% of our team describe their gender as **non-binary**

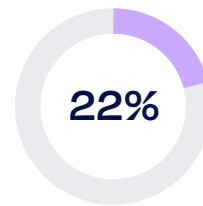
Social class²



4% of our team ranked their social standing as **class marginalised**



74% of our team ranked their social standing as **middle class**



22% of our team ranked their social standing as **class privileged**

2. Measured using an adapted version of the MacArthur Scale of Subjective social status where social standings of 0–4 are class marginalised, 5–7 are middle class, and 8–10 are class privileged. See [Class Inclusion at Work](#).

Team overview

DCA's team structure is designed to effectively advance our vision and work by leveraging our diverse expertise across the organisation. Our CEO reports directly to the DCA Board of Directors, ensuring strategic alignment and providing guidance in line with DCA's objectives.

Our key functions are outlined as follows. Explore individual team bios on our website to learn more.

Advocacy:	Members of our team help facilitate DCA's engagement with policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders to influence legislation and workplace policies that advance D&I.
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.
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.
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.
Member Engagement:	Engages with future, new and current DCA Member organisations, supporting them in maximising the membership value to help them embed leading-practice D&I strategies.
Research:	Conducts leading-edge, evidence-based research on workplace D&I to inform policy, practice, and public discourse.
Racial Equity and Intersectionality:	Drives strategic initiatives that address emerging challenges in workplace D&I, 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. Within this team, DCA's RISE Project team works to create pathways to senior leadership for CARM women.

Our External Advisory Panels

DCA convenes external advisory panels with subject matter expertise and lived experience to ensure our work is informed by real-world insight, grounded in lived experience, and reflects the perspectives of those most impacted by the issues we seek to address.

In 2025, this included our:

**Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait
Islander External Advisory Panel**

**Disability and Accessibility
External Advisory Panel**

**Research External
Advisory Panel**

**An expert panel to oversee and
inform our social class research**

Key research projects are overseen and informed by expert panels that may include representatives of peak organisations, practitioners, and people with lived experience and expertise specific to the subject matter. This year, DCA had an expert panel advising our social class research. This panel first met at the start of the project to gain their insights, then it met a second time for insights on our planned approach, and a third for their feedback on our final report.

In 2025, DCA's **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel** met once. The panel was comprised of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members across Country, with representatives throughout Australian states and territories. Panel members provided 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.

DCA's **Research External Advisory Panel** is a group that oversees DCA's research. This panel met three times in 2025. Members include leading academics and researchers with knowledge of D&I theory and practice. The panel meets to provide strategic direction to DCA's Research function. Panel members provide expert guidance to DCA about our direction and collaborations with industry.

DCA's **Disability and Accessibility External Advisory Panel** is comprised of leaders in the disability and accessibility community, some of whom are from DCA member organisations, representing a wide range of lived experiences and expertise. This panel met three times in 2025. 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. This EAP assists DCA to promote and facilitate accessible and inclusive workplaces, including better labour market engagement and recognition of the talents and untapped potential of people with disability.

We thank all our panel representatives for their invaluable contributions throughout the year. Their insights and lived experience have strengthened our work, ensuring it remains relevant, and impactful, while always centring the voices of people with lived experience. We deeply appreciate everyone's time, expertise and commitment to advancing meaningful change.



DCA convenes external advisory panels with subject matter expertise and lived experience to ensure our work is informed by real-world insight, grounded in lived experience, and reflects the perspectives of those most impacted by the issues we seek to address.

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.

In 2025, DCA welcomed three new directors to the Board, Tara Le Friedman and Zak Hammer in June, and Bronwyn Dodd in September, adding valuable expertise in notably digital transformation, strategy, social impact and change management.



Sunita Gloster AM
Chair, DCA Board
[Read Sunita's bio](#)



Chris Lamb
Deputy Chair, DCA Board
(interim CEO Jan-Feb 2025)
[Read Chris' bio](#)



Julie Canepa
Director, DCA Board
[Read Julie's bio](#)



Peter Chun
Director, DCA Board
[Read Peter's bio](#)



Bronwyn Dodd
Director, DCA Board
[Read Bronwyn's bio](#)



Ian Goshko
Director, DCA Board
[Read Ian's bio](#)



Zak Hammer
Director, DCA Board
[Read Zak's bio](#)



Elizabeth Hristoforidis
Director, DCA Board
[Read Elizabeth's bio](#)

The DCA Board of Directors is responsible for setting the ethical framework for the organisation and defining and nurturing the organisation's fundamental values.



Tara Le Friedman
Director, DCA Board

[Read Tara's bio](#)



Louise Monger
Director, DCA Board

[Read Louise's bio](#)



Craig Mutton
Director, DCA Board

[Read Craig's bio](#)



Annie Pettitt
Director, DCA Board

[Read Annie's bio](#)



Laura Raymer
Company Secretary,
DCA Board

[Read Laura's bio](#)

Our 2025 financial results

The following tables outline DCA's statement of comprehensive income and financial position for the 2025 financial year. These should be read in conjunction with the full Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025, 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 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue	5,217,855	5,466,567
Other Operating Income	955,638	947,921
Employee Benefits Expense	(4,316,664)	(4,061,396)
Depreciation and Amortisation Expense	(173,126)	(163,196)
Other Expenses	(1,904,342)	(1,931,904)
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(220,639)	257,992
Finance Income	108,543	117,430
Finance Cost	(10,414)	(10,704)
Net Finance Income	98,129	106,726
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(122,510)	364,718
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
TOTAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	(122,510)	64,718

Statement of financial position

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,901,887	2,305,809
Trade and Other Receivables	459,845	469,442
Other Financial Assets	4,833,540	4,560,956
Other Current Assets	64,692	64,692
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	7,259,964	7,400,899
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment	222,540	166,643
Intangibles	–	11,825
Other Non-Current Assets	92,999	146,142
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	315,539	324,610
TOTAL ASSETS	7,575,503	7,725,509
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and Other Payables	223,415	271,367
Employee Benefit Provisions	202,743	185,711
Unearned Income	3,036,240	3,031,879
Lease Liability	141,301	138,227
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	3,603,699	3,627,184
Non-Current Liabilities		
Employee Benefit Provisions	48,106	52,117
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	48,106	52,117
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,651,805	3,679,301
NET ASSETS	3,923,698	4,046,208
EQUITY		
Accumulated Surplus	3,923,698	4,046,208
TOTAL EQUITY	3,923,698	4,046,208



We aim to create a work environment where every member of the team feels valued and empowered to contribute and progress fully.



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