



First Peoples Disability Network Australia

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2015-2020

ABOUT FIRST PEOPLES DISABILITY NETWORK AUSTRALIA

We are First Peoples Disability Network Australia (FPDN) – a national organisation of and for Australia's First Peoples with disability, their families and communities. Our organisation is governed by First Peoples with lived experience of disability.

We proactively engage with communities around Australia and advocate for the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in Australia and internationally. We follow the human rights framework established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which Australia is a signatory, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

First Peoples with disability and their families are amongst the most seriously disadvantaged and disempowered members of the Australian community. We give voice to their needs and concerns and share their narratives of lived experience.

We work for the recognition, respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of First Peoples with disability and their families.

We work within a social model of disability, in which we understand 'disability' to be the result of barriers to our equal participation in the social and physical environment. These barriers can and must be dismantled. The social model stands in contrast to a medical model of disability, which focuses on diagnosis.

We were born of the efforts of advocates working from the early 1980s to bring attention to the specific needs of First Peoples with disability and their families.

Our journey has been long and difficult. Because of the intersection of our race and disability, we have had to confront and overcome apathy, neglect and prejudice both in the general community and in our own communities. That struggle continues.

We are a young organisation established informally in 2010 and incorporated in 2014. Our journey is just beginning.

OUR VISION

We have a vision of a just and inclusive society, in which Australia's First Peoples with disability are respected and valued for their culture, history and contribution to contemporary life, and in which the human rights of First Peoples with disability are recognised, respected, protected and fulfilled.

OUR PURPOSE

First Peoples Disability Network Australia is a national organisation of and for Australia's First Peoples with disability, their families and communities. Its purpose is to promote respect for human rights, secure social justice, and empower First Peoples with disability to participate in Australian society on an equal basis with others. We are the custodians of the narratives of First Peoples with disability, their families and communities and we recognise this important responsibility.

Ours is an oral history. We continue this by recognising the value of our peoples' narratives and collecting this as data, which informs our work and the work of others.

OUR CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES: HOW WE WORK

Our core values

- ® Recognition and respect for human rights, and in particular for the human rights of First Peoples and First Peoples with disability
- © Equality of outcomes for First Peoples with disability with other members of Australian society through equal opportunity, non-discrimination and affirmative action
- © Empowerment of First Peoples with disability and their families to direct their own lives and to secure the resources that they need to participate on an equal basis with others in Australian life
- Access to justice for First Peoples with disability
- Inclusion of First Peoples with disability in all aspects of Australian life
- Respect for the Elders of First Peoples nations across Australia and for their efforts over time to secure justice for their peoples and communities. In particular, we honour those Elders who have worked to secure justice for First Peoples with disability and their families
- ® Respect for the culture and history of Australian First Peoples and recognition of the ongoing importance of that culture in our contemporary lives
- Recognition and respect for the lived experience of First Peoples with disability and their families as the central driver of our work
- Recognition of the richness and diversity of Australian First Peoples communities across Australia

Our core principles

- We work within a social model of disability, which recognises that disability is produced by barriers to equality and participation for people with impairments that must be dismantled.
- We work with First Peoples with disability, their families and communities across Australia so as to ensure that our work reflects their diversity and priorities.
- We work with all First Peoples communities to create and maintain a safe and secure place for the exchange of ideas, the building of alliances, and the formulation of priorities, between and across community divides.
- We are passionate, determined, and committed to our work.
- We lead change, not react to it.
- We are innovative, creative, and solution-focused.
- We are accountable in all aspects of our work to First Peoples with disability and their families, our communities, and to the community generally.

OUR CORE OBJECTIVES

1. Attitudinal change through education

We will educate key stakeholders, including services and the community generally, about the rights, achievements, abilities and needs of First Peoples with disability and their families.

2. Community participation through capacity development

We will develop the capacity of First Peoples with disability and their families to secure and use the resources they need to participate in the community on an equal basis with others.

3. Leadership

We will be recognised as the leading national voice for First Peoples with disability.

4. Systemic change

We will drive systemic change for First Peoples with disability and their families.

5. A responsive service system

We will develop the capacity of mainstream specialist disability services, Aboriginal community-controlled services and governments to provide culturally appropriate disability services and supports for First Peoples with disability and their families.

6. Knowledge built through community-driven research

We will conduct research to capture the knowledge, expertise and experience of First Peoples with disability and use this knowledge to secure their rights through improvements to policy and practice.

7. Effective communication of our message

We will effectively communicate the needs and concerns of First Peoples with disability and their families to the community generally through diverse media channels.

OUR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

8. Effective governance and operations

We will:

- maintain our governance structure, systems and processes to ensure that we continue to operate under the control of First Peoples with disability and their families, and that we meet our legal obligations and achieve our purpose and objectives
- © establish and maintain effective, flexible and innovative operational structures, systems and processes that will enable us to achieve our purpose and objectives.

9. Access to resources

We will secure the resources we need for our work.

OBJECTIVE 1:

ATTITUDINAL CHANGE THROUGH EDUCATION

We will educate key stakeholders, including services and the community generally, about the rights, achievements, abilities and needs of First Peoples with disability and their families.

Key result areas

Influence on structures and processes

We will:

- target key stakeholders and share the narratives that we collect the lived experiences of First Peoples with disability
- encourage key stakeholders to support wider attitudinal change by committing to recognise, report and participate in changing attitudes
- develop cross-cultural educational resources and programs and deliver them to service providers to improve their accessibility and responsiveness to First Peoples with disability and their families
- participate in and engage with disability and Indigenous-specific advisory structures.

Community education

We will:

- oraise awareness of the needs, concerns, value and contribution of First Peoples with disability and their families by:
 - developing and delivering community education resources
 - participating in relevant community events
- promote the coverage of issues for First Peoples with disability and their families in mainstream community education programs that cover either issues for people with disability or issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- We have developed educational resources and programs that assist mainstream services to improve their cultural competence for work with First Peoples with disability and their families.
- **®** We have participated in and influenced the work of disability and Indigenous-specific advisory structures.
- We have developed community education resources that raise awareness of the needs, concerns, value and contribution of First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have participated in a range of community events across Australia and have raised awareness of the needs, concerns, value and contribution of First Peoples with disability and their families.
- Mainstream community education programs that cover issues for people with disability or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people also cover issues for First Peoples with disability and their families.

OBJECTIVE 2:

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION THROUGH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

We will develop the capacity of First Peoples with disability and their families to obtain and use the resources they need to participate in the community on an equal basis with others.

Key result areas

Information and education about rights and entitlements

We will:

- proactively share information to educate First Peoples with disability and their families about their rights and entitlements using various means including peer-to-peer support
- proactively share information about rights and entitlements with community, and with the Aboriginal and disability services sectors
- work to empower First Peoples with disability and their families to advocate for themselves and equip them with the information they need to do this
- work to ensure that First Peoples with disability and their families understand their rights and entitlements beyond the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Local Area Coordination – National Disability Insurance Scheme

We will:

- operate a National Disability Insurance Scheme Local Area Coordination service specifically for First Peoples in South Australia
- pursue the establishment of First Peoples specific National Disability Insurance Scheme Local Area Coordination services across Australia.

Disability Support Organisations – National Disability Insurance Scheme

We will:

- establish National Disability Insurance Scheme Disability Support Organisations for First Peoples in the Northern Territory and South Australia
- work with Aboriginal Disability Network NSW to establish a National Disability Insurance Scheme Disability Support Organisation for First Peoples in New South Wales
- pursue the establishment of National Disability Insurance Scheme Disability Support Organisations for First Peoples in each Australian state and territory.

- © First Peoples with disability and their families in the communities in which we work:
 - are connected to the services and supports they need in the general community
 - receive equitable access to the supports and services available under a human rights framework.
- © First Peoples communities in which we work show greater recognition and acceptance of the available supports, including but not limited to, the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- © The National Disability Insurance Agency's systems and processes for assessing eligibility, allocating support and managing support are culturally appropriate and sensitive.
- © First Peoples with disability who are eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme can obtain culturally appropriate and responsive supports and services.
- © First Peoples with disability and their families can effectively manage the supports and services they receive under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- © First Peoples with disability and their families are assisted, as needed, to effectively engage with and maintain their relationship with the National Disability Insurance Agency and service providers.

OBJECTIVE 3:

LEADERSHIP

We will be recognised as the leading national voice for First Peoples with disability.

Key result areas

Vision

We will:

- © create and promote a positive vision for First Peoples with disability and their families and engage our communities in our efforts to achieve that vision
- © continue to initiate and lead the conversation about the rights and needs of First Peoples with disability within our own communities, and within the Australian community generally
- identify and engage, nurture, inform, and educate future leaders of the rights movement for First Peoples with disability and their families.

Authenticity

We will:

- lead from lived experience
- share the narratives of the lived experience of First Peoples with disability and their families in the public domain
- regularly engage with our communities at a grassroots level across Australia to ensure we have a continuing understanding of their priority needs and concerns
- ensure that our current and future leadership reflects the diversity of our community, including in relation to culture, geography, gender, impairment type, age, and other characteristics
- establish a council of Elders with lived experience of disability to provide spiritual and cultural guidance to the development of our movement.

- Our communities across Australia continue to recognise us as a trusted and respected national voice of First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We continue to be recognised by governments and the general public as the legitimate and authoritative national voice of First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have a strong and diverse leadership group that can build our organisation into the future.
- We faithfully and respectfully share the narratives and oral histories of the lived experience of First Peoples with disability and their families and this contributes positively to the cultural understanding and decision-making processes of policy makers.

Influence

We will:

- continue to be the leading voice for change, on behalf of First Peoples with disability and their families, to all levels of government and the community generally
- represent the interests of First Peoples with disability and their families:
 - within the disability rights and advocacy sector, disability policy frameworks and the disability service system
 - within the First Peoples rights sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy frameworks and the Aboriginal community-controlled service system
- build alliances and partnerships to advance our objectives.

Inclusiveness

We will:

- o communicate about our work to our communities in culturally appropriate ways and in accessible formats
- give First Peoples with disability and their families the opportunity to engage with our work and express their views and concerns
- work with all First Peoples communities to create and maintain a safe and secure place for the exchange of ideas, building of alliances and formulation of priorities between and across community divides with a focus on the needs of First Peoples with disability.

International engagement

We will:

- represent the interests and concerns of Australian First Peoples with disability in key international forums, including those of the United Nations
- engage with First Peoples with disability from other countries to build international recognition and support for our needs and concerns as First Peoples with disability.

- We remain closely connected with our communities at a grassroots level across Australia.
- We have developed a clear agenda for improving the life circumstances and outcomes for First Peoples with disability and their families and communicated it to all relevant sectors of the Australian community.
- © Government policies and programs and community services recognise, and are responsive to, the needs and concerns of First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We stay actively engaged in, and contribute to, international efforts to improve recognition and responses to the needs of First Peoples with disability and their families.

OBJECTIVE 4:

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

We will drive systemic change for First Peoples with disability and their families.

Key result areas

Access to justice

We will work to improve access to justice for First Peoples with disability, including recommending criminal justice system reforms that:

- extend diversionary options
- reduce incarceration rates
- provide essential healthcare and rehabilitation
- end indefinite detention.

Access to education

We will:

- work to improve the meaningful participation (enrolment and retention) of First Peoples children and young people with disability in inclusive primary and secondary education
- o work to improve early recognition and early intervention for First Peoples children with disability
- promote the rights of all children to a quality education that enables them to fulfil their potential.

Prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation

We will work to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation of First Peoples with disability within our own communities and within mainstream and specialist services across Australia.

Prevention of the removal of First Peoples children from their families

We will work to prevent the removal of First Peoples children with disability from their parents and communities across Australia.

Access to employment

We will work to improve:

- access to employment
- vocational education

for First Peoples with disability across Australia.

Access to disability services and supports

We will work to improve:

- access to culturally appropriate disability services and supports for First Peoples with disability and their families
- the cultural understanding of service providers, with a particular focus on the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme across Australia.

Access to community infrastructure, especially in remote communities

We will work to improve:

- the availability of accessible public and community transport
- access to social housing
- access to social and community services

for First Peoples with disability, especially in remote communities.

Access to healthcare

We will work to improve access to appropriate healthcare, including mental healthcare, for First Peoples with disability across Australia.

- Australian governments and justice authorities recognise and act on the need to improve access to justice for First Peoples with disability and their families, particularly by reforming criminal justice systems.
- Australian governments and education authorities recognise and act on the need to improve access to inclusive primary and secondary education for First Peoples children and young people.
- Australian governments and education, healthcare and disability service authorities recognise and act on the need to improve early intervention education services and supports for First Peoples children.
- Australian governments expose the history of institutional abuse, neglect and exploitation experienced by First Peoples with disability, and to prevent it continuing and reoccurring.
- Australian governments, child protection authorities, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and child and family services prevent the separation of First Peoples children with disability from their parents and communities.
- Australian governments and healthcare authorities improve access to general and specialised healthcare, including mental healthcare, for First Peoples with disability.
- Australian governments and employers in all sectors improve the participation rate of First Peoples with disability in employment.
- Australian governments and the vocational education sector improve access to vocational training for First Peoples with disability.
- © First Peoples with disability and their families across Australia have equitable access to culturally appropriate disability supports and services available under the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and that appropriate safeguards are in place.
- Australian governments improve access to basic social and community services
 for First Peoples with disability and their families across Australia, including social
 housing, and public and community transport, particularly in remote communities.

OBJECTIVE 5:

A RESPONSIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

We will develop the capacity of mainstream specialist disability services, Aboriginal community-controlled services and governments to provide culturally appropriate disability services and supports for First Peoples with disability and their families.

Key result areas

Community of practice

We will:

- be the primary source of information and expertise in relation to the development of culturally appropriate and responsive services and supports for First Peoples with disability and their families
- o develop and support a community of practice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who have a professional interest in the development and delivery of culturally appropriate and responsive services for First Peoples with disability and their families.

Culturally competent disability services

We will:

- o develop educational resources and programs and deliver them to mainstream specialist disability services to improve their cultural responsiveness to First Peoples with disability and their families
- develop and implement a quality assurance framework that will endorse services that consistently achieve cultural competence in service delivery
- o develop and promote a competency checklist to guide the development of culturally responsive and accessible services for First Peoples with disability and their families
- instigate and maintain a merit-based approval system to highlight service providers that competently meet the needs of First Peoples with disability.

Disability-competent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services

We will develop educational resources and programs and deliver them to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services to improve their disability-related responsiveness to First Peoples with disability and their families.

Responsive government policy and programs

We will work with government to develop and implement procurement policies and processes that will drive culturally competent service development for First Peoples with disability and their families.

- We continue to be recognised by governments at all levels, and by the community generally, as a key source of information and expertise on the development of culturally appropriate and responsive services for First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have established a community of practice of First Peoples staff and this is contributing to the consolidation of knowledge and expertise in support of the development of culturally appropriate and responsive services for First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have developed educational resources and programs that are assisting mainstream disability services to improve their cultural competence for work with First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have developed and implemented a quality assurance framework for the endorsement of disability services that are culturally competent for work with First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have developed and implemented a checklist to guide the development of culturally responsive and accessible services for First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have developed educational resources and programs that are assisting Aboriginal community-controlled health and community services build their disability-related competence and capacity for work with First Peoples with disability and their families.
- Australian governments develop and implement procurement policies and processes that are driving culturally competent service development for First Peoples with disability and their families.

OBJECTIVE 6:

KNOWLEDGE BUILT THROUGH COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RESEARCH

We will conduct research to capture the knowledge, expertise and experience of First Peoples with disability and use this knowledge to secure their rights through improvements to policy and practice.

Key result areas

Capture of narratives of lived experiences of First Peoples with disability

We will:

- ocreate opportunities for people to share their experiences of disability as a basis for research
- develop a community-driven research agenda that is informed by the personal and family narratives
 shared with us during community consultations
- share our knowledge and research results in relevant publications and at policy and research forums
- build capacity in the First Peoples disability research sector by actively supporting First Peoples researchers with disability in all aspects of research.

Collaboration in rights-oriented research

We will:

- establish principles for the co-production of research with other organisations that is compatible with the
 First Peoples disability community
- establish partnerships with compatible researchers and organisations that have the potential to advance the human rights of First Peoples with disability and their families
- form international research alliances with other Indigenous peoples for the exchange and promotion of knowledge and research.

- We have developed a First Peoples disability research agenda.
- We have obtained funding for narrative-based community-driven research and taken the role of lead researcher.
- Our research papers have been published in relevant journals.

OBJECTIVE 7:

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF OUR MESSAGE

We will effectively communicate the needs and concerns of First Peoples with disability and their families to the community generally through diverse media channels.

Key result areas

Key opinion leader

We will:

- be a key opinion leader in the traditional and new media on issues affecting First Peoples with disability
 and their families
- build our reputation within the mainstream, Indigenous, academic and new media as a trusted and expert commentator on issues affecting First Peoples with disability and their families
- continue to contribute to national forums, conferences and seminars to highlight issues of concern for First Peoples with disability and their families and to promote our work, as appropriate.

Visibility

We will:

- © continue to develop and protect our brand as an organisation of and for First Peoples with disability, speaking and working from lived experience
- develop and implement communications plans to ensure that our work is effectively communicated to relevant stakeholders.

Stakeholder engagement

We will:

- identify our key stakeholder groups and update them regularly about our work and emerging issues
- maximise the reach of our communication by using diverse means including Aboriginal community languages and accessible formats where appropriate.

- We are the key opinion leader in the traditional and new media on issues affecting First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We are viewed as a trustworthy and expert commentator on issues affecting First Peoples with disability and their families.
- We have contributed to major national and other forums, including conferences and seminars, to highlight key issues of concern to First Peoples with disability and their families, and promote our work.
- We have effectively protected our brand and intellectual property as an organisation of and for First Peoples with disability, speaking and working from lived experience.
- We have effectively communicated about our work and emerging issues to relevant stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE 8:

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

We will:

- maintain our governance structure, systems and processes to ensure that we continue to operate under the control of First Peoples with disability and their families, and that we meet our legal obligations and achieve our purpose and objectives
- establish and maintain effective, flexible and innovative operational structures, systems and processes that enable us to achieve our purpose and objectives.

Key result areas

Capacity for governance

We will:

- provide ongoing training for directors to maintain the knowledge and skills they require to perform their roles effectively
- ensure that our Board reflects the diversity of our constituency
- o develop and implement a succession strategy that will ensure the identification and professional development of future organisational leaders.

Effective oversight of organisational activities

We will:

- @ develop and maintain comprehensive governance policies and procedures, regularly updated, which guide the Board's work and support the effective oversight of organisational activities
- maintain and review clear role descriptions and expectations for the Executive and other directors.

Compliance with legal and contractual obligations

We will develop a compliance framework to ensure we meet all of our organisation's legal and contractual obligations.

Board code of conduct and ethics

We will maintain and review a Board code of conduct and ethical guidelines.

- We have a knowledgeable and skilled Board that reflects the diversity of our constituency and effectively governs our organisation.
- We have identified and are nurturing future leaders of our movement who can assume governance roles in the future.
- © Directors are actively engaged in the governance of our organisation, including through effective sub-committee structures.
- Our Chief Executive Officer is well supported and supervised by the Board towards the achievement of our organisational goals.
- © Directors and staff have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and there are clear lines of communication between directors and staff.
- © Directors have acted in a way that is ethically consistent with their duties.
- We have set annual work priorities and budgets.
- We have effectively monitored and adapted our plans and budgets so as to maximise our outcomes and minimise our risks.
- We have clearly defined and understood staff roles and responsibilities.
- © Our staff members have the support and supervision they need to fulfil their work roles and achieve our organisational objectives to a high standard.
- **®** We have the physical infrastructure that we need for our work.
- **®** We have effective operational policies and procedures.
- We have successfully managed our growth and diversification of functions.

OBJECTIVE 9:

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

We will secure the resources we need for our work.

Key result areas

Pro-bono partnerships

We will establish pro-bono partnerships with academic, corporate and other bodies to deliver our work and extend its scope and reach.

Grant seeking

We will continue to seek grants for project funding and recurrent program funding to undertake priority areas of work.

Business development

We will explore the development of fee-for-service, revenue-generating programs consistent with our purpose.

Fundraising activities

We will conduct fundraising activities consistent with our purpose.

Donor development

We will:

- become a public benevolent institution capable of receiving tax-deductible gifts
- identify and engage potential donors.

Management of resource development

We will establish a resource development function to manage our efforts to secure additional resources.

- We have established pro-bono partnerships with academic, corporate and other bodies to deliver our work and extend its scope and reach.
- We have secured grants from government and other donors to undertake aspects of our work.
- **®** We have generated income through commercial services:
 - to offset the costs of those services
 - for reinvestment in other areas of activity.
- **®** We have conducted successful fundraising activities.
- We have developed and implemented a donor program that generates capital to support our work.

IMPLEMENTATION

We will develop a plan for each year covered by these Strategic Directions that will detail activities to be undertaken to achieve our objectives.

MONITORING

- We will monitor progress towards the achievement of our Strategic Directions at each annual planning session.
- We will monitor progress against our annual plans at each Board meeting.
- The Chief Executive Officer will regularly report to the Board against the objectives in the Strategic Directions.
- The Board will report to its constituency and the public, through its annual report, against the objectives in the Strategic Directions.
- These Strategic Directions will be reviewed and revised, where necessary, to improve our effectiveness and respond to emerging issues.

EVALUATION

We will:

- o invite feedback on our direct services through client satisfaction surveys
- o commission independent evaluations of:
 - mid-term progress towards the achievement of our Strategic Directions, in mid-2017
 - effectiveness in achieving our Strategic Directions, in the second half of 2020.

CONTACT DETAILS

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