



DIVERSITY
+ INCLUSION
ACTION PLAN
2024-2027

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Intereach acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and their strong spiritual connection to the land and the waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders, both past and present, and to those of the future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We will always remember that despite major physical changes, this land is, was, and will always be, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land.

INCLUSION STATEMENT

Intereach welcomes every person irrespective of gender or gender identity, age, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultural background, physical or intellectual abilities, country of birth, religious beliefs, sexual identity and other real and perceived differences.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CEOS

Having a diverse and inclusive workforce, workplace and community is an important focus for Intereach. As a commitment to this, we have developed an Intereach-specific Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that strives to empower everyone irrespective of gender, background, ability, race, ethnicity, age and other dimensions of diversity.

The action plan incorporates a range of initiatives that will bring our commitment towards diversity and inclusion to life. By taking this journey towards a more diverse and inclusive organisation, we are not only strengthening our core values of Leadership, Partnership and Social Justice but also positioning our organisation as a destination employer in today's competitive marketplace in line with our Strategic Plan.

At Intereach, we pride ourselves on fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment. We believe in the power of diversity, recognising that it fuels innovation, drives creativity, and enhances our collective ability to tackle challenges. We also know that inclusion requires a culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to bring their authentic selves to work.

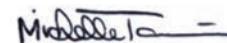
We believe that embracing diversity and inclusion not only a moral imperative but is also a strategic measure that will drive our success in the long-term.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the Intereach Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan as these two plans form the cornerstone of Intereach's pledge to creating and maintaining a welcoming workplace for our people, and environment for those we serve, that promotes reconciliation, belonging and inclusion.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Reference Group will be driving the actions of this plan and we encourage all staff to actively participate in initiatives being delivered across our footprint.

Thank you for your commitment to our shared vision. We look forward to the positive impact we will make through our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Warm regards,



Michelle and Yvette
Intereach Co-CEO's



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

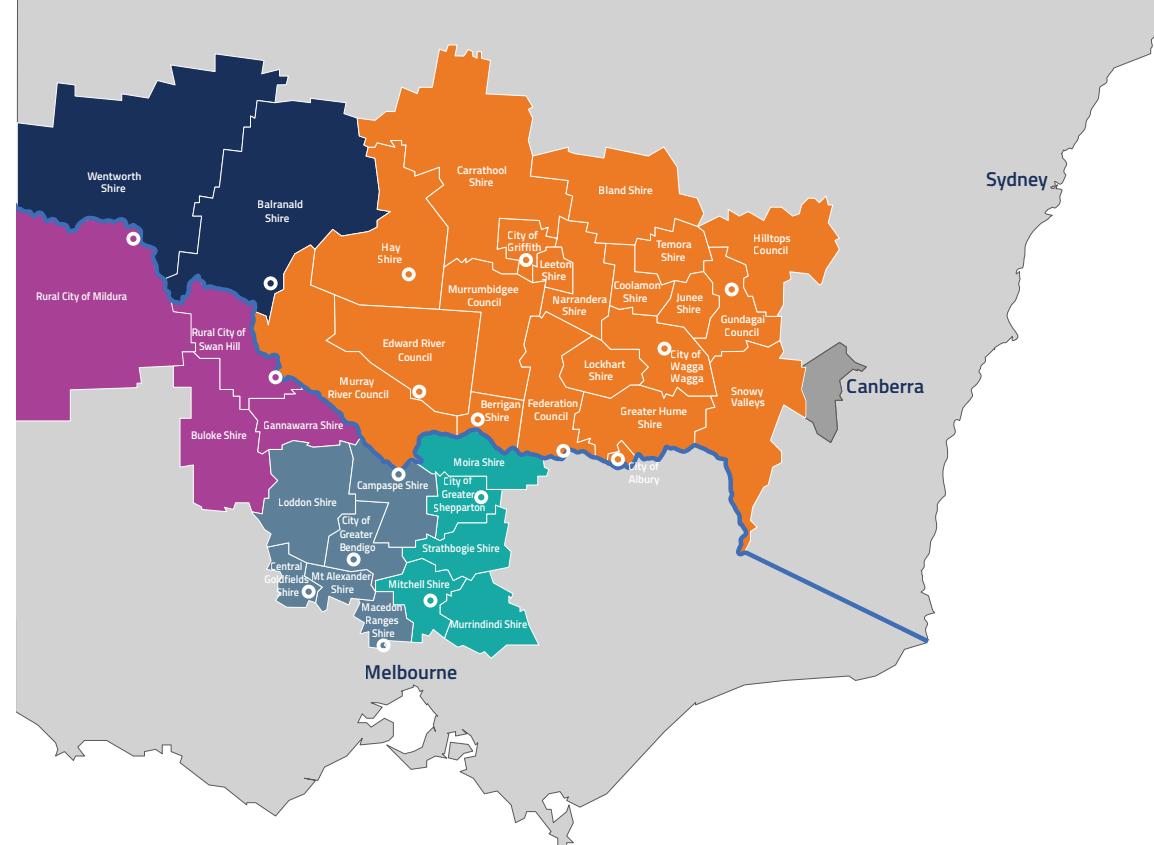
-Margaret Mead
Anthropologist

ABOUT INTEREACH

Intereach is a not-for-profit community organisation committed to developing community infrastructure and supporting rural, regional and remote communities.

For more than 50 years, Intereach has been working throughout the Riverina-Murray region of NSW and, more recently, northern and central Victoria to strengthen and support communities and to improve the social and personal wellbeing of children, families, older people, carers and people with disability.

Our footprint covers 38 Local Government Areas which has over 741,000 residents. We support these communities from our 17 offices located in Albury, Balranald, Bendigo, Cootamundra, Corowa, Deniliquin, Echuca, Finley, Gisborne, Griffith, Hay, Maryborough, Mildura, Seymour, Shepparton, Swan Hill and Wagga Wagga.



OUR PURPOSE

- Strengthen and improve social and personal well-being for individuals, families and communities.
- Promote and facilitate access, resilience, and equality.
- Deliver services that are of quality and have value.



OUR VALUES



Leadership

We use our social influence to motivate others to reach their full potential.



Partnership

We work collectively with others toward a common goal of positive social and cultural change.



Social Justice

We protect and promote human rights by recognising that all people are free and equal in dignity and rights.



INTEREACH DEMOGRAPHIC

Our Intereach Your Opinion Matters Survey is a valued organisational initiative, where we seek to hear the voice of our people, to provide them with the opportunity to reflect on their experience and give feedback to help identify areas for improvement and growth.

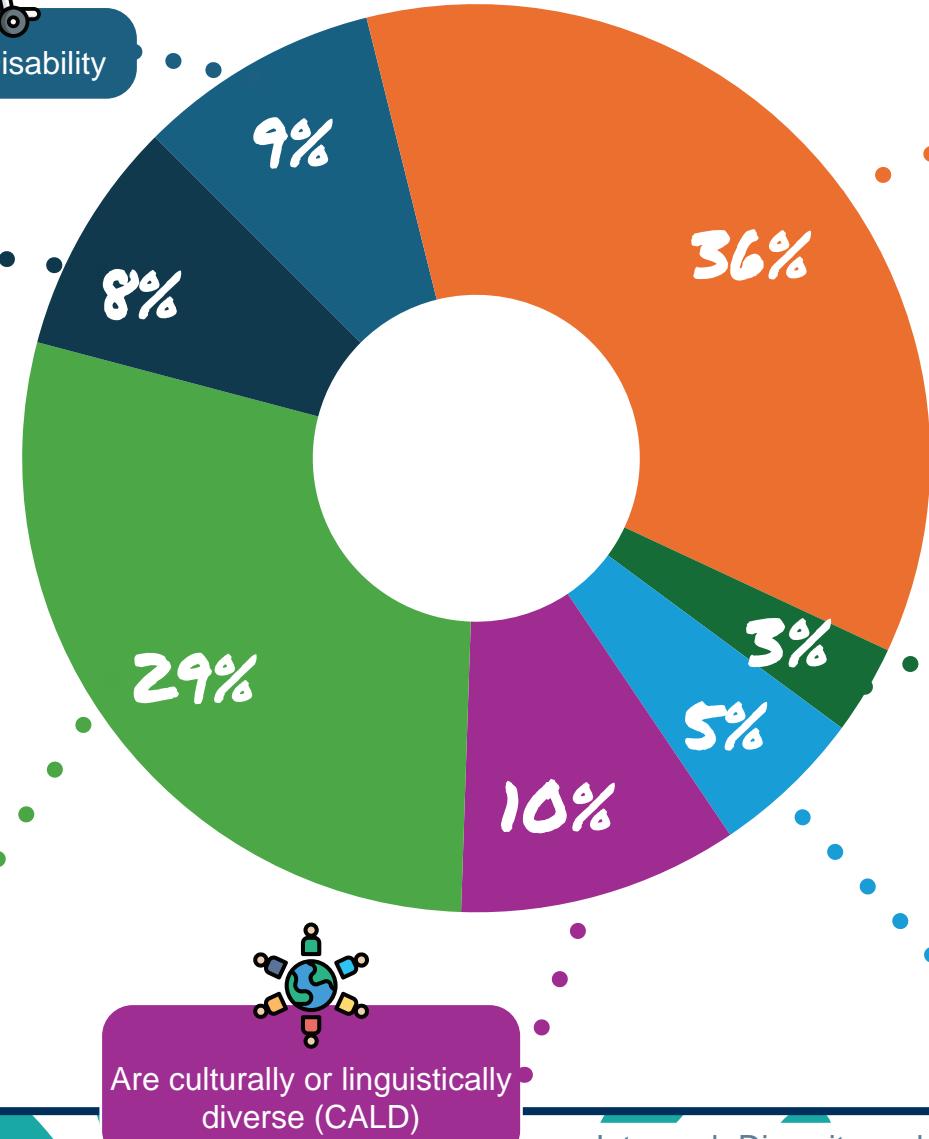
The information provided in this survey is integral in setting initiatives and priorities for the future and helping us to evolve as an organisation.

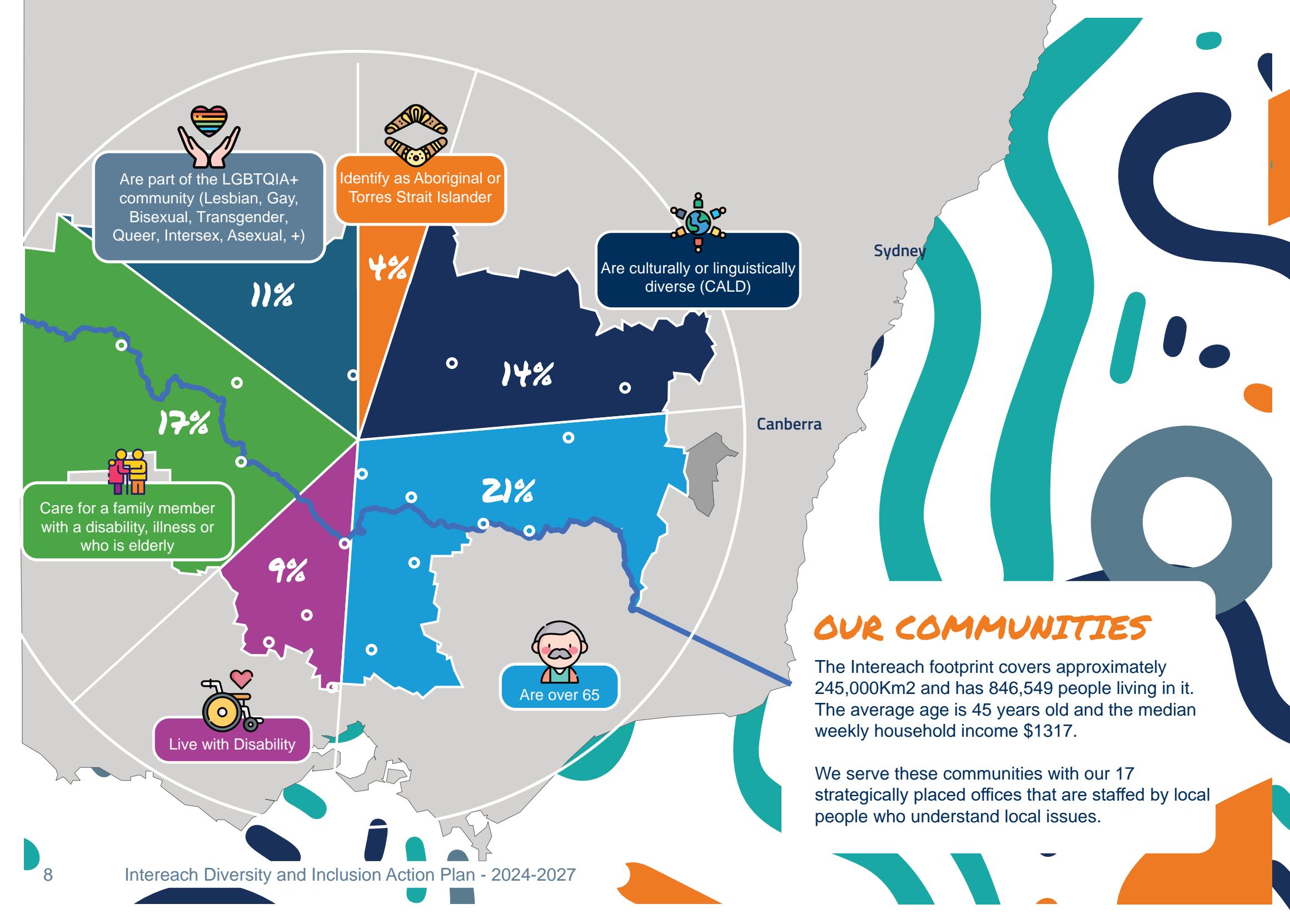
Our staff diversity profile indicated we have people employed with Intereach originating from all parts of the world and identifying as:

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- LGBTQIA+
- Mature Age
- Living with Disability
- Carers
- Living with mental health illness

OUR AMAZING STAFF

In 2023, we received 440 submissions from our 565 employees. Within the Your Opinion Matters survey responses, the following diversity data was provided by employees





WHAT DOES INCLUSION MEAN TO YOU?

Together, diversity and inclusion are the fundamental principles that form a strong foundation for a welcoming, equitable and respectful environment where differences are celebrated and valued.

To promote our commitment to inclusion and to bring staff along on our journey, on Wear it Purple Day on 25 August 2023, all staff were encouraged to consider what inclusion means and provide a word/s that embodies inclusion for them.

The results were formed into the word cloud below.

ACCEPTANCE

RESPECT

KINSHIP

PARTICIPATION

WHOLESOME

COLLABORATION

UNDERSTANDING

BELONGING

SAFE

THRIVING

EQUALITY

KINDNESS

FAITH

RESPECT

SAFETY

EMBRACING

EMBRACING

REPRESENTATION

VISIBILITY

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION REFERENCE GROUP

Our Diversity and Inclusion Reference Group (DIRG) operates as an advisory group which can be called upon as needed to inform the direction of the organisational policies, procedures, key documents and community events and activities in regard to diversity and inclusion.

The DIRG aims to promote and advance inclusion at Intereach, support all inclusion-based initiatives and provide a way for employees to have open conversations about important issues to enable a shared understanding of priorities and decision making.

Members of the DIRG are Intereach employees who have lived experience or identify as being from diverse communities, and members of the Senior Leadership team. The DIRG is also responsible for the development and implementation of Intereach's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

The DIRG meets bi-monthly to ensure actions outlined in the Inclusion Action Plan are progressed.



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Intereach implemented a Flexible Working Policy that supports the diverse needs of our employees and supports a culture that values work-life balance and inclusion. We have many employees who have been provided with flexible working arrangements to support their individual circumstances.
- Intereach purchased and promoted a suite of SBS Inclusion training modules which to all staff who can access through our organisational Learning & Development platform SeedHub. These modules include Age, Disability, Cultural, First Nations, Gender and LGBTIQ+ Inclusion courses.
- Our aged care staff participated in CALDWays training, consisting of four short online courses designed to educate aged care staff on various topics related to culturally inclusive service delivery, facilitated by Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra.
- Members of the Intereach Leadership Team attended Mulana Kaalinya Cultural Competency Training in Echuca VIC. Our leaders were privileged to be emersed in a journey of self-discovery, self-reflection, and deep listening about the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The group spoke about supporting our First Nations peoples and how we can do better.
- Harmony Day, IDAHOBIT, Volunteer Week, NAIDOC Week, Wear It Purple Day, R U OK? Day, International Day of People With Disability and National Carers Week, among others, are observed, recognised or celebrated internally within the organisation.
- Revision of supervision template was carried out and a new check-in template and guide have been designed to enable employees and their manager to connect, engage and build positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect.





- A 'Your Opinion Matters' staff survey is conducted annually.
- 8 weeks' paid parental leave has been introduced for eligible employees to support parents with shared caring responsibilities.
- Formation and retention of Intereach Reference Groups including the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, Diversity Inclusion Reference Group, Carers Reference Group and identified workplace Wellbeing Champions.
- Intereach developed and launched our new Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2026. This strategy aims to address disparities and challenges faced by individuals based on their gender and act as a guide for Intereach to promote and advance gender equality.
- To demonstrate our organisation's commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, Intereach joined Diversity Council Australia (DCA). Our membership with DCA provides our employees with access to resources and training to support our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. During Harmony Week 2024, we promoted our DCA membership to all staff and encouraged them to access and enjoy the resources available to them.
- Welcome Ambassador initiative partnership established with Settlement Services International. The Welcome Ambassador Program aims to provide vital support to newly arrived migrants in our Griffith, Swan Hill, and Echuca communities.



INTEREACH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN ACTIONS

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FOCUS AREAS

Our Action Plan has four focus areas with a strong emphasis on:

- 1. BUILD inclusive environments**
Goal: Develop and/or strengthen infrastructure and relationships

- 2. COMMIT**
Goal: Attitude, Beliefs, Culture & Vision

- 3. EDUCATE**
Goal: Internal and external learning opportunities

- 4. RECOGNISE**
Goal: Observance Days, community and employee engagement



1. BUILD

Action	Deliverables	Responsibility
1. Seek opportunities to establish new relationships and build on existing relationships with internal staff and external stakeholders that focus on diversity and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage and partner with peak bodies and government departments to develop and gain knowledge and resources to support our Intereach Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Provide Intereach staff and volunteers with the opportunity to attend internal and external local events and community working groups for diversity and inclusion to allow relationship building in local communities. e.g. multicultural councils, reconciliation committees, pride collectives etc. 	<p>People and Culture Team</p>
2. Create a culturally safe and accessible work environment for staff, volunteers, and community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all employees have access to flexible work arrangements to enable full work participation and work life harmony. Review our Work Health and Safety Framework and policy to ensure they meet the relevant standards of accessibility and reasonable adjustment. 	<p>HR, Program Managers, IT Department</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide inclusive and accessible resources via online platforms (website, intranet) with the aim to provide accessible digital experiences for people with vision, hearing, mobility, and cognitive limitations. 	<p>WHS</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with all staff to ensure accessibility issues of any kind are identified and addressed. 	<p>Marketing and Communications L&D IT</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable adjustments are reviewed and implemented to ensure all staff and volunteers have access to a safe, accessible and inclusive work environment as per the Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Policy. Ensure staff have plans in place when required and these are reviewed every 12 months. 	<p>WHS</p>

<p>3. Develop and improve recruitment processes to lead to an increased representation and employment of people from diverse backgrounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have fair and transparent recruitment process that help us improve diverse representation across our staffing groups. Audit our recruitment processes and systems to identify unintended barriers. Develop a campaign to increase confidence in sharing personal 'diversity' information to help better understand our employee demographics. Develop a Workplace Gender Equality Strategy to guide initiatives that support employment and volunteering opportunities for all people. 	HR HR HR Marketing and Communications People and Culture Manager
<p>4. Promote diversity and inclusion across different Intereach platforms to staff, volunteers and community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop inclusive marketing strategy and promotional material specific to all local communities. (Use of language and imagery, Easy English, Braille, fonts and contrasts, common language). Investigate opportunities to translate key Intereach resources (corporate brochure) and display website content in other languages. Redesign and regularly update the D&I intranet site to ensure the information and resources provided are relevant and up to date. Continue to share staff stories of inclusion and diversity through platforms such as the Intereach newsletter, intranet and social media pages. Where appropriate and practical, continue to display inclusion symbols at office entrance with outwards facing reception areas and other information conducive to a welcoming space. Explore how Intereach offices can display diverse and inclusive artwork reflective of the local community to support community members to feel welcome, included and connected to Intereach. 	Marketing and Communications Inclusion and Engagement Marketing and Communications Inclusion and Engagement Marketing and Communications
<p>5. Increase opportunities for diversity and inclusion suppliers to improve economic and social outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the procurement policy, guidelines and checklist to include accessibility standards and requirements are met when engaging with external suppliers and partners. 	Procurement

2. COMMIT

Action	Deliverables	Responsibility
6. Maintain accountability of the Diversity Inclusion Action Plan through an effective working group that drives governance of the DIAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and communicate the aims and activities and achievements of this Diversity and Inclusion Action plan across our organisation. Develop and distribute an EOI to join the RG to all continuing staff, new employees (within the first three months of employment) and volunteers on a period basis (i.e bi-monthly). 	Executive Team, Program Managers, DIRG, Communications and Marketing

3. EDUCATE

Action	Deliverables	Responsibility
7. Monitor the development and implementation of the DIAP through tracking of actions, progress, and reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Your Opinion Matters internal staff survey to ensure it captures staff feedback on diversity and inclusion initiatives and recommendations for improvement. Celebrate, promote and reinforce our achievement in fostering equity outcomes. Provide opportunities for staff learning and development to strengthen knowledge and appreciation of diverse and inclusive workplaces and communities. 	Inclusion and Engagement, People and Culture All staff Learning and Development, People and Culture
8. Provide opportunities to educate staff about diversity and inclusion in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff. Develop and roll out a comprehensive diversity and inclusion training program aimed at addressing unconscious bias in the workplace, including inclusive leadership and management practices; cultural awareness training; LGBTQIA+ awareness; disability awareness. 	Learning and Development Learning and Development

4. RECOGNISE

Action	Deliverables	Responsibility
9. Observe, acknowledge and celebrate inclusion and diversity across the Intereach footprint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host, support participate and promote diversity and inclusion initiatives including those listed in the Observance Days schedule to build and maintain relationships between our staff, stakeholders, and local communities. Encourage and enable RG members to participate in external events that recognise the importance of diversity and inclusion. Attend network and community meetings where practical and relevant to diversity and inclusion (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTQIA+, People with Disability, Multicultural and Carer). Extend invitations to people and staff from all demographic groups to come and share 'personal' and or 'lived' experiences with Diversity Inclusion Reference Group and/ or Intereach employees. 	Inclusion and Engagement Marketing and Communications All staff

MEASURING Maturity AND PROGRESS

Intereach is taking steps to drive lasting change. By using the Australian HR Institute Inclusion Maturity Framework, we will continue to strive towards a consolidation of best-practice, global D&I practices and maturity.

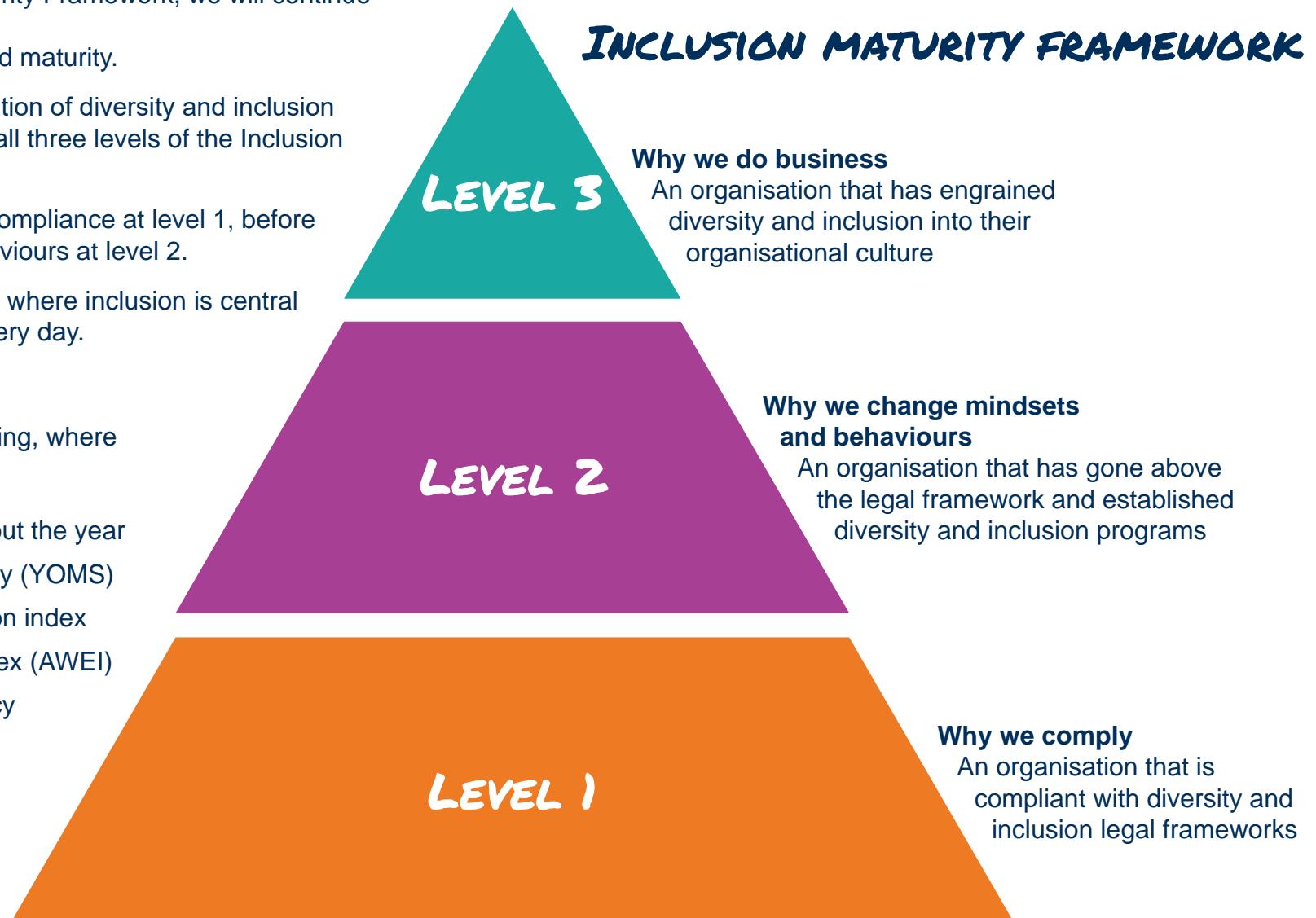
Across Intereach, a significant foundation of diversity and inclusion programs and initiatives exist across all three levels of the Inclusion Maturity Framework.

This framework starts with ensuring compliance at level 1, before moving to change mindsets and behaviours at level 2.

The ultimate goal is to create cultures where inclusion is central to how Intereach delivers services every day.

Intereach will monitor benchmarks using, where appropriate, the:

1. Workforce data collected throughout the year
2. Annual Your Opinion Matter Survey (YOMS)
3. Diversity Council Australia Inclusion index
4. Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI)
5. Workplace Gender Equality Agency Equality Scorecard
6. ACON Publications and Research Data
7. Building inclusive workplaces (CIPD)









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