

# ONI Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

2024-2027



We believe in an inclusive, diverse and equitable  
workforce that represents the communities we serve

In the spirit of reconciliation  
ONI acknowledges the Traditional  
Custodians of country throughout  
Australia and their connections to  
land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders  
past and present and extend that  
respect to all Aboriginal and Torres  
Strait Islander peoples on whose  
traditional lands we meet and work.



Spencer & Patterson 175-176

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# Message from the Director-General of National Intelligence

Australia is one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world, and at the Office of National Intelligence (ONI) we believe in an inclusive, diverse, and equitable workforce that represents the communities we live in and work to protect. We want the best minds in Australia to work at ONI and spark one another's creativity. We know this will only be the case if we encourage and seek out greater diversity and create a culture where all can thrive.

Our staff are deeply committed to their work and our mission. And we are stronger for the different backgrounds, experiences and outlooks we all bring. Seeing the world, and Australia's role in it, from multiple perspectives enriches how we work and think.

To that end, I am proud to launch the *ONI Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024–2027*, which reflects ideas and initiatives developed by ONI's diversity networks, with contributions from across our organisation.

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**We believe in an inclusive, diverse,  
and equitable workforce**

This builds on our previous diversity and inclusion strategy. It incorporates:

- organisation-wide diversity and inclusion initiatives; and
- priority actions for our diversity networks.

This Strategy will contribute to our goal of nurturing and sustaining an inclusive and vigorous culture that values difference and champions contestability, allowing new ideas and innovation to flourish.

I look forward to continuing to work together to embed diversity and inclusion across all our work and practices.



**Andrew Shearer**  
Director-General of  
National Intelligence





# Our commitment

We recognise that diversity and inclusion strengthen our organisation, our work, and our leadership of the National Intelligence Community.

We are committed to being a workplace that reflects the world we live in, and values differences of background, experience and thought.

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**We will embed diversity and inclusion across all our work and practices**

We will continue to foster an inclusive environment and build a workplace where innovative and different ways of thinking, interacting and working are the norm and are considered advantages to our culture of robust thinking and analysis. We will ensure a fair playing field for all, where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources.

Our leaders will empower us to realise that our unique perspectives, experiences and talents are welcomed, valued and embraced — so we can truly pride ourselves on our diversity and ability to be inclusive, fair, flexible and adaptable.

Our staff are committed to serving Australia. In return, our commitment is to provide them with a safe and inclusive workplace where they feel valued and receive the support they need to thrive and succeed.



# Our vision

By successfully implementing this strategy and associated actions, ONI will be a workplace where:



Our leaders and managers practise inclusive and accountable leadership at all levels, and display confidence and pride in promoting diversity and inclusion as a positive attribute for the workforce.



Our employees are aware of ONI’s commitment to diversity and inclusion and feel the effects of that commitment among their colleagues and within their workplace. As a result we retain our talented intelligence professionals.



Our recruitment practices are inclusive and select the best talent that reflects Australia’s diverse community.



Our expected behaviours are clearly understood by all leaders, managers and employees, and this flows into a trusted, collaborative and inclusive culture where everyone thrives and can perform at their best.



We clearly understand flexible work and the benefits that flexible working can offer ONI staff. We have clear policies and processes for accomodating flexible work in the intelligence environment.



We continuously improve the way we foster and promote diversity and inclusion, recognising there is always more we can do.



# Our business

We are a globally-engaged Australian intelligence agency of several hundred staff who work with partners across and beyond the Australian Government.

We are intelligence professionals - analysts, partnership managers, technologists, planners, enablers and leaders who maximise the value of Australia’s intelligence capabilities.

In an era of rapid geopolitical and technological change, we serve Australia and Australians with dedication — contributing to our nation’s security, resilience and prosperity.

Our mission is to provide Australia with a strategic advantage through our forward-leaning intelligence assessments and innovative open-source analysis, and by enhancing how the National Intelligence Community works together to address the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Diversity and inclusion are critical to achieving our mission. We need to bring a wealth of perspectives to our work and believe that liberal and inclusive values are central to our mission and our work to protect Australia and our way of life.



**Our difference is our strength**

We can only deliver for the Australian Government if we attract and employ brilliant staff with diverse backgrounds, life experience and outlooks.

Our mission requires us to reflect and draw on the rich diversity of talent in Australia today and to provide a place where people can do their best work in service of the nation.





# Our diversity and inclusion priorities

We know we need to encourage and seek out greater diversity to create a culture where we can all thrive, and to allow new ideas and innovation to flourish. Our work requires imagination, vision and unconventional ways of seeing problems and solutions.

This depends on us bringing together different perspectives, insights and ways of thinking from across cultural and linguistic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, age, disability and different forms of neurodiversity.



**At the organisation-wide level, our diversity and inclusion priorities for the next four years are:**

- 1 Building inclusive leadership and management.
- 2 Raising awareness of the benefits that a diverse and inclusive workplace provides for our intelligence capability.
- 3 Strengthening inclusive recruitment practices.
- 4 Reinforcing the culture and behaviours we expect at ONI, and instilling cultural safety.
- 5 Developing our understanding of flexible work in the intelligence environment.
- 6 Continuously improving the way we foster and promote diversity and inclusion.

We will deliver on these priorities through a series of actions across relevant focus areas. This will include training, guidance, role-modelling, encouraging participation and welcoming feedback from across our organisation, communicating clearly and regularly with our staff, refining our practices, updating our policies, exploring opportunities to improve further, and monitoring and reporting on our progress.



## Our diversity networks

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion starts with our champions and our Senior Executive Service (SES) sponsors, who support and promote the activities of our diversity networks. Our networks develop action plans that identify focus areas, actions and performance measures designed to improve diversity and inclusion across ONI.

### Cultural and Linguistic Diverse (CALD) Network

We comprise people from a wide range of cultural, ethnic, religious and national backgrounds. The cultural diversity of the workforce enables ONI to benefit from a broad range of skills and a variety of experiences and perspectives.

### Gender and Pride (LGBTQIA+) Network

We are committed to gender equality, and to fostering a culture where employees with diverse sexuality and/or gender feel respected, valued and empowered. The LGBTQIA+ acronym extends to all who are part of the wider diversity of bodies, genders, sexualities, relationships and identities.

### Disability Network

We need to reassess what talent looks like and be imaginative about accommodating people with disabilities, and valuing their contributions and the roles they can play. We can do this by breaking down barriers so every employee has the opportunity to excel and realise their potential. Increasing diversity and drawing on a wider talent pool will also increase our innovation, improve our performance, and boost our morale.

### Mental Health Network

ONI will continue to support its staff by working hard to improve understanding and remove stigma associated with discussion of mental health issues. We are dedicated to ensuring ONI's continued leadership in terms of support for our staff and their mental health and wellbeing.

### Neurodiversity Network

ONI is committed to building a deeper understanding of neurodiversity as a newer area of diversity and inclusion. We want to better understand the strengths of neurodiversity in order to create a workplace that values, supports and celebrates the unique minds of neurodivergent individuals and the contributions they make.

### First Nations Advocacy Network

ONI is committed to improving opportunities, pathways and cultural safety for First Nations people within ONI and the broader intelligence workforce. We want a National Intelligence Community that serves, and welcomes, all Australians.



# Our Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The ONI Diversity and Inclusion Committee supports our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace.

#### The Committee leads ONI's diversity networks

- the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Network
- the Disability Network
- the First Nations Advocacy Network
- the Gender and Pride (LGBTQIA+) Network
- the Mental Health Network, and
- the Neurodiversity Network.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Committee raises awareness, coordinates activities and drives change through initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion within ONI.

In addition, the Committee supports, mentors and advocates on behalf of our diversity networks.



# Our journey

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**The Diversity and Inclusion Committee raises awareness, coordinates activities and drives change through initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion within ONI**

## 2018



Informal Diversity Network convened across all National Intelligence Community agencies

## 2019



First ever ONI Diversity and Inclusion Strategy launched



Diversity Champions appointed across our diversity networks



ONI Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019–2022 launched

## 2020



Increased development opportunities for women in National Security (scholarships and programs)



All staff issued with remote work tokens during COVID to support hybrid work on our PROTECTED system

## 2021



Participation in the Recruitability Scheme (candidates have the option to nominate if they require adjustments)



Workplace Behaviours Policy released

## 2022



Overall workforce – 53% women / 47% men



Participation in multiple entry level programs

## 2023



ONI Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023–2027 launched



Neurodiversity Network established



ONI Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024–2027 launched



