



4 May 2023

Inclusion Australia welcomes release of NDIA Supported Decision Making Policy

New policy sets out framework for people with an intellectual disability to make their own decisions and get the supports they need.

Inclusion Australia welcomes [the release today](#) of the long-awaited NDIA Supported Decision Making policy. This is an important policy for people with an intellectual disability and their families. It clearly sets out that people have a right to make their own decisions about the NDIS, and to get the supports they need to make decisions.

Inclusion Australia CEO Catherine McAlpine said, “It is fantastic to see the NDIS policy on supported decision making released. Choice and control for people with an intellectual disability was a key goal of the original Scheme design and it’s just as important today.”

“2023 marks the 10th anniversary of the Scheme so it’s great to see the NDIA committing to supporting participants to make their own decisions about their lives.”

Without decision-making support, many people – especially people with an intellectual or other cognitive disability – are not able to live the lives they want or are not aware of the options open to them. This situation risks increasing segregation and reducing inclusion, as NDIA Chair Kurt Fearnley expressed concern about last week.¹

“We hope this policy will be part of changing the conversation so people can explore options with people they trust and make decisions that are right for them,” said Ms McAlpine. “The next step is for the NDIA to roll out its implementation plan in consultation with people with disability. This will be critical to make sure NDIA staff and community partners understand supported decision making and are consistently implementing it in practice.”

¹ ['We need to make sure the NDIS is what we fought for': Kurt Fearnley - ABC Radio National](#)

Including the experiences of people with intellectual disability

Inclusion Australia worked with the NDIA to make sure the voices of people with an intellectual disability were included in the development of the policy. Luke Nelson from our Policy Team helped design and co-facilitated workshops with NDIS participants around Australia to find out what people had to say about making decisions.

This included workshops with people from different cultural backgrounds, people with complex communication support needs and First Nations people from remote communities in central Australia.

Luke's personal experience as a NDIS participant was gave him particular insight into the feedback that was heard. "It was important to have a person with disability in the workshops. People taking part knew that I had experienced similar issues and felt more comfortable talking about their experiences."

With the new policy finally released, Luke reflected "I think this policy will give people with disability a chance to know that supported decision making is a real thing, that it can be delivered, and that the NDIA is willing to work with people with disability to make them feel included."

"I hope this policy will bring freedom and choice to people who use decision-making in their lives," said Luke.

Links

- Media statement by the NDIA <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/9115-media-release-minister-participants-have-greater-say-through-supported-decision-making>
- Full policy including Easy Read formats: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/.../supported-decision-making-policy>
- Film with Luke Nelson about the new policy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gm4GtC_9bUk

Acknowledgements

Inclusion Australia would like to thank our state [member organisations](#), National Ethnic Disability Alliance ([NEDA](#)), Children and Young People with Disability Australia ([CYDA](#)), [Merger of Minds](#) and [NPY Women's Council](#) for your wonderful support and contribution to the codesign workshops.

Further Reading

- Inclusion Australia's [submission to the NDIS on Support for Decision making](#), 2021
- Inclusion Australia's [omnibus submission](#) to the Disability Royal Commission
- Disability Royal Commission [Supported Decision Making and Reform Roundtables](#)
- Inclusion Australia's [Make Decisions Real project](#)
- My Life My Choices project – CID and SACID: [My Life My Choices](#)
- Disability Royal Commission hearing into Guardianship, Substituted and Supported Decision Making <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/rounds/public-hearing-30-guardianship-substituted-and-supported-decision-making>

[Inclusion Australia](#) is the national representative organisation for people with an intellectual disability and their families.

Our CEO Catherine McAlpine is available for media comment on 0419 530 524 or via CEO@inclusionaustralia.org.au