

**SOCIAL  
FUTURES**

# **Disability Inclusion Action Plan**

**Jan 2024 – Dec 2026**





Maree, employed by Social Futures accepting 2022 Values Award from Board member Penny

COVER: Chris, community member and a Social Futures program participant

# Executive foreword



**There are over four million people with disability living within Australia. As an organisation, Social Futures is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in all the ways in which we work.**

I am pleased to launch our first Disability Inclusion Action Plan. At Social Futures, we are dedicated to creating a more inclusive and equitable community for everyone. All means all.

We developed this Disability Inclusion Action Plan to ensure we live up to the standards we expect from every service and institution in our community.

Social Futures has a proud history of working to make a real difference in the lives of people with disability through the programs we deliver, the collaborative approaches we take and the values of inclusion, integrity and learning that underpin everything we do. This plan is our way of building on that foundation to become even better.

**'Nothing about us without us'** is a famous rallying cry for social justice, first created by disability activists seeking voice in the policies and practices that impacted their lives. In this spirit, our action plan has been co-designed and driven by the leadership and expertise of our Inclusion Peer Network, a group of staff who have a lived experience of disability, or as carers of someone with disability.

At Social Futures, we are committed to continuous improvement and learning. We recognise that this is an ongoing process, and we are grateful for the support and partnership of our stakeholders who will be instrumental in helping us achieve the goals in this plan. We have listened to community members telling us what they want to see from Social Futures as a sector-leading inclusive organisation.

Together, we can create positive social change through a more inclusive and accessible society for all of us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Davies'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Tony Davies,**  
CEO of Social Futures



# Action plan goals

## People

We attract, support, value and retain employees living with disability.

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## Places

Our places and spaces are accessible for all.

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## Community

The people we work with inform and access our inclusive services and supports.

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## Culture

We live our value of inclusion by ensuring a welcoming, safe and understanding environment for all.

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# Our commitment

Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan is a strategic commitment that prioritises, identifies and addresses areas for improvement within the organisation for the benefit of people with disability. This includes our internal staff, stakeholders, the broader community, and the people we support and work with alongside.

The plan is underpinned by the social model of disability, an understanding that recognises the barriers to access and inclusion are caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference.

Plan execution will improve outcomes for people with disability by ensuring accountability and actionable steps toward better access and inclusion. More broadly, it expresses our organisation's commitment to go beyond compliance and break down attitudinal, physical, communication and social barriers.

We developed this plan through extensively consulting with our staff and customers – outlining clear goals, outcomes, and actions for achieving greater inclusion and accessibility.

# Our business

Social Futures is a community-based, not-for-profit organisation that envisages communities in which all people are valued and included.

Our organisational vision is for 'thriving people, strong communities'. For almost 50 years, we have been creating positive social change in regional Australia, working directly with individuals, families, communities, organisations and governments across our programs that promote genuine participation for people with disability.

We are a regional leader and work alongside our partner organisations to strengthen and build capacity within the community sector by providing training, development and advocacy, and tailoring our programs to fit our diverse local communities.

We assisted thousands of others through workshops, events, education and community capacity building projects.

Social Futures has a wide sphere of influence, spanning our diverse participants, community service providers, government (federal, state and local), local and regional businesses, members of parliament, media and our partners and collaborators in non-government organisations, businesses and community.



**During 2022-23,  
28 program and  
services supported**



**27,402** people, over

**87,128** occasions of service

Social Futures has a geographic presence in the Bundjalung, Yugambeh, Gumbaynggirr, Yaegl, Dunghutti, Worimi, Darkinjung, Biripi, Wiradjuri, Wiljali and Barkindji Nations. We provide services on the Gold Coast in Queensland and across 70 per cent of regional NSW, with 22 service centres in Ashmore, Ballina, Bathurst, Broken Hill, Byron Bay, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Gosford, Grafton, Kempsey, Lismore, Maitland, Orange, Tweed Heads and Wyong.

# Our disability inclusion journey so far

Social Futures has always had a strong commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities so that they can enjoy all human rights and freedoms fully and equally. As the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Partner in the Community across Northern, Central Coast, Western and Far Western NSW, in 2022–23, we worked with 15,388 people with disability in delivering quality services to help them connect to community and NDIS supports.

We value the lived experience of our staff as an asset to Social Futures and an important driver of better access and inclusion.

Of our  
**381** staff,  
approximately

**8%** identify as living with disability and another

**8%** identify as a carer of someone with disability

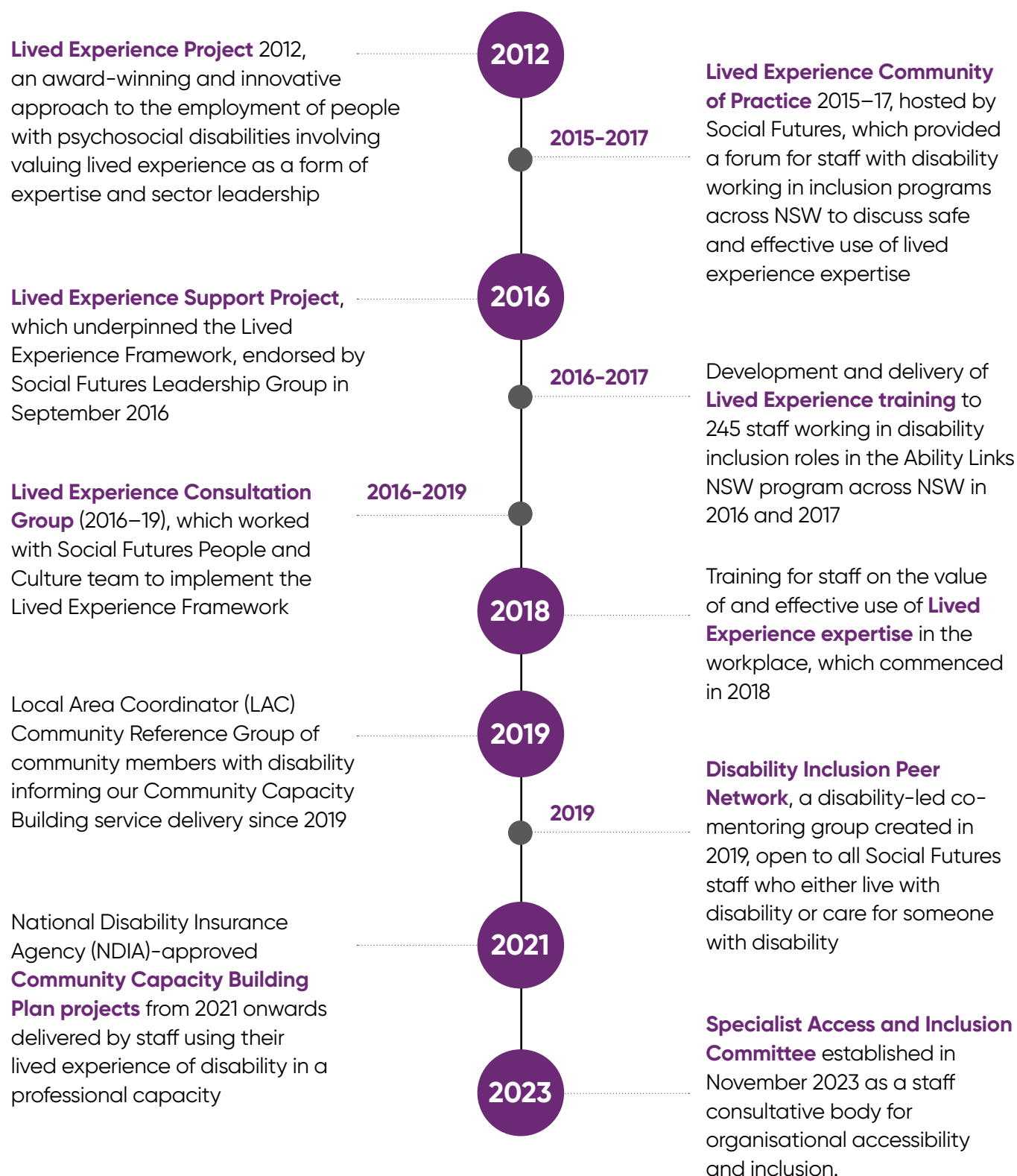


Below: Chris, performer at Spark 2022 conference with Social Futures employee, Amanda





**These are some of the actions we've undertaken in the last decade to embed access and inclusion into our organisation:**



This journey shows us that lived experience voices are at the heart of inclusive practice and community change. Understanding we can always do better in increasing accessibility, inclusion and employment of people with disability, we have invested in training and development that ensures disability inclusion isn't an afterthought. We established the **Inclusion Peer Network** to ensure that staff with disabilities have a place to share ideas, discuss issues and address these as they arise.

# Plan development

We formulated our Disability Inclusion Action Plan after extensive consultation. This consultation was primarily led by an external contractor and consisted of over 50 hours of discussion with key stakeholders, including our staff with disabilities, our community and our leaders.

Our collaborative approach ensured that consistent areas of improvement in our access and inclusion were captured extensively. It also highlights our commitment to voices of lived experience leading the way, by ensuring that staff with disabilities were able to provide their own experiences within our organisation in a safe and supported way.

The consultation aligned with our values of learning, inclusion and integrity by ensuring that staff were comfortable sharing experiences where accessibility standards were not previously met, to increase our understanding and learning on how to do better in the future.

The results from this consultation confirmed we have areas to address and actions to achieve to increase our accessibility and inclusive practice at Social Futures.

We are committed to achieving the goals we set through this Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

In 2023, we employed an Access and Inclusion Coordinator on a five-month secondment. This role focused on prioritising the learning outcomes of staff within our organisation for disability inclusion training, developing key policies and procedures, as well as resources that the organisation can take on board to increase accessibility in our communications, events and presentations. The Access and Inclusion Coordinator worked alongside the Inclusion Peer Network to ensure that the experiences of staff had been represented and to ensure that access issues are mitigated in future.



Cody, a Social Futures employee, about to receive the CEO's Award at Spark 2022 conference

## The consultation process included:

 20

**one-on-one interviews with staff with disability**

 11

**one-on-one interviews with staff with leaders in the organisation**

 11

**with disability in a 1.5-hour group discussion**

 55

**leaders in a group discussion**

 63

**written responses recieved to a staff circulated survey**

 **community engagement, including**

**9 surveys from community members and a 20-minute interview.**



# Five outcomes we are working toward

- 1 All of our buildings, service activities and communications meet and exceed a minimum standard in accessibility for staff and customers with disability.
- 2 All staff have a suitable level of disability awareness, confidence and competence.
- 3 Social Futures has an increased percentage of staff with disability across all branches of the organisation, including in leadership positions.
- 4 All staff are resourced with policies and procedures, guidelines and checklists to ensure a consistent and accountable approach to access and inclusion across the organisation.
- 5 Customers, volunteers and staff with a lived experience of disability are actively contributing to decision-making at Social Futures.



DJ, employed by Social Futures promoting the Sports Ability and No Limits wheelchair sports programs

Below: LAC Managers group enjoying wheelchair sports team building activity



# Action Plan – Outcome 1

All our buildings, service activities and communications meet and exceed a minimum standard in accessibility for staff and customers with disability.

Action	Deliverable	Start	Complete	Action responsibility
<b>1</b> Develop and use a self-assessment tool that provides an accessibility score to support decision making related to leasing and renovating Social Futures premises	<b>1a</b> Accessibility tool developed and approved in consultation with the Social Futures Specialist Access and Inclusion Committee (SAIC)	Mar 2024	May 2024	Chief Customer Officer
	<b>1b</b> Accessibility tool applied to all Social Futures premises by site managers (where possible with support from SAIC members)	Jun 2024	Aug 2024	Chief Customer Officer
<b>2</b> Develop and implement an action plan to move all premises from a 'good' to a 'better/best' accessibility score	<b>2a</b> DIAP Implementation Committee review all completed accessibility self-assessment tools and develop an action plan that identifies and prioritises low, medium and high cost improvements	Sep 2024	Dec 2024	DIAP Implementation Committee Chair
	<b>2b</b> Low-cost improvements are actioned	Jan 2025	Mar 2025	Manager Facilities and Fleet
	<b>2c</b> High priority medium and high-cost improvements are actioned	Mar 2025	Dec2026	Chief Customer Officer
<b>3</b> Review, update and develop resources and procedures to ensure minimum accessibility standards are met in relation to all internal and external communications	<b>3a</b> Procedure developed to ensure minimum accessibility standards are being met in relation to all internal and external communications	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	Senior Marketing Manager
	<b>3b</b> Documents relevant to all internal and external communications are reviewed and updated in line with the above procedure for minimum accessibility standards	May 2024	Jul 2024	Senior Marketing Manager
<b>4</b> Review, update and develop resources and procedures to ensure minimum accessibility standards are met in relation to all internal and external events	<b>4a</b> Procedure developed to ensure minimum accessibility standards are being met in relation to all internal and external events	Oct 2024	Dec 2024	Chief Customer Officer (external) Chief Performance Officer (internal)
	<b>4b</b> Documents relevant to all internal and external events are reviewed and updated in line with the above procedure for minimum accessibility standards	Jan 2025	Jun 2025	Chief Customer Officer (external) & Chief Performance Officer (internal)



# Action Plan – Outcome 2

All staff have a suitable level of disability awareness, confidence and competence.

Action	Deliverable	Start	Complete	Action responsibility
<b>1</b> <b>Develop a staff Disability and Inclusion Learning Framework that reflects the skills and knowledge needed for all of the diverse roles across the organisation</b>	<b>1a</b> Learning Framework Working Party is formed	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Senior Manager Practice Excellence
	<b>1b</b> Learning Framework, including materials and activities, is developed, sourced and approved by Executive	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Senior Manager Practice Excellence
<b>2</b> <b>Staff complete eLearning journey as per the Disability and Inclusion Learning Package</b>	<b>2a</b> >80% of staff completed their mandatory eLearning journey	Mar 2024	Sep 2024	Senior Leadership
<b>3</b> <b>Staff develop and embed learning through social and experiential learning</b>	<b>3a</b> Within each stream and branch, social and experiential learning and development activities are organised to embed learning	Sep 2024	Dec 2026	Senior Leadership
<b>4</b> <b>Increase specialist knowledge of accessibility and inclusion within Business Integration and Strategy and Organisational Excellence Branches</b>	<b>4a</b> Specialised training completed by 80% of Support Services staff	Jan 2025	Jun 2025	Senior Leadership Business Integration and Strategy  Senior Leadership Organisational Excellence
	<b>4b</b> Support Services staff meet every 6 months with the Specialist Access and Inclusion Committee (SAIC)	Feb 2024	Dec 2026	Senior Leadership Business Integration and Strategy  Senior Leadership Organisational Excellence



## Action Plan – Outcome 3

Social Futures has an increased percentage of staff with disability across all branches of the organisation, including in leadership positions.

Action	Deliverable	Start	Complete	Action responsibility
<b>1</b> Review, update and develop resources and procedures to ensure all recruitment processes meet minimum accessibility standards and are inclusive for people with disability	<b>1a</b> Recruitment processes and documents are reviewed and updated	Jan 2025	Apr 2025	Senior Manager People and Culture
	<b>1b</b> Procedure developed to ensure minimum accessibility standards are met in relation to recruitment processes	Jan 2025	Apr 2025	Senior Manager People and Culture
	<b>1c</b> SAIC member representation on interview panels for Disability Inclusion leadership positions and for positions where lived experience of disability is deemed essential or desirable	Jul 2024	Dec 2026	Senior Manager People and Culture
<b>2</b> Review, update and develop resources and procedures to ensure all onboarding processes meet minimum accessibility standards and are inclusive for people with disability	<b>2a</b> Onboarding processes and documents reviewed and updated	Sep 2024	Dec 2024	Senior Manager People and Culture
	<b>2b</b> Procedure developed to ensure minimum accessibility standards are being met in relation to onboarding processes	Jan 2025	Mar 2025	Senior Manager People and Culture
<b>3</b> Staff with disability are supported to participate in leadership development programs	<b>3a</b> Professional development opportunities (including mentorship) are offered to staff with disability	Apr 2025	Dec 2026	Senior Manager Practice Excellence
	<b>3b</b> Staff with disability have the opportunity to be represented on key committees	Oct 2024	Dec 2026	Team Leaders

## Action Plan – Outcome 4

All staff are resourced with policies and procedures, guidelines and checklists to ensure a consistent and accountable approach to access and inclusion across the organisation.

Action	Deliverable	Start	Complete	Action responsibility
<b>1</b> <b>Make a policy commitment to employing people with disability where their lived experience of disability is seen as a strength and asset to the organisation</b>	<b>1a</b> Revision of current Employment, Equity and Diversity Policy to include commitment to recruitment and retention of staff with a lived experience of disability	Jan 2024	Mar 2024	Senior Manager Quality and Compliance
	<b>1b</b> Lived Experience Policy developed and approved	Jan 2025	Aug 2025	Chief Performance Officer
<b>2</b> <b>Develop and implement a Personal Emergency Evacuation Procedure and make it available for all staff</b>	<b>2a</b> Procedure developed and implemented for all existing and as needed with new staff	Jan 2024	Jun 2024	Senior Manager Quality and Compliance
<b>3</b> <b>Develop an Accessibility Hub that stores and links to procedures, tools and resources which support staff with disability in the workplace</b>	<b>3a</b> Accessibility Hub developed and promoted to all staff	Mar 2024	Jun 2024	Manager Capacity Building and Engagement
<b>4</b> <b>Develop and implement a Workplace Adjustment Procedure to facilitate open conversations and documented processes for reasonable workplace adjustments</b>	<b>4a</b> Workplace Adjustment Procedure written and approved	Jan 2024	Mar 2024	Senior Manager People and Culture
	<b>4b</b> Procedure socialised with Leadership Team and implemented with all existing staff and as needed with new staff	Mar 2024	May 2024	Senior Manager People and Culture
	<b>4c</b> Other staff support documentation is adapted to align with the Workplace Adjustments Procedure (e.g. Personal Wellbeing Plan and Support Session templates, Workplace Adjustment Action Plan)	Jun 2024	Dec2024	Senior Manager People and Culture

# Action Plan – 5

Customers, volunteers and staff with a lived experience of disability are actively contributing to decision making in the organisation.

Action	Deliverable	Start	Complete	Action responsibility
<b>1</b> <b>Increase Board member representation of lived experience of disability</b>	<b>1a</b> Skills and experience audit of current Board completed	Jan 2024	Apr 2024	Chief Performance Officer
	<b>1b</b> Proactive recruitment recommendation given to Board membership	May 2024	Dec 2024	Chief Performance Officer
<b>2</b> <b>Utilise the Specialist Access and Inclusion Committee (SAIC) for staff to raise access issues and for leadership to consult with</b>	<b>2a</b> Consultation procedure developed for leadership seeking advice and for staff to raise access issues	Feb 2024	May 2024	Team Leader Capacity Building and Engagement
	<b>2b</b> Members of SAIC have representation on the Work Health and Safety Committee	May 2024	Jul 2024	Team Leader Capacity Building and Engagement
<b>3</b> <b>Provide opportunities for customers to give feedback on access and inclusion experiences</b>	<b>3a</b> People with disability are represented on the Social Futures Customer Advisory Panel	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Chief Customer Officer
	<b>3b</b> Review current customer surveys and feedback forms to identify opportunities for additional questions or themed reporting regarding accessibility and inclusion	May 2024	Jun 2024	Chief Customer Officer



## Our participants include:



people living with disability



families



families and carers of  
people with disability



members of the LGBTQSB+  
community



Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander peoples



people experiencing  
homelessness



culturally and linguistically  
diverse people



vulnerable people, or  
people experiencing social  
disadvantage.



children and young people



Social Futures employees at Spark 2022 team building workshop



Positive Social Change

## Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Jan 2024 – Dec 2026

**Inclusion is about the  
actions we take every day.  
We welcome, support,  
and celebrate diversity.**

**[socialfutures.org.au](https://socialfutures.org.au)**

**1800 719 625**

**PO Box 5419 East Lismore NSW 2480**

**[contact@socialfutures.org.au](mailto:contact@socialfutures.org.au)**

Join us on    



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land where we live and work and their continuing connection to land, water, sea and community. We pay respects to Australia's First Peoples, to their unique and diverse cultures, and to Elders past, present and future.

Inclusion is about the actions we take every day. We welcome, support, and celebrate diversity.