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**National Disability Insurance Scheme**

# Digital Partnership Program Discussion Paper

**February 2020**

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## Discussion Paper

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is developing a Digital Partnership Program (DPP), which will manage controlled and secure access to some of the NDIA’s data and systems, via Application Programme Interfaces (APIs).

These APIs are being created so providers and software developers can create new tools, apps and digital marketplaces to improve how participants, providers and the NDIA all connect and work together, under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

There are many groups, individuals, companies and community organisations currently working with the NDIS who will benefit from this service, and who can provide important information to help shape its design.

The NDIA asked for feedback in January, on what was originally called a Digital Market Service (DMS). The NDIA is now inviting all interested parties to provide their feedback, ideas and direction on the development of the Digital Partnership Program, and how access to APIs would allow the broader market to develop services and capabilities to help participants.

This paper includes elements from the previous paper, but also includes critical issues raised in responses, and gives more details on how the Digital Partnership Program will work, including the proposed new NDIS Payments Platform to enable real-time claims. More information on the role of the APIs, the data available, and the process, terms and conditions for subscribing to the program is also included.

We are asking for responses to this paper. Submissions should be no more than ten pages plus attachments in length and do not need to cover every topic raised in this document, or only topics in this document. Submissions lodged in the earlier consultation round have been, and will continue to be, taken into consideration.

### Key date

Due date for submissions Tuesday 14 April 2020, midnight AEDT

### Submissions can be lodged

Email: NDIA.PROVIDER.INFORMATION@NDIS.GOV.AU

By post: Digital Partnership Program

National Disability Insurance Agency

GPO Box 700

Canberra ACT 2601

### Contacts

Administrative and other matters: NDIS Contact Centre

Monday to Friday

8am – 8pm (local time) 1800 800 110

enquiries@ndis.gov.au

Website: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/community/have-your-say/digital-partnership-program>

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## Introduction

The NDIA is looking for ways to make it easier for participants to connect and interact with providers, and make it as easy as possible for each participant to manage their NDIS plan, and achieve their objectives.

Under the Digital Partnership Program, the NDIA is looking to achieve this in three ways:

1. enabling registered providers to interact directly with the NDIA to improve the efficiency of their business and the services they provide to participants;
2. simplify and automate the claims and payments process for participants and providers
3. encourage the development of a range of apps, tools and digital marketplaces designed to help participants connect and interact with providers that are relevant to them.

To enable this the NDIA will start to provide secure and controlled access to some NDIA systems and data, by publishing Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). These APIs can be used by Registered Providers to improve the efficiency of their operations, and by developers to build apps and other tools that connect into the NDIA and help participants make the most of their NDIS plans. The NDIA’s provider and markets vision, as outlined in the NDIS Market Enablement Framework published in October 2018, is to “build a competitive and contestable marketplace that is flexible and responds to the choices and preferences of participants.”

Some time ago, the NDIA decided not to develop a single proprietary NDIS “e-Marketplace” itself. Instead we are looking to leverage the innovation offered by the broader market and support and encourage third parties to develop apps, tools and digital marketplaces that provide greater information, transparency and choice to NDIS participants.

The Digital Partnership Program (DPP) is the program under which these APIs will be developed, and access to them will be managed and controlled. It will enable the use of the APIs by Registered Providers, developers who subscribe to the DPP, and the NDIA itself, in order to develop a range of digital solutions that will make finding and interacting with providers and the NDIA easier and more efficient for participants.

The DPP approach of developing some digital solutions, such as the NDIS Payments Platform, itself whilst also opening up the development of broader digital solutions to providers and developers, is designed to enable the rapid development and evolution of innovative and diverse digital solutions that transform the participant and provider experience. This will enable the development of a new range of digital services beyond what the NDIA could develop alone under a digital marketplace model, at a much faster pace.

There are already companies providing digital services for participants and providers. The Digital Partnership Program will support providers of digital solutions to improve, their offerings, and to create an environment that encourages and assists others to provide digital services, with the aim providing greater transparency, and more choice and control to NDIS participants.

As the DPP grows and matures, the NDIA will review what regulations are appropriate to make sure the quality and safety of participants is maintained. Any regulations to support the DPP will be consistent with the quality and safeguarding provisions within the NDIS Act.

This consultation paper is looking for feedback from:

* participants
* families and carers
* providers
* plan managers and support coordinators
* systems aggregators
* commercial parties involved in software development
* peak bodies, sector representatives and community organisations.

It is these people and organisations that the DPP is being designed to support and they are the key audience for this consultation paper.

In undertaking this consultation process the NDIA is seeking feedback on:

* The DPP approach and how it is planned to work
* What additional functionality and support the market would like
* The initial APIs and what the market would like to see in future APIs
* The proposed subscription process and terms and conditions
* Data that the market would like access to and the data that the NDIA will be seeking from partners under the DPP
* Any other ideas, feedback, or concerns around the DPP.

To have your feedback considered, submissions must be received by midnight AEDT on Tuesday 14 April, 2020.

Send your feedback to:

NDIA.PROVIDER.INFORMATION@NDIS.GOV.AU

Or by post:

Digital Partnership Program

National Disability Insurance Agency

GPO Box 700

Canberra ACT 2601

## The Digital Partnership Program

The establishment of the **Digital Partnership Program (DPP)** involves partnering with third parties, and providing access and support so they can develop digital services for participants and providers. The NDIA recognises that customer experience can be greatly improved for participants and providers alike, but the opportunities for digital solutions to address information asymmetry for participants in particular is fundamental to delivering the goals of the Scheme.

The DPP aims to enable providers and software developers to:

* automate and streamline processes;
* integrate processes: orders, e-invoices, payment authorisations, acquittals, etc.
* help participants to better manage their budgets
* give participants access to a greater range of providers
* let users to shop online for a range of services.

The Digital Partnership Program is being designed to encourage innovation by the market, through the use of common APIs. Details of the initial suite of APIs that the NDIA has built and of some APIs it is considering creating in the future are provided in this paper.

There are three primary categories of stakeholders under the proposed DPP model:

* **Digital Providers** - organisations or individuals who are approved to use APIs, to connect their core systems to the NDIA’s to enable them to work more efficiently and automate processes. It is expected that this will allow them to provide more efficient services to participants.
* **DPP Developers** - organisations or individuals who are approved to use APIs to develop apps, tools and digital marketplaces for commercial purposes. As developers, they are not authorised to access live NDIS data directly (other than test systems). But the tools they create will provide authentication mechanisms for participants and providers who use those tools to do so, if necessary.
* **DPP End Users** – anyone, including participants and providers, who use a digital service developed by a DPP Developer that makes use of the NDIA APIs. Many DPP End Users will likely use these services via mobile apps, websites or 3rd party software and may not know that those tools are even using the NDIA’s APIs.

The term **Digital Partners** is used to collectively describe Digital Providers and DPP Developers, as those entities that access APIs under the DPP either to integrate into their own systems or to use in the development of tools to offer to others commercially**.**

It is quite possible that roles will overlap. For example:

* a Digital Provider may also be a DPP Developer – providing tools for use by others
* A system aggregator, or providers of a digital marketplace may cross all three categories;
* The makers of practice management systems and financial accounting systems who currently provide core systems to individual existing NDIS providers, and hence are categorised as Digital Providers, may look to augment their existing products by becoming DPP Developers and developing tools or platforms for broad commercial use
* A Participant who is an end user of a system may also wish to become a DPP Developer.

Importantly, access to APIs will be managed by a subscription process which is based on the type of Digital Partner and what the intended use of the APIs is. Depending on the type of data a Digital Partner needs to access, and the APIs they need to connect to, and how they intend to use the APIs, the subscription process will be different.

The initial release of APIs has been designed for Registered Providers. These APIs essentially replicate functionality that is available on the myPlace portal, and this will allow Registered Providers to work more efficiently connecting systems and automating processes. The access to data via these APIs is no greater than what is already available to those Registered Providers via the myPlace Provider Portal. These APIs are now available to registered providers that subscribe as Digital Providers.

In time these initial APIs will also be made available to DPP Developers for use in the development of apps, tools and marketplaces they offer to the NDIS ecosystem on a commercial basis. Encouraging third parties to develop solutions that offer participants more information, increased transparency, greater choice and more competitive pricing is a core objective of the NDIA’s Digital Partnership Program.

Subsequent releases of APIs are intended to provide additional functionality to support the further development of apps, tools and digital marketplaces by DPP Developers, but will also be available to Digital Providers.

While there are undoubted benefits to opening up the development of apps, tools and solutions by DPP Developers to the NDIS ecosystem, the additional operational and reputational risk for the NDIA in allowing access to its core systems and selected data to enable that requires a more rigorous subscription process. A formal agreement with the NDIA will be required and these DPP Developers will need to comply with a range of business and technical requirements. More details are included in this paper.

**The Digital Partnership Program**

As the Preliminary Discussion Paper explained, one key deliverable of the DPP is the creation of a permanent Digital Partnership Office to:

* Act as the single point of contact between Digital Partners and the NDIA
* Publish technical advice and support documentation for use by Digital Partners
* Manage the application and certification arrangements (enrolment and onboarding) for Digital Partners to gain access to the APIs they wish to use
* Assess, approve, support, and prioritise the ongoing development of future APIs
* Coordinate governance arrangements and promote the Digital Partnership Program by the industry, according to a proposed NDIA Industry Engagement Framework

The design of the NDIA DPO is broadly based on the model used by the ATO, and its role and function are described in more detail later this paper.

## Scope and Approach

The NDIA’s decision to use third party developers is based on the number of new technologies, digital business models, online aggregators and other digital solutions that have appeared since the NDIA commenced.

Feedback from the first consultation was that there is some confusion about the NDIA’s role in development of new systems, platforms and services. The NDIA will not build a digital marketplace. The DPP will provide APIs to enable third parties, to lead the development of new and innovative digital services and solutions for participants, providers and other stakeholders.

The DPP relies on the participation of providers, software developers, aggregators, and a range of other third parties (e.g. Practice Management software). The NDIA’s role is to “*facilitate a competitive and contestable marketplace that is flexible and responds to the choice and preference of participants*”.

This is not to suggest that NDIA will never offer individual services or, develop specific mobile apps for participants that use the DPP platform, but that it will look to the market with appropriate signalling from the NDIA to be the major source of new services in this area. The NDIA will continue to support, and evolve its existing Portals and range of existing online services, as part of its broader Digital Strategy, but the role and functionality of these platforms will evolve over time.

The NDIA actively supports ongoing market development as part of its market stewardship role. The DPP will facilitate the growth and innovation of the market to **better serve the needs of participants**, but if is to succeed, there are two critical objectives it must achieve:

1. It must deliver benefits to participants while improving the efficiency, effectiveness and financial sustainability of the Scheme.
2. It must address the business and operational needs of a competitive and contestable market guided by NDIA stewardship of the market and leadership on how to deliver participant outcomes.

The DPP is intended to allow Digital Partners to drive improvements in systems available to participants and providers, to improve delivery for participants and the performance of the scheme.

Lessons learnt from other Government agencies, including the ATO, show the development and growth of a digital market needs to be actively promoted, managed and supported. The NDIA is committed to engaging and working with potential Digital Partners and the disability service and software development sectors, to ensure that the DPP is as easy and efficient to access as possible, and that awareness and adoption of the Program are wide spread. This will be one of the functions of the Digital Partnership Office.

### The DPP can also be used in many different contexts

| **Type of Digital Partner** | **Sample DPP use case** | **Used by DP’s to engage with** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Registered providers | Create, view and edit service bookings directly through existing business systems to reduce administrative time and cost to focus on participants | Participants, NDIA |
| Unregistered providers | Create, view and edit service bookings using business systems to reduce administrative time and cost to focus on participants | Participants, NDIA |
| LACs and Plan Managers(Self/Agency/Intermediary) | Access to specialised plan management tools to view/approve timesheets, invoices, track spending (real time) across multiple participants | Participants, NDIA |
| Community and Not-for-profit Organisations and ILC | Assist participants in identifying the best provider (consistent with their plan) for services and products | Participants |
| Aggregators and Marketplaces | Provide eCommerce platform allowing providers to establish their own online marketplaces accessible to participants, their plan managers, and support coordinators | All |
| Software Developers | Build innovative mobile apps to provide point solutions for general or specific participant needs that integrate with both aggregator systems and the NDIA | All |
| Support Coordinators | Purchase low-cost assistive technology directly through online marketplaces using allocated funds | Participants |
| NDIA | To provide better staff solutions, an abstraction layer to legacy systems, allow for transition to new platforms and support new data collection and analysis tools | NDIA |
| Government Agencies – Federal, State and Local | Allow for the integration or linking to DPP and scheme related services directly into existing government public web and staff facing systems | Participants and Government |

The breadth of potential Digital Partners in this table provides some insight into the effort required to generate awareness and take up of the Digital Partnership Program.

The Digital Partnership Program provides an opportunity to support and encourage the market to respond with innovative digital solutions. The NDIA’s market stewardship obligations require it to guide and support the development of digital marketplaces to facilitate choice and control for NDIS participants. Those same market stewardship obligations also require that the NDIA makes sure these new marketplaces do not negatively disrupt or compromise the Scheme’s operations.

## What we learnt from the first consultation round.

The following is a short summary of the feedback received from the first round of consultation. A total of 36 submissions were received.

* Responses were from a good cross section of registered providers, plan managers, software developers, aggregators and platform intermediaries. The notable exception was that of Participants. This is most likely a consequence of the timing of the consultation (over the holiday period) and the technical content. As a result, this round of feedback will target Participant perspectives and extra effort will be made to ensure that Participants as DPP End Users are engaged in the NDIA Industry Engagement Framework.
* There was overall support for the approach, and the decision to use APIs to deliver it.
* A reasonable number of submissions expressed a concern that greater detail about governance arrangements, market dynamics, and principles was needed.
* A number of submissions included suggestions of specific APIs that could be offered and their benefits, or the priority NDIA should give to the development of specific APIs.
* Many submissions made comments about the need to craft APIs in ways that supported the needs of Participants –highlighting approaches such as Co-design and communications requirements including WCAG compliance.
* There was extremely strong endorsement that the NDIA look to duplicate the Industry Engagement model used by the ATO. Over 80% of submissions supported this choice. A small number suggested possible variations to specific ATO’s practices that are seen as being too onerous and/or not applicable to the role and remit of the NDIA. Also noted was the critical need for the NDIA to grow its expertise and “maturity” in undertaking this new role.
* Many submissions included suggested changes or additions to the principles including accessibility considerations, human centred design, protection of participant information, DPP governance parameters
* A small number of submissions noted the need to consider the effect on the different plan management arrangements that Participants have in place.
* A few submissions suggested that Digital Market Service was a confusing title and did not accurately explain the approach.
* A few submissions indicated that there was an assumption that the NDIA would develop end-user facing tools. The NDIA will continue to develop selected digital products for participants and providers, the DPP is intended increase the range, speed to market and specialisation of solutions available to participants and providers, by also supporting and encouraging the development of apps, tools and digital marketplaces by DPP Developers.

A small number of submissions made the assumption that the DPP would replace the myPlace Portals. The NDIA will continue to support, and evolve its existing Portals, as part of its broader Digital Strategy, but the role and functionality of these platforms will evolve over time.

All of the feedback received during the first consultation round has been taken into consideration in the further development of the Digital Partnership Program. That feedback has been included in this second consultation paper.

## Proposed role of the Digital Partnership Office and the goals of the DPP

### Role of the Digital Partnership Office

The NDIA needs to connect with a new group of stakeholders, and manage and assist their access to the NDIA’s APIs in order for the DPP to succeed.

The NDIA is considering adopting similar engagement practices to those used by the [Australian Taxation Office](https://softwaredevelopers.ato.gov.au/DPO). By choosing this model, the NDIA could keep a consistent experience for Digital Partners who also work the ATO.

Modelled on the ATO’s Digital Partnership Office, the NDIA’s DPO will address the needs of the DPP in four ways:

* Actively promote, encourage and support the adoption of the DPP, and the use of NDIA APIs in the disability services and software development sectors
* Consult with Digital Partners and industry leaders to co-design the evolution of the NDIA’s API suite and related functionality
* Establish and lead an Industry Reference Group as a means of gaining regular feedback and guidance on the DPP from Digital Partners and other key stakeholders
* Manage the access to the NIDIA’s suite of APIs and make sure that Digital Partners can achieve their objectives
* Respond to issues and support the needs of Digital Partners accessing the NDIA APIs, to ensure the smooth operation of the DPP
* Keep the community and Digital Partners informed and engaged with the DPP and changes to it and APIs

The DPO will:

* Act as the single point of contact between Digital Partners and the NDIA
* Publish technical advice and support documentation for Digital Partners
* Manage the application and certification arrangements for Digital Partners to access APIs
* Assess, approve, support, and prioritise the development of future APIs
* Coordinate governance arrangements and promote the adoption and take up of the Digital Partnership Program by the industry through a structured engagement plan

**Goals of the DPP**

The Digital Partnership Program will support and encourage Digital Partners to develop apps, tools and digital marketplaces that help participants and providers work together more effectively.

Development by Digital Partners could, for example:

* Help participants better manage their budget through
	+ Real time budget view
	+ Tracking current supports
	+ Review goals
	+ Letting them share their plan with providers
	+ Allowing nominees and trusted others to assist with decision making
	+ Reports for plan review meetings.
* Allow large providers to connect their systems securely with NDIA systems to automate processes.
* Software developers could provide ways for providers to manage their business including:
	+ Practice management and appointment bookings
	+ Billing and receipting processes
* Allow participants to self-manage more efficiently
* Create digital marketplaces, allowing users to discover products and services from a range of different providers. Manage ordering, invoicing, payment, etc. Some examples might include:
	+ Mobile or web apps that connect participants and workers who deliver personal support services (including scheduling appointment times, confirming services, claiming and / or invoicing, payment processing and feedback)
	+ Assist participants eligible for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) to match their requirements with vacancies in existing dwellings and proposed developments
	+ Identify providers of assistive technology, with clear specifications, more accurate quotations, faster approval and delivery

The DPP will also collect market data to support the Agency’s overall market stewardship and scheme administration functions. It is expected to:

* Support greater data driven insights:
	+ More detailed information about the provider market, participants and mainstream and community organisations
	+ Increased access to data, creating early indicators of market gaps
* Support future innovation through:
	+ Increased focus on participant and provider experiences
	+ Help identify where alternative supports are leading to better outcomes
	+ Building capabilities to fill market gaps
	+ Formalise the role of aggregators, intermediaries and brokers
* Integrate with future digital solutions and government platforms.

## What types of APIs will be available?

APIs will be developed for use by the two categories of Digital Partners:

1. Digital Providers, who could use APIs in their own internal systems to automate and improve their business processes
2. DPP Developers, who could use APIs to develop tools, apps and digital marketplaces to offer to the broader NDIS market

These Digital Partners will have different needs, and will use the functionality and data accessed via the NDIA APIs in different ways and for different business purposes.

### Initial Suite of APIs

The initial suite of APIs available have been primarily designed to allow registered providers who subscribe as Digital Providers, to connect directly from their internal core systems to the NDIA, in order to manage their day to day work without needing to log into and enter or upload data via the myplace Provider Portal.

In this respect this initial suite of APIs that is being made available to registered providers from next week, essentially replicates functionality currently available on the myplace provider portal, but will allow real-time calls from the Digital Providers’ systems to the NDIAs.

It is expected that this initial suite of APIs will also be useful in the development of apps, tools and digital marketplaces for participants, and they will be made available to developers, who subscribe as DPP Developers, later this year.

These APIs have been built and will be available to registered providers who subscribe as Digital Providers under the Digital Partnership Program from next week.

These APIs replicate functionality of the myplace provider portal, and allow Digital Providers to make and review payment requests, service bookings, participant plan details, quotations and provider profile updates.

### Initial API Functions

**NDIS Payment Requests**

Digital Providers are able to submit and maintain payment requests against service bookings via APIs. They can make requests for single or multiple payments and retrieve information on submitted requests.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Payment Request Creation Single | Submit a single payment request for one service booking |
| Payment Request Creation Batch | Submit a set of payment requests for multiple service bookings and participants  |
| Payment Request List All  | Retrieve a list of all payment requests made by the provider |
| Payment Request List Specific  | Retrieve a single payment request made by the provider |

**NDIS Service Bookings**

Providers can create, maintain and delete Service Bookings.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Service Booking Creation | Places a service booking against a participant’s funded supports. This allows the provider to make a service booking for a support category or support item. |
| Service Booking Update Quantity and Amount | Provider can update the current quantity and allocated amount of an existing service booking |
| Service Booking Extend End Date | Extends the ending date of an existing service booking  |
| Service Booking Reduce End Date | Reduces the ending date of an existing service booking |
| Service Booking Update Status | This API updates the status of an existing Service Booking in the Participants plan. |
| Service Booking List All  | Retrieves a list of all the provider’s service bookings |
| Service Booking List Specific  | Retrieves a specific service booking assigned to the provider |
| Service Booking Delete  | Deletes a specific service booking assigned to the provider |

**NDIS Quotations**

Allows Providers to view quotations and submit new quotations.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Quotation List All | Retrieves a summary of all quotations for the provider along with current status on each |
| Quotation Response | Allows the provider to respond to a specific request for a quote from NDIA |

**NDIS Notifications**

Providers can view and manage notifications that they have signed up for, including:

* Quotation response required
* Service booking awaiting participant approval
* Service booking awaiting provider approval

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Notification List All | Retrieves a list of all the notifications that a provider has subscribed to receive |
| Notification Subscribe | Enables the provider to subscribe to a type of notification |
| Notification Unsubscribe | Enables the provider to unsubscribe from a previously subscribed type of notification |

**NDIS Reference Data**

Providers can retrieve all information needed to use each existing API.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Reference Data All | Retrieves a list of all the required datasets and parameters for the developer to know.  |
| Reference Data Attribute  | Retrieves values for a specific attribute that needs to be passed into other APIs. |
| Reference Data Sub-attribute | Retrieves values for a specific sub attribute data that needs to be passed into other APIs. |

**NDIS Products** Providers can look up a specific product name.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Product Catalogue View | Retrieves NDIA's Product Catalogue details |

**NDIS Upload File**

Digital Providers can use the Upload Files API to share a supporting document with NDIA.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Upload File  | Enables the provider to upload a file as a supporting document |

All APIs are subject to the existing creation and maintenance rules in force on the myplace provider portal. Refer to the [provider portal guides](https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/working-provider/myplace-provider-portal-and-resources) for more information.

### Future APIs

Under the Digital Partnership Program, the intent is to engage and discuss directly with Digital Partners and other relevant stakeholders to determine what APIs would be useful in the future, and which APIs the NDIA would be prepared to develop within the bounds of its commitments under the Act, its privacy policy, and its risk appetite.

The objective of any future API development is to support functionality that improves the information flow, transparency, ease of access, and choice and control for participants, and to simplify their interactions with providers and the NDIA. That might be through use and leverage by Digital Providers in their own systems, or to increase the functionality and usability of tools, apps, and websites developed by DPP Developers.

Through this process we are seeking specific feedback on the kinds of APIs that would help software developers create useful tools for participants, including how access to data or functionality via those APIs would benefit participants.

The following are thought starters to prompt discussion and feedback on future APIs which may be developed for Digital Partners.

It is important to note the NDIA is making no commitment to develop any specific APIs, either suggested by responses to this consultation, or mentioned as thought starters by the NDIA in this paper. Any future APIs developed by the NDIA will be at its discretion and subject to internal risk assessment and commercial decision processes.

**Thought Starters**

**Provider Finder (Registered Providers)**

Digital Providers have access to updated registered provider details

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Provider Finder  | Search for specific providers and services within a defined area |

**Price Guide**

Digital Providers have access to the NDIS Price Guide

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Price Guide  | View current pricing information for each catalogued support |

**Sharing my plan**

Change consent to share participant plans, view plans, create, update and view the status of plan goals.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Sharing my plan consent | Notify the NDIA that the participant has consented to share their plan |
| Viewing Plan | Access plan information with consent to be shared |
| Create Goals | Create goals for a participant’s plan |
| Update Goals | Update existing participant goals |
| Goals Status | Shows the current status of the participant’s goals |

**Plan Renewal**

Support for notifications and documentation download and uploaded, for plan renewals

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Plan renewal notification | Notify of a plan renewal |
| Downloading plan renewal documentation | Download plan renewal documentation |
| Upload plan renewal documentation | Upload and submit plan renewal information to the NDIA |

**Specialist Disability Accommodation**

Find Specialist Disability Accommodation providers and to create a booking.

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Search Specialist Disability Accommodation  | Allow searching a region for specialist disability accommodation |
| Book Specialist Disability Accommodation | Enable the booking of specialist disability accommodation |

**Quotations Enhancements**

Receive quote notifications, send and amend quotes to NDIA

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Quote notification  | Notification that a new quote is requested or an existing quote has changed |
| Amend Quotes | Send an amendment for an existing quote submission |
| Quote Status | Show the status of the provider’s quote request |

**Payments**

Claim Payments from NDIA

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Real Time Claim  | Send real time claim request to NDIA for products and services for delivered supports |

**Appointments**

Schedule and update an appointment with NDIA

| **API Name** | **Use** |
| --- | --- |
| Request NDIA Appointment  | Request an appointment with the NDIA |
| View / Update Appointment | View or update a scheduled appointment with NDIA |
| Notifications | Provide notifications on appointment including changes to the appointment |

## Principles

The NDIA has identified a number of principles it intends to apply under the Digital Partnership Program. These principles, which are expected to be followed by any digital offering developed by DPP Developers under the DPP include:

* Participants’ personal information and privacy must be protected above all else
* Give participants choice and control over which providers they choose
* Be clear and transparent about services and costs
* Make it easier for participants to find and access funded supports
* Make it easier for participants to switch providers if they are not happy
* Make it easier for self-managing participants to manage their NDIS plans
* Wherever possible, participants are not to be charged service or transaction fees
* Provide the Agency with specific data and visibility of underlying transactions occurring within the app, tool or digital marketplace
* All apps, tools and marketplaces are to be designed in a way that incorporates best practice in terms of accessibility by their intended NDIS participants, especially those with cognitive impairment
* No tool or digital marketplace developed by Digital Partners will have exclusive access to any segment of the market.

The NDIA may consider issuing guidelines for DPP Developers on “Best Practice” in terms of end-user design, development & testing, and/or WCAG compliance. The NDIA recognises that people with disability as DPP End Users may have special communications requirements and that digital solutions should be responsive to the characteristics of NDIS participants.

Terms and Conditions Digital Partners will be required to subscribe to the DPP, agree to the Terms & Conditions for accessing APIs that are aligned to their Digital Partner profile and intended use, and confirm that they comply with a number of business and software development practices within their organisations.

There are two levels of subscription:

1. Digital Provider – registered providers who are subscribing to access APIs for use in their own internal systems in order to improve the efficiency of their businesses with flow on benefits to the participants they support
2. DPP Developer – third parties (including registered providers) who are subscribing to access APIs in order to use them to develop apps, tools, digital marketplaces or other digital products that they will offer to participants, providers or other members of the NDIS ecosystem

**Access to APIs for Digital Providers**

At a high level, the Terms and Conditions for access to APIs by existing registered providers as Digital Providers include:

* Accept and abide by the terms and conditions
* Provide any information requested by the NDIA to be granted access to the APIs. This includes organisational identity, contact details and information about its systems. Update the NDIA of any changes to this information
* NDIA will determine (at its sole discretion) whether to grant access to the APIs
* Advise the NDIA of changes to operations, services or infrastructure. This includes outsourcing or off-shoring. The NDIA must be advised prior to that change in arrangement taking effect
* The right to access to APIs is a non-transferable
* Digital Partners must not use APIs for any purpose contrary to the terms
* Digital Partners must take reasonable steps to secure access to the APIs
* If a Provider has access to some APIs to automate process, and wants to develop third party software, they must then go through the process to gain access to the Tier 2 APIs and agree to those terms and conditions
* APIs are only to be used for the purposes requested
* The NDIA may monitor all actual or attempted access to, and activity within, the suite of APIs
* The NDIA may revoke access to the API Platform at any time at its sole discretion. It is not required to provide reasons for this decision. The NDIA is not responsible for any loss caused

The API Terms and Conditions document also includes requirements touching on such matters as API Use, protecting the Privacy of Personal Information, Access, Security & System Availability, Intellectual Property, and Liability & Indemnity.

A copy of the Digital Provider Terms and Conditions is included at Attachment 1.

A copy of the Digital Provider Technology Questionnaire is included at Attachment 2.

These Digital Provider Terms and Conditions are the same terms and conditions used with the providers during the recent API pilot, and will be the terms and conditions under which registered providers will be subscribed as Digital Providers to the DPP when the Program goes live next week. The NDIA is open to feedback on these terms and conditions, which may be incorporated into future versions.

**Access to APIs for DPP Developers**

As described in Section 6, the intention is to also make the initial suite of APIs available for use by DPP Developers in the development of apps, tools and digital marketplaces that they wish to offer to the market commercially. It is also intended that, over time, additional APIs will be developed by the NDIA to support the development of these third party solutions. The feedback from this consultation process, along with feedback from engagement with industry and the Industry Reference Group run by the DPO, will help inform and prioritise what functionality is included in the future API suite.

To gain access to the existing suite of APIs, and any future APIs, for the purpose of developing digital solutions to offer to third parties, developers will be required to subscribe to the DPP as a DPP Developer and adhere to the DPP Developer Terms and Conditions. The existing Digital Provider Terms and Conditions will be used as the foundation for this more stringent set of terms conditions. As mentioned previously, this is necessary to help manage the risk associated with allowing DPP Developers access to NDIA data and functionality in order to development of commercial digital solutions for NDIS participants and providers, with whom the NDIA may not have direct contact, and will limited control of the end user experience.

The DPP Developer Terms and Conditions will therefore cover such issues as:

* Licensing’s agreements on Intellectual Property to be in place between NDIA and Digital Partners with regards to commercialisation of tools, apps or marketplaces developed.
* Possible extension to existing liability and indemnity to cover commercial/financial loss
* Collection and exchange of data to the NDIA that occurs through API access leveraged by apps, tools or marketplaces
* Appropriate technical and organisation measures are in place and consented by the end user, protecting against unauthorised use of personal data
* Monitoring controls are in place to scan for cyber-attacks and detection of anomalies including processes and procedures for notification

Digital Providers who wish to extend the use of APIs beyond use within their own internal systems and who wish start using them for use in the development of apps, tools and digital marketplaces for third parties, will be required to subscribe as DPP Developers and accept the DPP Developer Terms and Conditions prior to using APIs for this purpose. For the purpose of clarity, this includes providers who have already subscribed as Digital Providers and accepted the Digital Provider Terms and Conditions.

## Data exchange between Digital Partners and the NDIA

Access to Scheme and market data, the terms and conditions that prescribe use of this data and the NDIA’s need to collect data are critical to the successful implementation of the DPP. In particular, the way this data can be used will determine and dictate the commercial opportunities available for DPP developers to build marketplaces, applications and solutions to enhance the interactions between participants, providers and the NDIA. The legislative and regulatory overlay also prescribes the need to protect personal information and the conditions under which the NDIA can collect data.

The DPP will support the Agency’s overall market stewardship and scheme administration functions as well as provide a platform for future innovation. As outlined in the Preliminary Discussion Paper, the NDIA will look to collect data to:

* Support greater data driven insights:
* More detailed information about the provider market (both registered and unregistered providers)
* Deep insights across the market, participants, providers and mainstream/community
* Increased access to data, creating early indicators of market gaps;
* Usage analysis and monitoring
* Provide the foundations for future innovation:
* Increased focus on participant and provider experiences
* Capability insourcing or outsourcing to fill market gaps
* Role of aggregators, intermediaries and brokers is formalised
* Ability to ‘plug in’ and integrate with digital solutions, as well as whole of government platforms

The DPP will provide also provide access to existing scheme and market data that will allow DPP developers to build marketplaces and solutions. The type of data that will support current and future APIs may include:

* Participant / Plan / Budget Information / Service Booking Data
* Payment Data
* Registered Provider / Workers Data (NDIS Commission)
* NDIS Reference Data
* Specialist Disability Accommodation Data
* Marketplace / Solution / API Metrics and usage data

The table below outlines the type of interactions that may be facilitated through future APIs and data to be shared via the DPP.

| **Data to be shared** | **Interactions** |
| --- | --- |
| Participant / Plan / Budget data / Appointment / Service Bookings | * + - Share plan data with providers / provide consent to access data
		- Will support solutions that will allow real time interaction with participants and providers.
		- Provide access to real-time budget information to support service booking creation and plan utilisation
		- Provide a mechanism to capture feedback on quality of service and supports - Satisfaction with individual supports received
		- Provide a mechanism to capture achievement /progress of goals in relation to the service and supports consumed - for example, employment gained and engagement with the community
		- Receive notifications of appointments, bookings and cancellations
		- Available funds to facilitate a service booking
		- Notification of alerts – funding thresholds eg. 25% remaining
		- Service booking details / location of service (geographic)
 |
| Payment Data | * + - Integration into practise management systems to facilitate appointment bookings, invoicing and payment claims.
		- Notification of payments
		- Support the development of system to system payment integration
 |
| Registered Provider / Workers Data (NDIS Commission) | * + - Detailed provider information regarding registration groups and outlet locations
		- Details of search requests based on support type and location
		- Details of search requests for support workers and their skillsets to help match participants needs
 |
| NDIS Reference Data | * + - Access to common NDIS reference data eg. Price guide
 |
| Specialist Disability Accommodation Data | * + - Enrol SDA dwellings
		- Search for and book dwellings
 |
| Marketplace / Solution / API Metrics and usage data | * + - Transactional data on services and supports with both registered and unregistered providers
		- Detailed transaction data based on support type and location
		- Details of search requests based on support type and location
		- Thin and failing markets / Identification of gaps and opportunities
		- API calls and usage / API Performance / Metrics
 |

The growth and evolution of the DPP along with future opportunities to leverage whole of government initiatives will provide greater access to data that will support ongoing opportunities for Digital Partners to grow and expand their solutions.

## The new NDIS Payments Platform

Integral to the Digital Partnership Program, the NDIA is in the process of designing and implementing a new Payments Platform for the NDIS. This new platform will allow real-time, automated payment claims to be made directly from the provider to the NDIA, without the need for manual entry or bulk upload via the provider or participant portals. Payment of approved claims will be made overnight.

This functionality will dramatically reduce the cost and time currently incurred by participants and providers when claiming for payments, and will significantly reduce the number of payments issues that they encounter.

The delivery of the new Payments Platform relies on access to the APIs discussed above, and hence it is considered an integral part of the Digital Partnership Program. The Payments Platform will be delivered in three phases:

1. **Direct Integration**

As foreshadowed in the descriptions of the APIs in Section 6, the initial suite of APIs will allow registered providers to perform the functions required to make payment claims directly from their core systems to the NDIA’s core system, and receive a response in real-time, as opposed to uploading claims via the myplace Provider Portal. Approved payments will be deposited into the provider’s bank account overnight.

Although these APIs are available to all registered providers from next week, it is acknowledged that it is likely that only those providers who run their own core ERP systems, and have the capacity and capability to integrate the APIs into those systems, will be in a position to take advantage of them initially.

1. **Package Integration**

The second phase of the Payments Platform deployment will enable access to the initial suite of APIs by companies who provide accounting packages, case management software, or other software packages to NDIS providers, for use in their own businesses. This will allow providers who use these software packages to make claims directly to the NDIA’s core system, and receive a response in real-time, in the same way those providers who were able to directly integrate APIs into their core systems can.

This will make real-time direct claims and overnight payment available to the thousands of smaller and medium sized registered NDIS providers who use these accounting or patient management packages.

1. **Point Of Service (POS)**

The third phase of the new Payments Platform involves enabling automated real-time claims via standard EFTPOS devices, at the Point Of Service, using payments capability built into a new Participant mobile app. When the participant opens the NDIS app or NDIS virtual card in the digital wallet on their phone, and taps the EFTPOS terminal or device, a claim is automatically generated for the services or support they have received, is assessed in real-time, and a response returned to the participants phone and the providers EFTPOS device. If approved, payment is made to the providers account overnight as it is for any regular EFTPOS transaction.

Detailed design and development of the POS solution and participant mobile app will be informed by separate industry consultation and direct input from a representative cross-section of participants, providers and other stakeholders. This real-time POS claims capability will be available to all providers who have an EFTPOS device, including small businesses, sole traders, and unregistered providers.

The first phase of the new Payments Platform, Direct Integration, is effectively available from next week with the launch of the initial suite of APIs for access by Registered Providers who subscribe to the DPP as Digital Providers. The process by which providers can subscribe and gain access to these APIs can be found on the NDIS website from next week. The second phase, Package Integration, will follow when the APIs are made available to accounting and case management software package providers later this year1. Availability to individual providers will depend if and when, the accounting or case management software packages they use adopt and integrate the claims related APIs into their package.

## Consultation Process

The NDIA is undertaking this consultation process in order to ensure that it fully understands the range of needs, capabilities, requirements, technological developments, potential business models and solutions that stakeholders would like to see considered in the design and implementation of the Digital Partnership Program. Feedback is therefore being sought from interested parties on any aspect of the Digital Partnership Program outlined in this paper, including anything that is viewed as missing.

Public consultation calling for submissions of feedback into the development of a Digital Partnership Program is occurring in two rounds:

1. As mentioned in Section 4 of this paper, the NDIA released the then titled, Digital Market Service Preliminary Discussion Paper on December 23, 2019, asking interested parties to outline any key areas of interest or concern, and share considerations, thoughts and ideas that they would like to see addressed in the second more detailed Discussion Paper.
2. Incorporating that feedback, the NDIA has now refined and published the Digital Partnership Program Discussion Paper (this document) – which provides further detail on the DPP, including details of the initial suite of APIs, and the Terms and Conditions and Digital Partnership Office that will support access to them, along with an overview of the new NDIS Payments Platform. The NDIA is now calling for further feedback on the approach outlined in this paper, to help inform the refinement and final design of the broader Digital Partnership Program.

### Timeline

| **Date** | **Activity** |
| --- | --- |
| 23 December 2019 | Release of Preliminary Discussion Paper Call for submissions of feedback (Round 1) |
| 12 January 2020 | Public submissions close (Round 1) |
| 28 February 2020 | Release of Discussion PaperCall for public submissions of feedback (Round 2) |
| 14 April 2020 | Public submissions close (Round 2) |

Interested parties are invited to make their submissions in response to this Round 2 Discussion Paper in writing to:

NDIA.PROVIDER.INFORMATION@NDIS.GOV.AU

Or

Digital Partnership Program
National Disability Insurance Agency
GPO Box 700
Canberra ACT 2601

The NDIA looks forward to your thoughts, insights and suggestions on any aspect of the Digital Partnership Program, but particularly on how it can best promote, enable and support the development of digital solutions that assist NDIS participants to achieve their plan objectives more effectively, by helping them manage their plans more efficiently, and enhancing and simplifying their interactions with their chosen providers and the NDIA.

## Attachments

NDIA Digital Providers Terms and Conditions

NDIA Digital Providers Technology Questionnaire