8 August 2023

The primary purpose of the Co-design Advisory Group is for the Independent Advisory Council (IAC), Department of Social Services (DSS) and the disability sector to provide strategic advice to the NDIA on the development, focus and implementation of co-design and engagement processes within the disability community.

The Co-design Advisory Group works collaboratively to:

- ensure disability community perspectives on issues facing the NDIS are represented
- gather feedback on the co-design priorities and approaches with peers and members, and
- provide and receive strategic advice on the design, implementation and evaluation of co-design and engagement.

The following members and NDIA representatives were in attendance.

Chairperson

- Leah Van Poppel, IAC Principal Member

Members

- Ross Joyce, CEO, Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Dwayne Cranfield, CEO, National Ethnic Disability Alliance
- Skye Kakoschke-Moore, CEO, Children and Young People with Disability Australia
- Maeve Kennedy, Inclusion Australia
- Jennifer Cullen, IAC
- Julie Yeend, DSS

NDIA representatives

- Corri McKenzie, Deputy CEO, Service Design & Improvement
- Donna Purcell, NDIA Participant Advocate
- Shannon Rees, A/g General Manager, Communications and Engagement

Secretariat

- Matthew Wright, Director, Sector Engagement and Advice
- Courtney Hoffman, Director, Strategy, Communications and Innovation
- Phillip Wakefield, Assistant Director, Sector Engagement and Advice

Apologies

- Catherine McAlpine, CEO Inclusion Australia
- Alex Rosenthal, A/g Branch Manager, Co-design and Engagement

Meeting summary

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land, paying respect to their Elders, past and present, and also paid respects to people with disability. Co-design Advisory Group (CAG) members each paid respect to the Traditional Owners of the land from which they were joining the meeting.

The Chair acknowledged two IAC representatives are still to be appointed to the CAG following the 2023 IAC membership renewal process.

The Chair advised Trish Drury from the Department of Social Services (DSS) will no longer be attending CAG meetings and acknowledged Trish's contribution to the CAG.

CAG members raised issue with the amount of pre-material content provided for the meeting. Members requested executive summaries be provided for detailed meeting content. The secretariat took an action to develop executive summaries for future meetings.

First Nations Strategy update

The Chair introduced Lisa Short, A/g GM Strategy & Priorities and Sharni Burstin, Director, Strategy & Priorities.

Ms Short and Ms Burstin provided an update on the NDIA First Nations Strategy. This included an update on the partnership agreement the NDIA has signed with First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) to co-design the NDIA's First Nations Strategy and establish the First Nations Advisory Council (FNAC). FNAC is Co-Chaired by Rebecca Falkingham, NDIA CEO and Damian Griffis, FPDN CEO.

Ms Short outlined how the First Nations Strategy team has engaged FNAC, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership group and the IAC Equity Inclusion Reference Group to seek feedback on the governance and stakeholder engagement plan for the First Nations Strategy. Once the stakeholder engagement plan is endorsed, the next steps will be meeting with participants, community representative organisations, and disability service providers.

Feedback

Mr Dwayne Cranfield offered to share learnings from the development of the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Strategy with the First Nations Strategy team and with Mr Damian Griffis.

CAG Terms of Reference and the role of CAG

The Chair introduced Corri McKenzie, Deputy CEO, Service Design & Improvement. Ms McKenzie led a discussion regarding the Terms of Reference for the CAG and the ongoing role of the CAG.

Feedback

CAG members discussed the possibility of cross-over between the responsibilities of the CAG and the Reform for Outcomes (RFO) program steering committee, which some members of the CAG may also be involved in.

CAG members agreed there is likely to be an increased number of co-design projects undertaken by the NDIA in partnership with disability representative organisations and IAC members after the outcomes of the NDIS Review and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability are reported.

CAG members asked for visibility of all the reference groups currently operating.

Discussion outcome

Ms McKenzie outlined two potential ways forward for the CAG to support discussion:

- Incorporate the responsibilities of CAG into the RFO program steering committee.
- Maintain the two groups, ensuring no duplication of responsibility between the groups in their updated Terms of Reference.

The group took an action to consider both options and finalise the preferred option at the September CAG meeting. Ms McKenzie stated these options are non-exclusive and any other options can be tabled at the September CAG meeting for discussion.

Co-design evaluation approach

The Chair introduced Andrew Goodall, Director, Strategic Evaluation. Mr Goodall sought CAG feedback on a draft co-design evaluation approach.

Mr Goodall spoke about the different options for evaluating co-design projects, including:

- retrospective evaluation that happens at the end of a project
- developmental evaluation, where evaluation is built into the co-design process through the life of a project.

Feedback

CAG members raised concern they have not previously been involved in the decision-making process for selecting the co-design evaluators.
CAG members recommended the co-design evaluation approached needs to include:

- reference to scalability
- reference to participant outcomes
- capacity building for the Agency and for disability representative organisations
- people with lived experience of disability in evaluator roles.

CAG members asked whether a combination of the two evaluation approaches could be implemented, to simultaneously evaluate past co-design activities as well as the current RFO program activities.

CAG members stated they are supportive of the NDIA increasing its internal capability to lead evaluations internally.

Discussion outcome

Mr Goodall agreed to re-draft the evaluation approach to incorporate the CAG members' feedback and recommendations.

Meeting close

The meeting concluded.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 12 September 2023.

If you have any feedback or questions about the Co-design Advisory Group, please email stakeholder.engagement@ndis.gov.au.

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