



Women
With
Disabilities
Australia
(WWDA)

Winner, National Human Rights Award 2001
Winner, National Violence Prevention Award 1999
Winner, Tasmanian Women's Safety Award 2008
Certificate of Merit, Australian Crime & Violence Prevention Awards 2008
Nominee, UNESCO Prize for Digital Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities 2020
Nominee, National Disability Awards 2017
Nominee, French Republic's Human Rights Prize 2003
Nominee, UN Millennium Peace Prize for Women 2000

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) – Call to action National Jobs Summit – 1st -2nd September 2022

Only 45.5% of women with disability are in the workforce¹ compared to 51.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women,² 62.1% of all women and 74.4% of men.³

Women with disability have a right to work on an equal basis with others, ensuring equal remuneration for work of equal value (noting that assessment of 'value' and 'productivity' should take into account contributions broader than just work 'output' - for example value added to workplace culture).

WWDA calls for the following **key actions** to address the fundamental human right of women with disability to have equal access to employment:

- Establish a Workforce Disability Equality Agency supported by legislation with functions and powers similar to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.
- Review employment and other relevant legislation and policies to ensure Australia is meeting its international human rights obligations set out in all 7 United Nations treaties to which Australia is a party.
- Develop a clear Transition Plan towards ending Australian Disability Enterprises (also known as sheltered workshops) and all other segregated settings, including in education, and in living arrangements.
- Ensure that people with disability enjoy equal remuneration for work of equal value and not suffer wage discrimination due to a perceived reduced capacity for work, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the UN International Convention on Economic, social, and cultural rights (ICESCR).
- Ensure a disability and gender equality lens is applied to all disability employment policies and programs including in open employment.

¹ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/employment/employment-rate-and-type>

² <https://womensworkforceparticipation.pmc.gov.au/index.html>

³ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jan-2022#data-downloads>

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- Collect employment outcomes data and information from all available sources on open and supported employment services, disaggregated by gender and disability.
- Address underlying barriers to employment for women with disability such as violence, abuse, exploitation, and sexual harassment.
- Introduce mandated public service disability employment targets (including for women with disability) and consider incentives for disability employment targets in non-government industries.
- Require all government grant and procurement recipients to meet disability employment targets.
- Conduct major reform of employment services and programs, including the Disability Employment Service (DES), the Job Access program (and its Employee Assistance Fund) - and ensure future employment programs are less administratively burdensome for employers, and for people with disability.
- Overhaul recruitment strategies, processes, and job design to match strengths of people with disability.
- Legislate to mandate employers (including the Public Service) to provide recruitment and orientation information in accessible formats, including Plain English and Easy Read and provide supporting resources, in co-design with people with disability.
- Introduce a national Workers Compensation Insurance Scheme, as an additional, optional scheme to existing State/Territory Schemes, to reduce administrative burden on national employers with multiple locations and remote workers.
- Implement the recommendations to Australia from the international human rights treaty monitoring bodies in relation to employment of people with disability.⁴

⁴ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2019) [Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Australia](#), adopted by the Committee at its 51st meeting (20 September 2019) of the 22nd session; UN Doc. CRPD/C/AUS/CO/2-3. See also: Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2017) [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Australia](#); 11 July 2017; UN Doc. E/C.12/AUS/CO/5. See also: Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General comment No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable conditions of work (article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), 7 April 2016, E/C.12/GC/23.



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- Ensure that all labour force participation data, collected through multiple data sources, is disaggregated by gender & disability.
- Investigate the feasibility of developing a Disability Procurement Policy, similar to Australia's Indigenous Procurement Policy.

*Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
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