



Australian Government

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Governance of Indigenous Data Implementation Plan



Artwork: Harmony in Unity, Brad Hore

Brad Hore is a two time Olympic and Commonwealth Games boxer, turned artist who has represented his Country and Culture on the world stage.

Brad's cultural artworks support First Nations peoples to feel connected to their land, sea and waters, whilst sharing and educating those wanting to learn more, welcoming in all who find a way to connect. Brad's paintings can be found in government departments, universities and supporting individual businesses to connect to a culture more than 65,000 years old.

Acknowledgement of Country

We, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and pay respect to those who have preserved and continue to care for the lands and waters on which we live and work, and from which we benefit each day.

We recognise the strengths and knowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples provide to the health, disability and aged care system and thank them for their ongoing contributions to those systems and the wider community.

We extend this gratitude to all health, disability and aged care workers who contribute to improving health and wellbeing outcomes with, and for, First Nations peoples and communities.

The Governance of Indigenous Data Implementation Plan was co-designed by Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-government partners.

Co-design partners are listed in **Appendix A**.

Implementing Governance of Indigenous Data

at the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the department) holds substantial data assets about the Australian population, including data related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) people. The department will work in genuine partnership to ensure that First Nations people are afforded the right to exercise ownership and control over Indigenous data across all phases of the data lifecycle. In recognition and support of this commitment, the department has responded to the Australian Government's [Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data](#) by developing a Governance of Indigenous Data (GID) Implementation Plan

through an 18-month partnership with a First Nations-led GID Working Group. See [Appendix A](#) for GID Working Group membership list.

The GID Implementation Plan and associated activity supports [Closing the Gap Priority Reforms](#), specifically Priority Reform 3: Transforming Government Organisations and Priority Reform 4: Shared access to data and information at a regional level.

The GID Implementation Plan aims to build strong governance over the department's Indigenous data holdings by implementing actions aligned with six goals, as shown below.

- The department will work in genuine partnership to ensure that First Nations people are afforded the right to exercise ownership and control over Indigenous data across all phases of the data lifecycle.



Goal 1:

Embed governance of Indigenous data in department policies and processes.

Actions

- a) Establish (and fill) Indigenous Data Champion roles within the department and define the scope and responsibilities of these partnering positions.
- b) Establish ongoing arrangements to implement, oversee and monitor Governance of Indigenous Data (GID).
- c) Embed GID in the department's data frameworks ([Data Governance Framework](#) and [Data Strategy](#)) and terms of reference of existing data committees, including policy/guidance to support shared decision-making for the use of Indigenous data sets.
- d) Communicate and achieve shared understanding of the importance of GID with business areas/data stewards, including working closely with relevant business areas to implement GID with reference to APS resources and other guidance.
- e) Ensure GID principles are applied to department policy and/or projects when being reviewed or updated, and for new policy/projects.
- f) Review and update departmental grant operational practices, protocols and checklists.
- g) Update the Data Asset Register to identify Indigenous data holdings, address gaps in Indigenous identifiers and improve visibility/searchability of Indigenous data.
- h) Ensure appropriate disposal/archiving of data sets containing Indigenous data.



Goal 2:

Build and maintain meaningful partnerships with First Nations people, communities and organisations.

Actions

- a) Review department engagement processes to ensure the department is monitoring, measuring and accountable for delivering effective and meaningful First Nations engagement experiences.
- b) Share and promote the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Engagement Framework](#) across the department.
- c) Co-design an Expression of Interest register for First Nations people with an interest in being considered for data governance committee/board positions.
- d) Embed partnership with First Nations people and communities at relevant touchpoints in the data lifecycle.
- e) Support department business areas to work with First Nations organisations and communities to build partnerships and focus on regional priorities.

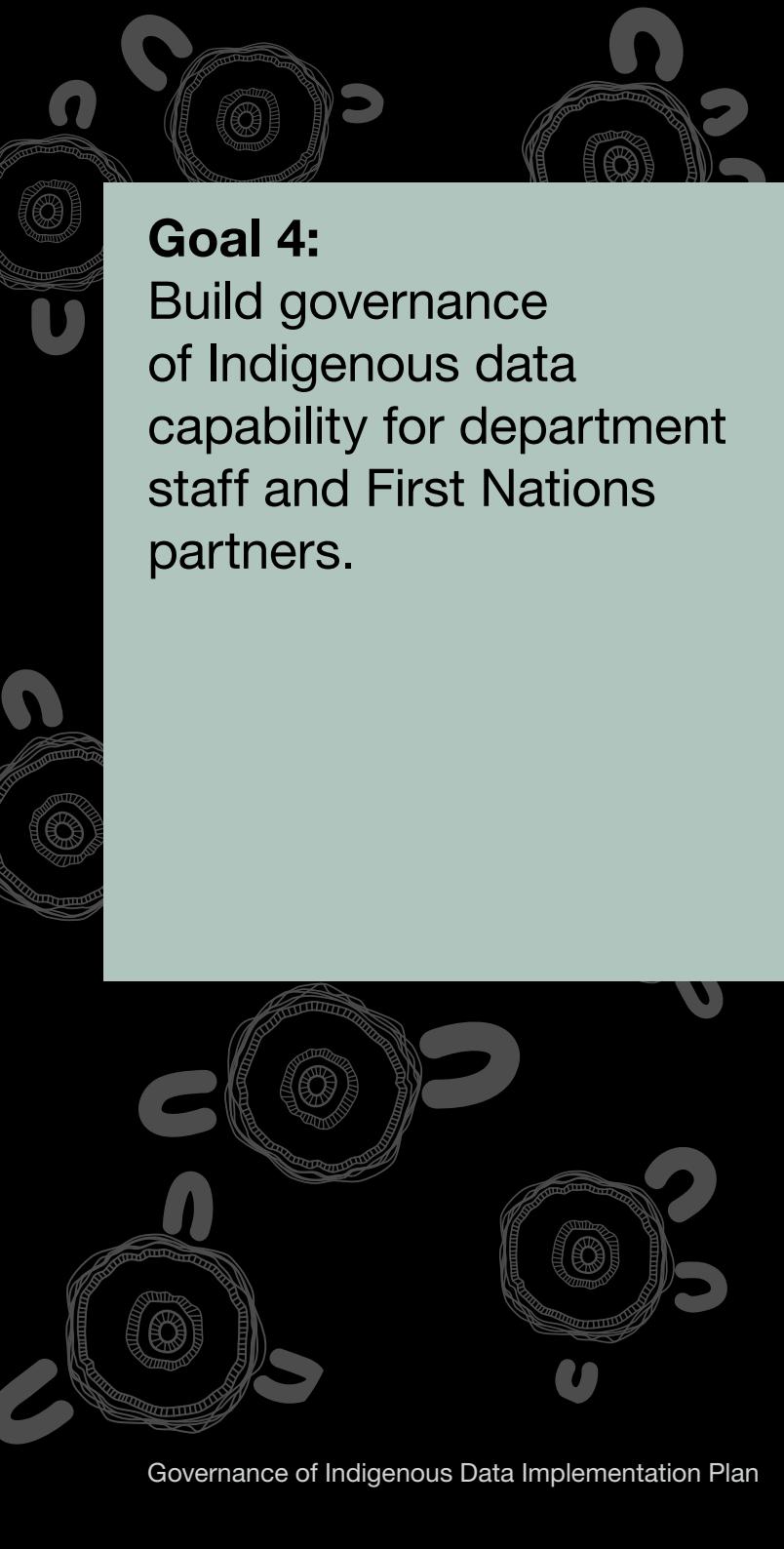


Goal 3:

Develop and implement methods for First Nations people to know what data are held relating to their interests, its use, and how it can be accessed.

Actions

- a) Support the inclusion of departmental data assets on the [Australian Government Data Catalogue](#) where appropriate.
- b) Identify and develop accessible open data assets of value to First Nations peoples for existing and future departmental data assets.
- c) Establish easy to follow guidelines for First Nations peoples/communities to request access to departmental data.
- d) Partner with First Nations peoples, communities and researchers in data-related activities to ensure appropriate methodologies are applied.



Goal 4:

Build governance of Indigenous data capability for department staff and First Nations partners.

Actions

- a) Ensure cultural capability and Indigenous data training is facilitated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations/partners.
- b) Undertake planning and mapping exercise to understand data capabilities needed now, and in the future, specifically in relation to Indigenous data.
- c) Review and update staff training and resources related to data and data governance to include:
 - Self-determination, Indigenous rights and cultural bias, with practical examples and case studies
 - Indigenous Data Sovereignty and GID guidelines and principles
 - The legitimacy and value of quantitative and qualitative data collected by First Nations people
 - What constitutes 'good' data and the importance of strengths-based approach.
- d) Explore opportunities to expand data-related secondments (both ways) and cadetship programs for First Nations peoples.

Goal 5:

Support and engage in organisational and cultural change to improve governance of Indigenous data across the government.

Actions

- a) Work with the APS-wide GID Community of Practice to develop a glossary of terms relevant to Indigenous data, including definitions of Indigenous data, Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance of Indigenous Data.
- b) Leverage the First Nations schedule in the National Health Reform Agreement as an opportunity to address GID with States and Territories.
- c) Continue to work with our partner agencies to share information, learning and practical steps to implement GID.
- d) Contribute to APS-wide strategies to improve data assets.

Goal 6:

Monitor and evaluate governance of Indigenous data implementation.

Actions

- a) Design an evaluation, monitoring and learning plan for implementation of GID actions outlined in this plan, in consultation with First Nations partners.
- b) Conduct monitoring and evaluation program that:
 - Monitors progress and effectiveness of GID implementation
 - Maintains communication with relevant stakeholders and senior executives about progress
 - Ensures public facing accountability (e.g. publishing annual reports).
- c) Monitor and evaluate GID capability uplift within the department.

Appendix A: GID Working Group Members

Name	Position	Membership Type	Role
Ms Chantal Jackson Non-Indigenous	Assistant Secretary, First Nations Health Division, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	Representative	Co-Chair
Mr Isaac Torres Djugun, Jabbir Jabbir and Gooniyandi man	Data Project Co-ordinator, Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance	Individual	Co-Chair
Prof Gail Garvey Kamilaroi woman	Professor of Indigenous Health Research, Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland	Individual	Member
A/Prof Kalinda Griffiths Yawuru woman	Academic and Lecturer, Centre for Big Data Research at UNSW and Menzies School of Health Research Darwin	Individual	Member
A/Prof Michelle Kennedy Wiradjuri woman	Strategic Research Advisor, Lowitja Institute Research Fellow, University of Newcastle	Individual	Member
Dr Daniel Hunt* Jaru and Indjibarndi man	Deputy Medical Director, Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service	Individual	Member
Dr Jacob Prehn Worimi man	Associate Professor, University of Tasmania	Individual	Member
Dr Cassandra Sedran-Price Muruwari/Gangugari woman	Executive Member, Maiam Nayri Wingara	Individual	Member
Mr Jim O'Shea Gumbaynggirr man	Chief Operating Officer and Company Secretary, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation	Individual	Member
Dr Fadwa Al-Yaman Non-Indigenous	Group Head, First Nations Health and Welfare Group, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Representative	Member
Ms Kayla Jordan Non-Indigenous	Assistant Secretary, Health Economics and Research Division, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	Representative	Member
Ms Shonella Tatipata Panai, Wuthathi and Kulkalgal woman	Assistant Secretary, First Nations Aged Care Branch, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	Representative	Member

* Withdrew before finalisation due to other commitments.

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All information in this publication is correct as at November 2025.

