



Australian Government  
IP Australia



# Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Action Plan 2025–30



## Acknowledgement of Country

IP Australia respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders, past present and emerging. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationship to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.



## Message from Director General

I am pleased to introduce the IP Australia Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Action Plan 2025–30 (the Plan). This Plan is a significant step towards creating a culturally safe, fair, and equitable workplace for all employees. It aligns closely with the APS CALD Employment Strategy, our People Strategy, and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023–26. These all aim to promote a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

The IP Australia CALD Action Plan 2025–30 outlines our commitment to improve representation and address the barriers preventing full participation of our people in the workplace. Our goal is to enhance career progression and development opportunities, while fostering a deeper understanding and actively working to eliminate the impacts of discrimination and racism.

Increased CALD representation brings numerous benefits to IP Australia as a whole and enables us to achieve our vision. It enhances our ability to innovate, improves employee and customer engagement, and fosters a more inclusive and dynamic workplace. By embracing diversity, we can better understand and serve our diverse workforce and customers, ultimately driving better business outcomes.

We will build on the existing strengths within our agency to uplift the cultural capability of all our employees, provide mentoring and sponsorship opportunities for CALD employees, while embedding cultural safety and inclusive language into everything we do.

I encourage everyone to engage with this Action Plan, so we can all contribute to making IP Australia a more inclusive and diverse workplace at all levels.

Together, we can create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected and reflect the diversity of the Australian community that we serve.



Michael Schwager  
Director General

## Message from CALD Champion

“The more culturally and ethnically diverse we are, the more different our experience will be, the more varied our perspectives, the more engaged our worldviews. Such plurality of views and approaches strengthens the foundations of our thinking and reasoning, gives greater breadth to our policy debates and enriches our program implementation and service delivery.”<sup>1</sup>

The APS CALD Employment Strategy aims to increase cultural and linguistic representation at all levels and uplift our ability to work together across diverse teams. Our cultural capability is a shift across the APS to foster inclusive workplaces. As CALD Executive Champion, I am the agency’s chief advocate and ally for the CALD network and its members. I am proud to promote cultural diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

Close staff consultation has been a cornerstone of this plan throughout its development. I would like to acknowledge the cultural leadership of our CALD Employee Network and Steering Committee members and the unwavering support of the Executive Diversity Champions that has led to a robust, action oriented, and practical approach to improving cultural capability and cultural safety at IP Australia.

I look forward to implementing the initiatives within this Plan to create a culturally safe environment in which employees feel safe to share their perspectives and know their ideas are valued and differences are welcomed.



Andrew Wilkinson  
CALD Executive Champion

1. Dr Gordon de Brouwer, Australian Public Service Commissioner, *Australian Public Service Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2024–2030*, April 2024 pg 5.





## Our aim: To represent the diversity of the community that we serve.

The IP Australia CALD Action Plan 2025–30 aligns to the focus areas and vision in the [IP Australia Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023–26](#), to move from inclusion to belonging. This action plan aims to provide a culturally safe, fair and equitable workplace for all employees. We aim to actively encourage and support diversity and inclusion and recognise the significant contribution this brings to enhance global innovations for IP rights and systems.

We use a strengths-based approach that aims to improve the cultural capability of employees, managers and senior leaders. This work will be ongoing to align to the [APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2024–2030](#).

We will support the implementation of the 5 headline actions of the APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Action Plan:

### Action 1

**Whole of APS standards:** Introduce an APS Statement of Leadership to Support Cultural Diversity to ensure that the standard for culturally respectful and safe workplaces is upheld.

### Action 2

**Cultural understanding:** Build an APS-wide Interagency CALD Champion Network and a curated collection of multi-media learning resources.

### Action 3

**Leadership and management:** Build APS leadership through embedding cultural capability training and sponsorship of CALD employees.

### Action 4

**Recruitment and progression:** Modernise the APS recruitment and promotion processes to apply a rigorous understanding of merit.

### Action 5

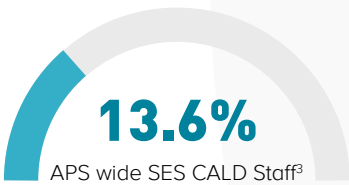
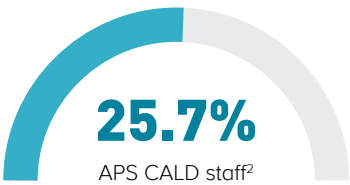
**Representation:** Introduce a reportable benchmark of 24% for CALD representation in the SES (Senior Executive Service).

# Supporting cultural and linguistic diversity at IP Australia

IP Australia is proud of the cultural and linguistic diversity of its workforce. As an Australian government agency we participate annually in the APS Employee Census to gain insights into our workforce.

IP Australia acknowledges the complexity around cultural background and how our employees might describe, experience and self-identify their cultural heritage and identity.

Our CALD Action Plan aims to create a safe and respectful working environment that represents the diversity of the community that we serve.



Low representation of SES CALD staff is a focus for IP Australia.<sup>2</sup>

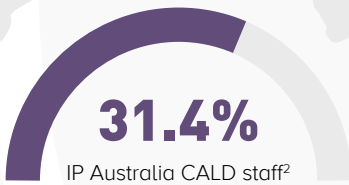
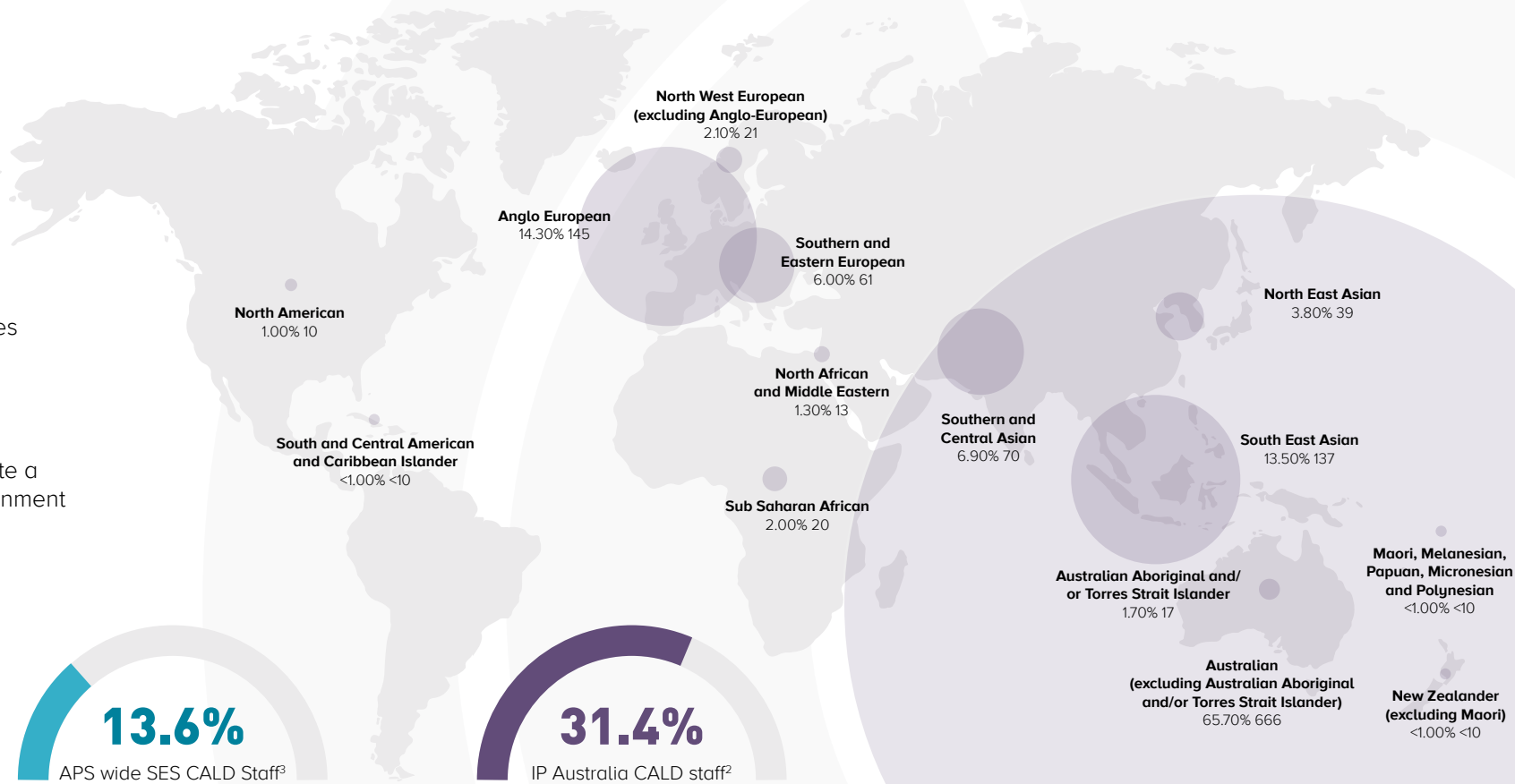


Figure 1: Map showing responses from the 2024 Census : How would you describe your cultural background?. Respondents can select multiple options as it applies to them.



2. 2024 Census results: Do you identify as culturally and linguistically diverse? (Yes %)

3. IP Australia’s CALD Dashboard initiative at action 1.2 aims to track the agency’s progress to meet the APS SES benchmark. IP Australia aims to support the equal representation of CALD staff at all levels.

# Our approach: Cultural capability uplift

We recognise that our leaders and employees need to understand their role in ensuring that everyone feels safe and respected at work. Our agency leads this uplift with a focus on cultural safety and a strengths-based approach. This means that we understand the benefits of a diverse workforce, the importance of leading with a strength's-based approach where difference is actively welcomed and the need to create a workplace environment where culturally and linguistically diverse employees feel safe and respected.

The diagram shows how cultural capability (our actions) and cultural intelligence (knowing) can lead to greater cultural competency. Cultural competency ensures a greater intercultural understanding to harness the wealth and depth of expertise of all IP employees.

Figure 2: IP Australia's Cultural Capability Uplift model

## Doing

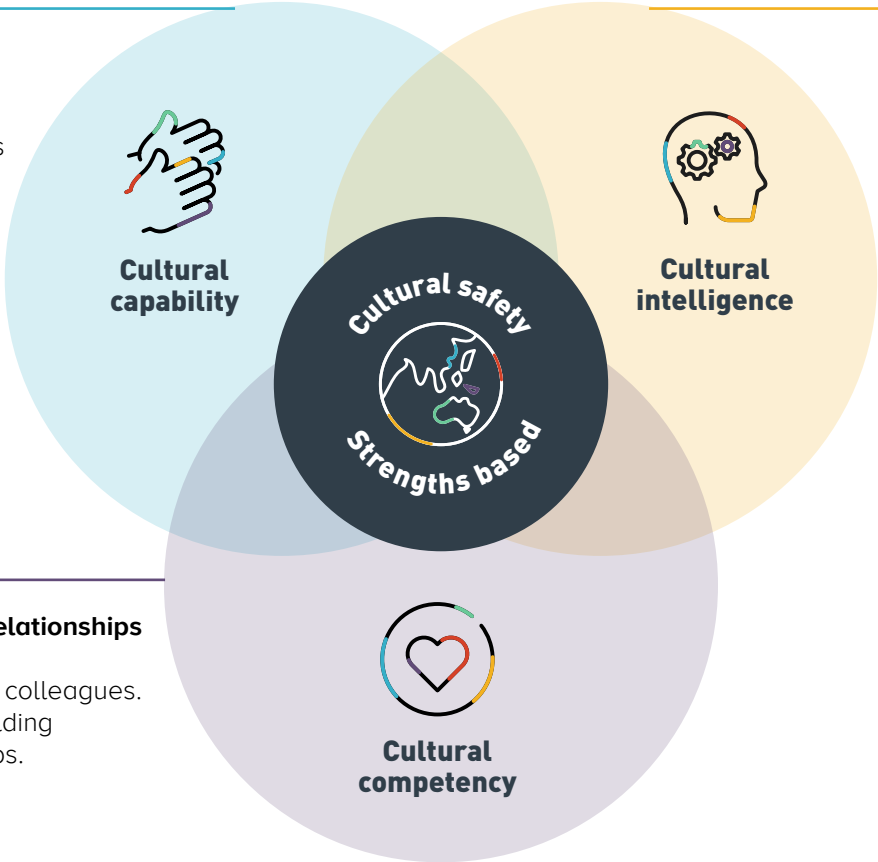
I adjust my actions, words and behaviours and listen and watch for feedback.

## Building respectful relationships

I care and respect my colleagues. I am committed to building reciprocal relationships.

## Understanding and improving cultural literacy

I invest my time to learn facts, context and the histories that inform the diverse cultures, countries and people of today.



# We asked IP Australia employees what 'cultural safety' means to them?

Figure 3: Employee responses during IP Australia's consultation phase.



# Overview

The IP Australia CALD Action Plan aligns to the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023–26 under the 4 pillars of *Attraction, Employee Experience, Inclusive Leadership and Celebration and Connection*.

We recognise the partnership between senior leaders and our CALD Champion, our CALD Network and Human Resources (HR) team. Our HR team includes data analysts, recruitment and learning specialists and people support. In the development of this action plan, we worked with our employees to prioritise our initiatives to help drive inclusion.

## Crucial

Integral parts of the D&I Strategy or can be executed quickly due to available resources. These are essential for measuring and tracking deliverables.

## Collaborative


Vital for achieving the objectives to reflect the diversity of the community we serve, at all levels. These require support from internal and external teams and therefore need more time.

## Supported


These have existing structures and guidelines that can be leveraged for implementation.




# IP CALD Action Plan 2025–30

Attraction	Priority	Initiative	Lead	Timeline
 <p><b>Key themes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathways</li> <li>• Marketing and employee value proposition</li> <li>• Review and update recruitment processes</li> </ul>	Crucial	1.1 Establish a database of panel members who have completed the panel member training either online or face-to-face within 2 years. This will provide governance that all panel members have been trained in fair and equitable recruitment processes.	Human Resources	June 2025
		1.2 Develop a CALD dashboard to measure and report on cultural capability uplift: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CALD representation (CALD footprint to include country data)</li> <li>• agency progress against the benchmark of 24% for CALD representation in the SES at agency level using the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) definition</li> <li>• employee census data on discrimination, racism, bullying and harassment</li> <li>• learning and development uptake and completion</li> <li>• promotions by CALD status to identify trends of promotion to ensure equitable promotions for overseas and Australian-born staff.</li> </ul>	Human Resources	June, November annually from 2025
	Supported	1.3 During recruitment, ensure culturally appropriate supports are available and visible for applicants and job seekers including the example statement of claims template, additional time for interviews and culturally aware panel members.	Human Resources	September 2026
		1.4 Review panel training modules (this includes the REFLECTED model for decision making) and Recruitment Policy to clearly outline the equitable and transparent application of the merit-based principle.	Human Resources	Annual
	Collaborative	1.5 Develop practices for forward SES recruitment and provide training around promotion processes to apply a rigorous understanding of the merit principle.	Human Resources	July 2027


## Employee experience

Employee experience	Priority	Initiative	Lead	Timeline
 <p><b>Key themes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible work</li> <li>• Allyship and storytelling</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Learning and career opportunities</li> </ul>	Crucial	2.1 Embed cultural safety and inclusive language in HR policies and processes through the HR policy review. Develop procedural guidance for cultural leave for CALD employees as per IP Australia's Enterprise Agreement 2024.	Human Resources	December 2025
		2.2 A minimum of 2 Workplace Contact Officers (WCO) trained by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), with knowledge of trauma informed grievance process. Update and increase visibility to employees of culturally safe processes to report and make complaints. Promote annually through Safe Work Month.	Human Resources	October annually
		2.3 Review learning offerings, virtual and face to face offerings around cultural capability, cultural safety and racism. Identify gaps and recommend learning products to increase understanding of racism (including lateral violence and intra-cultural racism) as well as cultural and psychological safety. Provide opportunities and/or learning to support cultural intelligence to understand different cultures.	Human Resources	February 2026
		2.4 Provide IP Australia employees with access to MOSAIC Part 1&2 (from the APSLearn) and make this available on LXP.	Human Resources	August 2025
	Supported	2.5 Provide learning offerings (such as cultural immersion) that enhance a greater sense of cultural understanding and knowledge of different international contexts, cultures, countries, languages, and so on.	Human Resources CALD Network	Annual
		2.6 Define and provide appropriate resources and training opportunities on how to be an active ally to guard against and identify harmful behaviours such as racist behaviour and discrimination based on identity or background. Use resources from the AHRC's National Anti-Racism Framework, the Diversity Council of Australia and the Federation of Ethnic Communities Association.	Human Resources CALD Network	September 2026
		2.7 Deliver the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour training presentation face-to-face or online annually and continue to monitor completion of online e-learning module.	Human Resources	May annually

# Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership	Priority	Initiative	Lead	Timeline
 <p><b>Key themes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal learning</li> <li>• Visibility and engagement</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Representation</li> <li>• Psychological safety</li> <li>• Performance and capability</li> </ul>	Crucial	3.1 Review the Performance Management Framework and provide support to managers, through guidance on conversation starters to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertake self-reflection and develop their own cultural awareness and literacy</li> <li>• have open conversations with individual team members about leadership, working style, and their communication preferences.</li> </ul>	Human Resources	July 2025
		3.2 Provide training and resource materials to support cultural change and active allyship through bystander and upstander training. Aim to address racism and discrimination by working on accountability of leaders to call out inappropriate behaviour and understanding the National AHRC's Anti-Racism Framework.	Human Resources	Deliver training by September 2025  Review impact and delivery for 2026
	Supported	3.3 Provide training to SES and include cultural safety included as part of SES performance frameworks. This will support leaders to enact the SES Performance and Leadership Framework and Charter of Leadership Behaviours.	Human Resources	April 2026
		3.4 Define a learning suite of training opportunities (online and/or face-to-face) that will increase the capability of managers to lead culturally diverse teams. Align to the 2-part APS multicultural capability uplift program that will be available APS-wide.	Human Resources	August 2026
		3.5 Partner and pilot with lead agencies on the APS CALD sponsorship model (action item 3B) to support the talent pipeline for EL1 and EL2 to progress to SES.	Human Resources	September 2025

## Celebration and connection

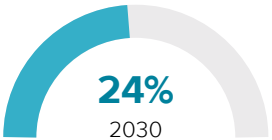
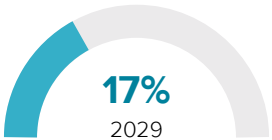
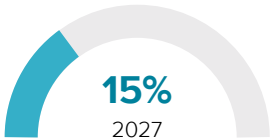
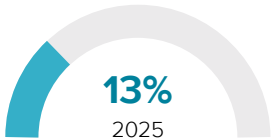
Celebration and connection	Priority	Initiative	Lead	Timeline
 <p><b>Key themes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection and events</li> <li>• Employee networks</li> <li>• Story-telling and communication</li> <li>• Cultural learning opportunities</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>	Crucial	4.1 Support IP Australia's intersectional calendar of events to create a place of connection for CALD employees across a range of networks and identities. Use this opportunity to discuss the ongoing nuance and complexity of CALD experience including but not limited to migration, linguistic diversity, and intersectional or compounding experiences as it relates to disability, gender, LGBTIQ+, Indigeneity, and inter-generational experiences.	CALD Network	Annually
		4.2 Increase the use and active promotion of storytelling through events and internal social platforms to share cultural perspectives, linguistic diversity and spotlight the lived experience of CALD voices. Use channels such as Viva Engage, event discussion panels, intranet and Steering Committee profiles.	CALD Network, CALD Champion, Communications Team	Ongoing
		4.3 Foster inter-agency links with APS CALD networks through invitations to events and social sharing online and in-person.	CALD Network	From January 2025
		4.4 Support the IP CALD Network community and increase visibility to develop a recognisable profile through merchandise to support belonging and connection at IP Australia.	CALD Network	June 2025

## Reporting framework

IP Australia CALD Champion	Quarterly APS SES CALD Champions meetings.
IP Australia CALD Network	Quarterly meetings with Steering Committee members.
Secretaries Board	Biannual reporting on EL talent pipeline and target for 2% increase annually for SES with non-English speaking background to reach 24% target by 2030.
APSC	Reports on APS-wide progress towards the population benchmark. For the purposes of this plan, we have adopted the measure of 'First language of employee was not exclusively English', which is collected in the Australian Public Service Database and allows comparison to the relevant ABS Census measure for the whole-of-population.

## APS population benchmark milestones

(SES representation in APS CALD Employment Strategy)





# Addendum

## APS CALD Employment Strategy and Action Plan – Summary of agency requirements

<b>Headline action 1: Whole of APS standards</b> <b>Objective: Ensure a safe, fair, equitable and inclusive workplace that is free from racism, discrimination, bullying and harassment.</b>	
APS strategy actions	IP Australia alignment
Raise awareness of, and uphold existing safeguards, demonstrating alignment with the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct.	2.3,2.5, 2.6,2.7, 2.8, 3.2
Enact the SES Performance and Leadership Framework and Charter of Leadership Behaviours.	3.3
Embed cultural safety and inclusive language in their corporate policies and processes.	2.1
Implement processes to guard against and identify harmful behaviours such as racist behaviour and discrimination based on identity or background, and ensure that avenues for people to make complaints provide psychosocial and cultural safety.	2.2
Performance frameworks should require demonstration of inclusive, equitable and respectful behaviours. These frameworks could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• approaches for starting conversations with all employees about what valuing their culture and providing a culturally safe workplace looks like for them - understanding that people will have different needs and expectations</li><li>• a requirement that all employees demonstrate how they build their own understanding, and implement their knowledge, of cultural similarities and differences of employees within their team, organisation or stakeholder groups.</li></ul>	3.1

<b>Headline action 2: Cultural understanding</b> <b>Objective: Understand and build on the diversity of the current workforce.</b>	
APS strategy actions	IP Australia alignment
Champions will be an internal advocate for dismantling workplace barriers faced by CALD employees in their agency, drawing on the broader experience of the Network in leveraging solutions.	1.3, 2.6, 4.2
Agencies need to be able to demonstrate their understanding of their own CALD employees and their cultural intelligence on CALD issues. A key step in this will be building a picture of the agency's CALD employee footprint and experience.	1.2
Promote and provide access to the curated collection of CALD employees' stories to improve capabilities through narrative-based learning (APSC project).	2.4

<b>Headline action 3: Leadership and management</b> <b>Objective: Enable people to make a full contribution and empower them to fulfil their potential.</b>	
APS strategy actions	IP Australia alignment
A baseline for achieving this is through the 2-part multicultural capability uplift program that will be available APS-wide. Part one of the program will be available for all staff to complete through APSLearn. It focuses on growing cultural awareness and applying it in the workplace. Part 2 of the program will target leaders (APS 6 to SES). Its focus is on how leaders can attract, recruit and develop multicultural teams, support career progression of CALD employees and build an inclusive workplace culture.	2.4, 3.4
Agencies need to demonstrate how they are building and empowering their leaders and managers' cultural capability to lead and foster culturally diverse teams effectively.	2.6
To address CALD employees' advancement barriers, agencies will need to implement initiatives like discussion panels showcasing different leadership styles, sponsorship programs, and mentorship/buddy systems. The underpinning principle for such initiatives is for 2 way learning: to uplift manager and leader cultural knowledge and provide active career support and mobility opportunities for CALD employees. The APSC can connect sponsors across agencies through its support for the APS-wide Interagency CALD SES Champions Network.	3.5, 3.6
Agencies could support managers, through guidance on conversation starters, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertake self-reflection and develop their own cultural awareness and literacy</li> <li>• have open conversations with individual team members about leadership, working style, and their communication preferences.</li> </ul>	3.1

**Headline action 4: Recruitment and progression****Objective: Create a level playing field and a fair go for all APS employees.**

APS strategy actions	IP Australia alignment
Recruitment and promotion processes need to reflect a thorough understanding of merit, providing opportunities for all that are fair and equitable, irrespective of cultural or racial background. Agencies need to make sure that their recruitment arrangements actually reflect this knowledge. Assessments of merit need to recognise a broader suite of skills, styles and characteristics including emotional intelligence, cross-cultural awareness and cultural intelligence, as they improve our work.	1.1, 1.4, 1.5
Across the APS, agencies also need to be able to demonstrate transparency of their processes and decision-making.	1.4

**Headline action 5: Representation****Objective: Reflect the population we serve and throughout the APS to represent diversity cohorts fairly**

APS strategy actions	IP Australia alignment
A benchmark level of 24% CALD SES representation would achieve representation equivalent to the whole-of-population. To ensure progress towards 24%, there are 3 interim benchmarks of 13% in the second year, 15% in the fourth year and 17% by the end of the sixth year. These benchmarks are based on one in 4 future SES appointments identifying as CALD, representing population share. This ensures a fixed trajectory towards 24% CALD SES representation.	1.2, 3.5

