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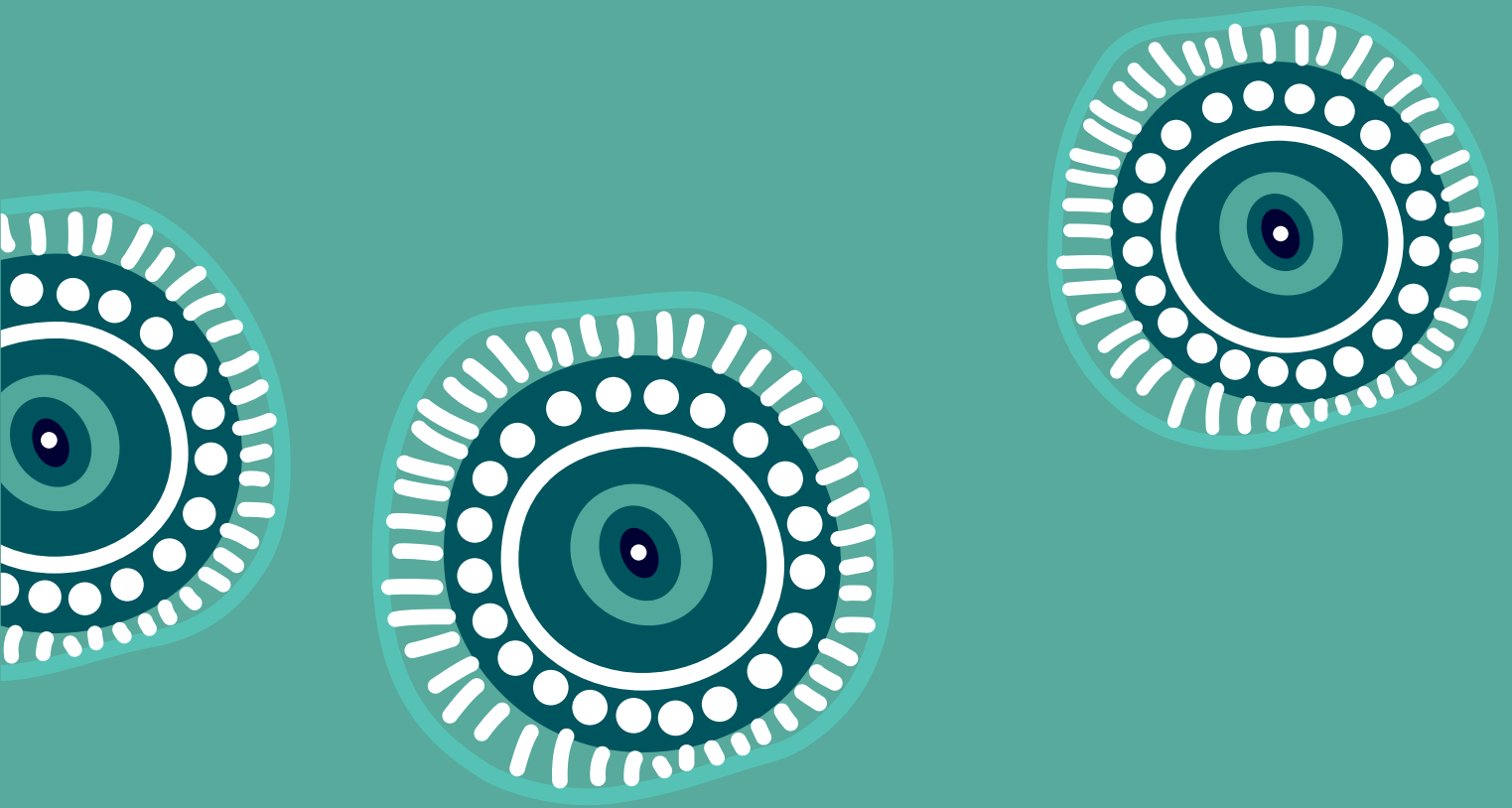


Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

Diversity Data Standards

A good practice guide for the
Australian sport system



Australian Sports Commission Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where its offices are located, the Ngunnawal people and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the people of the Yugambah Nation and the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The ASC extends this acknowledgment to all the Traditional Custodians of the lands and First Nations Peoples throughout Australia and would like to pay its respects to all Elders past, present and future.

The ASC recognises the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society and sport in Australia and celebrates the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



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Purpose

The collection of diversity data offers a window into the demographics and identities of your existing community. These insights help to identify any potential gaps that could lead to missed talent opportunities or existing processes or environments that only allow some of your workforce, participant or athlete base to thrive.

Understanding this data provides an organisation the opportunity to be strategic about how you focus your efforts, ensuring you create a welcoming and inclusive environment where all stakeholders can perform at their best and reach their full potential.

The process of diversity data collection can be complex, but in this practical guide we aim to provide you with guidance to support you on the way.

Audience

This document is written for the information of the Australian Sports Commission and the broader Australian sporting eco-system.

What is diversity data?

Diversity data refers to information collected about the demographic composition of individuals within a particular cohort ie. workforce, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers. This data typically includes various characteristics that reflect the diversity of individuals or groups of people, based on their identity.

For the purposes of this guide, the following diversity data areas are covered:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Gender
- LGBTIQ+
- Cultural and Linguistic Diverse (CALD)
- Disability

Purpose of collecting diversity data?

Diversity data is collected to understand the intersectionality of individuals, composition of a group or organisation and to identify any disparities or under-representation of certain demographic groups.

It is used to inform decision-making processes, track progress towards diversity and inclusion goals, and design targeted strategies or interventions to promote equity, diversity and inclusion. By analysing diversity data, organisations can identify areas for improvement and implement initiatives to create more inclusive environments and opportunities for all individuals.



Your purpose for collecting data needs to be clearly stated to your target audience in any data collection process. It is important that those providing data understand why you are asking for that information and the benefits of providing it. An example of a statement of purpose you could tailor to your needs is as follows:

As part of our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion we want to garner a strong understanding of our workforce/participation/athlete composition to ensure we are making informed decisions about the future direction and priorities areas of our work. The information you provide will help us to understand where we are underrepresented, identify our cultural capabilities and ensure our focus is on supporting and sustaining an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment.

Ensuring the data collection process is respectful and confidential

When addressing questions related to diversity data, it is crucial to adopt a person-centred approach based on sensitivity and respect.

This means that questions, response options, and reporting use contemporary terminology and words that have been tested with key stakeholder groups or peak diversity bodies.

Individuals may be hesitant to share personal data due to concerns about how it will be used. There are also legislative requirements about collecting personal and sensitive data.

It is therefore important to emphasise the confidentiality of diversity data collection before asking people to provide their information. This approach meets both ethical and integrity standards while helping maximise response rates.

It is recommended the following is addressed and outlined to individuals when asking for diversity data:

- Explain that providing this information is entirely voluntary
- Ensuring your organisation has a privacy policy and clearly identifies how it complies with privacy legal responsibilities in accordance with the [Australian Privacy Principles \(APPs\)](#)¹ and the [Privacy Act 1988](#). This includes explaining:
 - What personal information will be collected
 - Why the personal information will be collected
 - Who your organisation may give the personal information to and why
 - How your organisation will store the information
- Explain that diversity data will be de-identified and anonymous when reporting on diversity statistics. For further information on de-identification of data, suggest the [CSIRO framework for data de-identification](#).

For noting, when there are low numbers within a diversity group, it is recommended not to report on this as it will not be statistically significant and can breach confidentiality and privacy, particularly in a workforce environment.

¹ Information relating to obligations for not for profit organisations, refer to: [Privacy for not-for-profits, including charities | OAIC](#)



Core diversity data collection

1. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples
2. Gender
3. LGBTIQ+
4. Cultural and linguistic diverse
5. Disability

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples

‘Prefer not to say’ is important for respondents who are (appropriately) cautious about answering on their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status.

‘Not sure/don’t know’ option is also important as it recognises Australia’s Stolen Generations, and individuals who are not sure if they themselves and/or their relatives have Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander ancestry.

Q. Do you identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person?² (Please select one only)

- No
- Yes, Aboriginal
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander
- Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Unsure
- Prefer not to say

Gender

Under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, gender identity is broadly defined as meaning ‘the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person’s designated sex at birth’. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the basis of their gender identity.

Q. Which of the following terms best describes your gender identity?³

- Man or male
- Woman or female
- Non-binary
- I use a different term (please specify) _____ [open text field]
- Prefer not to answer

² Diversity Council Australia/University of Sydney Business School (R. D’Almada-Remedios, D. Groutsis, A. Kaabel, and J. O’Leary) **Counting Culture: Towards a Standardised Approach to Measuring and Reporting on Workforce Cultural Diversity in Australia**, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2021.

³ The ABS explains that “the terms sex and gender are interrelated and often used interchangeably within the general community. However they are two distinct concepts:

- Sex is understood in relation to sex characteristics. Sex recorded at birth refers to what was initially determined by sex characteristics observed at birth or infancy.
- Gender is about social and cultural identity, expression and experience.”



LGBTIQ+

It is important to recognise that LGBTIQ+ individuals face significant discrimination in both workplace and community settings and may be hesitant to disclose their sexual orientation. Therefore, before asking for this information, it is crucial to understand the purpose for asking and whether it is necessary.

If necessary, it is important to clarify why, how the information will be used, and the measures in place to protect respondents' privacy.

It is also recommended to include a statement like the below:

We acknowledge that language is constantly evolving and that one label or description may not fully capture the diversity within the LGBTIQ+ community. Our intention is to be as succinct as possible whilst remaining inclusive of all. If you have any concerns about the language used, please contact us.

Q. How would you describe your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual (Straight)
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Queer
- I use a different term (please specify) _____ [free text field]
- Prefer not to have a label
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Q. Were you born with a variation of sex characteristics (sometimes called 'intersex')?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Cultural and linguistic diverse

Q. Do you identify as culturally and linguistically diverse?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

[User note: For the purposes of needing more specific data, the below questions are suggested]

Additional measures: ⁴

1. Country of birth
2. Language, and
3. Cultural/ethnic background

⁴ Diversity Council Australia/University of Sydney Business School (R. D'Almada-Remedios, D. Groutsis, A. Kaabel, and J. O'Leary) **Counting Culture: Towards a Standardised Approach to Measuring and Reporting on Workforce Cultural Diversity in Australia**, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2021.



Country of birth

Q. What country were you born in?

- Australia
- China
- India
- Malaysia
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- UK
- Other country not listed, please specify _____ [open text field]

Language

Q. Apart from English, in which language(s) could you have a conversation about a lot of everyday things? [Please select or list as many as apply]

- English only
- Arabic
- Cantonese
- Dari/Hazaragi
- Italian
- Greek
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Nepali
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Other languages, please specify _____ [open text field]

Cultural and/or ethnic background

Q. How would you describe your cultural/ethnic background? (Please select all that apply)

The cultural background is the cultural/ethnic group(s) to which you feel you belong or identify. This background may be the same as your parents, grandparents, or your heritage, or it may be the country you were born in or have spent a great amount of time in, or you feel more closely tied to.

[Please note not all cultural or ethnic groups will be listed so select or list as many as apply]

- Canadian
- Chinese
- Danish
- English



- French
- German
- Indian
- Italian
- Maori
- Mexican
- Pakistani
- Philippino
- Spanish
- Sri Lankan
- Vietnamese
- Other cultural backgrounds not listed, please specify _____ [open text field]

Disability

As with many demographic traits, individuals can be wary about answering information on disability status. Therefore, it is very important to stress that answering questions on disability status are voluntary and confidential.

The Australian Disability Network have created a guide for [Sharing and Monitoring Disability Information](#). This guide provides examples on how to respectfully word confidentiality commitments, as well as inviting employees with disability to request workplace adjustments.

Medical model vs Social model of disability

The Medical model of disability holds that disability is caused by a person's impairment or difference alone⁵, and focuses on what is 'wrong' with the person, not what the person needs. People with disability are viewed as patients requiring treatment or care.

The Social Model of Disability, however, helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for people with disability. Under the social model, disability is the result of the interaction between people's impairments and their environments; filled with physical, attitudinal, communication-related and social barriers⁶. Removing barriers creates equality and offers people with disability more independence, with choice and control over their own lives.

For the purposes of this guide we support the social model in helping to recognise and address barriers, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

Q1. Do you have an ongoing disability or limitation or physical condition that restricts your life in some way?

- Yes
- No [Please go to question xx]
- Prefer not to say
- Don't know

⁵ People with Disability Australia: <http://www.pwd.org.au/student-section/the-social-model-of-disability.html>

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Q2. Has this condition lasted, or is it likely to last, 6 months or more?

- Yes [please go to question 3*]
- No [Please go to question xx]
- Prefer not to say
- Don't know

[* If asking about disability for workplace purposes, additional question required below]

Q3. If yes, do you require adjustments to your working environment or arrangements?⁷

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say*

(*If you would like to speak to someone to request a workplace adjustment which relates to your disability, please contact [insert name, email and/or phone number])

Disability – athlete question

Where the specific nature of an individual’s disability is required for an athlete pathway or participation in the high performance sports system, then the below question is recommended using the [IPC Classification](#):

Q. Which of the following best describes the nature of your disability? Please select all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/> Impaired Muscle Power	Athletes with Impaired Muscle Power have a Health Condition that either reduces or eliminates their ability to voluntarily contract their muscles in order to move or to generate force. Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Impaired Muscle Power include spinal cord injury (complete or incomplete, tetra-or paraplegia or paraparesis), muscular dystrophy, post-polio syndrome and spina bifida
<input type="checkbox"/> Impaired Passive Range of Movement	Athletes with Impaired Passive Range of Movement have a restriction or a lack of passive movement in one or more joints. Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Impaired Passive Range of Movement include arthrogyrosis and contracture resulting from chronic joint immobilisation or trauma affecting a joint.
<input type="checkbox"/> Limb Deficiency	Athletes with Limb Deficiency have total or partial absence of bones or joints as a consequence of trauma (for example traumatic amputation), illness (for example amputation due to bone cancer) or congenital limb deficiency (for example dysmelia).
<input type="checkbox"/> Leg Length Difference	Athletes with Leg Length Difference have a difference in the length of their legs as a result of a disturbance of limb growth, or as a result of trauma.

⁷ Employers have a legal obligation to provide ‘reasonable adjustments’ to allow people with disability equal participation or equal performance at work. A reasonable adjustment is a necessary or appropriate modification or adjustment made to ensure or enable equal participation. It could be an adjustment to work hours, training or workplace equipment. For example, an employee with physical disability may require modification of their desk/work area or an employee with vision impairment may require magnification of their computer screen.



<input type="checkbox"/> Short Stature	Athletes with Short Stature have a reduced length in the bones of the upper limbs, lower limbs and/or trunk Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Short Stature include achondroplasia, growth hormone dysfunction, and osteogenesis imperfecta
<input type="checkbox"/> Hypertonia	Athletes with Hypertonia have an increase in muscle tension and a reduced ability of a muscle to stretch caused by damage to the central nervous system Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Hypertonia include cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and stroke.
<input type="checkbox"/> Ataxia	Athletes with Ataxia have uncoordinated movements caused by damage to the central nervous system Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Ataxia include cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, stroke and multiple sclerosis.
<input type="checkbox"/> Athetosis	Athletes with Athetosis have continual slow involuntary movements Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Athetosis include cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and stroke
<input type="checkbox"/> Vision Impairment	Athletes with Vision Impairment have reduced, or no vision caused by damage to the eye structure, optical nerves or optical pathways, or visual cortex of the brain. Examples of an Underlying Health Condition that may lead to Vision Impairment include retinitis pigmentosa and diabetic retinopathy
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Impairment	Athletes with an Intellectual Impairment have a restriction in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour in which affects conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills required for everyday life. This Impairment must be present before the age of 18.

Alternate question outside of IPC classification:

Q. Which of the following best describes the nature of your disability? Please select all that apply

- Acquired brain injury
- Amputee
- Blind or vision impairment
- Autism
- Cerebral Palsy
- Deafblind
- Down Syndrome
- Loss of hearing
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Neurological condition
- Paraplegia/ quadriplegia
- Psychiatric condition
- Spinal injury
- Mental health



- Transplant
- Musculoskeletal condition (e.g. osteoporosis, arthritis, chronic muscle or joint pain, scoliosis)
- Cardiovascular condition (e.g. cardiovascular disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Other (please specify) _____ [free text field]
- Prefer not to say

Workplace Benchmarking

When comparing workplace diversity data against national or industry averages, recommended sources include:

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provides data on the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the community and in the labour market (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represented 3.2% of the total population in 2021 Census) - [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)
- The best available workforce benchmarking data for gender can be found at the [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#)
- The ABS data on [cultural diversity](#) – 27.6% of population were born overseas; top 5 languages used at home other than English were Mandarin (2.7%), Arabic (1.4%) Vietnamese (1.3%), Cantonese (1.2%) and Punjabi (0.9%); top 5 countries of birth England (3.6%), India (2.6%), China (2.2%), New Zealand (2.1%) and Philippines (1.2%) [Cultural diversity of Australia | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)
- The ABS data on [Disability](#) provides the best source of information to compare the representation of people with disability within your organisation to that of the Australian community.
- The Australian Human Rights Commission's [Face the facts: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People](#) (noting it is a 2014 document) and [Pride in Sport](#) provides data on the LGBTIQ+ community



Further references

[1.2 Collecting Diversity Data — The Good Data Guide](#)

[3 tips to improve your diversity data collection practices - HRM online](#) – references the ABS census and people feeling ‘statistically invisible’

[5 Best Practices for Equitable and Inclusive Data Collection \(schusterman.org\)](#)

[A framework for data de-identification - CSIRO](#)

[Australian Data Strategy](#)

[Collect Your Employees’ Data Without Invading Their Privacy \(hbr.org\)](#)

[Data and Digital Government Strategy](#)

[Data-Driven Diversity \(hbr.org\)](#)

[Diversity Data Guide: Collecting and analysing data on the inclusion and diversity of your workforce - PwC UK](#)

[D&I 101 - Collecting Diversity Data - Diversity Council Australia \(dca.org.au\)](#)

[How to Best Use Data to Meet Your DE&I Goals \(hbr.org\)](#)

[Medical vs Social Model of Disability \(afdo.org.au\)](#)

[More Than Numbers: A Guide Toward Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(DEI\) in Data Collection | Schusterman Family Philanthropies](#)

[Research the best way to collect diversity data | WGEA Review Report | PM&C \(pmc.gov.au\)](#)

[Resources | Data and Digital](#)

[Workforcediversity.pdf](#)

[What is diversity data and how to collect diversity data - EW Group \(theewgroup.com\)](#)

[D&I 101: Collecting Diversity Data](#), Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2022



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