



inclusion compass

key findings

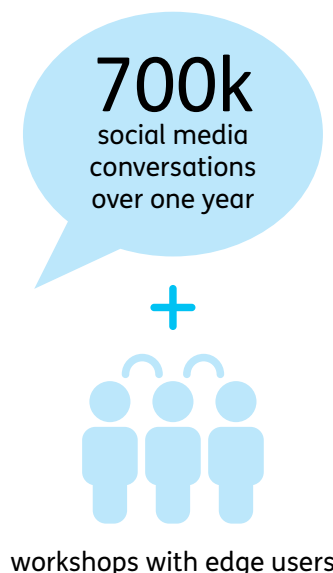
What is the Inclusion Compass?

Conversations reveal the state of inclusion in Australia

The Inclusion Compass is the first report of its kind in Australia. It asks Australians, ‘what are the key areas preventing our society from being accessible, equitable, and inclusive?’

Methodology

Centre for Inclusive Design, in partnership with The Lab Insight & Strategy, used AI-powered digital decoders to analyse over 700,000 online conversations, together with six months of workshops, to identify the short-falls, solutions, and to find the issues stopping Australia becoming a fully fair and inclusive society.



To get a full picture of what inclusion looks like in Australia today, it was necessary to go beyond online commentary, and speak to communities, representative organisations, and individuals affected by the key topics. These people came from marginalised

communities, referred to as ‘edge users’, being the elderly, people with disability, LGBTQIA+, culturally and racially marginalised communities, and other groups. This resulted in the sixth key topic of conversation being added, being the digital divide.

What should Australia aim to look like?

To know what an inclusive Australia should look like, the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals were matched against inclusion factors, like age, race, ethnicity, gender, sex, and religion.



The result of this work led to six key topics of conversation where inclusion was found to be an issue. Those key topics are:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Community safety
3. Education and development
4. Income equality
5. Connection and representation
6. Digital divide.

Inclusion topics

Topics of conversation where inclusion was found to be an issue



Key term: 'edge user' is defined as a person who experiences significant difficulty with the way a system, process, or product has been designed. Anyone can be an edge user at some time in their lives. Think of a physical injury, a sprain, fracture, or break, recovery from an operation, all these can affect a person's ability.'

What people are saying

What people across Australia have said about inclusion when it comes to the key areas where conversations showed inclusion was an issue.

“NDIS is all about access, inclusion and agency, but you don’t allow me to use my money. It looks great on paper, but in reality, it’s really hard.”

Income equality

“Interest rates increasing is creating a vicious cycle for people below the poverty line.”

“A patient recently told me that their medical problems would improve if I could prescribe them a full time job, stable housing and a puppy.”

Education and development

“We need practical conversations about how to make the workforce more inclusive, and shifting the focus to the employer, not the employee.”

Digital divide

“If people aren’t able to use technology they face exclusion.”

“Assumption that everyone who uses a mobile phone can use a computer.”

Connection and representation

“A male victim, a female victim and a Trans victim will all have slightly different needs and issues. Each deserves their own space.”

“Diversity strengthens us, and enhances us as a country, as a community, rather than everyone being the same.”

“Australian of the year? Easy. Every health care worker, every nurse, every doctor, every hospital cleaner, every frontline worker, every lab technician, every carer.”

Health and wellbeing

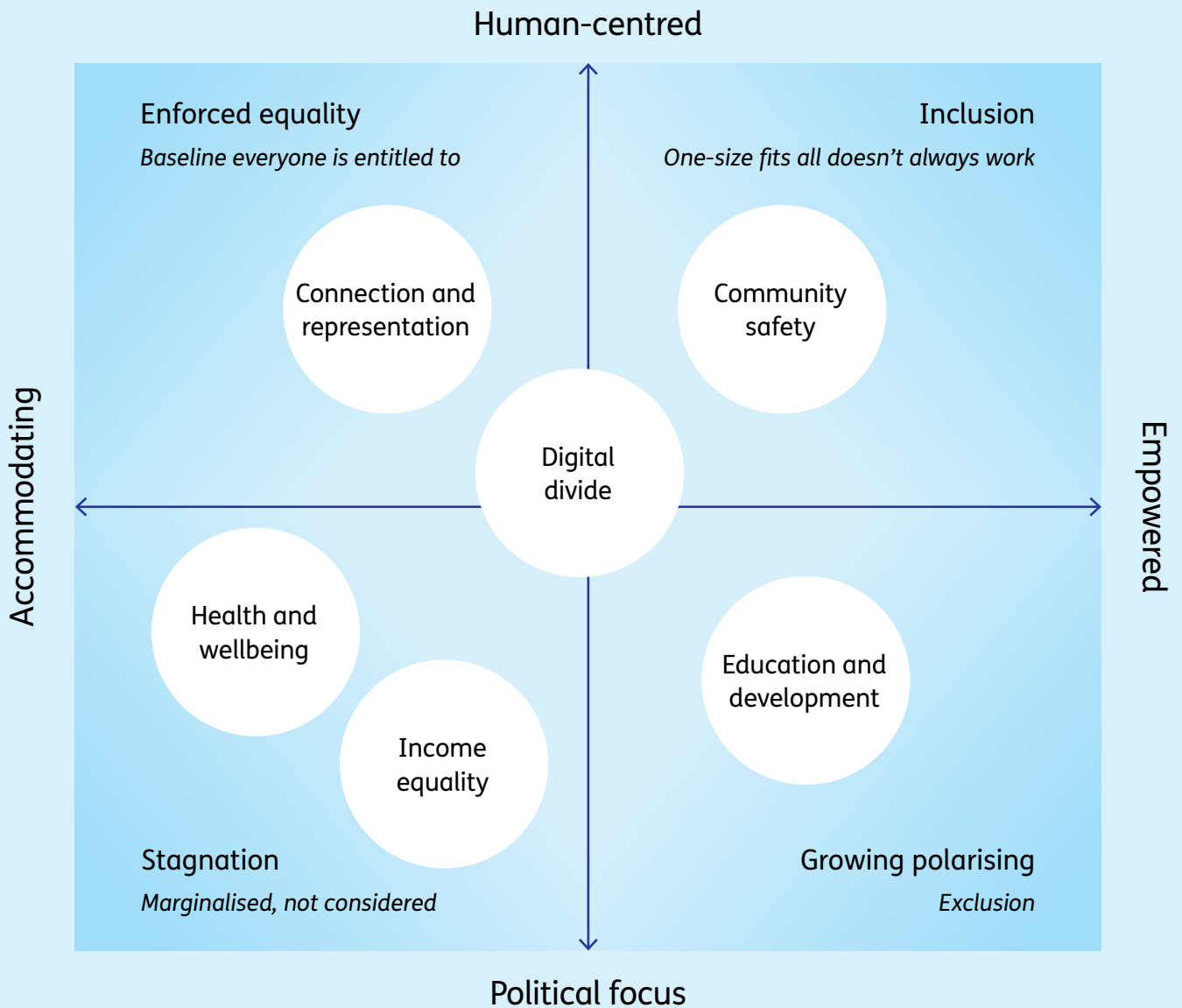
“I’m forced to use technology, and then can’t sleep worried that I’ll be hacked. We are so reliant of tech and it scares me.”

“There are stigmas, just because it is free, there is a five year waiting list for something simple like dental care.”

Community safety

*“Invasion and dispossession of Australia’s First Peoples.
Imprisonment of 10 year old children.
Black deaths in custody.”*

Analysis of digital and community conversations show the six key topics of conversations around inclusion in Australia sit in one of four Compass areas.



Human-centred conversations consider the protection of human needs as vital.

Accommodated conversations are when the needs of edge users are seen as the needs of a few to be accommodated by the mainstream and status quo.

Empowered conversations are when the needs of 'edge users' are seen as critical to creating a diverse society with recognition that the status quo needs to change.

Politically focused conversations refer to the topic being highly politicised, used as a human tool, with conversations revolving around, for example, left versus right issues. Call out culture sits here.

Explainer

The Inclusion Compass shows where conversations and viewpoints on the six key topics currently sit. That is, health and wellbeing, and income equality are viewed as sitting bottom left of the Compass, ‘accommodated’ and ‘political focus’. The tone of these conversations demonstrate, despite the best intentions of governments, people find themselves marginalised, and their needs and experiences are not considered.

Community safety and the digital divide sit in the top right of the Compass, ‘human-centred’ and ‘empowered’. These conversations focus on the need for equity. The need to recognise a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not always work.

While education and development conversations are also empowered in tone, they are often politicised. This combination can be polarising and create exclusion. Conversations regarding connection and representation are human-centred and have a focus on accommodating everyone. They are equality based and often advocate for the creation of a baseline everyone is entitled to have.

The Inclusion Compass is the voice of Australians providing solutions for Australia.

This Inclusion Compass is unique, showing both the movement of conversations and the underlying themes. As inclusion becomes more important and understood there will be a move towards ‘human-centered’ and ‘empowered’ conversations, however, it is important to recognise where conversations currently sit.

The six topics of conversation can be loosely placed over these axes shown on the opposite page.

Two axes are shown to help encompass the many narratives around inclusivity from everyday Australians. Where communities believe the conversation is politically motivated, rather than human-centred, the impact on society is negative. Likewise, accommodated rather than empowered.

The following pages offer solutions that came from the conversations we had with people across Australia.

Pathway to inclusion

The following are snapshots of what the Inclusion Compass conversations reveal as pathways for a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive society.



Health and wellbeing

To create a pathway forward for health, it is recommended to:

- improve access to healthcare for vulnerable people to remove and mitigate the disadvantages experienced when access to healthcare is restricted,
- consider an individual's whole health, not just focus on disease, and
- treat people with dignity and take a strengths-based approach to ensure people leave in a better place because of the intervention.

Income equality

To create a pathway forward for income equality, it is recommended to:

- design communities so diverse groups exist together rather than being segregated,
- redesign systems to accommodate and celebrate difference rather than expecting people to slot in,
- recognise poverty leads to a vicious cycle of exclusion,
- ensure current support systems and welfare services are designed to reduce rather than increase barriers for people trying to break the cycle of poverty, and
- government policies should focus on skilling, upskilling, and supporting the unemployed rather than looking to overseas for skilled workers.

Community safety

To create a pathway forward for community safety, it is recommended to:

- be aware fear, physical safety, and psychological safety look and feel different for different communities and, therefore, different interventions are needed,
- create programmes to de-stigmatise government responses to marginalised communities to break the cycle of mistrust and harm, and
- recognise the harm and isolation words can cause through social media, whether by traditional media organisations or individuals, and determine a way for people to be accountable for this impact.

Education and development

To create a pathway forward for education and development, it is recommended to:

- shift responsibility from the employee or student to employer or teacher/education provider to create accessible, and safe working and learning environments,
- view diversity and difference as a strength, not a deficit,
- identify and address barriers to education, skills, and employment for marginalised groups, and those looking to settle in Australia,
- support people with disability with training and resources on technology for special adjustments and personalisation, so it is factored into development, and
- ensure government employment and training programs support vulnerable people and cater for their varied needs.

Connection and representation

To create a pathway forward for connection and representation, it is recommended to:

- have a variety of community voices be heard and valued, and their insights be considered throughout decision and policy making processes,
- ensure media are required to adopt more inclusive language around underrepresented groups to reduce harm and isolation,
- acknowledge one size does not fit all, and different groups face different challenges in creating connection,
- promote the story of this country to represent the diversity of people who call Australia home, and
- explore further the need for non-digital opportunities for connection and human interaction.

Digital divide

To create a pathway forward and to bridge the digital divide, it is recommended to:

- provide omnichannel experiences (physical, digital, phone etc.) for services and products offered online, so people who are not online are not excluded,
- have people feel safe in online spaces.
- provide training for communities on how to use technology appropriately, and
- create accessible digital products, services, and spaces which cater for the varying needs of the community.

This is the start of the conversation, not the end.

About us

The Lab Insight & Strategy

The Lab is a creative human understanding practice where ambitious brands come to make brilliant leaps. Founded in 2006, our fiercely independent collective of strategic thinkers fuses the powerful forces of culture, behaviour, and technology to reveal fresh perspectives that enable brands to take advantage of our rapidly changing society and stay ahead of change.

We're lighting the way forward with an eye on the bigger picture. As a company committed to the triple bottom line, we maintain a sharp focus on our work, the wellbeing of our people and the impact on our place. As a certified B Corp, we meet the highest verified standards of social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability, and aspire to use the power of business to address social and environmental challenges.

We're committed to reconciliation and have completed our Reflect RAP to drive change and unification.

UTS Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion

The UTS Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion is the academic and promotion partner for this report.

As a public purpose institution, UTS is committed to driving social change within and beyond our campus. Our social impact agenda focuses research, education, and practice from across the university to benefit people and communities.

The Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion is a gateway for community organisations, not-for-profits, social purpose businesses and individuals to engage with the university's resources and expertise to maximise social impact.

The Centre for Inclusive Design

The Centre for Inclusive Design (CfID) is a leader in inclusive design methodology and application, with over 40-years' experience working with governments, educators, business, industry, and community organisations to deliver policies, products, services, and experiences which are accessible to all.

Inclusive design connects government and industry with communities of people who are traditionally excluded or unable to access products, services, and the built environment. Incorporating their lived experience into the design process increases the accessibility of the planned service, policy, product, or built environment.

CfID strives to ensure those with physical & hidden disabilities and disadvantages are considered throughout the decision-making process by both government and the private sector.

As a not-for profit working as a social enterprise, CfID specialises in bringing together different perspectives to the design process and delivering useful and usable solutions.

CfID exists to help governments, organisations and industries embody Inclusive Design.

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