

The Treasury
Measuring What Matters Consultation
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Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance Submission to the Measuring What Matters Consultation - Second Phase

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission. The Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance (ADIA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the emerging policy themes developed from phase one consultation.

In line with the ADIA's vision, **to build a digitally inclusive Australia where everyone is equipped to fully participate in the economy and society**, this submission focuses on the first and second emerging policy themes:

- Prosperous - A growing, productive and resilient economy.
- Inclusive - A society that shares opportunities and enables people to fully participate.

We outline our commentary on the themes and draft descriptions below. We acknowledge that the first Measuring What Matters Statement is likely to be relatively high-level and concise, and provide considerations for measurements and indicators.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. We would be pleased to discuss these matters with you further.

Yours faithfully,



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**Emerging Policy Theme 1 - Prosperous
A growing, productive and resilient economy**

- An economy that provides opportunities for all Australians.
- An economy that is more resilient and less vulnerable to shocks.
- People are financially secure.
- People have access to education, knowledge and training so they have the skills to fully participate in society and the economy throughout their life.
- People have access to necessary services and amenities.
- A sustainable budget that can continue to deliver the services Australians rely on and can buffer the economy against future shocks.
- A dynamic economy, which encourages and offers opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship.
- An economy that seizes the opportunities from the net zero transition and digitisation.

Digital technologies – and the ability to confidently, safely, and independently use them – are required for all Australians in a contemporary economy and society, for access to work, learning and life. This includes being able to access essential services such as health, education and the myriad government services accessible online, along with finding and undertaking employment, progressing along a career path, as well as being socially connected.

Competent use of digital technology across the Australian population has the potential to significantly improve Australia's productivity. Almost all jobs in a modern economy require a basic level of digital skills, and in the case of highly skilled technical jobs, digital ability is a necessary foundation on which to build the technical skills required.

Indicators:

An indicator around digital ability in Australia offers the following benefits to Australia's economy and society:

- A government-backed focus on improving digital ability across Australia.
- A greater understanding of the current state of digital ability in Australia.
- Impetus to improve digital ability across all cohorts, from those who are using devices and digital technologies for the first time, to those upskilling to gain employment in technology-driven environments or in industries where digitalisation is occurring at a rapid pace.
- An increase in employment opportunities, more people transitioning to roles requiring higher levels of digital ability, alongside more people having the essential digital skills to enter the workforce.
- A measure that will allow for disaggregation at a demographic and at a geographic level.

How this can be measured:

In order to measure digital ability in Australia, and in turn work toward improving the nation's digital ability as a whole, we must align behind a national common language around digital ability.

This can be achieved through the endorsement, at the Federal level, of the existing [Australian Digital Capability Framework](#), presuming it is extended to cover Pre-Levels 1A and 1B, to account for the skills people need to begin their digital ability journey.

In addition, the ADIA, in partnership with the Digital Skills Organisation (DSO), is undertaking collaborative work with a range of stakeholders, including Jobs and Skills Australia, to gain consensus on what are the Essential Digital Skills for access to work, learning and life. A joint submission from the ADIA and DSO has been provided under separate cover detailing the opportunities for measurement associated with this project.

Emerging Policy Theme 2 - Inclusive
A society that shares opportunities and enables people to fully participate

- A society that allows all people to afford life's essentials.
- A society that provides people access to secure, well-paying jobs.
- A society that supports social and economic accessibility and intergenerational mobility.
- Gender equality, including at work and in the community.
- A society that supports diversity and equity.
- Leadership in government and business that is representative of our diverse society.

While many people are benefitting from the increased role technology is playing in society, many Australians are digitally excluded, lacking affordable connectivity, the ability, or devices to utilise technology. We know that 11% of the national population remains highly digitally excluded, and an additional 17% are digitally excluded.¹ Taken together, the number of highly excluded and excluded Australians is substantial, equalling 28% of the national population in 2021.²

The recent [myGov User Audit](#) described the Australian Government's services platform as critical national infrastructure, highlighting the importance of digital infrastructure, digital ability, digital devices and connectivity to all Australians. Recommendations from the myGov User Audit Expert Panel which align with the Inclusive emerging policy theme includes:

- Ensure myGov leaves no one behind and upholds Australians' human rights.
- Design and build myGov in alignment with a refreshed and enforced Australian Government Architecture, incorporating the Design System and the Service Standard

Indicators:

Given the critical nature of digital technology in daily life, consideration should be given to including both affordable internet connectivity and access to suitable devices in an indicator for sharing opportunities and enabling people to fully participate.

How this can be measured:

Existing mechanisms are in place which support this measurement. Such mechanisms allow for disaggregation at a demographic and at a geographic level and capture the different experiences and outcomes of people across Australia. These include:

- [The Australian Census](#)

¹ Thomas, J., Barraket, J., Parkinson, S., Wilson, C., Holcombe-James, I., Kennedy, J., Mannell, K., Brydon, A. (2021). *Australian Digital Inclusion Index: 2021*. Melbourne: RMIT, Swinburne University of Technology, and Telstra.

² *Ibid.*

- [The Australian Digital Inclusion Index](#)
- [Mapping the Digital Gap](#)
- [DITRDCA Media Consumption Survey](#)
- [ACMA Surveys - Communications and media in Australia:](#)
 - [How we use the internet](#)
 - [How we communicate](#)
 - [How we watch and listen to content](#)

About the ADIA

The Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance (ADIA) is a shared initiative with over 500 business, government, academic and community organisations working together to accelerate action on digital inclusion. Our member organisations conduct a variety of research and practical programs aimed at reducing the digital divide and enabling greater social and economic participation for all Australians. The ADIA is supported by Infoxchange, Google and Telstra. Australia Post was also a founding partner.

The ADIA's vision is to build a digitally inclusive Australia where everyone is equipped to fully participate in the economy and society. Being digitally included means a person has:

- Affordable access to quality internet and appropriate devices.
- Access to inclusively designed online content, that's readable and accessible, including if they are differently abled or from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- The knowledge, ability, skills and confidence to complete tasks safely and securely online.