

GUIDE: Connecting cultural diversity planning to business planning cycles

What to consider

Step 1: Understand culturally diverse communities

Understand the organisation's awareness of the culturally diverse communities being serviced.

Step 2: Map the planning context

Map out all the organisation's strategic and planning documents and identify the intersections between them and your cultural diversity plan. Identify who within the organisation is useful to include from the start of the process.

Step 3: Leadership support

Is there overt leadership support for the cultural planning process? If not, start working on building CEO and executive leadership supports and identify the 'diversity champions'.

Step 4: Budget cycles

Consider the organisation's budget cycle and how the cultural diversity plan will sit within it. This is particularly important if access to additional funding is needed.

Co-designing a plan for cultural diversity

Co-design engages the users of your services during the initial design process to improve the final service delivery. This approach allows staff who are developing programs and/or refining services to ensure the service is meeting the needs of the target audience. Some benefits of using a co-design approach include:

- increases use of the service or program by giving ownership to the user
- develops a partnership relationship with the user
- enables users to shape the service to meet their needs and decide solutions
- builds a working relationship with the community of users for continuous collaboration and engagement.



Using a co-design approach internally to develop a cultural diversity plan is useful to build support and understanding across various departments. This will help to embed cultural diversity principles, objectives and targets widely, and avoid responsibility falling on one person or team.

Cultural diversity in policy

Embedding diversity considerations across the organisation's policy demonstrates support for cultural diversity and promotes inclusivity and acceptance of everyone. It is a key part of the organisation's commitment to addressing discrimination and promoting tolerance and acceptance.

Developing organisational policy with a cultural diversity lens will ensure you consistently engage with culturally diverse communities across the levels of the organisation, its policies, programs and services.

Policy that considers cultural diversity creates a framework to build internal capabilities and a culture of inclusion. Policy development needs to be a whole-of-organisation approach, starting at leadership and spreading through all levels of the organisation supported by systemic, organisational and individual commitment.

It is important for any organisation to continually adapt to the changing needs of the community it serves and improve service delivery. Policies show the organisation's commitments and expectations and designing and adjusting service delivery helps create programs that people will use.

Include diversity considerations in service planning and delivery

Making sure that diversity is an essential part of service planning and delivery will help you meet the needs of the communities you serve and attract potential customers. Approaches to planning depend on the location and the populations served, including:

- rural areas with low levels of culturally diverse communities where no single group is prominent
- areas with one or two large culturally diverse communities
- areas with multiple culturally diverse communities.

Planning effective communication

In the initial planning stages, consider who needs to know about the cultural diversity plan and the successful outcomes over its life. Who needs to be kept informed internally? Who needs to be kept informed externally?

