



## National Autism Strategy – Discussion Paper Alternate Submission

Thank you for your interest in contributing to the development of the National Autism Strategy (the Strategy).

If you cannot complete the guided, short-form questions, or provide a submission online, you can print this document and provide your written submission to:

**Email:** [AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au](mailto:AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au)

Alternatively, you can **mail** your response to:

National Autism Strategy  
Department of Social Services  
GPO Box 9820  
Canberra ACT 2601

This document contains information about:

- how to make a submission,
- the Privacy Collection Notice for this submission process, and
- guided free text questions to assist you in responding to the Discussion Paper.

You may attach documents, audio or video files as part of your submission.

When making a submission or completing the short-form questions, we suggest you refer to the Discussion Paper. The Discussion Paper contains questions for consideration against each of the focus areas that you might like to think about when making your submission.

A summary paper is also available. The Discussion Paper and Summary Paper are available at [www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy](http://www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy).

Easy read and Auslan translations of the Summary Paper will be available soon.

### Participating in this consultation

Your participation is voluntary, and you are under no obligation to participate if you do not wish to. If you participate or decide not to participate, it will not influence your relationship with the Department of Social Services (the department) or access to Federal government services, payments and benefits.

You can choose whether to provide your name, or remain anonymous.

You can also advise us if you would like to make your submission publicly available. If you do choose to make your submission publicly available, you will need to provide your name and email address.

Please note that we may collect your personal information if you provide your name and email address, or if you contact the department. Please see the Privacy Notice below regarding this consultation process.

You can contact us to withdraw your submission if you no longer want to participate in this process. Please email us at [AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au](mailto:AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au) and include your confirmation reference number (this number will be emailed to you once you have lodged your submission).

If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please email the Autism Policy team at [AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au](mailto:AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au).

### **Instructions**

When completing the below submission process you will be asked:

1. Some guided questions that we particularly want to hear about to help us draft the National Autism Strategy. If you don't want to answer these questions you can skip to upload a submission document or file.
2. Whether you want to upload a written submission document or other type of file. This is optional.
3. Questions about yourself if you are an individual.

### **If you need support**

If participating in this consultation process raises any concerns or you feel distressed we encourage you to access the Help and Support page available at [www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy](http://www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy).

If you require support to access the Discussion Paper or Summary Paper, including paper copies or telephone assistance, please email [AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au](mailto:AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au).

If you require translation services you can contact [www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Non-English-speakers](http://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Non-English-speakers).

### **Privacy Collection Notice**

Your personal information is protected by law, including under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act).

The Department of Social Services (the department, we, us, our), collects personal information about individuals for a range of purposes to enable it to carry out its functions.



More information about how we handle your personal information is set out in our Privacy Policy at [www.dss.gov.au/privacy-policy](http://www.dss.gov.au/privacy-policy).

This privacy collection notice is designed to ensure you are aware of certain matters in relation to the department's collection of your personal information, as required by the Privacy Act.

### **What is the purpose of the collection?**

The department is currently inviting participants to contribute ideas to the development of the National Autism Strategy (the Strategy).

### **What is 'personal information' and 'sensitive information'?**

Personal information is information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable.

Sensitive information is a subset of personal information. It includes information or an opinion about your racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of associations or unions, sexual orientation or practices, criminal record, or health, genetic or biometric information.

### **What personal information we collect**

Submissions to this Discussion Paper or Summary Paper are voluntary. While the Department will not actively seek personal and sensitive information, in responding to this Discussion Paper, the following personal information may be disclosed:

- name;
- email address;
- identity details, relating to gender, age, if you identify as having a disability, ethnicity, geographic and demographic information;
- other personal information (including sensitive information) that may be provided by you in your response.

### **How we collect your information**

We will collect information from you directly if you choose to answer the short-form questions or provide a written submission.

Your participation is voluntary, and you are under no obligation to participate if you do not wish to.

### **Why we collect your personal information**

We will use your personal information and views to inform the development of the Strategy.



All views will be considered. Participants are able to complete the short-form questions or lodge a written submission. The Government may choose to publish submissions. If lodging a written submission, you will be asked to specify whether you would like your submission to be published on the department's website and you will need to specify if you would like your input to be anonymous.

When lodging a submission, your email address will be collected to ensure you receive confirmation of your submission. Your email address will not be collected for any other purpose.

For participants who wish to have their submission's published, the department will redact any identifying or sensitive information of the participant, or someone they know prior to publication.

### **Who we disclose your personal information to**

We may disclose your personal information to the following people, organisations or third parties:

- entities contracted to provide services to assist us with the development of the Strategy, where required (which may include entities contracted to the department to provide information technology, accessibility, analysis and editing services);
- individuals within agencies, organisations and bodies that will be working with the department on the development of the Strategy, ie: the Minister for Social Services; and
- other parties where the disclosure is authorised by law.

All entities contracted by us are subject to strict confidentiality, privacy and security obligations. We will not disclose any of your information overseas.

### **Storage of your personal information**

Storage of personal information (and the disposal of information when no longer required) is managed in accordance with the Australian Government records management regime, including the *Archives Act 1983*, agency-specific records authorities and general records authorities. This ensures your personal information is held securely by the department.

### **More information**

The department's Privacy Policy contains more information about how we handle personal information, how you can access any personal information that we hold, and how to seek correction of that personal information. It also contains information about how to make a complaint about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles, as set out in the Privacy Act.

If you have any concerns or questions, you can contact us at [complaints@dss.gov.au](mailto:complaints@dss.gov.au).



## Confirmation and consent

By providing your personal information (including sensitive information) through the Discussion Paper short-form questions or submissions, or the Summary Paper, you consent to the department collecting your personal information and handling your personal information in accordance with this Privacy Collection Notice.

### Confirmation and consent **(required)**

- I have read the Privacy Notice regarding this online form and the department's Privacy Policy and wish to continue making a submission.

## Guided, free text questions

If participating in this consultation raises any concerns or you feel distressed we encourage you to contact one of the numbers on the Help and Support page at [www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy](http://www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy).

If you require support to access the Discussion Paper or the Summary Paper, including paper copies or telephone assistance, please email [AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au](mailto:AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au).

If you require translation services to assist in completing the submission process you can contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) at [www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Non-English-speakers](http://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Non-English-speakers).

You must answer questions that say required.

**The Australian Government may choose to publish submissions. As such, please specify whether you would like your submission to be published on the department's website ([www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)) and if you would like your input to be anonymous: **(required)****

- I consent to the publication of my feedback with my name or, if applicable, my organization.
- I consent to the publication of my feedback anonymously.
- I do not consent to the publication of my feedback.

Are you responding as an individual or as a representative of an organisation? **(required)**

- I'm responding as an individual.
- I'm representing an organisation.

## Guided Questions

This section includes 6 guided questions covering different sections of the Discussion Paper.

### **Q 1 What does a National Autism Strategy need to achieve?**

When answering this question, you might like to consider:

- What outcomes would you most like to see from a National Autism Strategy?
- What are your priorities for a National Autism Strategy?

### **Q 2 How can the National Autism Strategy support the rights, autonomy and diversity of the Autistic community?**

When answering this question, you might like to consider:

- What is affecting the rights of Autistic people?
- How can we better make sure the rights of Autistic people are recognised and upheld?
- How should the Strategy recognise the diversity of the Autistic community?

### **Q 3 What needs to improve so Autistic people are better supported across their whole life?**

When answering this question, you might like to consider:

- What barriers to social and economic inclusion have you experienced at different stages of life? (this could be things like being out in the community, relationships, having a career or being employed, having access to education)
- What are the biggest improvements you would like to see?
- Is more support needed for Autistic people at certain life stages?
- What should be in a National Autism Strategy so Autistic people get the support they need early in life, including making sure infants and children have access to diagnosis and adequate supports?

### **Q 4 What can be done to better support Autistic people from different population groups, including:**

- **First Nations Autistic people.**
- **Autistic people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.**
- **Autistic people that identify as LGBTQIA+.**
- **Autistic infants, children and young adults.**
- **Older autistic people.**
- **Autistic people with common co-occurring neurotypes and conditions, including but not limited to Autistic people with intellectual disability, Autistic people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and**

**Autistic people with Specific Learning Disorders (SLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.**

- **Autistic people with additional and/or complex support needs including communication needs.**

When answering this question, you might like to consider:

- How should priority groups be represented in a National Autism Strategy?
- What are the specific actions needed to support people from these priority population groups – actions will generally be specific to one of these identified groups.

### **Q 5 What might help to improve people's understanding of Autism?**

When answering this question, you might like to consider:

- Which sectors or professions need the most work to improve understanding of Autism?
- Why is the community's understanding of Autism important?
- How does a lack of understanding of Autism impact on people's rights and attitudes towards Autistic people?
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### **Q 6 Is there anything else you would like to tell us?**



## About you

### If you are answering as an individual

We have a few questions about you that we would like you to answer to help us know if particular group/s of people are more or less likely to have certain experiences. Information you give us through this process will not be given to or used by any other government service. You can choose to leave these questions blank.

### Q What is your interest in the National Autism Strategy?

Please select all that apply

- I am an Autistic person / a person with Autism.
- I am a family member of an Autistic person (or people).
- I am an informal carer of an Autistic person.
- I am completing this as a carer/trusted friend of someone with profound or high support needs.
- I am looking into whether I might be Autistic.
- I am looking into whether someone in my care might be Autistic.
- I work with an Autistic person or people.
- I'm a disability support worker.
- I work as a health, education or other professional.
- I work for an Autism or disability organisation.
- I work in federal, state/territory or local government.
- Other interest.
- Prefer not to say.

### Q Do you identify as any of the following?

Please select all that apply

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Speak a language other than English at home.
- LGBTIQ+.
- Person with disability (other than Autism).
- None of the above.
- Prefer not to say.

### Q. Which state or territory do you live in?

- ACT
- NSW



- NT
- QLD
- SA
- TAS
- VIC
- WA
- External Australian Territory (e.g. Torres Strait, Norfolk Island).
- I do not currently live in Australia.
- Prefer not to say.

**Q. Where are you located?**

- Major Cities of Australia (Capital cities, or other large cities e.g. Sydney and Newcastle).
- Inner Regional Australia (3 hours or less inland from a major city or town).
- Outer Regional Australia.
- Remote Australia (more than 3 hours from a major city or town).
- Very Remote Australia (more than 3 hours from a town).
- Prefer not to say.

