

## Bridge Housing *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: 2019-2021*

### Chief Executive's Foreword

Bridge Housing's employees are our key asset. Through them, we provide high quality homes and services to our residents, applicants and communities. Their ideas, energy and commitment are integral to Bridge Housing's ongoing success. We place considerable effort on creating a safe, inclusive and positive workplace environment and culture, where we celebrate the diversity of our employees' gender, age, cultural background, sexual preferences and religious identification.

Diversity and inclusion has been at the forefront of my strategic priorities since I became CEO of Bridge Housing in 2006. I am delighted to report that Bridge Housing has made excellent progress on diversity and inclusion over the last two years. Our achievements include:

- Achieved 50 per cent representation of both genders on the Bridge Housing Board, in line with the ASX's Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations.
- Introduced 10 days of Domestic Violence Leave as part of our White Ribbon Australia accreditation
- Increased our Parental Leave provisions from 6 weeks to 12 weeks for staff with at least two years of continuous service
- Introduced paid Cultural Leave for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- Launched the *Career Trackers* internship program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary students through their studies into employment.

Although I am proud of Bridge Housing's achievements, we know there is more that we can do.

This is why we have developed and launched our first ***Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2019-2021)***. Through this Strategy, we will continue to focus our efforts on creating meaningful opportunities and addressing barriers to ensure that each and every one of employees can truly thrive in our organisation. In developing this Strategy, we recognise that diversity and inclusion is a lifelong organisational journey – and we know that we can never stand still, nor take our success for granted.

By the time we have delivered our first Strategy at the end of 2021, we want to be able to say that we have built a comprehensive and genuine understanding of diversity and inclusion in everything that we do. We have set ourselves a range of ambitious targets with the objective of making sure that what we do has a real impact for our people – and, by extension - for our residents, applicants and communities.

Bridge Housing is committed to publicly reporting on our progress towards building a more diverse and inclusive organisation on an annual basis, as we strive to maintain our position as a leading community housing provider of choice for our current and future employees.

I am determined to build on our achievements to date, to be as bold and forward-thinking as we can be, and to increase our efforts to ensure that Bridge Housing is an organisation that truly welcomes, values and includes everyone.

By investing in our employees, I am confident that we will continue to succeed in delivering Bridge Housing's mission of improving lives through affordable homes and quality services.

John Nicolades  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## Introduction

At Bridge Housing, we believe that diversity includes everyone. We value diversity of thought and experience and believe that our inclusive and collaborative culture is integral to the success of our individuals, teams and organisation.

Although we are proud to have a diverse workforce who are committed to improving lives through affordable homes and quality services, we acknowledge there is always more we can do to leverage and build on the passion, innovation and talent of our employees.

Bridge Housing has a long-standing commitment to diversity and inclusion. In 2013, we developed our employee-focused **Diversity and Inclusion Policy** – the first in the community housing sector – which was guided by our Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Chaired by our Chief Executive Officer, the Committee is responsible for informing and assisting Bridge Housing in promoting and encouraging diversity and inclusion through various initiatives and strategies. The Committee includes members of our Executive Team and Senior Management Team, as well as employees representing the diversity of our organisation.

In 2018, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee reviewed and updated the policy to ensure it reflected our organisational values and aligned with contemporary research and best practice. The revised **Diversity and Inclusion Policy** was approved by our Board and came into effect in April 2019.

## About our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Building on our strong policy framework, we proceeded to develop our inaugural **Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**. Our intention was to prepare and implement a three-year strategy which built on our past achievements, identified areas for improvement and positioned Bridge Housing as a sector leader for our current and future employees. Using baseline workforce planning data collected by Bridge Housing and, more recently, by the Diversity Council of Australia, we have set clear and measurable targets which will help us determine if we have succeeded in achieving our goals.

The Strategy includes three strategic objectives:

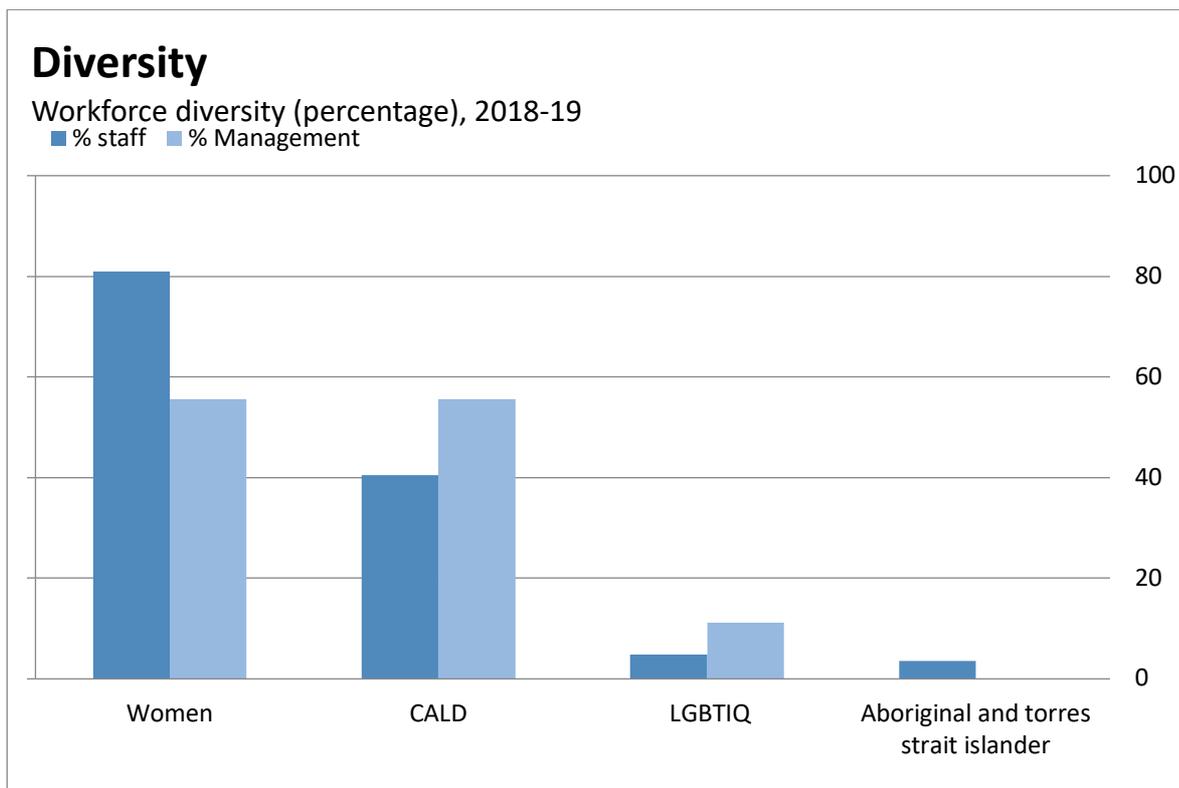
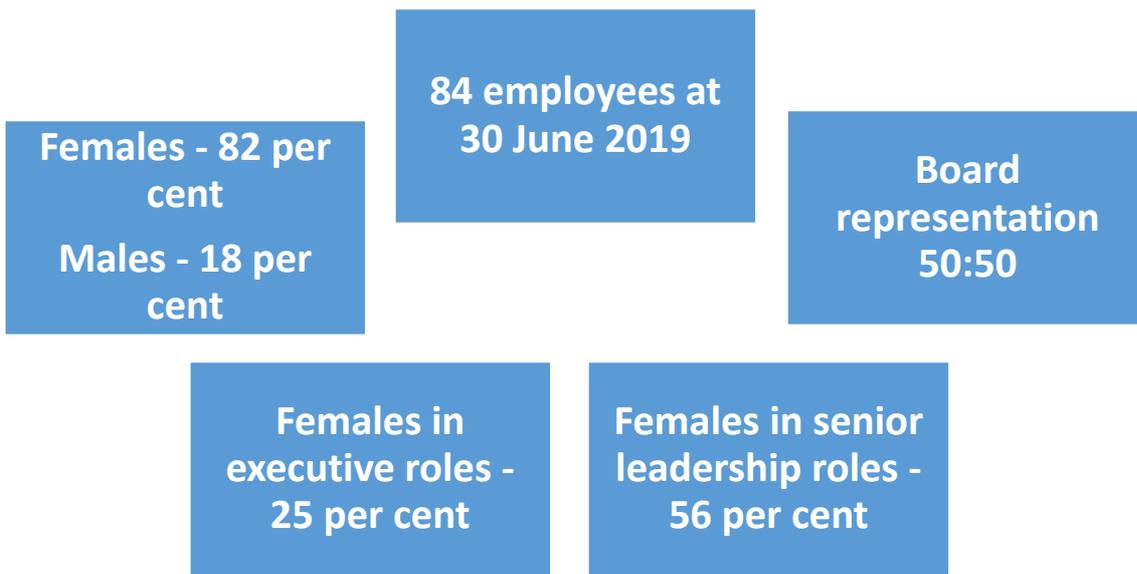
- We demonstrate leadership on diversity and inclusion at all levels of our organisation and the community housing sector
- We embrace diversity in our workplace
- We share our organisational journey and are accountable for our actions

Achieving our diversity and inclusion goals for all Bridge Housing employees requires time and dedicated resources. Over the next three years, we will use organisational efforts to focus on specific target population groups (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people), whilst ensuring we are well-placed to respond to new and emerging social issues affecting people from diverse backgrounds.

Our focus areas are outlined below:

Year 1 (2019-20)	Year 2 (2020-21)	Year 3 (2021-2022)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People from LGBTIQI backgrounds</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People with a disability or mental health issue</li></ul>

What does Bridge Housing look like in 2019? A Diversity Snapshot<sup>1</sup>

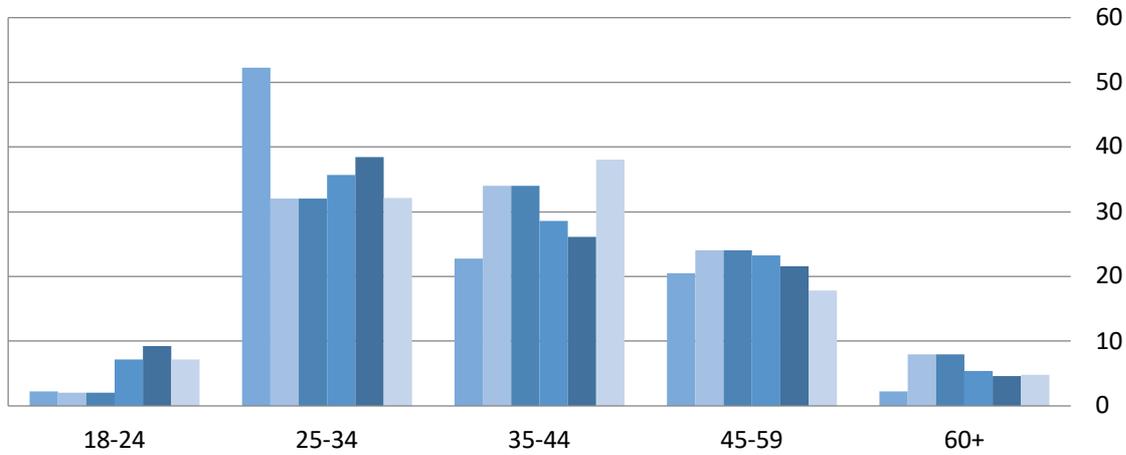


<sup>1</sup> Source: Bridge Housing Annual Report 2019

## Employee age

Employee age distribution (percentage), 2014-19

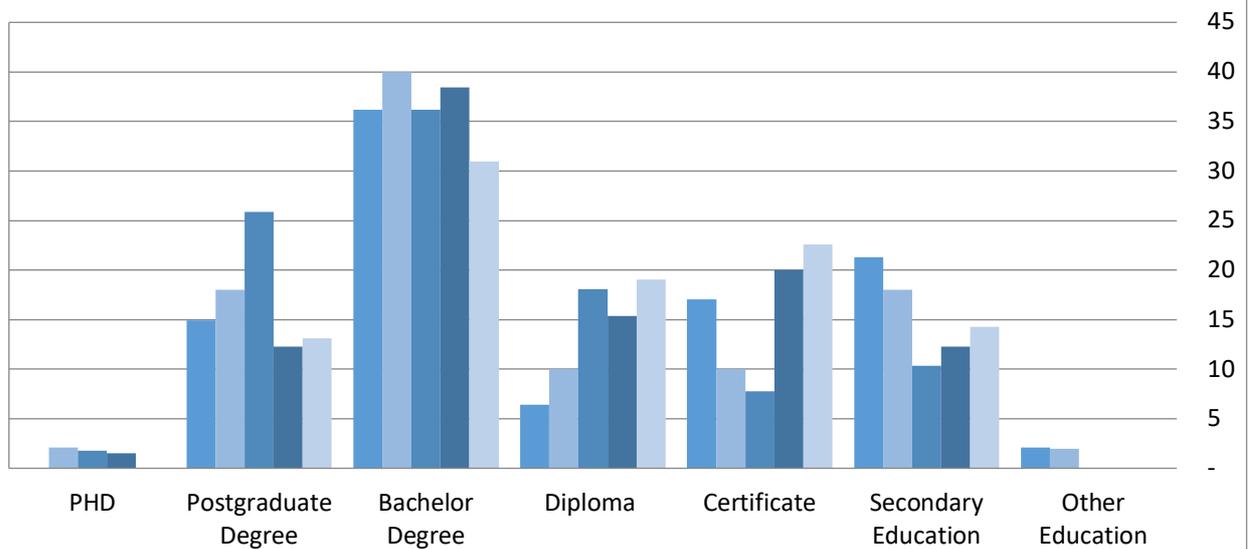
■ 2014 ■ 2015 ■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019



## Education

Level achieved (percentage), 2015-19

■ 2015 ■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019



## What is the difference between diversity, inclusion and equity?

**Diversity** is the term used to describe the differences between people, including their skills, knowledge, experience and perspectives. It can refer to 'social identity' characteristics, such as age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic background.

It can also be used to refer to 'professional identity' characteristics, such as profession, education, work experience and organisational role.

**Inclusion** is the term used to describe circumstances where individuals and groups feel valued, respected and a genuine sense of belonging, and are empowered to contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their workplace and organisation.

**Equity** is the term used to describe an environment where individuals and groups can receive access to the opportunities, networks, resources and supports to help them succeed and thrive in their workplace and organisation and elsewhere in their lives.

## Strategic Objective 1: We demonstrate leadership on diversity and inclusion at all levels of our organisation

### *What we want to achieve*

At Bridge Housing, we know that our commitment to diversity and inclusion is defined by the actions of our leaders. We want our leaders to be confident, informed and supported when it comes to leading on diversity and inclusion initiatives across all areas of our organisation.

To ensure our commitments are realised, we need to ensure that our Executive Team and Senior Management Team have accountabilities and responsibilities under our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and that they feel equipped with the knowledge, skills and tools to make a difference at Bridge Housing and the broader community.

However, we believe that diversity and inclusion is everyone's business. We want every single one of our employees to keep challenging themselves in the way that they think and work – and, ultimately, to play a leadership role in making a difference, no matter where they sit in the organisation.

### *What will we do?*

Focus Area 1: Leadership				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
1.1	<b>Demonstrate Bridge Housing's commitment to the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy's implementation by including relevant actions in Executive Team and Senior Management Team KPIs</b>	Executive Team and Senior Management Team	July	Include relevant actions in Executive Team and Senior Management Team KPIs
1.2	<b>Provide leadership through learning activities, forums and speakers that promote diversity and inclusion</b>	Human Resources and Diversity and Inclusion Committee	Ongoing	Deliver diversity forums, speakers and activities.  Deliver diversity and inclusion modules in leadership programs

Focus Area 2: Education and Training				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
2.1	<b>Deliver diversity and inclusion / 'culture sharing' workshops and refresher training for managers and all staff</b>	Human Resources	Annual	Deliver tailored diversity and inclusion training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander awareness (supported by Bridge Housing's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group)</li> <li>Cultural diversity awareness</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability and mental health issues</li> <li>• Gender equity awareness</li> <li>• LGBTIQI awareness</li> <li>• Unconscious Bias</li> </ul>
2.2	<b>Ensure that diversity and inclusion issues are embedded in new and existing staff training programs</b>	Human Resources	June 2020 June 2021	Diversity and inclusion issues are embedded in new and existing training programs, as required
2.3	<b>Organise regular staff events to raise awareness of contemporary diversity, inclusion and equity issues</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Committee	Ongoing	Coordinate and hold all-staff events in recognition and celebration of Diversity and Inclusion as per <a href="#">Diversity and Inclusion Calendar</a>
2.4	<b>Develop and maintain Diversity and Inclusion Events Calendar</b>	Executive Assistant	June 2020	Develop and maintain a Diversity and Inclusion Events Calendar for staff use

## Strategic Objective 2: We embrace diversity in our workplace

### What we want to achieve

At Bridge Housing, we recognise the importance of building a workplace culture where each and every employee feels included, valued and a sense of belonging. We want the best people working for us in an environment where diversity is celebrated, valued and thriving. We believe that if we get this right, we will be successful in recruiting and retaining people who are passionate and committed to our mission of improving lives through affordable homes and quality services.

In order to retain and enhance our position as a leading employer in the community housing sector, it is crucial that our organisational practices support our ambitions, which are reflected through our diversity targets. This includes the ways in which we identify and engage with people from diverse backgrounds; develop career pathways and opportunities for our current employees; and deliver policies which support flexibility and work-life balance.

Bridge Housing will support diversity and inclusion at every level of the organisation – not just for early career employees but for people in mid-career, middle management and senior management as well. We want our employees to have access to opportunities, resources and support that is renowned as best practice in the not-for-profit sector as a whole.

### What will we do?

Focus Area 3: Diversity Targets				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
3.1	<b>Maintain gender parity on the Bridge Housing Board</b>	Bridge Housing Board	June 2020 June 2021	Equal gender representation on Bridge Housing Board to 2021
3.2	<b>Increase female representation on the Executive Team</b>	CEO	June 2022	Equal gender representation on the Executive Team
3.3	<b>Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed by Bridge Housing</b>	Executive Team and Senior Management Team	June 2022	Maintain the trend growth rate to achieve 3 per cent representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in Bridge Housing by 2021* <i>(*: Based on ABS 2016 Census data – NSW.)</i> Undertake review of potential identified position/s for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3.4	<b>Ensure gender pay equity across all staffing levels of Bridge Housing Diversity and inclusion strategy.</b>	Human Resources	June 2020 June 2021 June 2022	Undertake gender pay equity analysis and measure performance against the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Reporting guidelines

Focus Area 4: Workforce Planning				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
4.1	Undertake a review of our onboarding and induction programs to ensure it reflects Bridge Housing's approach to diversity and inclusion	Human Resources	July 2021	New employees are aware of Bridge Housing's commitment to diversity and inclusion and how they can get involved in our diversity and inclusion initiatives
4.2	Develop and publish an employee remuneration dashboard in Bridge Housing's Annual Report	Payroll Coordinator	June 2020 June 2021 June 2022	Conduct gender pay gap audit and publish in Bridge Housing's Annual Report every year
4.3	Conduct biennial Diversity@YourWork Survey (Diversity Council of Australia) to inform workplace planning	Human Resources	September 2019 September 2021	Diversity @YourWork Survey completed every two years
4.4	Develop and implement Action Plan linked to results from the Employee Opinion Survey and Diversity @YourWork Survey	Diversity and Inclusion Committee	June 2020	Action Plan developed and implemented on an annual basis

Focus Area 5: Career and Leadership Development				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
5.1	Deliver the CareerTrackers internship program	Human Resources	June 2021	Two intakes of interns per annum  Identify potential employment opportunities for CareerTrackers program graduates

Focus Area 6: Policy Development and Review				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
6.1	Undertake a review of the <i>Flexible Work Policy</i>	Human Resources	June 2020	Maintain or improve provisions and resources available to staff through the updated Flexible Work Policy
6.2	Undertake a review of the <i>Parental Leave Policy</i>	Human Resources	June 2021	Maintain or improve provisions and resources available to eligible staff through the updated Parental Leave Policy

## Strategic Objective 3: We share our organisational journey and are accountable for our actions

### *What we want to achieve*

At Bridge Housing, we recognise the value of sharing our organisational journey as we continue to create a more diverse, inclusive and equitable workforce and workplace for each and every one of our employees. We want to be fully accountable to our stakeholders as we celebrate our successes and reflect on where we need to improve our efforts, including the actions we need to take to achieve our objectives. This means that we are committed to reviewing and publically reporting on our progress in completing the actions outlined in our ***Diversity and Inclusion Strategy***.

Over the next three years, we will continue to focus on securing and delivering our governance mechanisms, including our ***Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2022***.

Finally, we want to use our organisational voice to promote and support social initiatives that make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and communities everywhere. Where appropriate, Bridge Housing will actively participate in social advocacy campaigns and government inquiries on diversity and inclusion matters.

### *What will we do?*

Focus Area 7: Governance				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
7.1	<b>Undertake an annual Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Review to monitor progress on targets and completion of actions</b>	Human Resources	June 2021	Review completed and recommendations presented to the Board for consideration by October every year
7.2	<b>Implement new Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2022</b>	Sustainable Communities	June 2022	At least 90 per cent of Reconciliation Action Plan actions achieved within required timeframes
7.3	<b>Investigate accreditation programs relating to LGBTIQI workplace inclusion</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Committee	June 2021	Review Accreditation Programs in Year 2  Secure Accreditation for preferred program in Year 3

Focus area 8: Engaging with our external stakeholders				
Action Number	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measure of success
8.1	<b>Develop and publish an annual Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Progress Report, aligned with ASX Corporate Principles reporting</b>	Human Resources	Annual	Publish data in Annual Report which is aligned with ASX Corporate Principles reporting
8.2	<b>Promote the diversity of Bridge Housing's workforce and initiatives to our stakeholders through external channels</b>	CEO	Ongoing	A minimum of 2 staff videos developed and released annually  Publish articles on social media and Bridge Housing newsletters on a regular basis
8.3	<b>Participate in government inquiries on diversity and inclusion matters relevant to Bridge Housing</b>	CEO	Ongoing	Prepare written submissions in response to government inquiries on diversity and inclusion matters, as required
8.4	<b>Identify and support social advocacy campaigns on diversity and inclusion matters which are aligned with Bridge Housing's mission, vision and values</b>	Executive Team and Senior Management Team	Ongoing	Participation in social advocacy campaigns and promotion on social media as required