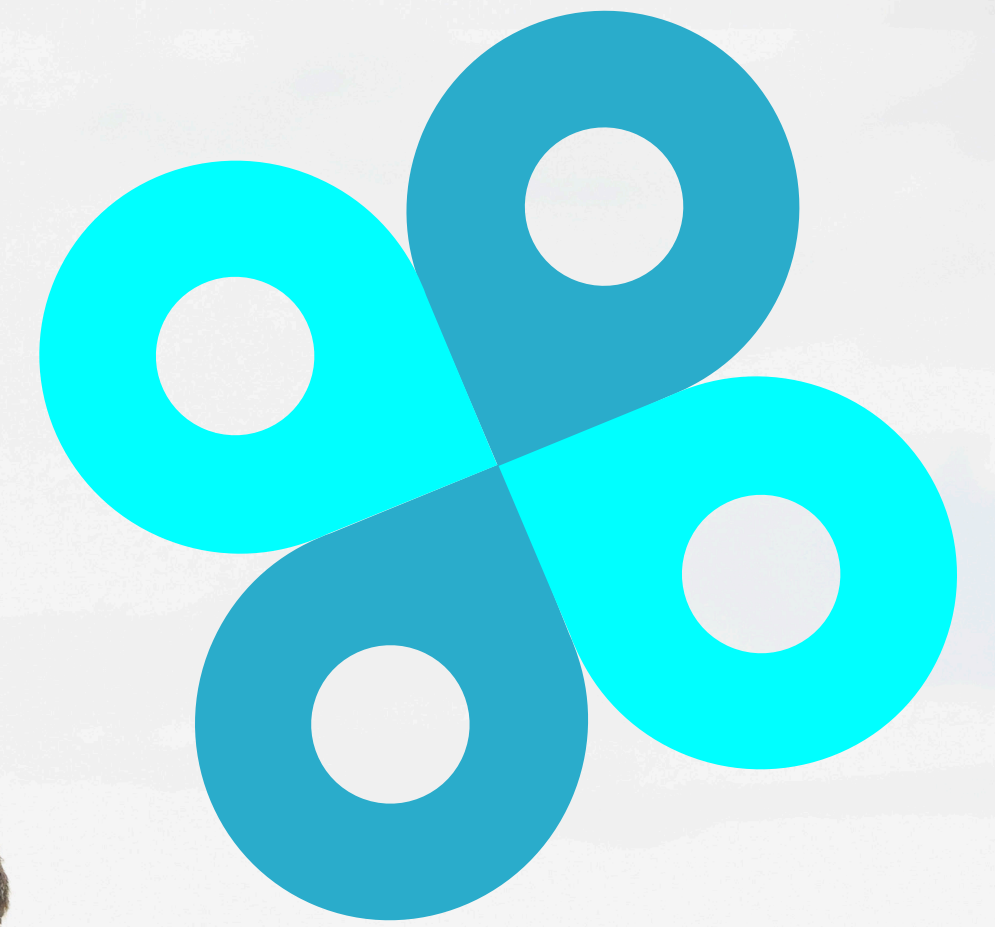


Sydney
WATER

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Plan

2023-2026



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Acknowledgement of Country

Sydney Water respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of Sydney, Illawarra and the Blue Mountains where we work, live and learn.

Their lore, traditions and customs nurtured and continue to nurture the waters (bulingang or saltwater and muulii ngadyuung or sweetwater) in our operating area, creating wellbeing for all. We pay our deepest respect to Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge their deep connections to land and waters. In the spirit of reconciliation, we remain committed to working in partnership with local Traditional Owners to ensure their ongoing contribution to the future of the water management landscape, learning from traditional and contemporary approaches, while respecting their cultural and spiritual connections.



A Message from our Managing Director

Sydney Water is committed to creating an inclusive culture where our employees, customers and community feel connected and sense of belonging.

We will achieve this by seeking to understand diversity of our people and finding better ways to do and be better as an organisation.

It's pleasing to see that our diversity metrics has improved, and we make a commitment to continue to focus on equity and inclusion, not just through the lens of representation, but through tangible improvements to people's lives

We have already achieved several milestones outlined in this 2023-2026 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan.

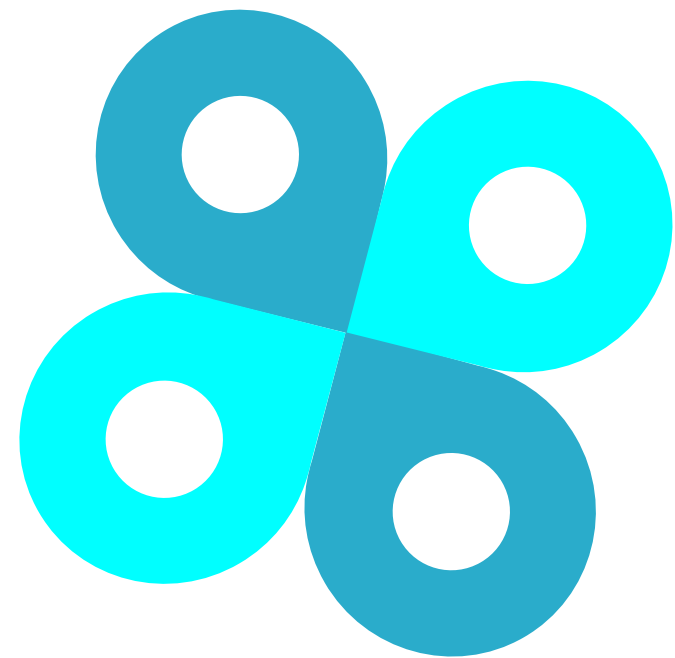
We continue to build on our work improving outcomes for our employees and communities. We commit to our roadmap for developing and maintaining meaningful and respectful relationships across all areas of focus within our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan. Strengthening partnerships and memberships is key to successful implementing this plan and this agility will continue throughout the lifetime of this plan.

I am the proud Executive Sponsor or our Sydney Water Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council and will continue to work with the DEI team and DEI Advisory Council to enable success in creating a better life with world class water services.





About Sydney Water



Sydney Water are proud custodians of Greater Sydney’s essential network of water, wastewater, recycled water and stormwater services, with over 3000 employees across the business. Sydney Water aims for employees and contractors to experience a positive, ethical, inclusive, and contemporary workplace, being empowered to innovate, learn, and deliver for customers.

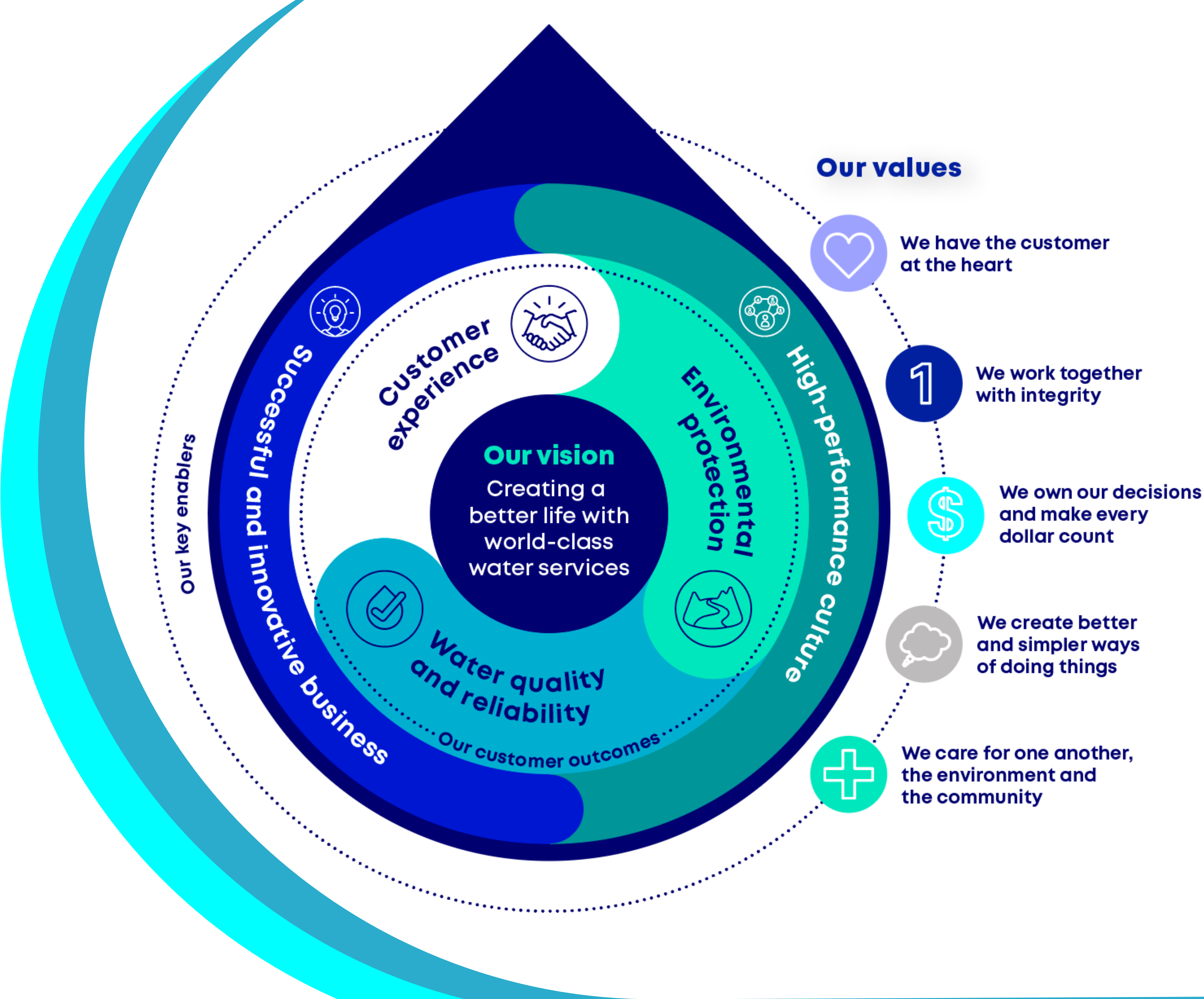
There is a commitment to represent the customer Sydney Water serves and to provide a supportive and inclusive workplace that allows all people to thrive and achieve full potential. Building a diverse and inclusive workforce supports the vision to create a better life with world class water services.

Sydney Water is a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact and have pledged to embody principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption within our strategies, policies and operations. Sydney Water celebrates, supports and continues to build a diverse and inclusive workplace where people have a sense of belonging.

This is who we are at Sydney Water

Our Vision “to create a better life with world class water services”, is the highest goal at Sydney Water and it exists to contribute to making life better for our people, our customers, and our communities. We’re working toward aligning our strategic outcomes to our customer priorities, so we can achieve our vision of creating a better life with world-class water services for our customers.

Our strategic customer outcomes include focusing on the customer experience, and how we can delight our customers, as well as having an innovative approach to our water quality, reliability and environmental protection. To enable these outcomes we strive to create a high performance culture and focus on being a successful and innovative business.



Our customers and community

We deliver our services across Sydney, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains. We're committed to continuing to lead the world in water services as we strive to deliver better outcomes for the community. We can only do this if we have a culture of innovation where ideas and feedback are encouraged, heard and acted upon. To achieve better outcomes for customers, we focus on making a better life for our employees.

Creating better lives for our customers and communities starts with creating better lives for our employees



Make an impact

We're one of the world's top 10 largest water utilities. Our people are passionate about working together to drive innovation, sustainability and exceptional experiences for our customers.



Inclusive and diverse

We are committed to ensuring our culture is inclusive and support First Nations employment, the advancement of women, the LGBTIQ+ community, people with disability and culturally diverse employees.



Benefits

We support our people and their families, no matter what stage of life they're in. We offer many benefits including: fitness passport, carers and parental leave, social networking, hybrid working and more.



We care, we connect, we respect.

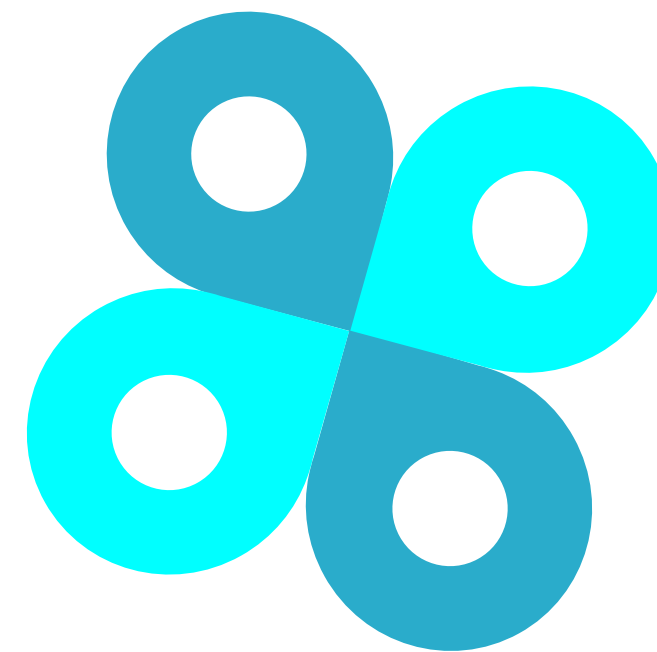
- We invest in research, innovation, and new technologies.
- We deliver work together with integrity and dignity, celebrate success and focus on better ways.
- We care and respect our people, the customers and community we serve, and the environment.
- We support to customers in vulnerable times.
- We protect personal information and privacy.

Our journey towards diversity, equity and inclusion

The global pandemic, social justice movements, corporate social responsibility, and technology have emphasised the importance of personal connection, achieving together, and caring for one another and community. It's crucial to treat people fairly and value them in an equitable environment. Respect is non-negotiable.

A respectful environment empowers people to grow personally and professionally, contributing to us achieving our vision and deliver on successful outcomes for our customers. We want to represent the customers we serve and to do this, we need to understand our organisation's diversity demographic. We know diversity statistics alone won't address systemic challenges related to workplace equity, bias, or exclusionary culture. To understand where to focus, we need to know how we represent in relation to diversity. We refreshed our profile questions so we can get a better picture of our representation.

We undertake annual employee experience surveys to help gauge employee experience and perception. In 2022 we introduced an Inclusion Index as a measure and amended the Index in 2024. Questions reflect our new approach to diversity, equity and inclusion. We focus on building and maintaining an equitable workplace by removing barriers and enabling people to thrive. Enabling people to thrive and a promoting a sense of belonging is vital for creating a better life for our people, customer and community.



Sydney Water's DEI ecosystem

We pride ourselves on aspiring for a culture of accountability, agility, and innovation through levers of safety, inclusion, and learning.

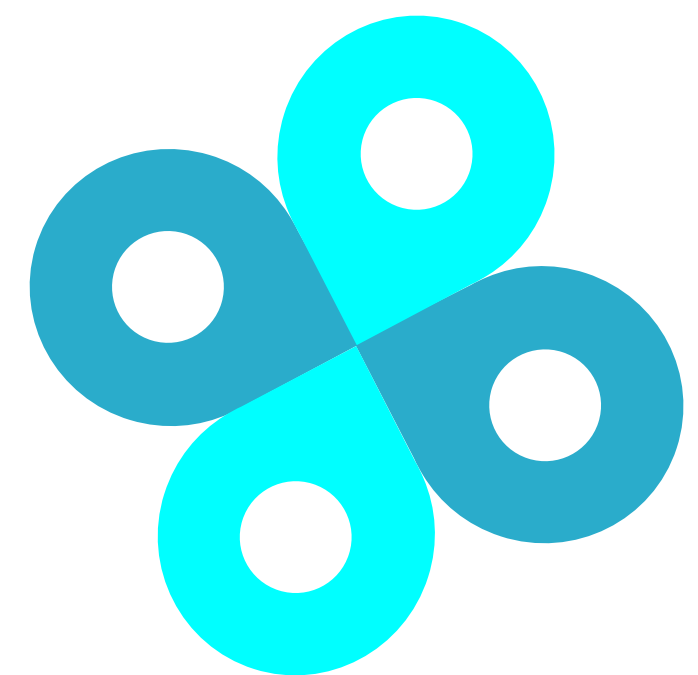
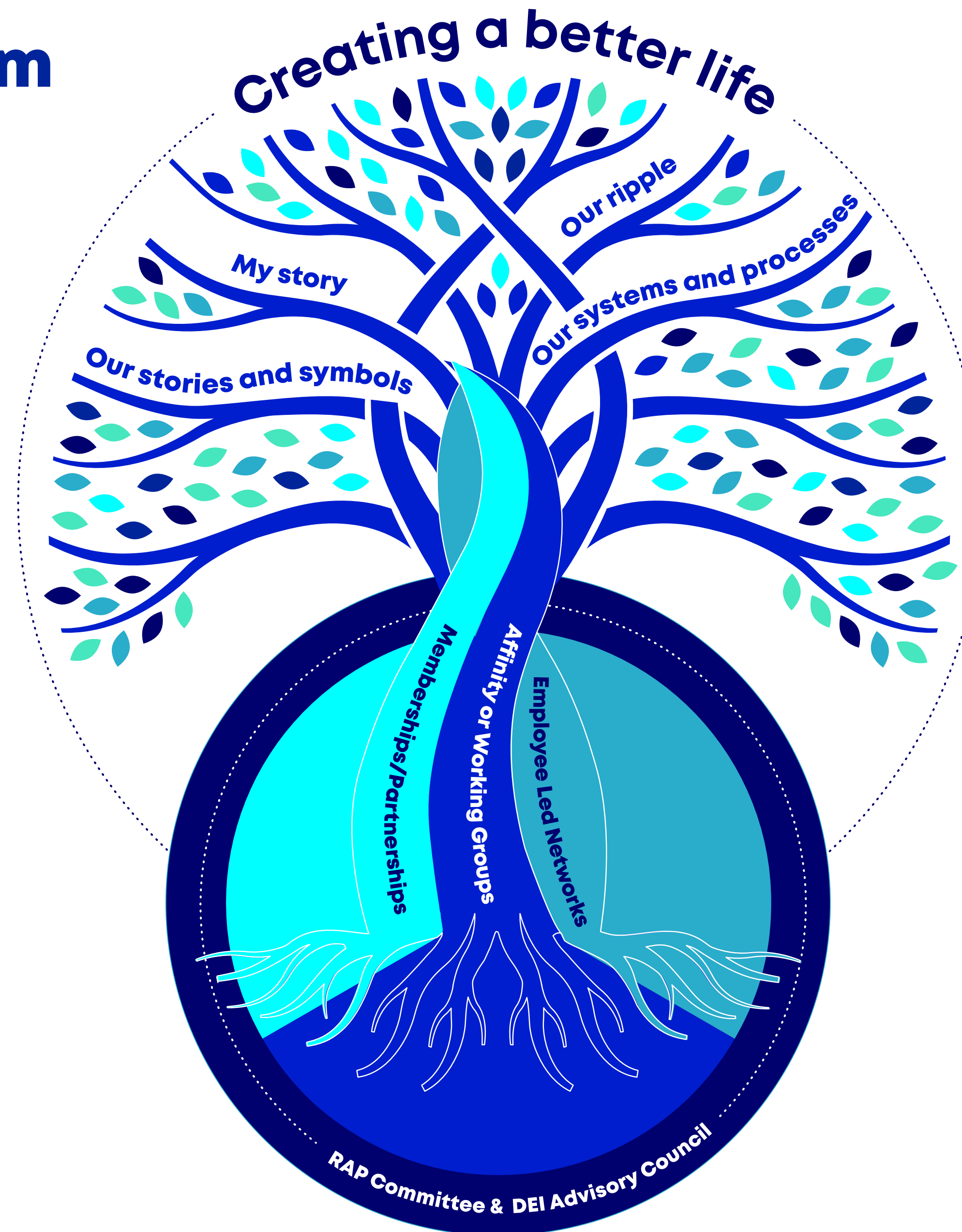
Our culture ecosystem describes the how and what we need to lean into across four aspects and these include:

- **Our stories and symbols**
- **Our systems and processes**
- **Our ripple (we)**
- **My Story (me)**

Our DEI ecosystem is made up of key enablers to support achievement of progression within diversity, equity and inclusion.

Key enablers include but are not limited to our RAP Committee, Advisory Council, Employee Led Networks, Affinity and Working Groups and our External Memberships and Partnerships.

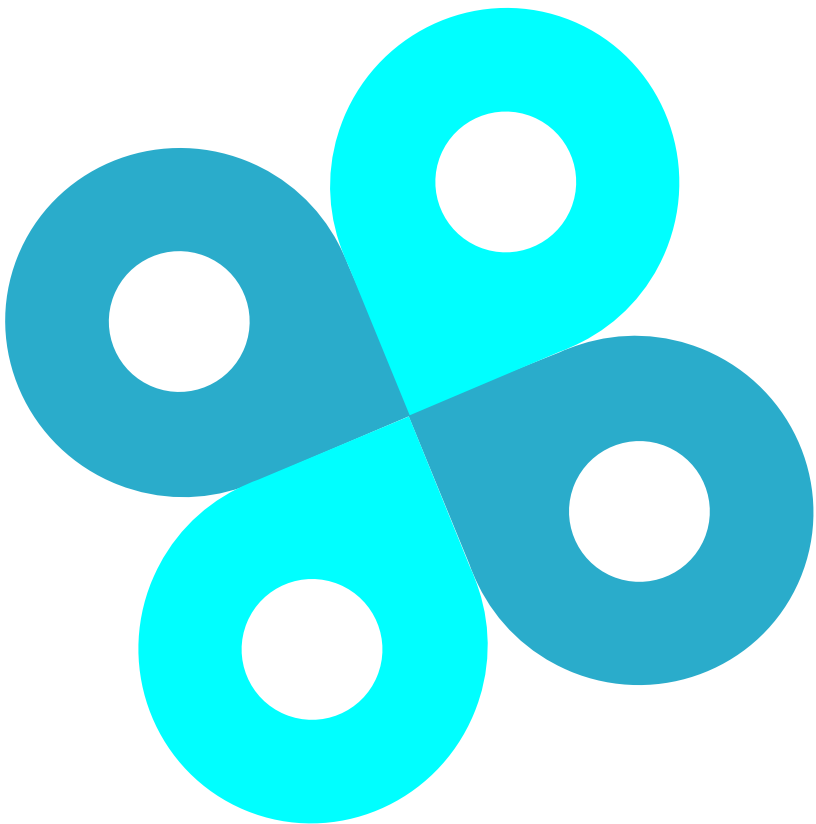
At the core of all work within DEI is the goal to achieve our vision at Sydney Water, to create a better life....



Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Commitment Statement

Creating a better life with world class water services is better achieved together. We understand the many benefits of having a diverse workplace, focusing on equity and inclusion to enable our people, our networks, and communities to thrive. We believe for our cities to thrive our people need to thrive first.

We care, we connect, we respect.



DEI objectives

Promote cultural safety – equity, inclusion and belonging is everyone’s business

Foster a sense of community where our people are respected, are connected and belong

Advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion so our people can contribute, feel valued and thrive

Embrace difference and a culture that is free from any form of discrimination or harassment

Continuously improve diversity representation to enable better outcomes for the community

Definitions

Diversity

Reflects difference between people represented at Sydney Water. It can include but is not limited to different thinking, different appearance, race, gender, neurodiversity and invisible and visible disability.

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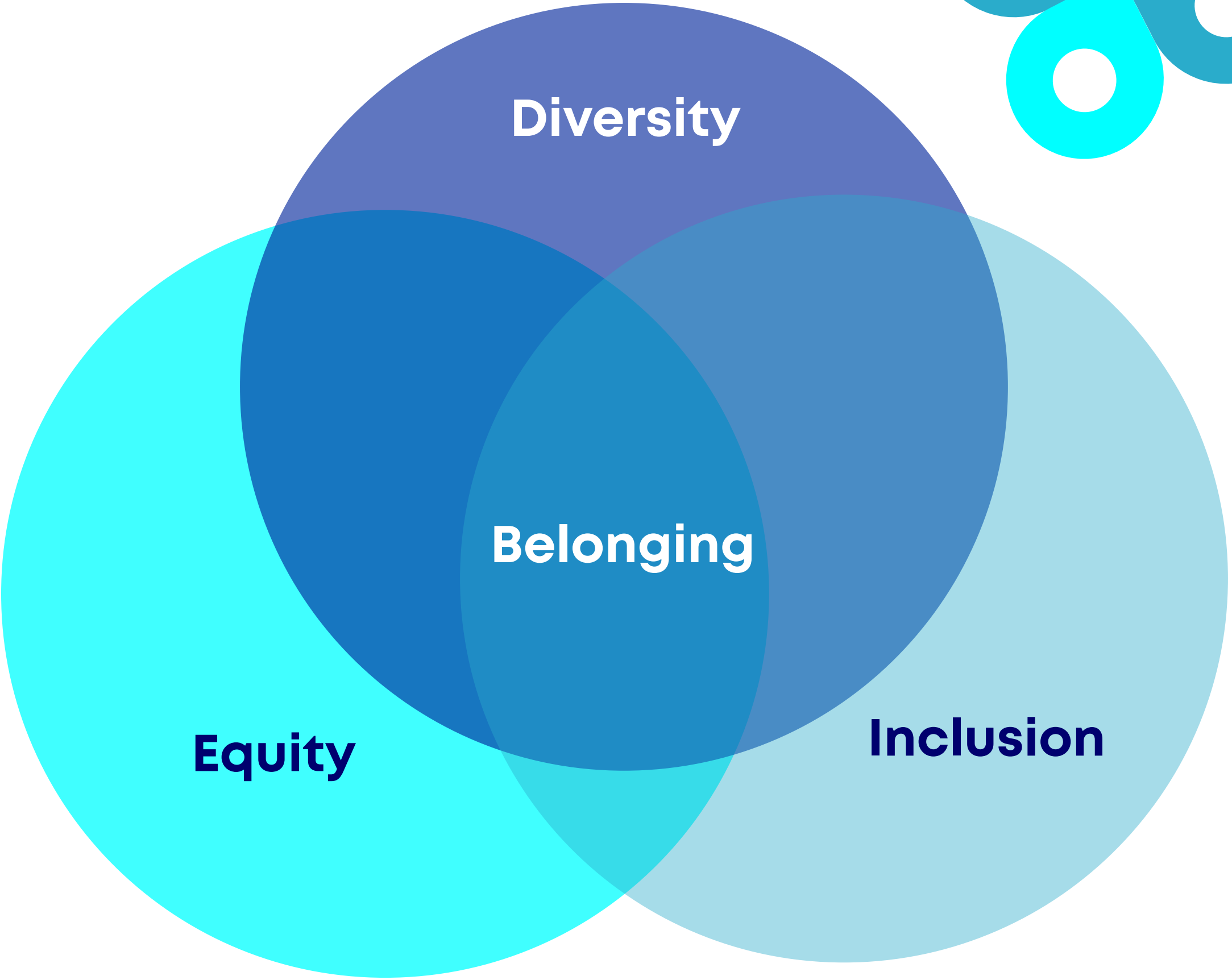
Equity

Is about enabling opportunity by removing barriers for people to thrive, by making adjustments and giving people what is needed to mitigate or eliminate social inequities at Sydney Water and beyond.

.....

Inclusion

Is when people are respected and connected, feel safe to engage, encouraged to contribute and assured voice and perspective is valued and is heard.



“Individually we are one drop, together we are an ocean”

Our pillars and areas of focus



Our Foundations

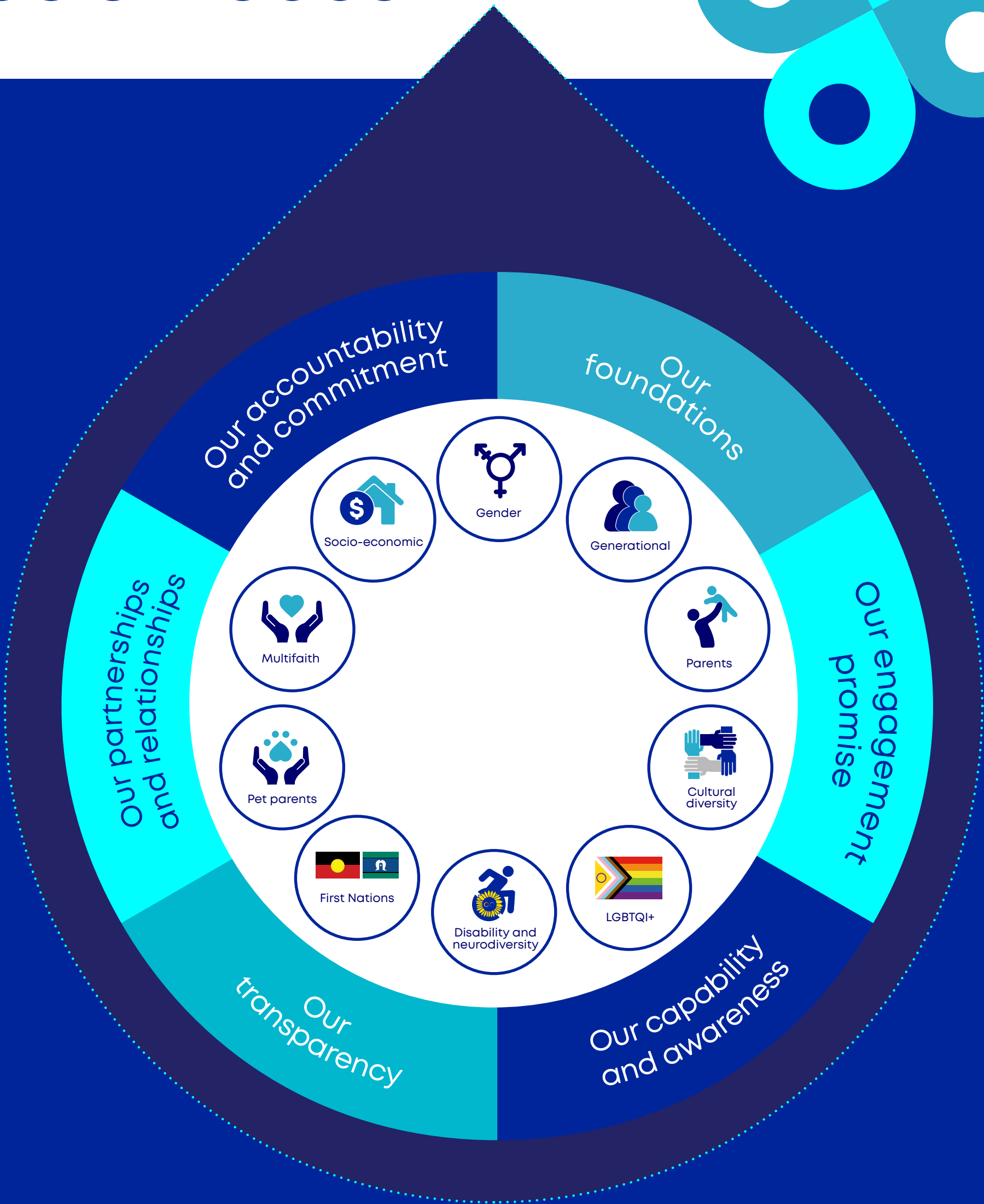
- be BOLD and intentional
- strengthen our foundations
- share stories and lived experience
- explore “why” about focus on DEI
- identify barriers within talent and sourcing, performance, and career progression

Our Engagement Promise

- provide safe space for sharing stories
- learn from lived experience and implement change around improvement opportunities
- implement various channels for sharing information and communication
- encourage a culture of allyship

Our Capability and Awareness

- raise awareness and increase knowledge at all levels of the organisation about DEI
- provide insight into programs that can uplift leadership capability
- contribute to building on and developing our employee talent pipelines through leadership



Our Authenticity and Transparency

- review metrics and improve data collection
- review targets and aspirations
- share and encourage sharing of our aspirations
- report on and share achievements and learning internally and externally

Our Partnerships and Relationships

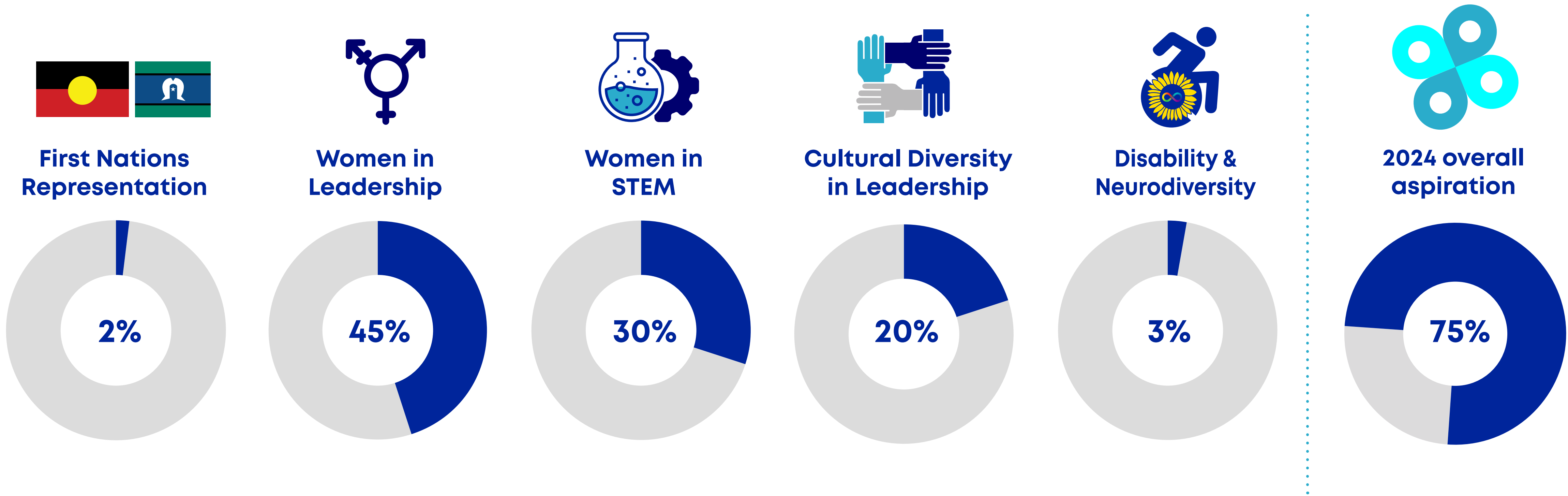
- develop new and build on existing: community, industry bodies, RTO's, and pipeline agencies
- leverage from partnerships to gain up to date knowledge around good practice
- maximise outputs from partnerships and relationships, knowledge, and expertise

Our Accountability and Commitment

- benchmark our organisation against others through partnerships and memberships
- Seek feedback, review and take action
- challenge the status quo
- engage with leaders and inspire engagement and accountability
- embed DEI into our DNA

Our aspirations

Our Diversity Index is a measure of representation across diverse groups within our organisation and we want to reflect the community we serve. All five focus areas within this Index are weighted at 20%, making a total of 100%.



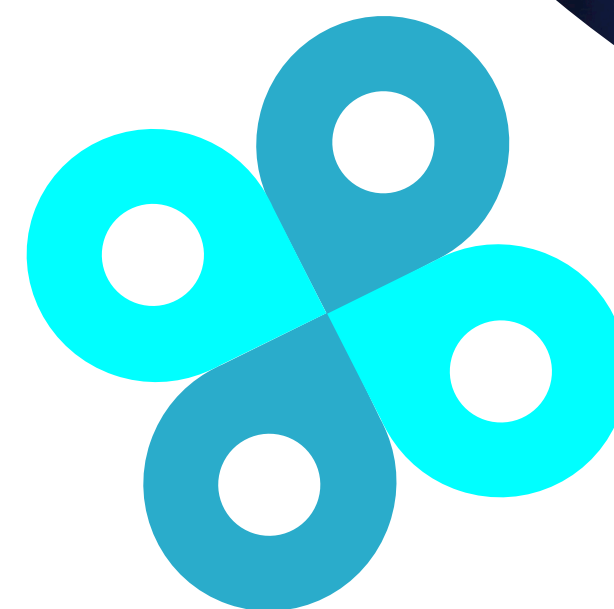
The role of psychological safety in our approach to diversity, equity and inclusion

Psychological safety is an enabler for a culture where people feel safe to be their authentic self. If it is not present, there can be a risk of people feeling excluded. People may socially withdraw, withhold information or ideas and solutions that can contribute to achieve the vision of creating a better life with world-class water services.

People do not share their diversity information sometimes due to risk of judgement and discrimination. In psychologically safe teams, team members feel accepted and respected, and believe it is safe to openly share background, experiences, feelings, and beliefs. Creating conditions where people can be themselves will influence sense of belonging and inclusion.

An inclusive environment will stimulate innovation and contribute to building cohesive and collaborative teams. Collaborative teams come in many forms and at Sydney Water, we encourage engagement through employee led networks.

Networks promote psychologically safe spaces so employees can connect openly, contribute to, and enable a learning culture. Psychological safety is not the goal alone, but a means to achieve a high-performance culture and create a better life with world-class water services.



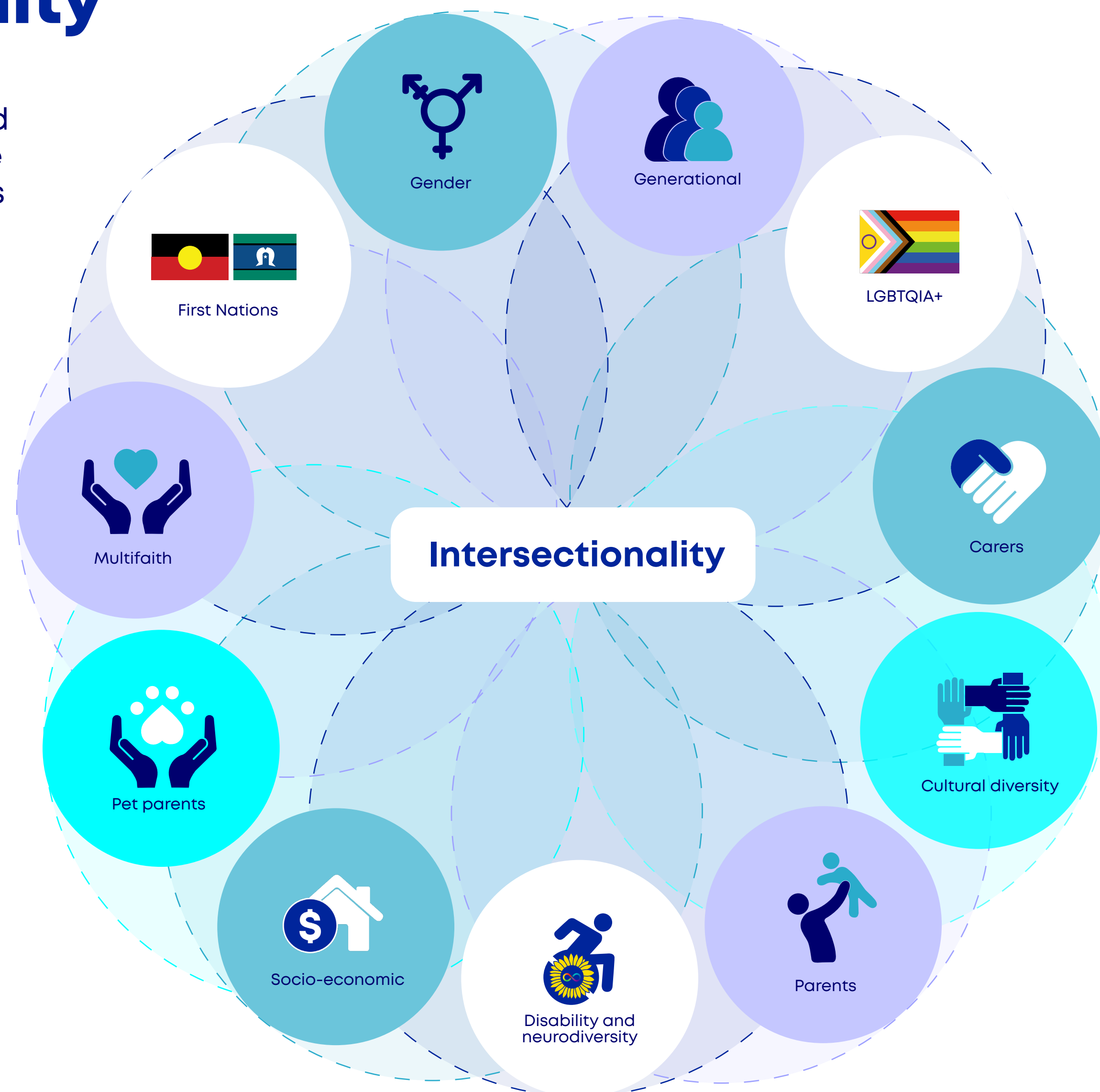
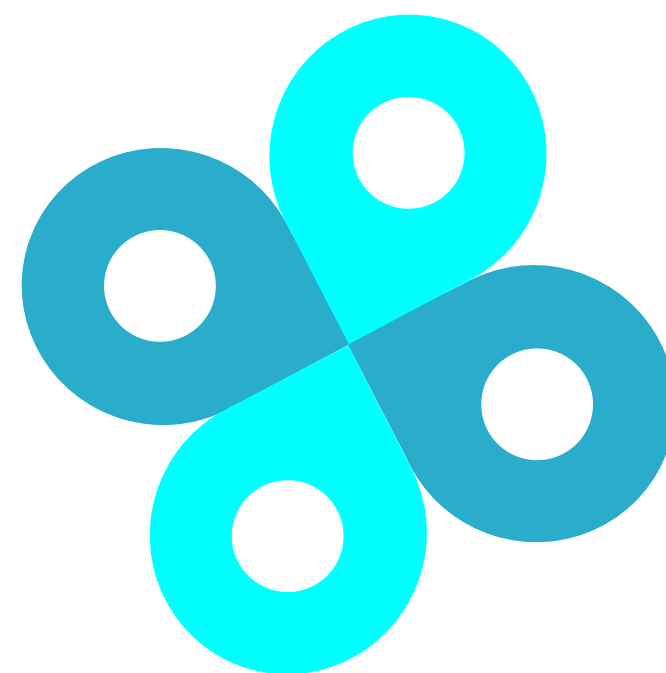
The importance of intersectionality

Intersectionality describes a combination of diversities and/or characteristics that may increase privilege or risk of marginalisation and discrimination due to social inequities. We acknowledge the importance of reducing risk through systemic changes and learning through the lens of lived experience, so we are an equitable and inclusive workplace.

It is important to take an intersectional approach when designing, delivering, and evaluating diversity, equity and inclusion within workplace initiatives and activities to the impact any compounding factors on employees. We aim to foster an environment where all employees have equitable opportunities and are treated with respect and impartiality, regardless of their age, gender, race, sexual orientation and cultural diversity.

This includes making decisions regarding:

- recruitment and selection
- internal promotion and remuneration reviews
- performance management
- education, training, and development
- career advancement
- flexibility
- accessibility
- policies and procedures.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion focus areas



First Nations peoples and procurement inclusion

Sydney Water launched its Innovate level Reconciliation Action Plan in July 2021 – this was a pivotal point in our reconciliation journey which began in 2018 with the formation of a small committee of dedicated employees. This group championed the early development of our RAP and then changes in the organisation, shifting momentum.

Some achievement since our RAP was established include:

- a self-paced customised cultural awareness training module, co-designed with Pindara Training – an Aboriginal owned company
- Traineeship Program - established pathway for First Nations trainees
- Aboriginal Procurement Participation Plan - to promote greater engagement and targeted spend with First Nations businesses
- First Nations employee network - launched April 2022, to create a safe forum for First Nations employees to increase awareness, improve relationships, and share challenges and opportunities
- Partnerships with First Nations employment and recruitment agencies
- We will continue to build on the Reconciliation Action Plan with the aim of greater alignment to our organisation strategy. Our RAP will be a roadmap for developing and maintaining meaningful and respectful relationships with First Nations peoples



**First Nations Employee
Networking event and
smoking ceremony with
Uncle Ivan**

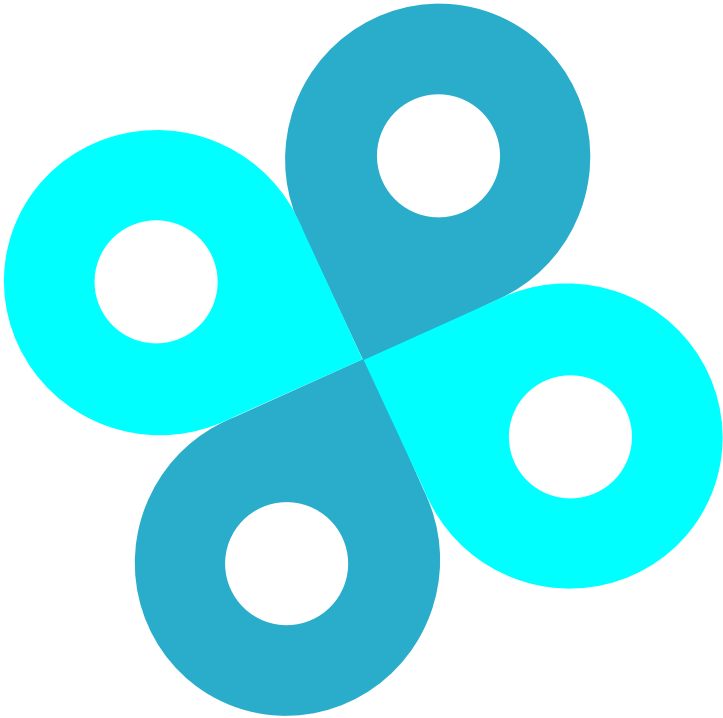
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion focus areas



Cultural diversity inclusion

Greater Sydney is home to people with multicultural, multilingual and multiracial backgrounds and this diversity brings a wide array of skills, languages, cultures and experiences, providing valuable benefits. We’re proud of our cultural diversity and acknowledge and celebrate through internal events such as Lunar New Year, Diwali and other culturally significant diversity days.

One of our top 3 priorities within our DEI plan is cultural diversity in leadership. Between 2023-2026, Sydney Water will be working with customers, community and employees to understand challenges and opportunities to support our people to thrive.



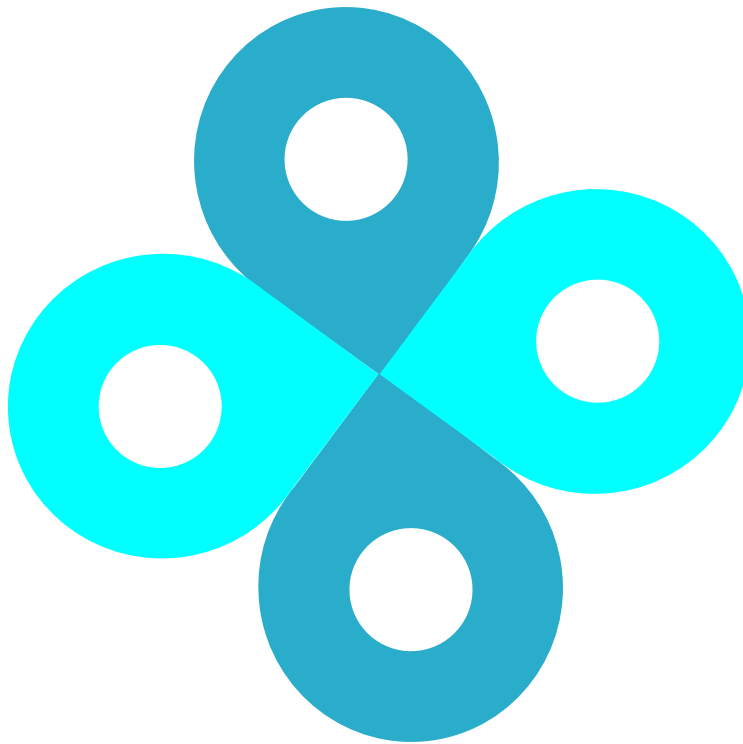
Sydney Water
Diwali event

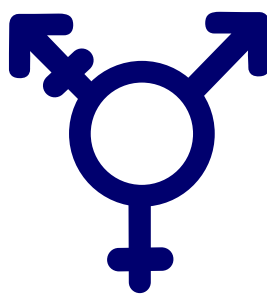
 People with disability and neurodiversity inclusion

In 2022, Sydney Water recognised Neurodiversity Week for the first time. The goal was to raise awareness about neurodiversity and highlight the valuable contributions that neurodivergent individuals bring to our organisation.

In 2023, consultations were held with employees who had direct or indirect experience with disability and neurodiversity. These discussions revealed a strong interest among employees in forming a disability and neurodiversity employee led network. In November 2023, the network was officially launched, with an executive sponsor.

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing neurodiversity and disability inclusion, we will continue to explore partnerships and memberships to ensure we receive tailored, expert guidance.





Gender inclusion

In recent years, efforts have centred around promoting female participation, decreasing the gender pay gap and increasing women’s participation in leadership and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) roles. Our current focus is specifically on women in leadership and women in STEM roles. Initiatives are delivered through significant days such as Women in Engineering and International Women’s Day as well as other strategic efforts outlined in our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan.

Women of Water (WoW) was relaunched in July 2022, with an Executive Sponsor. WoW provides a platform for women and allies to connect, collaborate, and broaden professional networks. Members are encouraged to share knowledge and stories about their successes and learnings. Additionally, a WoW Committee was established in 2022 to facilitate activities, provide support to members, and drive inclusion initiatives that empower women to thrive.



Female staff at Sydney Water’s Malabar site

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion focus areas



LGBTQI+ inclusion

Sydney Water’s Pride Network formed in 2020 and in late 2020, a committee was formed to formalise the group. The network’s mission is to increase LGBTQI+ inclusion by:

- raising awareness
- increasing visibility
- advocating for change
- improving sense of belonging for LGBTQI+ people and allies

The Pride Network is advancing its mission through promoting and delivering events, increasing social networks, and coordinating training and awareness. The Pride Network is a voice for LGBTQI+ inclusion and provides insight for policies, procedures and frameworks through a rainbow lens. In 2022, we participated in the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) and survey.

The AWEI is a definitive national benchmark of LGBTQIA+ workplace inclusion. In 2023, the Pride Network facilitated and led involvement in WorldPride, and Sydney Water joined the Welcome Here project, as an organisation that supports a safe, and inclusive of LGBTQI+ people.



Staff painting a reservoir wall for World Pride 2023

2023-2026 DEI Plan

Our Foundations	Our Engagement Promise	Our Accountability	Our Capability and Awareness	Our Authenticity and Transparency	Partnerships and Relationships
Develop a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) policy, statement, and objectives	Develop calender of significant days to recognise and celebrate diverse representation	Develop and launch a framework around leadership actions using shared goals	Develop monthly schedule for DEI fact sheets	Develop a framework and scorecard for tracking and reporting on DEI Metrics	Develop a First Nations procurement guide and collaborate with Supply Nation and NSWICC to educate on Procurement targets
Develop Inclusion Plans across DEI areas of focus	Develop a DEI Hub (SharePoint site)	Identify and explore roles across Sydney Water and target under-represented areas of focus	Facilitate, develop and/or support delivery of Link to Learn sessions across areas of focus within the DEI Plan	Communicate and publish aspirations and achievements of employees across focus areas	Review partnerships and memberships and explore new opportunities across the DEI focus areas
Contribute to a review of policy, processes and systems through an equity and inclusion lens	Develop information packs, pre and post a period of parental leave	Review existing and/or collaborate to support introduction of new structures for diverse hires	Review onboarding metrics, talent management and career progression metrics – collaborate to address improvement opportunities	Review and identify improvement opportunities to enable a more equitable and inclusive recruitment process	Enable engagement with external community agencies and organisations i.e. career days, community education, cultural events
Review and modify corporate induction to reiterate our commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce	Schedule Listening Circles to receive feedback and lived experience stories from a diversity lens	Report on aspirations and progress within Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Indices	Contribute to the development and implementation of a talent management and succession planning framework	Collaborate with internal business groups to develop tailored targets, tactical plans and initiatives	Collaborate internally to forge partnerships with schools, TAFENSW and universities to build networks
Take part in DCA's Inclusive Employer program Index to benchmark progress across leading DEI employers	Influence and implement change, as appropriate using insight from Listening Circles around lived experiences of diverse groups	Report on progress through monthly, quarterly or annual reporting	Develop and implement second iteration of Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Innovate RAP (2024-2026)	Explore appetite and support establishment of Employee Led Networks across areas of focus for DEI	Establish a DEI Community of Practice, consisting of membership from each ELN's, Comiittees and Council
Adopt recommendations from self assessment of the Inclusive Australia's Diversity Workforce Diagnostic Tool	Review and contribute to improvements in talent and sourcing	Ensure DEI goals exist within to executive and senior leadership goals	Continue to contribute to building a talent pipeline at entry level programs that align to our areas of focus within the DEI Plan	Conduct benchmark surveys though partnerships, memberships and collaborate internally to influence change	Engage with external partners and relationships to raise public profile and to reach new candidates across diverse focus areas
Analyse the WGEA reporting data and develop and implement innovative programs and initiatives	Implement a People Library with the DEI Hub for employees to share stories and learn from other's lived experience	On an ongoing basis, DEI Team will track progress within the DEI Plan, will be agile to achieve better outcomes for community, customer and people	Develop, deliver and review information sessions across sites in relation to Reconciliation at Sydney Water	Report on progress within the DEI Plan through our Annual Report to provide public access from our website	Explore 10-year partnership with Career Trackers, providing a pathway into the Graduate program
Identify and implement programs for talent retention and capability growth for employees	Develop a series of articles and podcasts to reflect 'the stories we tell is the culture we create'	Introduce monthly reporting of subcontractor spend with all of our large suppliers within First Nations area of focus (e.g. RDCs, major projects, IT etc)	Source and seek endorsement for inclusive and reverse mentoring programs (intersectional lens)	Develop visible scorecard to tell the story of DEI at Sydney Water	In line with NSW government requirements, introduce contractual obligations in contracts over \$7.5m for 3% first nations participation.

We're proud to be associated with:

- Australian Disability Network (ADN)
- Changing Places Group
- Diversity Council of Australia (DCA)
- Family Friendly Workplaces (FFW)
- JobAccess
- Jobsupport
- KARI Foundation
- National Association of Women in Operations (NAWO)
- NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce (NSWICC)
- Pride in Diversity (PiD)
- Supply Nation
- WaterAble
- Welcome Here Project
- WORK180

A message from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team

We would like to thank all of our DEI Ecosystem at Sydney Water for supporting and contributing to the delivery of this plan. We have our committees and council, our employee led networks, affinity groups and working groups that we have mentioned throughout this plan and this would not be successful without their input.

As part of our ecosystem, all of these enablers make a meaningful difference for our people and play a major role in progressing our aspirations in diversity, equity and inclusion along with our vision, to create a better life with world class water services.

Thank you all, from your DEI team

Bec Mede, Manager, Diversity & Inclusion

