



NDIS Quality  
and Safeguards  
Commission

# Community Engagement Payment Policy

Payment to individuals and  
organisations

Version 1.0 (October 2024)



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## 1. Guiding principles

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) is committed to engaging with people with lived experience of disability and other members of the community in its work. We also want to make sure that cost is not a barrier to engaging with us.

The individual and collective expertise of people with lived experience of disability plays a vital role in helping achieve better outcomes for all.

We are guided by our purpose and vision when we engage with members of the community:

- **Our purpose:** To uphold the rights of NDIS participants, to elevate quality and safety and enable consumer independence.
- **Our vision:** That people with disability achieve their aspirations.

The NDIS Commission has developed this policy with a sustainable, affordable and ethical approach that is consistent with other Australian Government agencies.

## 2. Purpose of the policy

The Community Engagement Payment Policy (the Policy) explains payment to individuals and organisations who engage in its consultation, research, co-design and other collaborative activities.

The Policy also has guidance to make sure those participating in activities are fairly compensated for their contribution.

The Policy applies as of 1 October 2024.

## 3. Audience

This Policy is for:

- NDIS Commission employees, contractors and volunteers involved in co-design, collaboration and consultation activities.
- NDIS participants and their supporters, and members of the disability community who contribute to co-design, collaboration and consultation activities conducted by the NDIS Commission.

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## 4. Definitions

- **Paid participation:** payment to an individual or organisation invited by the NDIS Commission to contribute expertise to an activity, such as a committee (ongoing and non-ongoing), advisory group, specific initiative or project.
- **Contribution:** sharing knowledge, expertise, experience and access to both disability information and stakeholder networks provided by the participating individual or organisational representative.
- **Specific, time-limited project:** a committee, advisory group, specific initiative or project that has a stated purpose and timeframes for completion.

## 5. Eligibility

This Policy applies to individuals or organisations invited by the NDIS Commission to contribute their expertise and/or lived experience in these ways:

- Non-ongoing: a specific, time-limited project
- Ongoing: for a longer-term work including the NDIS Commission's Consultative Committee or one of its sub committees also known as advisory groups.

Individuals under 18 years old are eligible if they have a parent, legal guardian or carer's approval to participate and receive payment.

NDIS Commission employees and contractors, and Australian Public Service and State/Territory public service employees, are **not eligible** for payment.

## 6. Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is when someone participating in an engagement activity has a connection to a third party that might influence their contribution. The conflict can be actual or perceived.

This may include employment arrangements, personal or business interests, and/or social and personal relationships.

Family members, friends or close associates of NDIS Commission employees can participate in engagement activities as long as they share information about this potential conflict of interest.

An NDIS Commission employee must not stay involved in an activity if their family member, friend or close associate is participating.

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## 7. Engagement activities

### 7.1. Invitation to engage

Individuals or organisations are invited by the NDIS Commission to contribute their expertise and experience to an activity. This could be a committee, advisory group, specific initiative or project, and may include face-to-face forums, teleconferences, videoconferences, online meetings, and/or written feedback addressing specific questions asked by the NDIS Commission.

The invitation will explain:

- if the activity is a paid participation opportunity
- the format of the activity
- estimated time commitment required
- required outcomes
- if this Policy applies, and how the NDIS Commission will pay contributors
- whether participation in the activity is optional
- cancellation terms for the activity.

The NDIS Commission may collect (with permission) the details of individuals interested in taking part in future engagement activities.

### 7.2. Types of engagement activities

- Periodic meetings, such as the Consultative Committee and its advisory groups
- One-on-one interviews
- One-off or short series of focus groups or workshops
- Time-limited contribution to a project or informal working group
- Research activities
- Photo and/or video shoots
- Presenting and/or participating in a panel at an official NDIS Commission event (internal and external).

The Policy does not apply to activities that do not meet the definition of paid engagement activities.

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### 7.3. Unpaid activities

If an activity is unpaid, the invitation will include this information to help the individual make an informed decision about volunteering their time.

Activities that are **not eligible for payment** include:

- invitations to attend NDIS Commission public forums or presentations
- completing public online or telephone surveys
- general informal discussions with NDIS Commission staff
- where an individual or organisation is contracted to provide advice to and/or facilitate activities for the NDIS Commission
- unsolicited advice and/or personal stories.

### 7.4. Selecting people for paid activities

When planning paid engagement activities, the NDIS Commission looks for NDIS participants and other members of the community who have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to contribute.

We leverage existing networks and relationships with:

- community groups
- disability representative organisations (DROs)
- disability advocates
- peak bodies or other organisations.

We also find relevant contributors through NDIS Commission-led committees and/or consultative groups, internal staff networks and other connections of NDIS Commission employees.

The NDIS Commission uses a variety of channels to find relevant people to engage in activities, aiming to represent the diversity of the wider community.

Individuals and organisations may be invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the activity, which will include important information such as the format of the activity, expected time commitment and whether it is a paid activity. All selection processes will be compliant with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

### 7.5. Accessibility

The NDIS Commission is committed to reducing barriers to participation for people with lived experience of disability. We will take steps to make sure activities are accessible, including meeting locations and materials provided. If an individual has specific access needs, they can contact the NDIS Commission on the phone number or email address provided in the invitation to discuss their requirements.

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## 8. Payment

If an individual or organisation **does not want to be paid or reimbursed**, they can notify the NDIS Commission either in writing or verbally (to be recorded by the NDIS Commission).

If an individual is participating on behalf of an organisation, group or committee, the NDIS Commission will pay the organisation, group or committee, unless advised otherwise. If the individual is acting on behalf of the disability organisation, group or committee in a paid capacity, or engaging in an activity for which the entity receives Commonwealth funding, then payment may not apply (however, participants may be eligible for reimbursement of expenses). This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Participating in engagement activities is voluntary and payment for this **does not make the NDIS Commission the person's employer**. All payments will be made direct into the individual or organisation's bank account.

## 9. Types of payments

### 9.1. Payment for your time

Payment is calculated according to the latest Australian Government's [Remuneration Tribunal \(Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Office\) Determination](#) (Determination): Section 12 Table 2A. For completeness, you are not considered a part time officer of the Commonwealth/an employee for the purposes of the Determination.

### 9.2. Out-of-Pocket Expenses

Out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed if they are considered necessary and reasonable by the NDIS Commission and represent value for money. The NDIS Commission must be informed in advance of expected out-of-pocket expenses.

The NDIS Commission may cover out-of-pocket expenses including:

- flights
- transport
- parking
- meals
- accommodation.

Where a member/person with disability needs to travel with a support person, that support person may also be entitled to reimbursement of their airfare and a travel allowance in accordance with the above principles.

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## 9.3. Expenses not eligible for reimbursement

Expenses incurred as a result of personal discretion that fall outside of the agreed engagement activity will not be reimbursed unless agreed to in writing prior. In addition to these identifies above the following are examples of expenses that will not be reimbursed:

- Tips and gratuities;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Food and drinks consumed in private/ personal social settings;
- Fines and infringements; and
- Printing and other preparation materials (office equipment etc.).

## 9.4. Expenses eligible for reimbursement

### 9.4.1. Accommodation and meals

Where attendance at in-person meeting requires accommodation overnight and meals, it is calculated at the rate of the latest [Remuneration Tribunal \(Official Travel\) Determination](#): Part 4 Division 2 and Part 6 Tier 3 of the latest Australian Government's Remuneration Tribunal Official Travel Determination Remuneration Tribunal (Official Travel) Determination 2023.

Reimbursement cannot be paid where an allowance for the same trip is paid through another source.

### 9.4.2. Flights

Economy airfares (return) must be booked at the lowest practical fare and using the most direct route from the person's place of residence/work to the engagement location. The NDIS Commission will not pay for any kind of airline lounge membership/access, travel insurance or missed flights.

Requests to be exempted from travelling economy may be made for people with disability whose disability requires them to travel in a higher class.

Where a person with disability needs to travel with a support person, that support person may also be entitled to reimbursement of their airfare and a travel allowance in accordance with the above principles.

### 9.4.3. Transport

If private travel is used to travel to an engagement activity, payment will be calculated at the rate of the latest [Remuneration Tribunal \(Official Travel\) Determination](#)[file:///prinfnas002n/Users/SM0233/My Documents/Engagement/Remuneration policy/Remuneration Tribunal \(Official Travel\) Determination 2023 | Remuneration Tribunal \(remtribunal.gov.au\): Part 5, Section 26, Sub-section 3](file:///prinfnas002n/Users/SM0233/My%20Documents/Engagement/Remuneration%20policy/Remuneration%20Tribunal%20(Official%20Travel)%20Determination%202023%20|%20Remuneration%20Tribunal%20(remtribunal.gov.au):%20Part%205,%20Section%2026,%20Sub-section%203). Any private vehicle used for this purpose must be comprehensively insured.



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Travel costs (taxi, public transport) may only be claimed when the engagement is face-to-face and should be the lowest practicable fare, taking into account reasonable adjustments to support disability requirements.

## 10. Receiving payments

- The NDIS Commission will clearly explain the process of how a payment and/or reimbursement will be made in the invitation to participate
- To receive payment, individuals or organisations are required to have a bank account, provide their Tax File Number and superannuation account details. Individuals or organisations should make sure they are aware of their legal obligations and understand if they need to report payments from the NDIS Commission to relevant government departments, such as Centrelink or the Australian Taxation Office.

## 11. Participation fees

Participation fees are calculated in accordance with a [Remuneration Tribunal Determination](#). To receive payment, individuals or organisations must have a bank account into which payment will be made.

To enable payment to your nominated bank account and superannuation account, you will need to complete the following forms:

If you have an ABN, you need to complete the following forms:

- Business and/or Personal Details and Engagement
- Declaration of Confidentiality form
- Super choice form
- TFN declaration.

If you do not have an ABN, you need to complete the following forms:

- Personal Details and Engagement
- Declaration of Confidentiality form
- Super choice form
- TFN declaration.

Bank account details must be provided for payment of participation fees as no other payment methods will be considered.

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## 11.1. Superannuation

The NDIS Commission is required to pay you superannuation (super) contributions in accordance with the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992 (SGA Act)*. Effective 1 July 2022, employers are required to make super contributions for all their employees (independent contractors are employees for superannuation guarantee purposes only) regardless of how much they earn.

## 12. Cancellations

If an engagement activity is cancelled or postponed, reimbursement may be available for any reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses already paid for. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## Document information

### Document owner

Communications team

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