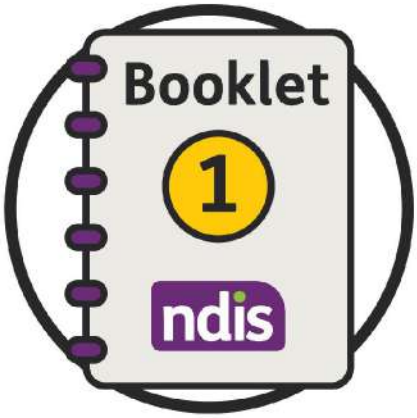




Applying for the NDIS

Booklet 1 of 3

Easy Read version



ndis

ndis.gov.au



ndis.gov.au

How to use this booklet



The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) wrote this booklet. When you see the word ‘we’, it means the NDIA.



We wrote this booklet in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

Not bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 54.

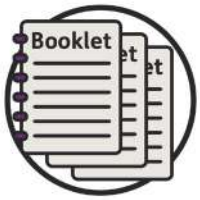


This Easy Read booklet is a summary

of another booklet.



You can ask for help to read this booklet.
A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



There are 3 booklets that all work together.



Booklet 1 explains how to apply for the NDIS.



Booklet 2 explains how to make an NDIS plan.



Booklet 3 explains how to use your NDIS plan.



This is Booklet 1.



You don’t have to read this booklet all at once.



You can take your time and work through it at your own pace.

What's in this document?

What is the NDIS? 6

What does the NDIS do? 8

Who helps deliver the NDIS? 11

Who can take part in the NDIS? 16

Steps to apply for the NDIS 25

What does NDIS funding pay for? 31

What happens after you apply? 43

How has the NDIS supported people? 47

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Notes 59

What is the NDIS?



The National Disability Insurance Scheme pays for supports and services for people with disability around Australia.

We call it the NDIS.



The NDIS is support from the Australian Government.

The NDIS supports people with disability to:



- get the supports they need



- make decisions about their supports



- be in control of their supports.

The NDIS also helps people with disability get support:



- as early as possible in their lives



- when they first get a disability.



This is called **early intervention**.

It can apply to both children and adults.



The NDIS can also connect people with disability to services in their community.

For example, a doctor or support group.



And the NDIS shares information about what supports each state and territory government can provide.

What does the NDIS do?

Funding for supports and services for participants



Funding is money from the government that pays for supports and services.



The NDIS provides funding for **participants**.

When people with disability join the NDIS, we call them participants.



This funding can help participants:

- live a good life
- enjoy their life.



Not everyone with disability can get the NDIS.



So we help people with disability to find and use other supports too.

We explain who can use the NDIS on page 16.



The Australian Government made laws about which supports the NDIS can pay for.

The laws explain that these supports must be:



- **reasonable** – something that is fair



- **necessary** – something that a person needs.



There are also some supports the NDIS can't pay for.

For example, day to day things like groceries.

How do you find out more?

You can find more information about what supports we can pay for on our website.

ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/how-ndis-supports-work-menu/reasonable-and-necessary-supports



The NDIS also works to connect all people with disability to supports they need.

Who helps deliver the NDIS?

National Disability Insurance Agency



The National Disability Insurance Agency runs the NDIS.

We call it the NDIA.



The NDIA is a part of the Australian Government.



It was set up according to the law.

The law that applies is called the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013.*



The NDIA decides:

- who can become a participant
- what supports the NDIS can fund.

Partners in the community



Partners in the community are community organisations that we work with.

Local area coordinators



Local area coordinators are people who work for our partners in the community.



They help all people with disability find and use supports.



And they share information about the NDIS with the community.



If you're 9 years or older, a local area coordinator will be your main person to contact for the NDIS.

Early childhood partners



Some of our partners in the community support:

- children with disability
- their families.



We have a program for children with disability who are younger than 9 years old.



It's called the early childhood approach.



Early childhood partners help us with this program.

What about areas without a local area coordinator or early childhood partner?



Some places might not have:

- local area coordinators
- early childhood partners.



If you live in one of these areas, you can contact us.

We will help you decide if you want to apply for the NDIS.

How can you contact us?

You can visit our website at **www.ndis.gov.au**

Or you can call us on **1800 800 110**

How will we work with you?



Our Participant Service Charter explains what you can expect from the NDIS.

It also explains how you can:



- contact us



- tell us what we are doing well.



Our Participant Service Charter also explains what you can do when you don't agree with a decision we made.



You can find an Easy Read version of the Participant Service Charter on our website.

www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/policies/service-charter

Who can take part in the NDIS?



If someone can take part in the NDIS, we say that they are **eligible**.



We have questions you can answer to help you work out if you're eligible for the NDIS.

Question 1



Are you younger than 65?



You must be younger than 65 to be eligible for the NDIS.



If you are younger than 65, you can go to Question 2.

Skip to Question 2



If you are not younger than 65, you can't join the NDIS.

But you might be able to use other supports.



You can visit the My Aged Care website for more information about supports if you're over 65.

www.myagedcare.gov.au

Question 2



Do you live in Australia?

You must live in Australia to be eligible for the NDIS.



Are you a:

- citizen?
- permanent resident?

You will have a document that says you are one of these, like a passport.



Or do you have a:

- permanent **visa**?
- Protected Special Category visa?

A visa is a document that says you can go to another country for a certain amount of time.



You must also have one of these to be eligible for the NDIS.



You can go to Question 3 if you:

- live in Australia
- have one of these documents.

Skip to Question 3

You can't join the NDIS if you don't:



- live in Australia



- have one of these documents.

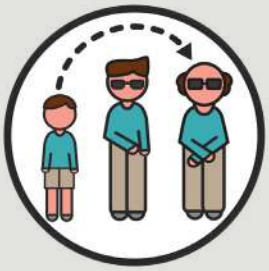


But we can help you find other supports.

You can call us.

1800 800 110

Question 3



Do you have a disability that is permanent?

This means it won't go away.

Do you have a disability that affects:



- the way you live your life?



- your **functional capacity**?



Your functional capacity is how you:

- understand the choices you have
- do things for yourself
- learn new skills
- communicate to others what you want.



If you have a disability like this, you might be able to join the NDIS.



You don't need to answer any more of these questions.



We can support you to decide if you want to apply for the NDIS.

We can also help you find other supports.



If you don't have a disability like this, you can go to Question 4.

Skip to Question 4

Question 4



Do you use equipment because of your disability?

For example, a scooter to help you move around.



Have you changed parts of your home because of your disability?

For example, changing your bathroom or adding a ramp.



If you have used equipment or changed parts of your home, you might be able to join the NDIS.



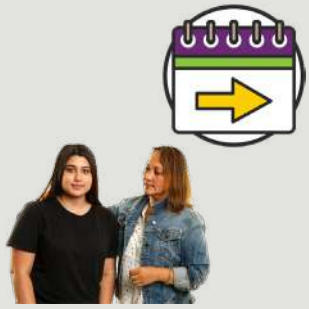
You don't need to answer any more of these questions.



If you haven't used equipment or changed parts of your home, you can go to Question 5.

Skip to Question 5

Question 5



Do you need some supports now to help you in the future?



You might be able to join the NDIS early if you need support now to help you later in life.



If you need some support now to help you in the future you might be able to join the NDIS.



If you don’t need supports now, you can’t join the NDIS.



But we can help you find other supports.

You can call us.

1800 800 110

Are you eligible for the NDIS?

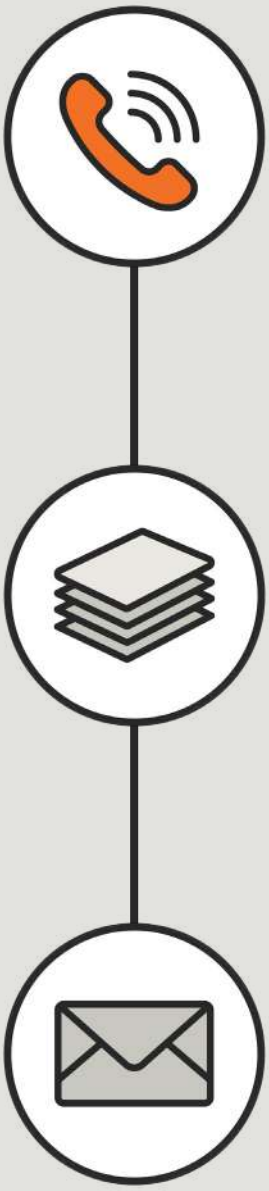
You can visit our website to find out if you can join the NDIS.

If you are eligible, you can apply.

www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis

We explain how to apply on the next page.

Steps to apply for the NDIS



Step 1. Contact us

Talk to us to work out if you can join the NDIS.

We can help you apply.

Step 2. Apply

Submit all of the documents you need to apply.

This includes documents from health care workers.

Step 3. Receive outcome

We will send you our decision within 21 days.

How do you apply for the NDIS?



You need to tell us you want to be a participant.

You must apply to do this.



If you are 9 years or older there are different ways you can apply.



Your local area coordinator can help you apply.



You can apply by calling us.

1800 800 110



You can fill out a form on our website.

www.ndis.gov.au/how-apply-ndis/what-access-request-form



If you have a child who is younger than 9, we think it's a good idea to talk to an early childhood partner before you apply.

What information do you need when you apply?



You need to tell us about yourself when you apply for the NDIS.



We need documents that show proof of who you are.

For example, your driver's licence.



And we also need any information that proves you have a disability.



For example, your doctor or health care worker can write a letter or report.



But we might ask you for more information about your disability if we need it.



When you apply for the NDIS, you will also have to sign a form that says you want to apply.

What if you need help to apply?



You can ask for help to apply.

You don't have to apply on your own.

A family member, carer or support worker may be able to help you.



If someone supports you to apply, you need to tell us that it's okay to share information with them.



For example, a family member might call us to check if we have decided if you can join the NDIS.

You can let us know if you want to share this information:



- on the form



- by calling us.

What if you can't make decisions on your own?



Sometimes people need support to make decisions.



But if you can't make decisions with support, we might look for someone close to you who can make decisions for you.

We call this person a **nominee**.



Someone else can also apply for you if they have **legal authority**.

When someone has legal authority, they make decisions for you when you can't make decisions on your own.



And if you're younger than 18, the people who look after you will apply for you.

What does NDIS funding pay for?



When you become a participant, we help you make a **NDIS plan**.

A NDIS plan is a document that has information about:



- you and your goals



- the supports you need



- the funding the NDIS will give you.



You can spend your funding on supports that are included in your plan.

These supports can be:



- help with daily life



- aids and equipment.



These supports can also help to:

- work towards your goals
- do the things you want to do.

But they must be:



- reasonable



- necessary.

The supports and services in your plan should also:



- be good value for money



- work well for you.



And they should work well with any help or support you get from other people or places, like family and friends.

Your NDIS funding is different to other payments you might get, such as:



- the **Disability Support Pension (DSP)** – a payment from the government to help with your day-to-day living costs



- **compensation** – money you might receive if you have an accident.



The NDIS will not affect any of these other payments you might receive.



You can visit our website for more information about what supports and services we pay for.

ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/would-we-fund-it

What about families and carers?



Most NDIS supports and services are for people with disability.



But some supports can also be helpful for families and carers.



Some government programs provide supports for carers.



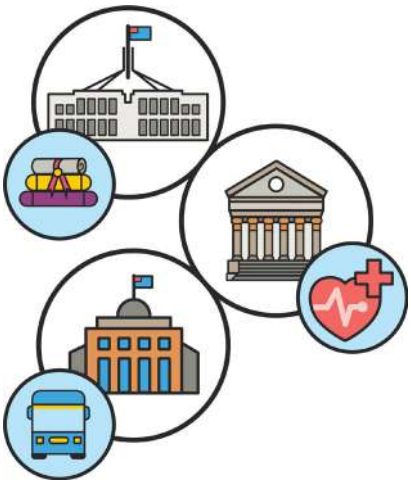
But you might be able to use some funding in your NDIS plan to give your carers a break.



For example, you might use some of your funding to have a short stay out of home.

This means your carer can have a break.

What about other government services?



The NDIS works together with other government services.

This includes:



- education – school, university and TAFE



- health – hospitals and health care



- employment – finding and keeping a job



- family support – keeping children safe and supporting families in need.

Education



The education system pays for:

- teachers
- equipment
- buildings
- transport to activities and excursions.



The NDIS pays for the support you need because of your disability to help you take part in education.



This support includes:

- support with day-to-day activities, like eating or going to the toilet



- transport to and from school or university



- support you need when you are ready to leave school or university.

Health



The health system pays for:

- doctors, nurses and other health care staff
- medical, dental and hospital care
- medication and treatment.

The NDIS pays for health care you need because of your disability, including:



- support or therapy to help your body move better over time



- wheelchairs and equipment.

Employment

Employers and the government pay for:



- workers to learn how to include people with disability at work



- changes at your work to help you do your job



- help to find a job, if that's what you need.



The NDIS pays for support to help you work towards your employment goals.

This might include:



- support while you are at work, like help to got to the toilet or eat and drink



- transport to go to and from work if you can't use public transport



- support to help you find and keep a job.

Family support



The family support system pays for **out of home care services.**



When a child or young person can't live with their parents or carer, they live in out-of-home care.

They might live:

- with a different family
- in a home for children in out-of-home care.



The family support system also pays for **child protection services.**



Child protection services can decide if a child:

- is not safe in their home
- can't live with their family.



The NDIS pays for the support a family needs because of disability.

This can include:



- therapy or behaviour support to help a child live with their family



- funding to give carers a break.

What happens after you apply?



Once you apply, we will look at all the information you gave us.



We might need to ask you for more information.



After we have all the information we need, we will send you a letter within 21 days.

The letter will explain:



- if you can join the NDIS



- why we made our decision



- what will happen next.



If you can't join the NDIS, we can help you find and use other services.



There are lots of services that aren't part of the NDIS that you can use.



You can visit the Disability Gateway for more information.

www.disabilitygateway.gov.au

What if you don't agree with our decision?



If you don't agree with our decision, you can ask us to **review** it.



When we review something, we check to see what:

- works well
- can be better.



You have 3 months from the day you get our decision to ask us to review it.



Your local area coordinator or early childhood partner can explain how to do this.



If you're still not happy after we review our decision, you can contact the **Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)**.

The AAT reviews government decisions.



You can call the AAT.

1800 228 333



You can visit the AAT's website.

www.aat.gov.au

You are now ready to move to Booklet 2

How has the NDIS supported people?



We have some examples that explain how the NDIS has supported different people.

Janine and Harriet



Harriet is 4 years old.

Janine is Harriet's mum.

She is worried about how Harriet is developing.



Janine used the NDIS website to learn about the early childhood approach.

She thinks this might help Harriet.



We helped Janine find a local early childhood partner.



The early childhood partner explained that Harriet doesn't need the NDIS.

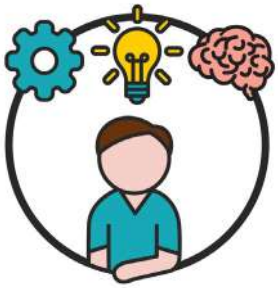
But they said Harriet should have some early intervention support now to help her later in life.



After 3 months, Harriet is developing well.

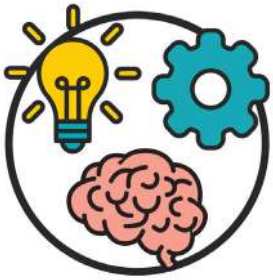
And her family feel good about supporting Harriet on their own.

Dom



Dom is 24 years old.

He has an **intellectual disability**.



An intellectual disability affects how you:

- learn
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.



Dom lives with his parents.

He needs their help with daily tasks, like cooking meals and going places.



Dom wants to do more things on his own.

And he wants to get a job one day.



His dad wanted to know if Dom could be a participant.

We explained that we need proof of Dom's disability.



Dom's dad sent us proof of Dom's disability.

And we helped Dom become a participant.



He uses his NDIS funding to learn new things, like cooking meals on his own.



Dom hopes he can use his NDIS funding to help him learn new skills so he can get the job that he wants.

Jim



Jim had an accident in his home.

He had lots of injuries to his leg.

He had to go to hospital.



After Jim left the hospital, he:

- needed help changing bandages on his leg



- started rehab – support to move and use your body after an accident or injury.



Jim read about the NDIS.

He worked out that he couldn't join the NDIS because his injuries won't be permanent.



Jim knows he might be eligible for the NDIS in the future.



But this can only happen if he has proof he has a disability from his injuries.

More information

For more information, please contact us.



You can visit our website.

www.ndis.gov.au



You can call us.

1800 800 110



You can follow us on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/NDISAus



You can follow us on Twitter.

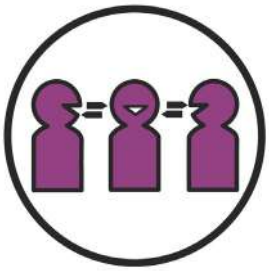
@NDIS

Support to talk to us



You can talk to us online using our webchat feature at the top of our website.

www.ndis.gov.au



If you speak a language other than English,

you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

131 450

If you have a speech or hearing impairment, you can call:



TTY

1800 555 677



Speak and Listen

1800 555 727

National Relay Service

133 677

www.relayservice.gov.au

Word list



Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)

The AAT reviews government decisions.



Child protection services

Child protection services can decide if a child:

- is not safe in their home
- can't live with their family.



Compensation

Compensation is money you might receive if you have an accident.



Disability Support Pension (DSP)

The DSP is a payment from the government to help with your day-to-day living costs.

Early intervention



The NDIS also helps people with disability get support:

- as early as possible in their lives
- when they first get a disability.

This is called early intervention.

It can apply to both children and adults.

Eligible



If someone can take part in the NDIS, we say that they are eligible.

Functional capacity



Your functional capacity is how you:

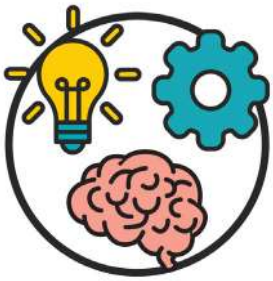
- understand the choices you have
- do things for yourself
- learn new skills
- communicate to others what you want.

Funding



Funding is money from the government that pays for supports and services.

Intellectual disability



An intellectual disability affects how you:

- learn
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.

Legal authority



When someone has legal authority, they make decisions for you when you can't make decisions on your own.

NDIS plan



A NDIS plan is a document that has

information about:

- you and your goals
- the supports you need
- the funding the NDIS will give you.



Necessary

When something is necessary, it is something that a person needs.



Nominee

But if you can't make decisions with support, we might look for someone close to you who can make decisions for you.

We call this person a nominee.



Out-of-home care services

When a child or young person can't live with their parents or carer, they live in out-of-home care.

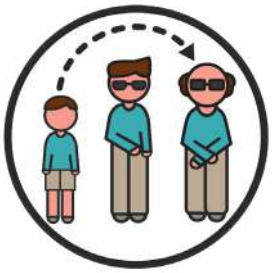
They might live:

- with a different family
- in a home for children in out-of-home care.



Participants

When people with disability join the NDIS, we call them participants.



Permanent

When something is permanent, it won't go away.



Reasonable

When something is reasonable, it is fair.



Review

When we review something, we check to see what:

- works well
- can be better.



Visa

A visa is a document that says you can go to another country for a certain amount of time.

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Notes



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