



# Let's talk about work



This booklet covers:

- planning for employment
- exploring your employment goals
- planning for when you leave school
- finding employment providers.

# How to use this booklet

We want to talk with you about your interest in work. If you are unsure about getting a job, planning to work or you already have a job, this booklet will help you talk with your local area coordinator or NDIS planner about how the NDIS can help.

This booklet has questions for you to consider and space to add your answers. These questions can help you to think and talk about:

- the skills you have
- the type of work you might like to do or the work you do now
- your work goals
- the support you need.

You can share this booklet with family and friends and bring it to meetings. Filling it out will help us understand:

- how to help you achieve your work goals
- the support you need in your NDIS plan.

Your **my NDIS contact** is your main contact in the NDIS. They can be:

- a local area coordinator
- an NDIA Planner.

They will give you information about the NDIS and can help you understand the questions in this booklet.



Find out more about how the NDIS can support you to find, keep or change jobs on the [Finding, keeping and changing jobs](#) page of the NDIS website.

Scan to read NDIS participant employment stories or visit [ndis.gov.au/employmentstories](https://ndis.gov.au/employmentstories)



# How the NDIS can help with work

You may have heard people say the NDIS improves opportunities for ‘economic participation’. This means we have a key role in helping you think about work and get a job. We can explain the supports that help you find and keep a job or do other things like volunteering.

NDIS support may include funding in your plan or information about other employment supports in your community.

We can help you:

- build your skills
- learn new things
- get around independently.

We can also help your employer make sure a job is right for you.

Supports can include the following:

- Finding out what you are good at and what work suits you. This is sometimes called discovery.
- Learning how to work in a team.
- Learning how to solve problems and get tasks done.
- Understanding the behaviours and communication skills employers expect.
- Help to find the right job and make sure it fits your skills.
- Help for your employer about the best way to support you at work.
- Help to change jobs and progress your career.
- Support at work to do your tasks until you can do them yourself.
- Personal care at work like help with having a meal.

Other NDIS funding like community participation supports can also help build skills and take steps to employment.

A community participation provider can help you:

- learn to use public transport
- meet people
- find new interests
- work in a team
- manage your money.

Getting into the community is a great way to make friends and develop social skills. Gaining confidence in these areas may be your first step in the employment journey.

Your **my NDIS contact** may also have information about employment supports from community and other government services including:

- Disability Employment Services (DES): help to find and keep a job. Visit [jobaccess.gov.au](http://jobaccess.gov.au) for more information
- Employment Assistance Fund: financial help for eligible people with disability and employers to buy:
  - work-related modifications
  - equipment
  - Auslan services
  - workplace assistance and support services
- Community programs
- Volunteering opportunities

# Different types of work

The NDIS may fund necessary on the job supports, which you can use in a range of settings.

## Open employment

Work that is open to people with and without disability. It can include:

- self-employment
- apprenticeships
- jobs with a government organisation or other businesses in the community.

## Micro-businesses

Micro-businesses are small businesses run by an individual rather than a corporation or larger company. They usually employ between one and 4 people and may be family-run.

## Self-employment

Self-employment is when you work for yourself. You earn your income directly from your own business, trade or profession. For example, you may have your own lawn mowing business, or you may provide bookkeeping services to other businesses.

## Social enterprise

Social enterprises or social traders address issues like:

- social problems
- improving communities
- providing people with access to employment and training
- helping the environment.

Social enterprises receive most of their income from trade, not donations or grants.

## Supported employment services

Supported employment services (formerly Australian Disability Enterprises or ADEs) employ you and support you on the job.

They offer a range of jobs and training in industries such as:

- hospitality and food preparation
- manufacturing and recycling
- packaging and printing
- gardening and furniture assembly.

These employers can give ongoing work or act as a link for people with disability to gain skills and confidence for other employment.

## Volunteering

Volunteering is unpaid work and can be a great first step to paid work. Being a volunteer has lots of benefits and can help you:

- gain work experience in your field of interest
- increase your work skills and general wellbeing.

As well as having a positive impact on your community, volunteering can build important personal and work relationships. Talk to your local area coordinator about opportunities to volunteer in your area.



# Planning for work

Your plan meeting is a chance to talk about work and your new or existing work goals. It is also a time to talk about:

- barriers you have faced with work or looking for work
- why you think you have not been able to find a job in the past.

The meeting is between you and an NDIA planner. If you would like it can also include:

- your nominee or third-party decision maker
- a family member or carer
- support coordinator.

Your planner will look at this booklet with you and discuss what you have written.

## Checklist

- ✓ Use this checklist before your meeting to make sure you have prepared all the information you need.

You can complete this booklet on your own or with someone's help. This might be your family, support coordinator, or **my NDIS contact**.

- ✓ Collect information about other employment supports you receive. For example, you may have:
  - letters or agreements from your employer or current service provider
  - a job plan from your Disability Employment Service or NDIS provider.

- ✓ Bring any reports or assessments along to your NDIS meeting, such as:

- school reports
- work experience reports
- career transition plans created at school
- work assessments
- functional capacity assessments
- discovery or vocational profile (outlining the best work environment for you)
- current job plan

If you are leaving school, collect all your information before you finish school.



## Krystal's story

Born with cerebral palsy, Krystal and her family saw no limits for her. But others did. In the workplace and even with a degree in Social Work under her belt, Krystal found employers reluctant to take her on.

'I've had to deal with a lot of people who had preconceived notions of who I was and what I was capable of,' Krystal said. After a decade working as a social worker with Housing SA, Krystal, 38, recently moved into the leadership role of South Australia State Manager for a not-for-profit Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) provider.

Krystal's NDIS supports help with transport to and from work, keeping her healthy through physical and occupational therapies, and daily tasks at home to live independently.

Scan to read [Krystal's full story on the NDIS website](#).



# Your work journey

This part of the booklet will help you share information about where you are in your journey towards work.

## If you are already working or volunteering

Tell us about what you do.

- How many days a week do you work or volunteer? How many hours do you work each day?
- Where are you working? Would you like to keep working there? Or would you like help to try something different?
- Is it paid or unpaid work?
- Would you like more hours?
- What sort of supports help you at work? Do you have a support worker or co-worker helping you some of the time, all the time, or not at all?
- Would you like to find new opportunities?



Use the space below to make any notes or list questions.

For example:

- I am volunteering at a clothes shop for 3 hours each Monday. I don't get paid at the moment but would like to do some more hours and get paid.
- I work in a supported employment service 3 days a week and would like to try working somewhere else one day a week.
- I want to increase the number of days I work and take up a promotional opportunity at my workplace.

Write your answer here:

## If you are ready to look for work or start volunteering

Tell us about what you would like to do.

- What sort of work or volunteering would you like to do?
- Is there a volunteer job you would like to try before applying for a paid job?
- Is someone already helping you such as your family, a friend, Disability Employment Service provider or NDIS provider?



Use the space below to make any notes or list questions.

For example:

- I would like to volunteer at my local library. I love books so it is ok if I don't get paid at the start, but one day I would like to become a librarian.
- I have always loved to bake cakes and cookies. One of my goals is to one day work in a bakery.

Write your answer here:



### Jono's story

Jono is 20 years old from Geelong. He lives with a chromosomal condition and intellectual disability. Combining his love of sport with career ambition, Jono used his NDIS employment supports to help him achieve his goal of becoming a swim instructor.

Jono's provider worked with him to build foundational skills for work through simulation sessions, both face-to-face and online. They found employers that matched Jono's likes and interests. Jono undertook a swimming instructor course before engaging in interview preparation and planning.

Jono said building skills with NDIS support really benefited him. 'Now I'm just really putting myself out there. I'm trying my best; the coaching really helped me find my voice and confidence. I'm definitely proud of how far I've come.'

Scan to read [Jono's full story on the NDIS website](#).



## If you are not quite ready to look for work

Planning to work can feel like a big step. Your **my NDIS contact** or support coordinator can help you think about steps towards working. You may use part of your funding for work experience or volunteering to see what you enjoy and what skills you have.

You may still be at school but want to get ready for work when you leave or look for a part-time job while you are still at school. You may need more help than school can provide.



### If you haven't thought about getting a job, can you tell us why?

For example:

- I have not thought about work because I am not sure if I can work without a lot of help.
- I have thought about work but don't know if there is anything I would be good at, and it just seems too hard because of my disability.

Write your answer here:



### Scott's story

Scott from Toowoomba is 28 and has a moderate intellectual disability. He works 3 days a week at a supported employment service, where he has learned about gardening, plants and using the tools of the trade.

Scott has also started his own gardening business. Due to the meticulous way he maintains gardens, people are chasing him for quotes. Scott's support worker plays an integral part, helping him to learn to run his own business.

'For my 21st birthday all my family gave me money, so I bought gardening tools,' Scott said. He's currently saving for a ute.

Proud mum Michelle said: 'Scott is this incredible young man who has just taken off.'

Scan to read [Scott's full story on the NDIS website](#).





## Let's explore what work might be right for you



### Do you have any work skills, qualifications, or work experience?

- What is your level of education?
- Have you done any courses?
- Are there any courses you would like to do?
- If you have volunteered in the past, what did you do?

For example:

- I did 2 weeks of work experience at a panel beating business when I was at school.
- I don't have any qualifications, but I am good at working on cars.

Write your answer here:



### Do you look after your own money?

- Do you have any goals to save money?
- Can you manage your own money?
- Do you have a bank account and bank card?

Write your answer here:



### What tasks do you do well? What do you love doing?

Tell us what you are already good at and if you need some help doing these things.

- Do you have any jobs you do at home?
- Are you involved in any sports, social activities, or programs?

For example:

- I like cooking and always prepare Sunday dinner with Mum's help.
- I clean my room and put my laundry in the washing machine.
- I love mowing the lawn and some people in my street pay me because they say I do a great job.

Write your answer here:



### Daniel's story

Daniel's business website boasts an impressive line-up of international stars rocking his quirky and unique t-shirt designs. With 49,000 Facebook followers, the young Perth artist and entrepreneur is making a big impression nationwide. Daniel is 30 and lives with cerebral palsy.

Daniel started his t-shirt business, Daniel (ink.), 10 years ago. He set up his first market at a local Darlington Arts Festival with 30 shirts and 2 designs. Daniel sold out of t-shirts that day and never looked back.

An NDIS support worker helps Daniel with the physical demands of running the business, like setting up pop-up shops at markets and shopping centres around Perth most weekends.

His NDIS-funded wheelchair was recently upgraded to a motorised model, greatly boosting his independence. Daniel also drives his own car, thanks to NDIS-funded modifications.

'I appreciate the support I get through the NDIS to help me with the physical part of the business. It has changed my life,' Daniel said.

Scan to read [Daniel's full story on the NDIS website.](#)





### What transport do you use to get around?

- Can you drive a car?
- Do you use public transport?
- Do you have the right equipment to help you catch transport safely?

For example:

- I catch the bus into town and to my friend's house. I had a card I carried in my wallet that told me the right stop to get off, but I don't need the card anymore.

Write your answer here:



# Exploring your work goals

One of the most important jobs for the NDIS is to help you achieve more independence and participate in the community and workforce. An NDIS plan can support you to pursue your work goals.

**Here are some examples of work goals and how NDIS participants can use their funding to help pursue them.**

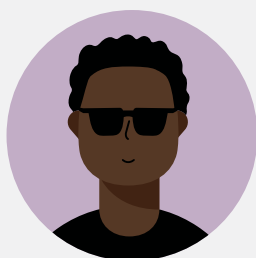
## Mohammed's goal:



**'During the next 12 months, I want to do some more work with animals.'**

Mohammed used some of his core supports budget to pay for a support worker to help him volunteer at the vet in his town. The owner of the vet said Mohammed kept the place spotless and did a very reliable stocktake. Mohammed now has paid work at the vet one day per week and would like to increase to 2 days. His support worker helps him set up for his day at work and will help him learn other tasks that may allow him to be paid for more days of work.

## Lachlan's goal:



**'During this plan period, I want to expand my skills so I can start looking for a new job.'**

For the last 2 years, Lachlan has worked part-time doing dishes at a café. His goal is to work full time and learn new skills so he can serve customers and handle money.

Lachlan and his **my NDIS contact** had a great conversation about how he works independently, but he may need help to develop his skills further.

His **my NDIS contact** helped him find a provider to build his customer service and money-handling skills through employment coaching and work experience. When he's ready, Lachlan's job coach will also help him apply for a new role.

## Akari's goal:



**'This year, I'd like to explore what type of jobs might best suit me and find work.'**

Akari used employment assistance funding in her NDIS plan to gain work experience in a supermarket. She soon discovered she loved working in the bakery section and her support worker is developing her skills to work more independently and gain paid employment.

## Adrian's goal:



**'I want to get a part-time job after I build my skills and confidence at work.'**

Adrian wanted a job but was not sure if he was ready or what an employer might expect of him. Adrian decided he would like to start work at a supported employment service to help him learn more about his skills and what is expected of him at work.

Right now, this is the place for Adrian to build confidence and understand more about workplaces. The supported employment service will provide opportunities for Adrian to build his skills. They will also help Adrian move to another workplace when he feels ready.



**If you have a work goal, write it down here. Or write down a goal that will help you decide if work is something you want to try.**

If you need some help with this, ask your **my NDIS contact** or support coordinator.

For example:

- I would like to start my own dog-walking business by the end of the year.
- I am not sure about working but, during the next 12 months, I would like to see what it is like to work and what skills I need.

Write your answer here:



## Do you have some ideas about how the NDIS could help you get a job?

For example:

- I don't think I need much help at work. But I would like some help to get a better routine in my life to be at work on time.
- I would like help to learn about dog grooming.
- I have no idea. I want to find out what I am good at.

Write your answer here:



## Ian's story

Ian said having employment supports in his plan helped him secure paid work at Bunnings. 'When I left school, I really didn't know what job I wanted to do,' Ian said. 'I have autism, so all I knew was I was a hands-on type of guy who liked helping people out.'

Ian received regular one-on-one employment coaching that saw him explore different types of work. 'I did work experience at Coles, at a garden place and I did a course at Woolworths. I volunteered at PAWS, Foodbank, at festivals and at a Crocodile Park. I was supported to try a lot of different things.' He also gained his First Aid Certificate and Construction White Card along the way.

Ian said it was an organised guided industry tour that really made him want to work at Bunnings. 'We did some mock interviews then next thing the interview came along. I must have done pretty well because I got a call to say I got a job.'

Scan to read [Ian's full story on the NDIS website](#).



# Employment assistance for young people

## Are you thinking about getting a job while you're in school or when you leave school?

While you are at school, you may want help to find or keep a part-time job outside school hours.

If you need this extra help because of your disability, we may be able to fund support to build your skills to get a job. This could include:

- working in a team
- staying on task
- managing your money
- learning to catch the bus or train.

Work experience in your school curriculum is the responsibility of your school. But if you need extra support because of your disability for work experience, we may be able to fund this.

You may also get to do a school-based traineeship, where you combine school, study and work. We don't fund supports that are the responsibility of your employer, school or traineeship provider. But if there are extra disability-related supports you need, we may be able to fund these to help you complete your traineeship.

You may be able to use **NDIS capacity building funding** to help you achieve your goals.

Your support coordinator or **my NDIS contact** can give more information about these supports.

## Are you moving from school to work?

Leaving school is a big step in life. It's important to think about your work or further study goals. This could be during your last years of school or as you get close to the end of school.

If your disability affects your ability to learn or interact with others, you may need extra time and support to build your skills for work.

We will tailor NDIS employment supports to your needs and goals and help you:

- build your skills and confidence for work
- explore the type of work that is right for you
- gain experience in work settings
- connect to the right job and employer.

Each person's support will be different. But the following can help build employment readiness:

- money-handling skills
- time-management skills
- communication skills
- discovery activities to find your skills
- discovery to find what work suits you
- extended work experience
- learning how to take instruction at work
- travel skills.

### Example

Elsie is approaching the end of year 12 and has had some work experience during school. She's still unsure what she would like to do and where her skills lie.

Elsie speaks to her planner about her goal to work. She gives information about her work experience through school and the support she needs to build skills for work.

Elsie's planner decides it is appropriate to fund employment assistance to help Elsie develop her skills for work and try different types of work.

## Have you left school and would like to work?

You may have left school a while ago but still need support to build your skills for work. It's never too late to start thinking about work, even if you've had only a bit of work experience or no employment history.

We may be able to fund supports to help you build skills for work, discover what you're good at and what you'd like to do. We can also help you get work experience in open employment and to find the right job for you.

We'll also think about whether a [Disability Employment Service](#) can help you find work.

# Congratulations

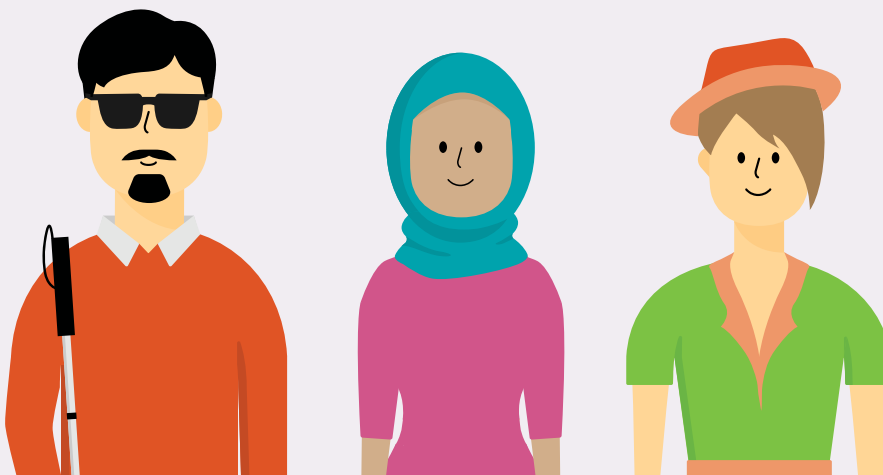
## You have taken steps to consider employment

Your plan meeting is a chance to talk about work with your NDIA planner and think about the next steps.

Your NDIA planner will work with you to make an NDIS plan with the supports you need to pursue your work goals.

## Next steps

- Once you have your NDIS plan you can decide how to use your funding to pursue your work goals.
- You can start asking providers about the services they offer and choose one that helps you pursue your goals.
- Your local area coordinator, support coordinator or service provider may be able to help you get started.





# Finding employment support providers

When you have your approved NDIS plan, it is time to choose employment support providers to help you.

You may have some NDIS-funded employment supports, or your **my NDIS contact** or support coordinator may have spoken to you about accessing your local Disability Employment Service.

If you have NDIS-funded supports you can use the [Provider Finder](#) on the NDIS website, or ask your local area coordinator or support coordinator to help you find employment support providers in your area.



These are some questions you can ask an employment service provider before choosing to use their services:

- What help will you give me to build the skills I need?
- Do you provide one-on-one or group support, or a mix?
- What are the reasons you provide support this way?
- What skills or qualifications do your staff have?
- How will you help me find a job that matches my skills and abilities?
- How do you connect with and support employers?
- What types of businesses have you placed people in, and what type of jobs are they doing?
- How many of your participants have found a job in the last 12 months?
- How long do most of your participants stay in a job?
- Do you provide help after a person gets a job?



If speaking to a supported employment service (previously called an ADE), you could ask the following questions:

- What types of jobs do you offer?
- Will I be able to learn new skills while I work for you?
- Are there opportunities for me to progress in your organisation?
- Can you help me get a job in open employment when I'm ready?

If you need a Disability Employment Services provider, visit the [Job Access website](#). While they are not funded by the NDIS, it may be in your plan under the 'My current informal, community and mainstream supports' section. This is where non-NDIS supports are listed.

## Tips for choosing a provider



Don't forget you are a paying customer. You get a say in who you choose and how your supports are delivered.



Your supports should meet your needs.



You have the right to change providers if you are not happy.



You should talk to other people who have used the service and ask them about their experiences.



Find a registered provider with the [Provider finder tool](#), or talk with your **my NDIS contact** or support coordinator.



For more information on employment assistance and to find lists of registered providers, visit the [NDIS website](#).

# What if I do not have a job at the end of my plan?

At the end of each NDIS plan you will have a plan reassessment to check how you are progressing towards your goals.

Your **my NDIS contact** will discuss your progress and if you need additional funding to pursue your goals.

To support a request for a change of situation, or your upcoming plan reassessment meeting, your employment support provider should prepare a report including:

- the work goal you are aiming for
- support delivered and your progress to date
- the skills you still need to build
- the plan to get you there, including how long it is likely to take.

## What if I have a concern about NDIS supports or services?


If you have a concern about your current NDIS supports or services, it is important you talk about it with your provider first.


If you cannot resolve this directly or don't feel safe to have the conversation, you can ask your local area coordinator or support coordinator for help.


You can also contact the [NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](#).



### National Disability Insurance Scheme

 Website: [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)

 Telephone: 1800 800 110

 Webchat: [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)

### Follow us on our social channels



### For people who need help with English

 TIS: 131 450

### For people who are deaf or hard of hearing

 TTY: 1800 555 677

 Voice relay: 1800 555 727

 National Relay Service: [accesshub.gov.au](https://www.accesshub.gov.au)