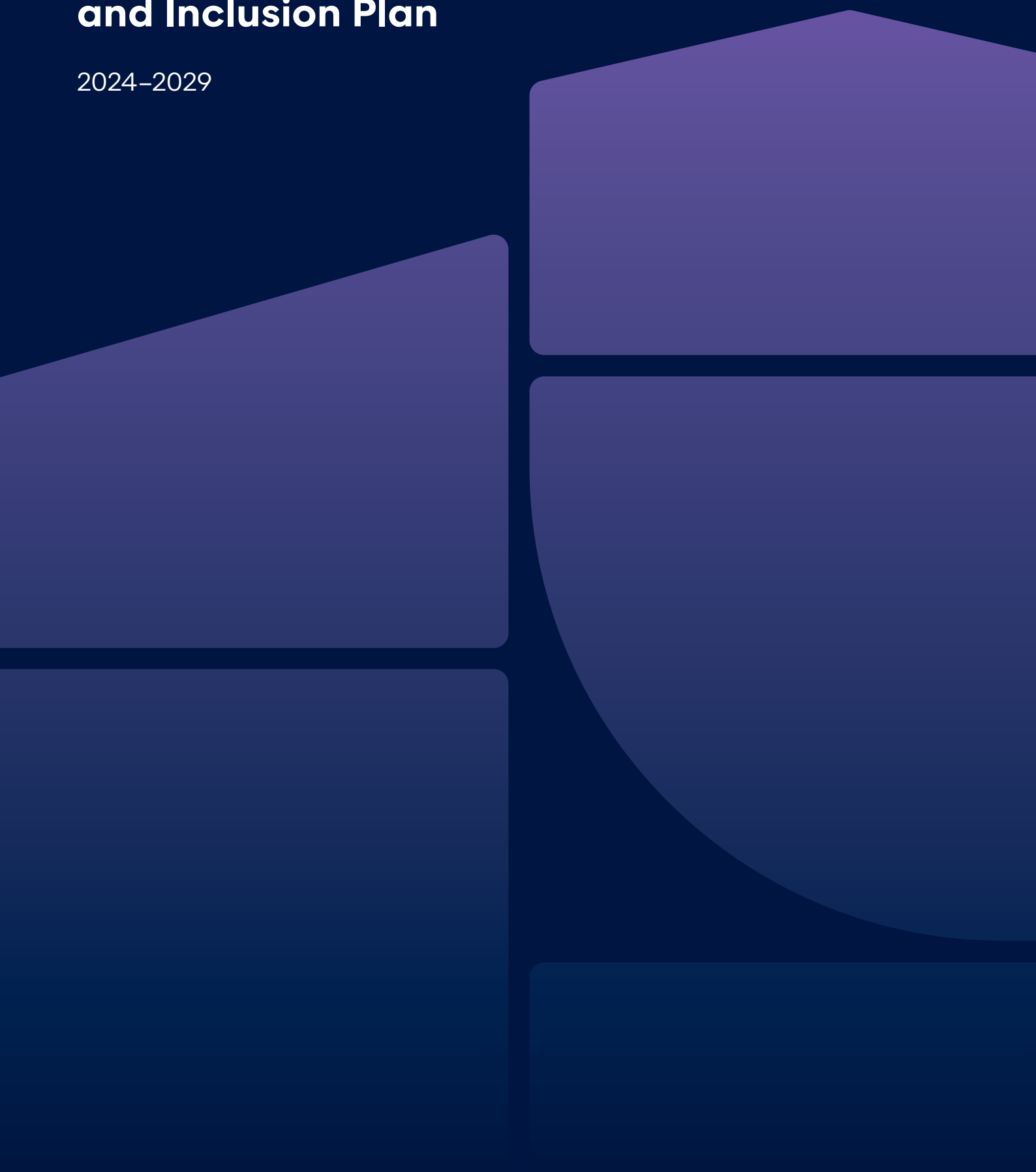




Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

2024-2029





Acknowledgement of Country

Synergy acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Land on which we operate and their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, their cultures and to Elders past and present.

Contact us

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, please reach out to our team via:

PSSV.Diversity.Equity.Inclusion@synergy.net.au

GPO Box K851, Perth WA 6842

synergy.net.au

Alternative formats

Our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is available on request in a variety of formats, including electronically, by email and on our website; in hard copy, in both large and standard print, and in audio format.

For further information, please contact our team using the contact details on the left.

Translating and interpreting service (TIS National)

If you require translating or interpreting services, please call TIS National on 131 450.

Voice or hearing impairment service (National Relay Service)

If you have a voice or hearing impairment, please contact the National Relay Service on:

TTY: 133 677

Speak and read, type and read, and type and listen (if you have a hearing or speech impairment).

Voice Relay: 1300 555 727

Speak and listen (if you have a speech impairment).

SMS Relay: 0423 677 767

Text and listen.





Contents

Chief Executive Officer message	4
Minister for Energy message	5
About Synergy	6
Diversity, equity and inclusion at Synergy	8
Reflecting on our progress	10
Developing our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029	12
Desired outcomes	14

Chief Executive Officer message

I am extremely proud to launch Synergy's fourth Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029.

As an essential service provider to the vast majority of Western Australians, we know we must do everything we can to ensure our products and services meet the needs of the diverse range of customers we serve, our buildings and facilities are accessible, and our team is representative of the community in which we live and work.

I am pleased to support people living with disability and know firsthand that even small changes and opportunities can positively impact the lives of these people, as well as those around them.

We recognise having people from diverse backgrounds and lived experience brings a variety of different perspectives, knowledge and ideas, which in turn sparks creativity, encourages innovation, improves employee engagement and boosts commercial returns.

This includes, of course, people living with disability, who make a positive contribution to Synergy, and the community, every day.

Our latest Disability Access and Inclusion Plan focuses on identifying employment opportunities for people living with disability, improving our team's understanding and awareness of the issues faced by people living with disability, enhancing our customer service delivery and ensuring our products, services, information, buildings and facilities are accessible to all people.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team, as well as our All Abilities Employee Reference Group, for guiding Synergy as we continue on this journey. Our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029 is a significant piece of work which builds on the fantastic work undertaken by our team in previous years. I look forward to working with you, and the wider Synergy team, as we implement the strategies within.

David Fyfe
Chief Executive Officer



“We recognise having people from diverse backgrounds and lived experience brings a variety of different perspectives, knowledge and ideas, which in turn sparks creativity, encourages innovative solutions, improves employee engagement and boosts commercial returns.”

Minister for Energy message

I am honoured to support Synergy’s most recent Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029, which demonstrates their commitment to Western Australians living with disability.

As a State-owned electricity generator and energy retailer, I am pleased to see the progress Synergy has made since launching its inaugural Disability Access and Inclusion Plan in 2007, particularly in supporting its customers and employees living with disability and, more broadly, the flow-on effect this has had within the community.

I congratulate Synergy and support their commitment to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for employees and the Western Australian community.

Hon. Reece Whitby MLA

Minister for Energy (WA Government)



“As an essential service provider, and understanding our decisions and actions have the ability to impact the daily lives of our customers, we have made it our purpose to lead Western Australians to their intelligent energy future.”

Warradarge Wind Farm is a Bright Energy Investment (BEI) asset which is a joint venture between Synergy, CBUS and DIF.



About Synergy

Synergy is proud to be Western Australia's largest electricity generator and energy retailer. We have more than one million residential and business customers across the South West Interconnected System (SWIS), a network which extends from Kalbarri in the north to Kalgoorlie in the east and Albany in the south.

Established under the *Electricity Corporations Act 2005*, Synergy is owned by the State Government of Western Australia, with our board and management team reporting to the Minister for Energy, the Hon. Reece Whitby MLA.

We generate electricity at coal, gas, wind, battery and solar assets across the State, contributing around 40 per cent of electricity in the SWIS. As an essential service provider, and understanding our decisions and actions have the ability to impact the daily lives of our customers, we have made it our purpose to lead Western Australians to their intelligent energy future.

Aligned to this, in 2022, the State Government committed to Synergy retiring its coal-fired electricity generation assets by 2030. In support, they will provide around \$3 billion, through Synergy, towards renewable generation and energy storage projects.

To achieve our purpose, and these commitments, we must leverage the knowledge and lived experiences of our diverse workforce, which today is made up of around 950 people.

Our values

Our values are the unique qualities we look for in our people. By staying true to them, we will continue to be the first choice for our customers, a leader in the energy sector and a valued partner to other industries.



Innovation



Accountability



Collaboration



Trust

Diversity, equity and inclusion at Synergy

We are committed to raising awareness about diversity, equity and inclusion, and the importance of creating a workforce that reflects the diversity of our customers and the community that we serve.

We are working towards creating an inclusive environment where people have a strong sense of belonging and can bring their whole selves to work. We want our people to know their voices are heard, all cultures are respected and that diverse perspectives are essential to our success.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy

We are creating an organisation that is inclusive and respects and values diversity so that we can better serve the Western Australian community.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy clearly states our intentions, focusing on four key priority areas: gender equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation, all abilities and LGBTQ.

Planning for better access and inclusion

Our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan has been developed to exceed the requirements under the *Disability Services Act 1993 (WA)*, with strategies focused on the seven outcomes outlined in the Disability Services Regulations 2013 and in support of Synergy's broader Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy.

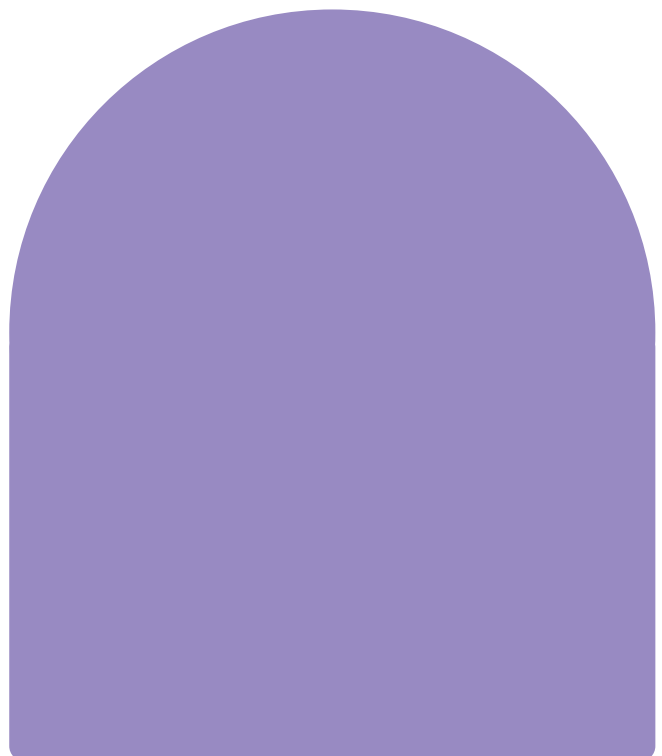
We aim to meet or exceed our legislative obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan specifies a framework for recognising ways we can further advance access and inclusion for our customers, employees and other stakeholders within the Western Australian community.

Our commitment

We are committed to ensuring everyone in our community, including people with disability, as well as their families and carers, can access our information, services, facilities and events.

We will support and empower our employees, so they are able to contribute to our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to the best of their ability, and ensure we consult with people with disability, their families, carers and support service providers to identify and eliminate barriers to access and inclusion.



Reflecting on our progress

Since launching our 2018–2023 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, we have introduced a range of strategies and initiatives to support equitable access and inclusion for our customers, employees and other stakeholders, these include:

- continuing to improve and enhance our website and documentation to meet the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 (WCAG 2) Level A;
- engaging employees in activities to improve their understanding of disability, including recognising and celebrating events such as International Day of People with Disability;
- running targeted recruitment campaigns to attract prospective employees living with disability to our graduate program;
- coordinating disability awareness training sessions for teams who recruited employees who live with disability;
- offering employment opportunities to people living with disability through our partnership with disability employment service provider, EDGE Employment Solutions;
- establishing an All Abilities Employee Reference Group to progress access and inclusion at Synergy for both our customers and employees;
- upgrading and redesigning the collaboration space used for customers and employees at our head office in Perth to ensure accessibility;
- providing mental health first aid training to support all employees, including those living with mental health conditions;
- undertaking ergonomic assessments for employees with disability to identify individual requirements and make reasonable adjustments;
- proactively supporting return to work programs for employees with disability;
- developing personal emergency evacuation plans to ensure employees with disability can safely evacuate our buildings and facilities in the event of an emergency;
- developing an events checklist to provide practical information to assist our people in planning accessible and inclusive events, enabling people with disability to participate in the community and in the workplace; and
- ensuring the voice of people with a lived experience of disability is embedded in our steering committee which is planning our head office relocation in 2024.

Case study

Partnerships to create sustainable employment opportunities

In line with our commitment to people living with disability in Western Australia, we were proud to establish a partnership with EDGE Employment Solutions (EDGE) in the 2021 financial year.

The partnership has enabled us to recruit 18 new employees who live with disability to our business over the course of two years. A key part of the partnership is the ongoing specialist support provided by EDGE which is designed to support the retention and development of these employees.

We are proud to report, as a result of this partnership, the majority of these placements exceed 18 months tenure. More broadly, the partnership has assisted us to raise awareness of the barriers faced by those living with disability and the positive contribution that individuals living with disability can make in the workplace when matched to the right role.

In recent years, we have celebrated International Day of People with Disability by taking part in the National Disability Services WA lunch and hosting internal events which celebrate the achievements of people living with disability. These events provide Synergy employees with greater insights into the experiences of those with lived experience of disability and the important role employment plays in overall wellbeing.

In 2022, we extended an invitation to a number of EDGE jobseekers, providing them with an opportunity to network with our people, learn about Synergy and explore the vast range of employment opportunities available at Synergy. This event contributed to three EDGE jobseekers securing employment with Synergy.



Participants at our International Day of People with Disability event in 2022, Perth. Pictured L-R: Daniel (EDGE Employment Solutions) with Soham and Patrick (Synergy).

Developing our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029

The Disability Services Act Regulations 2004 sets out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans.

All Abilities Employee Reference Group

In developing this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, our All Abilities Employee Reference Group, whose participants expressed an interest in or had specialist knowledge of disability barriers and/or lived experience of disability, conducted desktop research of relevant public sector agencies, local government and corporate Disability Access and Inclusion Plans and implementation plans.

This included reviewing the *Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025* and *People with Disability: Action Plan to Improve WA Public Sector Employment Outcomes 2020–2025*, as well as our own *Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020–2022*. We also conducted an analysis of our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2018–2023 to identify strengths and gaps, influencing proposed strategies and actions in our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029.

Consultation process and data analysis

Synergy engaged E-Qual Disability Consultants to develop an internal and external consultation strategy and support the consultation process for our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029.

Stakeholders, including our customers and employees, as well as the community more broadly, were invited to contribute by completing an online or hard copy survey and/or by phoning, texting or emailing their feedback.

External stakeholders were invited to do so via:

- a notice which was published on our website in October 2023;
- our social media channels;
- an email to stakeholders in the community with an interest in disability or potential staff or clients with disability; and/or
- advertising in *The West Australian* on 14 October 2023.

Internal stakeholders were invited to do so via:

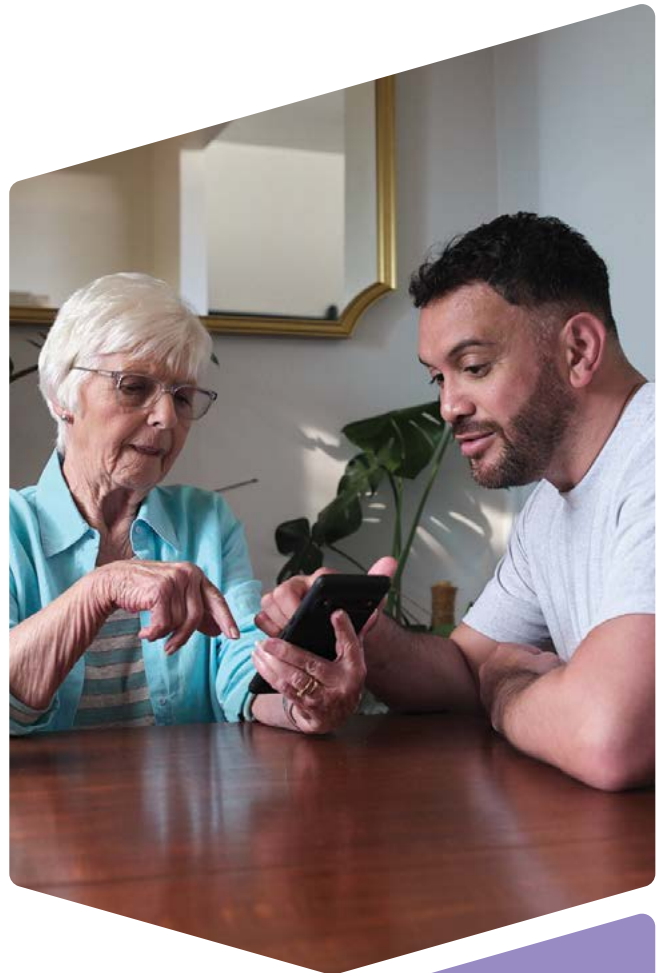
- a notification on our intranet;
- an email to all employees;
- posters with a QR code at all Synergy sites and offices; and
- through our All Abilities Employee Reference Group.

Our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024–2029 has been reviewed and endorsed by our Executive Leadership Team as well as our All Abilities Employee Reference Group. It has been submitted to the Department of Communities and made available on our website and intranet.

Implementation, monitoring and reporting

The implementation of our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is the responsibility of all Synergy employees. In addition, our All Abilities Employee Reference Group is accountable for monitoring and reporting on our progress through:

- quarterly meetings;
- quarterly updates to our Executive Leadership team;
- an annual progress report against the outcomes of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan; and
- the Public Sector Commission’s equal employment opportunity annual collection report.



Desired outcomes

Synergy will work to achieve the Western Australian Public Sector's seven desired outcomes to progress access and inclusion by implementing the following strategies.

Outcome 1

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any event by Synergy.

Strategies:

1. Ensure implementation of Synergy's access and inclusion event checklist for community events that Synergy is involved in, as well as any internal events that employees attend.
2. Make additional training and education available to employees arranging Synergy events to ensure access and inclusion is considered as a priority at both internal and external events.

Outcome 2

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of Synergy.

Strategies:

1. Ensure the advice of an accredited access consultant is sought when planning and designing any facilities or undertaking major refurbishments.
2. All buildings have emergency evacuation procedures in place, which include specialist personal emergency evacuation plans for employees living with disability, where required.
3. New premises comply with the Australian Standards and the Disability Standards on Access to Premise.

Outcome 3

People with disability receive information from Synergy in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategies:

1. Continue to review and improve the accessibility of our website, information and intranet, ensuring it complies with the Western Australian Government's Website Content Accessibility Guidelines and World Wide Web Consortium web standards.
2. Make resources related to accessibility and universal design available to relevant employees to support the development of new content intended for public and/or internal use.
3. Ensure information is made available in alternative formats on request.
4. Provide training to educate employees on how to present information in an accessible format.

Outcome 4

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the employees of Synergy as other people receive.

Strategies:

1. Provide disability confidence training to customer facing employees to ensure they are equipped to provide quality services to people with disability.
2. Promote our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan internally and externally to ensure employees and customers are aware of our commitments.
3. Engage subject matter experts, where required, to ensure Disability Access and Inclusion Plan outcomes are achieved and reported on annually.

Outcome 5

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to Synergy.

Strategies:

1. Ensure our complaints policy and process are accessible and fit for purpose for people living with disability.
2. Identify, address and improve, where relevant, access and inclusion matters resulting from complaints and feedback.
3. Provide opportunities for people with disability to comment on access to events and services to improve Synergy services, facilities and communications.

Outcome 6

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Synergy.

Strategies:

1. Engage a customer consultation group of individuals with lived experience of disability, to provide feedback on products and services offered by Synergy.
2. Provide information regarding public consultation in alternative formats for customers with disability on request.
3. Ensure community and stakeholder engagement initiatives adhere to Synergy's access and inclusion event checklist.

Outcome 7

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with Synergy.

Strategies:

1. Continue to partner with disability employment specialist providers and proactively seek to employ candidates with lived experience of disability.
2. Provide training, resources and support for employees who are involved in hiring prospective employees, including how to implement inclusive recruitment processes to support the recruitment of people with disability.
3. Facilitate ongoing training and support for managers of employees with disability to improve retention and disability confidence.
4. Offer ongoing support and development opportunities to employees with disability to assist with career progression.





[synergy.net.au](https://www.synergy.net.au)

Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation
trading as Synergy ABN 58 673 830 106