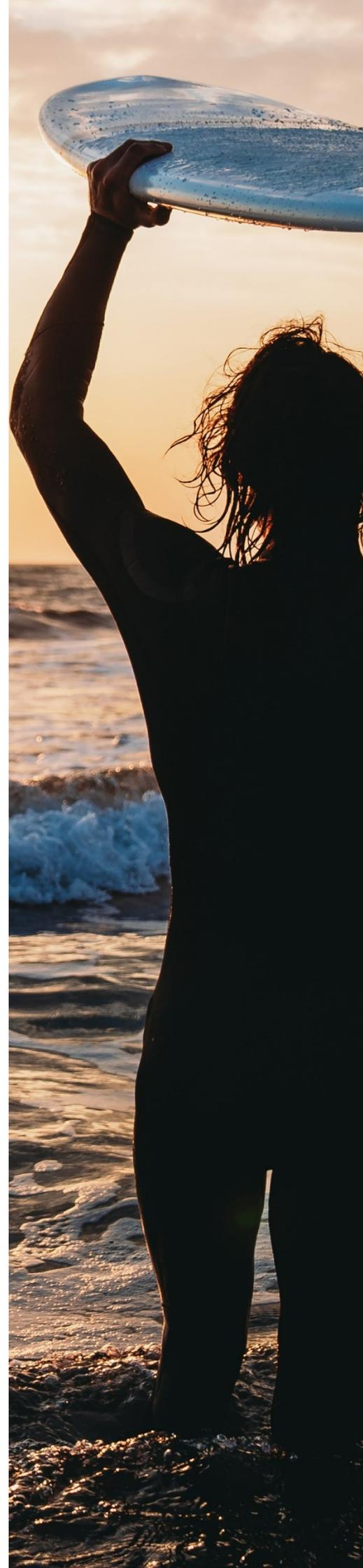


WATERMARK SEARCH INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATE BRIEF

**Branch Manager, New Framework Policy
National Disability Insurance Agency**
March 2026



Presented by Watermark Search International.
Trusted for over 40 years, focused on the future.



Role Summary

Branch Manager New Framework Policy

- **SES Band 1 | National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)**
- **Full-time | Non-ongoing (2 years) | Location: Various**
- **Shape the future of the NDIS. Lead reform that matters.**

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is seeking an exceptional senior leader to join its **Policy and Practice Leadership Division** as **Branch Manager, New Framework Policy (SES Band 1)**.

This is a rare opportunity to lead one of the most critical policy reform agendas in Australia — shaping how people access, plan for and receive supports under the NDIS, while ensuring the Scheme is sustainable, equitable and participant-centred.

This role provides strategic leadership for the development and implementation of key policy and operational reforms associated with **New Framework Planning**, including the delivery of the new holistic support needs assessment for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

About the role

Reporting to the General Manager, Policy and Practice Leadership, the Branch Manager is responsible for providing strong expertise and leadership across a complex policy and operational environment. The role has responsibility for a large, multidisciplinary workforce located across multiple sites.

Key responsibilities include:

- Setting and delivering the strategic direction of the New Framework Policy Branch, aligned with NDIA and Government reform priorities
- Leading the development of legislative instruments, operational policies and planning frameworks to support New Framework Planning
- Delivering the design and implementation of the new support needs assessment, including associated tools, procurement and contract management
- Strengthening participant risk and safeguarding frameworks, consistent with Royal Commission recommendations
- Providing high-level, evidence-based advice to senior executives and Ministers on complex policy, operational and governance matters

What we are looking for

The NDIA is seeking an SES leader who brings:

- Extensive experience in complex policy environments, with deep understanding of the legislative and operational framework in a government context (or comparable social policy systems)
- Proven capacity to lead large, diverse teams and deliver high-quality outcomes in dynamic and high-pressure environments
- Strong understanding of parliamentary, budgetary, intergovernmental and political decision-making processes is essential.
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders
- Sound judgement, integrity and resilience, with the ability to navigate complexity and ambiguity
- Experience with managing procurement and contracts is highly desirable

The successful candidate will operate strategically, model respectful leadership behaviours, and demonstrate a strong commitment to putting participants at the centre of policy and practice.

The ability to provide expert advice and recommendations on key, often complex, aspects of the NDIA's reform agenda and scheme design in alignment with the framework of broader Government policy parameters will also be advantageous.

About the NDIA

The NDIA is an independent statutory agency of the Australian Government responsible for implementing the National Disability Insurance Scheme — one of the most significant social reforms in Australia's history. The NDIA is committed to delivering a participant-centred, evidence-informed and sustainable Scheme that improves outcomes for people with disability.

What you should know

To be eligible for employment with the NDIA, you must be an Australian citizen. A candidate's suitability for employment with the Agency will be assessed through a pre-employment screening process. This will include a criminal history check and the ability to obtain and maintain an Australian Government security clearance, at the Negative Vetting 1 level. This will be arranged for you, if successful.

The NDIA will provide reasonable adjustments for candidates to participate equitably in the recruitment process and discuss workplace adjustments to fulfil the requirements of the role.

We strongly and actively encourage applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences, particularly people with disability, and including First Nations peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and LGBTIQ+.

Application Instructions

Please apply via <https://watermarksearchinternational.snapforms.com.au/form/ndia> quoting Ref No A006299

Your application should include:

- A complete current resume
- A one-page pitch (maximum 750 words) quoting reference A006299

Your pitch is an opportunity to tell us why you are the right candidate for the Branch Manager, New Framework Policy position. It should highlight relevant examples and accomplishments that demonstrate that you have the capabilities, skills and attributes to deliver at the SES Band 1 level in a complex Policy and Framework setting:

- Why you want to work in the Policy and Practice Leadership division.
- What you will contribute to the role.
- How you will build and champion the NDIA's vision to improve outcomes for people with disability through innovation and collaboration.

Be sure to highlight relevant examples and accomplishments that demonstrate your suitability for the role. You can use the SES Band 1 Work Level Standards to ensure you pitch at the right level.

The closing date for applications is 11.59 pm AEST Sunday, 5th April 2026

RecruitAbility applies to this vacancy. Under the RecruitAbility scheme, you will be invited to participate in further assessment activities for the vacancy if you choose to opt-in to the scheme, declare you have a disability and meet the minimum requirements for the vacancy. All requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered and managed in consultation with you.

Further information can be found at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/recruitability>

Reasonable adjustments and support for applicants

Reasonable adjustments are available to support applicants through the process.

Reasonable adjustments could include:

- An Auslan interpreter
- Extra reading time during assessment activities, or
- Accessible software.

If you would like to receive a comprehensive candidate pack, or discuss the role in further detail please contact Chris Grant on 0493 714 171 or Bronwen Kerr on 02 9233 1200 or email search@watermarksearch.com.au.



SES Band 1 – Branch Manager – New Framework Policy



Candidate pack

Contents

SES Band 1 – Branch Manager, New Framework Policy, candidate pack	1
Contents	2
Acknowledgement of Country	3
Vacancy details	5
About the role	6
About the Policy and Practice Leadership Division	6
Desirable skills, experience and qualifications	7
About you	8
About the NDIA	10
Values	10
Eligibility information	12
How to apply	13
SES Leadership	14
APS Values	14
Charter of Leadership Behaviours	15
SES Performance	17
SES Recruitment	17
Minimum requirements	17
RecruitAbility	18
Application process	19



Acknowledgement of Country

The NDIA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

Welcome message



Welcome to the Branch Manager, New Framework Policy candidate pack. I'm the Acting Deputy CEO, Service Design and Improvement at the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). I'm thrilled to share this pack with you, which is designed to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the role. It will assist you with your application.

This pack is more than just an application guide. It's a window into our values, culture and how you can create lasting change for Australians living with disability. We're looking for candidates who are passionate about policy and practice leadership. We want to know about the unique contributions you can bring to our team.

The New Framework Policy branch is a brilliant team to work in. You will lead a team of policy leaders developing legislative instruments to guide how the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) works, writing operational policies to inform reform implementation, supporting the management of procurement of a new tool, responding to correspondence and driving policy thinking in areas such as how people access the NDIS, what supports are funded, and NDIS plans can be managed.

This is a dynamic environment where diverse ideas and perspectives are key to our mission. Our culture is a highlight for our staff members. You will enjoy a culture of continuous learning and collaboration. Your work directly contributes to enhancing the lives of Australians with disability.

The New Framework Policy branch is a place where your skills and passion for social impact can flourish. This makes every day at work both challenging and rewarding.

We look forward to receiving your application and finding out how you can contribute to our team.

Aaron Verlin

Acting Deputy CEO, Service Design and Improvement

Vacancy details

Table 1. Vacancy details

Category	Description
Job reference	A006299
Classification	SES Band 1
Employment type	Full-time
Job type	Non-ongoing – 2years
Group	Service Design and Improvement
Division	Policy and Practice Leadership
Location/s	Various
Clearance Level	Negative Vetting Level 1
Contact officer(s)	Chris Grant, Partner, 0493 714 171 Bronwen Kerr, Head of Engagement, 02 9233 1200

About the role



The Branch Manager, New Framework Policy, is an SES Band 1 position reporting to the General Manager, Policy and Practice Leadership. The position has 6-8 direct reports, and responsibility for a team of 30 to 60 staff located across multiple locations.

This role is accountable for:

- Setting and delivering the strategic direction for the branch, ensuring alignment across the NDIA, and contributing to strategic planning, and NDIS reforms.
- Delivering the ongoing policy and design settings for New Framework Planning, in particular the new holistic support needs assessment, inline with timelines set by the NDIA and Government.
- Leading the development of the Personal and Environmental Circumstances Questionnaire (PECQ), targeted modules, and policy positions on the administration of the needs assessment tool in the NDIS context.
- Ensuring the NDIA has an appropriate participant risk and safeguarding framework, including the implementation of the participant safeguarding policy, in alignment with the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.
- Managing the procurement and management of contracts associated with the tool(s) used in the new support needs assessment, including validation, testing, and implementation.
- Delivering operational processes that assist the implementation of New Framework Planning.
- Providing high-level, comprehensive advice to senior executives and Ministers on complex policy, financial, operational, and governance matters.

About the Division

The Policy and Practice Leadership Division is responsible for operational policy and practice settings for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), informed by the evidence base and evaluation of participant experience and outcomes.

The division leverages strategic partnerships and drives the NDIA's research agenda, to align with reform goals, and to facilitate innovation and outcomes in line with the NDIS Participant Outcomes Framework.

It is responsible for practice leadership and the monitoring of practice to improve participant experience and consistent delivery of the Scheme.

The Division is made up of the following teams:

- Scheme Policy Branch
- Participant Outcomes, Evidence and Evaluation Branch
- New Framework Policy Branch

About the Branch:

The New Framework Policy Branch is responsible for the delivery of the legislative instruments relating to New Framework Planning, including overseeing the management of the tools required in the new Support Needs Assessment. The branch is also responsible for developing the operational policies to support the assessment, budgeting and planning processes including quality assurance, and further strengthening participant risk and safeguarding processes.

Desirable skills, experience and qualifications

Relevant tertiary qualifications are desirable. In addition, memberships of relevant professional associations or institutes will be well regarded

For more information regarding the capabilities required of SES APS leaders, please consider the relevant Leadership Profile in line with the [APS Integrated Leadership System](#) (linked).

About you



We're seeking a senior leader with deep knowledge and experience across a range of areas of NDIS policy and operation, particularly the NDIS legislative framework and NDIA's operational processes to support the delivery of New Framework Planning.

A strong understanding of parliamentary, budgetary, intergovernmental and political decision-making processes, along with awareness of the NDIS stakeholder environment is essential.

Experience with managing procurement and contracts is highly desirable.

The ability to provide expert advice and recommendations on key, often complex, aspects of the NDIA's reform agenda and scheme design in alignment with the framework of broader Government policy parameters will also be advantageous.

What we're looking for in our ideal candidate:

- **senior operational leadership experience (and excellent people skills).** You bring energy and expertise to shape strategic work programs, set clear priorities, and lead a very diverse team to consistently deliver high-quality operational outcomes.
- **a track record of great relationship building,** with a proven capability to build, shape, maintain and leverage effective relationships and partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.
- **focuses strategically.** You think and operate strategically, setting clear and strategic direction for the team to deliver impactful outcomes against accountabilities.
- **ability to navigate complexity and exhibit integrity, drive and resilience.** You bring sharp judgement and excel in dynamic, fast paced and high-pressure environments.
- **A natural connector and collaborator** who thrives on working across teams, identifying shared goals and working in a highly matrixed organisation undertaking significant reform.
- **Curiosity and preparedness to learn,** fostering a learning culture to ensure that policy and practice is informed by the evidence base and evaluation of participant experience and outcomes.

- **A leader who promotes respectful standards of behaviour**, reflects on their own biases and behaviours, and demonstrates how they are contributing to promoting a respectful culture, workplace, programs and policies that empower staff and puts participants at the heart of everything we do.

About the NDIA



The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is an independent statutory agency of the Australian Government. We are implementing the world leading National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This is one of the biggest social reforms in Australia's history. The NDIS is designed to enhance the quality of life of, and increase economic and social participation for, people with disability.

Our [Corporate Plan 2023-2027](#) is the NDIA's key planning document. It identifies our purpose, outcome, programs and key activities over the next 3 years.

Learn more about the NDIA on the [NDIS website](#).

Values

The NDIA values are:



We value people.

We put participants at the heart of everything we do.



We grow together.

We work together to deliver quality outcomes.



We aim higher.

We are resilient and always have the courage to do better.



We take care.

We own what we do, and we do the right thing. Our values reflect our passion and commitment to building a positive, participant-centred culture.

A safe place to be your authentic self and thrive

The NDIA takes pride in actively creating a culturally safe, inclusive, accessible and caring workplace.

We are committed to employing a diverse workforce and empowering them to thrive.

Our people reflect the rich life experiences and broad identities of all Australians. Our Office of Agency Accessibility and Inclusion is here to support you at work. We have a disability action plan and other inclusion plans to help you succeed

At the NDIA, we work to nurture and sustain a supportive, inclusive and culturally safe workplace. This celebrates and reflects the people we serve and the broader Australian community. We acknowledge and welcome everyone including people with disability, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual, Sistergirl, Brotherboy Plus (LGBTIQASB+), varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds, mature age workers and those new to the workforce. We also honour gender equality in all we do.

We are dedicated to collaborating and growing together. To do this, we leverage the vast knowledge, expertise and unique lived experiences of our team members.

By joining us, you will become a key part of a community driven by respect, support and authenticity. We engage in initiatives that are challenging and inspiring. They are shaping a fairer Australia.

Read more on our [Inclusion and Diversity page](#).

Eligibility information

To be eligible for employment with the NDIA, you must meet certain conditions before your employment can begin. These are set out within the *Public Service Act 1999*. Requirements include:

- **Employment Suitability Check/Police Check** – This includes the ability to obtain and maintain an Australian Government security clearance at the Negative Vetting 1 level, if you are successful in getting a job.
- **Citizenship** – You must be an Australian citizen to be eligible for employment with the NDIA.

How to apply



To apply, send your application documents (as outlined below) to search@watermarksearch.com.au quoting Application No: **A006299** and Title, **Branch Manager, New Framework Policy**

Your application should include:

- A current resume
- A succinct pitch (maximum 1000 words)

Your pitch is your opportunity to tell us why you are the right candidate for this role, why you want to work in the Branch Manager, New Framework Policy position within the Service Design and Improvement Group, Policy and Practice Leadership Division and what you can contribute. Make sure to highlight relevant examples and accomplishments that show your ability to deliver at the SES band 1 level. Your pitch needs to demonstrate that you have the capabilities, skills and attributes as stated in the 'About you' section. You can use the [SES Band 1 Leadership Profile](#) from the Integrated Leadership System to ensure you pitch at the right level.

The closing date for applications is **11:59pm, Sunday April 5th 2026**

Reasonable adjustments and support for applicants

Reasonable adjustments are available to support applicants through the process.

Reasonable adjustments could include:

- An Auslan interpreter
- Extra reading time during assessment activities, or
- Accessible software.

If you would like help understanding this document, would like to receive it in another format or would like to discuss the provision of reasonable adjustments please contact Chris Grant, Partner, Watermark Search or Bronwen Kerr, Head of Engagement using the National Relay Service 133 677

=<http://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs> or email search@watermarksearch.com.au

SES Leadership

SES leaders enable collective performance through exemplifying leadership behaviours. Within the NDIA, all SES are expected to encompass the APS Values and the [Secretaries Charter of Leadership behaviours \(DRIVE\)](#), as a core function of their role.

APS Values

Our values are the foundation of all we do. The principals of good public administration are embodied in the APS Values. The APS Values require that we are:



Impartial

The APS is apolitical and provides the government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.



Committed to service

The APS is professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and works collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the government.



Accountable

The APS is open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.



Respectful

The APS respects all people, including their rights and their heritage.



Ethical

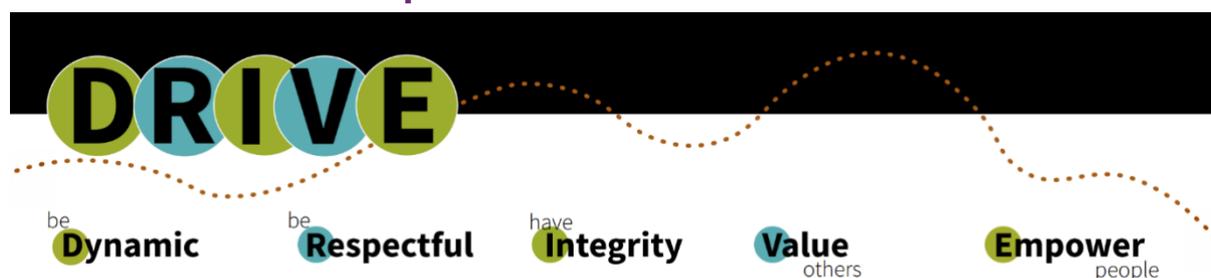
The APS demonstrates leadership, is trustworthy and acts with integrity, in all that it does.



Stewardship

The APS builds its capability and institutional knowledge and supports the public interest now and into the future, by understanding the long term impacts of what it does.

Charter of Leadership Behaviours



The Charter of Leadership Behaviours sets out the behaviours that we, as Secretaires, expect of ourselves and our SES, and want to see in leaders at all levels of the APS.

The Charter focuses on behaviours that support modern systems leadership within the construct of the APS Values and Code of Conduct.

These behaviours build on the Integrated Leadership System and APS Leadership Capability Framework.

Be Dynamic

- Have an inquiring mind and be willing to innovate and change
- Understand the system you operate in
- Practise new ways of deploying yourself in your system to achieve the best outcome
- Embrace risks and actively manage them
- Enjoy your work and have a positive attitude
- Don't walk past problems—be part of the solution

Be Respectful

- Treat people with decency and respect
- Embrace diversity and actively seek out views and perspectives that challenge your own
- Build an inclusive culture that enables people to make their best contribution

Have Integrity

- Be open, honest and accountable
- Take responsibility for what happens around you
- Have courage to call out unacceptable behaviour

Value others

- Be an active listener
- Value others' contributions, perspectives and wisdom
- Collaborate not compete to succeed as a team
- Understand people and their views and motivations in order to lead, influence and communicate well
- Build relationships

Empower people

- Trust, empower and grow others
- Interpret and provide context—don't do people's jobs for them
- Build capability and networks
- Expect people to deliver and find positive ways to hold them to account
- Accept people won't always get it right—and support them to bounce back

SES Performance

We encourage you to review at the [Senior Executive Service Performance | Australian Public Service Commission website](#) to help write your application.

SES Recruitment

The NDIA SES Recruitment processes are aligned with [Senior Executive Service recruitment | Australian Public Service Commission](#). Our selection processes are designed to ensure the best available leader for the job.

Minimum requirements

SES Band 1 [Work Level Standards](#) and [SES Band 1 Leadership Profile](#).

RecruitAbility

Diverse Skills, perspectives and abilities are appreciated. They are valued and crucial to our workplace culture.

The NDIA is committed to supporting the employment and career development of people with disability.



RecruitAbility applies to this vacancy

Under the RecruitAbility scheme, you will be invited to take part in further assessment activities for the vacancy if you choose to opt-in to the scheme. To do so, you must declare you have a disability. You must still meet the minimum requirements for the vacancy. All requests for adjustments will be considered and managed in consultation with you.

To find out more, visit the [APSC website](#).

In the NDIA, we believe building a culture of inclusion begins with a fair application process. If you have any questions, require support or reasonable adjustments, we are here to help. The Agency's contact person in the Vacancy Details section of this Candidate Pack can provide confidential assistance. You need only ask.

Application process

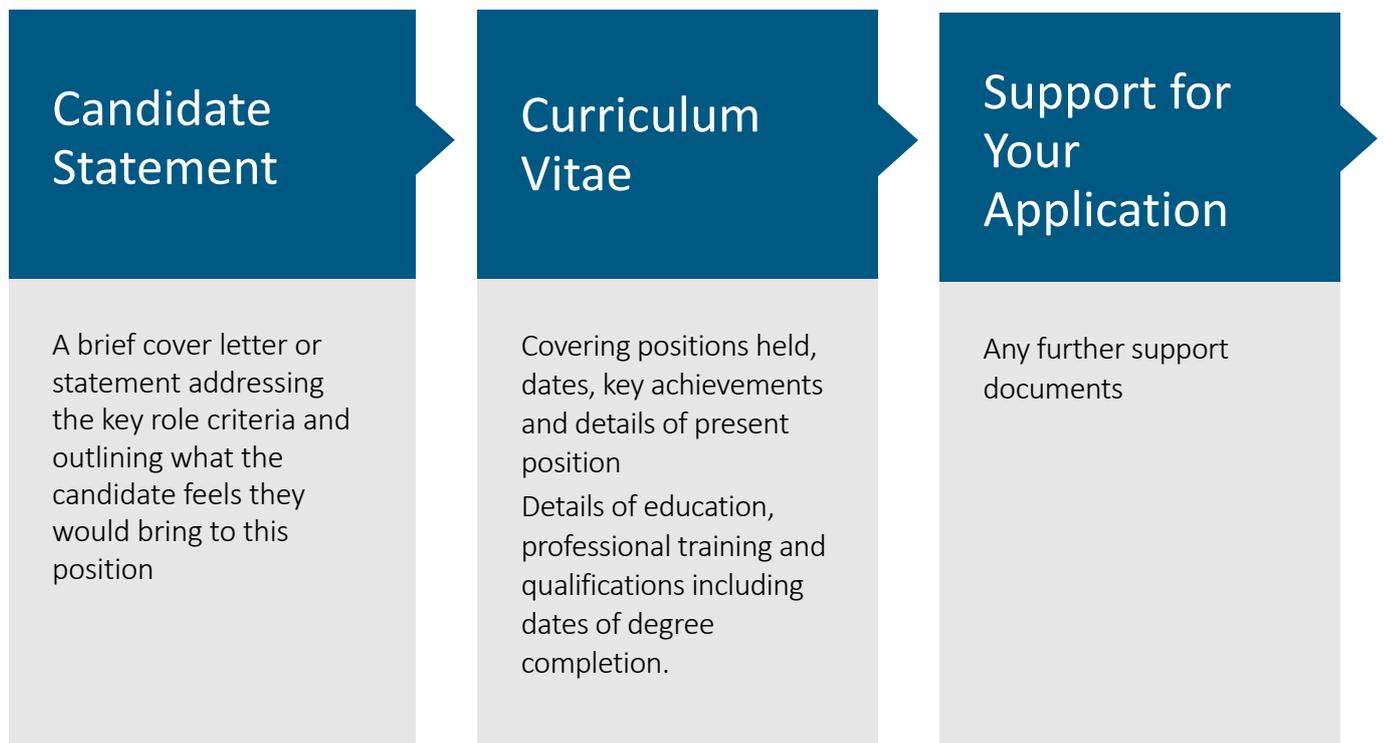
Table 2. High level application process

Step	Details
1. Apply	Submit your application through the https://watermarksearchinternational.snapforms.com.au/form/ndia website.
2. Shortlist	You will be shortlisted based on how well your resume and pitch demonstrate your skills for the vacancy.
3. Assessment	Shortlisted applicants may be invited to an interview with a panel. Any additional assessments will be discussed with you if required.
4. Reference check	We may contact your referees to further assess your suitability.
5. Outcome	The recruitment panel will finalise the outcome. All applicants will be notified of their result.
6. Merit pool	A merit pool may be established for 18 months and may be used to fill future vacancies.

How to Apply

An executive search is being undertaken by Watermark alongside the public advertisement.

Applications for the position will need to include the following:



For a confidential discussion please call Chris Grant on 0493 714 171 or Bronwen Kerr on 0439 489 428 of Watermark Search International who are leading the search on behalf of Client.

Chris Grant

Partner, Executive Search
0493 714 171

Bronwen Kerr

Head of Engagement
0439 489 428

Mia Som

Project Administrator
03 8629 1317

Please send your application quoting **Ref No A006299** to Watermark Search International at <https://watermarksearchinternational.snapforms.com.au/form/ndia>. We will reply to the email address used for your application.

Closing date: 11.59 AEST Sunday 5th April 2026

Our Capabilities



Executive Search

Founded in 1979, we are one of the longest established Australian executive search firms. Even though we are, above all else, an Australian based firm, we have an established track record in attracting and then securing, overseas candidates.

We have considerable expertise in senior executive appointments across a broad range of public and private sector organisations. Our firm has been built on a substantial body of work undertaken for publicly listed companies, private companies, professional services, state owned corporations, government agencies, departments and advisory boards.



Interim Executive

We provide immediate and high-level specialist executives with the experience to bring stability to and provide guardianship for a company during a period of change, executive absence or performance turnaround. We also assist with providing executives who deliver on projects, programs or specialist reviews. When clients are ready to appoint an executive, we normally complete the assignment within two weeks. Our latest survey shows that those executives remain in place for an average of 9 months.



Board Appointments

We believe that strong boards make for better organisations and improved business performance. In conducting searches we do not simply look for 'a name' but rather search for candidates with the relevant skills to add real value to a board. We often start our board search by working with the client to produce a Board Skills Matrix, which then informs the specific brief.

Our track record ensures familiarity with the specific, and often sensitive, challenges involved in appointing Non-Executive Directors and Chairs with the right skill, personal and cultural fit.



Thought Leadership

As thought leaders, we undertake various pieces of research and market analysis to form our Agile Leadership Lessons Podcast, Annual Interim Executive Survey and Board Diversity Index. To view our current reports please [click here](#).

Candidate Care



At Watermark, we recognise we have a duty of care to both our clients and the candidates. As an ambassador for the National Disability Insurance Agency, we recognise how important our role is in representing your brand, we take this responsibility seriously and treat successful and unsuccessful applicants with the same level of respect:

- All candidates filtered out before an initial interview are advised in writing.
- Candidates sourced by Watermark are called and given feedback on their performance throughout the selection process; this includes feedback about their experience, knowledge, capabilities and fit for the organisation as well as feedback about their interviewing and presentation techniques.
- Candidates who proceed to client interviews are debriefed and receive feedback either face-to-face or over the phone; this includes feedback as outlined above, plus specific feedback from any notes taken during the interview. We also provide feedback on areas for development such as interview skills, professional development and career guidance.

Candidate Charter



We respect our candidates as individuals and value them as an integral asset to our business. Our focus is on understanding their talents and aspirations and matching them to the right role and organisation. Whether we approach you about a specific role or you contact us to explore opportunities, we want you to experience our commitment to providing a seamlessly professional, constructive, integrity driven service where we care about our engagement with you.

Watermark Search are members of the [Association of Executive Search Consultants](#) (AESC) which means their Code of Professional Practice applies to us.

AESC members:

- Integrity - conduct themselves and their business activities with absolute integrity and are at all times open, honest, and worthy of trust.
- Excellence - focus on their clients' unique business needs, providing high quality service and using rigorous results-focused methodologies.
- Objectivity - serve as trusted advisors, exercising independent, objective judgment.
- Diversity and Inclusion - value diverse leadership. They identify the most qualified talent by searching and assessing without bias.
- Confidentiality - always respect any confidential information entrusted to them by clients and candidates.
- Avoiding Conflicts of Interest - avoid conflicts of interest with clients and candidates. Where a potential conflict may exist, members disclose and resolve those conflicts.

Copyright 2021 Association of Executive Search Consultants www.aesc.org

If ever you feel we have not lived up to this code of ethics, please tell us. We want to know.

Email our Managing Director at David.Evans@watermarksearch.com.au.

Contact Us

Melbourne

Level 11, 385 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
+61 3 8629 1333

Sydney

Level 32, 200 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000
+61 2 9233 1200

watermarksearch.com.au



Watermark
SEARCH INTERNATIONAL

