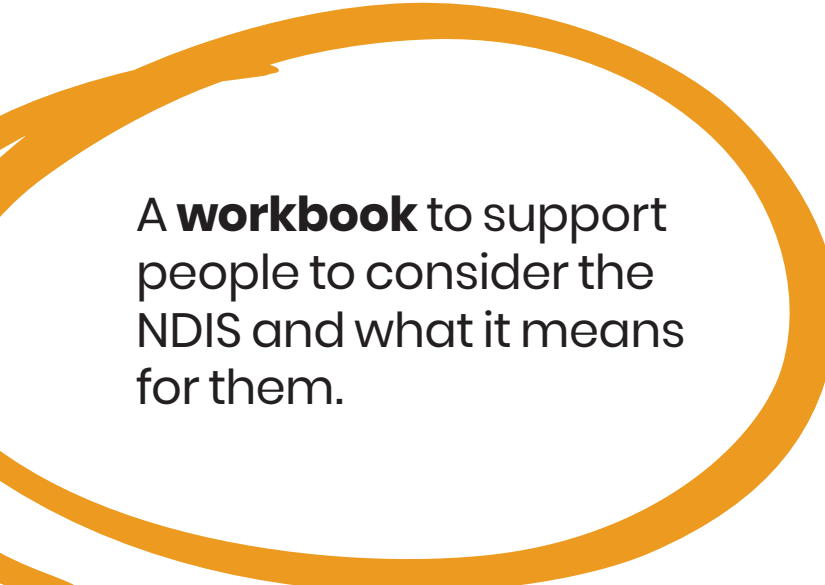


I can PREPARE

to access the **NDIS**



A **workbook** to support people to consider the NDIS and what it means for them.

Embark improves access to the NDIS for adults experiencing homelessness and mental illness



About this workbook

This workbook is designed to help start a conversation about the NDIS and whether you might be eligible and interested in submitting an Access Request Form.

It works best when completed with someone else who can support you. You can complete some or all of the sections in any order that works for you.

This workbook may help you decide whether to proceed with applying to the NDIS and what supporting information you may need to gather for that process. It has not been designed to submit to the NDIS as part of your application, but contains lots of useful information if you decide to proceed.

The purpose of this booklet is to:

- Facilitate a discussion about eligibility for the NDIS for psychosocial disability.
- Understand how your disability impacts your day-to-day life.
- Assist service providers to support you to decide if the NDIS might benefit you and if you are ready to apply.
- Determine if you meet the eligibility criteria for the NDIS.
- Assist you in getting ready to apply for the NDIS by helping to identify and gather the information required for an NDIS application.



The **National Disability Insurance Scheme** (NDIS) is an Australia-wide scheme that aims to improve the lives of people with disability, including psychosocial disability.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is the independent statutory agency whose role is to implement the NDIS.



Project Embark was delivered in 2019 by Independent Community Living Australia (ICLA) with the purpose of exploring and identifying opportunities to improve access to the NDIS for people who are homeless and experiencing psychosocial disability.

About you



Full name	
Date of birth	
Gender	Age
Citizenship	
Language spoken	
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	
Contact number	
Contact address	

What if the NDIS isn't for me?

Not everyone will be eligible for support under the NDIS and for others it may not be the right thing for them right now.

If the NDIS is not the best fit for you, ask staff from your current service provider to point you in the right direction to get supports that are better suited to you.



What is psychosocial disability?

Psychosocial disability is an internationally recognised term under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It relates to the social consequences of disability and how a person's mental health impacts their ability to fully participate in life.

People affected by psychosocial disability may have difficulty engaging in opportunities such as education, training, cultural activities, and achieving their goals and aspirations.

Not everyone who has a mental health condition will have a psychosocial disability, but for those who do, it can have a significant impact on their life and potential recovery.

Are you ready?

Applying for the NDIS can take time and will involve creating a detailed account of how your mental illness affects your life.

This process can be difficult, especially for people who have experienced trauma. Here are some points to discuss before you begin:

- 1 It's up to you – how much would you like to complete today? Perhaps there are some parts you might like to come back to later. There is no deadline to apply and the NDIS is an ongoing program.
- 2 Are there aspects of your history that others are familiar with or are already documented somewhere that might save you having to re-tell your story?
- 3 Who can support you while you talk through your mental health needs? Is there a friend, trusted support worker or family member you'd like to involve?
- 4 What practical support might make this easier?
- 5 If you don't have stable and secure accommodation, can you use the address of a trusted service provider or family member?
- 6 What about setbacks? It can take some time to gather the documentation. Not all applications are approved and some are only approved after several attempts. What might help you to stay motivated during this process?

Project Embark has created additional resources that you may wish to refer to throughout this conversation.

They include:

- Videos
- Templates
- Brochures

Let's check your eligibility

Are you **under 65 years old**?

Are you an **Australian citizen, permanent resident or Protected Special Category visa holder**?

Do you **live in Australia**?

Do you have a mental illness that is likely to be lifelong and substantially **impacts on your ability to participate in day-to-day life**?

*** If you answered yes to all of the above questions, you may be eligible for an NDIS plan.**



Your mental health

What types of mental health conditions do you live with? If you have been given a diagnosis and have found that helpful, share that information here. You can also include information about your symptoms.

Use your own words to describe how your condition affects you.

TIP: If you proceed with an Access Request Form, ensure that all your supporting documentation is consistent and not contradictory

What are the long-term impacts of your mental health condition? What are the ongoing side effects you experience from treatments? Describe them here.

Consider how your mental health affects your mobility, communication, social interaction, learning, self-management and self-care.

TIP: The way that impacts are described in supporting evidence is important, see Project Embark's resource **I Can Help People Join the NDIS** for more help.

What treatments, if any, have you had or are you currently receiving for your mental health condition?

List all types of treatment you have tried in the past. Remember, not all treatments come from a doctor. Some examples could include psychology or counselling, meditation, support groups, exercise, changing your diet or any alternative therapies.

TIP: If you proceed with an Access Request Form, you will need to show that your mental health condition is likely to be lifelong. It is important that all your supporting evidence is clear that while ongoing support may reduce the impact, no other treatments are likely to resolve the illness and the condition is likely to be lifelong.

**If you could change aspects of your everyday life, what would you change?
Is anything preventing you from living well?**

TIP: Think about what type of support might help reduce the impacts described above.

Challenges related to your mental health

In what situations or areas of your life do you experience difficulty due to your mental health condition?

For more help understanding these areas see Aftercare's **Defining Functional Impacts** tool!

Mobility and transport	Communication
Social interaction	Learning
Self-management For example managing money, making decisions or connecting to services.	Self-care

TIP: Think about what type of support might help reduce the impacts described.

1. For more help with understanding these areas, see Aftercare's 'Defining Functional Impacts' tool: <https://www.aftercare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Defining-Functional-Impacts-Tool.pdf>

Your goals

What could your life look like with the right support?

While setting goals occurs later (during the planning stage of the NDIS), we find it important to discuss goals early on. Discussing goals can help you to understand what you can get out of the NDIS. Consider what goals you might have in the following areas:

Mobility and transport	Communication
Social interaction	Learning
Self-management For example managing money, making decisions or connecting to services.	Self-care

Who is in your support network?

These questions may help you identify who could help support an application to the NDIS. This section might also help you to understand what additional support is available to you if you decide not to proceed with the NDIS.

Family, friends or community organisations	How do they support you?
Doctors, psychiatrists or other medical professionals	How do they support you?
Other: Trustee & guardian, Legal Aid etc.	How do they support you?

For information, support and advice about the NDIS:

Visit the NDIS website, contact
your local NDIA office or call
the 1800 number directly



www.ndis.gov.au

The NDIA: 1800 800 110



Acknowledgement

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National Disability Insurance Scheme.
Visit the NDIS website for more information
www.ndis.gov.au*