



QUEENSLAND STAKEHOLDER **ENGAGEMENT & CO-DESIGN** STRATEGY

Community Forums Summary Report

February 2025



Acknowledgements

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work. We pay our respects to the Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the community.

QDN also acknowledges people with disability who have come before us and died in institutional settings, as well as those who are still trapped in institutions or silenced by institutional practices. We take on the responsibilities of being clear about the rights of all people with disability and, where necessary, speak in an informed and considered manner, for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Background & Introduction

QDN was engaged to develop the Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy (the Strategy) as a priority action of the Queensland Disability Reform Framework. The Queensland Disability Reform Framework is framework for disability reform in Queensland in response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) and the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS Review).

The Strategy establishes structures to put people with disability and stakeholders at the heart of reform processes and guide collaborative work. You can read more about the strategy on the QDN website [here](#).

Initial steps in the implementation of the Strategy included engagement of a variety of diverse stakeholders via community forums. This report summarises the participation and key outputs of these forums.

About the Community Forums

The community forums were hosted by QDN in partnership with the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety and served several purposes including:

1. Connecting with people across Queensland communities
2. Sharing information about the approach to disability reform in Queensland
3. Letting people know about the Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy and extending an invitation for further involvement
4. Hearing feedback from Queensland communities about their key priorities for disability reform.

The community forums were held between 10 February and 14 February 2025. In total there were 11 community forums held across the state with a total of 787 registrations and 581 attendees. Eight face-to-face forums were facilitated in Ipswich, Brisbane, Toowoomba, Cairns, Rockhampton, the Gold Coast and Mackay and three forums were run online.



The forums were well attended by a range of stakeholders, including people with disability and their families or carers, advocacy, community and peak body organisations, disability service providers, state, local and federal government and community stakeholders. Figure 1 shows the range of forum attendees by stakeholder type.

During the forums, participants completed two activities. During the in-person forums these were completed by groups at tables and during the online forums participants could complete the activities individually and as a breakout group. Activity 1 was an opportunity for people to prioritise of reform areas. This involved deciding which three reform areas were the top priorities (reform areas are listed on page 3). Activity 2 was an opportunity for participants to indicate which reform areas should be prioritised in the 3–6-month timeframe, 6-12 month and 12–18-month timeframes.

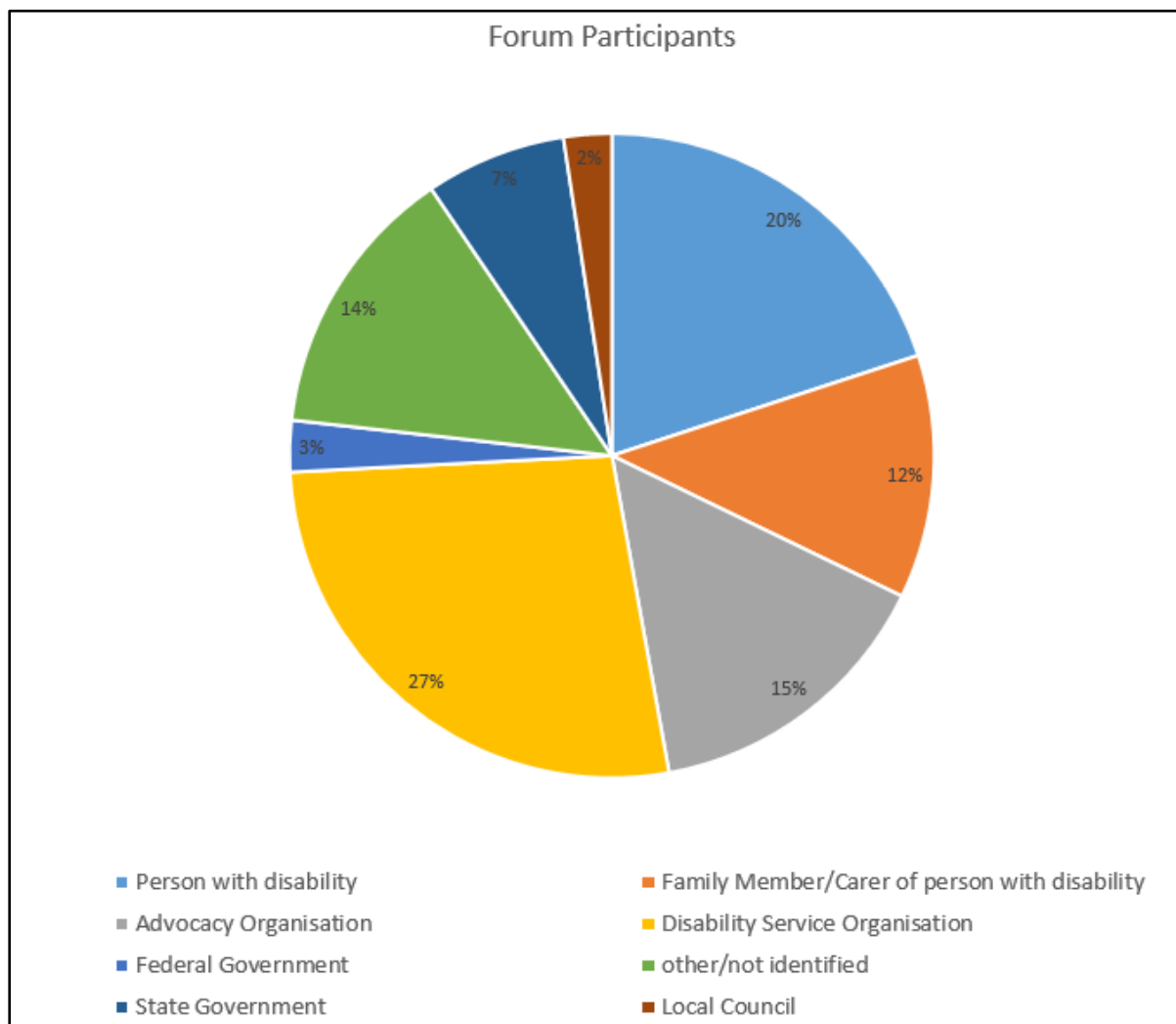


Figure 1: Forum participants disaggregated per stakeholder type



Queensland Disability Reform Framework

The Queensland Disability Reform Framework provides an outcomes based, structured approach to delivering disability reform in Queensland, following the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review.

The Queensland Disability Reform Framework sets out key focus areas and initial reforms under three broad objectives and 12 outcome areas.

The three objectives are:

1. Inclusion, rights and voices
2. Quality services and supports
3. Commitment and accountability.

Outcome areas under each objective are listed below:

Inclusion, rights and voices

1. Inclusion and participation
2. Empowerment
3. Partnership with people with disability

Quality services and supports

1. Mainstream services
2. Foundational Supports
3. NDIS participant experience
4. NDIS systems and frameworks
5. Quality and safeguards
6. Disability workforce

Commitment and accountability

1. Inclusive governance
2. Government partnerships
3. Evidence and accountability

For a full overview please see Appendix A or read the Queensland Disability Reform Framework [here](#) for more information.

Priorities identified by forum attendees

The community forums provided an opportunity for people to engage in the prioritisation of reform outcome areas. Through discussions and the two activities, participants identified their priorities for change and timeframes for their priorities.

Reform outcome areas of highest importance as voted by attendees at the community forums can be seen in Figures 2 - 9.



Across all the in person and online forums the three highest priority outcome areas were:

1. Foundational Supports (12%)
2. Mainstream services (11%)
3. Disability workforce (11%)

In addition to the quantitative data on outcome areas of highest importance, comments and discussion also identified some further insights:

- A. Integration of service systems is critical to delivering the right support at the right time
- B. Capacity building and upskilling mainstream services to work effectively with people with disability and their families
- C. Building the capacity of people with disability to understand their rights, self-advocacy and to navigate systems is foundational to achieving progress against all the outcome areas
- D. Quality and safeguards are needed across all the systems
- E. Attracting and retaining a quality workforce particularly in regional, rural and remote areas is important alongside training and development
- F. Funding models for disability services need updating (price of services needs to be updated and regulated)
- G. There is a need to ensure a joined up approach to care and support between service systems
- H. Clarity and linkages between mainstream services and foundational supports is important
- I. Expanding opportunities for employment pathways and delivering inclusive workplaces with a clear focus on people with disability as a key part of the workforce
- J. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, access to services is critical and support for navigating disability systems
- K. Housing and health within mainstream services were highlighted as areas for priority action.

“Emphasis should be placed on capacity building, ensuring that people with disability are the first to identify gaps and needs. Their authentic voices must be included in decision-making processes to influence change.” – Forum participant

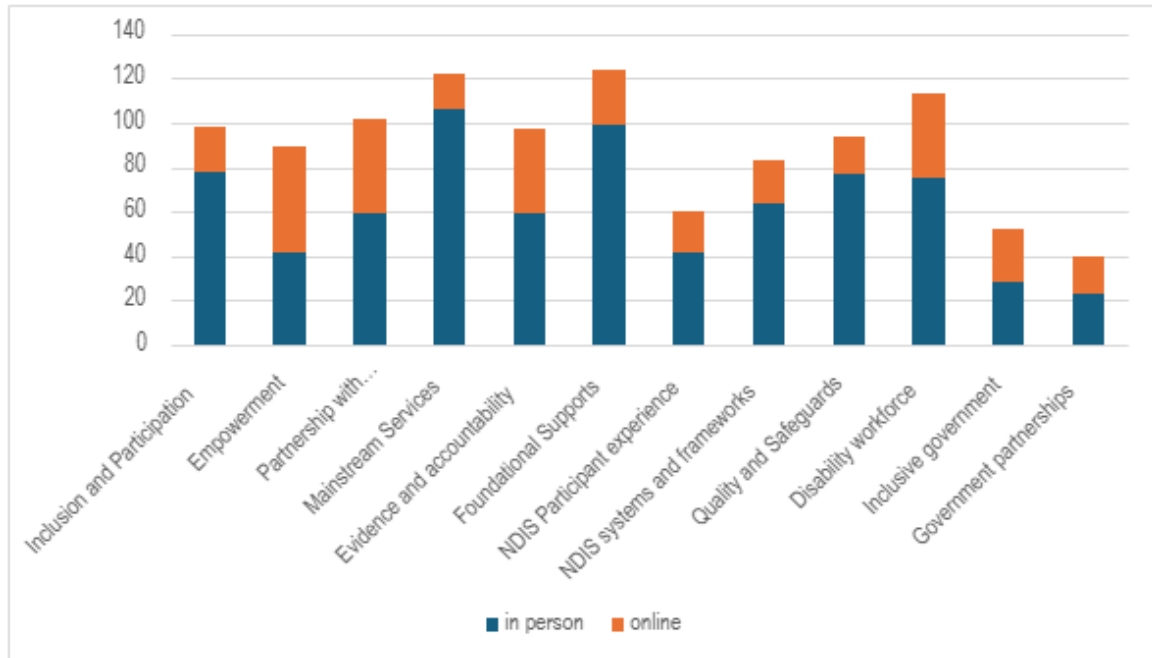


Figure 2: Number of votes in reform outcomes areas of highest importance across all forums

Regional Findings

The priorities of regional and metropolitan participants were mostly similar. The disability workforce featured as one of the highest areas of importance in regional and rural data. However, the empowerment outcome area was voted as less important regionally when compared to the overall ranking.

Key insights from regional forums which capture some of the qualitative findings:

- A. Workforce is key in regional communities
- B. Equitable access to mainstream services needs to be considered for regional areas
- C. There are limited services and structures in regional communities to build and scale foundational supports and this needs to be considered
- D. Work needs to be done to strengthen the integration of government services and sectors
- E. Local government has a strong role to play in place-based initiatives to contribute to the reforms.

“Clear policies and guidelines should promote equitable access, while training in accessibility and reducing exclusion for people with disability, especially in regional areas, is necessary.” –

Forum participant



These comments strongly affirmed the cross-cutting priorities outlined in the Queensland Disability Reform Framework of:

1. Improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders
2. Integrated services and joined up approaches
3. Addressing intersectional disadvantage
4. Access and service equity in regional, remote and rural areas.

Figures 3-9 show the views of attendees who participated in the forums at each location.

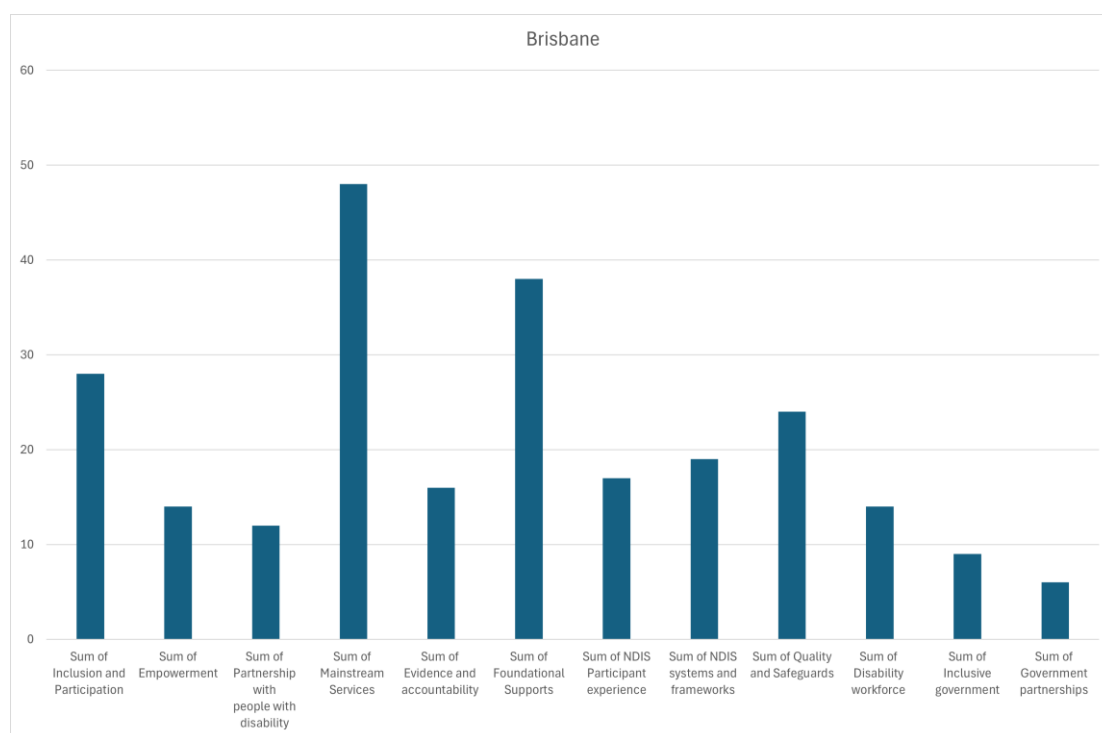


Figure 3: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the two Brisbane Forums

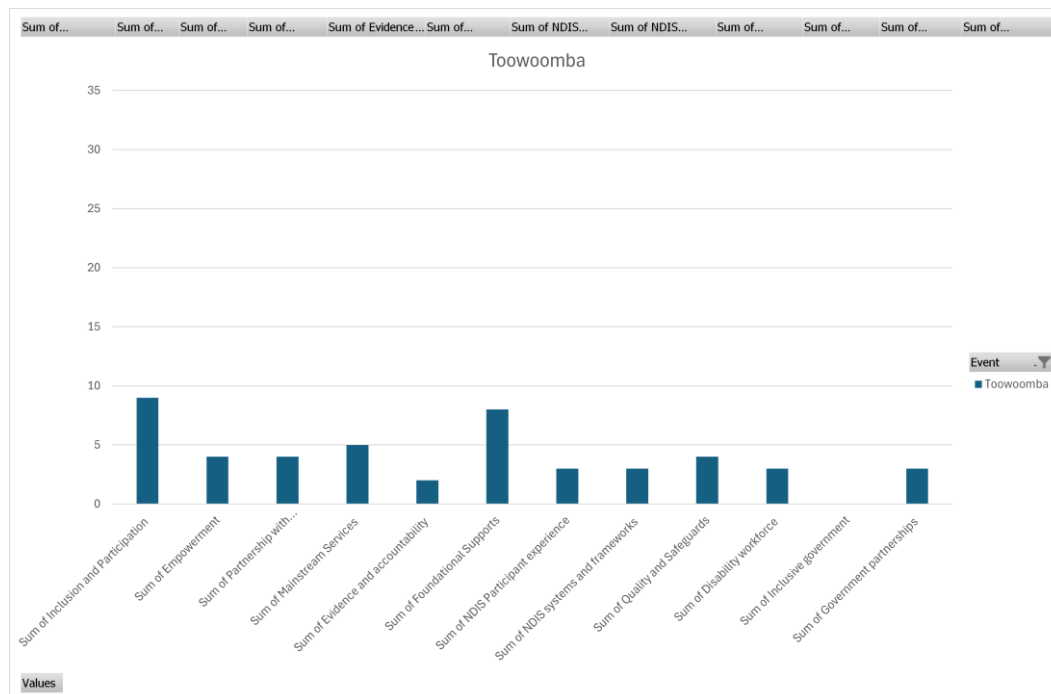


Figure 4: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the Toowoomba Forum

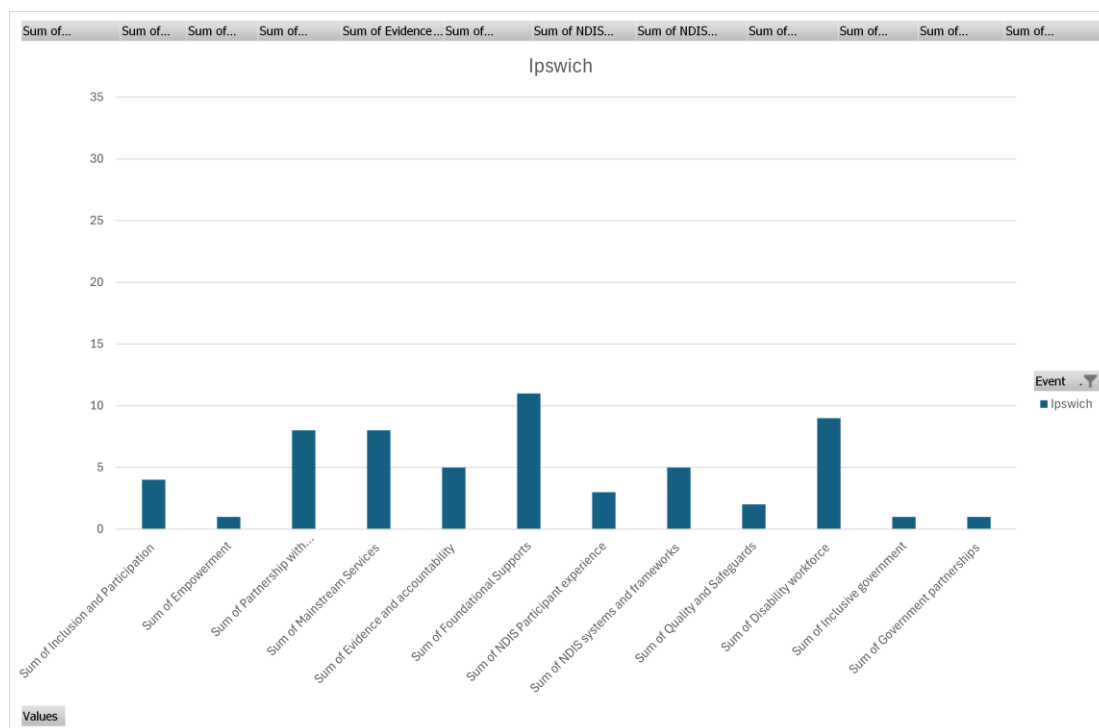


Figure 5: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the Ipswich Forum

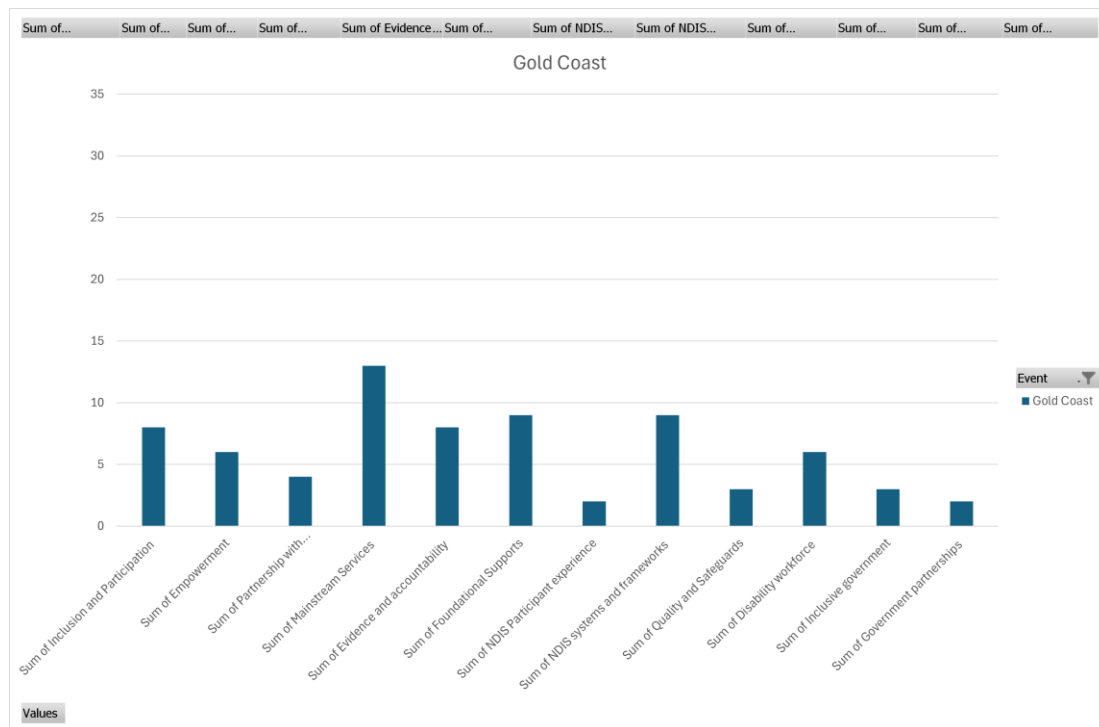


Figure 6: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the Gold Coast Forum

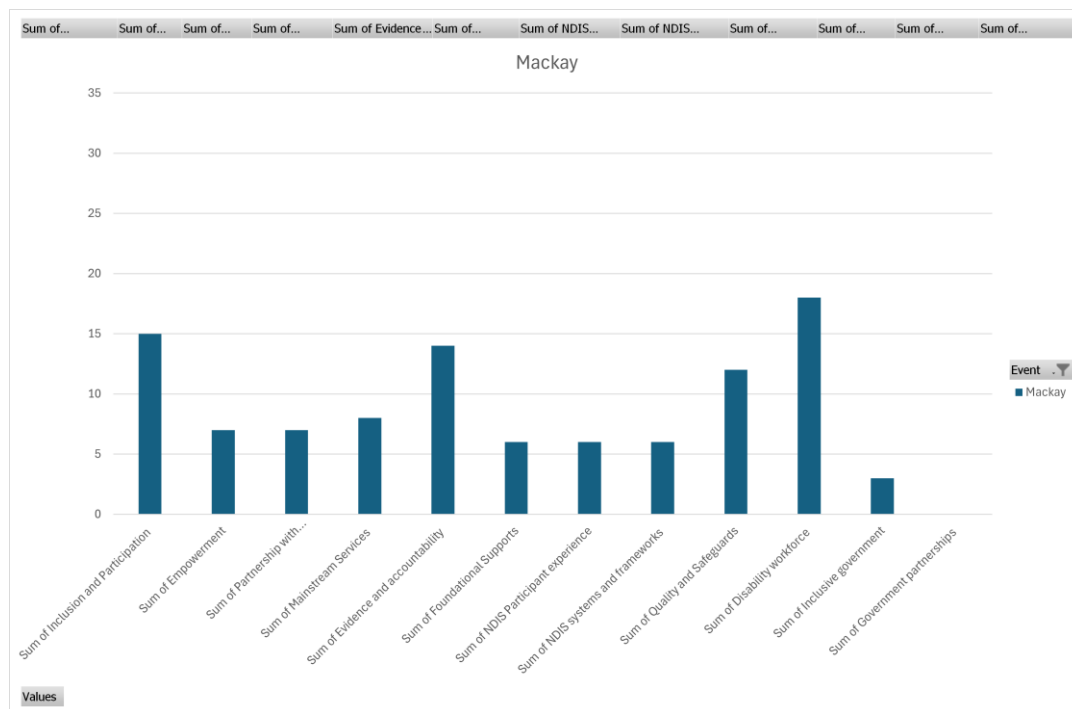


Figure 7: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the Mackay Forum

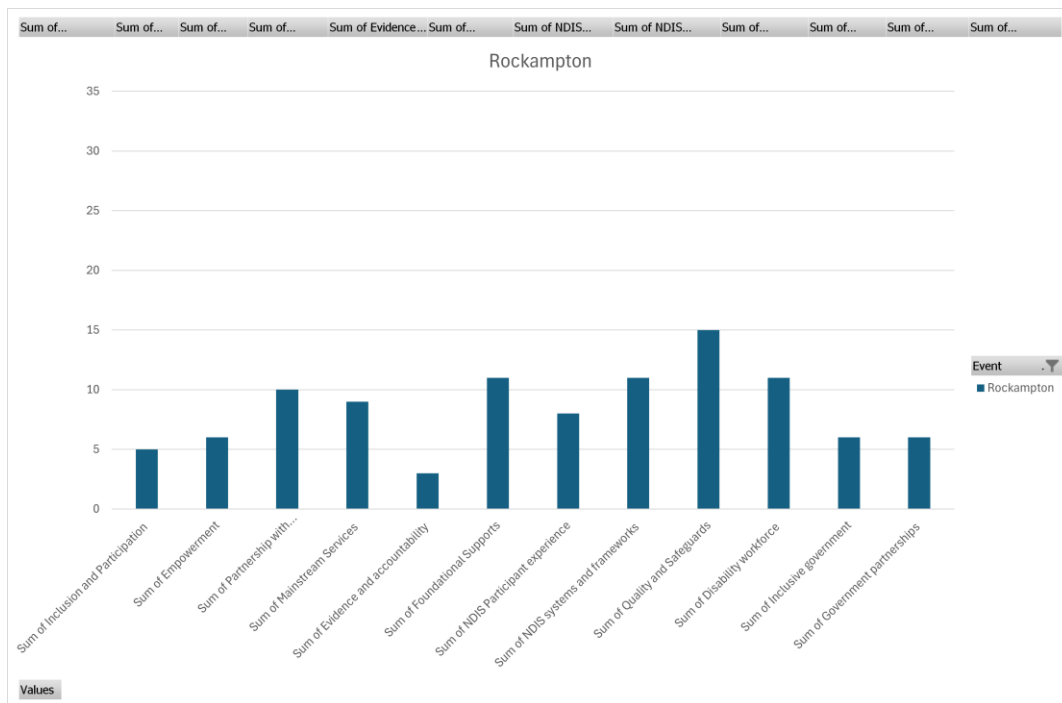


Figure 8: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the Rockhampton Forum

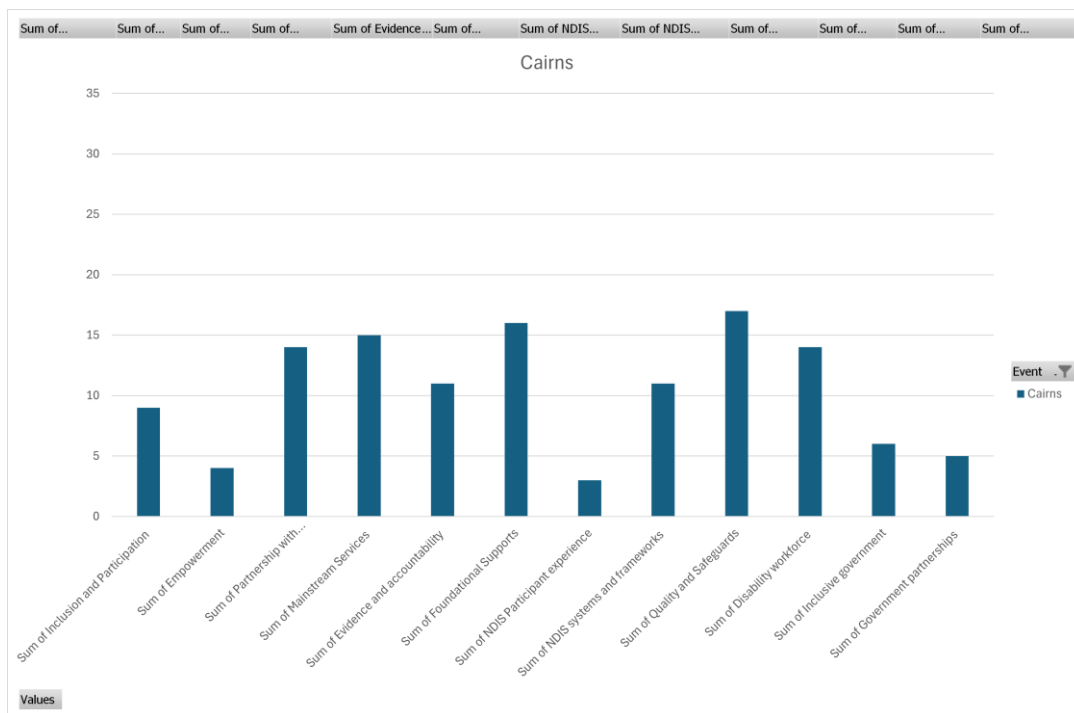


Figure 9: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the Cairns Forum



Figure 10 demonstrates the statewide perspective from attendees who participated in the online forums.

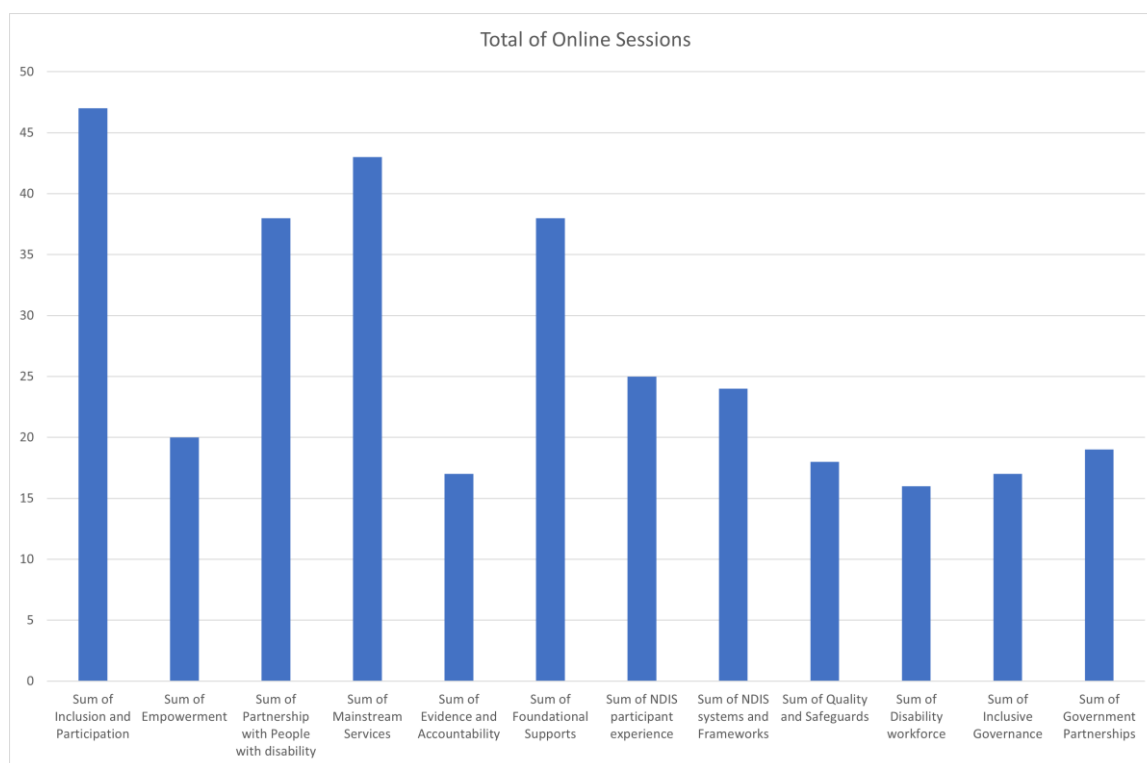


Figure 10: Number of votes in reform outcome areas of highest importance at the online State-wide forums



Timeframes for Priorities

Participants were given an opportunity to indicate which reform outcome areas should be prioritised in the 3–6-month timeframe, 6–12 month and 12–18-month timeframes.

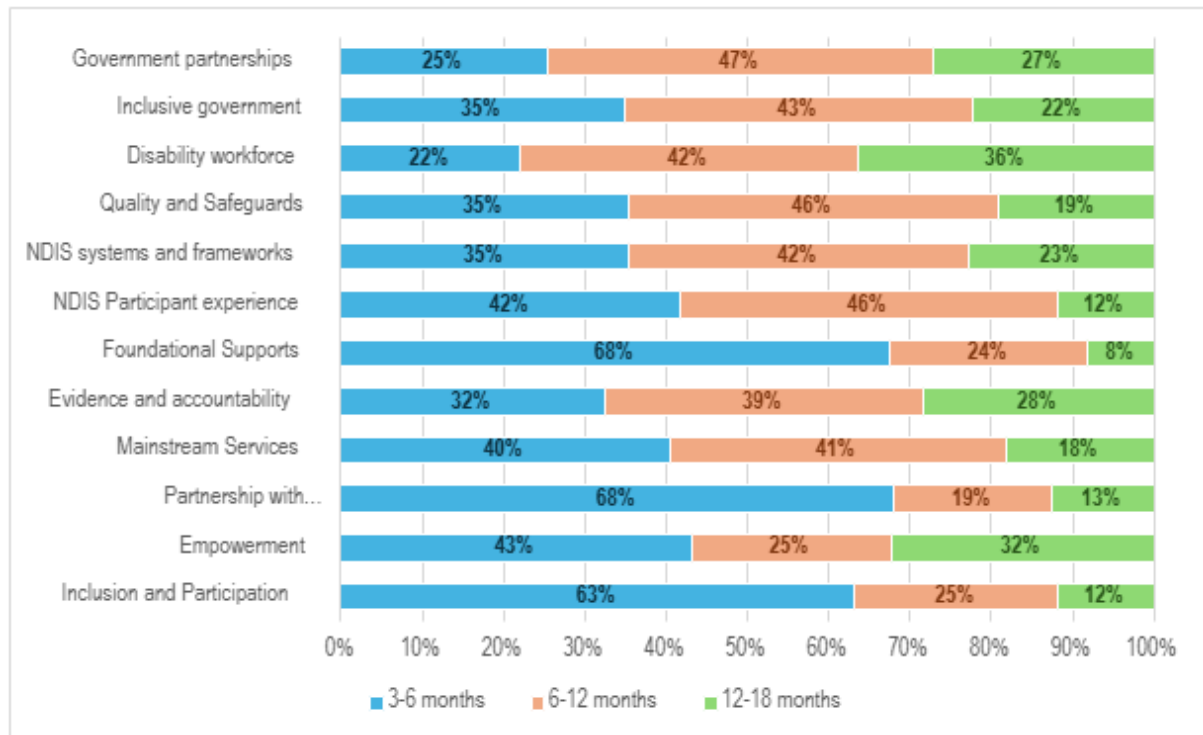


Figure 11: Timeframes for priorities across reform outcome areas

Foundational Supports and partnership with people with disability are seen as immediate priorities with 68% of attendees identifying both these outcome areas within the 3–6-month timeframe. This is followed by Inclusion and Participation (63%) and then to outcome areas with less than fifty percent – Empowerment (43%), NDIS participant experience (42%) and mainstream services (40%). Disaggregated data from the timeframe periods is shown in Figures 12 – 14.

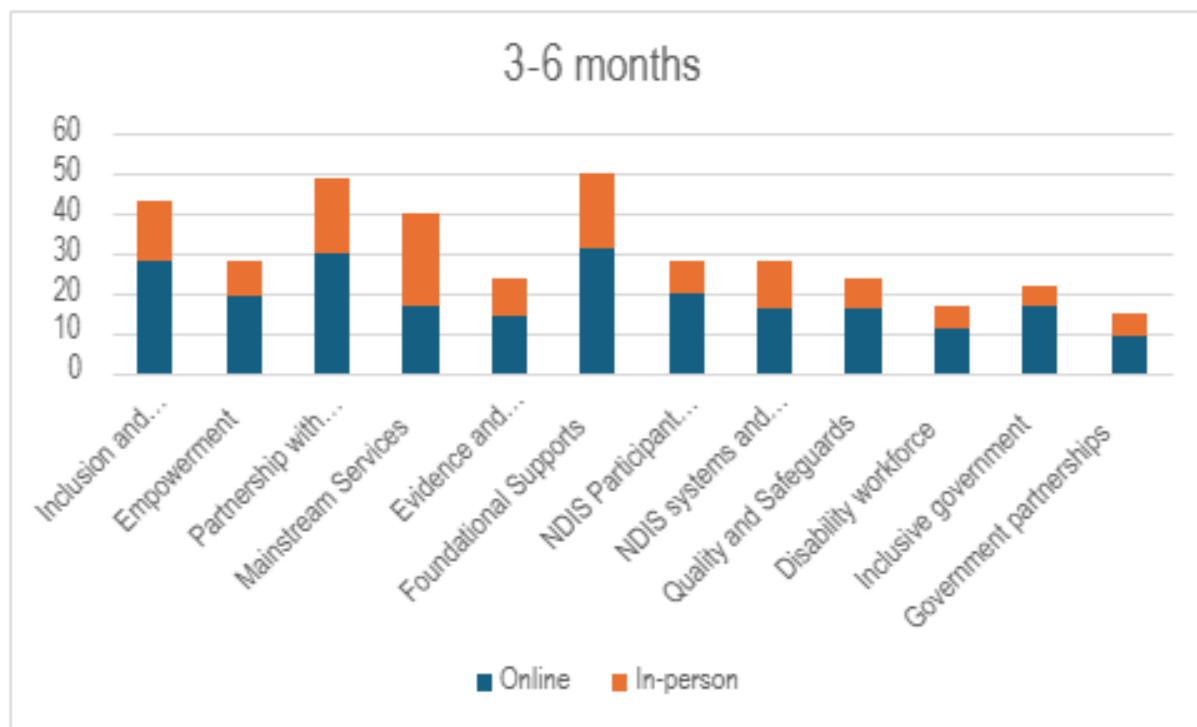


Figure 12: Priority reform outcome areas for the 3-6 month period

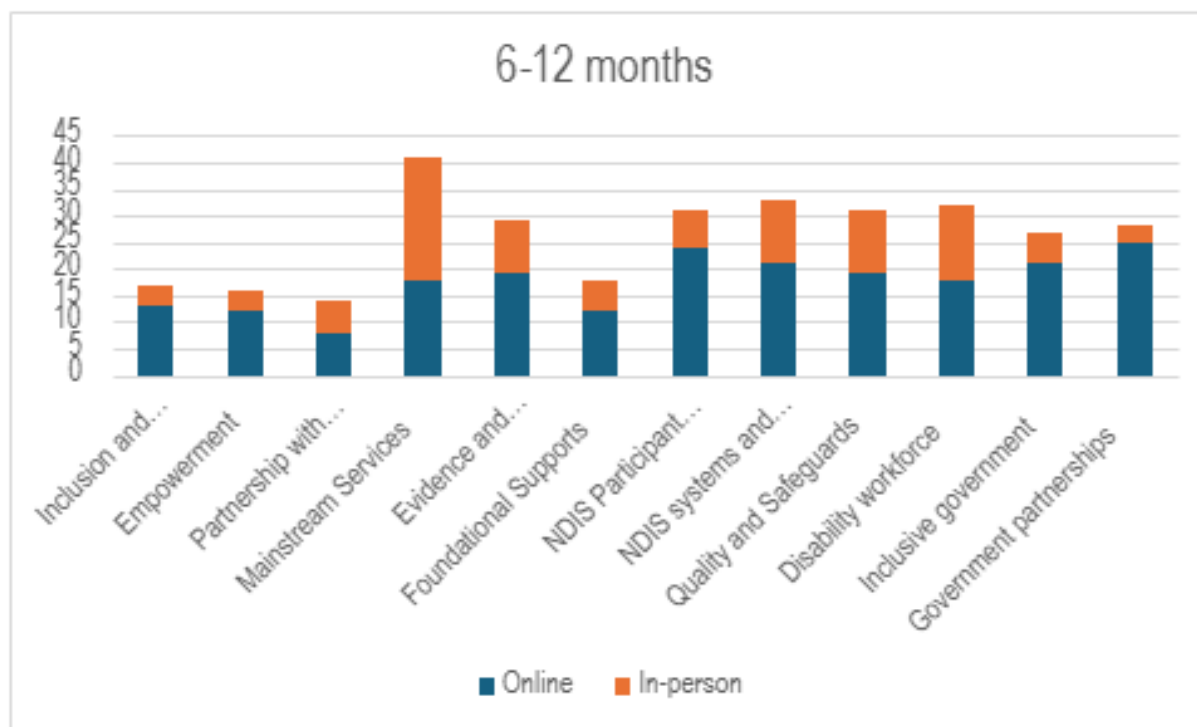


Figure 13: Priority reform outcome areas for the 6-12 month period

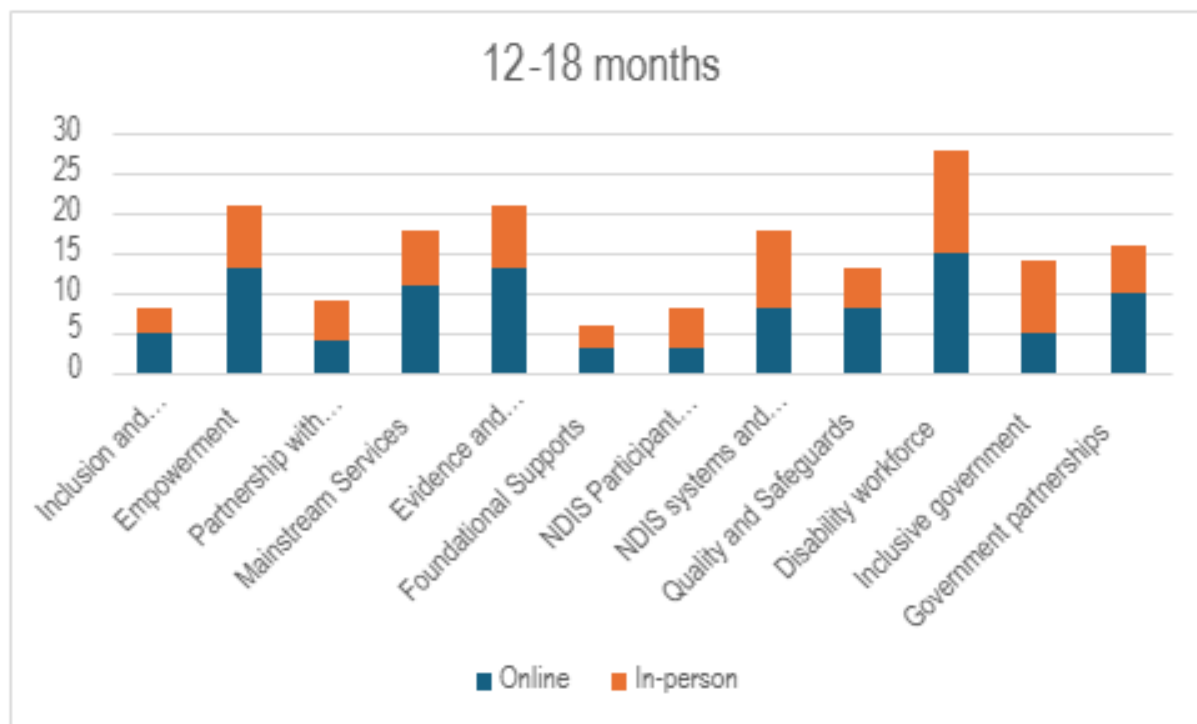


Figure 14: Priority reform outcome areas for the 12-18 month period

Conclusion & Next Steps

We acknowledge and thank all those people from across Queensland who participated in the community forums and shared their insights and feedback. Alongside the community forums was an expression of interest process for the Disability Reform Implementation Stakeholder Committee (DRISC) and the Disability Reform Co-design Team (the Co-design Team) which closed on 14 February 2025. We thank everyone who completed an expression of interest. The recruitment process for these groups has been taking place in the weeks following the forums. At the time this report was written, recruitment for the Co-Design team was in progress.

The next steps are to finalise the membership of DRISC, and work with the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (The Department) to establish priority areas for reform. The Department is also working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories on joint reform priorities.

Stay tuned for information about future forums and updates by regularly checking the QDN website [here](#) and by being a part of the Disability Reform Community of Practice. Sign up to receive updates via Microsoft Forms [here](#). For more information, please contact QDN's policy team on 1300 363 783 or admin@qdn.org.au.



Appendix A: Queensland Disability Reform Framework reform domains

