

Supporting excellence and equity in education

ESA Strategic Plan
2024–2026



Education
Services
Australia



ESA acknowledges the Eastern Kulin Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which our head office stands, and pays our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the Traditional Custodians of Country across Australia and their continuing connection and contribution to lands, waters, communities and learning.

Artwork by Keisha Leon.

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About ESA

Education Services Australia (ESA) is a national, not-for-profit company owned by all Australian education ministers.

Established in 2010 to support national education priorities and initiatives, we deliver technology solutions for schools, training and higher education sectors, including:

- researching, testing and developing innovative education technologies and communication systems
- developing, sharing and deploying technical data and assessment systems, professional development, and career and information support services
- providing access to digital teaching and learning resources, tools and services, such as Scootle, ELLA and myfuture
- ensuring national access to quality-assured systems and content.

Our vision is to make a positive difference for Australian students by working with all education systems and sectors to improve outcomes, enhance teacher impact and strengthen school communities. We also have a strong focus on reducing our carbon footprint and promoting diversity and inclusion.

Education Services Australia (ESA) has a mission to combine education and technology expertise to create and deliver national solutions that further education reform in Australia and contribute to improved student outcomes, enhanced teacher impact and stronger school communities.

More than just a company, we're a trusted partner helping school communities and jurisdictions succeed in a continuously evolving digital age.



Chair statement



ESA’s strategic plan outlines the way we will work to achieve education ministers’ vision for an Australian education system that encourages and supports every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they may face.

“Our strategic ambition is to be an essential partner in realising the goals of an Australian education system which promotes excellence and equity, and one in which all young Australians become: confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners and active and informed members of the community.”

To achieve our ambition, we will actively engage with the education community, listening to learners, educators and policymakers to understand their needs. We will focus our efforts on meeting these needs through the delivery of safe and effective education solutions that support and empower educators and foster equity in education.

My fellow board members and I are proud to present ESA’s 2024-26 strategic plan and look forward to ensuring our positive impact on the lives and learning of young Australians.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Vicki Baylis,
Chair, Education Services Australia



CEO statement



Technology can be a powerful tool to help transform learning. It has the potential to empower students to expand their learning beyond the confines of the traditional classroom, support self-directed learning, help educators tailor learning experiences to individual student needs, and better support students with disabilities.

Teaching is a fundamentally human endeavour, and the design, deployment and use of educational technologies must recognise that this potentially powerful tool is just that, a tool for use by educators and students.

“Building on ESA’s solid foundations, our strategic plan describes how we will address the emerging challenges and realise new opportunities presented by innovative education technologies and digital solutions while continuing to perform as a trusted, reliable and collaborative organisation.”

Our five strategic priorities, underpinned by our organisational values, will inform a workplan focused on creating, shaping and nurturing solutions that support excellence and equity in education.

We are committed to sustainable practices, reconciliation and equity and will deliver impact by our people who are engaged, developed and equipped with the infrastructure, and systems that they need.

On behalf of ESA, we look forward to working with the education community to achieve our objectives on their behalf.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Smith,
CEO, Education Services Australia



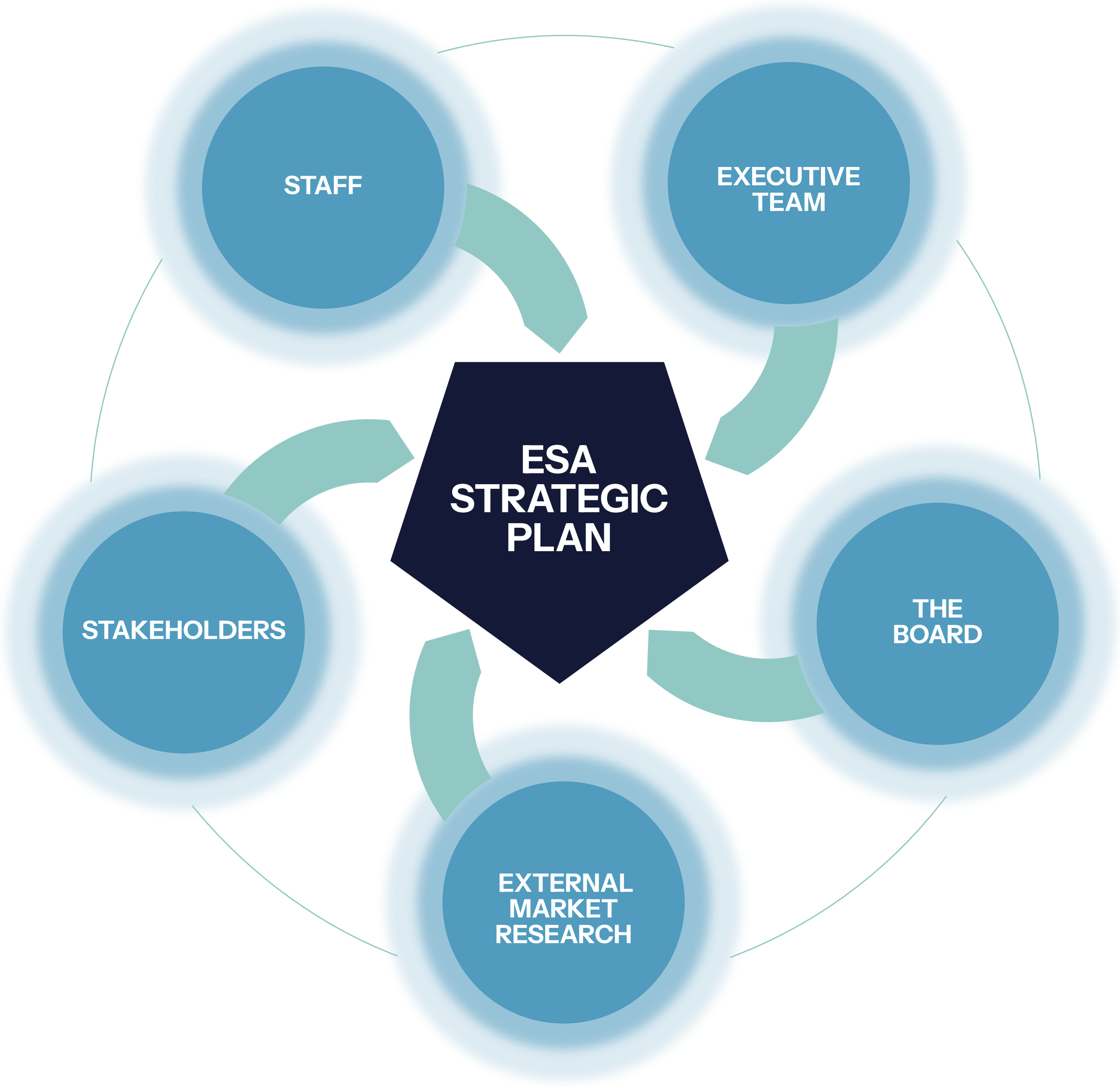
Our strategic planning process

To ensure a well-rounded and considered strategic plan, ESA pursued a robust and thorough strategic planning process involving staff, the executive team and the Board.

Along the way, we:

- gathered stakeholder feedback
- conducted external research
- interviewed Board Directors
- interviewed the executive team
- held staff workshops.

To guide the process, we established a working group and regularly engaged stakeholder groups. The resulting strategy is aligned with the Letter of Expectation from Australia’s education ministers which defines our core functions and principles. And to ensure accountability, we publish our values, performance and impact annually.



Strategic context

1 Education sector

Australia’s education sector is characterised by strong capability and significant goodwill, however, in a rapidly changing environment there are opportunities to strengthen the system to ensure all students receive an education that sets them up to succeed.

Challenges on which ESA will focus its efforts include:

- teacher retention and teacher workload
- seeking new ways to improve and support students’ wellbeing
- improving achievements for currently underperforming priority equity cohorts
- providing practical and meaningful opportunities for lifelong learning.

Four key themes emerged from the strategic planning process:

2 EdTech market and emerging technologies

Existing and emerging technologies are transforming the classroom for students, teachers and educational institutions, with the potential to improve quality, accessibility and equity, as well as encourage new thinking. Technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR) and blockchain offer new possibilities and challenges.

AI has been making waves in the EdTech space, with tools like ChatGPT revolutionising personalised learning, offering assistance with reading, writing and problem-solving across various subjects. AI technologies can also automate routine tasks and create personalised assessments, allowing teachers to more specifically target each student’s individual needs.

Predictions of exponential growth in the global EdTech sector, already estimated to be worth \$150 billion, will attract new players and rapid innovation. Australia’s education leaders will require support to ensure these technologies are safe and effective.

3 Government policy and operation

Education policy is evolving at a national, state and jurisdiction level as education ministers respond to opportunities and challenges. One of our core strengths is responding to this evolving policy landscape in a practical and effective way.

4 Government priorities and needs of education

ESA is well positioned to bridge the gap between government policy and priorities and the needs of education. We are known for providing practical high-quality solutions for educators, learners and families. Our capabilities are well regarded by those who’ve engaged with us, but there’s still work to be done to ensure our capabilities are more widely recognised and utilised to advance the education sector’s objectives.



Our purpose

To create, shape
and nurture solutions
that support excellence
and equity in education.



Our values



> User focused

We put users at the centre of our solution design and delivery.

> High quality

We deliver high-quality solutions.

> Collaborative

We foster strong relationships and collaboration to achieve outcomes.

> Innovative

We find innovative solutions to meet our partners' objectives.

> Efficient and sustainable

We're efficient and sustainable in our design, delivery and operations.

> Responsible

We provide trusted, unbiased advice and solutions to ensure the best outcomes for all students.

Our strategy

Our ambition is to build on our existing foundations and enhance our impact across the education sector.

We recognise that the existing gap in access to digital technology is widening, and actively seek ways to give all teachers and students easy access to the content and services they need to improve outcomes.

We value the strong relationships we have developed with stakeholders and the wider school community, and through these connections understand that easily accessible resources and solutions are essential. However, access alone does not create impact. The most influential solutions are those that are relevant and timely, meeting teachers' and school community needs.

We acknowledge that technology is ever-evolving and in order to remain a leader at the intersection of education and technology, we need to explore and embrace new technologies and incorporate them into our solutions.

Our people will always be at the heart of what we do. Over the next three years, we will continue to build upon this, investing in their leadership development, supporting their wellbeing, and expanding opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

We will invest in our technology, infrastructure and processes to increase our capabilities – working smarter, not harder – to put us in a better position to deliver effective and efficient solutions.



Strategy on a page

Our purpose

To create, shape and nurture solutions that support excellence and equity in education.

Strategy statement

To be recognised as an essential partner in the delivery of safe and effective education solutions informed by our unique understanding of our stakeholders' digital opportunities and challenges.



Our strategic pillars



Empower and support educators



Be an essential partner



Foster equity in education



Inspire and enable our people



Achieve operational excellence



Empower and support educators

Our work will enhance teaching and learning through digital innovation. We'll create and nurture products and services that are engaging, useful and relevant.

We have a long history of delivering high-quality projects and services for the education sector and we'll continue to meet the needs of our diverse stakeholders with high-quality solutions. Technology is a key enabler for personalised, equitable and future-ready learning. Technology is also evolving rapidly, offering new opportunities to enhance student achievement and streamline education management. We'll provide digital projects and services that align with national reform goals and benefit the education of young Australians. These activities will also facilitate the exchange and distribution of knowledge, resources and services, saving time and money across jurisdictions, sectors and schools.

Key activities

- Develop and implement user satisfaction metrics.
- Implement product strategies for our digital solutions.
- Fully integrate our approach to co-design.
- Provide evidence-based quality assurance frameworks to guide our work.

Success

Our success will be shown in growing active users of our products, achieving high levels of satisfaction from our users and funding partners, and being acknowledged as innovative in our generation of ideas and delivery of solutions.





Be an essential partner



We will deepen our impact and broaden our reach as a preferred partner for education solutions.

The education sector in Australia is rich and diverse. Various factors influence the circumstances and needs of different systems, sectors, schools and students. Through effective engagement, we'll co-design solutions that capture the views and meet the needs of Australia's educators. Collaboration with stakeholders remains essential for enhancing the value and accountability of our activities.

While we're known and respected by those that we have delivered for, our aim is to expand our reach and ensure that the use and impact of our solutions is broad and deep. We'll communicate effectively about ESA, our value proposition, opportunities and impact. Our people are important and we will leverage their expertise and passion to foster strong bonds with current and future partners. We will seek out partnerships that enrich and diversify our content, delivery and impact.

Key activities

- Implement an effective stakeholder engagement strategy.
- Equip staff with key messages to spread the word about our solutions.
- Promote ideas and innovation.
- Strengthen our partnerships with national education agencies.

Success

Our reputation as an essential partner for education initiatives will signal our success. We'll expand our partnerships, strengthen our approach to innovation and ensure we respond to the needs of our stakeholders.



Foster equity in education

Our work will address the unique needs of students experiencing disadvantage.

Through our own research and stakeholder feedback, we know the Australian education system has an acute equity gap. The emergence of generative AI and related technologies has the potential to accelerate learning and achievement, but the benefits are not evenly spread. We'll work to ensure that the promise of more personalised and flexible learning in addition to reductions in teacher workload are available to all. Our approach will involve collaborative design to create products that address a wide range of requirements, particularly for students facing educational disadvantage. As we learn from experience and adapt our products, we will use our role in education to advocate for digital equity by proactively sharing insights and knowledge.

Key activities

- Accompany all our solutions with an equity statement.
- Develop national personas of school leaders, teachers and students that illustrate equity gaps and provide insights on how to bridge them.
- Expand our partnerships with non-for-profit and philanthropic organisations.

Success

Our success will be evident in the inclusive and effective design and delivery of our solutions across cohorts experiencing inequity.





Inspire and enable our people

We will support and develop our people to make an impact.

Supporting our people has always been at the heart of what we do. Happy and healthy staff create greater outcomes and ensure ESA is an attractive place to work. With a continuously evolving education and technology environment, it's important for us to support resilience and to retain valued staff. Regular engagement surveys show that our staff are aligned to the purpose and values of the organisation and derive great satisfaction from the impact of their work. We'll continue to focus on staff development, wellbeing and engagement.

Key activities

- Maintain our strong workplace culture.
- Strengthen our employee value proposition (EVP).
- Amplify our commitments to reconciliation and reducing the gender pay gap.
- Implement an inclusive leadership development program.

Success

Our success will be shown through high staff engagement scores, particularly in wellbeing, learning and leadership development.





Achieve operational excellence

We will invest in infrastructure, systems and processes that facilitate impact and productivity.

The operating performance of an organisation creates the foundations for achieving its objectives. We know that working more efficiently and effectively, using technology as a tool, will allow us to achieve greater impact. As technology evolves, expectations of our staff, stakeholders and users change. We'll review and refine our operating model so we're in the best position to achieve our goals.

With information security and privacy as a priority, we'll ensure we have a strong culture of data protection and the tools and processes to deliver our commitments.

Key activities

- Ensure our operating model provides the foundation to achieve our objectives.
- Develop and implement measures and targets to inform our progress and ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.
- Renew our digital roadmap with information security and privacy at the centre to ensure our technology platforms and tools meet stakeholder and staff needs.

Success

Our success will be shown by achieving our annual budget targets, receiving high levels of satisfaction from staff with regards to resources, processes and technology, and by achieving our privacy and information security objectives.



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