



December 2020

Closing the digital divide

When we look back on this year, we will remember it as one that caused a profound shift in the way people connect. As the COVID-19 pandemic forced us out of shared and public spaces, we have seen an acceleration in digital adoption and transformation. While this shift is generating significant social, cultural and economic benefits, for the 2.5 million Australians who remain offline it further reinforces the digital divide.

Since 2015 we have partnered with RMIT University, the Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University and Roy Morgan to produce the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII), which examines the digital divide across three dimensions – Access, Affordability and Digital Ability.

The 2020 ADII showed us that while gains have been made in some areas, overall improvement has slowed. Australians with low

levels of income, education and employment, as well as those living in some regional areas continue to be the least digitally included in Australia.

The results of the ADII help us to shape our digital inclusion agenda, including our [Access for Everyone](#) programs, [Tech Savvy Seniors](#), our commitment to providing [accessible](#) products and services, and our [Telstra Foundation](#) investments including [Indigenous Digital Excellence \(IDX\)](#) and [Tech4Good](#). These programs and Telstra's leadership in digital inclusion were recently recognised when we took out the top place in the first-ever corporate [Digital Inclusion Benchmark](#).

Closing the digital divide is essential for social and economic wellbeing and future prosperity, particularly as we look to the digital economy to rebuild post COVID-19. We will continue to do all we can to promote digital inclusion, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate and thrive online.



Our response to modern slavery

In September 2020, we published our annual [Modern Slavery Act Statement](#) – our fifth statement as a business and the first under new Australian Modern Slavery legislation. As a responsible business, we take modern slavery very seriously. It’s a complex and often hidden practice, and companies like ours are not immune to the risks of causing or contributing to it through our operations or supply chains.

At Telstra we believe accountability and transparency are key to credibility. As such, we have reported not only on the progress made in FY20, but also on the unacceptable practices we found and how we addressed these.

Our statement reflects the work we are undertaking to drive change across the organisation. We have changed the way we interact with suppliers, delivery partners, licensees and dealers, through ongoing dialogue and audits, encouraging people to speak up and modifying our contractual terms. The statement goes in to detail on Telstra’s workforce, operations and supply chain, how we identify and address modern slavery risks across our business and supply chain, and our due diligence processes.



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Working together for an accessible future

To help create a more inclusive future we recently launched our FY21 [Accessibility Action Plan](#) and joined [The Valuable 500](#) community.

The Valuable 500 is a collective force for inclusive good and one that mirrors our interest in putting accessibility and inclusion front and centre. It's a global movement that brings together leaders and organisations around the world to put accessibility on their agenda in order to drive inclusivity and change.

We are proud to be one of the [four per cent of businesses](#) globally that are focussed on making products or services that are inclusive of disability. However, we recognise that we can all do more to

make our workplace, products and information more accessible to our stakeholders. Our new Accessibility Action Plan looks at how we prioritise inclusion for our job candidates and colleagues, and how we create more accessible products and services for our customers.

Visit our [Disability services page](#) on Telstra.com for more information.

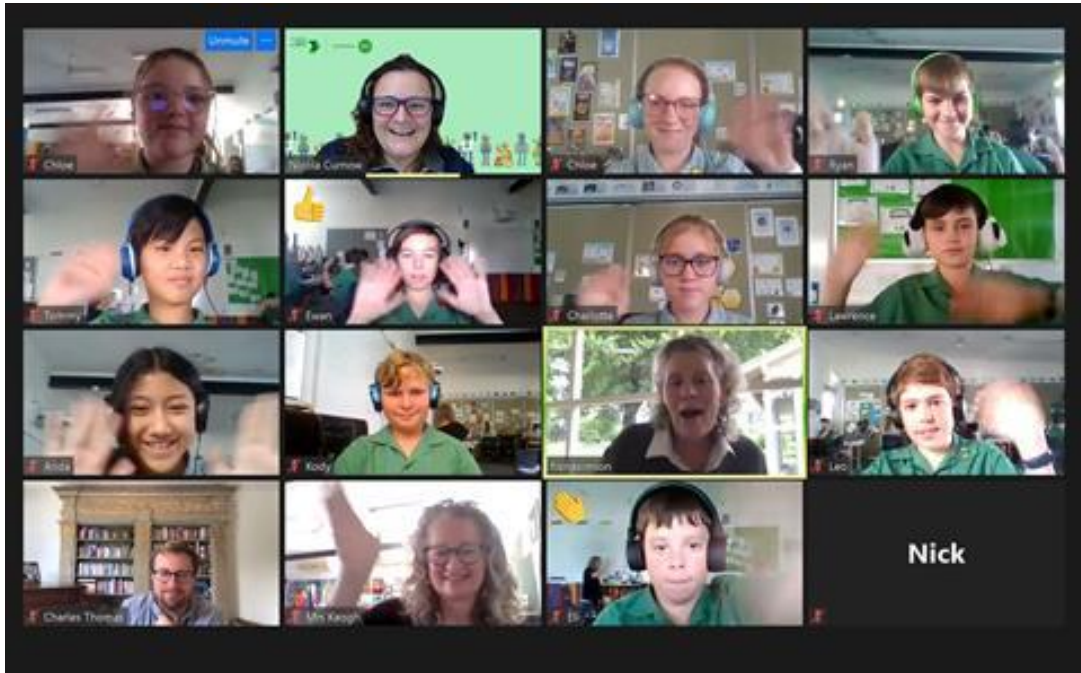


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Inspiring kids to rethink agriculture and technology

[Code Club Australia](#), powered by the [Telstra Foundation](#), recently teamed up with the [National Farmers' Federation](#) to deliver a [virtual session](#) to school kids from Murwillumbah, NSW. The session followed the launch of [six coding lessons](#) that focus on the importance of agriculture and technology – aiming to inspire primary school-aged kids to consider agriculture as both a vocational pathway and a way to build a sustainable future.

The [Australian Digital Inclusion Index \(ADII\)](#) shows a significant gap when it comes to digital equality in some regional and remote areas. Code Club and the Telstra Foundation are committed to improving the digital inclusion of students in these areas and inspiring the next generation of kids to engage with the tech skills now needed for life on the farm.



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Partnering to improve our packaging

As Australia's leading telecommunications and technology company, we have a responsibility to improve how efficiently we manage resources and to minimise our environmental impacts. One way we look at reducing our packaging impact is through a business partnership with social enterprise [Beehive](#).

Beehive produces recycled and recyclable paper return satchels that we are using as part of a shift away from plastic materials. In FY20, making the transition from plastic to recycled paper satchels enabled us to save more than 135,000 plastic satchels from landfill.

This partnership has enabled Beehive to fund support services such as low-cost meal preparation, English classes, digital inclusion and employment classes, employment readiness training and support in communities for seniors, long-term unemployed and people living with disabilities.

We continue to look for opportunities to grow our relationship with Beehive across different areas of the business.



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