Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science and Resources

Executive Director, National Artificial Intelligence Centre

SES Band 2

Reports to	Deputy Secretary, SES Band 3
Location	Successful candidates will be required to establish their work base in Canberra, Melbourne, or Sydney.

About the department

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources and our broader portfolio are integral to the Australian Government's economic agenda. Our purpose is to help the government build a better future for all Australians through enabling a productive, resilient and sustainable economy, enriched by science and technology. We do this by:

- growing innovative and competitive businesses, industries and regions
- investing in science and technology
- strengthening the resources sector.

Globally competitive industries are important contributors to Australia's economic growth and productivity. Jobs and prosperity can be secured through competitive businesses and industries and opening new markets for Australian resources. The department works closely with industry, businesses, the science community, and other stakeholders to help build a globally confident and outward-looking Australian economy through supporting science and commercialisation; growing business investment and improving business capability; and simplifying doing business.

For more information about the department please refer to our website www.industry.gov.au.

Who we are

The National Artificial Intelligence Centre (NAIC) was established in 2021 to support and accelerate Australia's Artificial Intelligence (AI) industry. It is the primary vehicle for the Australian Government's National AI Plan goal to spread the benefits of AI. The NAIC, through its many programs and its platform, www.ai.gov.au, is charged with delivering the safe and effective adoption of AI for Australian industry, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and not-for-profits.

NAIC is doing this by:

- supporting AI adoption by addressing barriers and challenges, providing resources, access to skilling and developing industry best practices;
- growing and supporting an Australian AI industry;
- convening the AI ecosystem; and
- uplifting safe and responsible AI practice.

At NAIC we are partnering with industry and the broader ecosystem to uplift Australia's AI capability, to support SME success with AI, and to uplift the practice of safe and responsible AI. Through the AI Ready Network program, the team is actively engaging with industry and the AI ecosystem to

support the landing of priority initiatives, uplift workforce capability, map and measure the Australian AI ecosystem and deliver safe and responsible AI practices.

The NAIC team leads several high-profile initiatives such as the www.ai.gov.au platform, Australia's AI Week, the CEDA AI Leadership Summit, the AI Ready Network, Buy Australian AI program, AI Industry Connections, the AI Industry Directory, the development of the AI6 (guidance for AI adoption) as well as a commitment to maintain ongoing guidance, support and advice to Australian SMEs on AI adoption. These initiatives together with regular industry reports, enable Australia's businesses to take advantage of the opportunity of AI in a safe and responsible way.

The opportunity

As the Executive Director, you will lead a highly dedicated and motivated industry-focused team to deliver on the objectives of NAIC including leading the transformation of Australia's AI ecosystem and substantially contribute to the Government's National AI Plan to position Australia as one of the global leaders in developing and adopting trusted, secure and responsible AI.
As Executive Director you will also advise and support the Government on the full range of portfolio issues bringing your expertise to bear across a diversity of issues. As part of this role, you will ensure the department is meeting its legislative and governance obligations, is working collaboratively to deliver outcomes, and responds flexibly to current and emerging issues. We are looking for a leader that understands this environment, is comfortable with the pace of AI technology innovation and is agile and looking to do things differently to deliver the outcomes for Government. You also have a broader role in providing leadership across the Australian Public Service (APS) in the delivery of whole-of-Government policies and services, managing in a changing and devolved environment.

You will have the opportunity to access leading professional development programs targeted to Senior Executives as well as comprehensive on the job learning specific to the NAIC's operations and public sector management.

You will work closely with other Senior Executives, Heads of Division and Heads of Agencies from across the portfolio to ensure a connected and integrated department, with reduced silos and a creative and collaborative approach to problem solving.

The opportunity will be considered in Canberra, Melbourne, or Sydney, subject to business requirements. We are open to flexible work, and our flexible work policies will empower you to contribute meaningfully and achieve your career goals.

Our ideal candidate

We are looking for an exceptional industry leader for NAIC to drive the transformation of Australia's AI ecosystem. Our ideal candidate will have the gravitas to lead the NAIC, engage in technical and strategy conversations on AI and work closely with other industry leaders to drive productivity, adoption and uplift safe and responsible AI practices in Industry. Our candidate will also have an important role in supporting the department's strategic positioning across government and effectively representing portfolio perspectives to position Australia as one of the global leaders in developing and adopting productive, secure and responsible AI. As a key leader and representative of the department, your common sense, political nous and ability to navigate ambiguity and uncertainty will be key to success in this role.

We are seeking a candidate with:

- Well-developed knowledge and understanding of the AI industry and/or AI ecosystem.

- Senior leadership experience in the AI industry (or related fields). Business experience during cloud, digital or AI transformation will be highly regarded.
- Demonstrated leadership of high-impact programs that create scale.
- Proven ability to develop, influence and drive a strategic agenda.
- Exemplary stakeholder engagement experience, with a focus on fostering external stakeholder relationships outside of government to achieve outcomes.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with a demonstrated ability to communicate with influence and convey complex information coherently and concisely to a range of audiences.
- Strong attention to detail, problem-solving skills, good judgement, and the ability to think strategically and logically.
- Outstanding leadership skills with a demonstrated commitment to wellbeing and inclusion.

How to apply

To apply, please go to www.derwentsearch.com.au and click on 'search jobs' to find the position advertised. Your application must contain:

- your CV including the contact details of 2 referees, and
- a 'one page pitch' (750 word maximum) telling us how your skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications make you the best person for the job.

Your application must not contain any classified or sensitive information. This includes in your application response and CV.

A merit pool may be established and used to fill future vacancies within 18 months from the date the vacancy was first advertised in the Gazette.

If you require further information or assistance, please contact Katharine Whittaker on 0450 754 956 or publicsector@derwentsearch.com.au.

Applications close Sunday 29 November 2026

Eligibility

This vacancy requires a **Negative Vetting 2** security clearance. Successful candidates will be required to obtain and maintain a clearance at this level.

We encourage applications from diverse backgrounds and experiences. We strongly believe that diversity of experience, perspective, and background will lead to a better environment for our employees and better outcomes for Australia.

Applications from **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**, and **people with disability** are highly encouraged because your diverse experience, perspectives, and background strengthen our service delivery, productivity, capability and innovation.