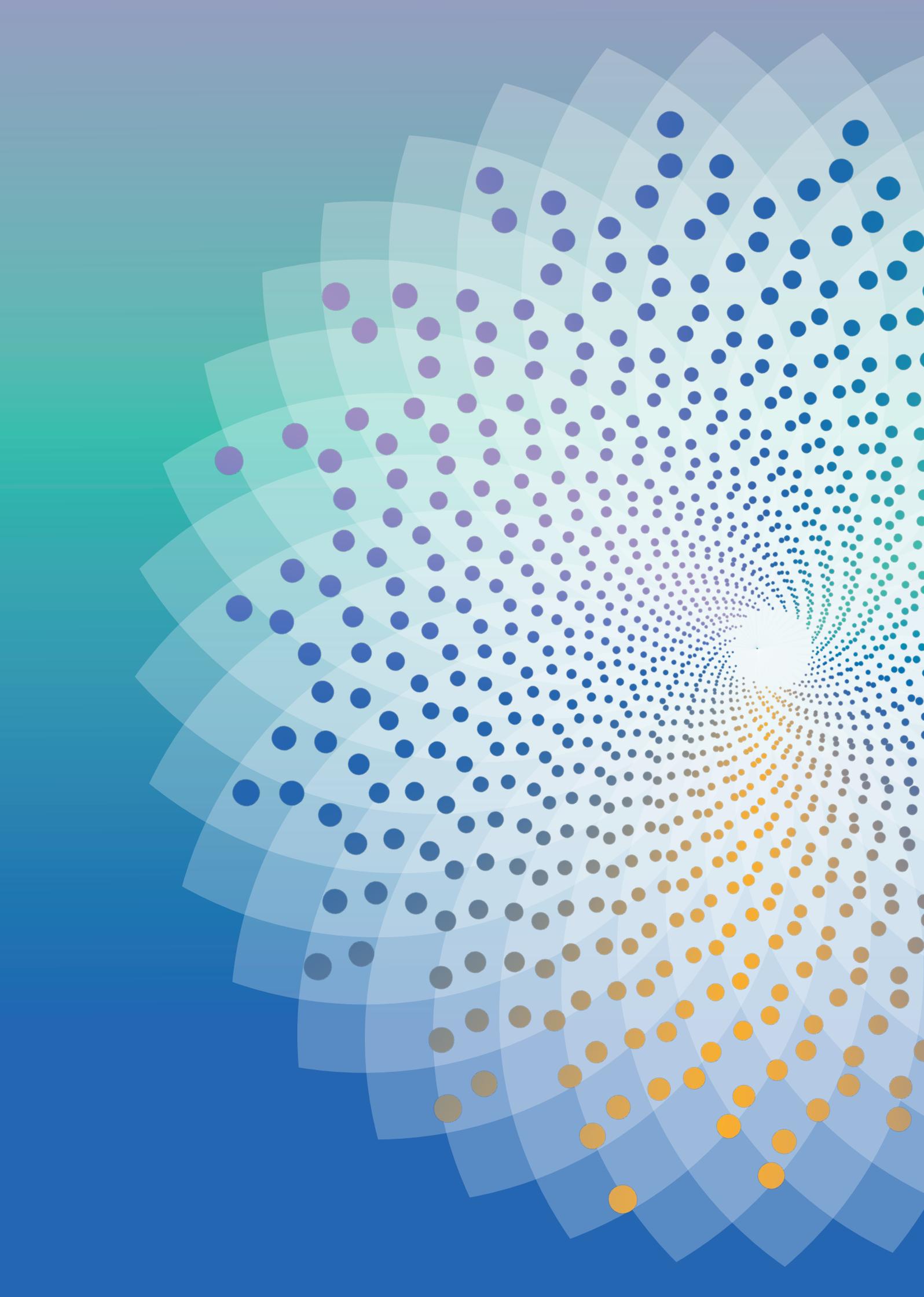




ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN  
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

# Business Plan 2025

Adoption Authority of Ireland



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# Foreword from the Chairperson

The Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI) is pleased to present the 2025 Business Plan. This plan sets out the key actions the AAI will take to deliver on our goals for the first year of our new three-year strategic cycle, 2025–2027, within the framework of four pivotal themes: the people we serve, what we do, who delivers our services, and how we deliver our services.

While the AAI has experienced significant growth and change as an organisation in recent years, our mission to ensure the provision of the highest possible standards of adoption-related services, with the best interests of the child and young person as the first and paramount objective, remains unaltered.

The 2025 Business Plan seeks to continue the work of the Authority and its focus on making a difference to children's lives through the decisions it makes. Those decisions have lifelong implications for the child or young person, the birth parents, and the adoptive parents which go beyond the issue of providing care during childhood. There is a lifelong value to the relationship created by adoption which is underpinned and supported by the state.

An enduring priority for the Authority is the manner in which the views and interests of the child and young person in adoption matters are addressed. In this plan, we are commencing a programme of work that will seek to identify critical points for the Authority that

provide opportunities to enhance and develop how the views and interests of children and young people can best be captured.

We will also work towards establishing a sustainable model for intercountry adoption mediation services and a plan of action that is responsive to the evolving global trends in intercountry adoption.

Our work with the Department of Children to explore how the Authority can support a national approach to open or semi-open adoption is a key priority. While we are mindful that this would require a change in legislation, the Authority stands ready to support such a change.

The AAI's 2025 Business Plan demonstrates our commitment to proactively navigate the operational and legislative changes in the landscape of adoption and family formation in Ireland and internationally while maintaining and further developing our current services.

The AAI Board's development of this new three-year Strategy and the 2025 Business Plan afforded me, as the departing Chairperson in October 2025, an opportunity to reflect on our organisation's challenges and achievements over the past number of years. It is my privilege to be in a position to guide the work of the Authority to ensure a smooth transition to a new Board in November 2025



**Ms Orlaith Traynor**  
Chairperson

# Chief Executive Officer's Introduction

With this first business plan under the AAI's new Strategic Plan 2025–2027, we are continuing the important work commenced under the previous 2022–2024 strategy and moving ahead with how we develop and evolve the delivery of our statutory functions under the Adoption Act 2010 (as amended) and the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 (BITA).

We have organised the business plan for 2025 to clearly delineate our business-as-usual (BAU) activities and tasks from the work to be progressed relating to our strategic goals and associated actions.

A major focus for the AAI in 2025 is engagement. This includes external engagement with our service users and other stakeholders and internal engagement with our staff. The launch in the second half of 2025 of the new AAI website will be a key milestone for us. The new website will bring together the AAI's website and the birthinfo.ie website.

Through concerted outreach activities, the AAI will be working towards establishing a more formalised approach to stakeholder engagement and interactions. These will include seeking views and inputs to inform

our work as well as disseminating findings from our various work streams via a range of media and channels.

On the internal side, the AAI will progress actions to establish and roll out its 'One AAI' programme. 'One AAI' aims to support and develop our staff, improve knowledge and communication flows, and build cohesion and staff engagement.

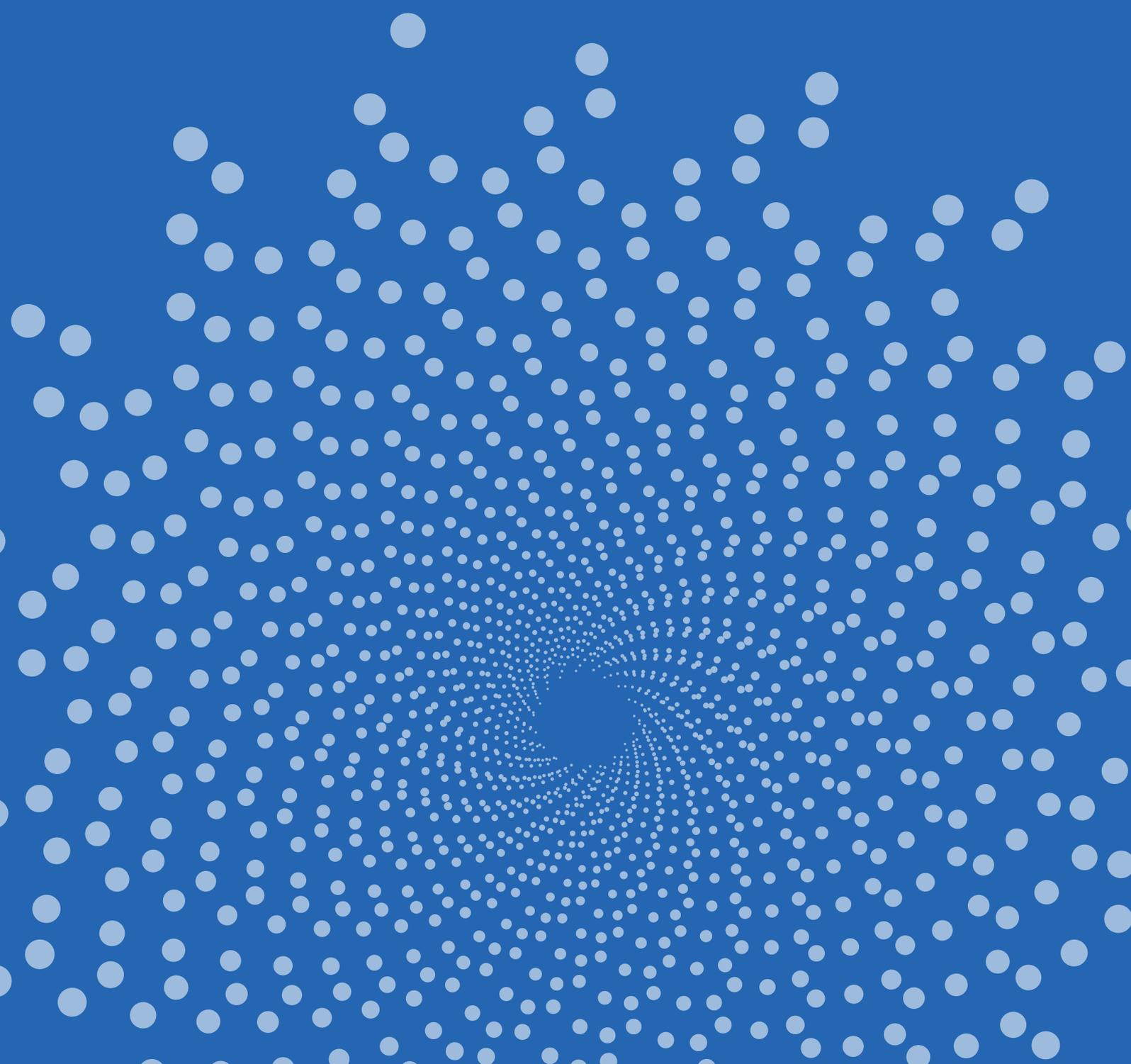
As 2025 is the first year of a new strategy for the organisation, we will commission work to review the organisational shape and design so that it is fit for purpose to deliver on this strategy. We will also review our future workforce needs and ensure that our workforce can be supported with the right mix of skills, experience and other competencies for optimal delivery of our statutory functions and strategy in the best interests of children, young people and our other service users.

It is my absolute privilege to lead the work of the AAI executive in supporting the Board and delivering services. I look forward to our collective delivery of this business plan in 2025.



**Dr Lorraine Horgan**  
Chief Executive Officer

# INTRODUCTION



## 1.1 About Us

**The Adoption Authority of Ireland was established under the Adoption Act 2010 on 1 November 2010. The Adoption Act 2010 (as amended) was introduced to improve standards in both domestic and intercountry adoption, replacing its predecessor organisation, the Adoption Board. We are an independent, quasi-judicial statutory body under the aegis of the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (the Department).**

The AAI's functions and responsibilities are set out in the Adoption Act 2010 (as amended) and the BITA.

They can be summarised as

- Being the state authority for domestic adoptions in Ireland – granting Declarations of Eligibility and Suitability, hearing the views of the child or young person and granting adoption orders;
- Being the designated Central Authority for intercountry adoption in the State (under the 1993 Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption);
- Granting Declarations of Eligibility and Suitability for intercountry adoptions and recognising, where appropriate, adoptions effected in other states and maintaining the Register of Intercountry Adoptions;
- Providing birth, early life, care and medical information to people who were adopted, boarded out, nursed out, resident in a scheduled institution or the subject of an illegal birth registration. These services are provided under the BITA;
- Providing a statutory tracing service, alongside a mediation, brief intervention and adoption support service via a specialised social work team;
- Maintaining the Contact Preference Register (CPR);
- Collecting and maintaining information, data and records about adoption;
- Conducting, commissioning and supporting research into adoption and adoption-related topics;
- Safeguarding records relating to adopted persons and those subject to historic care arrangements;
- Maintaining the Register of Accredited Bodies of entities that are accredited to provide adoption services; and
- Providing advice, on request, to the Minister on matters relating to adoption.

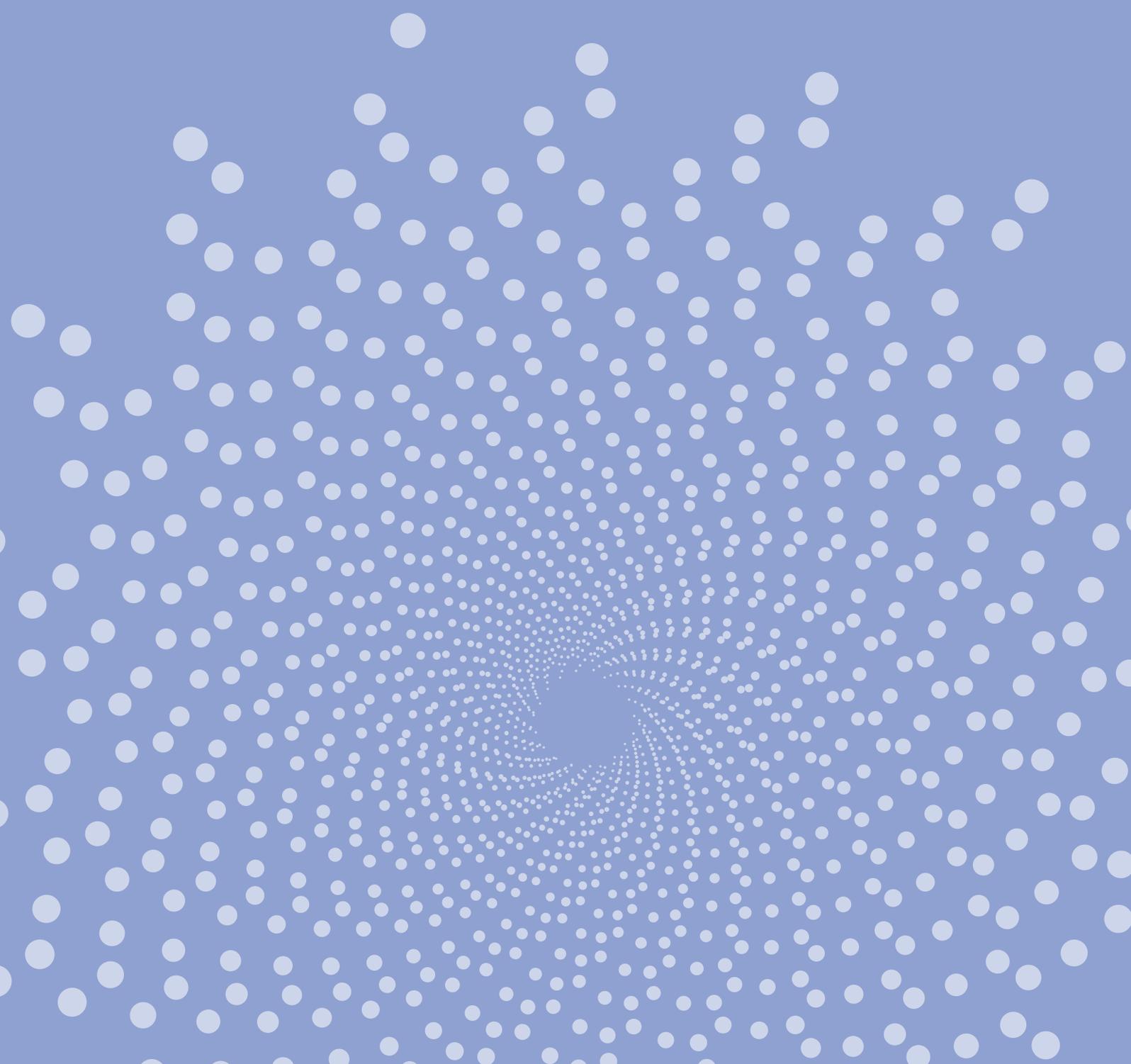
The services we provide are diverse and complex, and our stakeholders represent every part of society, including adopted people of all ages, birth and adoptive families, and others whose lives involved adoption in some way. In addition to the Department and our accredited agencies, we work closely with other government departments, state agencies, representative and advocacy groups and international partners to deliver our services.

## 1.2 Our Functions

The functions of the AAI span the following areas:

- **Domestic Adoption** – Domestic adoption refers to a situation where an Irish resident child is adopted by an Irish resident individual or couple. The nature and effect of an Irish adoption order is that the child becomes the child of the adopter as if born to them, with all the rights and duties of parents and children in relation to each other. Irish adoption legislation only allows for the adoption of a child. A child is defined as a person who has not yet reached the age of 18. There are four types of domestic adoption – stepfamily, extended family/relative adoption, domestic infant adoption and long-term foster care to adoption.
- **Intercountry Adoption** – Intercountry adoption refers to the situation where persons resident in Ireland decide to adopt a child who is resident in a country other than Ireland. The nature and effect of such an adoption is that the child becomes the child of the adopter as if born to them, in the case of a qualified couple with all the rights and duties of parents and children in relation to each other. Intercountry adoption was given a statutory basis in 1991 with the passing of the Adoption Act in that year. Intercountry adoption is only possible when managed between central authorities in the respective countries under the Hague Convention.
- **Information Services and Records** – The Information Services and Records unit of the AAI assists with post-adoption information and services such as access to records. Under the aforementioned BITA, access to birth, care and early life information; medical information; and information relating to illegal birth registrations and provided items is now available. This unit is also responsible for data protection, freedom of information (FOI), digital information and communication technology and historical archives falling under the National Archives Act 1986–2018.
- **Social Work** – Adoption Authority social workers understand that adoption is a life-long process that can generate a mix of emotions and needs for parties involved. It is the responsibility of the social work service to provide a statutory tracing service to clients. Further to this work, social workers provide mediation, brief intervention and support and complete reviews of all current proposed adoptions.
- **Accreditation** – this function involves the formal evaluation and ongoing monitoring by the AAI of certain bodies or persons, specifically bodies or persons who are involved in making arrangements for the adoption of a child or the provision of services such as tracing, counselling or mediation for the adoption of a child or the provision of services such as tracing, counselling or mediation for adopted persons or relatives of adopted persons.
- **Research** – The AAI is required to undertake and assist in research projects and activities relating to adoption services. The AAI is committed to informing adoption policy and service delivery through provision of a comprehensive research and communications framework.

# MISSION, VISION AND VALUES



## 2.1 Our Mission

To ensure the provision of the highest possible standards of adoption-related services, with the best interests of the child and young person as the first and paramount objective, and act as the memory institution for our service users.

## 2.2 Our Vision

To be the centre of excellence, and principal authoritative source of information, on all aspects of adoption and adoption-related services and to deliver these services in a way that is consistent, high-quality, trusted and responsive.

## 2.3 Our Values



### ***Empathy and Respect***

We recognise that adopted people of all ages, birth and adoptive families all have their unique circumstances and needs. Our services are highly consequential to them, and we commit to being sensitive and conscious of each person's needs as we deliver our functions. Everybody that engages with us is treated courteously and with dignity. We listen to and are focused on empowering our staff, our partners and our service users.



### ***Integrity and Accountability***

We are honest, open and transparent in the delivery of services, being clear about what we do, why we do it and how we do it, and communicating the consequences of our actions.



### ***Collaboration and Teamwork***

We work as a team, and as part of a wider team with our staff, partners and service users in the delivery of our functions. Through collaboration and communication, we ensure the highest standard of service delivery and uphold our duties as a trusted service provider and regulator.

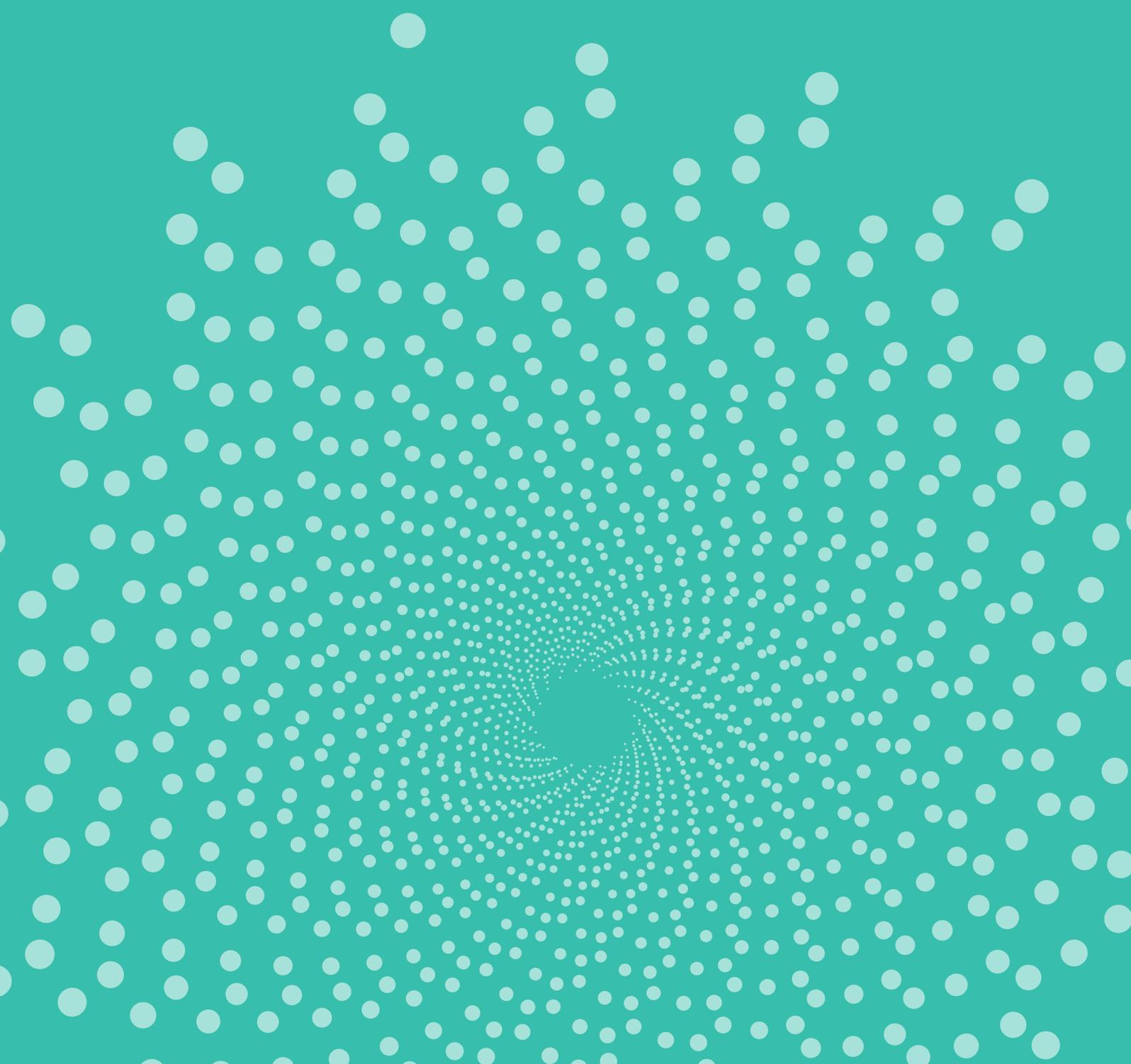


### ***Adaptability and Innovation***

We embrace change and build the resilience of both our staff and the organisation so that we can respond and adapt to the ever-changing legal and societal environment. This is underpinned by a culture that fosters innovation and encourages ongoing quality improvement in the delivery of our functions and services.

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# BUSINESS PLAN 2025



## 3.1 Overview

**Our 2025 Business Plan has been developed in collaboration with the AAI Board, the Senior Management Team (SMT), stakeholders, partners and staff and is designed to allow for delivery of the first year under the AAI's new Strategic Plan 2025–2027. The AAI commissioned Crowe Ireland to facilitate this process. Our business planning takes place on an annual basis, allowing us to reflect on our performance for the year against the goals set, and identify key actions for us to undertake in the year to deliver on the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan.**

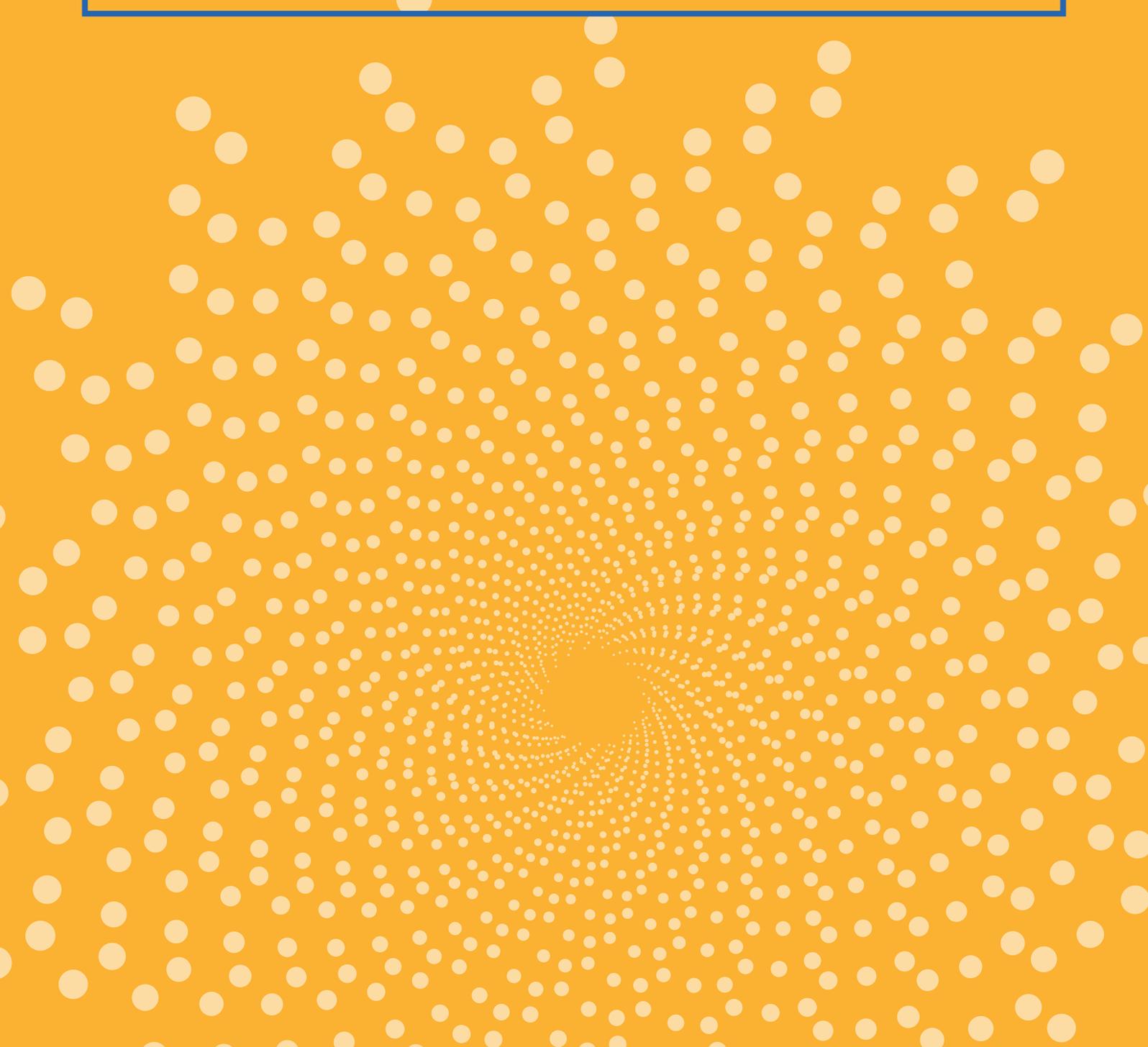
This Business Plan outlines the themes, strategic goals and actions which have been identified by the AAI in order to provide the highest levels of service throughout the lifespan of the Strategic Plan, starting in 2025. For each key action identified for 2025 under a strategic goal, any agreed key performance indicators will comprise an expected completion date and action owner. In addition to this, we have set out the BAU requirements for the year across each functional area of the organisation.

Our Strategic Plan sets out four key themes with associated goals and underlying actions as set out below.

 <p><b>1. The people we serve</b></p>	<p>Hear the views and acknowledge the interests of the child and young person in adoption matters.</p>	<p>Improved public communications and public information about adoption and the AA.</p>	<p>Build our understanding of the experience and perspective of intercountry adopted persons.</p>		
 <p><b>2. What we do</b></p>	<p>To effectively discharge our functions under our legislation, enhance the implementation of our functions and support legislative developments.</p>	<p>Contribute to the development of policy and legislation relating to adoption and family formation.</p>	<p>Review the current AAI Research Strategy and develop a successor strategy.</p>	<p>Implement a culture of continuous improvement in the delivery of our services.</p>	<p>Leverage the use of technology to support service delivery.</p>
 <p><b>3. Who delivers our services</b></p>	<p>Design and roll out 'One AAI', a programme designed to build cohesion and engagement among our staff.</p>	<p>Develop and implement a Strategic Workforce Plan.</p>	<p>Review the existing structure and ensure the design of the organisation can ensure we are the right shape and the right size to deliver on our purpose and functions.</p>	<p>Establish an employee-wide learning and development (L&amp;D) programme to support professional and personal development of our staff.</p>	
 <p><b>4. How we deliver our services</b></p>	<p>Evaluate and enhance our services functions.</p>	<p>Ensure a timely and smooth Board transition up to and beyond November 2025.</p>	<p>Evaluate and enhance our regulatory oversight functions.</p>	<p>Foster the AAI's culture of innovation in how we carry out our work.</p>	

The following pages set out our BAU requirements and the key actions for 2025 under each of our strategic goals.

PLANNED 2025  
BUSINESS ACTIVITY  
PER FUNCTION



## 4.1 Domestic Adoption

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Processing of applications for Declarations of Eligibility and Suitability	Circa 140 Declarations granted per year.	Director of Operations / Board Secretary
Applications for Adoption Orders	Circa 100 Adoption Orders per year.	
Maintaining the Birth Father Register	The Register is checked on receipt of each Application.	
Review of all delegations within domestic adoption under the 2010 Act	Review completed and list of Delegations under 2010 Act drawn up by Q1.	

## 4.2 Intercountry Adoption

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Processing of applications for Declarations of Eligibility and Suitability	Circa 37 Declarations granted per year.	Director of Operations / Board Secretary
Maintaining the Register of Intercountry Adoptions	Circa 209 entries made per year. Processing and review of each application received which may then result in an entry made or refused.	
Maintaining the Gender Recognition Register	Circa 2–3 Applications per year. Processing and review of each application made.	
Review of all delegations within intercountry adoption under the 2010 Act	Review completed and list of Delegations under 2010 Act drawn up by Q1.	

## 4.3 Records

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Processing applications for the release of records for relevant persons, qualifying relatives and qualifying persons	1,200 cases completed.	Director of Information Services and Records
Processing applications in respect of the CPR and creating matches	500 applications processed.	
Conducting CPR Checks for relevant bodies	2,000 checks completed.	
Service User Queries	1,500 queries dealt with.	

## 4.4 Archives

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Processing transfers of relevant records from Secondary Information Sources	2 Section 48 Directions issued.	Director of Information Services and Records
Processing Review requests concerning the release of records	50 reviews completed.	BITA 2022 Review Officer
Processing FOI Requests	45 requests completed.	Freedom of Information Officer

## 4.5 Data Protection

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Processing of Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs)	30 requests completed.	Data Protection Officer
Conducting Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)	4 DPIAs completed.	
Data Sharing Agreements / Data Processing Agreements	6 agreements concluded / reviewed.	
Data Protection Training	10 teams completed refresher training.	

## 4.6 Solutions

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Closing of ICT service tickets and requests	900 tickets resolved.	Director of Information Services and Records
Digitisation of relevant records	1,000 bound volumes digitised.	
Data loading and validation	150 completed.	

## 4.7 Social Work

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Providing a tracing service under Part 5 of the BITA	200 cases allocated to social worker.	Principal Social Worker
Working with persons matched on the CPR under Part 6 of the BITA	55 cases allocated to social worker.	
Providing support and brief intervention to people affected by the delivery of services under the BITA	45 cases allocated to social worker.	
Case review as required as part of the domestic and intercountry adoptions process completed under the Adoption Act 2010	All relevant cases reviewed as needed.	
Responding to queries from the public and professionals on adoption, tracing and the BITA	All queries responded to within 3 business days.	

## 4.8 Corporate Services

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
<b>Providing support functions, systems and structures to the organisation, across</b>	Efficient and effective corporate support services in place.	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Preparation of the 2024 financial statements.</li> <li>■ Oversight and monitoring of the 2025 expenditure relative to budget.</li> <li>■ Development of the 2026 financial estimates for the Department.</li> <li>■ Payments to creditors completed within 30 days.</li> <li>■ Monthly management accounts prepared within 21 days of month-end.</li> <li>■ Filing of all Revenue and departmental returns within required timeframes.</li> </ul>	
<b>Procurement</b>	Delivery of the 2025 procurement plan.	
<b>Building and facilities management</b>	Oversight of maintenance of office facilities to required standard.	
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3 press releases issued.</li> <li>■ Communications Plan agreed with the Board.</li> </ul>	
<b>Environment and Sustainability</b>	Climate Action Roadmap 2025 developed and delivered.	
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mandatory training monitored and delivered as required.</li> <li>■ Annual review of the Safety Statement.</li> </ul>	
<b>Logistical support for Board meetings and hearings</b>	Effective logistical support provided.	
<b>Provide governance and risk management support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Parliamentary Questions responded to within requested timeframes.</li> <li>■ Risk registers updated quarterly.</li> <li>■ Monthly corporate risk register submitted to Board.</li> </ul>	
<b>Coordinating strategic and business and organisational planning and reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Coordinate quarterly business plan reporting to SMT and the Board.</li> <li>■ Coordinate development of the 2024 Annual Report.</li> <li>■ Coordinate development of the 2026 Business Plan.</li> </ul>	

## 4.9 Accredited Agencies Functions

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Monitoring and overseeing the regulated entities	Request and review on submission of the biannual reports from each accredited agency.	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services
Carry out reaccreditation process of agencies	One agency – Pact – to undergo reaccreditation.	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services
Carrying out statutory inspections	Conduct one inspection of an accredited agency (Pact).	Director of Operations

## 4.10 Research

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
Undertaking research projects and activities relating to adoption services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Publication and dissemination of one detailed report in respect of the Lived Experience of Intercountry Adoption (ICA) Study (over 18s).</li> <li>■ Ongoing, tailored dissemination of findings from the Reflections on the Irish Domestic Adoption Process 1952–2022 study to key stakeholders.</li> <li>■ Management of 2 commissioned studies in relation to the ICA Study (under-12s) and in relation to surrogacy, from an Irish perspective and 2 in-house studies in relation to the ICA Study (13–17 year olds) and in relation to the adoption assessment process, all to completion.</li> </ul>	Research Officer

## 4.11 Human Resources

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
<b>Maintenance of business as usual for HR functions, including</b>	To include day-to-day functions for the HR team including payroll, leave administration (family leaves, illness related etc.).	Head of HR and Staff Development
<b>Payroll</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Preparation of payroll instruction for the National Shared Services Office for .64 staff.</li> <li>■ Processing of annual increments process for all staff.</li> <li>■ Adding/removing individuals from payroll.</li> <li>■ Reviewing payroll adjustments as required</li> <li>■ Informing staff of any changes that pertain to them.</li> <li>■ Processing the quarterly payment of fees to Board members.</li> <li>■ Processing the payment of fees to external members of Board subcommittees.</li> </ul>	
<b>Processing and administration of all staff leave and associated records and time and attendance system administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Updating records and informing staff as appropriate.</li> <li>■ Continued technical support on the new time and attendance system, updating requests as required by staff.</li> </ul>	
<b>Supporting staff learning and development</b>	<p>Support staff learning and development (L&amp;D) activities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Organising staff-wide training.</li> <li>■ Identifying appropriate L&amp;D interventions to meet staff needs.</li> <li>■ Booking training course participation for staff.</li> </ul>	

Key Tasks	Expected Outcome	Task Owner
<p><b>Recruitment, onboarding and induction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ HR business partnering to develop business cases for new/replacement posts as required for consideration by the Department.</li> <li>■ Full end-to-end recruitment process from creation of candidate booklets, advertising of role, interviewing to appointment and completion of onboarding formalities and induction process</li> <li>■ Partnering with Public Jobs and the Commission for Public Service Appointments.</li> </ul>	<p>Head of HR and Staff Development</p>
<p><b>Administration of pensions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Issuing annual benefit statements.</li> <li>■ Responding to pensions queries from staff and pensioners.</li> <li>■ Issuing leaver statements.</li> <li>■ Annual submission to DPENDR data bank and any other information DPENDR may require.</li> </ul>	

5

STRATEGIC GOALS  
TO BE DELIVERED IN  
2025

## 5.1 Theme 1: The people we serve

We recognise the diversity of our service users. We will ensure that meeting their unique needs and perspectives is at the heart of our work, and that they have a supported, positive user experience.

### GOAL 1: HEAR THE VIEWS AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE INTERESTS OF THE CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON IN ADOPTION MATTERS

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
1a	Scoping the development of the experience map.	Scoping complete.	Q2	Director of Operations / Board Secretary
	Identifying data points to inform the development of the experience map.	Data identification complete.	Q3	
	Finalising the development of the experience map.	Experience map developed.	Q4	
	Conduct/commission research with children and young people.	Research findings published and disseminated.	Q4	Research Officer

### GOAL 2: IMPROVED PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT ADOPTION AND THE AAI

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
2d	AAI's Tracing Model documented and published.	Model documented and published.	Q3	Principal Social Worker
2e	Share research findings using accessible formats.	Plain English versions/audio recording of Reflections Report chapters published and supported by AAI's social media channels.	Q3	Research Officer

### GOAL 3: BUILD OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVE OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTED PERSONS

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
3a	Planning for engagement with Irish intercountry adopted persons.	Planning for engagement complete.	Q4	Principal Social Worker
	Report on 18+ ICA lived experience study.	Report published and disseminated.	Q2	Research Officer

## 5.2 Theme 2: What we do

We will continuously work to deliver our services efficiently, effectively and in line with our values. We will evaluate what we do and work to enhance the evidence base for how we carry out our functions.

### GOAL 4: TO EFFECTIVELY DISCHARGE OUR FUNCTIONS UNDER OUR LEGISLATION, ENHANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR FUNCTIONS AND SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
	Undertake a review to evaluate and establish a sustainable intercountry adoption mediation services model for Ireland.	Report on a sustainable intercountry adoption mediation services model delivered for consideration by the Board.	Q3	Director of Operations / Board Secretary
4a	Development of a plan for engagement with the Department, Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) and other relevant stakeholders to continue to evolve and respond to the changing global trend in intercountry adoption and including exploring new intercountry programme potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Plan for engagement developed.</li> <li>■ Department advice received regarding country programme development.</li> </ul>	Q2 Q3	Chief Executive Officer
4b	Formal engagement with the Department to explore how the AAI can support its consideration of a national approach to open or semi-open adoption.	Formal engagement with the Department commenced.	Q2	Chief Executive Officer
4c	Commission a review of standards underpinning all domestic adoption in a sample of other jurisdictions (to align with programme under 5d).	Review commissioned and work commenced.	Q4	Principal Social Worker

### GOAL 5: CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION RELATING TO ADOPTION AND FAMILY FORMATION

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
5c	Continue our active participation in the statutory review of the BITA.	Submission made in respect of the BITA.	Q2	Director of Information Services
5d	Continue our involvement in the EU programme (Technical Support Instrument) supported by DG Reform, working in partnership with the Department and UNICEF, on the review of domestic infant adoption in Ireland.	Submission made in respect of domestic adoption.	Q3	Principal Social Worker

**GOAL 6: REVIEW THE CURRENT AAI RESEARCH STRATEGY AND DEVELOP A SUCCESSOR STRATEGY**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
6a	Conduct a review of the outcomes of the current AAI Research Strategy.	Review of current Strategy complete.	Q2	Research Officer
	Scoping the development of a new AAI Research Strategy.	Research Strategy scoped.	Q2	Research Officer
	Final AAI Research Strategy approved by the Board.	Strategy signed off by Board.	Q4	Research Officer

**GOAL 7: IMPLEMENT A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
7a	Dedicated Strategy for the Acquisition, Retention and Safeguarding of Relevant Records developed for Board approval and implementation commenced.	Board approval of Strategy for the Acquisition, Retention and Safeguarding of Relevant Records.	Q2	Director of Information Services and Records
	Commence Implementation Strategy for the Acquisition, Retention and Safeguarding of Relevant Records.	Implementation commenced.	Q4	Director of Information Services and Records
7b	Reexamine completed information releases under BITA 2022 Parts 2–4 to applicants against records acquired subsequently by AAI for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>additional relevant records; and</li> <li>complete supplementary information releases for such applicants.</li> </ul>	300 cases completed.	2025	Director of Information Services and Records
7d	Timely compliance with Sections 22 and 24 of Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme 2022 to the Office of the Chief Deciding Officer required for the administration/implementation of the Redress Payment Scheme.	96 hours.	2025	Director of Information Services and Records
7e	Engage with relevant stakeholders to identify and develop new approaches in working with birth mothers following the introduction of the BITA, ensuring the inclusion of the views and the experiences of birth mothers.	Feedback mechanism in place for birth mothers engaged in tracing.	Q2	Principal Social Worker
7g	Explore with the Department, Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) and other stakeholders, the AAI's capacity, and the relevant associated required governance structures, to undertake adoption assessments.	Paper exploring the practical and legal landscape of adoption assessment drafted.	Q2	Principal Social Worker

GOAL 8: LEVERAGE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY				
Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
8a	Deliver consolidated archival access points from across the AAI's records for our current, and historic services users, in digital form to ensure timely, efficient and accurate information retrieval and release.	8,600 Case Files entries.	2025	Director of Information Services and Records
		76,000 County Homes entries.	2025	Director of Information Services and Records
8b	Functional and non-functional requirements assessed against suite of products in relation to online tools that allow for more secure document handling and information dissemination.	Assessment complete.	Q2	Director of Information Services and Records
	DPIA conducted for online tools that allow for more secure document handling and information dissemination.	DPIA conducted.	Q3	Director of Information Services and Records
	Pilot of online tools that allow for more secure document handling and information dissemination commenced.	Pilot commenced.	Q4	Director of Information Services and Records
8c	Ensure the AAI is prepared for the transition to becoming an AI augmented organisation by enhancing our data readiness in a manner that protects the fundamental rights of service users.	Training of relevant staff facilitated.	Q2	Director of Information Services and Records

## 5.3 Theme 3: Who delivers our services

We will make the AAI an excellent place to work, supporting our staff to develop and grow within their roles and within the organisation. We will ensure that the AAI has the right mix of skills, experience and culture to allow the organisation to thrive.

GOAL 9: DESIGN AND ROLL OUT 'ONE AAI', A PROGRAMME DESIGNED TO BUILD COHESION AND ENGAGEMENT AMONG OUR STAFF				
Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
9a	Review of outcomes of the employee engagement survey to inform the development of the HR Strategy and findings shared.	Outcomes reviewed and presented to HR, management, staff and the Board.	Q1	Head of HR and Staff Development
	AAI HR Strategy developed.	AAI HR Strategy developed, incorporating a well-being pillar, and approved by the Board.	Q4	
9b	Development, implementation and ongoing delivery of a schedule of monthly events, including lunch-and-learn sessions, available to all staff in addition to staff endeavour recognition events and celebration of key deliverables.	Schedule of monthly events, including lunch-and-learn sessions, developed and communicated to all staff via the staff intranet and delivered throughout the year as well as periodic staff endeavour recognition and celebration events.	Q2	Head of HR and Staff Development
			Ongoing	
9c	Revise current programme of internal communication and knowledge sharing.	Programme of internal communication and knowledge sharing reviewed and revised.	Q4	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services
	Internal communication and knowledge sharing through a range of staff communication channels.	Multiple communication channels and mechanisms developed to allow for improved two-way communication and knowledge sharing.	Q4	

**GOAL 10: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLAN**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
10a	Conduct a workforce analysis, mapping knowledge, skills, competence and capacity across the organisation.	Organisation-wide skill and capacity matrix developed to inform the Strategic Workforce Plan.	Q2	Head of HR and Staff Development
10b	Assess the anticipated future workforce needs of the AAI and conduct a gap analysis against the existing workforce analysis.	Future workforce needs assessment and gap analysis completed.	Q3	Head of HR and Staff Development
10c	Engage with staff, partners and the Department in relation to current and future workforce needs and create a comprehensive strategic workforce plan for the AAI.	Development of a Strategic Workforce Plan enabling the AAI to achieve the goals set out within this Strategic Plan.	Q3	Head of HR and Staff Development
10d	Submit relevant business cases for any new posts that may be identified in the Strategic Workforce Plan for consideration by the Department for sanction.	Business case submitted for all new posts identified in the Strategic Workforce Plan.	Q4	Head of HR and Staff Development
10e	Recruitment to new posts in line with AAI's recruitment policy and procedures.	All recruitment to new posts conducted in line with the AAI's recruitment policy and procedures.	Ongoing	Head of HR and Staff Development

**GOAL 11: REVIEW THE EXISTING STRUCTURE AND ENSURE THE DESIGN OF THE ORGANISATION CAN ENSURE WE ARE THE RIGHT SHAPE AND THE RIGHT SIZE TO DELIVER ON OUR PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
11a	Commence process to commission a review of the organisation structure and establishment of a Target Operating Model (TOM) for the organisation and progress the project.	Review commissioned and TOM/organisation structure project commenced.	Q2	Chief Executive Officer

**GOAL 12: ESTABLISH AN EMPLOYEE-WIDE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (L&D) PROGRAMME TO SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR STAFF**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
12b	Create a bespoke professional development framework for all employees to allow for individuals to undertake L&D programmes of relevance to their roles and career development aspirations.	Professional Development Framework developed and implemented.	2025	Head of HR and Staff Development

## 5.4 Theme 4: How we deliver our services

We will ensure that our governance, management and organisational enabling mechanisms are fit for purpose, and we will work to continuously improve them.

### GOAL 13: EVALUATE AND ENHANCE OUR SERVICES FUNCTIONS

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
13a	Evaluate our capacity to deliver effective service in-house rather than on an outsourced basis as part of the Strategic Workforce Plan.	Evaluation of the AAI's capacity to deliver services in-house delivered as part of the Strategic Workforce Plan (see Goal 10) and identification of required resourcing.	Q3	Chief Executive Officer
13b	Conduct a comprehensive review and update to our suite of HR policies and procedures.	Review and update of Employee Handbook continuing throughout 2025.	Ongoing	Head of HR and Staff Development

### GOAL 14: ENSURE A TIMELY AND SMOOTH BOARD TRANSITION UP TO AND BEYOND NOVEMBER 2025

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
14a	Review of the current iteration of the Board Member Induction Programme.	Review complete.	Q1	Chief Executive Officer
	Development of a revised Board Member Induction Programme.	Revised Board Member Induction programme developed.	Q2	Chief Executive Officer
	New Board members appointed by the Minister and induction and onboarding process commenced.	New Board member induction process commenced.	Q3	Chief Executive Officer
14b	Review and evaluate the Board governance architecture and policy frameworks.	Review and evaluation complete.	Q3	Director of Operations / Board Secretary
	Implementation of actions from the evaluation of Board governance architecture and policy frameworks (if any).	Actions implemented.	Q4	Director of Operations / Board Secretary
14c	Implementation of the recommendations relevant to the Board contained in the Department's Periodic Critical Review (PCR) report and other governance evaluations.	PCR Report and other evaluation recommendations implemented.	Q4	Chief Executive Officer

**GOAL 14: ENSURE A TIMELY AND SMOOTH BOARD TRANSITION UP TO AND BEYOND NOVEMBER 2025 CONTINUED**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
14d	Promote the smooth transition of new members on to the Risk and Audit Committee and the Research Subcommittee, concurrent with the appointment of the new Board in 2025.	Smooth transition, to include induction and learning and development programme planning, of new members on to the Board's subcommittees, aligning with the Board transition in 2025.	Q4	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services and Research Officer

**GOAL 15: EVALUATE AND ENHANCE OUR REGULATORY OVERSIGHT FUNCTIONS**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
15a	Review all in-house processes and procedures relating to the monitoring and oversight of the AAI's accredited bodies.	All policies and procedures reviewed and areas for improvement identified.	Q3	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services

**GOAL 16: FOSTER THE AAI'S CULTURE OF INNOVATION IN HOW WE CARRY OUT OUR WORK**

Ref	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	End Date	Action Owner
16b	Deliver commitments under Theme 1 'Digital and Innovation at Scale' under the 'Better Public Services – Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy'.	Delivery of a new integrated AAI website which provides a near seamless user experience.	Q2	Head of Finance, Assurance and Support Services

## 6 Resourcing

As at 31 December 2024, AAI has 57 sanctioned positions, with the following breakdown per grade:

- 1 Director
- 2 Principal Officers
- 1 Principal Social Worker
- 5 Assistant Principal Officers
- 1 Archivist Grade II
- 1 Archivist Grade III
- 2 Social Worker Team Leaders
- 5 Senior Social Work Practitioners
- 5 Professionally Qualified Social Workers
- 6 Higher Executive Officers
- 2 Administrative Officers
- 16 Executive Officers
- 10 Clerical Officers

## 7 Financial Framework

The following table provides a breakdown of the pay costs and non-pay costs estimated for the forthcoming year relating to this Business Plan, broken down into various categories.

<b>Pay Costs</b>	€	€
<b>Total Pay Costs</b>		<b>4,518,561</b>
<b>Non-pay Costs</b>		
Grant Payment	324,720	
HR Management and Development	119,970	
Board and Committee Costs	89,990	
Upkeep and Overheads	557,053	
General Expenses	856,603	
Legal	1,400,000	
Travel	52,820	
Information Services and Records	615,120	
Research and Library	91,730	
Social Work	120,610	
<b>Total Non-pay Costs</b>		<b>4,228,617</b>
<b>Total Costs</b>		<b>8,747,178</b>

# Appendix A:

## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

### List of Acronyms used throughout this document:

AAI	Adoption Authority of Ireland
BAU	Business-as-usual
BITA	Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022
CPR	Contact Preference Register
Department	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DPENDR	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform
DPIA	Data Protection Impact Assessment
DSARs	Data Subject Access Requests
FOI	Freedom of Information
HR	Human Resources
ICA	Intercountry Adoption
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
L&D	Learning and Development
PCR	Periodic Critical Review
SMT	Senior Management Team
TOM	Target Operating Model
Tusla	Child and Family Agency



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN  
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND