



Australian  
Inclusion  
Group

# ANNUAL REPORT : 2023



inclusionwa



inclusion solutions



plannavigators



Australian  
Inclusion  
Network

# Staff 2022-2023

## Australian Inclusion Group

### Chief Executive Officer

Paul Fleay

### General Manager - People & Culture

Jess Kain

### General Manager - Business Services

Laurensia Rosana

### Compliance & Internal Audit Manager

Karla Summers

### Marketing & Communication Manager

Brett Syme

### Business Information & Technology Manager

Olivia van der Kroon

### Finance Manager

Yuhan Richards

### Accountant

Ai Lin Ling

Peiyang Zheng

### HR and Payroll Officer

Emmanuel Fidalgo

### Board Minute Taker

Grace Mills

## Inclusion WA

### Individualised Services Managers

Jessica De Masi

Matthew Shaw

Sharon Morgan

### Individualised Services Coordinator

Anna-Louise Bowden

Anne Marliac

Ashlee Price

Danielle May

Dylan Headley

Jarrod Murfit

Jodi Batley

Joshua Unwin

Karla Longstaff

Leanne Green

Li Yen Ong

Liam Parsons

Linelle Fields

Marina Leeming

Sarah Genoni

Sarah Tussler

Sasha McCaughan

Sharon Edwards

Thomas Darley

### Service Support Assistant

Janine Muir

### Service Support Officer

Dimithira Jani

Suzanne Lawlor

### Support Coordinator

Nikki Ilich

### Senior Mentor

Ashley Middleton

Bettina Van Dijk

Brenton Terry

Cameron Hill

Kerryn Troy

Kudakwashe Juru

Nicholas Ardley

Ramona Chant

Ryan Randolph

Thomas Taverner

### Mentor

Agot Jok

Alec Holder

Allanah Schwagereit

Allison Riley

Amanda Choularton

Amelia Brewin

Amy Greatbanks

Amy Vinson

Angus Armstrong

April Pendergast

Aran Lock, Aran

Archie Morrison

Aseem Gandhi

Austen Rees

Avril MacLennan

Benjamin Bastion

Caitlin Sawrey

Campbell Fleay

Caroline Smith

Chantell Fourie

Chantelle Fairall

Christopher Cady

Christopher Prindiville

Conor O'Sullivan

Craig Kenyon-Quigley

Craig Walton

Daniel Barrington

Daniel Gregory

Daniel van der Waal

Darby McGrath

Darren Stevenson

Darryl Fernandez

De'Arne Liddell

Deborah Hamon

Ebonee Lynch

Edward Withers

Elise Reidy-Crofts

Emerson Robb

Eric Songcuan

Evelyn Snook

Farina Olsen

Gayle Aggiss

Giannina Kramer

Gillian Bailey

Glenn Pugh

Hanna Dethlefsen

Hannah Lawrence

Isabella Dunbar-Tapp

Isobelle Petri

Jack Williams

Jacqui Hampton-Grigg

Jaime Pyne

Jaimee Bennett

Jamie Lee Hamon

Jarred Frederick

Jasmine Webster

Jay Cutler

Jay Weinstein

Jessica Bennett

Jessica Hegarty

Jessica Tanner

John Flannery

Jordan Murfit

Kameron Casey

Karyna Platonova

Katherine Millington

Kayla Braddy

Kellie Patterson

Kerry Riley

Kevin Jackson

Kirsten Bosly

Kym Cochran

Laim Gough

Lara Del Bianco

Lauren Martin

Leah Lebowitz

Libby Ashley

Liia White

Lorraine Drexler

Luke Hartley

Mackenzie Bougoure

Margaret Steadman

Mari Mokonen

Matthew Appelbee

Matthew Vlahov

Max McDonald

Mayank Kumar

Meg van der Borgh

Michael Beckers

Michael Cotton

Michael Owens

Muhammad Ibrahim

Nahom Mebrahtu

Nan Versaci

Natalie Burder

Natasha Brown

Nathan Sutton

Niamh Patchett

Nicholas McNeillage

Nigel Matthews

Nivalda Rebelo

Olivia George

Patrick Marlborough

Patrick Roso

Peter Adamson

Piper Bethell

Raymon Chong

Renee Crompton

Rhianna Choularton

Rhys Choularton

Riley Gravenall

Rinzin Norbu

Robert Houston

Robert McCasker

Rosie Ryan

Ruth Constantine

Ryan Slater

Sara Paredes

Sasha Todhunter

Shan Williams

Steven Preedy

Steven van der

Westhuizen

Suesara Nelson

Tessa Darcey

Thaylia Solly

Thomas Corlson

Thomas Mucciarone

Thomas Tuffnell

Tiana Blackwell

Tinsae Teshome

Toby Van

Venus Karel

William Catlin

William Pusey

Yvette Maher

Zaya Amarbileg

Zoe Williamson

### Service Support Officer

Michelle Boyle

### Mentor

Diana Clausen

Malcolm Dunlop

Caroline Smith

## Australian Inclusion Network

### Manager

Karla Summers

### Coordinator

Leanne Ellis

Eloise Maxwell

### Support Worker

Isobella Kingsman

Emma Spindler

## Inclusion Solutions

### Senior Inclusion Consultant

Ciara Cooney

### Project Officer

Rachel Dillon

### Manager

Adam Nankin

Zoya Yuxhnevich

## Plan Navigators

### General Manager

Kristy Macnamara

### Plan Management Manager

Shelley Johnston

### Plan Manager

Sarosha Govender

Mark Murrell

### Support Coordinator

Francis Baptist

Felicity Brown

Karla Summers

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# Chair's Report



**Moving beyond the forced physical exclusions that came with COVID this financial year heralded a renewed optimism about our work and our impact. This manifested in revisiting our organisational vision - *A world where all people can live a good life and participate in a welcoming community*. Given our sector's challenges, it was a timely prompt to refocus our collective sights on our core values and business goals.**

From a financial perspective, like most organisations in the sector, AIG experienced another challenging year. On the back of the previous financial year's difficulties, the board and management team took steps to reset our strategic focus, with the key goal of recovering financial stability across the Group by the end of the 2024 financial year. The execution of the overall strategy remains young, but we believe that the indicators are trending in the right direction, and we look forward to seeing this continue into the 2024 financial year.

One tough decision taken in line with this plan and following the enormous challenges of the COVID period was to wind up the operations of the Australian Inclusion Network, so that we could concentrate our energies on the Western Australian community.

We were heartened by Inclusion WA posting a small profit on the back of an enormous effort from the operational team in each of the Perth Hubs. However, as a Group, we struggled to set a profit budget and posted an overall loss. This has been a concern for our organisation and our Board, as it is across many of our peer organisations. Accordingly, while we continued to explore opportunities for growth, we also actively sought opportunities to reduce costs.

Another approach to rationalising costs was the creation of efficiencies by improving business processes. Our incoming Finance Manager Yuhon Francis, together with her team, successfully championed the introduction of a new finance system. We also welcomed Jess Kain's return from parental leave into the Manager, People and Culture role, together with the introduction of a new HR system. We are confident that the enormous work in these transitions will be justified by a reduction in manual handling, duplication and data entry and by improving reporting, analytical and management functionality.

In addition to the redefinition of portfolios among the executive team, this financial year foreshadowed some changes in governance at the board level, with long-standing board members and former Chairs Matt Popham and Brendan Cullinan making the hard call to step away from their board roles. While we are deeply sad to farewell Matt and Brendan, we thank them both for their enormous contributions over many years and offer our best wishes as they move on to new challenges.

We look forward to recruiting new contributors to the Board and welcoming them to an otherwise stable governance team. The attention paid to succession planning at the board level over many years is now bearing fruit: the great mix of skills on the board has fortified us to navigate the ongoing challenges in the sector. The cohesion and cooperative rapport of the board was enhanced by the increased capacity for face-to-face meetings this year.

While it has not been the easiest year, our strength as an organisation continues to deepen. As we look forward to consolidating our path in a more stable direction in the new financial year, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the people who make me so proud to be a part of this wonderful organisation – our team, including the Board, Paul as the CEO, the executive team and every other person who works so hard to help us do what we do. Let's keep pulling together for another great year in 2023/2024.

**Gemma Nugent**  
**Board Chair**

“The attention paid to succession planning at the board level over many years is now bearing fruit: the great mix of skills on the board has fortified us to navigate the ongoing challenges in the sector.”



Clockwise from top left: AIG tree planting, AIG walk for reconciliation, AIG beach cleanup and AIG end of year celebration 2022.

# Group Operational Report



**I believe it was Socrates who said, "The secret of change is to focus all your energy not on fighting the old but on building the new." This was valuable insight that is still very relevant today. The past year has been one of change - and it feels like I have said that a number of times in recent years. But much of the change is designed to help us operate more effectively in a challenging environment.**

We have been focused on how we can operate effectively and efficiently within the NDIS environment. This has led to structural change within our teams but also system change. In the past 12 months, we have implemented a new finance system and a new HR system. This is on top of the wider system change and evolution. Thankfully, all of the wonderful, dedicated people who work within the Group, took the words of Socrates to heart – and everyone had their focus on moving forward.

Last year I spoke of getting back to core values, and it was fantastic this year to have a number of opportunities for all of our people to reconnect with the purpose of the work. We held a mentor summit in February where a large number of our front-line people came together to talk about the work and reflect on person centred practice. Additionally, we got John Armstrong back over to Perth to run Social Role Valorisation training for the first time since before COVID. These, on the surface, may seem like small things to talk about over the course of a busy and hectic year, but they are vital. It is our focus on core values ahead of anything else which sets us apart and which ultimately helps all of our staff feel part of something much larger and more purposeful. It is this focus that provides the energy and drive to work through the complexity of change, and to stay positive and resilient.

With the context of change and evolution, it was pleasing to see the hard work of the Inclusion WA teams start paying dividends in the past 12 months. While we want, and need, our people focusing on the way we work, the reality is we are also a business and must



AIG January 26th

be viable. As such, we spent time over the year having a simple focus on delivering the hours required by our clients. This meant making sure we had the required staff and supporting them to be the best they could be. As a result of this simple focus, Inclusion WA made a small profit for the first time in many years. While there is much work still to do – and we are still setting a deficit budget for the coming year – it is proof that it can work.

We were not so fortunate in our operations in Brisbane, where we had to shut down the Australian Inclusion Network. This will be discussed elsewhere in this report, so I will restrict myself to mentioning that I have no doubt we could have been successful in that market – and hope that we can one day relaunch. Unfortunately, we had a perfect storm of events that created a challenging environment, which included launching a few months prior to COVID.

Plan Navigators is an exciting business that is having a huge impact, especially in regional WA. When we first set up this business, our view was that not only could we support people without offering direct support, but we felt our focus could be on working with people in areas with "thin markets". It was an innovative idea to support people to employ their own staff, with our role to build capacity and create independence. The growth Plan Navigators has seen over the past year has been due to the traction in regional WA combined with the stability, clarity, and dedication of the small team – most notably led by Kristy Macnamara.

“ It is our focus on core values ahead of anything else which sets us apart and which ultimately helps all of our staff feel part of something much larger and more purposeful. ”

Inclusion Solutions, if we are honest, had a slightly challenging year. We had some key people in senior roles leave the organisation – and in a small team that removes corporate knowledge. However, having spent the past few months working much more closely with the team, I can see that there are many green shoots of opportunity and also of community need. A recent workshop of State Sporting Association employees (from more than 20 sports) facilitated by Inclusion Solutions highlighted how much support the community still needs. There is still a lack of understanding and appreciation for the power of being an inclusive club – and how to achieve that. I am confident that a new team, which is now in place, will make the next 12 months hugely successful and get back to operating in a way that led to the well-deserved, positive reputation that Inclusion Solutions has.



**AIG beach clean up**

There are always people who leave an organisation during any given year, and we cannot always mention everyone, however a senior colleague who devoted 7 years to helping to build our business left at the end of 2022, so I would like to make a specific mention of Laurensia Rosana, and thank her for her huge contribution.

As always, I would like to thank the Executive team and senior leaders of the organisation – Jess Kain, Olivia van der Kroon, Kristy Macnamara, Karla Summers, Jess De Masi, Sharon Morgan, Matt Shaw, Zoya Yuhnevich, Yuhon Richards – and all of their teams for



**AIG end of year celebraion 2022**

the passion, humour, intelligence and focus they all bring to work every day. It has been a pleasure and an honour working with you.

I would also like to thank the Board, led by Gemma Nugent. The perfect Board, in my opinion, is one that has a mixed skill set, is values based and has the perfect balance of challenge and support. So, it is my view that the Australian Inclusion Group has the perfect Board – and I thank them all for their support and the right amount of challenge throughout the year.

I also know, as I write this report, I will not be with the organisation by the time the next report is due in 12 months. Therefore, I will beg your indulgence for a moment to say a simple thank you for the journey over the past 14 years. We are all just passing through, but I hope to have left a small mark during my time. It would also be true to say that the organisation, the values, the people I have worked with, and the people we have supported have all left a significant mark on me. It has been the most powerful, life-changing work. I'm proud to have been a part of it.

**Paul Fleay**  
**Chief Executive Officer**



**AIG Quiz Night: Paul, Matt and Pete.**

# Board of Directors



**Gemma Nugent**

**Chair**

Gemma is a specialist contract lawyer who founded her own commercial and contract law practice, SoundLegal, in 2019. Prior to this, Gemma was corporate counsel to a global engineering and design consultant for many years.

Gemma has taught commercial and corporate law at Curtin Law School. She also played a key role developing a legal advisory service for NFPs at the John Curtin Law Clinic. Gemma holds degrees in law and psychology, completed a Master of Business Administration in 2013 and will complete her Master of Laws in 2022.

Gemma has been on the board at AIG since 2015 and is so proud to be a part of the work that AIG does. The Board and Management team always bring their best selves to their roles and she finds the opportunities for personal connection with AIG team members and clients very rewarding.



**David Shallue**

**Deputy Chair**

David joined the Board in February 2018. He has operated his own human resource management and industrial relations consultancy since 2005. Prior to this, David held similar roles in the arts and entertainment industry, primarily

involved in the area of venue management operations. As well as his involvement with AIG, David is the Secretary of the WA Branch of The Lord's Taverners Australia. He is also an active member of the ANA Rowing Club.

David is heavily committed to creating welcoming communities for everyone.



**Michael Radford**

**Treasurer**

Michael joined the board as an observer in 2019, and has since been nominated to the role of Treasurer in November 2020. Currently, he is the Commercial Finance Manager at Boral Construction. Michael has previously held roles in a broad range

of industries from Mining and Engineering to grassroot start-ups. In his spare time, Michael enjoys spending as much time with his two young boys and keeping physically active, whether it's long distance ocean swimming or hiking new places in the state.



**Scott Harper**

**Secretary**

Scott joined the Board in late 2019. Scott has worked as the Government Affairs Manager for Alcoa of Australia since 2018. Prior to this, Scott was deployed overseas with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to represent Australia at the

United Nations in New York City. He is a lawyer by training and started his career in corporate law before working as Associate to former Justice of the High Court William Gummow AC. He holds a Bachelors of Law/Arts from the University of Western Australia. Scott enjoys cooking, spending time in Vienna with his Austrian wife and time at the beach with their Labrador, Pippa.



### Brendan Cullinan

#### Board Member

Brendan joined the Board in April 2012. He is married to Jane with two children. Brendan has worked in the sport and recreation industry in Western Australia for over 20 years in positions with the State Government and various sporting

organisations. Brendan is currently the Executive Director with Triathlon Western Australia. In his spare time, Brendan keeps active by coaching AFL football and enjoys keeping fit. Brendan holds a sports management degree and is a qualified company director.

Brendan has played sport all his life. He has worked professionally in sport and recreation for nearly 20 years. He envisions a true 'sport for all' philosophy where people have a choice to participate in their favourite sport regardless of their ability, gender, or age.



### Catherine Pearce

#### Board Member

**Commenced January 2022**

Catherine has over 15 years' experience working in management and engineering consulting in Australia and the UK. She is passionate about helping people and organisations reach their

potential, through good governance and great working dynamics. Catherine is pleased to have joined the Australian Inclusion Group Board in 2022 and support social inclusion in our communities.

Catherine's expertise is in advising organisations of all types and sizes on strategy, governance, program management and operations as they navigate significant change or implement challenging projects. She brings together analytical thinking and broad industry experience to filter and process complex data, identify key issues, develop innovative strategies, and navigate challenging stakeholder environments to drive outcomes. She has worked across a wide range of industries, with not-for-profit, government, community, education, health care, engineering, construction, defence, utilities, resources, manufacturing and financial services organisations.



### Reece Hedwards

#### Board Member

Reece has personal and professional experience in the disability industry. Having a life long physical disability, he has also had 13 years experience with direct care including a role at Inclusion WA before being involved with

supporting people moving onto the NDIS from their state funded plans. Reece has a strong ambition to empower people with disabilities, helping and encouraging them to take control of their lives. Reece is also a proud father and enjoys playing footy and golf in his spare time.



### Matthew Popham

#### Board Member

Matthew is a tax professional with over 25 years of experience in providing tax advice to a range of entities including not-for-profit organisations. He currently works for a large multinational gold mining company and has a Degree

in Business Economics. Matthew is married with three children and, together with his wife Jennifer, plays an active role in the WA swimming community for people with disabilities. In his spare time, Matthew likes to run in exotic places, is a rugby coach, plays touch rugby and wheelchair basketball and enjoys most sports.

Matthew has three wonderful, sporting children. One of his sons is an elite para-swimmer who happens to have cerebral palsy. This is why he is passionate about social inclusion and the inclusion of people with disability.



### Claire Swyny

#### Board Member

**Commenced January 2022**

Claire is a Registered Psychologist with a Masters in Industrial and Organisational Psychology and a passion for inclusion and diversity. She has over 20 years experience working across a

cross-section of internal and consulting roles in organisational development and behaviour change management.

Claire spent the first decade of her career in a consulting environment, helping client organisations across industry sectors with their organisational development, coaching and psychometric assessment needs. After extensive experience assisting organisations optimise their performance and manage change projects, Claire advanced to a General Manager position, leading a profitable consulting business. She then broadened her exposure via appointment to an internal, strategic leadership role in Learning and Organisational Development, with Monadelphous Group, before moving into a Culture, Inclusion and Diversity lead position with Woodside Energy and HR Business Partner leadership positions with the Finance, Engineering, Sustainability and Climate divisions at Woodside. Claire is a well-respected professional in the areas of organisational development, culture and inclusion with a strong commitment to positive progress in social inclusion and a drive to help individuals, teams and organisations operate to their fullest potential.

# Overview

“The 2022/23 financial year marked an extremely positive change for Inclusion WA.”

**In a sector consistently undergoing profound transformations and grappling with uncertainty, Barack Obama's words resonate: "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." Amidst a backdrop of shifting landscapes within our sector and global unpredictability, it becomes increasingly vital to reaffirm our core values and beliefs.**

The past year has brought forth an array of new compliance and auditing requirements, further emphasising the imperative of anchoring ourselves in our organisational purpose. As external pressures mount, the risk of mission drift looms. It's all too easy to veer off course without realizing it. To counter this, we must remain unwavering in our commitment to delivering exceptional services and embodying the change we envision.

The 2022/23 financial year marked an extremely positive change for Inclusion WA. Our primary focus was on consistently delivering high-quality services to our existing clients, even amid the challenges posed by a global pandemic. Whilst also keeping a close eye on the changes happening around us. The continual introduction of new external demands threatened to divert our attention from our mission yet, encouragingly, our client survey results demonstrated that Inclusion WA maintained its commitment to excellence throughout this period.

Furthermore, Inclusion WA encountered financial obstacles as we transitioned out of a post-COVID world and into some clear air to focus on not just consolidation but actual growth in revenue. Navigating this transition during a global pandemic presented formidable hurdles. Nevertheless, as the financial year drew to a close, the organisation's financial position began to show signs of improvement, instilling a much-needed sense of confidence as we entered the 23/24 financial year.

Within these pages, you'll discover a glimpse of the remarkable support we've provided throughout the year. It serves as a poignant reminder of our "why" and reinforces our dedication to driving positive change in the lives of the individuals and communities we serve. As we consolidate our services and embark on an exciting phase of our organisation's evolution, we remain steadfast in our commitment to pushing boundaries and empowering people to lead fulfilling lives.

Below and right: IWA Mentor's Summit



## Staff survey results:

### Improved workplace culture and more social opportunities to connect with peers

- \* In 2022, 20% of employees disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, 'There are enough opportunities to connect with my peers'. In 2023, we'd like to see that number at or lower than 12%.

**Result - Achieved. This was 10% for 2023.**

### Increased employee satisfaction with pay and conditions

- \* In 2022, only 32% of employees agreed or strongly agreed that their 'salary is competitive with similar jobs I might find elsewhere'. In 2023, we would like to see that increase to 40% or higher.

**Result - Achieved. This was 55% for 2023.**

### Improved communications and cross-hub/entity pollination

- \* Increased social events and training opportunities will also create casual opportunities for employees from different hubs/entities to get to know each other and chat about what's happening.

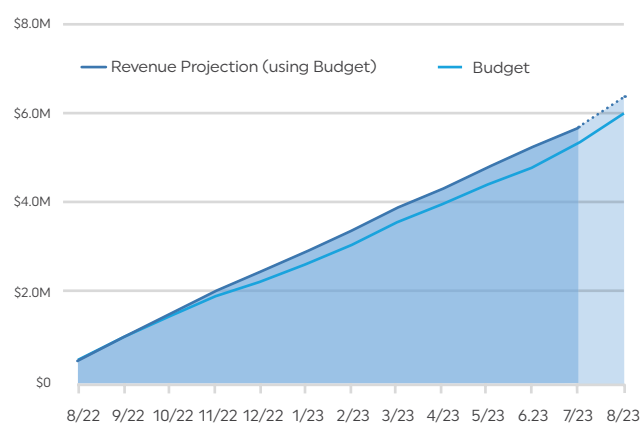
**Result - Achieved. We have run more training and social events for the year to date.**

### Ramona's 10 year celebration



## Client Data:

### Total Revenue YTD + rest of year budget



### Retained Income

July 2022	143,342
August 2022	14,068
September 2022	3,900
October 2022	7,175
November 2022	80,029
December 2022	-34,240
January 2023	16,888
February 2023	25,304
March 2023	-31,201
April 2023	-27,769
May 2023	63,727
June 2023	-18,873
July 2023	-62,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>180,039</b>

# Client Stories

## Jacob

**Jacob's story begins when he completed high school with a burning passion for working in the hospitality sector. Despite his enthusiasm, he was unsure about how to turn his dream into a reality. Jacob had always been captivated by the world of cafes, relishing the experience of trying different foods and beverages. It was evident to him that pursuing a career in hospitality was the ideal way to start his professional life in an area he truly cared about.**

Inclusion WA stepped in to assist Jacob in realising his dream. Our mentors worked closely with Jacob, conducting a comprehensive assessment of his skills, talents, and areas that required additional support. This collaborative effort helped create a roadmap for his journey.

Over the course of nine months, Jacob diligently worked with his Inclusion WA mentors on honing his skills, boosting his confidence, and refining his abilities in the hospitality sector. His passion and commitment were evident to everyone who worked with him. During this time, Jacob secured a volunteer position at Dome Cafe, a pivotal moment in his journey.

Jacob's time at Dome Cafe proved to be transformational. Not only did his mentors recognise his remarkable skills and dedication, but the cafe's manager also saw his immense potential. Impressed by Jacob's hard work and enthusiasm, the manager extended an offer for a paid position.

Today, Jacob is thriving in his role. He has seamlessly integrated into the team, delivering exceptional service to customers and making valuable contributions to the cafe's success. His story is a shining example of how determination, coupled with the right support and guidance, can lead to professional success.

Inclusion WA continues to work alongside Jacob, offering ongoing support in various areas. Currently, we are assisting him in obtaining his driver's license, a crucial step towards achieving greater independence.

Through our collaborative efforts, Jacob has not only found meaningful employment but has also gained confidence and independence. Inclusion WA looks forward to continuing to work with Jacob to help him reach his future goals.

## Glenn

When we first embarked on our exhilarating journey with Glenn, he was searching for ways to kickstart his self-confidence. Glenn was ready to build on a number of existing skills but was looking for some support to get started. Through the unwavering support of Glenn's mentors and by developing quick rapport, Glenn has transformed into a bingo-calling powerhouse, ready to dazzle and amaze!

Glenn was initially very shy and reserved with his mentors. It took a few months for Glenn to engage in conversation and build trust with his mentors however it quickly became clear that he had a passion for public speaking. He had just never been allowed the opportunity to "get into character" and express himself.

Rather than diving straight into public speaking, Glenn decided to explore some community options. Through his time getting to know his mentors, he mentioned he had always wanted to join a bingo group to start his journey. After a few sessions at his local bingo group, it was evident that Glenn had found a great group of people to help him on his journey towards engaging in public speaking. Fast forward a few short months, and Glenn transformed into a bingo maestro, commanding the room with his charismatic calls.



Glenn (left) at bingo

I would also like to share Eric's reflections about this win:

"This got me thinking about our recent SRV training – the social roles that define us and the identities we embrace. Glenn's role as the bingo maestro isn't just about calling numbers; it's a testament to the power of self-confidence. As we watched Glenn bask in the applause, soaking up the positive energy, it was clear that his newfound identity has enriched his engagement with everyone around him. This is what it's all about – celebrating the small steps that lead to monumental triumphs and embracing the new roles that empower us to shine."

# Overview

Although the work has grown and evolved over the years, at Inclusion Solutions, our focus has always been on fostering vibrant, connected, and inclusive communities. This year, we've seen some big changes, and whilst we've welcomed some fantastic new projects, over the past little while, we've been focussing our efforts inwards. With some movement within the organisation and changes to our resourcing, we've been working hard to make positive changes internally, so that just like the communities we work with, our community here at Inclusion Solutions is vibrant, connected, and inclusive.

With change comes opportunity. We welcomed some fantastic new team members this year, including Mandurah local and passionate volunteer, Marie Scott; Anne Marliac, who joins us on secondment with over nine years of experience at Inclusion WA; as well as Crispin Roberts, whose knowledge in policy and practice in sports and recreation is second to none, particularly in the space of disability, with 20 years of lived experience himself.

We also recently created a new position, centred around Training and Development. After some great early successes with this role, we're excited to be welcoming two new part-time staff who will be driving our workshop content development and delivery. Community education and capacity building continue to be a key pillar of work for us, and we are excited to grow our work in the space, expanding upon and fine-tuning our current offerings and fee-for-service work.



**Kwinana Connect Event**

The year started with a bang for us with one of our best Social Inclusion Forums ever hosted in the City of Kwinana. It was a magical night outdoors under the fairy lights, and it was fantastic to connect so many community members and hear from some truly inspiring local leaders. This event certainly set the tone for us, as we continued with several other fantastic events throughout the year.

“ Our Industry Mentors in Employment project also continues to see steady success as we focus on fostering genuine relationships to improve disability employment across the metropolitan area. ”



Kwinana Connect Event

In the education sector, we've loved working alongside Dual Paralympic Gold Medallist, Ben Popham, to deliver inspirational and educational presentations to students around disability inclusion in sport as part of our Telethon Inclusive Schools Project. So far, we've presented to over 700 students and have been overwhelmed by the positive response we've had to date. We are excited to be looking at extending the project in the coming year thanks to the enthusiasm of our supporters at Telethon.

Our Wayfairers Project, in Kalamunda and Mandurah, where we connect older adults with volunteer opportunities to reduce social isolation and foster intentional skill-sharing in the community, is now in its final years. We've identified key community champions to lead the next phase of the projects and have begun exploring how we fine-tune our process and utilise online technology to match individuals with local opportunities to ensure the projects' ongoing sustainability beyond these two communities.

This year, we also started an exciting new project focusing on online learning to support the professional development of individuals working in the disability and community sectors. The project, administered by National Disability Services and funded by the Department of Communities, has seen us develop "The Inclusion Hub", an online learning platform where we have developed a number of courses in collaboration with some amazing industry experts and community champions. Covering topics including disability, social inclusion, LGBTQIA+ awareness, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement, and more. This course series will certainly be a legacy piece for us, one that we know will benefit many organisations across the country.



Inclusion Solutions team at the AIG quiz night.

## Overview continued

We were also proud to receive additional funding from the Department of Communities to deliver our “The Open the Doors” project. Although we are in the early stages of this project, it will see us working alongside three town centres over two years. Grounded in co-design and collaboration, this project focuses on opening the doors to community, educating and supporting cafes, restaurants, retailers, and other local businesses around access and inclusion best practice so that all people, particularly those from low participation backgrounds, can contribute to their communities, both socially and economically.



Looking towards the sporting sector, we believe our work in the space to be more important than ever, as so many Australians experience community through their local sporting clubs and groups. Through our partnership with the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries, we’ve hosted a number of engagement activities to understand challenges, trends, and opportunities at both a State Sporting Association and local club level and working on a range of initiatives to ensure no matter what the sport, they are kicking goals when it comes to fostering genuinely inclusive environments.

Our Industry Mentors in Employment project also continues to see steady success as we focus on fostering genuine relationships to improve disability employment across the metropolitan area.



**Above and left: Industry Mentors in Employment project**

We’ve connected with several volunteer mentors and mentees, hosted two successful networking events, and matched three young people with disability with industry mentors working in their desired field to share their experiences, and make any important industry introductions. One of our mentors, Curtis, has long been passionate about media and sound, so you can imagine our excitement when we connected with Eddie from RTR FM. The two are now meeting regularly with Eddie not only sharing his knowledge, but also facilitating a volunteering opportunity at the radio station to help Curtis identify what aspects of the field he is most interested in to help him continue his employment journey!

Lastly, we wrapped up the Building Inclusive Communities Western Australia (BICWA) project in March. With twenty Local Government Authority partners and their communities over the 2021/22 period, from all corners of WA, this project delivered six quality resources to educate and support building capacity for greater inclusion of all people. With close to 2000 individual participants benefiting from the grant, there were many positive outcomes for LGAs and their communities. There were also some educational resources developed during the project, such as the Club Renovation Toolkit and Community Development Series, which have been valuable in informing some current and future grant funded projects as well as potential passive income streams.

# Case Study

## The Inclusion Hub

We know how important quality services are when it comes to the disability sector. The individuals and organisations in this space play a pivotal role in fostering genuine inclusion and shaping how the broader community views disability.

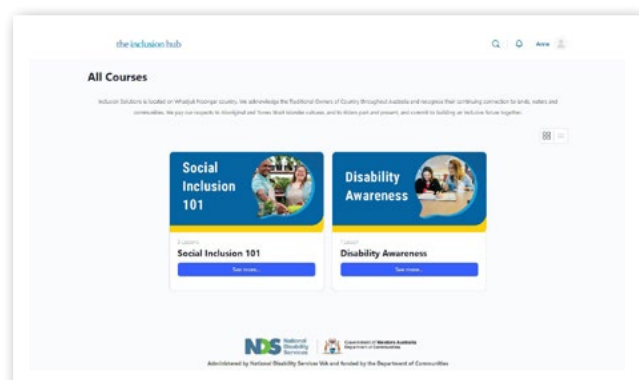
Yet currently, we are facing a time when there are so many reasons to leave the sector, including increased casualisation, underemployment and employee burnout. The HESTA 2021 State of the Sector Report also highlighted the lack of opportunities for professional development and learning for small to medium providers. It is, therefore, more important than ever to remind staff in the sector why their work is so important and valued and provide opportunities for further learning to ensure the sustainability of a thriving sector.

To do this, we've been working on what we've called "The Inclusion Hub". As our biggest project of the year, administered by National Disability Services WA and funded by the Department of Communities, we've been working on developing an online course series covering a range of topics, all aiming to support staff working in disability and community facing roles.

With a total of nine courses between 30 minutes and an hour in length, these bite-size learning opportunities will be made available to every organisation in the sector and cover a range of topics, including social inclusion theories, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, person-centred practice, human rights and advocacy, Aboriginal engagement and more. Each course includes videos, case studies, and interactive activities to ensure the course is engaging and accessible to all participants.

"Our goal with these courses is to provide a space for people with lived experience to share their stories. We want their voices to be shared far and wide. With the hope that those working on the ground can truly grasp the significance of their role in helping others lead fulfilling lives."

"We're genuinely excited about this project and optimistic that it'll gain national traction once the trial phase wraps up. With a solid three decades of experience under our belt, this project offers a unique avenue to amplify the message of social inclusion's remarkable impact on a larger scale. Our aim is to inspire the next generation of workers so folks with disability get better supports and live more fulfilling lives."



### The Inclusion Hub

For our team at Inclusion Solutions, we know this project will be a legacy piece for us. It's an opportunity for us to capture our 30 years of knowledge and experience in the sector, as well as collaborate with some fantastic experts in the space, sharing their expertise and lived experiences.

# Overview

# Organisational Highlights

It's hard to believe another year has passed! Heading into its second year as a standalone entity, Plan Navigators continued its efforts to build connections with people living in Regional WA and the broader Perth metro area. We witnessed steady growth in our Albany service, which gave us confidence in our future plans to expand our work in Regional WA, with a particular focus on the Great Southern Region over the next 12 months.

The 2022/23 period presented us with new challenges. We had started to leave behind the issues that COVID and government mandates had created, only to face new hurdles. Plan Navigators had to navigate financial challenges, adapt to the new requirements of the NDIS Commission, and implement new systems to support the growth and efficiency of our service.

Plan Navigators recognised that the new challenges posed by the full rollout of the NDIS Commission had an impact on our Shared Management Service. The Shared Management Service offers tailored support, allowing clients and their families to have a high level of control over their supports and service design, while Plan Navigators acts as the employer of their staff. Due to the introduction of different requirements from the NDIS Commission, we realised that the flexible and tailored service model would no longer be sustainable for most of our clients. During this period, we worked closely with each individual and their family to help them build the capacity to take on the role of the direct employer of their staff, and they transitioned to our Payroll Support Service.

We continued to navigate the delicate balance of maintaining financial viability and sustainability as a service. This included enduring a 3-year price freeze on rates for Support Coordination and Plan Management while meeting the needs of the people we support, ensuring the quality of service, and prioritising the health and wellbeing of the Plan Navigators team. We also recognised the importance of diversifying the services we provide to ensure our long-term viability in the years to come.

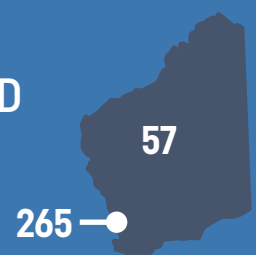
## Our Clients

**325** TOTAL CLIENTS SUPPORTED  
by Plan Navigators

**73** NEW CLIENTS  
in the 22/23 FY  
an increase of **29%**

CLIENTS SUPPORTED IN OTHER STATES  
**3**  
2 QLD  
1 VIC

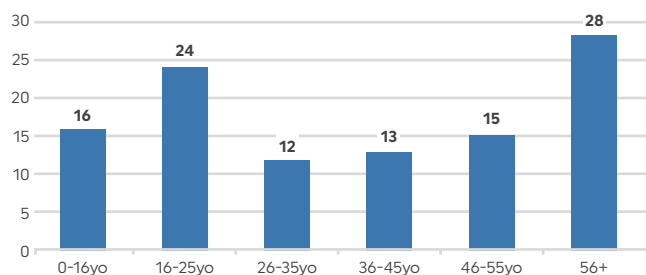
**57** CLIENTS SUPPORTED  
living in regional WA  
265 in Metropolitan WA  
5 in Mid-West/Gascoyne  
52 in SW/Great Southern



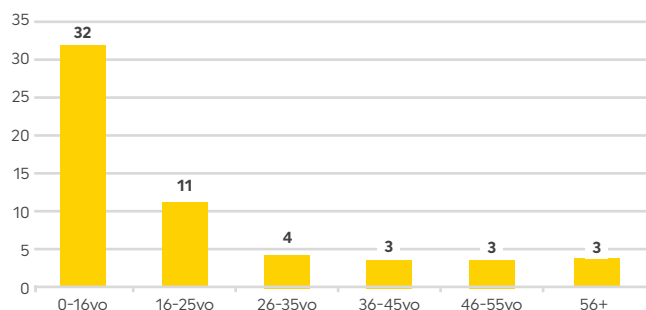
2022-23 FY	Services delivered in 2022-23	Compared to 2021-22
Plan Management-value of clients supports and service paid	<b>\$10.5 million</b> of invoices paid out for clients!	<b>14.72% increase</b> in processing client invoices (additional \$1,35,2864.00)
Support Coordination hours delivered	<b>2,746 hours</b>	<b>24.25% increase</b> in hours delivered by the support coordination team (additional 536hrs)
Shared Management direct support hours delivered	<b>2,883 hours</b>	
Payroll Support Service hours delivered	<b>1,009 hours</b>	

# Client Story

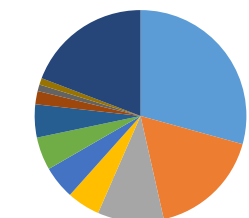
Perth Metro Breakdown of Client Age Groups



Regional WA Breakdown of Client Age Groups

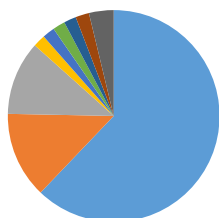


Perth Metro Primary Disability Type Distribution



Autism = 29.29%
Intellectual Disability = 17.17%
Psychosocial = 10.10%
Cerebral Palsy = 5.05%
Neurological = 5.05%
Physical = 5.05%
Psychiatric = 5.05%
ABI = 2.02%
ADHD = 1.01%
Angelman's syndrome = 1.01%
Other = 19.19%

Regional WA Primary Disability Type Distribution



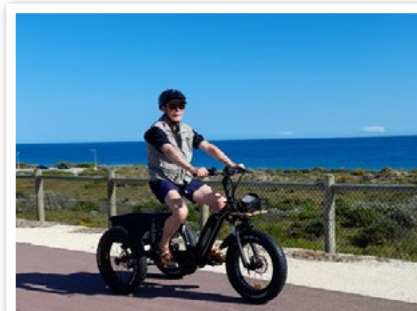
Autism = 60.00%
ADHD = 12.73%
Intellectual Disability = 10.91%
Epilepsy = 1.82%
Incomplete 13th Chromosome = 1.82%
Learning Disability = 1.82%
Not Disclosed = 1.82%
PDA = 1.82%
Other = 3.64%

Plan Navigators first met Willem and his partner in 2022. Willem was new to the NDIS and seeking a Plan Manager to assist with paying for his supports and services, as well as a Support Coordinator to help navigate the complex NDIS system.

Willem is a man who was born in Belgium and travelled to Australia in his younger years, eventually deciding to settle in Australia and get married. In 2023, Willem became an Australian Citizen. Willem possesses many gifts and talents, leading a fascinating and progressive life. One of Willem's passions is maintaining fitness through regular exercise.

As a Support Coordinator, the role is to guide individuals in finding the right supports and services to help them achieve their goals. This includes providing recommendations in areas of need, such as equipment. It's a challenging task to find the perfect fit, and Willem initially faced some obstacles. The ideal Occupational Therapist was not found right away. However, with some initial apprehension, Willem received support to connect with another Occupational Therapist who truly understood his needs. This dedicated therapist took the time and care to ensure that Willem could access a mobility device, which greatly enhanced his independence and made exercising and accessing services easier.

Willem relies on his pedal-assist trike to independently reach his local services. Willem expressed that using his trike to attend appointments during his 'off times,' when his condition impacts him, makes him feel amazing and allows him to function effectively. Maintaining as much independence as possible is of utmost importance to Willem.



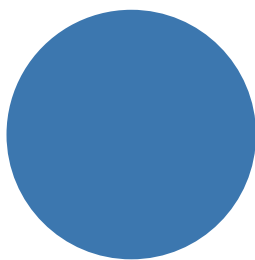
Willem on his black trike on the foreshore near his home

# Client Survey

Each year, Plan Navigators conducts a client satisfaction survey to collect feedback that helps us improve our services.

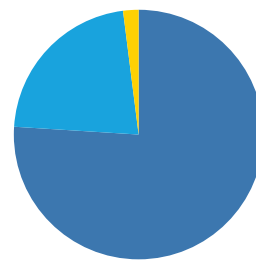
## Would you recommend Plan Navigators to others?

■ Yes = 100%  
■ No = 0%



## Overall, how satisfied are you with the services you receive?

■ Very satisfied = 76%  
■ Satisfied = 22%  
■ Neither satisfied or unsatisfied = 2%  
■ Unsatisfied = 0%  
■ Very unsatisfied = 0%



## Please choose if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

### Customer Experience

Questions and concerns are dealt with in a timely manner

I know who to contact to make a complaint or provide feedback

My Support Coordinator or Plan Manager communicates with me in a way that suits my needs

My Support Coordinator or Plan Manager treats me with respect

### Service Delivery

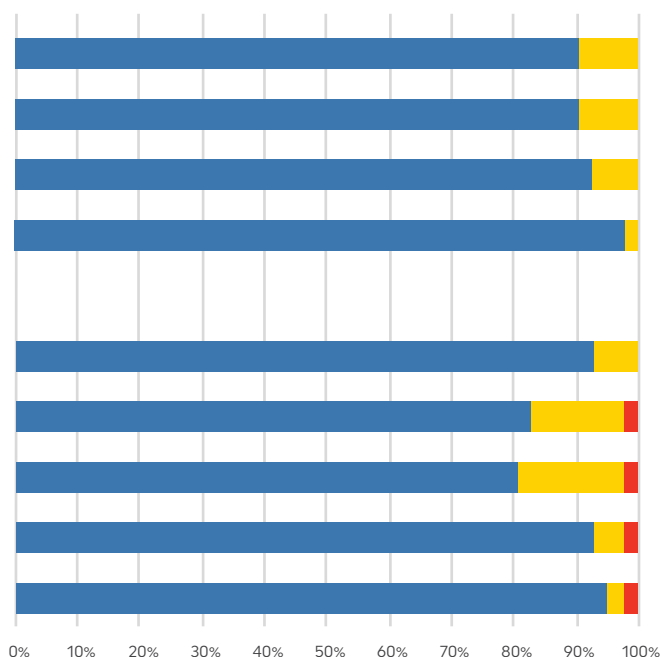
My service agreement was explained to me in a way that suits me

I have been supported to understand how to use my NDIS plan

Plan Navigators have supported me to upskill and take more control over my funding, my supports and services

I have been supported to understand my budget information so I can make decisions on how to use my plan

The service I am using with Plan Navigators is supporting me to achieve the goals in my NDIS plan



■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Unsure

# Client feedback themes

## What is working well?

Many of the clients were happy with the services they received. Below are some of the key themes that emerged from client feedback. These key themes collectively reflect the strengths of the services.

### Effective Communication

Clients consistently highlight the importance of clear, prompt, and responsive communication. They value being able to reach out to their Plan Managers or Support Coordinators when needed and receiving quick and helpful responses.

### Personalised Support

Clients appreciated the personalised and friendly service they received. They mention feeling supported and well-cared for, with their specific needs and preferences taken into account.

### Timely Payments and Budget Management

The plan management service is commended for reimbursing invoices in a reasonable timeframe, providing clear budget information, and ensuring that support workers are paid on time. This financial stability is essential for clients.

### Advocacy and Knowledge

Support Coordinators are praised for being knowledgeable about the NDIS and for advocating on behalf of clients. They help clients navigate the complex system and make informed decisions.

### Flexibility and Accessibility

Clients value the flexibility of the services, including the ability to add specific needs when required. They also appreciate the accessibility of Support Coordinators, knowing they can get assistance promptly.

### Consistency and Trustworthiness

The services are recognised for their consistency and reliability in providing assistance and support. Clients trust their Plan Managers and Support Coordinators to meet their needs consistently.

## Efficient Systems and Management

Efficient systems and management are mentioned as contributing to the success of the services. Clients are satisfied with the service's ability to handle finances, payroll, and overall coordination effectively.

## Positive Relationships

Clients emphasise the positive relationships they have with their Plan Managers and Support Coordinators. They appreciate the patience, friendliness, and availability of these professionals.

## Client Empowerment

The services are recognised for empowering clients by helping them build their capacity to manage certain aspects independently, such as becoming direct employers of their staff.

## What could we do better?

Some clients provided feedback on how we could improve our service. Below are some of the key themes that emerged from client feedback.

### Communication and Contact

Clients want better communication and more contact with plan managers and support coordinators.

### Data Preservation

Clients expect the preservation of historical information when new plans are introduced to maintain continuity.

### Promotion and Awareness

Clients feel there should be more effective promotion of services to raise awareness among clients.



# Overview

“ We wish all the staff of AIN only the best for their future, they have been able to help me so much over the past 2 years. ”

## The first half of the year saw some new referrals come through, a lot of this work was for Support Coordination, with a smaller amount of people wanting Community Access.

We also had Paul Fleay, our CEO, come for a visit to meet with the team and discuss future planning. It was during this time that we started having conversations about working with some of the schools in our local area. We also discussed the possibility of having Jess De Masi (Manager for Inclusion WA) to fly over for a week and assist us with training around customised employment for families and targeted training for the team.

Not long into the new year, Leanne and Karla were back to recruiting for another support worker. It was during this recruitment round we met with and hired Emma.

In November, we ran a free Employment Discovery training session which Jess De Masi facilitated at Chermside Library for people and their families. We had 7 out of the 15 registered attend, with participants ranging from people with a disability and their families to teachers and other support workers.

In February 2023, the hard decision was made to cease operating entirely by the end of March 2023. This decision wasn't made lightly, but due to ongoing issues with attracting and retaining staff, we were unable to continue providing the quality and consistency of supports that we pride ourselves on.

This meant that over the next couple of months, the team were working hard to ensure current clients still maintained the same supports whilst also researching for other providers who were able to continue the ongoing support once we finished. Many meetings were held during this time with other providers to introduce them to the clients and their families. We also offered to complete buddy shifts with the clients and their new providers.

Even though this was a sad moment for all of us at the Australian Inclusion Network, we had some very memorable moments in our 2 years in Brisbane. We also made great connections with people who were using our services as well as other providers. Most importantly, we were able to reflect on what some of our successes were whilst in Brisbane:

- \* The support we provided was well received from people using our services
- \* We empowered people to have more choice and control over their supports
- \* We made solid connections with other providers in Southeast Queensland
- \* Through our training we were able to upskill participants around what good support looks like and how to gain meaningful employment which was a highlight for all of us

Prior to closing AIN, we were able to gather some feedback from people who used our services:

## What made you choose AIN as your provider?

- \* I attended a training session held with Eloise and Karla and from that moment I was impressed with their ethics and attitude and even with many phone conversations held with Karla afterwards where I wanted them to be my Support Coordinator, Karla was honest and advised that she felt AIN wasn't the right fit for my needs and requirements at that stage. Not long after this conversation I hired AIN to assist me to access my community.
- \* We were referred to AIN from our Support Coordinator and from the very first meeting with them I appreciated that they took the time to explain everything to my daughter who the funding is for.
- \* AIN came highly recommended by our Plan Manager.
- \* I was referred by another person who uses AIN Services
- \* They were recommended by our previous support worker.

## Overall, how satisfied were you with the services you received?

- \* Very Satisfied, couldn't fault them and the support they provided my brother.
- \* I have always been extremely satisfied with the support from AIN. If I raised concerns or felt my needs were being adequately met I would speak with Karla, and they were addressed promptly and to my satisfaction.



- \* Very satisfied, I really appreciated that when they didn't know something they would say that they didn't know and would then go and research the topic. I appreciated their honesty and that they were willing to learn from me as well, so it was a 2-way street.
- \* Very happy, I was sad when we were told that they were closing, but they helped me find another provider before leaving so I wouldn't miss out on my regular supports.
- \* We were very happy with their supports; I know at times it was hard with lots of staffing changes, but we were glad to have the one constant person that we could always fall back on.

## What worked well?

- \* Having a support worker who:
  - Can provide appropriate supports (and behave appropriately) when I am in a professional context.
  - Can keep up in training workshops and help me to process information/act as a back-up brain when I'm struggling with fatigue.
  - Was interested in learning from my professional knowledge and experience – it was a 2-way relationship with knowledge sharing between professionals in different fields.
  - I also think the training that AIN provided to its staff was exceptional and I wish it was standard for all support workers nationally.
- \* Helping me learn the bus routes so that I could attend my movie classes by myself.
- \* Having support workers that understood their jobs.
- \* Having someone who didn't think they knew more about me than I do myself and willing to ask me questions and learn from me.

## Any other comments:

- \* We wish all the staff of AIN only the best for their future, they have been able to help me so much over the past 2 years and even though I have had a lot of different staff it has shown me that I am ok when a person leaves.

- \* Thank you for your support, you have now set the bar for my expectations when it comes to what I want in a support coordinator.
- \* Thank you for your help and support over the past year. I will call if I don't like my new support worker and see if you have moved back to Qld.

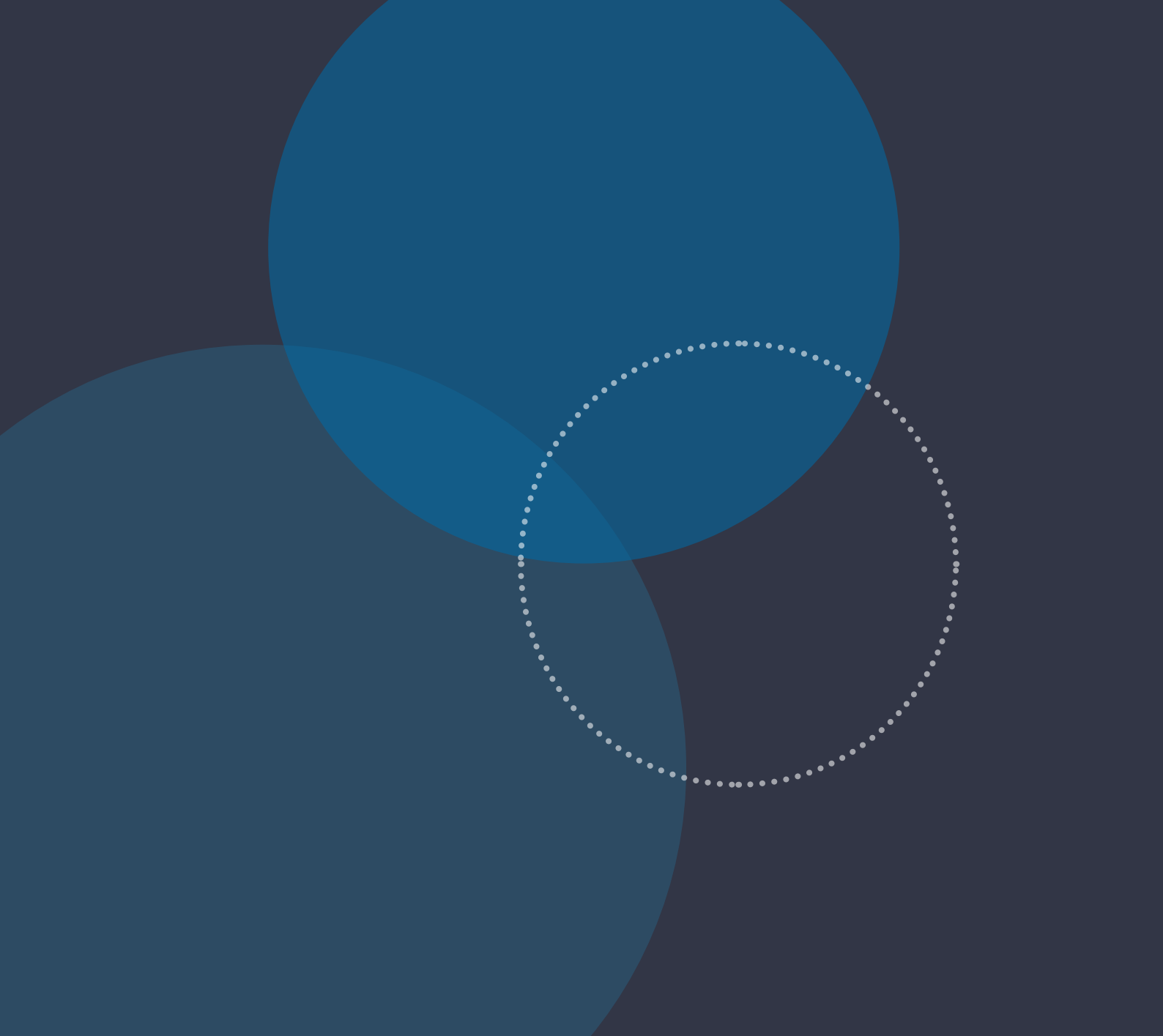
And lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank some people that have been there throughout our journey:

- Our Board for giving us the opportunity to try something new in a different state.
- Richard Orr, for starting us on this whirlwind of an adventure way back in 2019.
- Paul Fleay for being our voice of reason when we needed reassurance and for the reminders that we were heading in the right direction.
- The entire AIG group for providing support not only to me but the entire team, whether it be regular virtual catch-ups or phone calls.
- The entire AIN team. Each of you played an important part in setting up AIN, influencing the community when working alongside people we supported, and going the extra mile in everything you all did.
- Most importantly, the clients who chose to use our services. We were a small organisation, and the way we worked was different from a lot of other organisations that you had previously worked with, so to be able to trust us and trust that we would do what we would, was a big leap of faith, and we truly appreciate it.

Without each and every one of you, AIN wouldn't have been as successful as it was, and I just wanted to thank you all for your support and guidance over the past 2 years.

Thanks

**Karla Summers Manager Australian Inclusion Network.**



We gratefully acknowledge the support given by these organisations throughout the year:

