



Australian  
Inclusion  
Group

# ANNUAL REPORT : 2025







End of Year Party



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# Chair's Report



## It is an honour to present the Australian Inclusion Group Annual Report for the 2024/25 reporting year.

In doing so, I'm reminded that my 2023/24 Chair's Report made particular note of the fact that the strategic focus for the Group during the course of that year had centred on recovering financial stability across the group.

Twelve months on, it's difficult to envisage a time in the future when financial sustainability won't be the overriding priority for providers in the disability sector. We continue to see operators rationalising their services - and, in some cases, ceasing their operations completely - as we all strive to navigate a pathway through a seemingly ever-changing NDIS landscape.

Notwithstanding that, AIG's form of client-centric service delivery remains at the core of why we exist, and all our endeavours in staying true to our core purpose while ensuring the ongoing viability of the business model we operate continue to be predicated on the needs and aspirations of those we work with. Indeed, the uplifting client stories that form part of this Annual Report bear testimony to how, on the one hand, assisting people to identify and achieve their personal goals increases their independence and connects them to their community while, on the other, promoting social inclusion across the wider community creates a more inclusive and connected society.

It's therefore not difficult to understand why we're so committed to this ideal.

"Our achievements across the reporting period stand us in good stead for the future..."

The reporting year has been yet another of significant change for the Group: we saw the departure of several long-term employees, organisational changes in response to those departures, the progressive implementation of a flatter operational structure and that enduring emphasis on the organisation's bottom line.

Each instance enabled us to critically analyse how we could streamline our structures and processes to reduce our overheads without adversely impacting our culture, the Group's underpinning philosophy or the quality of those services delivered to clients.

As a result, the overall financial health of the organisation saw incremental strengthening, month-on-month, over the course of the year. A significant achievement in these difficult times.

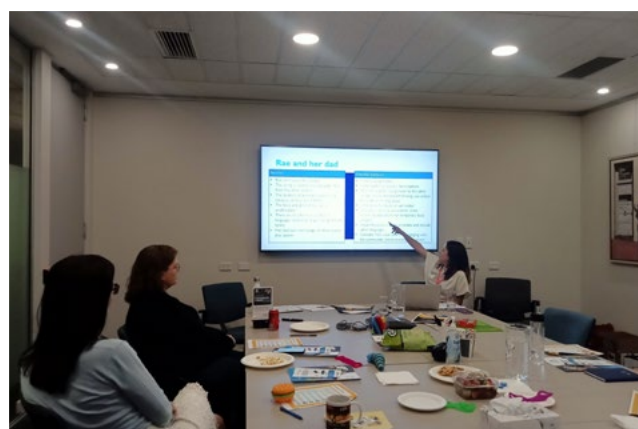


**Anne and Adam talking about myths on inclusive employment**

Managing those disparate elements effectively was no easy task, and I pay tribute to our CEO, Leanne Pearman, and the staff of AIG for their dedication and commitment to sustaining us during what could otherwise have been a disruptive and disjointed phase of our evolution. The fact that we were able to maintain operations and enhance our viability prospects against this background is, in large part, due to their perseverance and I thank them, one and all.

Board members, too, were unstinting in their engagement and contributions to our deliberations and decision making. I acknowledge those who stepped down during the year - Chair: Gemma Nugent, and Members: Catherine Pearce and Mallika Macleod, and pass on the gratitude of the Group for the roles they played during their tenure.

The current Board members warrant special consideration also. In any other circumstances, it would be reasonable to expect that a largely new Board would require some lead-time to bed down and become effective. Throughout the reporting year, though, new office holders, and general Board members alike, embraced their roles and responsibilities and made the transition a seamless one. It was a privilege to lead them.



**Training Social Inclusion in Play Spaces - City of Stirling**

In summary, 2024/25 was largely a successful one for the Group: we met or surpassed the short to medium-term targets and objectives we set at the commencement of the financial year and responded effectively to those unforeseen issues that invariably arose during the course of the year.

Our achievements across the reporting period stand us in good stead for the future and I am confident that we have the wherewithal to maintain our sustainability and position within the sector going forward.

**David Shallue**  
**Chairman of the Board of Directors**  
**Australian Inclusion Group**

# CEO Report



## What a year!

This year has been one of significance in AIG's history. It has brought change, challenge, and many moments that remind us why our work through Inclusion WA and Inclusion Solutions matters.

Across the Group, our shared purpose has remained the same: to support people with disability to live a good life, to strengthen communities to be more inclusive, and to influence systems so that everyone belongs.

## The Heart of Change

This year brought significant change, including a major restructure and the difficult closure of Plan Navigators in December 2024.

We farewelled a number of valued people who have each contributed to the story and strength of AIG: Jess Kain, Kristy Macnamara, Yuhan Richards, Olivia van der Kroon, Karla Summers, Shelley Johnston, Felicity Brown, Francis Baptist, Hayley Warren, Vanessa Govender and Mark Murrell.

These decisions were made to protect the future of our work and ensure that AIG, Inclusion WA, and Inclusion Solutions can continue to be alongside people and communities for years to come.

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"Every part of AIG is grounded in human rights, inclusion, belonging, and capacity building."

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## Thanking the Plan Navigators Team

I want to acknowledge and thank the Plan Navigators team for their professionalism, care, and commitment during the closure of the service. It was a very challenging time, and their focus remained firmly on the people they supported, ensuring each person was safely transitioned to another provider of their choice with minimal disruption. This outcome is a true reflection of their integrity and dedication to people, as they upheld our values right through to the end and left a legacy of quality, person-centred practice that we remain proud of.

## Staying True to What Matters

Every part of AIG is grounded in human rights, inclusion, belonging, and capacity building. Whether through individual supports, projects, training, consultancy, or partnerships, our work is about supporting people and communities grow stronger.

This year, we began to see signs of financial recovery after several tough years. That stability is not just about numbers, it means we can continue to invest in people, relationships, and the work that changes lives. The leadership of our Board and the resilience of our staff and managers across every area and role of the organisation have been key to getting us here.

We established our Lived Experience Board Subcommittee, bringing together people with disability and family members to guide, challenge, and strengthen our work. Their insights are helping us reflect on and improve our services, and they will play a key role in developing our next Strategic Plan in 2026. I want to thank all members for their time, openness, and constructive feedback.



## Our Strategic Plan 2024–2026

Our Strategic Plan continues to guide how we bring inclusion to life across AIG. It keeps us focused on what matters most, which is people, connection, and sustainability. .



We are now preparing for the next stage of strategic planning in 2026, building on what we have learned and achieved over the past two years.

# CEO Report continued

## The Work of Inclusion WA and Inclusion Solutions

**Inclusion WA** continues to be alongside people with disability, families, and communities. The team's work is built on trust, respect, and connection whilst supporting people to build skills and confidence, make friendships, gain employment, and to live as contributing citizens in their communities. All our mentors, service coordinators, and managers are there through the highs and lows of people's real lives, celebrating goals achieved and helping navigate challenges and systems.

**Inclusion Solutions** continues to focus on community change and inclusion at a broader level. This year, the team led a number of inclusion projects, delivered many trainings and provided valued consultancy that supported communities, organisations, schools, local governments, employers, and sporting clubs to be more inclusive. Through co-design and strong partnerships, Inclusion Solutions continues to influence how inclusion is understood and practised across Australia.

I want to thank the Managers across the organisations; Jess De Masi, Jodee Coleman, Matt Shaw, (who left us in May), and Ciara Cooney. The work of both organisations reflects AIG's unique strength, supporting inclusion both one person at a time and across whole communities. You can read more about their, and their amazing team's work across the year, later in this report.

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"The year ahead will bring reform, change, and new challenges and AIG is ready."

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CEO Leanne Pearman and Matthew McGuire

## Our Voice and Influence with Sector Reforms

AIG's influence continues to reach beyond our own organisation. This year, I represented AIG on NDIA advisory groups for Self-Management, Home and Living, and other Sector Reform reference groups. I am also an active member of the WA Network of Disability Advocacy, ensuring that the lived experience of people with disability and the voice of values-based organisations like ours are part of both state and national discussions.

Internationally, I was honoured to present at the Social Role Valorisation Conference in Nova Scotia, exploring how we can balance promoting valued roles with honouring each person's authenticity and choices.

These opportunities allow us to bring the voices of people and families into broader reform conversations and ensure policy reflects real life experiences.



## Acknowledging Our Board

AIG has a stable and diverse Board, whose leadership and trust have been instrumental during a year of change and renewal. Each Board member has shown deep commitment to AIG's purpose and values. Their belief in our work, and in the leadership of our teams, has made it possible for us to navigate challenges while continuing to grow our impact. I am grateful for their time, integrity, and genuine commitment to the people and communities we serve.

## Looking Forward

The year ahead will bring reform, change, and new challenges and AIG is ready.

We are strong because of our people, our approach, and our shared belief that inclusion is everyone's business and that people with disability deserve not just services, but real lives.

To our Board, thank you again for your guidance and trust. To our incredible teams across **all** of AIG, Inclusion WA, and Inclusion Solutions, **thank you** for your commitment, care, and willingness to make a difference.

A special thanks to our HR, payroll, finance, admin, marketing, and service support teams for everything you do to keep our organisation strong and functioning. We simply couldn't do this work without you.

Most importantly, to the people and communities who invite us in, thank you for allowing us to be alongside you.

Together, we'll keep building communities where everyone is welcomed, valued, and supported to live a good life.

**Leanne Pearman**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Australian Inclusion Group**



Leanne CEO report The Australian attendance at the 2025 International Social Role Valorisation (SRV) Conference in Nova Scotia, Canada



The room was full of excited attendees at the Inclusive Employment Forum

# Board of Directors



**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.



**Paul Tulloch**  
**Secretary**

Paul joined the Board of AIG in Feb 2024 and accepted the role of Treasurer in April 2024. Working with the team at AIG has provided Paul with an opportunity to contribute to the community through the pursuit

of social inclusion.

Paul has spent more than 17 years in the mining and resource industries, travelling nationally and internationally for various operational and governance roles. He holds a Bachelor of Business from Murdoch University in Perth and a Bachelor of Laws from Deakin University in Victoria, and is admitted to practice law in Western Australia.

Paul is supported by an amazing partner and is a proud father of two young children, all of whom bring him endless happiness, love, and laughter.

In his spare time, Paul loves to spend time with his family and to read.



**Blake Jaenke**  
**Treasurer**

Blake is an Accounting and Tax professional with over 15 years' experience having worked in the construction, mining, telecommunications and education industries as well as Public Practice.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ) and recently established his own Accounting and Advisory business.

Blake has two young children and is heavily involved with their school, where he has been a Board Member and Treasurer of the P&C Committee since 2019. He is also the 2024 Chair of the Corporate Advisory Panel for the WA branch of CAANZ and has been a member of the Panel since 2021.

Blake is pleased to have joined the Australian Inclusion Group Board in March 2024 and to support social inclusion in our communities.



**Patrick Ky**  
**Board Member**

Patrick Ky is a lawyer with over fifteen years of experience providing legal, policy, and strategic advice to government and corporate organisations.

Patrick has worked in the public sector in Western Australia and Victoria and in large international law firms in Melbourne and London. He holds a Bachelor of Law and Bachelor of Science from Monash University as well as a postgraduate law degree from the University of Oxford.

Patrick has three young children, and his experiences supporting a neurodivergent child drives his passion for creating more accessible and inclusive communities.



**Jo Baker**  
**Board member**

Jo has had a long and varied career in senior executive roles within the Banking Industry, focusing on delivering strategic, cultural, process, productivity, and cost-improvement initiatives

and programs. Jo has extensive experience leading large processing, operations, change, risk, capability, and sales teams. She specialises in transformational and cultural change, implementing significant operating models and organisational design changes.

Jo is a hands-on leader who loves helping solve complex problems and helping people reach their potential. Jo holds degrees in Human Resources, Social Science, and Counselling and recently moved into a senior people role within the WA Government.

Being new to the AIG board Jo has a desire to help make a difference in the community as we aim for a socially inclusive future for all. Personally, Jo relishes spending time with her friends and family while enjoying the outdoor lifestyle.



**Marita Walker**  
**Board Member**

Marita has worked in the disability sector for over 35 years in state government and the NGO sector, where she was CEO of Perth Home Care Services (now Avivo) for 14 years and from 2014 – 2021

in the National Disability Insurance Agency. She was an early advocate for the NDIS and was then involved in local implementation as the Trial Site Manager of Perth Hills and later in the policy area of NDIA. Governance experience includes membership in various peak bodies in disability, mental health, aged care and Chairperson of WAiS.

Marita also has personal experience as the Guardian of a woman with disability who moved from a group home to an individualised arrangement 13 years ago.



**Claire Swyny**  
**Board Member**

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.



**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.

# Retired Board Members

We would like to thank our retired Board Members for their invaluable contributions.



**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.



**Cathrine Pearce**  
**Board Member**

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.





**Mallika MacLeod**  
**Board Member**

Mallika brings 37 years of disability lived experience to the table, together with over 25 years working in community & cultural development, community

engagement, arts management, training, and events management. Mallika's board experience includes state and national levels, such as Arts Access Australia (Board member & Chair), People with Disabilities WA (Treasurer), DADAA (Board), and Health Consumers' Council (Chair).

Mallika is passionate about the inclusive ways we can invest in diverse young and emerging leaders in any industry, seeing this as critical to ensuring opportunities are extended to many and not just the well-connected few.



**National Disability Awards Trophy**

# Inclusion WA

**Throughout the 2024/25-year, Inclusion WA remained focussed on our purpose, supporting people to connect with their communities, pursue their goals, and live the life they choose.**

The year also marked a period of stabilisation for Inclusion WA, following a year of significant structural change across AIG. With stronger cost controls and resource management strategies in place, the organisation prioritised this stability, which included consolidating systems, strengthening team cohesion and embedding clear processes to ensure operational consistency.

A key focus was on strengthening the use of data and reporting tools to identify operational pressures early and make more informed decisions. These improvements allowed Inclusion WA to respond quickly to emerging challenges, allocate resources strategically, and maintain quality outcomes for the people we support.

During the year, our coordination team transitioned to working more closely together from the Osborne Park office. This shift has strengthened relationships across the team, improved efficiencies, and created greater consistency in the way we work across service boundaries. The increased collaboration and shared problem-solving has enhanced communication, strengthened practice, and ensured the people we support benefit from a cohesive, united approach.

"Our commitment to fostering inclusion and creating positive social impact remains unwavering."



**The 2025 Mentor Summit Workbook**

Recognising that our impact begins with our people, we have continued to invest in the growth and capability of our staff. Key highlights included our Mentor Summit held in February, alongside increased opportunities for professional development through collaborations with the Mental Illness Fellowship of WA (MIFWA) and leadership training supported by an AIMWA grant. These initiatives not only built confidence and skill within our workforce but also strengthen the outcomes we deliver for individuals, families, and communities.

Our commitment to fostering inclusion and creating positive social impact remains unwavering. By supporting our staff to adapt and lead in a complex and changing NDIS landscape, we ensure that Inclusion WA continues to provide person-centred, innovative, and high-quality support.

In a tight funding environment, these efforts have been vital to maintaining our resilience and capacity to deliver meaningful and quality outcomes. This was reflected in our recognition at the 2025 NDIS Awards where Inclusion WA won in the category for Excellence in Supporting Employment Outcomes - a testament to the dedication of our team and the positive difference we continue to make together.

**Jodee Coleman and Jess De Masi**



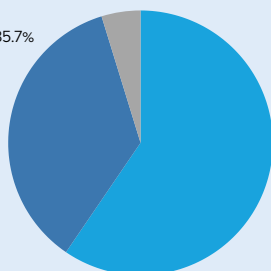
Matthew McGuire doing Welcome to Country at the IWA Mentor Summit

## Client Survey Snapshot

The annual Inclusion WA Client Survey provides valuable insight to both Management and the Board on areas we are doing well and provides an opportunity to constructively reflect on areas we can improve on. Through this valuable input, we can continue to ensure we provide high quality support services now and in the future.

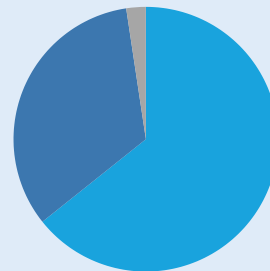
### Survey Respondent Profile

- I am a user/client of Inclusion WA = 59.5%
- I am a family member of an Inclusion WA client = 35.7%
- Other = 4.8%



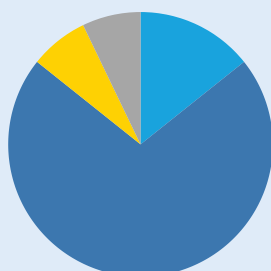
### Overall, how satisfied are you with the services you receive?

- Very satisfied = 64.3%
- Satisfied = 33.3%
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied = 0%
- Unsatisfied = 2.4%
- Very unsatisfied = 0%



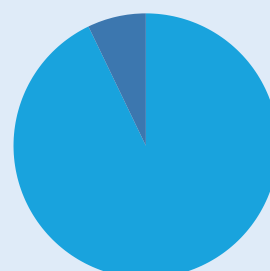
### What type of support services do you receive from Inclusion WA?

- Health and Wellbeing = 14.3%
- Community and social participation = 71.4%
- Employment and job seeking = 7.1%
- Other = 7.1%



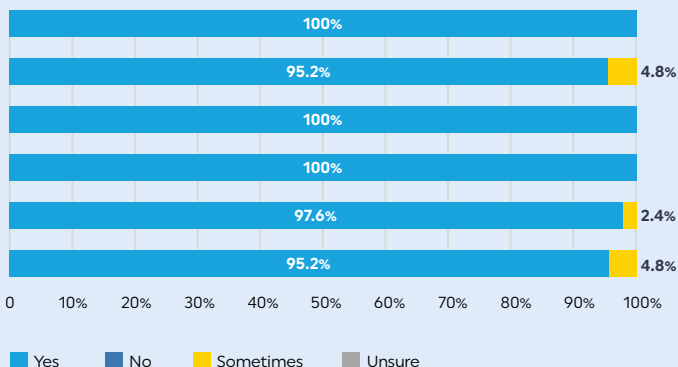
### Would you recommend Inclusion WA to other people?

- Yes = 92.9%
- No = 7.1%



### Service Delivery

- I feel safe with my supports
- I feel safe to speak up if something is not right
- I trust the people who support me
- The services I get are free from violence, abuse and neglect
- I feel known as a person, not just a participant
- I feel supported to make my own choices and decisions



## Client Survey Snapshot continued

### What do you think Inclusion WA is doing really well?

*"Helping me to understand money and how to budget more etc."*

*"They support me in building my confidence."*

*"Care and communication."*

*"Communication and person centred support."*

*"Focus on my son's goals."*

*"The flexibility and the quality of staff."*

*"Reliability."*

*"Buddy shifts and providing a solid team of people around our family."*

*"The break my goals down into smaller goals to help me achieve them."*

*"Mentors being Punctual and Reliable."*

*"Managing my needs."*

*"Hiring of mentors, mostly flexible, mentors understand my disability, mentors I work with a very supportive."*

*"Everything. I have a great team around me."*

*"Yes extremely extremely brilliant service for me just love inclusion and the mentors."*

*"Providing a support worker who is very suitable to my needs."*

### What do you think Inclusion WA could do better?

*"Talk to each other."*

*"More flexible with occasional changes."*

*"Communicate better between each other."*

*"Group activities to support social interaction."*

*"Inform family of any concerns that they aren't aware of regarding the client."*

*"Have monthly or bimonthly calendars of activities being accessed."*

*"Service Coordinator is often unavailable for phone contact. They seem to be in constant meetings."*

## Client Story: Samuel MacDonald

When Inclusion WA was first contacted by a Queensland based organisation 'Better Together' in late 2024, the request was unlike any we'd received before. They were seeking support for a young man named Samuel MacDonald, a landscape and nature photographer who wanted to travel solo to Perth for the first time.

For Sam, who lives with *Retinitis Pigmentosa with Usher Syndrome*, a condition that gradually causes vision loss, particularly in low light, the trip represented far more than a holiday. It was an opportunity to explore his artistic passion, grow his confidence in independent travel, and capture the beauty of Western Australia through his camera lens.

### Planning an adventure

Inclusion WA Coordinator Karla Longstaff led the planning over several months, working closely with Sam, his Queensland support team, and Inclusion WA mentors via a series of Zoom meetings. Together, they built a detailed plan that reflected Sam's goals, interests, and routines.

Every element of the trip, from accommodation and daily itineraries to lighting conditions for photography sessions was shaped by Sam's input. He shared his wish list of experiences: snorkelling at Rottnest Island, photographing Perth's skyline at sunset, and visiting Fremantle and Rockingham. The team worked collaboratively to make sure each goal was well planned and achievable.

Karla also introduced Sam to his Perth mentors, Adam Firstenberg, Alec Holder, and Fraser West, through online meet-and-greets. This helped Sam build familiarity and comfort before even stepping on the plane. The mentors were carefully chosen to reflect Sam's support needs and shared interests.

"Sam had such a clear vision for what he wanted from his trip," said Karla.

"Our role was to listen, plan around his passions, and make sure he could focus on what he loves most"

### Capturing Western Australia

When Sam landed in Perth, Adam greeted him at the airport with a warm welcome, a custom welcome sign and a week of adventures ahead.

The days that followed were filled with discovery, laughter, and creativity.





Sam proudly showing his welcome sign at the airport.



Sam snorkelling at Rottnest Island.



Sam photographing the Perth skyline at sunset during his supported holiday in March 2025.

"Though I'm slowly losing my eyesight, a disability doesn't stop me doing what I love. I want to inspire others to feel the same."

Sam MacDonald

At Rottnest Island, Sam and Fraser snorkelled among coral reefs and marine life, spotting an octopus that Sam later called "the highlight of my trip." In Fremantle, Alec joined him for a walking photography tour through the historic streets and along the foreshore, finishing with long-exposure shots of Perth's iconic Blue Boat House at sunset.

Evenings were often spent chasing golden light at Kings Park and South Perth Foreshore, where Sam captured the city skyline reflected across the Swan River. One evening, as he lined up his shot, a pod of dolphins surfaced, turning an ordinary photo into a moment of magic!

Between adventures, Adam supported Sam to navigate new environments, source new camera gear when his GoPro cable broke, and find local cafés to unwind in after a long day of shooting.

### Building confidence through connection

Throughout the week, Inclusion WA mentors stayed in close contact with Karla and Sam's team in Queensland, adjusting daily plans to suit his energy and interests. The combination of proactive communication, thoughtful preparation, and flexible on-the-ground support allowed Sam to focus entirely on the joy of exploring and creating.

"It was a genuine collaboration," said Jessica De Masi (manager)

"Sam's couldn't have been more ecstatic with his trip and made sure to update me daily on all the fun he was having".

### A lasting impression

At the end of his stay, Sam expressed his gratitude to the team before flying home. In a customised video he creatively recorded at the departure gate and sent to his Inclusion WA team Sam said,

"I've had the absolute best time"

"Adam, Fraser, and Alec have been amazing. I've really enjoyed getting to know them and I'd love to come back again for another holiday."

For Inclusion WA, Sam's journey was more than a successful trip, it was a milestone in person-centred collaboration across state borders. It showcased how thoughtful planning, genuine relationships, and creativity can empower someone to live a life rich with purpose and adventure.

Sam continues to share his photography online and dreams of one day opening his own gallery. His next Perth trip is already in the works!

## Client Story: Brianna's Journey

For quite some time, Brianna found it difficult to engage in meaningful activities with her mentors. Although she often spoke about wanting to achieve various goals, she found it challenging to take the first steps.

As a result, supports often became limited to unstructured activities, such as driving to vintage cafés or walking around the community without much planned and declining suggestions from mentors. While these were enjoyable for Brianna in the moment, they did not support the outcomes that she wanted to achieve.

The turning point came when Brianna was matched with a new team, Olivia and Hannah. With fresh energy and collaborative approaches, together they have built a strong rapport with Brianna and supported her to take small but meaningful steps forward.

The change has been remarkable. Brianna is now:

- Cooking meals independently of her supports
- Attending the gym on her own
- Swimming laps in the pool, rather than just floating
- Volunteering regularly at Good Sammy
- Participating in a local social group

The social group, in particular, has been a breakthrough. Not only is Brianna attending regularly, but she is beginning to take on a leadership role, helping to suggest activities and guide the group. Brianna has since requested to increase her supports to attend a second social group, Zingo Bingo, which introduced a new mentor to her team, Clare. Clare and Brianna have become a staple at this group as well, often arriving early to help the facilitator set up and calling out the numbers. Brianna is also now exploring the option of hosting some of these events when the facilitator is unavailable so that the group can still continue.

Behind the scenes, this progress has been driven by a committed and coordinated support team. Brianna's mentors maintained regular communication through Microsoft Teams and direct catch-ups, sharing updates, ideas, and strategies to ensure consistency in their approach. They also worked closely with her Service Coordinator, seeking feedback and exploring ways to keep Brianna motivated between sessions.

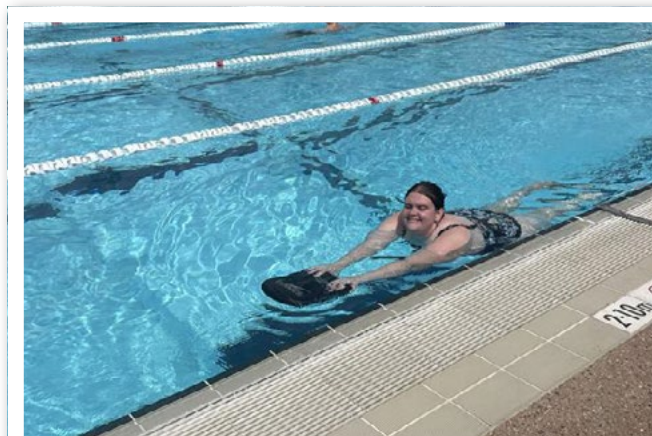


Brianna

By setting clear expectations and celebrating small wins, her mentors helped Brianna recognise her own capability and take greater ownership of her goals.

The team's success came from striking the right balance, providing Brianna with choice and control, while also offering gentle encouragement and structure when needed. By setting clear expectations and celebrating small wins, her mentors helped Brianna recognise her own capability and take greater ownership of her goals.

Brianna's journey demonstrates the difference that collaborative, person-centred support can make. With patience, consistency, and teamwork, she has gone from declining most opportunities to embracing them and is now thriving in ways that once seemed out of reach.



Brianna

## Client Story: Rochelle's Road to Recovery

The start of a new year is often filled with celebration and fresh beginnings, but for Rochelle and her family, this January took an unexpected and difficult turn.

Rochelle was hospitalised and admitted to ICU at Royal Perth Hospital.

During this time, the Inclusion WA team worked closely with Rochelle's family, the hospital, and her wider support network to ensure she had the care, advocacy, and coordination she needed.

After several challenging weeks in hospital, Rochelle was finally discharged, a moment of relief and joy for everyone involved.

Despite everything she's been through, Rochelle's resilience and positivity have remained unmistakable.

"Rochelle truly lights up any room she's in," said Jodee.

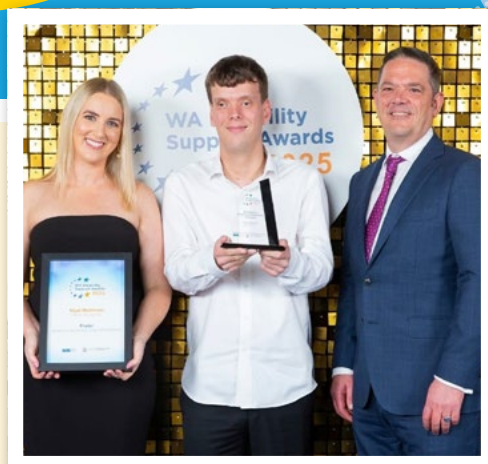
"Even after everything she's faced, her energy and joy remind us why we do what we do."



Rochelle pictured enjoying an evening at Synthony Orchestra

"Rochelle truly lights up any room she's in. Her positivity is infectious, and her resilience inspires everyone around her."

– Jodee Coleman, manager



Jess De Masi and Client Harri at the NDS Awards

## NDS Support Worker Awards 2025

**Inclusion WA is incredibly proud of the staff nominated for this year's National Disability Services Support Worker Awards.**

Long term, Inclusion WA Mentor Nigel Matthews was the overall winner in the category Excellence in Supporting Employment Outcomes!

Nigel was recognised for his outstanding work supporting Harri in launching his business, Bold Charters, an accessible transport company created to support people with disability to travel independently. Harri and Nigel's story was also featured in a WA Today article following the award ceremony.

This marks the second consecutive year that Inclusion WA mentors have been formally recognised at the National Disability Support Worker Awards, a reflection of the passion, creativity, and commitment that define our team. Congratulations, Nigel and Harri, on this exceptional achievement.

We were also proud to nominate another exceptional team this year. In the category *Excellence in Disability Support*, Team Caitlyn was nominated for their collaborative and dedicated approach to supporting Caitlyn to achieve her goals. The team includes:

- Jasmine Webster
- Isabella Dyball
- Nicholas Ardley
- Riley Riordan
- Jarred Frederick
- Li Yen Ong

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all our nominees. Your commitment to inclusion, innovation, and person-centred practice continues to make a profound difference to the people we support and the wider community.



# Inclusion Solutions

At Inclusion Solutions, our commitment to fostering vibrant, connected, and inclusive communities remains at the heart of everything we do. Over the past year, we have continued to adapt, grow, and strengthen our impact across Western Australia and beyond, building communities where everyone feels valued and has the opportunity to belong.

This year has been one of reflection and renewal. As our programs and partnerships continue to expand, we have also focused on ensuring that our internal culture reflects the same inclusivity and connection we champion externally. These efforts have strengthened our team, clarified our direction, and positioned us for an exciting future of growth and innovation.

After 15 years of dedicated service, our General Manager, Matt, departed the organisation, leaving behind an enduring legacy of leadership and commitment. We also said goodbye to Inclusion Consultant Poppy Sloan and welcomed Ciara Cooney, Crispin Roberts, and Marg Pantall to the team each bringing fresh perspectives, enthusiasm, and valuable expertise. In addition, we were delighted to welcome three interns, whose passion and ideas have brought great energy to our work and helped shape our ongoing projects.

As we look to the year ahead, Inclusion Solutions remains focused on strengthening relationships, driving innovative inclusion initiatives, and supporting communities to build places where everyone can connect, contribute, and thrive.

## Key Highlights

# 16



### Local Government Authorities

Actively partnered with 16 Local Government Authorities across Western Australia to promote inclusivity and accessibility in their communities.

# 45+



### State Sporting Associations supported

Engaged and provided tailored support to over 45 State Sporting Associations, enhancing their capacity to foster inclusivity

# 602

### EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

worked with 602 external stakeholders to drive collaborative efforts in creating more inclusive environments.

# 4

### NEW TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Developed and delivered four new training workshops specifically tailored to meet the diverse needs of Western Australian communities.



# 40,468

### views via Social Media Platforms

Facebook - 36,009, Instagram - 4,359, LinkedIn (Impressions) - 41,094





**115**   
PEOPLE ATTEND

**Inclusive  
Employment Forum**

Successfully hosted an Inclusive Employment Forum, attended by 115 people from various businesses

Presented to:

**15**   
SCHOOLS  
and

 **413**  
BUSINESSES

**86** TRAINING SESSIONS delivered in total



Above: The Inclusion Solutions team

Left: Crispin



## Highlights of social impact

### Remote communities - The Disability Community Development Project

Remote communities - The Disability Community Development Project was a partnership between Inclusion Solutions and Job Pathways that worked alongside the remote Aboriginal communities of Warmun and Wyndham in the East Kimberley. The project aimed to understand local experiences of disability, community strengths, and barriers to accessing support. Through community visits, conversations, and collaboration with local leaders and organisations, it explored how disability services could be better understood, designed, and delivered in ways that reflect local culture, values, and priorities.

### Open Doors Project

Funded by the Department of Communities under the WA State Disability Strategy 2020–2030, the Open Doors Project tackled the everyday barriers people with disability still face in their communities (discrimination, exclusion, and attitudes that get in the way of full participation).

Over the past year, the project engaged more than 80 small and medium businesses across five business communities to strengthen their disability awareness and embed inclusive practices.

Businesses took part in engaging training, delivered both online and face-to-face by presenters with lived experience, and received a comprehensive guidebook, checklists, and an action plan to support practical change. The impact was clear: 96% of participants reported learning new strategies and said they would recommend the training to others.

Many businesses have already started making tangible changes, from improving signage and websites to introducing sensory-friendly options and embedding inclusion goals into team practices.



Members of the Inclusive Employment panel discussion

### Participants reflected on the value of broadening their understanding of accessibility:

"I like the idea of not just physical accessibility but also people feeling comfortable and respected when accessing services," and

"It was so good to learn about different ways that businesses can be more inclusive, especially in the non-physical area - sensory, lighting, noise, as well as communication options."

By equipping businesses with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to take action, the Open Doors Project is helping to create more welcoming, inclusive communities where everyone feels they belong.



Anne and Chris at Ability Link Webinar

## WIN Project

The WIN Project (Welcoming Inclusive Network) has gone from strength to strength this financial year. This project is designed to support community sports clubs to make changes that make their programs and environments are more inclusive for People with Disability. Clubs are then recognised with a Gold, Silver or Bronze WIN Badge should they reach certain standards in the assessment process. This lets community members know this club has put a priority on creating a welcoming space. In 2024-25, after extensive sector consultation with over 25 different stakeholders and the establishment of a Lived Experience Working Group with 8 different disability perspectives, the first of its kind criteria has been designed and finalised. 29 sporting clubs have signed up to be a part of the project for 2025-26 with some great outcomes to be guaranteed!



Anne delivering training on how to create an inclusive customer experience

## Generating Respectful, Open Workplaces in Western Australia (GROW WA)

The Generating Respectful, Open Workplaces in WA (GROW WA) Initiative aimed to empower businesses, organisations, and individuals to adopt inclusive employment practices, supporting people with disability and fostering more welcoming workplaces. Key activities included four free webinars, a targeted social media campaign, and a full-day forum on inclusive employment strategies. Planning began in August 2024, the first webinar launched in December 2024, and the initiative culminated in a forum on 8 April 2025.

The initiative was delivered in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (CCIWA) through their Charity Initiative, with light-touch support from the Disability Assembly of WA (DAWA). Inclusion Solutions and CCIWA also contributed to DAWA's Employment Summit in March 2025. In early 2025, a formal collaboration with DAWA was established, reflecting shared goals in advancing disability employment outcomes.

GROW WA sought to increase awareness and understanding of inclusive employment practices, demonstrate the economic benefits of inclusive workplaces, build the capacity of businesses and individuals to foster inclusion, and complement existing initiatives in the disability employment space. The initiative highlights the impact of collaboration in creating equitable, inclusive, and economically resilient workplaces across WA.

The Generating Respectful, Open Workplaces in WA (GROW WA) Initiative was a collaboration between Inclusion Solutions and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (CCIWA), with support from the Disability Assembly of WA (DAWA). It aimed to empower businesses and individuals to create inclusive workplaces and improve employment opportunities for people with disability. Delivered through webinars, a social media campaign, and a statewide forum held in April 2025, the initiative raised awareness of inclusive employment practices, highlighted their economic and social benefits, and strengthened collaboration across sectors. GROW WA demonstrated how partnership and shared learning can drive more welcoming, equitable, and resilient workplaces across Western Australia.



## WayFairer Project

The WayFairer Project continues to be a flagship initiative, achieving significant growth this year thanks to the dedication of our team and the support of local communities. Running in both the City of Kwinana and the City of Mandurah, the project connects individuals aged 50 and over with volunteer opportunities, enabling them to share their skills, talents, and experiences while making meaningful contributions. This engagement strengthens community connections, fosters intergenerational learning, and promotes social inclusion.

Since the commencement of the WayFairer Programs in Kwinana and Mandurah, the project has focused on building strong relationships with local stakeholders and embedding the initiative within each community.

The project continues to strengthen partnerships, expand its reach, and enhance community inclusion. Its ongoing focus is on fostering social connection, reducing isolation, and creating inclusive opportunities for people of all ages.



**Matt Shaw, together with Chamber of Commerce WA's former CEO, Peter Cock, and HR Manager Chris Nunn**



**Ben Popham presenting Building Inclusive Schools Workshop to Duncraig SHS**

## Included In Sport Project

Commencing in March 2025, the Included in Sport project will create diversified inclusive sporting opportunities for people with intellectual disability and Autism across Western Australia.

Funded for a period of three years by the Department of Cultural Industries, Tourism and Sport (DCITS), the project will provide programs on athlete eligibility pathways, professional development workshops, and capacity building to empower clubs and communities to offer a variety of participation opportunities.

Initial work on the project focussed on building a strong platform from which to launch the public-facing elements, namely inclusive gala days, an inclusive sports forum, and a series of workshops. This included building relationships in both sporting and disability sectors, including with our project partner, Sport Inclusion Australia.

Our existing relationships with local government authorities provided the project with key contacts and access to members of the local communities, which was greatly appreciated.

We are excited about the next stages of the project, which will see Included in Sport engage with our target cohort to provide opportunities across the breadth of the sporting landscape.

We thank DCITS for this opportunity to work in this important space, and for the department's ongoing support and advice as we have moved forward.



## Building Inclusive Schools

In the past year, the *Building Inclusive Schools* program engaged approximately 1,500 students across Perth Metro through 15 workshops designed to foster understanding, inclusion, and belonging for students with disability. Delivered by presenters with lived experience of disability, alongside Paralympians Ben Popham and Rhiannon Clarke, the sessions combined disability awareness education with inspiring personal stories of resilience, growth, and achievement. With half of the participating schools being education support or integrated models, the program successfully met its objectives to provide strong role modelling for students with disability and increase awareness and inclusion among peers within school communities. Feedback from students and teachers was overwhelmingly positive, with several schools requesting repeat sessions and inviting the team to participate in future inclusion events. The program continues to build a culture of understanding and belonging in school communities, shaping more inclusive generations of young people across WA.

### A quote from Aquinas College after Rhiannon's presentation:

"We had the honour of welcoming Paralympian Rhiannon Clarke to speak with our Senior students. Her inspiring talk reminded us that with determination and belief in yourself, anything is possible. She also shared a powerful message about pressure and perspective, explaining that the more pressure you place on winning, the harder it is to enjoy what you do. Instead, she encouraged students to focus on loving their craft, appreciating the effort they give, and finding contentment in knowing they've done their best."

### A quote from John XXIII as part of their letter of support for the next round:

"In both the 2024 workshop with our student leaders and the 2025 Year 9 workshop, Inclusive Solutions delivered engaging and meaningful experiences that resonated deeply with our students. These sessions increased awareness of disability, built empathy, and encouraged resilience, tolerance, and inclusion, strengthening connections across our student body."



Above: Rhiannon and Poppy at Aquinas College



Right: Ben Popham at John XXIII College

## Infinity X

The *Infinity X Career Program (Regional)* is a six-week online career development and exploration initiative designed for LGBTQIA+ individuals with disability, including those with mental health conditions, neurodivergence, and chronic illness, living in regional Australia. The program empowered 19 participants through tailored workshops, virtual mentoring, and networking with industry professionals, helping them build confidence, develop employability skills, and explore sustainable career pathways.

The Bunbury (Over 18) hub at *Richmind Wellbeing (Step Up Step Down – Richmind WA)* excelled in promoting the program to their existing clients, highlighting the strong demand for this type of initiative in the region. Approximately 70% of participants were from Bunbury, engaging weekly in a safe and inclusive space that fostered community connection and access to additional wellbeing and career support services.

A program highlight was one of the guest speakers, Gabriel, an alumni participant from the initial pilot in Perth (Boorloo) Metro, who has since commenced studies in Politics and Law and received multiple awards, including *30 Under 30* recognition for social advocacy. Their return to the program inspired current participants and demonstrated the lasting impact of Infinity X in supporting individuals to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential.

Through its accessible and inclusive design, the program continues to foster self-advocacy, resilience, and empowerment, equipping participants with the tools and confidence to pursue fulfilling, independent, and meaningful career.

"Through its accessible and inclusive design, the program continues to foster self-advocacy, resilience, and empowerment, equipping participants with the tools and confidence to pursue fulfilling, independent, and meaningful career."



### Infinity X Career Program (Metro)

The Infinity X Career Program (Regional) was a six-week online initiative for LGBTQIA+ people with disability, including those with mental health conditions, neurodivergence, or chronic illness, living in regional Australia. Nineteen participants took part in tailored workshops, mentoring, and networking that built confidence, employability skills, and career pathways. The Bunbury hub at Richmind Wellbeing was particularly successful, with around 70% of participants engaging weekly in a safe, inclusive space that connected them to further wellbeing and career supports.

A program highlight was guest speaker Gabriel, a Perth pilot program graduate now studying Politics and Law and recognised for social advocacy, whose story inspired participants. Infinity X continues to promote self-advocacy, resilience, and empowerment, helping people pursue meaningful and sustainable careers.

#### Quotes from participants:

"I have tools & strategies to help me in my career. The program met and exceeded my expectations."

#### All participants said:

- Their self-advocacy skills have improved as a result of the program.



The day brought us an interesting panel discussion

## Communities of Practice

We host the National Supported Decision-Making Community of Practice, which now has more than 90 members. We are also a lead organisation in the Social Role Valorisation State Community of Practice.



Matt Shaw is welcoming attendees and setting the tone for the day

## Thank You to Our Partners, Stakeholders, and Supporters

None of our achievements this year would have been possible without the support and collaboration of our partners, stakeholders, and supporters. We are especially grateful to the Department of Cultural Industries, Tourism and Sport (DCITS), Department of Communities, Telethon, National Disability Services, National Disability Insurance Agency, and Department of Social Services, among others. Your commitment to inclusion and belief in our mission have been instrumental in enabling us to create meaningful impact. Together, we are building stronger, more connected communities, and we look forward to continuing this important work alongside you.



# Plan Navigators

## Thank you to the Plan Navigators team

We thank the Plan Navigators team for their dedication to people, and to the way in which they demonstrated integrity through the process of transitioning people to their choice of service as Plan Navigators closed.

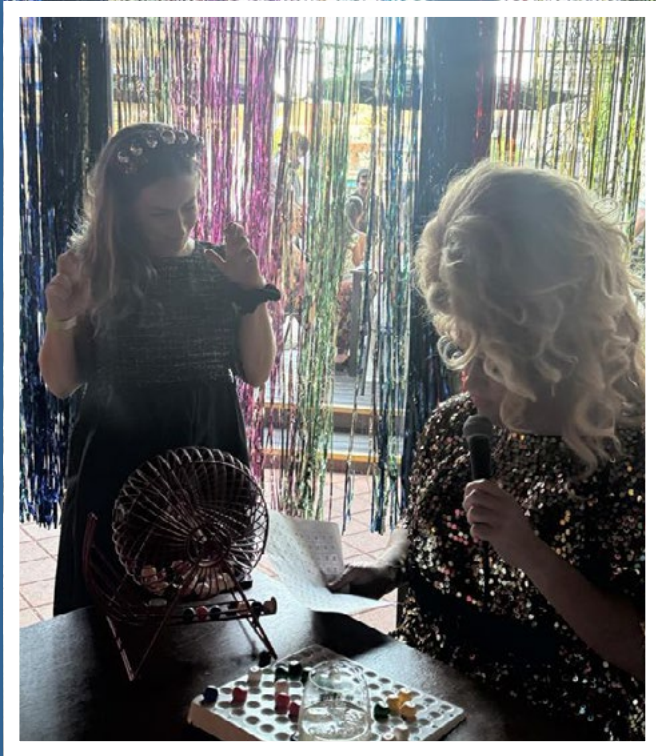
Kristy Macnamara, Michelle Boyle, Shelley Johnston, Mark Murell, Francis Baptist, Vanessa Govender, Felicity Brown and Hayley Warren.

Below: Plan Navigators Team (Metro)

Right: South West Team (Albany)







End of Year Party



End of Year Party

