

nclusion  
Australia



Inclusion Australia

# Taking the microphone

Annual Report 2022-2023



# Acknowledgments

Inclusion Australia acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which this publication was produced. We acknowledge the deep spiritual connection to this land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We extend our respects to community members and Elders past and present.

Inclusion Australia recognises the efforts of self-advocates who have courageously told their stories and worked tirelessly over the years for equality and human rights for all.

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Last but not least, thank you to all the Inclusion Australia staff and member organisations who contributed to this Annual Report.

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<https://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/what-we-do/our-annual-reports/>.

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# Inclusion Australia

## Our Vision

Our vision is an inclusive Australia for people with intellectual disability.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to work with our member organisations to make positive change for people with intellectual disability and their families.

## Our Goals



1. Break down barriers to inclusion for people with intellectual disability.



2. Increase the voice of people with intellectual disability and their families.



3. Make sure Inclusion Australia has enough resources to do a good job.



4. Help our member organisations be sustainable and even more inclusive.

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# Chair's Report

There have been many milestone years for Inclusion Australia since we started almost 70 years ago. However, I feel sure we will look back on this past year as one of the more significant for people with an intellectual disability, their families, and the wider disability community in our history.

2017 was another such year, when Inclusion Australia and our members stood side-by-side to demand a Royal Commission into violence, abuse, and neglect of people with disabilities. Speaking on a cold day in Melbourne, former Our Voice chair Michael Sullivan OAM stood in front of television cameras to declare “Enough is enough. It is our time to be heard. Here is our time for justice, now.”

6 years later, the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has concluded its work and presented its findings to government. Over the intervening years, many thousands of people with disability have courageously shared their stories. Inclusion Australia and our members have worked tirelessly to support people with an intellectual disability to contribute to the work of the Commission in a range of ways. I want to acknowledge the strength, resilience, and bravery of everyone who spoke truth to power through the Royal Commission.

This year we have also seen a much-needed independent review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). In partnership with our member organisations, Inclusion Australia has once again sought to amplify the voice of people with an intellectual disability in the review process. Families have also played a strong role in the review, drawing on their experiences of navigating an overly complex system to make the changes needed to empower their loved ones.

Throughout these two huge initiatives, people with an intellectual disability have led from the front. Self-advocates from around Australia have spoken up to help change the future for others to come. This is what our community does. As both investigations come to an end, our hope – our expectation – is that these experiences will shape a better more inclusive future for all Australians.



This year we also formally expanded our operations with the opening of our first office in the Northern Territory. That presence on the ground means that we can better hear and represent the voices of people in the Territory and connect those experiences with our work around Australia.

The effectiveness and reach of our work are testimony not only to the hard work and expertise of our current board and members, but also to the vision and commitment of our many previous board and members over the past seventy years. When I joined the NCID board back in 1994, I was conscious then of the proud history of our organisation, and felt humbled to be carrying the torch lit by those founding members back in the mid-1950's. As I now stand down from the board, I like to imagine how proud those founders would be to see what has come of their vision.

On behalf of the Board, I want to congratulate Catherine and her team for their huge efforts this year. This work was formally recognised by Government with our status as an official Disability Representative Organisation once again confirmed.

As we look to the future, I know Inclusion Australia will continue to represent our community and support people with an intellectual disability and their families to shape the future for generations to come.

**Kevin Stone AM, October 2023**



*Kevin Stone with our CEO Catherine McAlpine and Kalena Bos, Chair of the Our Voice Committee, Hobart November 2022*

## A message from our CEO

Hello and welcome to the Inclusion Australia Annual report for 2023. The theme this year is 'Taking the Microphone.' This is about how people with an intellectual disability have been leading from the front more than ever this year in our work.

All around the country, in our projects, on committees, at state and national conferences, in person and online workshops, and in many national consultations, our community has been speaking up on issues that matter.

This has been more visible as the restrictions around COVID have eased. I am proud of the way our team has supported each other as we look to be inclusive in a new world where COVID is still a risk for many in our community. The growth of hybrid events (held online and in person) has meant everyone still has a voice and a chance to lead from the front, whatever their circumstances.

Our team has grown too, and we now have more people with disabilities in important policy, inclusion, and communications roles across Inclusion Australia. Our team also includes family members of people with an intellectual disability. Along with the important contributions from the Our Voice Committee, this means all our work includes and is informed by people with an intellectual disability.

We added even more depth to our national team this year with the official opening of our Inclusion Australia Northern Territory office. The team includes three Inclusion Advisors with an intellectual disability, and I was delighted to join them in Darwin this year to celebrate the opening. We look forward to working alongside other organisations in the Northern Territory to represent their interests nationally.

This year the Disability Royal Commission wrapped up its public work. This included the final Public Hearings, many of which our team attended in person.

The Royal Commission also closed for submissions on 31 December. We worked hard to deliver many submissions right up to the deadline, including our huge report on inclusive employment. This important project – led by people with disability – was about creating more choices and opportunities for people with an intellectual disability to work in open employment. You can read more about our submission in this report, including stories and





feedback from people with an intellectual disability and families around the country as well as research from employment experts.

This year we also saw some big wins with the establishment of the new National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health. Set up with bipartisan support following many years campaigning by our community, notably by the NSW Council for Intellectual Disability, Down Syndrome Australia, 3DN at the University of NSW, and Inclusion Australia, this new Centre will make a huge difference to health inequality.

Supported decision making has also been a big topic for Inclusion Australia this year. As well as the launch of our Make Decisions Real videos and resources, we also worked closely with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to inform the development of their new NDIS Supported Decision Making policy.

Part of this work involved designing and leading consultations with different groups across our community. One consultation was codesigned with our colleagues at Developmental Disability Western Australia and Merger of Minds, a group of young people with complex communication support needs. This was the first time this group had been included in a formal consultation by the NDIA and the members had a lot to say!



*Catherine McAlpine, Brooke Canham and Dougie Herd at the SACID Conference*

As a representative organisation, it is also our job to listen to different opinions and voices in our community. In February this year I met with families in Western Australia who are deeply concerned about the future following the planned closure of a WA Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE) by a large service provider. Our advocacy on the urgent need for alternatives to ADEs was also concerning to these families, so we had much to talk about.

Through our meeting we were able to find important common ground and look for solutions that work for everyone. We will continue to work with people with an intellectual disability and their families across Australia to progress employment reform following the release of the Disability Royal Commission's report.

This work highlights the strength of Inclusion Australia and our member organisations to represent the rich diversity of people in our community. The deep connections to local communities of our members mean that we have been able to work together and respond quickly and authentically to requests from the Australian Government and other bodies across the year. We have used this in our role as a Disability Representative Organisation to make sure that the voice of people with an intellectual disability and families is heard across government.

This has been particularly important during the independent review of the NDIS which was announced in October 2022. Our team has worked hard over the past 12 months to make sure the experiences of people with an intellectual disability were heard by the NDIS Review panellists, including workshops and dedicated sessions with panel members at the VALID and SACID conferences. We look forward to reading the Panel's recommendations and to a more accessible, inclusive, and sustainable Scheme that works better for people with an intellectual disability and their families.

As we look to the future, we see more need than ever for our strong national voice. Early signs from the Disability Royal Commission point to many cross-cutting issues where the biggest single impacts are on people with an intellectual disability. This is even greater for First Nations people with an intellectual disability and people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This year has shown that our team is stronger than ever and ready to work with our colleagues and community for a more inclusive Australia.

**Catherine McAlpine, October 2023**

# Our Voice report

Our Voice is an official committee of the Inclusion Australia board. All members have an intellectual disability and represent their organisations from around Australia.

## Our Voice Committee members



Kalena Bos  
*Chair*



Payge Hollis  
*Queensland*



Laura Naing  
*New South Wales*



Sarah Byrne  
*South Australia*



Sonia Hume  
*Tasmania*



Kyal Fairbairn  
*Western Australia*



Luke Nelson  
*Victoria*

Our Voice members in 2022-23 were:

- Kalena Bos (Chair, Tasmania)
- Kyal Fairbairn (Western Australia)
- Laura Naing (NSW)
- Luke Nelson (Victoria)
- Payge Hollis (Queensland)
- Sarah Byrne (South Australia)
- Sonia Hume (Tasmania)

## Our Voice's big year

We have been very busy this year. Here are some of the big things we worked on:

### Talking about the NDIS

We have done a lot of work about the NDIS this year because of the NDIS Review. We talked with people in our organisations and groups about their experiences with the NDIS and what needs to change.

We shared this with the NDIA in a meeting with Leah Van Poppel. Leah is a member of the NDIA Board and is the Principal Member of the Independent Advisory Council (IAC) to the NDIS. Leah co-chairs the Intellectual Disability Reference Group (IDRG) which reports to the IAC. Leah said she would share our information with the IAC and the NDIA Board. She thanked us for being very clear and honest and said she would love to come back and talk with us again.

### Presenting at conferences

In November we presented at the 40th anniversary of the Speak Out Conference in Tasmania. It was great to be able to be together in person at a conference.

Our presentation was called 'The Chicken and the Egg'. It was about what comes first, supported decision making, employment, or inclusion. We all learn from each other about how to be good leaders and help other self-advocates.



*In Hobart for the Speak Out Advocacy conference*

Some of us also went to the VALID Having a Say conference in Geelong in February. We did a presentation about being included in meetings and making sure people with intellectual disability are heard in consultations.



*Ready to party at the Having a Say dinner-dance.*

We also talked with people about the NDIS Review and what people told us about their experiences with the NDIS. It was nice to be together, to dress up and have fun at the famous Having a Say dinner and dance.

To find out more about Our Voice and our work, visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/about-us/our-voice/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/about-us/our-voice/)

# Taking the microphone – a year of leading from the front



With many of the restrictions around COVID easing, there were more opportunities to work together in person again this year. After so long apart, we saw people with an intellectual disability centre-stage, picking up the microphone and saying it's our turn!

One of our main strategic goals is about increasing the voice of people with an intellectual disability. All around Australia, our team has been out and about attending and speaking at conferences, workshops, focus groups, government sessions, and more!

Learning through lived experience is invaluable in informing our policy, advocacy, and project work. We think that the real expertise in collaboration and advocacy comes from the strength and commitment of people with an intellectual disability leading the conversations as the experts in the room.

## Here is a snapshot of some of the big moments from this year...

### July 2022

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Our CEO was in Alice Springs for the Disability Royal Commission public hearing about how the NDIS works for First Nations people with disability in remote communities.

She was also part of an emergency planning workshop with the Australian Government to talk about making sure people would be safe in another COVID-19 pandemic.

### August 2022

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Self-advocates Greg Tucker from VALID and Gavin Burner from SACID travelled to Canberra with our CEO for the NDIS Jobs and Skills Summit. They met with NDIS Minister Bill Shorten and the new Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese.

Catherine was also part of a national roundtable about employment with Minister Tony Burke.



*Greg Tucker, the Hon Bill Shorten MP,  
and Gavin Burner*



*Gavin and Catherine meet newly elected  
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.*

We ran a series of workshops for people with intellectual disability and families about getting information together for NDIS planning.

## September 2022

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Our Voice members Payge Hollis and Laura Naing spoke at the Virtual Disability Conference about the issues people have had with the NDIS and ideas to make it work better for people with an intellectual disability.

CID and SACID ran their My Life My Choices conferences in NSW and in Adelaide.

## October 2022

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Our Board and Our Voice members met together in Melbourne for our annual Inclusion Australia Strategic Workshop.



Self-advocates from Loud and Clear in Queensland ran their second annual conference up on the Sunshine Coast, including their big concert.

## November 2022

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Luke Nelson and Maeve Kennedy spoke in Melbourne with a panel of MPs and Senators from the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS about culture and practice in the NDIS.

Members of the Our Voice team travelled to Hobart for the 40th anniversary of the Speak Out Conference. They gave a presentation on decision making and employment.



*(L-R) Dr Monique Ryan MP, Libby Coker MP, Senator Kerrynne Liddle, Alicia Payne MP, Luke Nelson, Maeve Kennedy*



*Kyal (WA) and Sarah (SA) at the Speak Out conference*

## December 2022

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Co-researchers with an intellectual disability gave feedback to Australia’s Disability Strategy on including people with an intellectual disability in their evaluations.

We completed our inclusive employment project led by people with disabilities and gave our report to the Disability Royal Commission before the 31 December deadline.

## January 2023

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Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) held their National Youth Disability Summit in Canberra. Our Voice member Payge Hollis attended to represent people with an intellectual disability.

*Payge at the CYDA National Youth Disability Summit*

## February 2023

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VALID Having a Say Conference in Geelong.

Our Voice Committee presented on being included in meetings and making sure people with intellectual disability are heard.

We launched our Make Decisions Real resources at a joint session with CID, SACID and at the VALID Having a Say Conference in Geelong.

Brooke and Maeve from our team gave a presentation about employment with SACID.

Our CEO travelled to Perth to meet with people with an intellectual disability and families affected by the uncertainty about the future of large ADE providers.







*Luke, Kyal, Sonia, Sarah, Payge, and Kalena with Laura on screen from the 2023 Having a Say Conference in Geelong*

## March 2023

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Our CEO attended the World Down Syndrome Day event on March 21 at Parliament House in Canberra.



## April 2023

In April there was a party for the official opening of the Inclusion Australia Northern Territory office in Darwin.

Also in April, Minister for the NDIS, Bill Shorten gave a big speech about the future of the NDIS.

We wrote an Easy Read version of the Minister's speech and our Policy Team shared their thoughts on the speech and what it means for people with an intellectual disability: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/shorten-suite/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/shorten-suite/)



*The IANT team celebrate by cutting a cake with the IANT logo*

## May 2023

Catherine was a key speaker at a national webinar on the National Disability Data Asset.



## June 2023

From 9-10 June, SACID ran their second Leading Through Inclusion conference in Adelaide. Inclusion Australia Policy Officer Brooke Canham and CEO Catherine McAlpine delivered a keynote address.



William Ward-Boas, Your Service, Your Rights Project Coordinator travelled to Brisbane to talk about his employment journey at the annual Disability Employment Australia Conference.



*William with fellow panellists at the DEA Conference 2023 in Brisbane.*

In mid-June Our Voice Chair, Kalena presented at the DSC NDIS Conference in Sydney, talking about *An accessible NDIS: Learning from people with intellectual disability about what needs to change.*

# Disability Royal Commission



## Royal Commission

into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and  
Exploitation of People with Disability

**The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability started on 5 April 2019. It looked at abuse, neglect, exploitation, and all types of violence against people with disabilities, in all settings and contexts.**

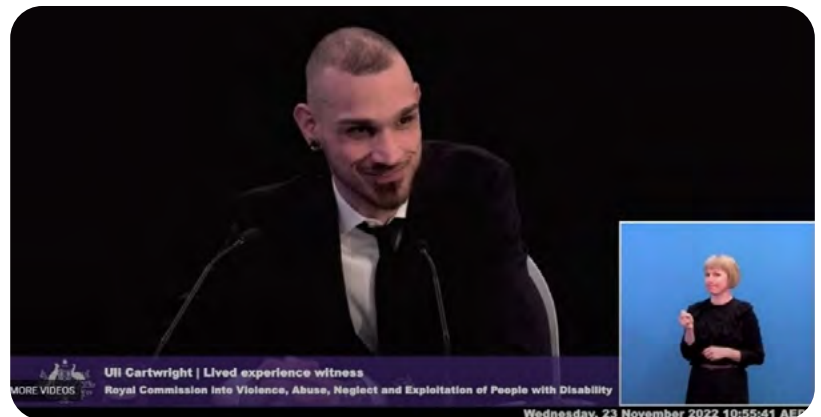
This was the last year that people could provide new information to the Royal Commission, with the closing date for submissions on 31 December 2022.

Inclusion Australia was busy right up until the deadline delivering our report and research from our inclusive employment project, as well as submissions from IANT. Our team and our member organisations also attended and appeared as witnesses at public hearings throughout the year.

- In July, our CEO and IANT Manager Liz Collier attended Public Hearing 25 on the operation of the NDIS for First Nations people with disability in remote and very remote communities. This was held in Alice Springs.
- Catherine was also at Public Hearing 27 in Perth in September, which considered conditions for people with disability in detention in the criminal justice system.
- In mid-October, Advocacy Practice Leader Julie Butler from Speak Out Advocacy gave powerful evidence in Brisbane on behalf of people with an intellectual disability from Tasmania at Public Hearing 28 on violence against and abuse of people with disability in public places.



- Later in October, our Senior Policy Manager Maeve Kennedy was in Melbourne across four days of hearings on the experience of violence against, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Public Hearing 29 24-28 October, Melbourne)
- Maeve was also in Sydney in November for Public Hearing 30 on guardianship, substituted and supported decision-making. She saw Uli Cartwright, a self-advocate from VALID, talking about his experiences with the guardianship system as a young person with disability.



CID also gave evidence at this hearing about what makes good support for decisions and how governments can do this better.

The Inclusion Australia Northern Territory team worked with its Local Steering Group members and developed a submission on this topic: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/submission/submission-to-the-disability-royal-commission-on-guardianship-and-substituted-decision-making/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/submission/submission-to-the-disability-royal-commission-on-guardianship-and-substituted-decision-making/)

The IANT team also led development of a submission about conditions in detention after the Local Steering Group identified conditions in the detention and the impact of the criminal justice system as a primary issue for people with an intellectual disability in the Northern Territory: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/submission/submission-to-the-disability-royal-commission-about-conditions-in-detention/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/submission/submission-to-the-disability-royal-commission-about-conditions-in-detention/)

The last formal hearing of the year was in Brisbane in December. Catherine and Maeve were there as the Commissioners looked beyond the Royal Commission, hearing from a range of witnesses on their vision for a more inclusive Australia. Policy Officers Brooke and Luke wrote a reflection about what it is like to watch a Royal Commission hearing: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/story/watching-the-disability-royal-commission/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/story/watching-the-disability-royal-commission/)



*(L-R) Maeve Kennedy, Catherine McAlpine with Senior Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission, Kate Eastman AM*

Our CEO and Senior Manager worked closely with staff at the Royal Commission on a range of topics, including employment and supported decision making. We participated actively in quarterly meetings with the Chair, the Honourable Ronald Sackville AO KC.

Working with other organisations, especially the other national Disability Representative Organisations (DROs) was also a big part of our Royal Commission work. We met every two weeks during the Commission to discuss what was happening and the ways in which we could work together. Inclusion Australia hosted a fortnightly DRO policy staff meeting to support this work as well. Together, we released joint statements and submissions to draw attention to big issues for our communities. This included a joint statement with People with Disability Australia and DANA about

access to housing for people with disability: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/australians-with-disability-need-action-to-remove-barriers-to-secure-safe-and-accessible-housing/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/australians-with-disability-need-action-to-remove-barriers-to-secure-safe-and-accessible-housing/).

As the deadline for final submissions approached, we worked with other disability organisations to write a submission on things that the Royal Commission had not covered in depth: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/submission/joint-submission-to-the-disability-royal-commission-on-identified-gaps/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/submission/joint-submission-to-the-disability-royal-commission-on-identified-gaps/)

# Our Systemic Advocacy

As a systemic advocacy organisation, we work with Government, other disability organisations, and other people to help make systems work better for people with an intellectual disability.

Our advocacy is informed and supported by our Systemic Advocacy Working Group, which our members are part of, and by the Our Voice Committee.

This section includes some of our big systemic advocacy topics for the year.

## Inclusive employment project and submission



We did a big project in 2022 about employment for people with an intellectual disability. We wanted to find out about people's experiences in Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE) and other jobs and learn about what was hard and what could be better. This project was led by people with disabilities, with El Gibbs, Sonia Hume, and Larry Simpson in key roles.

We did lots of stakeholder engagement, including a project advisory group with people with an intellectual disability and

people from National Disability Services, People with Disability Australia, and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). We interviewed people who have worked at ADEs and family members to learn about their experiences and what would make things better. We heard from hundreds of people across Australia through two online surveys.

We also commissioned experts to lead research on inclusive employment and how much it would cost for the government to make some changes.

We sent a big report about our project to the Disability Royal Commission in December. It says what we want to see change to make employment more inclusive in Australia.

To find out more and read our reports visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/project/inclusive-employment-project/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/project/inclusive-employment-project/)

Policy Officer Brooke Canham was part of the project advisory group.

She said, 'This [project] is important because we always talk about equal rights at work, and this is a basic human right. We talk a lot about having fair and equal pay when we have a job. This submission will help readers understand how people with an intellectual disability deserve to be treated.'

## **Human rights and promoting supported decision making**

This year we worked on lots of issues about human rights. Human rights can be a complicated topic so our Policy Officers wrote an article for our website which uses clear language to explain what human rights are and what the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is: <https://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/resource/thinking-about-the-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/>

Supported decision making is a human right. It means that everyone has the right to make their own decisions about their lives, as much as possible. It also means that people should be able to have support to make decisions if they need it, or if they would like. As well as our project on supported decision making, Make Decisions Real, we did lots of policy work about supported decision making this year. We worked with the NDIA to talk to people from different communities about what good support for decision making looks like for them, and to share our feedback and ideas about what the NDIA needs to do better to support people to make decisions about their NDIS.

We also worked with our members to develop a statement about guardianship and supported decision-making, and what we believe. We released this statement during the Disability Royal Commission hearing into guardianship, supported and substitute decision making in November 2022: <https://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/invest-in-support-for-decision-making-to-ease-guardianship-challenges/>

## **Presenting at conferences, inquiries, and meetings**

Our team is often invited to speak at meetings and conferences. This is an opportunity to talk about our work and our lived experience.

In October, Brooke was invited to be a speaker at a national forum for Australia's Disability Strategy about the importance of paid work. She spoke in conversation with our Senior Policy and Projects Manager, Maeve Kennedy about what having a job means and what being paid a proper wage means for her choices in life.





Brooke also spoke about employment as part of a panel at an online event held by the University of Technology Sydney, with researchers from Australia and Japan.

In November 2022, Luke Nelson and Maeve gave a presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS about the ‘culture and capability’ of the NDIA. They spoke about the experiences of people with intellectual disability working with NDIA staff and NDIS processes, and shared ideas for making things better.

In May 2023, Luke and Dariane McLean from our Policy Team were invited to speak to a national roundtable on procedural sedation for people with an intellectual disability hosted by Assistant Health Minister Ged Kearney. Catherine also took part in this important discussion.

In June 2023, Brooke and our CEO Catherine were invited to be keynote speakers at the SACID conference in Adelaide. Brooke also met Social Services Minister, Amanda Rishworth MP who was also a speaker at the conference.

## Our Submissions

At Inclusion Australia we are committed to making sure the voices of people with an intellectual disability and families are heard. This includes consultations with the Australian Government, the NDIA and other organisations about things that might affect people with an intellectual disability.

We work together with our state members to make sure our submissions give people an opportunity to have a say and be heard on issues that matter.

In 2022-2023, we were involved in more than 28 submissions. Most of these we wrote ourselves, but for some of them we worked with other organisations as well.

## **Some of our big submissions for this year included:**

### **Joint submission on a new Act to replace the *Disability Services Act 1986***

We worked with DANA to bring a group of disability organisations and researchers together to write a submission to the Australian Government with our ideas for a new law. We said that the aim of the law should be making sure people with disability are fully included in our Australian community and are treated as equal citizens.

### **Parliamentary Inquiry into Access to Dental Services**

In March 2023, the Australian government set up a committee to look at how people experience dental care in Australia, and how to improve it. We made a joint submission to the Committee with AFDO, CYDA and Down Syndrome Australia. We talked to people with disabilities about their experiences with dental care and made recommendations about what needs to change.

### **National Advocacy Collective (NAC): Supporting the rights of parents with an intellectual disability.**

The NAC is a group of people across Australia who support the rights of parents with an intellectual disability. The NAC works with governments to make positive change. We wrote a submission to the NDIS Review that talked about ways the NDIS could better support parents with an intellectual disability.

Brooke said, 'This submission was important because we talked to lots of parents with an intellectual disability, so it is giving a voice to them. It also talks about how to make the NDIS better for them'.

### **Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport**

The Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport are a set of rules that all public transport providers must follow to make sure public transport is accessible to people with disability. The government has been reviewing the standards to see how they can work better. Inclusion Australia made a submission to the review, and we endorsed another submission by NSW CID. The IANT team wrote a submission to the review about how to make transport safe and easy to use in the Northern Territory.



*The Inclusion Australia policy team working together online*

## **Current and proposed sexual consent laws in Australia**

In November 2022, the Australian Government put forward an inquiry to report on Australia's current and proposed sexual consent laws.

Our submission to the inquiry talks about how current and proposed laws impact people with an intellectual disability, especially the availability of accessible information about relationships and sexual education and consent.

Our CEO was invited to give evidence at a public hearing held by the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Reference Committee about the experiences of people with an intellectual disability and families and how changes to legislation might affect them.

Our submission was referenced in the Committee's report tabled in Parliament.

These are just some of the highlights from this year.

For a full list of all our submissions, visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/advocacy/our-submissions/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/advocacy/our-submissions/)

# Access and Inclusion

Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do at Inclusion Australia. This year we took steps to make things even more inclusive by creating the Access and Inclusion Team.

Our goal is to make sure that everyone in our team is included and that our work is accessible. This is especially important for us as a workplace that employs people of all abilities.

## Some of our jobs are:

- Making Easy Read and accessible versions of Inclusion Australia documents
- Giving advice and support to other teams on access and inclusion
- Making 'how to' resources and videos for staff
- Running monthly peer meetings where staff with an intellectual disability get together for support and discussions on access and inclusion at work

## Inclusion Australia Easy Read guidelines



This year we developed our first Easy Read guidelines. This document is available in Easy Read and provides guidance for staff on how we make Easy Read documents at Inclusion Australia. We drew from the advice of people with an intellectual disability, the Easy Read expertise of our member organisations, our Communications team and international easy information standards.

These guidelines ensure that we have quality and consistency across our Easy Read and that new staff can more easily learn how it works. Our Access and Inclusion Officers use the guidelines as a basis for our Easy Read writing and testing. We look forward to more advocacy in the future about Australian standards for Easy Read information!

## Easy Read translations

Over the 8 months since our team formed, we have completed 11 Easy Read internal policies and procedures, 5 accessible staff forms, and many Easy Read versions of HR documents like employee letters and position descriptions. We have also done Easy Read translations of policy submissions, project documents and meeting papers to support other teams at Inclusion Australia.

# Our engagement work



At Inclusion Australia, working with and listening to our community is central to what we do.

We work with people with an intellectual disability and families in many ways.

We always aim to create safe spaces where people can give feedback and advice, talk about their lived experience, and share ideas. This engagement is an important way for people to influence change in systems, policies and projects. It is also a way for our community to have a role in designing new resources.

Over the past year we ran many workshops, activities, surveys, consultations, and events.

## Workshops

Some of the topics we have supported workshops on include

- Information Gathering and Planning for the NDIS
- Supported Decision Making in the NDIS, working with people with complex communication support needs, people with disabilities from different cultural backgrounds, First Nations people with disability in remote communities and young LGBTIQ people with disabilities.
- Making evaluations more accessible for Australia's Disability Strategy
- Research priorities for the National Disability Research Partnership

## Our Research Bulletin



We have been working hard this year to make sure people with intellectual disability can find out about opportunities to have a say in research and consultations. One idea was our research bulletin.

We work with universities, researchers, and consultants to create Easy Read information about opportunities which we advertise for them. We also wrote a guide for researchers about working with people with an intellectual disability.

This work connects our community to important research work. Nothing about us without us!

Find out more here: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/have-your-say-in-research-projects/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/have-your-say-in-research-projects/)

## Making online more accessible



As more work moves online, we have been working to make sure that this is as accessible as possible.

Online surveys are often used to engage with communities to gather information. Sadly, many surveys are not accessible or written in a way that everyone can understand.

This year we have been using new software to create Easy Read surveys. These are much more accessible and allow more people to have a say.

In late 2022, as part of our inclusive employment project, we ran an Easy Read survey to capture the views and experiences of people with disability and

their families with employment. The survey asked people to share what they think about work, their experiences of working, and what kind of choices in employment people want to have in the future. Feedback from the survey was used in our submission to the Disability Royal Commission. We made recommendations about what needs to change so more people with an intellectual disability can gain open employment and have the support they need at work.

## Supporting the voice of families



Families play an important role in the lives of people with an intellectual disability. As well as providing much needed informal support, it is typically families who navigate the complex systems that people with disabilities use. It is often families who play a vital role in speaking up for people with very complex support needs.

Working with families is a critical part of our work. This year we have run many dedicated workshops especially for families on a range of topics. Our monthly Services for One National Community of Practice is another way that families have a say on important systemic issues. The group was formed as part of a project we ran about supporting people with complex support needs, with parents from each state and territory participating. The group continues to meet regularly led by an Inclusion Australia team member, Dariane McLean, who is an experienced advocate and the parent of a man with autism and an intellectual disability.

This year the Community of Practice covered a broad range of topics, including provider registration, restrictive practices, quality and safeguarding, and how to support people with complex support needs and their families. The group's expertise informed many of our submissions. In December 2022, the Community of Practice and the Inclusion Australia CEO met with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner, Tracy Mackey, to discuss services-for-one and how to better support people with complex support needs.



**Inclusion Australia Northern Territory (IANT) is the newest team at Inclusion Australia. We work with people, families, and advocacy organisations in the Northern Territory to make sure they are effectively represented in Inclusion Australia's national advocacy.**



*The IANT team Liz Collier, Daniel Ross, Rebecca Hell and Ben Hankin with Catherine McAlpine and Senior Manager, Maeve Kennedy*

Our work in the Northern Territory is informed by a Local Steering Group that includes representatives from advocacy and other territory-based organisations:

- Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS)
- Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC)
- Integrated Disability Action (IDA)
- Disability Advocacy Service (DAS)
- Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commissioner
- Youthworx NT
- Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)

This was a big year for the IANT team. Some of the big things that happened were:

## **We moved into our new office**

In March 2023, we moved into our own office in Nightcliff Community Centre, Darwin. It was great to set things up and to have a place that we can invite people into.



Before we had the office, we moved around a lot. As members of the team said:

“We are enjoying working in our office. It’s nice to have our own permanent space to come to and work in.”

“It’s a comfortable and relaxed space, you know that you’re coming to a safe environment when you’re coming to work.”



*Liz talking to guests at the official IANT office opening*

## **We had our opening party**

In April 2023, we had a party to celebrate the official opening of our office. The Welcome to Country from Jeanneen from Larrakia Nation was very meaningful. Lots of people came to the party and we felt really supported. It was great to have Catherine and Maeve come up for the party. Catherine spoke about Inclusion Australia, and everyone in the team talked about our work in the Northern Territory.

## **We met Minister for Disabilities, Ngaree Ah Kit**

While Catherine and Maeve were in Darwin, we met with the Honorable Ngaree Ah Kit, the Minister for Disabilities in the Northern Territory. It was nice to have her come to our office and to talk with her about our work.

We talked about the NT Disability Strategy and how to make sure people with an intellectual disability are included. We presented her with some Traffic Light Cards and explained how they can be used to make meetings more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities.

Keep up to date with IANT and our work here:

[www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/about-us/inclusion-australia-northern-territory/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/about-us/inclusion-australia-northern-territory/)



*Minister Ngaree Ah Kit meets the team*

# Our Projects

## Towards Inclusive Practice



Towards Inclusive Practice was a national project funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. It was run in partnership with our state and territory members and a network of Inclusion Advisors with an intellectual disability. The Inclusion Advisor Network was one of the most important parts of TIP.

Over two years, the Inclusion Advisors came up with ideas about what people working in government need to know to be more inclusive. With the project team, they created a range of detailed resources that give advice to government departments and other organisations about working in a way that is more inclusive of people with an intellectual disability. This includes videos, guides, tip sheets and other helpful advice: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/towards-inclusive-practice](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/towards-inclusive-practice)



It also includes a series of videos about power and trust, so that people working for government can better understand what it feels like when you don't have power or when you are not listened to. Inclusion Advisors from across Australia were part of these videos.

This information has been shared with lots of people in government, including the CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency. We have received positive feedback about our information. People say it helps them to understand how to be more inclusive.

To find out more about the project and the experiences of the Inclusion Advisors, visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/towards-inclusive-practice/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/towards-inclusive-practice/)

## Make Decisions Real



Make Decisions Real is a 3-year Information, Linkages and Capacity Building project that aims to improve supported decision making for people with an intellectual disability and the people who support them.

The project has been led since 2021 by Lorraine and Brooke, both peer workers with an intellectual disability.

This was a big year for the project as we launched our Make Decisions Real resources at the VALID Having a Say Conference in Geelong.



*Launch of the Make Decision Real videos at Having a Say in Geelong*

## Make Decisions Real videos

We made six accessible films featuring people with an intellectual disability talking about how they do supported decision making in their own lives. The videos explain our 5 steps of Supported Decision Making. There is also booklet with questions so viewers can follow along. Brooke and Lorraine feature in the videos and did the narrations.

Brooke said 'I really enjoyed writing the video scripts and working alongside Lorraine. I was a bit stressed out on filming day as it was hard to read the cue cards, but we did a lot of practice runs so it all turned out fine.'

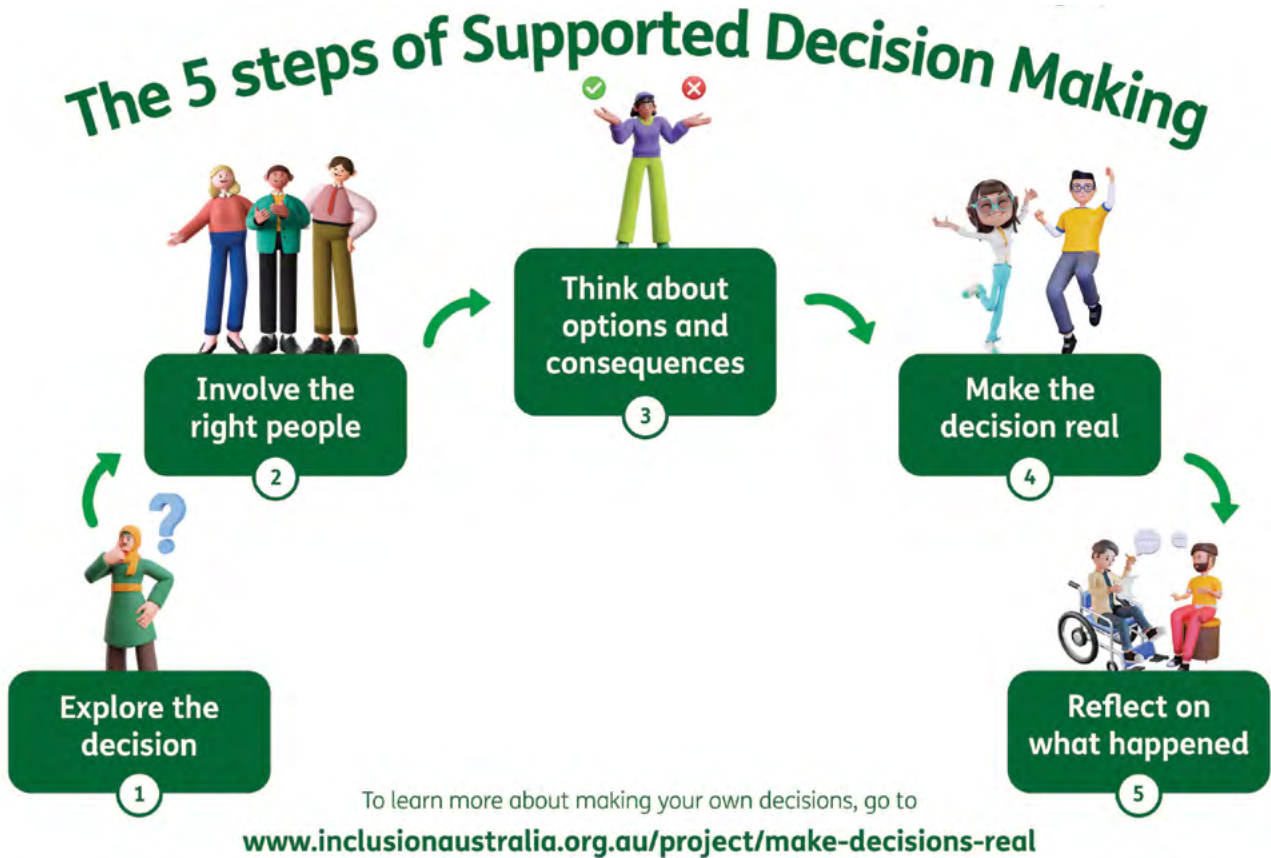
To watch or download visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/resource/5-steps-of-supported-decision-making-videos/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/resource/5-steps-of-supported-decision-making-videos/)

## Make Decisions Real posters and information sheets

We made a series of accessible posters and information sheets to help people learn about supported decision making. These includes important topics like:

- Making decisions: my rights
- Getting the right support
- The 5 steps of supported decision making

Lorraine said, *'I really enjoyed making them, and helping to decide which images to use to match the words.'*



The posters and information sheets use easy to understand language and pictures so they are accessible for everyone. They are free to use and download. Access them here:

[www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/resource/the-5-steps-of-supported-decision-making/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/resource/the-5-steps-of-supported-decision-making/)

Brooke said, 'We really hope these resources help people with intellectual disability learn how they can do supported decision making in their own lives.'

Lorraine added 'And to always speak up if something is wrong – because speaking up helps you get what you need.'

For more on Make Decisions Real visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/project/make-decisions-real/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/project/make-decisions-real/)

## Your Service, Your Rights

# Your Service, Your Rights



**Your Service, Your Rights (YSYR) is a national project to build the capacity of people with an intellectual disability and NDIS service providers to understand peoples' rights when receiving services.**

We have been working closely with our member organisations to deliver this information in an accessible, inclusive, and collaborative way. YSYR Project Coordinator William Ward-Boas shares his highlights from this year.

## Our Facilitator Network

In the past 12 months we worked with the 28 Facilitators across Australia to deliver information within services. The Facilitator Network consisted of people with disability sector experience and people with an intellectual disability.

The network has been one of the best privileges of the entire project. We got to work with people who have lots of experience delivering information, communicating with services and encouraging voices of people with disability to be heard. Everyone had the common goal to of delivering this information in the best way possible.



## NDS National Quality and Safeguarding Community of Practice

We approached National Disability Services so we could share the Your Services Your Rights project at their Community of Practice. We were welcomed to share our knowledge to encourage service providers to think about how they could help get people with intellectual disability involved in service decision making.

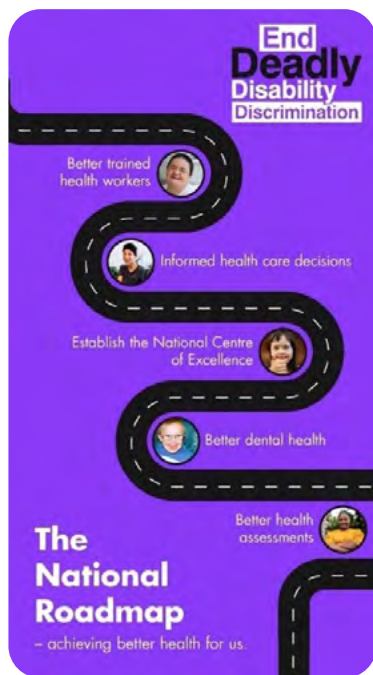
### Accessible online information

We felt the information on the website needed to be in more accessible language and include more images. We worked hard to structure the content on the website so there was more information in Easy Read. We also created a webpage for provider resources.

For more information on Your Service, Your Rights visit: [www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/project/your-service-your-rights/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/project/your-service-your-rights/)



# National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability



Our community had a major win this year with confirmation of the establishment of the National Centre for Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health.

The Centre of Excellence is a commitment as part of the National Roadmap to Health for improving the health of people with intellectual disability is a project that aims to address serious health inequalities faced by people with intellectual disability.

Developed by the Department of Health and Aged Care, the Roadmap to Health outlines a 10-year plan designed to make healthcare more patient focused, accessible, and integrated.

The Roadmap and the Centre of Excellence are the result of a long campaign by the Council for Intellectual Disability (CID) and Inclusion Australia called [Our Health Counts](#).

We also worked closely with Down Syndrome Australia and 3DN at the University of New South Wales as part of the consultations to develop the Roadmap. This included taking part in a series of roundtables with people with intellectual disability, families, and representatives, as well as academic and health experts.

Our CEO, Catherine McAlpine is part of the [Roadmap Implementation Governance Group \(RIGG\)](#) which oversees and provide advice on the implementation of the initiative. In the coming year a key focus will be on getting the Centre of Excellence up and running.



*Our CEO Catherine with members of the CID team for a Disability Royal Commission public hearing on health inequality*

For more on the roadmap, visit: [www.health.gov.au/our-work/national-roadmap-for-improving-the-health-of-people-with-intellectual-disability](http://www.health.gov.au/our-work/national-roadmap-for-improving-the-health-of-people-with-intellectual-disability)

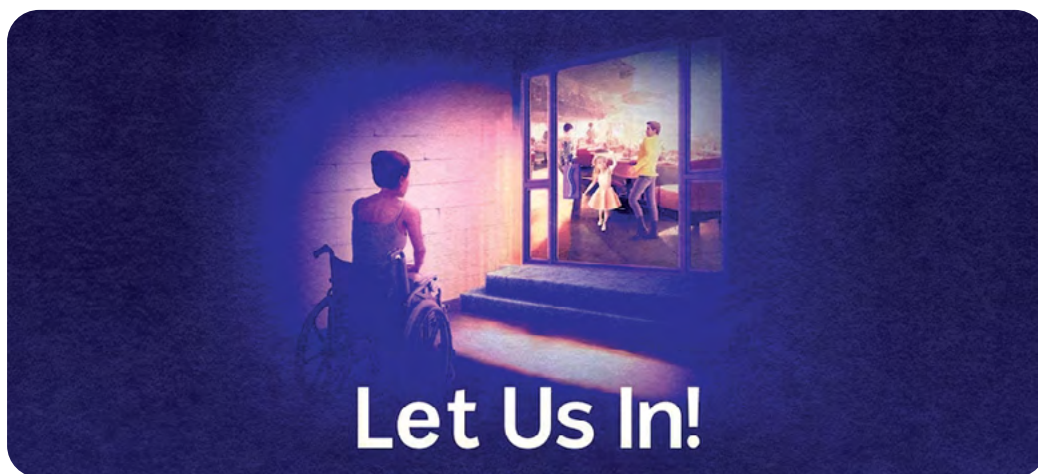
# Inclusion Australia in the media

One of our strategic goals is to increase the voice of people with an intellectual disability and families. One way we do this is through working closely with national media organisations.

## September 2022

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- Catherine did an interview for ABC online about the worker shortage and people with disabilities: [Young people with disability great candidates to fill jobs during national labour shortage.](#)
- In August and September 2022, we talked with former Paralympian and NDIA Chair Kurt Fearnley on his new ABC podcast on disability, Let Us In. The team talked about everything from employment to education. These were broadcast in October 2022. You can listen to the podcasts here: [Let Us In! with Kurt Fearnley and Sarah Shands.](#)



- Catherine was interviewed by the ABC about the appointment of Kurt Fearnley to the NDIA Board and why it matters for people with disabilities: [Kurt Fearnley's job at the top of the NDIS gives the disability community hope.](#)

## October 2022

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- Catherine spoke with the ABC about safety for people with disability in public places: [Abuse of people with disability in public places at the centre of this week's DRC hearing.](#)

## November 2022

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- Catherine did a series of radio interviews about our inclusive employment project.
- Catherine talked to 3CR in Melbourne about guardianship and supported decision making: [International Womens Day, 3CR Community Radio.](#)



## December 2022

- Catherine talked to 2CC Talk Radio in Canberra about employing local people with disabilities: [Local businesses urged to hire people with an intellectual disability.](#)

## January 2023

- Catherine did a series of interviews with the ABC about group homes following the NDIS Commission Own Motion Inquiry: [NDIS report finds serious incidents occurring in group homes](#) and [call for the phasing out of group homes](#) and [watchdog reveals shocking incidents in disability group homes.](#)



- Catherine did an interview with SBS Radio about inclusive employment: [Royal Commission report on failing disability employment provider may just be the beginning](#)

## April 2023

- April 2023 Catherine spoke to the ABC in response to Bill Shorten's big speech: [Catherine McAlpine, Inclusion Australia re NDIS Reboot.](#)
- April 2023, Dariane and Catherine spoke to the ABC News about use of unauthorised restrictive practices by NDIS Providers: [The number of reports of unauthorised restrictive practices to the NDIS is up five-fold in three years.](#)
- April 2023 Catherine spoke to the ABC for a radio interview about the final DRC public hearing: [Disability Royal Commission draws to a close.](#)

## May 2023

- Catherine was part of the launch of SDM policy the NDIA: [Participants to have greater say through supported decision making.](#)

# Inclusion Australia online

## Including Everyone, the Inclusion Australia newsletter



This year we launched Including Everyone, our first official newsletter. This bi-monthly online only publication is shared with over 1000 subscribers (and growing!) It includes a range of topics so people can keep up to date with everything that is happening at Inclusion Australia and with our members.

We are exploring ways to make Including Everyone more accessible in the future including Easy Read and video versions. You can sign up and find back issues here:

[www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/what-we-do/including-everyone/](http://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/what-we-do/including-everyone/)

## Social Media in numbers

This year, Inclusion Australia has been increasing its use of social media to advocate for and raise awareness of issues impacting people with intellectual disability and families. We have looked at different platforms to help us share our work, projects, and campaigns, and support our friends and colleagues from other disability advocacy organisations with different audiences.

### Facebook



Our Facebook account is our most popular online place for people to engage with us. We have over 4,000 followers.

### LinkedIn



This year we relaunched our LinkedIn account to a great response. We have more than 900 followers.

### Twitter



Our Twitter account has seen a huge growth through our advocacy on topics. We currently have over 3,500 followers.



Our newsletter has over 1,200 subscribers nationally and growing.

# Our members

**Inclusion Australia's strength comes from our state members who use their combined experience and expertise to promote the inclusion of people with intellectual disability.**

Our state members are:

- Council for Intellectual Disability (CID) – New South Wales
- Developmental Disability Western Australia (DDWA) – Western Australia
- Parent to Parent (P2P) – Queensland
- Speak Out Advocacy – Tasmania
- South Australian Council on Intellectual Disability (SACID) – South Australia
- Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALID) – Victoria



Together we form a network that is connected to people with an intellectual disability and families and committed to the shared vision of inclusion in all aspects of Australian life.

Each of our members have many years of experience of advocacy across local, state, and national governments as well as international agencies, such as the United Nations.

In the next section you can catch up on their big activities in 2022/23.

## CID Easy Read Constitution

CID members approved CID's new [Easy Read Constitution](#) in October 2022. The Constitution was developed by CID with legal advice from Minter Ellison. The Constitution was tested with members before it was taken to our AGM for the members' vote. The Easy Read Constitution means all our members have access to information about their rights and responsibility as members.

## Centre of Excellence

CID's campaign [Our Health Counts](#) asked the Australian Government to fund the establishment of National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health.

The Government announced 4-year funding for the Centre.

CID is part of a group of organisations chosen to run the Centre of Excellence which will be at the University of New South Wales.

## Supported Decision Making Framework

We created a [Supported Decision Making](#) Framework with people with intellectual disability.

It says what is important for good supported decision-making:

- Everyone has the right to make decisions
- Everyone has the right to risk
- Everyone has the right to support
- Everyone should respect what a person decides.



We said people with intellectual disability can make more of their own decisions when they have things and people to support them.

**For more about CID please visit: <https://cid.org.au/>**



## Our projects

We have a new Friendship Project which is about making friends and keeping them. We made some great videos on friendships from people's ideas, which you can find here [ddwa.org.au/online-learning-directory/the-friendship-project/](https://ddwa.org.au/online-learning-directory/the-friendship-project/)

Another project was about making gyms accessible and inclusive for people with intellectual disability. We launched 'FlexABLE', an online course for gym staff and personal trainers. Here are the links to the Flexible resources:

- Online course: [ddwa.org.au/online-learning/flexible-course-outline/](https://ddwa.org.au/online-learning/flexible-course-outline/)
- Handbook [ddwa.org.au/resources/flexible-handbook-for-gym-professionals/](https://ddwa.org.au/resources/flexible-handbook-for-gym-professionals/)
- Easy read books and videos [ddwa.org.au/joining-the-gym-easy-read/](https://ddwa.org.au/joining-the-gym-easy-read/)

## Consultations

Our Advisory Council has been doing lots of consultations with government agencies and other organisations to review and test easy read resources. Some of the issues the Advisory Council raised include:

- How accessible are sporting clubs
- Feeling safe on public transport
- Employment for people with disability
- Dental issues and accessing affordable dental care
- Housing



We are also teaching students with disabilities at high school about their rights, how to speak up for themselves and what a good life looks like.

Our staff worked closely with Inclusion Australia throughout the year. We worked on the Your Service Your Rights project delivering workshops throughout WA to teach people their rights when getting services. We also supported Kyal as our DDWA Our Voice member to attend meetings.

**For more about DDWA please visit: <https://ddwa.org.au/>**



# PARENT TO PARENT

## Stand by Me

Now in its third year, our Stand by Me project continues to support peer groups in the Central Queensland, Fraser Coast, Sunshine Coast and greater Brisbane regions.

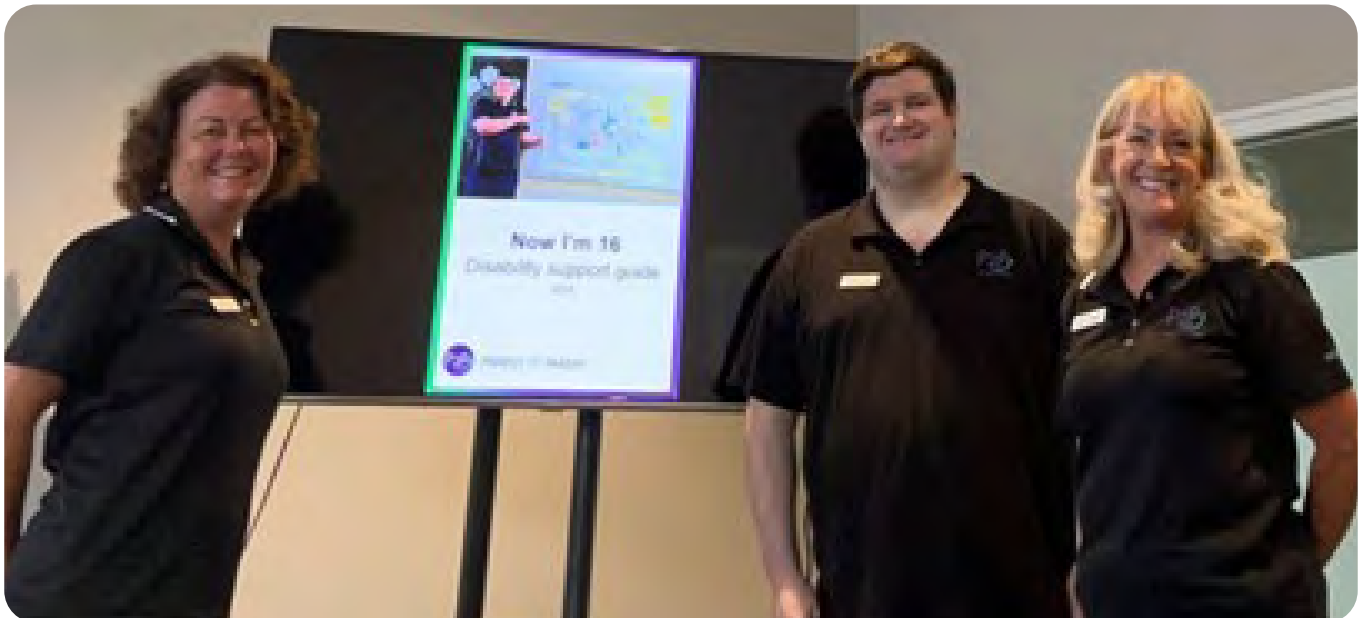
Each group has been developed around the specific needs and wants of their local community. The project employs people with intellectual disability and family members.



## Transition guides

In 2023 we developed three new workshops which are delivered by a parent or carer and co-facilitated by people with disabilities. Two of the workshops take a 'deep dive' into our [Now I'm 16 and Now I'm 18 Transition Guides](#). The guides provide information and links to benefits that young people are eligible to receive when they reach these age milestones.

This third workshop is about finding your place in your community. It focuses on connecting in a way that is real and meaningful and includes tips on checking for true belonging.



*Louise, Drew and Beth presenting at an information workshop.*

## Loud and Clear



Members of Loud and Clear work to inspire inclusive communities through self-advocacy. Members range in age from 25 to 80 years and all identify as having an intellectual disability. Loud and Clear Qld is supported by P2P and [Spiral](#) through an Information, Linkage and Capacity building grant.

Loud and Clear has continued to go from strength to strength. A successful Council grant meant members could build on their conference planning skills to plan and run the Loud and Clear Qld Conference and Concert in October 2022.



Local rap artist MC Wheels performed at the concert and wrote and recorded the Loud and Clear Qld rap. Read all about it in this report by members Drew and Payge: <https://p2pqlld.org.au/what-we-do/projects-and-collaborations/loud-and-clear-qld/loud-and-clear-conference-2022/>

Members have increased their public speaking skills and have presented at information sessions including Rotary and Carers Qld. Local MP Rob Skelton was a guest speaker so that members could meet their local politician and talk about inclusion in the community. Members created their motto - *to inspire inclusive communities through self-advocacy*.



*Tim and Payge presenting at an information session*

**For more about P2P please visit: <https://p2pqld.org.au/>**





South Australian Council on  
Intellectual Disability

## Leading Through Inclusion Conference

SACID held its 2nd Leading Through Inclusion Conference, in June 2023 at the Hilton Hotel, Adelaide. The conference is aimed at people with an intellectual disability, family members and carers, as well as professionals who want to learn more about how to make an inclusive community. The conference was co-designed and co-delivered by our Inclusion Advisors, who have an intellectual disability, ensuring all content was accessible and relevant to people with disability. The Conference was a success. People told us:

- 'I like how people with an intellectual disability ran all the sessions.'
- 'I haven't attended an event that was done by and for people with disability and it was amazing.'
- 'I liked the inclusive feel of the conference.'



## My Life My Choices

SACID finished our My Life My Choices project on Support Decision Making. The team worked hard throughout to share their knowledge on Supported Decision Making by:

- Developing and delivering workshops to different groups in the community.
- Sharing their experiences of Supported Decision Making to help others.
- Developing a set of Conversation Cards as a resource for people to use in conversations about making decisions.

To finish off the project, the team organised a conference with 100 people! The day was filled with knowledge, sharing, learning and fun and supported people across South Australia to attend. People were empowered throughout the day to take charge of the decisions in their life, through thinking about their strengths and practicing making decisions. Everyone was able to take a set of the Conversation Cards to take home and use with their decision supporters.

## Redress Support Service

SACID opened our Redress Support Service. We are the only Redress Support Service that works specifically with people with intellectual disability. SACID's Redress Support Services can help you before, during and after you apply to the National Redress Scheme.

The National Redress Scheme is a way to support people who experienced child sexual abuse by an institution or while an institution was supposed to be looking after them.

SACID's Redress Support Service ensures that people with intellectual disability are able to access and understand information about the scheme.

Our service supports people with intellectual disability through the application process, links them to necessary supports and services, and connects them with opportunities to build their resilience.



*SACID staff group photo, 2023*

For more about SACID please visit: <https://sacid.org.au/>

# VALID

## Having a Say came back!

VALID's Having a Say conference, organised for and by people with intellectual disability, was brought back in February 2023. This was the first in-person Having a Say since it had to be cancelled in 2021 due to COVID-19.

Deakin Uni and Costa Hall in Geelong were once again packed with over 850 delegates taking part in a full program of presentations, activities, and plenary sessions. Though shortened to two days, Having a Say 2023 still featured the popular closing night Disco out on the pier. We look forward to an even bigger and better conference in 2024!



## VALID8 returned to full strength

VALID's Victorian Government-funded VALID8 project focuses on boosting and assuring service user empowerment practices in not-for-profit disability residential services. It too was badly affected by COVID-19, but in 2022-23 came back into full operation. A team of 15 staff were employed and trained, working in three groups. 50 properties were visited, assessed and reported on in 2022. This was a great achievement for the team as they were forced to make a very late start in September due to the impact of COVID.

## VALID got a new CEO

After a period of change, VALID's new CEO Fionn Skiotis started in early August 2022. His focus was on reviewing and improving VALID's internal systems, HR, compliance and governance. He also met regularly with advocates, providers and peaks across the disability sector and with the Victorian and Federal Governments. With this work completed and a new Constitution adopted in November 2022, VALID is now in a strong position to re-focus on our Purposes including strengthening and promoting the human rights of people with intellectual disability.

For more about VALID please visit: [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)

# SPEAKOUT

ADVOCACY

Speak Out is a Tasmania-wide membership organisation for people with an intellectual disability. All our work helps people to be aware of their rights, make decisions and have a say about things that affect their lives.

## Looking Forward, Looking Back – our 40<sup>th</sup> annual Speak Out Conference

In November the Speak Out conference celebrated 40 years of self-advocacy and advocacy. We had lots of different workshops and activities, and many special guests came along including NDIS Minister Bill Shorten who attended a plenary session. People asked him questions about the future of the NDIS.

It was good to see so many past advocates and members. We shared memories and made plans for the future. From the first conference in 1982 we have had amazing times together and spoken out locally, nationally, and internationally. We are all very proud of this big birthday and look forward to the next 40 years!

## Self-advocacy and representation

Our self-advocacy groups and peer support networks run across the state and assist people in different parts of their lives. This year we helped organise a human rights rally at Parliament House to let politicians know that Tasmania needs a Human Rights Act.



Our members also sat on committees and gave advice on different issues using their lived experience of intellectual disability. This included the NDIS Intellectual Disability and Equity and Inclusion Reference Groups, and the National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability and Better Health Care for People with Intellectual Disability Advisory Group. We were also part of the Disability Royal Commission Strategic Engagement Group and the Inclusion Australia Our Voice Committee.

## Educating other people

This year 14 people with intellectual disability worked as Inclusion Advisors, Peer Educators, facilitators and on our Easy Read team. Their important work included Road to Success Self Advocacy training across Tasmania, Your Service Your Rights workshops, and producing Easy Read documents for government.



We are getting more and more opportunities to have a say about what is important to people with intellectual disability. Our systemic work was about

- the NDIS, including the NDIS review and the PACE trial in Tasmania.
- Health and people with intellectual disability
- Discrimination and rights
- The Tasmanian Public Trustee
- Parents with an intellectual disability
- The Future of Supported Employment
- The Disability Inclusion Bill.

**For more about Speak Out please visit: <https://www.speakoutadvocacy.org/>**

# Financials

This page shows:

- how much money Inclusion Australia has on 30 June 2023
- how much money Inclusion Australia owes on 30 June 2023
- the value of everything Inclusion Australia owns on 30 June 2023
- Provisions – things we might have to pay in the future



## Current Assets

How much money we have

\$2,785,932

How much people owe us

\$38,166

**Total \$2,824,098**



## Total Liabilities

How much money we owe

\$143,858

Government Grants

\$2,166,961

Provisions

\$209,436

**Total \$2,520,255**



## Total Assets

How much money we would have if we sold everything we own

**\$2,834,904**



## Equity

How much money would be left if we sell everything we own and pay all the money we owe or need to spend




**\$314,650**

# Financials 2022-23

This page shows:

- how much money Inclusion Australia got in 2022-23
- how much money Inclusion Australia spent in 2022-23
- how much money is left over

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	<b>Revenue</b>	How much money we got	\$2,123,916
	<b>Expenses</b>	How much money we spent	\$2,130,753
	<b>Surplus</b>	How much money is left over	\$ (6,836)

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To see the whole Audit report for 2022-2023 please call 1300 312 343 or email [admin@inclusionaustralia.org.au](mailto:admin@inclusionaustralia.org.au) to request a copy of the full Audit Report.

## Our team 2022-2023

- Becky Rowe – Manager, Access & Inclusion
- Ben Harkin – Northern Territory Inclusion Advisor
- Brooke Canham – Policy Officer
- Catherine McAlpine – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Christine Kuca-Thompson – Project Lead
- Daniel Ross – Northern Territory Inclusion Advisor
- Dariane McLean – Family Network Coordinator
- Eban Pollard – Project Coordinator
- Emma Bloom – Comms & Engagement Officer
- Emma Softly - Access & Inclusion Officer
- Heather Forsyth – Project Coordinator
- Jamie Bannister – Manager, Comms & Engagement
- Jemma Lang – Bookkeeper
- Liz Collier – Northern Territory & Projects Manager
- Lorraine Sequerah – Access & Inclusion Officer
- Luke Nelson – Policy Officer
- Maeve Kennedy – Senior Manager Policy & Projects
- Maryanne Mahoney – Admin Support
- Miranda Cross – Senior Policy Officer
- Rebecca Hell – Northern Territory Inclusion Advisor
- Riley Buchanan – Policy Officer
- Sloane Orger – Executive Assistant to the CEO
- Sue O’Riley – Operations Manager
- William Ward-Boas – Project Coordinator

We’d also like to thank Phuong Tran, Alana Doyle, Jackie Softly and El Gibbs for your invaluable contributions to our work this year across a range of projects.



# Inclusion Australia Board 2022-2023

Our Board of Directors is responsible for our governance and strategic direction.

Our Board members in 2022-23 were:

- Felicity Crowther – SACID
- Jenny Dixon – Speak Out and Treasurer
- Jodi Wolthers – Parent to Parent
- Justine O’Neill – CID
- Kalena Bos – Our Voice Chair
- Kevin Stone – Chair
- Mary Butterworth – DDWA and Deputy Chair (July to October)
- Stephanie Gunn – VALID and Deputy Chair (October to June)
- Tracy Wright – Independent Director



*The Inclusion Australia Board, Melbourne October 2022 with our CEO Catherine McAlpine (far left). Kalena Bos and Mary Butterworth are missing from the photo.*

**For more about our Board visit:**

<https://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/about-us/our-board/>

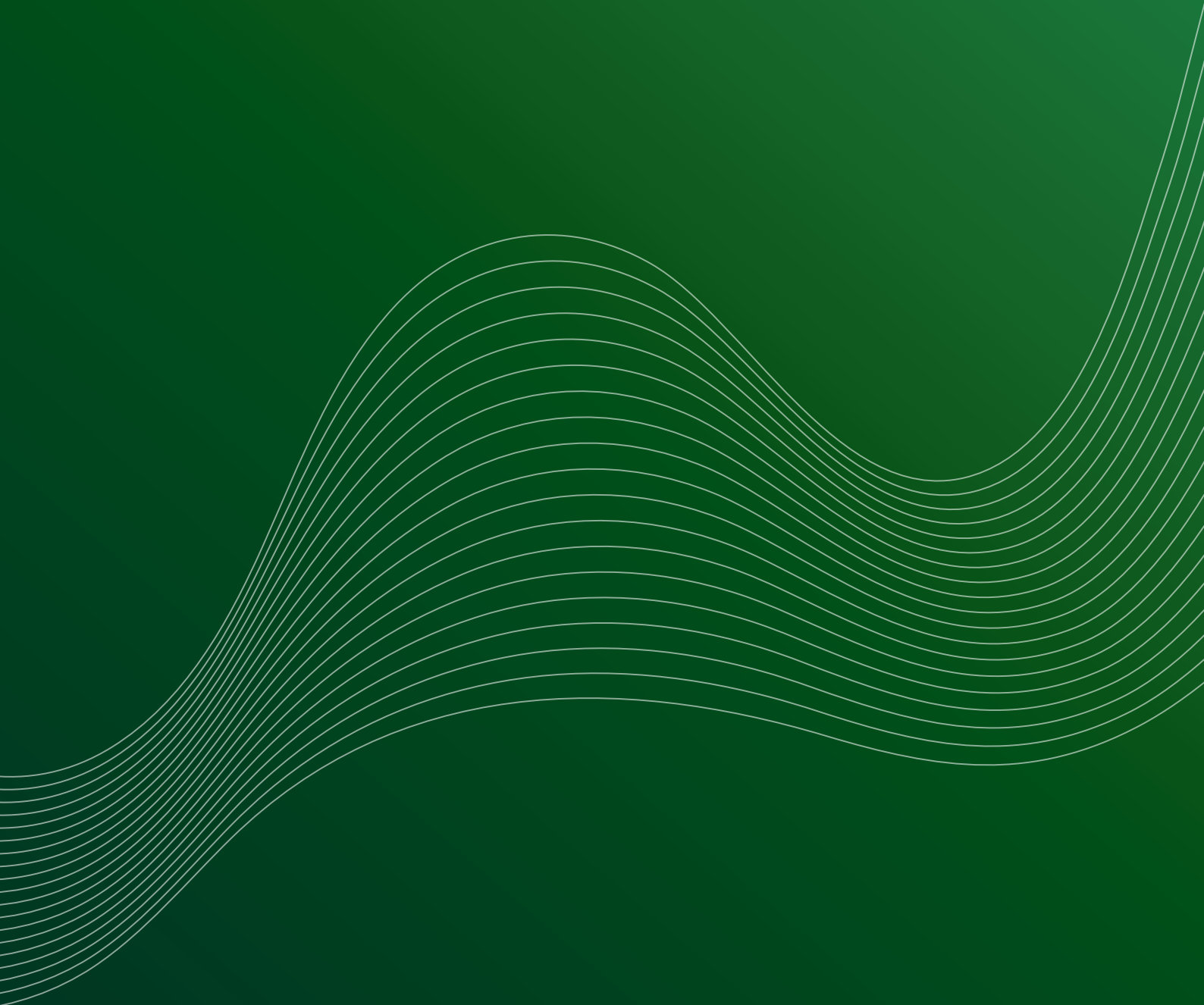
# Standing Committees and Groups

As a systemic advocacy organisation another way we make our voice heard is by being part of different national groups and committees.

Throughout 2022-23 Inclusion Australia played an active role in the following government groups and committees.

LEAD AGENCY	GROUP NAME	STARTED	ENDS
AHRC	Disability Discrimination Commissioner DRO / DPO Forum	Jul 2020	Ongoing
DOH	COVID-19 Disability Advisory Committee	April 2020	Ongoing
DOH	Intellectual Disability Health Roadmap Implementation Working Group (RIGG)	Oct 2021	Ongoing
DOH	COVID-19 Disability Communication Working Group	Oct 2021	Ongoing
DOH / DSS	Disability and Health Sector Consultation Committee	Apr 2021	Ongoing
DPMC	NDIS Review Co-Group	Jun 2023	Oct 2023
DSS	Ministerial Roundtables	Dec 2019	Ongoing
DSS	DES Reform Working Group - People with autism, intellectual disability & psychosocial disability	Aug 2020	Sep 2022
DSS	DES Reform Working Group - Young people	Aug 2020	Sep 2022
DSS	DES Reform Working Group - Mature Age people	Aug 2020	Sep 2022
DRC	Royal Commission DPO / DRO Quarterly Forum	Aug 2020	Jun 2023
DSS	Disability Representative Organisations (DRO) Forum	Jan 2021	Ongoing
DSS	Australia's Disability Strategy DRO Working Group	Jun 2022	Ongoing
DSS	Supported Employment Services (SES) Award Transition Working Group	Aug 2022	Ongoing
DSS	DES Reference Group	2018	Sep 2022
DSS	NDS Vision Reference Group	July 2022	Ongoing
DSS / SA	Services Australia and DSS Peak Bodies Group	2018	Ongoing
DSS / SVA	ILC Performance Measurement Framework Sector Advisory Panel	Oct 2022	Apr 2023
NDIA	NDIS IAC Inclusion & Equity Reference Group	Feb 2021	June 2023
NDIA	Monthly Stakeholder Engagement Meetings	Mar 2021	Ongoing
NDIA	NDIS and Sector Codesign Group	Sep 2021	Ongoing
NDIA	Home & Living Codesign Steering Committee	Feb 2022	Dec 2022
NDIA	Supported Decision Making Codesign Steering Committee	Mar 2022	Feb 2023
NDIA	PACE Advisory Group	July 2022	Ongoing
NDIS Commission	NDIS Commission Disability Sector Consultative Committee	2020	April 2023





**Inclusion Australia**