



# Annual Report

# **2023-2024**

**The national voice of independent advocacy**



**DANA**

Disability Advocacy  
Network Australia

# Who we are

**Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA) is the national representative body for a network of independent disability advocacy organisations throughout Australia.**

## **Our vision**

DANA's vision is of a nation that includes and values people with disabilities and respects human rights for all.

## **Our purpose**

DANA's purpose is to strengthen, support and provide a collective voice for independent disability advocacy organisations across Australia that advocates for and with people with disability.

We achieve this through:

- promoting the role and value of independent disability advocacy
- providing a collective voice for our members
- providing communication and information sharing between disability advocacy organisations
- providing support and development for members, staff and volunteers of disability advocacy organisations
- building the evidence base to demonstrate the value of disability advocacy
- promoting the human rights, needs, value and diversity of people with disability

DANA is a company limited by guarantee and the liability of Members is limited as provided in our constitution.

# Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge all the Traditional Owners on the land in which we live and work. We recognise their enduring connection to the land, seas and waterways. We thank all First Nations people and organisations who have worked with us, and shared their expertise. We recognise that Sovereignty was never ceded, always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

DANA would also like to acknowledge the vital importance of fusing lived experience with advocacy. People with disability have long been experts in advocacy, and we are incredibly thankful to work with so many people with lived experience, including those with disabilities, chronic illnesses, and caring duties. Being an organisation largely made up of people with disability means we better understand the issues people with disability face—and we have more insight into creating positive change. Sharing lived experience can be challenging, but it can also be powerful, and we'd like to thank every single person with lived experience who has supported our work, or shared their experiences.



# Contents

- Who we are .....2
- Acknowledgements.....2
- A message from the Chair.....4
- A message from the CEO .....6
- Our submissions .....8
- Our members .....9
- Partnerships and engagement ..... 11
- Strategic focus areas ..... 13
  - Lead and strengthen..... 14
  - Communicate and connect.....20
  - Promote independent advocacy.....23
  - Sustainability .....27
- Statement of financial position.....30
- Independent auditors report .....31





# A message from the Chair

**It's been a momentous year of change and challenges in the disability advocacy space. Whilst there has been recognition for the important work of DANA and our member organisations, DANA continues to advocate for more funding and resources to support members and highlighting the systemic issues that members identify.**

We know the advocacy sector saves lives—and on behalf of the Board, I'd like to extend our gratitude to all our phenomenal members. Our member organisations play such a vital role in ensuring the rights (and voices) of people with disability are heard and upheld. As one organisation, DANA can only do so much. But together, with our members and advocates, we can create change. Our organisations are enriched with lived experience, joined together by the notion that there should be “nothing about us without us”. With DANA's appointment as Secretariat for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), we can coordinate efforts between our organisations, and ensure the voices of diverse people with disability are heard by decision-makers.

As DANA grows, so too do our members. Our growth means we can help our members with capacity building, advocacy, and we can identify the gaps where organisations need the most support. In a time where a lot of funding has been cut to the disabled community, we have fought to get it back—and we've even been able to give funding directly to our members to do their important work.

The disability community have always been innovators, and DANA is no different. We've been at the forefront of the NDIS Review, the Disability Royal Commission, and changes in legislation. We commissioned a report from world-renowned disability and human rights expert Dr Simon Duffy to look at the NDIS, and compare it to similar systems around the globe. It also looked at how the NDIS can be more sustainable, and improved.

Our Priorities Project was another monumental piece of work that looked at issues within the disability and advocacy community, with simple, ready-to-implement solutions that can have a big impact on people with disability and our community. We will always work to support and uplift the disability and advocacy community, and we look forward to continuing to do ground-breaking work.

I've been Chair of the Board for a little over a year now—and it's been truly incredible to work with people dedicated to creating change. It's such a privilege to be part of an organisation—and a sector—with so much lived experience. We are incredibly proud that much of our organisation consists of brilliant, passionate people with disability. I'd like to recognise all the staff at DANA, in particular our CEO Jeff Smith who has done an exemplary job of leading DANA through a significant time of growth. I would also like to thank the DANA Board who are dedicated to supporting the organisation and continue to show their passion for members. I'd also like to welcome our two new Board Directors David McGinlay and Jenny Karavolos, who have brought new ideas and energy to our organisation. I'd also like to thank retiring director Jenny Hughes, who has been a tireless steward for members over the last few years. While you may be leaving us, we will always be grateful for your work.

## A message from the Chair continued

To our members, I just want to say how privileged we are as an organisation to work with and alongside you. Thank you for your tireless dedication to advocacy, and supporting our communities.

I'd also like to thank our funders, including the Department of Social Services, the NDIA, foundations and philanthropists: you are the reason we are able to work together to make a difference: thank you.

Thank you again, to the wonderful DANA staff: without you, and without our members, none of this work would be possible. We are a powerful sector, especially when we come together: and it's truly an honour to be a part of it.

I am excited to see what the next 12 months brings, and how we can continue to make a difference for our members, and people with disability.

**Wendy Prowse**  
Chair







# A message from the CEO

**There have been huge changes over the last year for the disability advocacy sector and for people with disability. It's been a generational moment, with the landing of both the NDIS Review, and the final report of the Disability Royal Commission. While this generational moment has brought extraordinary challenges, it's also brought opportunities.**

As always, we are working hard to ensure people with disability are at the forefront of the changes being made—and that these changes address the needs of disability and advocacy organisations, individual advocates, and the wider community.

Our primary goal remains to work with our members and communities to recognise the importance of independent advocacy, and increase support for the sector. Disability advocates around the country have campaigned hard to have the funding to meet the needs of people with disability through our Speak Up! for Advocacy campaign. Advocacy organisations met with politicians, talked to media, rallied their communities and spread the word about the importance of independent advocacy. The lack of support for advocacy in the Federal Budget was profoundly upsetting for many of our organisations, along with the upheaval from the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building grants. Our staff have supported many member organisations as they've navigated these difficult waters.

One of our key pieces of work during this financial year focused on the value of advocacy. Through our pre-Budget submission and the Speak Up! for Advocacy campaign we highlighted why it's so vital our member organisations are properly funded so they can support the increasing numbers of people with disability knocking at their door. We asked the Federal Government for an additional \$93 million in funding over 18 months for our member organisations.

We've made sure to work closely with our members, and one of the best ways to do that is to check in. Together with Deputy CEO El Gibbs and National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA) Manager Martin Butcher, we've visited members all around the country—and it's been phenomenal to see the important work happening, and how we can collaborate.

Our members were key to the NDIS Review, and through our NDIS Engagement and Solutions project, we were able to grant \$60,000 in funding through six \$10,000 grants for organisations to hear from people with disability in closed settings, like group homes and prisons. The key discussion papers, consultation and final recommendations we made were picked up by the Review, including a strong recommendation for increasing advocacy funding.

As part of the NDIS Review, we commissioned a report from Dr Simon Duffy and Dr Mark Brown about the future of the NDIS, which was highly influential to the Review panel, and quoted by the Co-Chair, Bruce Bonyhady. Drs Duffy and Brown did several high-profile events, leading and changing the conversation about the NDIS.

Launched in May 2024 by NDIS Minister Bill Shorten, our Priorities Project was another successful and influential piece of work—one fuelled by lived experience. Coming out of the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS reform process, the Priorities Project looked at issues within the disability and advocacy community, and how we can improve them with practical, person-centred, and ready-to-implement solutions.

Our team worked tirelessly on this philanthropy-funded project, with more than 130 people and more than 260 hours of consultation within our community. It was a report written by and for the disabled community, and is truly a monumental piece of work that we hope will guide governments and policymakers on simple changes that can have an enormous impact.

Another exciting change was DANA being appointed as the Secretariat for the NDIA Disability and Carers Organisations Forum. This new role complements our work as the National Coordination Function for the Disability Representative Organisation Program, and allows us to support people with disability and their families to engage across government through their representative organisations.

This includes shaping agendas, collaborating on key projects and submissions, and working together to respond to the NDIS Review and the Disability Royal Commission. It also allows us to profoundly strengthen the voice of both advocacy organisations and the often marginalised people and communities who they work with and alongside.

We're also ramping up our efforts through the National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA). Now in its second year, the NCDA has led the way for important work in our community, including capacity building, identifying and elevating unmet demand and need, and identifying and alleviating systemic advocacy. Advocates have attended webinars and training, led by advocates using leading technology and research. The NCDA is also delivering ground breaking reports and data about advocacy, the impact that advocates have, and the profound exclusion far too many people with disability face.

Our members are at the heart of everything we do. We are—and will continue to—work tirelessly for them, and for the disability community.

Despite the challenges we face, we have always been known for our strength and dedication: and we will face the coming battles together. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for all our member organisations. Each of you do such important work for some of the most marginalised people in the country, and it's truly an honour to work together.

The Board has also played an influential role over the past year, stewarding us through an unprecedented period of growth and ensuring that we both stay true to our purpose and vision and do so to the highest standard.

I also want to acknowledge our funders, both government and philanthropic. This includes the Department of Social Services, the NDIA, and foundations who have provided the vital financial support we need to keep going.

Finally, I'd like to express my sincerest gratitude for the work of our team. Our persistence as a sector has been instrumental in advancing the rights of people with disability. I think we are creating something very special here at DANA: and we couldn't do that without the wonderful people we work with, many of whom are people with disability and people with caring responsibilities. It's an invaluable thing to be able to fuse lived experience with advocacy, and I think that is something our teams and members do exceptionally well. People with disability are often seen as "vulnerable" and problems to be solved, rather than problem-solvers—and we've shown that to not be true. We've shown that people with disability are innovators, and can lead the changes we need in our communities—and change is coming.

Thank you, and I look forward to working with our staff, Board, members, and community in the exciting year ahead.

**Jeff Smith**  
CEO

# Our submissions

**DANA has led the development of key submissions, including through the National Coordination Function.**

## **Key submissions included**

NDIS Provider and Worker Registration	May 2024
NDIS Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Bill 2024	May 2024
NDIS participant experience in rural, regional and remote Australia	Mar 2024
Inquiry into the Administrative Review Tribunal (supplementary submission)	Mar 2024
Inquiry into the Administrative Review Tribunal Bill	Feb 2024
Disability Royal Commission Response Consultation	Jan 2024
Priorities for the Australian Government response to the Disability Royal Commission	Jan 2024
Developing a Not-for-Profit Sector Development Blueprint	Dec 2023
COVID-19 Response Inquiry	Dec 2023
Pre-Budget Submission from the Disability Advocacy Sector	Nov 2023
A stronger, more diverse and independent community sector	Nov 2023
Housing and Homelessness Plan	Oct 2023
Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Bill	Oct 2023
Consumer policy response to the NDIS Review, “What we have heard” report	Aug 2023
Advocacy funding submission, NDIS Review	Aug 2023
National Health and Climate Strategy Submission	Jul 2023

**Our enhanced capacity and profile have allowed us to work with our members to build disability advocacy perspectives into key aspects of our work.**

## **We also coordinated Disability Representative Organisations to release joint submissions, including**

NDIS Provider and Workforce Registration Taskforce	May 2024
Disability Royal Commission Response Consultation	Jan 2024
Disability Employment Centre of Excellence	Dec 2023
Disability Services and Inclusion Bill 2023 (for the Community Affairs Legislation Committee)	Sep 2023
Disability Services and Inclusion Bill 2023	Aug 2023



# Our members

**At DANA, we partner with many organisations to advocate for the disability community. People with disability deserve to be valued and included, with fundamental needs met, and their human rights respected.**

It's a privilege to work with and support so many member organisations fighting for better outcomes for some of the most marginalised members of society. We are committed to working with our members, and strengthening our sector through capacity building, information, training, and calls for increased funding. This has been a significant part of our Membership Engagement focus, which works to highlight the value of DANA membership, as well as understand the diversity of our members, their needs, identifying gaps, and strengthening capacity for both systemic and individual advocacy.

Our **members** work in areas like:

- Self-advocacy
- Family advocacy
- Citizen advocacy
- Individual advocacy
- Legal advocacy
- Systemic advocacy

## Our member organisations

### Australian Capital Territory

- ACT Disability Aged and Carer Advisory Service Inc.
- Advocacy for Inclusion
- Women with Disabilities ACT

### New South Wales

- Action for People with Disability
- Australian Centre for Disability Law
- Community Disability Alliance Hunter
- DAISI Services
- Disability Advocacy NSW
- Down Syndrome NSW
- Family Advocacy
- Illawarra Advocacy
- Intellectual Disability Rights Service
- Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW
- Newell Advocacy
- Self Advocacy Sydney
- Side By Side Advocacy
- Spinal Cord Injury Australia
- Synapse
- Physical Disability Council of NSW

### Northern Territory

- Darwin Community Legal Service
- Disability Advocacy Service
- Integrated disAbility Action
- Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council

### Queensland

- Aged & Disability Advocacy
- Amparo Advocacy
- Capricorn Citizen Advocacy
- Independent Advocacy NQ
- Mackay Advocacy
- Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion
- Queenslanders with Disability Network
- Rights in Action
- Speaking Up For You
- Sunshine Coast Citizen Advocacy
- TASC – QLD Social Justice Centre

### **South Australia**

- Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion
- Brain Injury SA
- Carers and Advocates Australia Pty Ltd
- Citizen Advocacy South Australia
- Disability Advocacy & Complaints Service of South Australia
- Disability Rights Advocacy Service
- Independent Advocacy SA

### **Tasmania**

- Advocacy Tasmania
- Association for Children with Disability
- Citizen Advocacy Launceston
- Speak Out Association of Tasmania

### **Victoria**

- Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation
- Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities
- Association for Children with a Disability
- Association of Employees with Disability
- Barwon Disability Resource Council
- Citizen Advocacy Sunbury and District
- Colac Otway Region Advocacy Service
- Disability Justice Australia
- Disability Resource Centre Melbourne
- Gippsland Disability Advocacy
- Grampians disAbility Advocacy
- Leadership Plus
- Melbourne East Disability Advocacy
- North-East Citizen Advocacy

- Inclusive Rainbow Voices
- Regional Disability Advocacy Service
- Rights Information and Advocacy Centre
- Southern Disability Advocacy
- STAR Victoria
- Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability
- Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council
- Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service
- Women with Disabilities Victoria
- Youth Disability Advocacy Service

### **Western Australia**

- Advocacy WA
- Citizen Advocacy Perth West
- Developmental Disability WA
- Explorability
- Kin-Disability Advocacy for Diverse Communities
- Midland Information Debt & Legal Advocacy Service
- People with Disabilities WA
- South West Autism Network
- Southwest Advocacy Association
- Sussex Street Community Law Services
- UnitingCare West

### **National**

- First Peoples Disability Network
- Rights & Inclusion Australia
- People With Disability Australia

# Partnerships and engagement

**At DANA, we know how important it is to work with others in the community—and that's why we often partner with other organisations and initiatives, particularly when it comes to providing a voice for people with disability.**

## **Everybody's Home campaign**

Housing is one of the top issues that people with disability and advocates are dealing with every day, and one of the 6 priorities identified in our Priorities Report. The significant lack of affordable, accessible and available housing is a crisis for the disabled community. An analysis from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare showed that housing is an issue for more than half of disabled people, with more than nine in ten being turned away from services because there simply isn't enough social housing—particularly accessible social housing. Only six percent of people with disability who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, are getting the long-term housing they need. The system is pushing more and more people with disability into homelessness, boarding houses, and even aged care, because they can't find suitable accommodation.

The Everybody's Home campaign is fighting for more affordable, accessible housing for people who need it. DANA, along with a number of our members, are great supporters of this campaign. We hope the government will listen, and prioritise accessibility.

## **Sweltering Cities**

Alongside many disability rights groups around the country, DANA joined with Sweltering Cities to urge the Federal Government to take action to protect people with disability from the increasing threat of summer heatwaves. People with disability and chronic illness are often more susceptible to temperature changes so, in a letter to NDIS Minister Bill Shorten, we highlighted the need for the government to take stronger action to prevent hundreds of people with disability dying in each city every year as heatwaves become hotter and longer.





### **Advocacy Standards**

DANA has been working together with the peak body for aged care advocacy, Older Persons Network Australia (OPAN), to create a new Australian Standard specific to advocacy for aged care and disability. The new standard can be used to strengthen and continuously improve advocacy, and enable agencies to demonstrate to government departments that they are achieving outcomes for the funding they receive.

After a significant period of consultations and co-design, the Standard for Advocacy in Ageing and Disability is now complete and in the process of being published. We are now beginning the process of developing a scheme. A scheme can be understood as being “made up of a set of requirement and procedures which direct how conformity assessment activities will be conducted”. For this project the scheme will be developed by JASANZ to enable Advocacy Services to be certified against the requirements of the Advocacy Standard.

### **NDIS Review events**

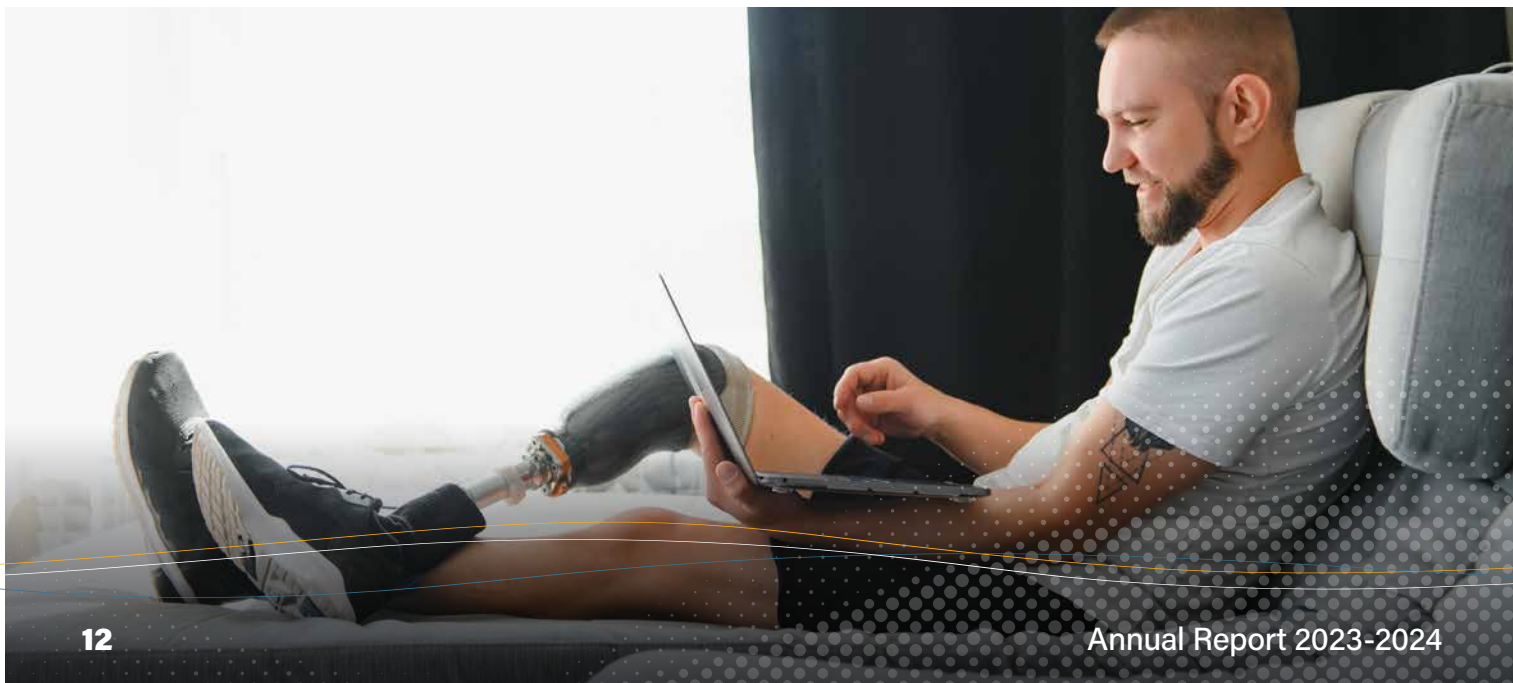
Over the summer of 2023/2024, DANA facilitated five events, online and in-person, for people with disability. These events, held in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra, and Perth, were part of the Department of Social Services ministerial roadshow, and allowed people with disability to voice their concerns, and learn about the NDIS Review, and what will happen next.

### **Ask Izzy**

DANA has been working hard on developing a new search engine that will be a significant asset to the community. Ask Izzy is a disability advocacy tool which will help our members find the information they need to develop their advocacy. You can search for case studies, funding streams, research, and linkages to other appropriate organisations and resources. While it’s still in testing phases, we look forward to releasing this tool with the sector.

### **Final ceremonial sitting of the Disability Royal Commission**

The Disability Royal Commission was an enormous event for the disability advocacy community. After decades of advocacy, and four-and-a-half years of often harrowing storytelling, the final ceremonial sitting was held on 15 September 2023, ahead of the release of the final report. CEO Jeff Smith and Deputy CEO El Gibbs attended the important event, marking the end of many years of hard work. People with disability have done so much to ensure no more people with disability have to experience abuse, neglect and exploitation. It’s clear there is a genuine need for co-design, to ensure better outcomes for everyone in the community.



# Strategic focus areas

As part of our Strategic Plan 2023-2025, DANA identified four key focus areas for our work:

Strategic focus area 1



## Lead and strengthen

- Provide a leadership role for the collective voice of independent disability advocacy organisations Australia-wide
- Support adequate and recurrent funding of the disability advocacy sector nationally
- Advocate for systemic changes to uphold the rights of people with disability

Strategic focus area 2



## Communicate and connect

- Provide expertise on the issues that affect the disability advocacy sector
- Develop and strengthen partnerships to enhance our work
- Undertake and uphold co-design and collaboration in our work

Strategic focus area 3



## Promote independent advocacy

- Promote the benefits of independent disability advocacy
- Support building the capacity and resilience of the disability advocacy sector

Strategic focus area 4



## Sustainability

- Build a sustainable professional organisation that supports its purpose and values
- Demonstrate and promote an outcomes approach in all that we do



Strategic focus area 1

## Lead and strengthen

**DANA has an important role to play in strengthening the disability advocacy sector in Australia. As leaders in the advocacy space, we provide a collective voice for our members, ensuring adequate funding for the sector, as well as fighting for systemic change to uphold the rights of people with disability.**

### Understanding the sector's needs

As part of being a leader in the sector, it's important for us to understand the biggest issues facing our communities, so we can identify solutions and bring much-needed change. According to our NCDA Systemic Advocacy Insight Report, the top issues highlighted by those in our sector include:

- NDIS (40%)
- Housing (12%)
- Education (10%)
- Service provision (8%)
- Child safety (8%)
- Transport (8%)
- Funding (5%)
- Supported decision making (5%)
- Government payments (4%)

Our members and their needs guide the work we do—and because the NDIS is such a huge issue for our members, it's been a huge focus for us. Advocates are the backbone of the sector, and we've heard from a lot of our members that there have been significant challenges in helping people with disability to navigate the NDIS, particularly when there have been so many changes, and a lot of fear and uncertainty.

Advocates have stepped up to reassure people and translate the changes—even though that's something they're not funded for. Highlighting the importance of advocacy—and ensuring its funding—has therefore been a focus for DANA over the past financial year, as well as many other projects and partnerships looking at other key focus areas for our members and sector.



We're working on uniting the advocacy sector, so we can increase our capacity for change, including collaborating with like-minded organisations and advocates. We've had a high level of member engagement, increased member input in our submissions, and increased uptake on our recommendations. We've also been able to support our members in many ways, including capacity building, resources, and funding, with the goal of strengthening our communities, so we can better advocate for the rights of people with disability.

### **The Federal Budget**

After the Federal Budget was handed down in May 2024, we were incredibly disappointed to see the government ignored our urgent calls for advocacy support, despite our ongoing campaigning for an additional much-needed \$91 million in advocacy funding (see our full campaign review on page 23).

We know funding and budgets for many of our members is dire. One in two people will be turned away from advocacy support organisations, with many at risk of closure, or cutting staff. So it's a tremendous disappointment for many in our community, particularly with funding being cut for a lot of those in the community.

After consultations with our member organisations around Australia, we found:

- 85% will have less capacity to support people with disability over the next 12 months
- the vast majority have long wait lists, with many closing their books
- 93% are considering staff cuts or have already reduced hours or made staff redundant ahead of this new financial year
- small organisations, rural and remote organisations and organisations who only receive funding from their state or territory government are particularly under threat.

We released a joint statement about this crisis and urgent need for an urgent funding lifeline of \$64.225 million, to ensure people with disability can continue to access the advocacy they need during this time of reform. Including funding for:

- the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) to meet existing advocacy demand until mid-2025
- a dedicated funding boost for advocacy providers operating in rural, remote and very remote areas to meet the immediate need
- training for disaster management, First Nations cultural safety training, resources and pilots, and supported decision-making awareness
- state and territory disability advocacy programs to sustain organisations currently outside of the federally-funded NDAP.

The statement was endorsed by 58 independent advocacy organisations.

We also worked hard to support our members. For example, we were able to give support to Victorian Disability Advocacy Program (VDAP) organisations in their campaign for more funding, as well as support to our South Australian members for state funding. The disappointing outcomes of Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) funding were something we raised with the Department of Social Services and Ministers' to ensure the impact on our members was well understood and remedied.

More than 1,200 emails were sent by our members and supporters to the Minister's Office, expressing concern over the absence of advocacy funding in the Federal Budget.

## NDIS

There has been significant change across the NDIS, including the new NDIS Amendment Bill 2024, with more to come. While we've done a lot of work with the NDIS to ensure co-design, collaboration and consultation between the government and our community, particularly through the NDIS Review, the response has certainly been disappointing in key ways. Both the NDIS Review and the Disability Royal Commission highlighted the need to place people with disability at the centre of the reforms, and this change has been uneven at best, and largely absent in other respects.

We worked tirelessly to try to improve the Bill, and to get the best possible outcomes for people with disability and the advocacy sector. We released a joint statement with other peak organisations in June 2024 where we urged the government to amend the bill to ensure people with disability don't lose life-saving support, appeared several times before the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, did significant submission and media work, organised legal advice and information sessions, and tried to both oppose certain amendments to the Bill and improve others. We will always push for an NDIS that puts people with disability at the centre, and one that is both fair and equitable; and resilient and sustainable for future generations.

Advocates have told us how much of a challenging time it's been with all the upheaval and changes—and we are dedicated to ensuring these advocates are able to do their jobs, and support people with disability.

We will continue to work with governments and organisations to ensure the changes will be in the community's best interests.

## NDIS Review and Engagement Solutions Project

Our NDIS Review and Engagement Solutions Project identified the following focus areas for advocates and people with disability, including:

- Fires, floods and COVID-19
- Quality and safety
- Mainstream and Tier 2
- Supported decision-making for advocates

As part of this project, we offered six grants of \$10,000 to our members to engage with people with disability in various closed settings, like group homes, prisons, and classrooms—perspectives that may often be missed when discussing advocacy and rights.

The Project delivered:

- discussion papers by experts in each of the 4 focus areas
- online forums with 74 attendances including 58 advocates from 38 organisations
- short surveys to advocates and people with disability with 175 responses
- Small grants for 6 member organisations to engage in closed settings
- summary reports with key themes and headline solutions on each focus area

Policy Officers Liam Thatcher, Siobhan Clair and Project Officer Caitlin Clair, at the Annual NDIS Conference

Director of Policy and Advocacy, El Gibbs, joins a panel at DSC's Annual NDIS Conference in March, 2024.





**Dr Simon Duffy and Dr Mark Brown meet with Natalie Wade to discuss their report.**



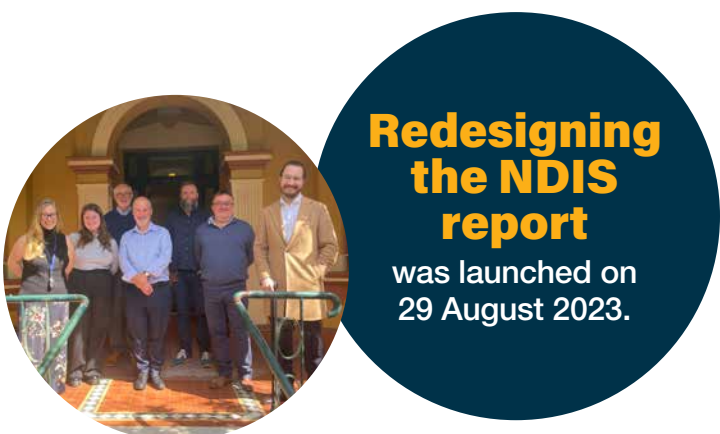
**Strategic focus area 1 Lead and strengthen** continued

**Redesigning the NDIS report**

Last year, DANA commissioned world-renowned disability and human rights expert Dr Simon Duffy and Summer Foundation Research Fellow Dr Mark Brown to look at the NDIS system, as well as speak to several advocacy organisations and people with disability across Australia. Doctors Duffy and Brown were together able to provide both an international and domestic perspective on the NDIS. The report explores why the NDIS is unsustainable in its current form,

and offers a regenerative vision for its reform where people with disability are at the centre.

The report also allows us to compare Australia's support systems to others emerging around the globe. It includes suggestions for improvement in development and design, provides useful tools and wider evidence from the disability movement to strengthen their ability to engage in discussions, and calls for further consultation and co-design with the disability and advocacy community.



**Attending an event for the Report: Staff from the Physical Disability Council of NSW, Annabel Smith, Alice Batchelor, Edward Morris and Adrian O'Malley, with Dr Simon Duffy, DANA CEO Jeff Smith, and Jim Simpson (far right) from Council for Intellectual Disability.**



**Dr Mark Brown and Dr Simon Duffy are featured in The Age following the launch of their report**



### **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability**

The Royal Commission’s long-awaited Final Report was released on 29 September 2023. After nearly two decades of relentless advocacy and four-and-a-half years of consulting with the disabled community about their often-harrowing stories of violence and harm, the Commission released their Final Report, with 222 recommendations for much-needed change to protect and empower the disabled community.

During this time, DANA has been working hard on engaging with members and the general public about the Royal Commission, and what we can do. Our teams conducted an in-depth analysis about the Royal Commission, its recommendations, and what it means for our members. We also met with Minister Bill Shorten and Minister Amanda Rishworth, as well as shadow minister Michael Sukkar and participated in a two-day forum for CEOs of disability organisations on how to respond to the commission, and the NDIS Review, back in December 2023.

It was disappointing and quite demoralising to see that only 13 of the 222 recommendations were accepted in full by the government (although this occurred outside of our reporting period for this annual report, we couldn’t not include it).

### **DANA’s Secretariat role**

DANA plays a leading role in the disability advocacy sector through our role as the Secretariat of the National Coordination Function (NCF) of the Disability Representative Organisations (DRO) program for national systemic advocacy and the Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) forum for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

The National Coordination Function is an important role that coordinates joint submissions between disability organisations, and liaison between Federal Government agencies and departments, and responses to announcements, like the Disability Royal Commission. It also coordinates policy and CEO meetings for disability organisations, and has also facilitated consultation and engagement for the National Disability Research Partnership and the National Disability Data Asset.

The Secretariat role has now been extended to working in partnership with the NDIA to support the Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Forum, including setting up working groups with the agency to engage more closely about key aspects of the NDIS, including membership, accessible communications and employment. This is a new model of engagement, and moves the DRCOs closer to a shared decision-making approach, which DANA is excited to be involved in.



## First Nations advocacy

As an advocacy organisation, we know how important it is to make sure we focus on issues of importance for some of the most marginalised communities. It's important to ensure voices of the First Nations community are heard, which is why we worked with our member organisation First Peoples Disability Network to strongly advocate for a Voice to Parliament. The Disability

Day of Solidarity for the Voice to Parliament was a significant occasion to help share information about the referendum, including an easy read version of the Uluru Statement of the Heart. We helped compile resources, campaigns and events to support the Voice, but it sadly was not ratified. We will continue to work with First Nations people and organisations to fight for the rights of disabled First Nations people.

## Priorities Project

The Priorities Project was a key part of our work over the past 12 months.

- 260 hours of combined consultation
- More than 130 experts across our sector (including people with disability), six clear priority areas were identified, including:
  - access and eligibility for support
  - housing
  - safeguarding
  - establishing financial supports
  - representation and inclusion
  - advocacy.

As part of this process, the DANA team, including Policy Officer Alana Starr, made sure to capture intersectional experiences, including people whose voices aren't often heard. The team found that almost 88% of people with disability have almost no support, and it's even more challenging for people in rural and remote areas, as well as people with other intersectional identities. Housing is also a critical issue, with the disabled community being disproportionately impacted by the housing crisis, particularly due to a lack of accessible, affordable accommodation that don't meet the National Construction Code. It also recognised the fears about new support systems, like Foundational Supports, with potential layers of bureaucracy where more people can fall through the cracks. There was also a significant concern about a lack of clarity on upcoming changes to the NDIS.

As well as identifying issues, the project also included simple solutions that can make a huge difference for many people with disability and those in the disability and advocacy sector.

This includes:

- more investment in peer support, home modifications, disability aids and equipment outside of the NDIS
- setting up a Lived Experience Transition Taskforce
- specialist case management supports for people in need.

Many of these solutions are practical, community-based, and can be implemented now. It was produced by, and for, the disabled community—because no one knows disability better. The Priorities Project final report was launched in May by NDIS Minister Bill Shorter, as well as being briefed across government departments and agencies, and influencing the foundational supports work.



Strategic focus area 2

## Communicate and connect

When it comes to advocacy, communication and connection is key. DANA provides expert commentary on issues impacting disability advocates and the disability community, and we ensure our members are kept up-to-date with the latest information—and how we can work collaboratively to strengthen our communities.

**46 Member**

newsletters, bulletins and sector reports delivered

**5,939 Followers**

reached on social media channels

**\$60,000 Funding**

grants delivered to members

**2,870 Total subscribers**

to DANA mailing list



### Communication updates and improvements

One of our biggest aims was to continue to build and strengthen how we communicate with our members and communities this year. This included increased use of the DANA website, building a new website for the National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA), a new advocacy campaign website, as well as increasing our social media reach on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

The NCDA website underwent internal and external user testing, with positive feedback—particularly around having resources from advocacy organisations in one place. The NCDA team also worked hard behind the scenes to get the Disability Advocacy Portal ready for launch.

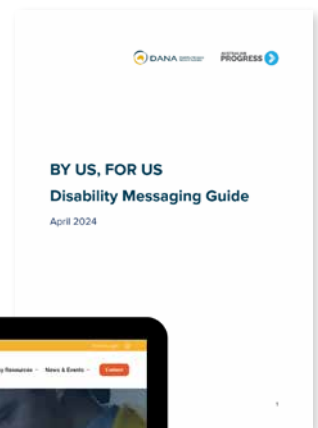
DANA’s pages on the Disability Royal Commission and Submissions were also improved, and we worked on strengthening our blogs to keep the community up-to-date about important changes in the sector, like the budget, the Disability Royal Commission and the NDIS. During the times important changes were announced for the community—like the NDIS Bill—there were significant spikes in DANA’s website traffic, with 15,380 users accessing the website between October 2023 and January 2024. This shows DANA’s work is important not only to our members, but to the wider disability and advocacy community.

DANA also continued our regular bulletins to members and the wider community to ensure better communication on the latest disability advocacy information, which has had exceptional feedback, and a high engagement rate.

### By Us, For Us: a disability messaging guide

After months of collaboration and engagement with advocates, organisations, and people with disability, we launched By Us, For Us, a disability messaging guide, developed in partnership with Australian Progress.

The guide is a critical step in re-shaping mainstream narratives about disability. Disability representation matters, so it’s important we shift the idea of disability from being deficit-based, in favour of diverse and realistic representation, and narratives that emphasise strength and value. We want to build widespread public support for change and policy change—and public opinion about disability will have a huge impact on our ability to do that.



**7,300 visits**  
– increase to website during week of Day of Action



## Advocacy in the media

Our team has been dedicated to connecting with the media in response to systemic advocacy issues facing people with disability. DANA is a regular contributor to national media outlets, including television, radio, print and podcasts, particularly during times of importance for our community like the Disability Royal Commission Final Report with our CEO Jeff Smith leading the sector press conference in Adelaide.

On regular occasions, DANA has been featured in ABC World Today, Nine News radio, ABC Podcasts, NewsRadio Breakfast, Insiders, and more.

### Report reveals ‘huge missing piece’ in NDIS – ABC

An interim report as part of a review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme has found the current payment and pricing methods are “discriminatory” and focus too heavily on competition, rather than quality.

As DANA Deputy CEO El Gibbs told ABC NewsRadio’s Thomas Oriti:

“There’s nowhere to get independent information about what’s a good service, what can you use with your package, how do you choose that, how do you negotiate a contract...” she said.

### Disability advocates warning of shortfall in funding - ABC World Today

Disability advocates are warning there’s a massive shortfall in funding required to ensure people with a disability are able to access the support they need. The National Disability Advocacy Network says the sector is now at breaking point. They say an additional 91 million dollars in funding is needed to ensure people with a disability can access vital services.

Featured:

- Cathy Milne, senior advocate, Side by Side Advocacy
- El Gibbs, director of policy and advocacy, Disability Advocacy Network Australia
- Margaret Smith, chairperson, NPY Women’s Council
- Rajni Chandran, carer

### NDIS treated as a ‘Magic Pudding’ by governments and disability service providers, review co-chair says – ABC

DANA Deputy CEO advocacy El Gibbs said cuts to disability support in state, territory and local governments amid the NDIS rollout saw “huge gaps” in services.

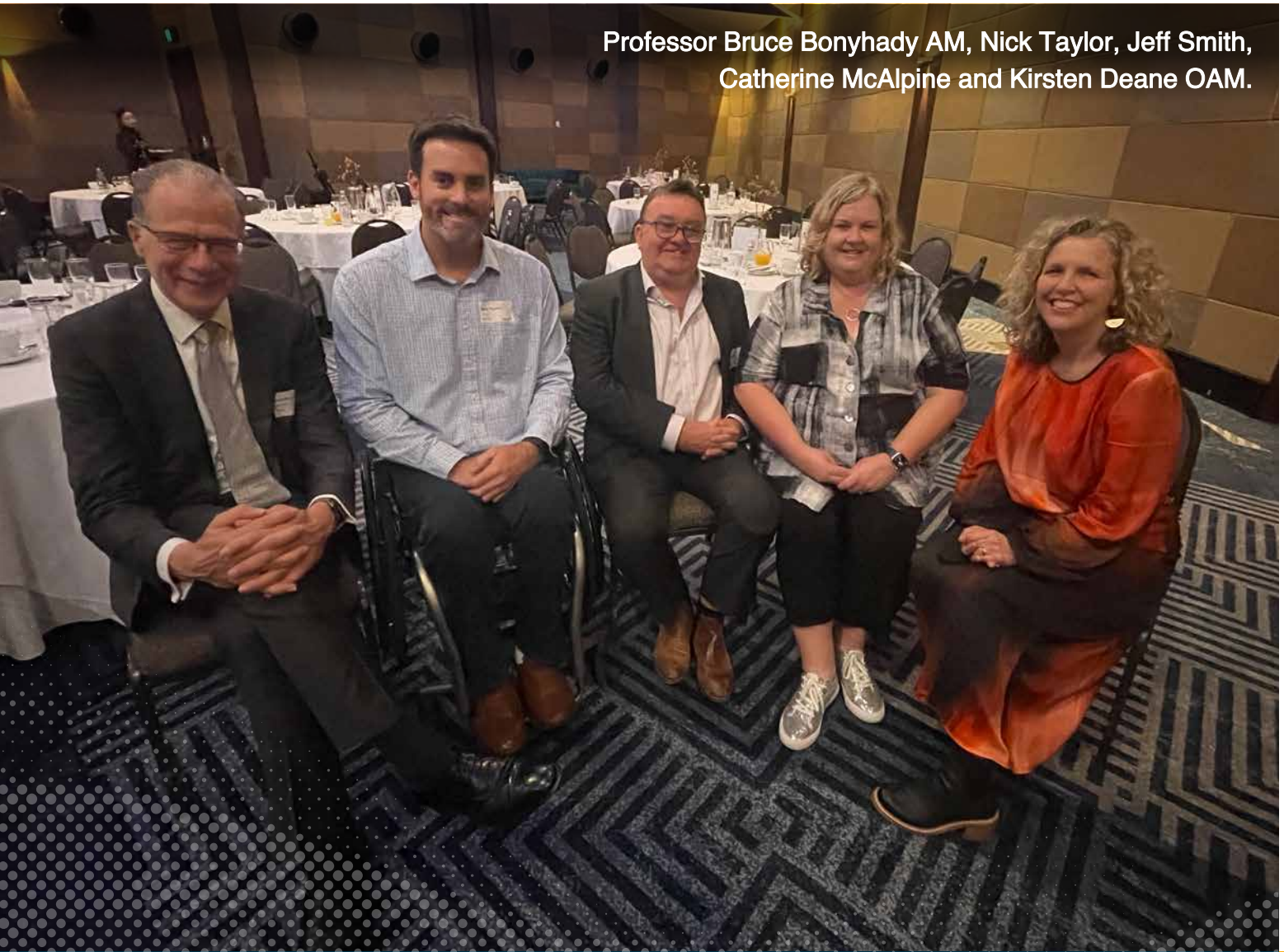
“All governments have also failed to make sure that public mainstream services are accessible and inclusive of people with disability – transport, health, housing, education and more,” she said.

### Members in the media

Local advocacy group say there is an urgent need for more funds to be committed by state and federal governments to help cover gaps in service provision.

CEO Dr Sandy Ross said that included an immediate injection of \$43 million for the National Disability Advocacy Program, as proposed by the Disability Advocacy Network Australia’s pre-budget submission and funding campaign launch.

Featured: Rights, Information and Advocacy Centre chief executive, Sandy Ross



### Strategic focus area 3

## Promote independent advocacy

**Advocacy changes—and saves—lives. DANA is committed to strengthening and promoting the value of the advocacy sector, and how we improve lives for those in the disability community. We champion our member organisations—because together, we can make a difference.**

### Training and education

Through DANA and the National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA), we've rolled out various training and education programs, including reports, resources, webinars and workshops.

We're working to increase capacity, capability, and resilience in the sector. The NCDA has continued meeting with member organisations one-on-one to provide support as needed.



# SPEAK UP!

## for Independent Advocacy

The event resulted in **688 actions** including **393 emails** to government, and **275 emails** to local MPs.

### Speak Up for Independent Advocacy – Funding Campaign for DANA Members

In late 2023, DANA launched the Speak Up for Advocacy campaign, a national effort aimed at raising awareness of the critical funding shortfalls facing disability advocacy organisations. The campaign equipped DANA members to take action by contacting their local Members of Parliament (MPs) to advocate for increased government funding and support for the advocacy sector. The response was incredible—over 2,000 individuals sent emails or made calls to their MPs, and more than 20 organisations held direct meetings with their MPs to highlight the urgent need for funding.

Media coverage and personal stories shared by our member organisations helped increase awareness of the funding issue and demonstrated the real impact advocacy has on the lives of people with disability.

The campaign was backed by DANA's Pre-budget submission to the Federal Government, urging it to triple funding for independent disability advocacy in Australia. Our submission, *A strong, sustainable future: addressing capacity shortfalls for a strengthened disability advocacy sector*, called for an immediate investment of at least \$91.225 million to ensure people with disability receive the support they need (see page 21).

NEWS

### Surge in demand leads disability group to stop taking new clients

By McPherson Media Group  
Dec 5, 2023

f | t | e



Unprecedented: Rights, Information and Advocacy Centre chief executive Sandy Ross says an urgent injection of funds into the sector is needed to meet demand.

A key disability advocacy and capacity-building organisation in regional Victoria has suspended taking new client registrations due to an "unprecedented" surge in demand.

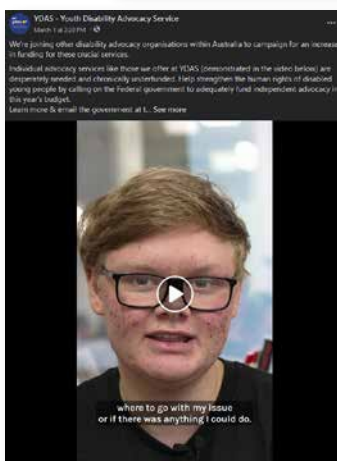
THE WORLD TODAY →

### Disability advocates warn 1 in 2 turned away

By Flint Duxfield  
Broadcast Thu 30 Nov 2023 at 11:30am



Disability advocates warn 1 in 2 turned away (Stock photo: cverve)



where to go with my issue or if there was anything I could do.





## National Day of Action – Speak Up! For Independent Advocacy campaign

On 21 March 2024, we held an online National Day of Action to promote our Speak Up! For Independent Advocacy funding campaign. The day encouraged people in the community to get in touch with ministers and senators to make sure they understand how critical a funding increase is for reform in the advocacy and disability sector.



We're also working to raise awareness about what advocacy is, and why it's important—especially for people with disability. We've done this through advocacy campaigns via email and social media, meeting with politicians, talking to TAFE students studying disability support, as well as our Day of Action campaign.

### **National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA)**

The NCDA has had a busy 12 months. Almost two years after our inception, we're working hard to be recognised as a leader in the disability advocacy sector, and provide opportunities to build the capacity of our members. This includes spearheading various projects and supports, facilitating networking, distributing important information, and providing peer support opportunities.

### **National Systemic Advocacy Forum**

The NCDA team hosted a national online systemic advocacy forum in March, 2024. It involved discussion about housing, child protection, guardianship (including safeguarding), and public transport, with breakout rooms to identify issues and solutions. Attended by 46 people, it was also an opportunity for organisations and advocates to build their networks and connections in the sector, and identify opportunities for joint action.

#### **Feedback about the NCDA**

**"I would like to continue in attending as many peer network groups as possible."**

**"It was my first time attending & I thought it was great. I have been an advocate for some time and have not had an opportunity to engage with a session like this! Thanks for organising this awesome event :)"**

**"We [an NDAP organisation] met with Courtney last week. She had an abundance of energy and having the experience in the sector really helped us to talk with her about the issues we're facing. We think it's so great that there is a priority being placed on all NDAP organisations, not just those in a metropolitan area. We often feel like we're out here in the regions all alone, fighting battles by ourselves, but to hear directly from the National Centre and the work they're doing, gives us a lot of hope and excitement to know that things are happening."**

– responses from an advocate peer network evaluation survey

**"Really great resources**

**that I will pass onto colleagues. Lots of new information and resources I haven't heard about before. Particularly interested in the short course."**

**"Really valuable having the peer network, thank you!"**



National Centre for Disability Advocacy



### Advocate networking and webinars

Advocates are a huge asset to the disability community—and that’s why the NCDA is committed to delivering monthly networking events and webinars, where experts in the disability and advocacy community present about particular topics, and its relevancy to their work. In this financial year, we held webinars including:



- **How to get heard**, which explored tips and tricks on how to be heard when it comes to systemic advocacy, including engaging with government, and running proactive campaigns
- **The power of case studies**, which explored the power of storytelling when it comes to advocacy and change, encouraging members to utilise case studies in their own work
- **Why data is important**, which explored the benefits of the sector taking control of its data, and where improvements can be made
- **Mental health issues and advocacy**, which explored strategies to resource advocates when working with clients who have lived experience of mental health
- **Supported decision-making for advocates**, which explored what supported decision-making is, why it matters, how it can be implemented, as well as tools for time-sensitive solutions
- **Disasters and advocacy**, which explored person-centred emergency preparedness for situations, and how advocates can help people with disability prepare for emergencies
- **Trauma-informed practice in advocacy**, focusing on a high number of advocacy clients who have a lived experience of trauma
- **Advocacy in the criminal justice system**, with a focus on people with disabilities in the justice system, human rights, and how advocates can be more effective.

“Thank you to the NCDA team for organising. This webinar exceeded anything I was thinking it would be . . . the longer I think about it, the more I realise I needed this refresher to remind me of the calm and control I need to bring as an advocate in stressful situations with clients. . . would love to do more with these people again, if possible.”

– April webinar feedback

“Excellent! The presenter was so knowledgeable, answered questions with ease, spoke very clearly, and at a perfect pace . . . making the whole thing flow seamlessly. Really enjoyed this and got a lot out of it.”

– May webinar feedback

“I thought the discussion was important, as it made me feel as though the struggles I’m facing, others are experiencing as well.”

– May peer network feedback

We are excited to continue to deliver webinars on **topics of importance** for our members into the future.

### NCDA's impact

At the NCDA, we strive for excellence—and our member feedback is important to us. This is why we recently conducted a workforce survey for our members to identify the impact the NCDA has had on their work. Here are some comments we received from members during this survey:

“The NCDA has raised the profile and status of advocacy and provided support and training opportunities to services that would otherwise miss out. The collective voice and experience that the NCDA brings together has helped to raise and have input into systemic issues. It also unites a sector that at times feels isolated, misunderstood and unappreciated by Government.”

“NCDA has fostered a sense of connection among advocacy organisations, including our own. This has been greatly appreciated, particularly among smaller organisations in rural and remote areas where we can often feel as though we are operating in silos. We welcome the sense of connectivity that NCDA has ushered in for our sector.”

“The trainings provide a **sense of community,** as well as new & reinvigorated knowledge that I can use in my practice sharing information and also creating a community of practice of a sort—it is helpful in this work to be able to speak with others doing the same work across the country to gain insight.”

### Advocacy Sector Portal

Testing has begun for the NCDA's new Advocacy Sector Portal. The Portal aims to be a great resource for DANA's members, with an invaluable resource library, case study library, as well as capacity trackers and systemic advocacy trackers. A small number of National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) organisations have been a part of an early access trial to work out the bugs and improve functioning. Our Project Implementation Plan is underway, with ten organisations gaining access per month. We hope this will be an important tool in supporting our members to strengthen their advocacy, and look forward to how we can make this tool even better.

### Insight Report

As people working in the advocacy sector, we know how important our work is—but the value of our work and its impact isn't always shared with those in power. Our first systemic advocacy Insight Report highlights the systemic advocacy underway by a sector with limited resources, demonstrating the abiding need for additional funding. Our first Insight report, published in May 2024, focuses on the range of advocacy being undertaken by disability advocacy organisations and their networks, elevating systemic advocacy issues to the government and wider society, while promoting the value of systemic advocacy.



Members of the DANA Board, clockwise from top-right: Stephen Ellis, Denise Boyd, Brendan Cullinan, Wendy Prowse, Geoff Southwell and David Petherick.



DANA Team attend a strategy planning meeting in Melbourne



Strategic focus area 4

# Sustainability

**To create lasting change, our organisation and members need to be sustainable—including sustainable funding. DANA is working hard to build our organisation, support our members, and ensure the advocacy sector can continue to fight for change.**

## Funding

We are pleased to note that DANA received Federal funding to play its role in representing people with disability who have engaged with individual advocacy supports and providing the National Coordination Function for the DRO program. However, we recognise there needs to be a significant increase in funding for many in the disability advocacy sector. We've met with a range of members to discuss funding issues, and plan funding campaigns, while identifying our member organisations most urgently in need of an increase in funding. Every organisation is different, so we conducted one-on-one consultations to understand our member's unique difficulties and needs.

We've secured funding for the National Centre for Disability Advocacy, with a clear pathway for its continuation over the next ten years. We're looking into ways to diversify our funding across various government departments, agencies, and philanthropists. Philanthropy has funded some DANA projects in the past year, including the Priorities Project and the report and engagement from Dr Simon Duffy and Dr Mark Brown.

As a result of securing funding for DANA, we've been able to help many of our members with support and resources, as well as funding for six \$10,000 grants for member organisations to engage with people with disability in closed settings.



### **Staff training and professional development**

A sustainable organisation is an organisation that values its staff. That's why we work hard to provide training opportunities and funding for professional development. In the 2023/2024 period, we:

- ran sessions on DANA's purpose, values, and how it feeds into our everyday work with Social Impact Hub
- enrolled staff in the Australian Writers Centre's Plain English in Business Writing Course
- trained staff with Connecting Up Cyber Security Essentials
- trained staff in Creating Accessible Documents through Vision Australia
- invited staff to complete a digital health check tool to assess their perceptions of how inclusive and accessible DANA's systems, processes and programs are to improve accessibility
- trained managers and staff on new cloud-based HR system
- trained Accessibility Working Group Members with Intopia's Accessibility Fundamental eLearning

DANA is also using HR Assured (Citation Group) for expert human resources advice to ensure our organisation is compliant with employer obligations. We undertook a comprehensive compliance audit on 3 November 2023 to identify operation concerns, with phased implementation for solutions.

### **Operational audit and strategic planning**

Operations has been a focus internally for the DANA team. We conducted an operational audit internally from October to December 2023, which resulted in a report with recommendations to enhance DANA's operations. The recommendations included improving financial management systems and processes, creating a consistent onboarding and induction process, and updating (and creating) organisational policies.

In March 2024, we held our Strategic Planning Days, with sessions for the board, and our staff. The days led to valuable discussions, evaluating the outcome and impact of DANA's work, and our next steps. The operational audit report was also delivered to the Board during this time, and recommendations are now being actioned.

### **Welcome to our new staff and Board members!**

It's an exciting time of growth for DANA, with the addition of Cherry Baylois, Elicia Ford, Kerry Golding, Jodi Lamanna, James O'Brien, Alana Starr and Liam Thatcher to the team.

We also welcomed two new Board members David McGinlay and Jenny Karavolos at our December 2023 Annual General Meeting. We'd also like to thank retiring Board director Jenny Hughes for her tireless work during her time at DANA.

### **Collaborating with experts in their professions**

DANA's commitment to sustainability extended beyond our internal efforts to include strong partnerships with an exceptional group of consultants. We gratefully acknowledge the following professionals for their invaluable contributions: Talia Avrahamzon, Tori Haar, Debbie Hindle, Carol Lewis, Eleisha Mullane, Ruth Richter, Marg Scott, Ellen Skladzien, Julia Smithson, Phuong Tran

### **Accessibility Working Group**

In December 2023, the Accessibility Working Group was established by staff to work out priority areas for accessibility improvement. After internal consultation with staff, the group developed an Accessibility Action Plan, with seven key targets across the next year. Work has commenced on this plan, including establishing an internal access and inclusion resource library, identifying training and development opportunities, like Easy Read training, accessibility when delivering hybrid content, web accessibility, and accessibility with Microsoft 365.

# Our people

## 2023-2024 Board

<b>Wendy Prowse</b>	Chairperson (CEO, ADACAS, ACT)
<b>David Petherick</b>	Deputy Chair (EO, Barwin Disability Resource Council VIC)
<b>Geoff Southwell</b>	Treasurer (CEO, Leadership Plus VIC)
<b>Denise Boyd</b>	Secretary (EO, STAR Victoria)
<b>Brendan Cullinan</b>	Member (CEO, People with Disabilities WA)
<b>Jenny Hughes</b>	Member (CEO, Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion SA)
<b>Kim Roots</b>	Member (EO, Side By Side Advocacy)
<b>Jenny Karavolos</b>	Member (CEO, Disability Advocacy & Complaints Service of South Australia Inc (DACSSA))
<b>David McGinlay</b>	Member (CEO, Disability Rights Advocacy Service)

## Co-opted Members

<b>Christopher Ouizeman</b>	Member, (EO, ADHD Foundation)
<b>Stephen Ellis</b>	Member (General Manager, Clue)

## 2023-2024 Staff

<b>Jeff Smith</b>	CEO
<b>EI Gibbs</b>	Director, Policy and Advocacy
<b>Martin Butcher</b>	Manager NCDA
<b>Cherry Baylois</b>	Policy Coordination Manager <i>(from April 2024)</i>
<b>Elicia Ford</b>	Operations Manager <i>(from October 2023)</i>
<b>Liz Cunneen</b>	Executive Assistant
<b>Siobhan Clair</b>	Policy Officer
<b>Alana Starr</b>	Policy Officer <i>(from March 2024)</i>
<b>Jessica Schulz</b>	Communications Officer
<b>Liam Thatcher</b>	Advocacy and Policy Officer <i>(from October 2023)</i>
<b>Caitlin Clair</b>	Project Officer <i>(until November 2023)</i> , Policy Officer <i>(from November 2023)</i>
<b>Jodi Lamanna</b>	Policy Officer <i>(from April 2024)</i>
<b>Kim Tyson</b>	Education and Engagement Officer
<b>Courtney Wolf</b>	Education and Engagement Officer
<b>James O'Brien</b>	E-Learning Officer <i>(from April 2024)</i>
<b>Lesley Porroj</b>	Finance Officer
<b>Anna Lienhop</b>	Project Coordinator <i>(until November 2023)</i>
<b>Kerry Golding</b>	Education and Engagement Officer <i>(from September until December 2023)</i>

# Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,104,948	1,382,020
Trade and other receivables	18,232	17,846
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>2,123,180</b>	<b>1,399,866</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	15,353	11,590
Total non-current assets	15,353	11,590
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>2,138,533</b>	<b>1,411,456</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	146,015	92,357
Other current liabilities	917,154	690,052
Employee provisions	108,650	36,958
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1,171,819</b>	<b>819,367</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>1,171,819</b>	<b>819,367</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>966,714</b>	<b>592,089</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Retained earnings	966,714	592,089
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>966,714</b>	<b>592,089</b>



# Independent auditor's report

## Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

### Opinion

I have audited the financial report of Disability Advocacy Network Australia Limited (the "Company"), which comprises the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In my opinion, the financial report of the company is in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- i. Giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

### Basis for Opinion

I have conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the *Financial Report* section of our report. I am independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001*, the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional

and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Corporations Act 2001*, the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* which has been given to the directors of the company, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

I believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Director's report for the year ended 30 June 2024 but does not include the financial report and my auditor's report thereon.

My opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report, or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Responsibilities of Directors for the Financial Report**

The responsible entities of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

## **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.

Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure, and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with responsible entities regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during my audit.



David Perceval,  
Fellow Chartered Accountant  
Institute of Chartered Accountants  
Australia #45109

27th July 2024  
Canberra ACT





**DANA**

Disability Advocacy  
Network Australia



**[www.dana.org.au](http://www.dana.org.au)**



**3 Moncur St, Marrickville NSW 2204**



**[office@dana.org.au](mailto:office@dana.org.au)**