

Participate
Australia
Empowered living



Annual Report
2016/2017



Contents

Vision	1	Board of Directors' Report	20
How you can help	1	Treasurer's Report	21
A Message from our Chair	2	Balance Sheet	22
A Message from our CEO	3	Income Statement	23
Year at a Glance	4	Statement by the Board Of Directors	24
Support	10	Auditor's Report	25
RASAIID	12	Donations and Memberships	28
Strategy and Communications	14	Our Funders	29
Finance and Corporate Services	17		



Vision

Participate Australia makes a difference in the lives of people with disabilities by respecting their dignity, autonomy, freedom of choice and independence, and by supporting the achievement of their goals.

Purpose

Participate Australia is a high-quality provider of person-centred advice and support for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

Core Values

Participate Australia strives for a community that

- respects human dignity and freedom, and the personal identities of children, women and men;
- is non-discriminatory and affirms equality while valuing difference, and
- sustains full and effective participation and inclusion by ensuring equal opportunity and accessibility.

As a business we

- focus on the people who receive our support — people with disabilities, their families and carers;
- maintain high ethical standards;
- listen with respect, learn continually and innovate with purpose, and
- engage the community.

Supporting People with Disabilities

Participate Australia exists to support people with disabilities to live active independent lives in the community. For over thirty-four years we have been supporting people with disabilities to do the things they want and lead fulfilling lives.

In working with our participants, we focus on

- inclusion, choice, control
- individualised, person-centred support
- life-skills, daily living, relationships
- community participation
- home care, health and wellbeing
- lifelong learning and work
- coordination of NDIS plans

How you can help

With the transition to the NDIS, funding for anything not directly related to the support of participants, is even more difficult to come by. This impacts things like program development and evaluation, teaching resources or expenses associated with researching and responding to the needs of participants and their families.

Contrary to what is often said, the NDIS is not creating an open market. It affords participants freedom of choice and as a result creates a competitive environment for providers, but it has also introduced a highly regulated, prescribed fee structure that is generally seen as insufficient across the industry.

The billable fee for a particular support item is sufficient to cover support workers' entitlements (wages and on-costs) and it contains a marginal component to help us run the business and pay for things like rent, utilities, vehicles, maintenance and renovations of our facilities, as well as salaries of non-support staff.

But it is scarcely enough and puts enormous pressure on our operations. We will therefore continue to make a significant effort to fundraise for a wide range of things. Last financial year, we spent significantly on the development and enhancement of meaningful and well-resourced activities, evaluating outcomes and making enhancements where necessary. We undertook extensive renovations to the roof of our main building to stop the leaks that sprung up every time it rained; we replaced ageing computers used in our IT classes; installed air conditioning in our activities centre in Belmore and build a wheelchair ramp to give access to the terrace and garden at the back, and we fitted out an open-plan office to accommodate more staff to meet the growth of our organisation.

Make a Donation

There are many ways you can help us achieve an even better result this financial year.

The easiest and most effective way is to set up a regular donation. It only takes two minutes! Just visit participateaustralia.com.au/donate.

If you are running in City to Surf or if you have a great idea for a fundraising activity to help us continue to achieve great things, give us a call. We can setup a fundraising page for you or help you in creating one yourself. It's very easy and takes just a few moments.

If you are celebrating a significant birthday or anniversary and wish to ask for donations in lieu of gifts, or even instead of flowers to honour the passing of a loved one, please speak with us about how we can facilitate this on your behalf. You can also make a lasting bequest in your will to support a program with a particular importance to you or to ensure access to activities regardless of a participant's financial circumstances.

Whatever your idea of support may be, we would be delighted to discuss as to how we can best support you in achieving it.



A Message from our Chair

The 2016–2017 financial year was one of strong growth through a period of substantial change.

We supported 368 participants (up 3.6% from last year), providing a record 220,342 hours of support (up 69% from 130,305). This is largely owing to the provision of support to the fifteen residents of RASAIID on a 24/7 basis and to healthy growth in our core business. Early indications from the transition into the NDIS since July 2017 suggests that we will further experience growth through the current year as well.

The four committees of the Board have continued work on some important strategic objectives for this last phase of NDIS rollout. The Customer Engagement Committee has started to build representative consultation groups of carers and self-advocates, respectively, and is working with the Manager Community Engagement. Their objectives will be to inform Participate Australia on the strategic direction following the full rollout of the NDIS and to ensure our focus remains on meeting their needs and fulfilling their aspirations.

The Strategic Projects Committee reviews progress against the Strategic Plan on a regular basis to keep us on track and to make recommendations to the Board for amendments and additions resulting from the further development of the NDIS. It also commenced preparations for the accreditation of Participate Australia as a Child-Safe Organisation, a process that will strengthen our already robust safeguards for the protection of the children in our care, and which will be required by the National Quality and Safeguard Commission under the NDIS.

The unpredictable environment caused by the continuous evolution of the NDIS requires of the Finance and Audit Committee to monitor cash flows and the financial health of the organisation even more frequently. This is necessary to make changes in response to the seemingly unsystematic rollout of NDIS plans and the short-term funding gaps we experience as a result.

The Fundraising and Marketing Committee is implementing a plan that will further strengthen our new brand with existing and prospective stakeholders and it is focussing on the sustainability of our life-skills program and the funding necessary to develop contemporary and accessible resources to support better learning outcomes.

I thank my fellow Directors for sharing their expertise and for their investment of time and resources in achieving the outcomes of each committee. I also thank the Management team and employees at all levels who participate in committees and who give generously of their personal time to contribute to a concerted effort. We are fortunate to have a team with a strong, collaborative culture and an understanding of the importance of every single contribution to the greater good. This has never been more evident than through the last months where the transition to the NDIS and the implementation of a new enterprise resource planning system put additional pressure on all teams and added significantly to an already full workload.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I express our genuine appreciation to the team and applaud its resilience and good spirit.

Glenn Ball, Chair
September 2017



A Message from our CEO

The last financial year certainly brought about some of the most significant changes our organisation has seen in its 34-year history. We moved from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee, after members passed the necessary resolutions at the 2016 AGM, and we changed our brand and company name to Participate Australia.

We commenced transitioning to the NDIS, initially with the residents of RASAIID, the supported living program in Ryde, and with a number of participants who live in the SW Sydney region of the NDIS. The transition of RASAIID residents pushed the envelope with the NDIS, as the unique model is not one the scheme recognises and we faced considerable obstacles in securing above-benchmark funding to guarantee safe and dignified support for the fifteen residents. Thanks to an opportunity to trial the new Supported Individual Living tool we were able to demonstrate to the complete satisfaction of the NDIA the required support needs of all RASAIID residents and eventually obtain adequate funding for all.

Over the course of the year we held 40 workshops, attended by 520 individuals, to help prepare families for their NDIS planning meeting, and we started building important relationships with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), which administers the NDIS. All of this has placed us and our families in a strong starting position for the full transition to the NDIS in the months ahead.

To ensure we are able to work within the framework of the NDIS we commenced with the development and implementation of our new participant record and staff rostering system. The system employs a high level of automation and provides easy access to the data necessary for billing and mandatory reporting.

While the NDIS certainly brings greater benefits to almost all of our participants, it is also not without its shortcomings and flaws. I have no doubt that technical and procedural issues will eventually be resolved, as the scheme evolves. But the NDIS has also resulted in a further reduction of the funding that can be used for non-support costs of our organisation, including operational and program costs (rent, utilities, maintenance; program development, evaluation and resources), as well as wage costs of non-support staff.

We continue to rely heavily on income from fundraising to ensure the continuation and improvement of the highly sought-after life-skills programs and to cover costs of renovations and refurbishments.

During the 2016–2017 financial year, we solicited fundraising income of more than \$282,000 to achieve all of these things and more.

Participate Australia closed the financial year with an operating surplus of \$60,545, after increasing our working capital fund, and without making any concession on quality or reducing the hours of support. This has been made possible once again with an increase in brokerage activities. This is always also an expression of confidence from government agencies and other providers in the quality and efficacy of our work.

I would like to thank our participants and their families for continuing to support us through this turbulent year and for their trust in Participate Australia to provide support. I also wish to thank the Board of Directors collectively for their guidance and strong governance, and individually for the important role each Director plays in the success of our organisation.

And of course, I also thank the tremendous effort and commitment of our 160-strong workforce who have excelled again through a period of strong growth and tremendous change. It is the strength of this team that allows us to accommodate the significant changes in the sector.

Jerry McNamara, Chief Executive Officer
September 2017

Year at a Glance

Funding

With the transition to the NDIS, the funding mix has changed and will continue to do so until everybody is funded through the NDIS. NSW government sources still made up the bulk of our income, however with a reduction in block funding and a further increase of individual funding packages. This continues to put pressure on our ability to respond to unforeseen support needs in an emergency or to subsidise participants whose government funding is insufficient.

At the same time as the number of participants with NDIS plans grows, there is an equal reduction in the number of people with State government funding. This brings about a marked decrease in the component of the funding that is available to providers for costs other than direct support. The funding structure of the NDIS allows for about half of what that component is under State funding — while the costs to providers increase, owing to compliance, systems requirements, change management and the need to acquire and retain participants through marketing activities.

Funding from the NDIS appears in the mix for the first time in the 2016–2017 financial year, and already made up a significant part of income.

The commencement of the rollout of the NDIS in parts of Sydney from July 2016 has impacted on brokerage activity from Wesley Mission and Uniting — our two primary partners in this domain. While this resulted in 397 fewer hours of brokerage in the past financial year (10,548 hours) compared to the year before (10,945), income from this revenue stream increased by \$8,865 to \$693,275 (see page 10).

Brokerage is not only a significant source of revenue, but it contributes to our sustainability, as participants whose experience, while they were accessing supports and emergency accommodation with Participate Australia, was a rewarding and enriching one, are now able to exercise choice with their NDIS funding and are returning to us for more support.

Income from fundraising was down compared to last year (see below). In part we can attribute this to a general toughening of the fundraising environment during a period of sustained economic insecurity and financial pressures on household and company budgets. It is also true that there is a misperception in the community that the disability space is now adequately funded thanks to the NDIS. This is of course not borne out in reality.

Funding Sources

	2016	2017	% Change	% of overall funding
NSW Government	\$5,057,611	\$5,313,040	5	61.35
Commonwealth Government	\$207,007	\$219,389	6	2.53
NDIS	\$-	\$2,071,891	N/A	23.92
Local Government	\$11,350	\$719	-94	0.01
Brokerage	\$684,410	\$693,275	1	8.01
Donations	\$101,869	\$43,941	-57	0.51
Corporate Sponsorships	\$127,408	\$94,426	-26	1.09
Trusts and Foundations	\$31,915	\$33,550	5	0.39
Events	\$21,560	\$32,788	52	0.38
Other	\$174,513	\$156,975	-10	1.81
	\$6,417,643	\$8,659,994	35%	

Hours of Support

The number of hours of support that we provide have meaning only in the context of the achievements that the people we support make. This has gained considerably in importance under the NDIS, where funding is always tied to the achievement of goals. These may include seemingly small steps, like learning to tie shoe laces, but also more significant achievements, for example to know to expect \$5.70 in change for paying for a cappuccino with a \$10 note at the local café, or to know which bus to take and where to get off to get home from school safely.

We have made a renewed and successful effort this year to introduce the achievements of goals in all support activities, where this is reasonably possible.

In the 2016–2017 financial year Participate Australia provided 220,342 hours of support (up 69% from last year) to 368 participants. The marked increase in hours of support comes from the full transition of all fifteen residents to their new homes in the RASAIID supported living complex.



Strategic Plan 2014–2018

The Strategic Plan 2014–2017 was designed in anticipation that the NDIS would evolve for a few years and that strategic goals therefore needed to be adapted to the changing environment.

The Strategic Projects Committee monitors progress against the plan and undertook a thorough review of it late in 2016. The review resulted in a set of recommendations and a revised draft plan for the period to June 2018. This was adopted at the Board meeting of February 2017 and has guided our operational work since.

The revised strategic plan comprises five key strategies, namely:

- an undertaking to be NDIS-ready across the whole of organisation, including participants, their families, staff and Board;
- a commitment to person-centred support, especially through the unsettling transition to the NDIS;
- to continue the pursuit of considered growth opportunities;
- to be successful as a business by enabling our employees to be successful, and
- to continually measure and improve the quality of our supports.

We expect the NDIS will largely be settled by 2019 and we will undertake another review of the current strategic plan in light of the known environment early next year to determine whether to develop a completely new three-year plan or whether we are best advised to continue the flexible approach of the last two years.

Outlook

Many participants who have already obtained an NDIS plan are satisfied with the result. Some are finding that their NDIS funding is more generous than their past funding. Some uncertainties remain for others and in some instances participants have requested a review, as they did not think the funding would afford them adequate support. Where possible, we are providing additional information and evidence of past support to assist with the review. Regrettably, a plan review can take weeks, sometimes months. In the meantime however, we will provide continuity of support.

As a result of the transition to the NDIS, the State government has changed the way it funds providers for those participants who do not yet have an NDIS plan. Funding is now disbursed monthly and is reduced for participants with an approved plan. However, providers are advised of the details of affected participants with a delay, which can cause some temporary funding shortfalls. We are therefore no longer able to rely on a regular and steady income, making budgeting a greater challenge and potentially causing issues with cash-flow.

This is as a result of the choice now available to participants with an NDIS plan — some of whom have chosen to cover all their support needs with Participate Australia, others only in part. It will take some 12 months for trends to become clear and for sufficient data to be available for accurate financial modelling and operational planning.

Key in this period of uncertainty is our relationship with participants and their carers, who are often the decision-makers. With our new enterprise planning resource system we have a tool at our disposal which will make rostering easier and which will reduce administrative work, freeing up time for good, personalised customer service. We anticipate that we will make full use of this system by the end of the year.

We anticipate some growth in our core business in the Inner West, where we have already seen a number of new participants come on board, and we are continuing with the acquisition of new business outside of the Inner West and through the provision of new support options.

We have and will continue to minimise expenditure, without ever compromising on quality and safety. This is a significant challenge for all NDIS providers, with very little allowance for non-support costs, including wages of non-support staff.



2017–2018 Business Plan

The Business Plan for the current financial year introduces the new department of Community Liaison. This department covers the management and provision of accommodation, notably RASAIID; brokerage of accommodation and 1-on-1 support from third parties, including the NSW government; and NDIS support coordination, to provide assistance to participants and their families in coordinating and implementing the most suitable support options. Erika Aravena, who had been seconded to setup and manage the transition of RASAIID until June this year, will be heading this department as Executive Manager.

The 2017–2018 Business Plan focusses on outcomes associated with key objectives on which the CEO will report to the Board; objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable realistic and time-bound (SMART). In addition to operational activities necessary to achieve the strategies contained in the 2014–2018 Strategic Plan, we will pursue three objectives in collaboration between all departments and business areas, namely:

- the attraction and retention of participants, through demonstrated best practice disability support, the creation of opportunities and choice, personalised and achievable care plans, and innovative activities and programs with which to achieve aspirations and goals;
- the provision of efficient and effective administrative processes, through prompt and appropriate response to enquiries from a dedicated and committed team, and
- the secure management of data required for reporting and billing for NDIS funded supports.

The Board of Directors considered and approved the 2017–2018 Business Plan at its meeting of 21 June 2017.

In order of priority, the Support department will pursue these objectives in the 2017–2018 financial year:

- developing individual person-centred plans for all participants;
- ensuring participants and families are NDIS-ready;
- reviewing and enhancing all activities to suit needs of current and future participants;
- reshaping activities so that they better reflect NDIS support items;
- managing and minimising incidents and accidents;
- redefining the relationship with families to ensure costs of non-billable work is covered;
- supporting participants in achieving greater self-determination through self-advocacy or individual advocacy; and
- ensuring Support Workers and Coordinators are NDIS-ready;
- working with Finance to ensure budget targets are met to reflect the changed environment and the way we do business.

Community Liaison will focus on:

- continuing to manage RASAIID safely and sustainably, and
- maintaining relationships with the RASAIID executive and the NDIA;
- maintaining and strengthening brokerage income during the transition to the NDIS, and investigating where comparable funding may come from when the NDIS is rolled out in full, and develop acquisition plan;
- promoting transparent and impartial NDIS support coordination, acquiring new business and reviewing the long-term viability of support coordination;
- preparing Participate Australia for the accreditation as a Child Safe Organisation and training staff and participants in strategies that foster a child-safe environment (in collaboration with the Office of the Children's Guardian);
- convening an interagency restrictive practices panel and managing restrictive practices authorisations and reviews, and
- continuing improvement in service delivery and quality of support, through actively seeking feedback from participants and carers in collaboration with the self-advocacy group.

Key areas of focus for Corporate Services lie in:

- developing and strengthening the skills base of our people in the constricted financial environment of the NDIS;
- managing recruitment, induction and retention of staff;
- agreeing adequate staffing levels and resources with departments;
- investigating remote working options for a more mobile workforce;
- managing HR, IR, WHS and risk matters;
- maintaining administrative systems and services;
- monitoring the quality and compliance of all operations;
- managing facilities, contracts and vehicles;
- overseeing and managing Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting, and
- maintaining adequate ITC infrastructure.

In recognition of the significant risks arising from the uncertainty of the new funding environment of the NDIS, the Finance department will monitor the financial viability on a monthly basis, through:

- monitoring cash flow as participants transition to the NDIS;
- maintaining current systems under block funding until all participants have transitioned;
- establishing and firming up of new procedures to manage NDIS packages under various fund management models;
- working with all departments to support them in setting and reviewing income and expenditure targets;
- continuing to grow working capital fund;
- reviewing extension of NDIS Plan Management as a business offering;

Strategy and Communications will continue to support all other departments with activities and resources that fall broadly under the domain of marketing. It will also:

- support staff, participants and families in becoming NDIS ready;
- develop a plan to attract new participants;
- assist the Support team in retaining existing participants;
- devise and execute a marketing plan to achieve set goals;
- undertake a range of fundraising activities to meet targets;
- develop a communications plan to support the execution of the marketing and fundraising plan;
- develop a media plan around key events and nurture media relations to utilise where required;
- maintain quality control and continuous improvement arising from the third party verification audit;
- develop a brand reinforcement strategy around new name; and
- assist in the development of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021.



Support

In the 2016–2017 financial year, we increased the number of support hours from 130,305 to 220,342 (+69%). This gain was largely achieved with the support of RASID residents, where we delivered 109,335 (+86,755) hours of support alone. Excluding RASID, supports increased by 3,282 hours (+3%) from the previous year.

As the State government increased the number of individualised funding packages in the 2016–2017 financial year and in doing so provided participants with more choice, some opted to be supported individually (1-on-1) instead of participating in group activities. This individualised support is up to three times more expensive than support through group activities, where a ratio of 1 support worker for every 3 participants is the norm. This resulted in fewer hours of support than if these participants had continued to access group activities and resulted in slower growth of support overall.

As the NDIS will be rolling out over the next year, some of the programs shown in the table below will become redundant, as their funding from State government sources dries up and participants exercise choice.

Changes to Keep Pace

2016–2017 has been another busy year for the Support department, which made some significant changes to keep pace with the evolving world of the NDIS and the changing expectations of participants and carers.

Early in 2017, our highly valued Manager, Kelly Grasso (née Rodrigues), took extended leave to have a healthy baby boy. On her return to work, Kelly assumed different responsibilities in the newly created Community Liaison department under Erika Aravena, as described above. The establishment of this new department in the current financial year, created opportunities for members of the Support team to assume greater responsibilities and support the sustainability and viability of the department.

We appointed Thom Calma to the role of Executive Manager Support to lead the department from July 2017. Thom previously held a co-management position of the department. He consistently and over a number of years contributed very significantly to the development and strengthening of the Support team through leadership and cooperation.

Program/activity	Planned hours	Actual	%
NDIS	3,456	3,575	103%
Group Activities	8,896	8,931	100%
Individual Support	5,500	5,428	99%
After School Support	9,720	9,767	100%
Day Options	26,187	22,133	85%
Life Choices	14,882	10,267	69%
Self-Managed Packages	11,493	5,872	51%
Flexible Respite	5,666	5,630	99%
School Holiday Support	5,040	5,853	116%
Older Carers' Disability Assistance	8,694	8,511	98%
Life Skills and Self-Advocacy	5,231	6,163	118%
Supported Living Funding	2,638	2,728	103%
Individual Accommodation Support Package	1,000	947	95%
Brokerage	15,723	10,548	67%
RASID	100,000	109,335	109%
Miscellaneous (referrals, cancellation, etc.)	4,500	4,655	103%
Total	228,626	220,342	96%

The previous team structure remains with separate areas of responsibility to ensure (i) quality support for participant and families, and (ii) the development and management of activities, as well as that of front-line support staff respectively. This included an investment in two new positions to manage referrals and support intake and NDIS transition of our participants, as well as a dedicated role to manage our facilities. Both of these appointments were in response to the evolving nature of the disability space.

The gradual rollout of the NDIS in the Sydney region resulted in an increase in the number of people who access supports through Participate Australia, as they exercise choice afforded to them in their plans. We are able to provide to these people, as well as to those already accessing our programs and transitioning to the NDIS, valuable information and support them in changing over into the new and largely unknown environment.

With the increase in participant numbers, we consolidated office space in our main building and moved all support activities into the newly created space, from where the majority of group activities are run.

New Opportunities

Over the last 12 months, Participate Australia has had the opportunity to work in partnership with a number of great organisations and community groups.

We worked on a project with Tecuris, a company that strives to improve the quality of life of people living with disabilities, their carers, families and support workers. It does so by providing a holistic set of services that empower people to engage in the community, improve their health and wellbeing and obtain essential information, goods and services by utilising accessible digital innovation.

Tecuris worked with Participate Australia on a trial program with 20 families to improve and make more accessible communication between participants, their families and support workers. The tool was originally developed to assist elderly people living independently who are at risk of social isolation to connect with loved ones and essential services through an easy to use app on a tablet computer. The app recognises the different skills and trepidations some people have with technology and it provides easy access to a number of clever tools.

In the context of the trial with the Tecuris app, we enabled more and more frequent communications with family members of participants who live far away. The app also supported them in better engaging in activities, research things that they are interested in and share learnings with peers.

The pilot was very successful and we are currently discussing with Tecuris how to make this tool accessible to more people with disability.

Along with Tecuris, Participate Australia also partnered with the Office of the Public Guardian on another project to undertake a proof of concept to enhance our financial literacy program by creating an electronic learning tool of the existing resources. This is an exciting opportunity, as it will allow students to engage with a learning material in a more interactive and innovative way. Moreover, it allows the resources to have a far broader reach, as they will be accessible online to anyone in Australia. This has been an extremely valuable project, which we are confident will enhance the learning experience of participants. We are currently preparing a significant grant application on invitation of Financial Literacy Australia, to develop the entire program on this platform with the specific purpose of making it more accessible and to more people.

Just as the old financial year was coming to an end, Participate Australia partnered with Canterbury League Club to hold cooking classes in a commercial kitchen environment. Six of our participants attended a series of cooking classes during which they learnt how to make basic but tasty meals, were trained in proper kitchen hygiene and safe usage of cooking equipment all under the guidance of the club's Executive Chef, Stephanie Azar. This was an extremely enjoyable and empowering experience for the participants, as well as their families who joined the group on the final night for a three-course graduation dinner, prepared, of course, by the participants.



RASAIID

Ryde Area Supported Accommodation for Intellectually Disabled — RASAIID — is a unique supported living project of fifteen people with disability living in the community. They live in what is best described as a town-house complex with separate villas and some shared amenities, like a BBQ and picnic area.

The complex introduces supported living arrangements that respects the individuality of each resident and allows for person-centred support in a way that ordinary supported living arrangements cannot.

This has been both, its defining strength and its biggest challenge, as it does not easily fit into the supported independent living arrangements of the NDIS.

After the trial period of the previous financial year, Participate Australia agreed to be the provider of support at the complex and to support residents in transitioning to the NDIS. This required that we prepare very detailed support plans and justification for the level of support that we deemed necessary to ensure residents were safe and led a dignified existence in their homes.

Our view of that was not immediately shared by the NDIA. This resulted in protracted and difficult negotiations between ourselves and the agency, and it required significant involvement of the parents and carers of the fifteen RASAIID residents, their expert advocate, Christine Agius (Action for People), as well as the Federal Member for Bennelong, John Alexander, OAM and the Hon Victor Dominello, MLA, Member for Ryde.

A resolution was found at the eleventh hour, literally weeks before the existing funding ran out.

With adequate NDIS funding now in place, the residents are well settled into their homes and have already made some progress in achieving a greater level of autonomy and freedom of choice.

The success of this program is largely thanks to the extraordinary effort and commitment of Erika Aravena, who was seconded to the project for a period of 18 months to undertake thorough assessments, prepare support plans and engage and train staff to achieve the best outcomes, while working with the parents of the fifteen residents to understand and respond to their expectations. From the 2017/2018 financial year, the management of RASAIID and the support of the fifteen residents fall under the newly created Community Liaison department, and so remain the responsibility of Erika Aravena.

In the 2016–2017 financial year, we provided 109,335 hours of support at the complex in Ryde, and we employ 29 dedicated support workers who share support on a 24/7 basis under the guidance of four team leaders.

24-hour staffing, including awake shifts, remains a challenge at RASAIID, and we have undertaken significant effort to recruit and build a team of dedicated support workers for this purpose. Their work with the residents has resulted in many positive changes, including increasing articulation of wants and needs, more autonomous decision making and more active participation in household chores, meal preparation and so on.

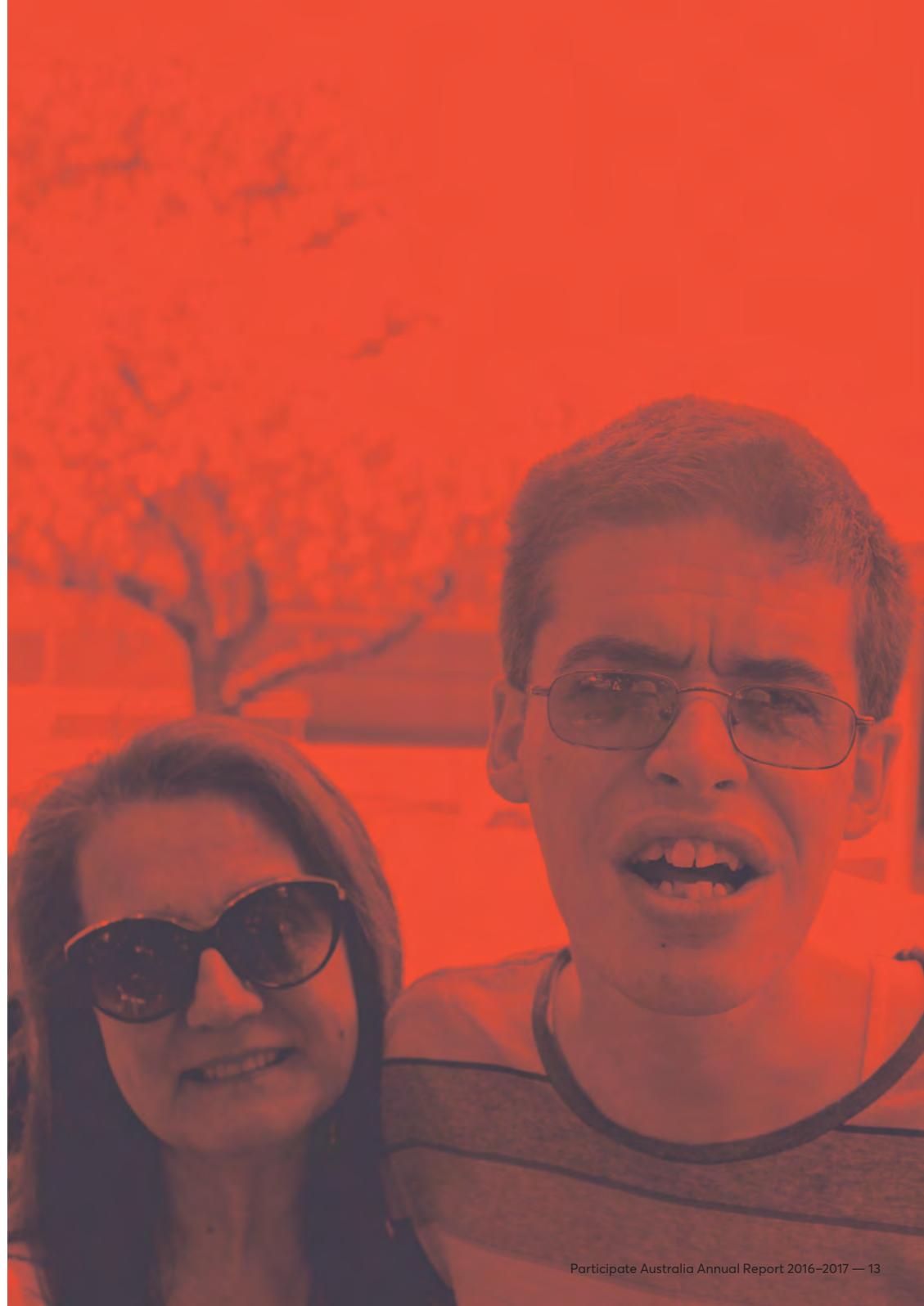
Support Coordination

NDIS support coordination is an independent service of Participate Australia. It is kept at an arm's length from other supports to ensure impartiality, as it serves to assist participants in finding the most suitable and appropriate programs and activities to help them in achieving the goals articulated in their NDIS plan. As such, there is a perceived risk that a provider might seek to influence the choices a participant makes and use this service to acquire more business.

For this reason, we have separated NDIS support coordination from the support team physically (the team is located at a different address) and structurally (it is subsumed in the newly created Community Liaison department).

We commenced with the provision of NDIS support coordination in April and have already experienced significant activity in this domain, with a considerable number of existing and new participants using this service.

An emphasis of the work we undertake in this area is on maintaining great transparency and on demonstrating impartiality to participants and to the NDIA.



Strategy and Communications

Fundraising

Fundraising income for the year ended 30 June 2017 was \$282,385 (reduced compared to the previous year). This comes off unusually successful fundraising activities in the 2015–2016 financial year, which showed an increase of more than 60% over the year before that, thanks to some very lucrative one-off opportunities.

During the reporting period, income from grants and the business sector was lower than the year before, but income from infrastructure and systems grants (non-recurring grants from government) was significantly higher, as was income from events.

This past year marked the tenth anniversary of our arts event, For Art's Sake, which for the first time introduced arts prizes to the total value of \$10,000 donated by a generous, anonymous donor. The event that raised \$34,420 exhibited 61 artworks from artists with various abilities and disabilities. The art prizes were awarded through a panel of experts, including Wendy Sharpe, David Capra, Prof Colin Rhodes and Tamara Armstrong.

Branding of a new Company

Following an extensive consultation process in the previous year and the passing of the resolutions at the 2016 Annual General Meeting, we immediately commenced with the process of registering our organisation as a company limited by guarantee with a new name: Participate Australia Limited.

This process included changing the legal structure of the organisation to fall under Commonwealth oversight through the Australian Securities and Investment Commission and to dissolve the incorporated association and its connections from State legislature. It involved the creation of a new brand and associated guidelines and the production of stationery and collateral, as well as a new digital presence and website. The later was very generously created at no cost through the volunteer engagement opportunities that the global enterprise software company Atlassian afford their employees through the Atlassian Foundation, which fulfils the company's community engagement commitments.

Continuing Improvement System

In June 2016 we started working with our preferred vendor, VisiCase, on developing our new enterprise resource planning system to help us manage our participants' records, roster staff on to provide the support they need, and provide data necessary for reporting, payroll and billing under the NDIS. With the support of two Directors with professional expertise in this line of work, a team comprising senior staff from each department started carefully scoping the project to adapt to our specific needs a proven system that is already widely used in the disability space and which was specifically designed for disability providers under the NDIS.

The system will allow us to streamline processes and automate and reduce administrative work to minimise human error and gain efficiencies. It is an NDIS-ready system that automatically updates NDIS pricing structures as reviews are rolled out. Through a user group forum of other providers using the same platform, who collaboratively work on continually improving the system through the articulation and prioritisation of emerging needs, the system will gradually achieve better outcomes. It is for this reason that we have named it Kaizen — from Japanese for 'change for the better' or 'continual improvement'.

The new system was successfully deployed on 25 September and is now operational across all business units.

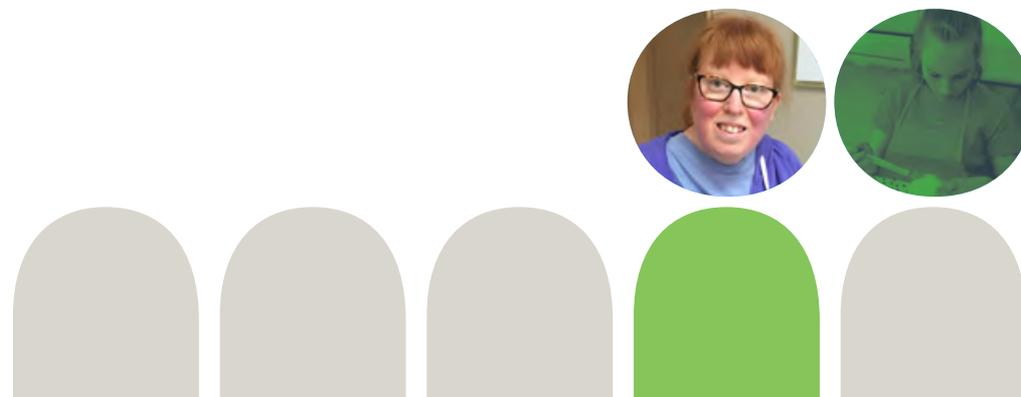
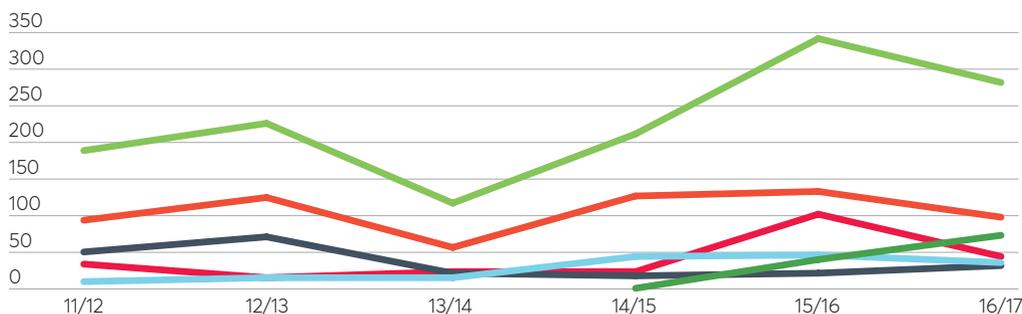
Strategic Planning

In 2014 we made the conscious decision to prepare a three-year strategic plan that was flexible enough to afford the organisation the agility that would be required to navigate through and respond to the evolving nature of the NDIS with the very limited information that was available at the time. Three years on, the NDIS has evolved very considerably but is still in a state of flux, with various aspects of the scheme yet to be clearly defined and a framework that is itself responding to the reactions from the sector to the scheme's progression.

The Strategic Projects Committee of the Board reviews progress of the organisation against the strategic plan every two months and in December makes recommendations to the Board for any necessary changes in response to external factors out of our control. In December 2016 the committee tabled and recommended to the Board a revised strategic plan with an extension to 2018, which was adopted unanimously at the February Board meeting.

This strategic plan continues to allow great flexibility as the NDIS continues to be rolled out with improvements and the resolution of issues. The government's time table suggests a full rollout of the scheme across Australia by 2019. We share the view of most providers that it will probably take another year thereafter for the scheme to be settled entirely and routine to take over all aspects of it. This is by no means a criticism but a reflection of reasonable expectations for a change of this magnitude, also borne out from the experiences made with the establishment in 1975/1976 of Medibank, which is the only comparable structural change to a social benefit scheme in Australia in recent history.

Source / Program	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
Grants — Programs	\$93,189	\$124,820	\$56,084	\$125,976	\$132,708	\$97,081
Grants — Infrastructure/Systems	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$40,000	\$73,000
Community Fundraising	\$34,372	\$14,580	\$23,932	\$23,603	\$101,869	\$43,941
Events	\$51,459	\$71,524	\$21,250	\$17,907	\$21,560	\$32,788
Business Sector Donations	\$10,000	\$15,415	\$15,914	\$43,945	\$46,615	\$35,575
Total Fundraising Income	\$189,020	\$226,339	\$117,180	\$211,431	\$342,752	\$282,385



Supporters and Ambassadors

A review of our fundraising activities in 2016 that also looked at fundraising strategies of comparable providers and current trends in philanthropic giving, suggested we make some changes to the way we seek to raise funds. In recent years, we have become quite successful at fundraising through philanthropic grants through the submission of small grants application. In the 2016–2017 financial year we submitted 38 applications totalling almost \$600,000. We won 20, totalling \$170,000. That's a success rate of 52% or 28% — depending on what you're measuring.

The review suggested that we continue with our current grants writing regime. After all, it is the bread and butter of our life-skills program, and \$170,000 goes a long way in achieving great outcomes.

If we want to continue with a viable and competitive life-skills program, one that continues to lead with innovation and that responds swiftly and effectively to emerging needs of participants, we must build relationships with supporters that will lead to more sustainable income from fewer, but larger grants.

In September last year we appointed Andrea Natoli as Partnerships and Development Manager who has been active in the community creating stronger relationships and building our profile with business, local government, Members of Parliament and within Clubs NSW.

As a result, Atlassian built our website at no cost, Canterbury League Club ran professional cooking classes for our participants, Club Burwood and Club Canada Bay hosted events free of charge, Club Ashfield hosted a luncheon for participants and carers, grant income from Wests Ashfield increased by 250% from the previous year and Dulux are talking to us about how they can help with repainting our building.

These relationships will continue to grow and opportunities will continue to emerge from them. We are indebted to all of these organisations and take this opportunity to thank them for their tremendous community spirit and generous support.

In 2016 our Patron of eight transformational and exciting years, Julie McCrossin, stepped down to focus her energy on other interests of importance to her. Julie left behind a pair of large shoes that are hard to fill with the kind of exuberance and passion that always accompanies her.

Over the past year, we found that in the local community a lot of people who have a great interest in advocacy, disability rights and equality and we are tremendously proud and privileged to have won the support of Participate Australia as Ambassadors from some outstanding public figures.

Tim Fergusson, celebrated comedian, screenwriter, actor and director, and dare we say, 'veteran' of the Doug Anthony Allstars, is also lecturer at RMIT, the Australian Film Television and Radio School, the New York University School of Arts and proud Ambassador of Participate Australia.

He was joined by legendary sportswoman, Alex Blackwell, captain of the NSW Breakers, captain of the winning 2010 Australian World Twenty20 team and Australian Test Captain reclaiming the Ashes in 2011.

And just as the new financial year rang in, we were most delighted to find that both Ellen Fanning, awarded journalist and former ABC Washington correspondent, as well as up-and-coming NRL talent and Wests Tigers hooker, Jacob Liddle, both agreed to assume Ambassador roles too (but that's a story for next year's annual report).



Finance and Corporate Services

The Finance and Corporate Services department covers the areas comprised of finance, human resources, administration, facilities and vehicles.

The department's primary focus in the 2016–2017 financial year was on preparing for the transition to the NDIS from July 2017 for the majority of Participate Australia's participants. The residents of RASAIID, located in the Northern Sydney district, and some participants residing in the SW Sydney region already transitioned during the 2016/2017 year. This provided some insights into the workings of the NDIS. This understanding of the NDIS processes for participants and providers, as well as learnings gained from the deployment of the NDIS Portal in July 2016 will be invaluable in the current financial year.

During the 2016–2017 year, the NDIS was still developing systems and defining procedures, including the Supported Individual Living tool, an assessment and quoting tool for supported living. We were fortunate to be able to trial this before its formal release to finalise the quotes for RASAIID residents to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

To further make our organisation NDIS ready, we continued along the path of implementing a new CRM and rostering system. This system will go live in September 2017. It will greatly enhance and streamline rostering and client records management.

Recruitment of suitable support and administration staff has continued to be a challenge this year. We have experienced a decline in applications from suitable candidates for these roles, and we acknowledged that it was necessary to implement a change to our methods of recruitment. We are continuing to develop this strategy, and are confident to maintain our high expectations of skills and experience of our workforce.

People and Talent

As at 30 June 2017, Participate Australia had 160 employees and 20 volunteers:

- 129 direct support workers
- 31 office staff
- 20 volunteers, of which 13 are Directors

In an effort to retain a close understanding of the needs of the people we support and of the challenges support workers face, Participate Australia office employees all undertake regular shifts to support participants in group activities, during school holidays and on social outings. These quarterly shifts remind us of the challenges families living with disability face every day, and of the importance of ensuring that our support programs meet their needs.

We demonstrate our commitment to inclusion through the appointment to the Board of two directors with disability and three directors with lived experience of disability. Our administration team includes an employee with disability and we have a policy of including a participant on interview panels for our recruitment process. With support of a director and an executive manager, a representative group of self-advocates has convened working groups addressing a range of issues and taking opportunities for professional and personal development through the attendance at conferences and seminars.

We recognise that the work that our employees do can be emotionally demanding, and that added stresses resulting from the transition to the NDIS and the development and deployment of a new rostering and client management system can be taxing. We therefore continue to provide training opportunities in emotional intelligence and resilience and have available to all employees free and strictly confidential access to an external employee assistance program provider.

Staff Awards

Each year, Participate Australia recognises the commitment, professionalism, ethos and work ethic of employees and volunteers.

Through six rounds, all Participate Australia employees have the opportunity to vote for whom they think deserve to be recognised for their outstanding efforts over the year. This year, we are recognising three strong professionals for their contribution to our organisation.

The Moore Brothers Award for Excellence in Direct Support acknowledges support workers who have stood out amongst their peers. It is named in honour of three brothers and participants (of what used to be FRANS at the time), Thomas, Danny and Joshua Moore. The late Thomas and Danny, as well as Joshua, who survives his brothers, played an important role in demanding a greater person-centred approach, at a time when the term had yet to achieve such prominence as today. The three brothers often insisted on their rights to individuality, inclusion and universal access, choosing to extend their participation in support programs to seeing bands and having a drink at their local pub.

We are proud to recognise the work of Gabriella 'Gabby' Antelmi for the Moore Brothers Memorial Award for the 2016–2017 financial year.



Gabriella 'Gabby'
Antelmi

Gabby joined the Participate Australia team in March of 2016. Working across individual support and group activities, she quickly proved herself as a reliable, diligent and thoughtful support worker. She has worked with a wide range of participants and is a Team Leader across multiple activities. Gabby is highly regarded by families and is often complemented for the passion and care she brings to the work she does.

Gabby grew up in a family of seven children and a younger sister with an intellectual disability. Gabby says that this has given her "a strong urge" to make people with disability "feel supported and equal". Gabby's interest in helping others grew after experiencing homelessness and living in an unstable situation from a young age. "This made me want to understand more about helping others and preventing them from experiencing this." Gabby went on to study Community Services and it was through this study that her interest in disability support grew.

Gabby found Participate Australia along her journey and felt "instantly welcomed and respected". Through her experience at Participate Australia, Gabby has learnt much about people, the industry and herself. "I've grown so much as a person, which is amazing", she says. "I am so grateful for this opportunity."

The Rising Star Award is one of the most important awards we deliver each year, as it recognises the high quality work and commitment of a new support worker. The award is given to a worker who has been at Participate Australia for one year or less. This award is not only to recognise the promising career of a newcomer, but it is also an award of encouragement to other workers, new and old.

This year, the Rising Star Award is a tie between two very strong and very professional employees, Joanne Amodeo and Carol Sakellariou.



Joanne Amodeo joined Participate Australia in late 2016 and worked across a variety of activities. Her positive and enthusiastic nature was quickly recognised by our participants, office staff and her colleagues.

Growing up, Joanne always enjoyed helping others and she was drawn to this industry as she finds providing support to the participants very rewarding and fulfilling. Joanne is a mother to six "cheeky and wonderful boys" (two of whom also work for Participate Australia) and is happily married to her husband Angelo. Though Joanne acknowledges that juggling a busy home life and support work can pose challenges, she knows it is all worthwhile when she sees the joy that comes from seeing happy participants achieve their goals. Joanne believes in the motto that if you "do the work you love, you'll never have to work a day in your life."

Carol Sakellariou joined Participate Australia in March 2017 and works primarily with the RASAIID residents. Originally from Kenya, Carol, a mother of three, moved to Sydney after living in Melbourne for a period.

Carol worked with a large hotel group for seven years in different roles, however, grew up volunteering in aged and disability facilities. She completed her Certificate IV in Disability in 2014 while continuing to work in hotels and volunteering in the education system. Moving to Sydney in 2016, Carol was a manager within the hotel industry, however, not

feeling fulfilled she made the decision to focus her energy on supporting people with disabilities and became a full time support worker in 2017.

Carol's professionalism and work ethic helped her establish herself as a strong worker and leader amongst her peers. Carol sees each day as an opportunity to learn new things about the participants she supports and about herself. This is her passion. "I love and enjoy my job and I always look forward to tomorrow," Carol says. "Seeing participants achieve their goals, no matter how big or small, is very fulfilling...I am glad to be accepted in Participate Australia and look forward to the future."

Participate Australia also looks forward to a long future with Gabby, Joanne and Carol.

The award for service excellence is named after the late Director and Treasurer, Dick Conroy. Dick's work was dedicated to continually improving outcomes for participants and their families but also to empowering employees to be the best they can. *The Dick Conroy Memorial Award for Service Excellence* recognises outstanding achievements of our office staff. It is arrived at by a voting round every two months, wherein office staff nominate three colleagues whose professionalism and dedication have greatly influenced the success of Participate Australia.

This year's winner, Joanna Kazzi, joined our organisation in 2012, initially as a support worker where she soon gained the respect of her colleagues for being a great organiser and for seeking to enhance the experience of participants. Joanna enjoys seeing other people happy and she achieves that not only by understanding their needs but by finding out how they would like to have them met. This applies to the way she engages with participants and carers, as well as with her colleagues.



Joanna
Kazzi

"Knowing that what we do, helps make the lives of people with disabilities and their families a little easier, fills me with a deep sense of joy and purpose" she says.

In 2016, Joanna assumed the position of an activities coordinator, where she also played a key role in the development of our flagship financial literacy program and she assumed a range of other responsibilities with equal commitment and dedication. This is reflected in the high number of

nominations she received for this award and in the expression of admiration from her colleagues that it implies. "I am very grateful for the opportunities given to me here; they have allowed me to grow both personally and professionally."

The Ray Garden Memorial Award, finally, is presented for outstanding achievements of our volunteers. The award is in honour and in memory of the late Ray Garden, a participant of more than 30 years, who passed away in 2013, aged 66. Ray visited our offices in Croydon several times per week, to chat with staff, water plants and generally be of help around the office.

This year's Ray Garden Memorial Award is presented not to one but to fourteen volunteers: directors of Participate Australia who have consistently worked in the background, with tenures ranging from 2 to 12 years.

The Board is comprised of thirteen Directors and the minute taker, who joined the Board as a Director in 2005 and served as its Secretary before resigning the directorship in 2015 but continuing to serve in the capacity of minute taker.

Directors are rarely recognised and hardly ever seen by the people we support. Yet, their focus is primarily on ensuring that what we do as an organisation is done within the confines of the law and clearly focussed on outcomes benefitting participants and their families.

The Board of Directors of Participate Australia comprises seven women (eight if we count the minute taker) and six men. Two Directors are living with disability and three more have lived experience in disability. Their names are listed below.

Directors invest a significant amount of time in our organisation. Each is a member of at least one Board Committee and brings professional expertise and a wide range of experiences to the Board. At various times they are involved in projects and can spend many hours per week working for the organisation.

It is fitting that this award should go to the Board collectively in recognition of their commitment and engagement, and for the great responsibility they each take in overseeing the proper conduct and judicious management of Participate Australia, especially in this very challenging year of transition.

Board of Directors' Report Participate Australia Limited

The Board of Directors submits the financial statements of Participate Australia Limited for the financial year ended 30 June, 2017.

Directors

The names of the Board of Directors at the date of this report are:

Glenn Ball, Chair
Emily Dash, Vice Chair
Warren Dawes, Treasurer
Rosemary King, Secretary
Sandra Casinader, Director
Darren Dick, Director
Penny Gerstle, Director
Stephen Hodges, Director
Genevieve Haines, Director
Mary McMahan, Director
Shaun Palmer, Director
Rosa Saladino, Director
Gil Thew, Director

Non-voting

Jerry McNamara, CEO and Public Officer
Sally De Dear, Escritoire

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were support and assistance to people with disabilities, their families and carers.

Significant Changes

No significant changes in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The surplus from operating activities for the year was \$60,545.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Glenn Ball **Warren Dawes**
Chair Treasurer
6 September 2017

Board Meeting Attendance for the 2016–2017 Financial Year

	Meetings attended
Glenn Ball, Chair	6/6
Emily Dash, Vice Chair	5/6
Warren Dawes, Treasurer	6/6
Rosemary King, Secretary	6/6
Sandra Casinader, Director	6/6
Stephen Hodges, Director	6/6
Darren Dick, Director	4/6
Penny Gerstle, Director	4/6
Rosa Saladino, Director	5/6
Mary McMahan, Director	5/6
Gil Thew, Director	6/6
Genevieve Haines, Director	6/6
Shaun Palmer, Director	6/6
Sally De Dear, Escritoire	5/6

Treasurer's Report 2016–2017

The audited accounts for the year ended 30 June, 2017 are presented for your consideration and adoption.

A full set of Financial Statements is available on request.

The 2016/2017 financial year finished with an operating surplus of \$60,545 compared to a surplus of \$30,570 for the previous financial year — and increase of \$29,975.

The Operating Result for 2016–2017 comes after the transfer of \$300,000 to the NDIS working capital reserve. This is part of continuing management action to ensure adequate working capital in advance of the rollout of the NDIS on 1 July, 2017.

It is important to note that the working capital reserve has in no way compromised Participate Australia meeting its obligations in terms of the provision of services to participants, their families and carers.

Income

Income increased by \$2,252,594 on the previous year, primarily due to the receipt of \$2,071,891 of NDIS funding.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased by \$2,042,619 on the previous year mainly due to:

- \$1,703,270 increase in salaries and wages including salary rate increases
- \$415,659 increase in program expenses, partly offset by lower occupancy costs.

The expenditure increases are related to the provision of services to RASAIID participants in advance of the rollout of the NDIS on 1 July, 2017.

Financial Position

The Balance Sheet shows a strong financial position.

Current Assets exceeded Current Liabilities by \$774,572 at 30 June, 2017 indicating a healthy cash position and this and the operating result reinforce the view that Participate Australia is financially sustainable and a going concern.

The Balance Sheet records \$620,000 for the aforementioned NDIS working capital reserve as at 30 June 2017 and provisions for annual leave, long service leave, personal leave, redundancy payments and IT system upgrades of \$520,074 as at 30 June, 2017, which are considered to be appropriate financial safeguards given the uncertainties around the rollout of the NDIS.

Any queries regarding the 2016–2017 results can be addressed to me or to the Chief Financial Officer, Susan Woodhouse.

I would like to thank the Board, staff, and our Auditor, David Conroy for their support, help and advice throughout the year.



Warren Dawes
Treasurer
6 September 2017

Participate Australia Limited		
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2017	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,461,703	2,702,227
Accounts receivable and other debtors	287,449	99,753
Total Current Assets	2,749,152	2,801,980
Non Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	99,450	29,708
Total Non-Current Assets	99,450	29,708
Total Assets	2,848,602	2,831,688
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and other payables	1,454,506	1,918,319
Provisions	520,074	399,892
Total Current Liabilities	1,974,580	2,318,211
Total Liabilities	1,974,580	2,318,211
Net Assets	874,022	513,477
Equity		
NDIS working capital reserves	620,000	320,000
Retained surplus	254,022	193,477
Total Equity	874,022	513,477

Full financial statements and accompanying notes pertaining to this audit report are available on request.
Our contact details are on the back of this report.

Participate Australia Limited		
Statement of Profit and Loss and other Comprehensive Income for the Year ended 30 June 2017	2017 \$	2016 \$
Revenues from ordinary activities	8,670,236	6,417,642
Employee benefits expense	(6,706,281)	(5,003,011)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	(18,723)	(13,103)
Occupancy expense	(292,572)	(415,920)
Programme activities expense	(822,425)	(406,766)
Motor vehicles expense	(99,304)	(97,764)
Other expenses from ordinary activities	(370,386)	(330,508)
Current year surplus before income tax	360,545	150,570
Income tax expense	-	-
Current year surplus	360,545	150,570
Prior year workers compensation refund	-	-
Net current year surplus	-	150,570
Transfer to NDIS working capital reserves	300,000	120,000
	60,545	30,570

Full financial statements and accompanying notes pertaining to this audit report are available on request.
Our contact details are on the back of this report.

Statement by the Board of Directors

In the opinion of the Board of Directors the accompanying financial report presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Participate Australia Limited as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including Australian Accounting Interpretations) of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Participate Australia Limited will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:



Glenn Ball **Warren Dawes**
Chair Treasurer
6 September 2017

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF PARTICIPATE AUSTRALIA LIMITED ABN 39 136 853 895



Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Participate Australia Limited (the company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of profit or loss, statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

Principal: David Conroy FCA

Postal Address:
Level 2/154 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: 02 9267 9227
Fax: 02 9261 3384

Email: admin@bryanrush.com.au
ABN: 95 373 401 379

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Participate Australia Limited is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2017 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

We conducted our 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. We are independent of the company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 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 our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the Corporations Act 2001, which has been given to the directors of Participate Australia Limited, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

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

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2017, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Corporations Act 2001 and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the company'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 the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our 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 the 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 this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We 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 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 company's internal control.

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

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' 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 company'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 company 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. We communicate with the directors 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 our audit.

Conroy Audit & Advisory



D R Conroy
Principal

Sydney
Date: 6 September 2017



Donations and Memberships

Please consider supporting Participate Australia with a tax deductible donation or by becoming a member.

Your donation helps us continue with critical life-skills programs that nurture greater autonomy and help people with disability lead more fulfilled and engaged lives.

We guarantee that your donation goes towards these programs and that it will have a direct impact on the people who access our programs.

All donations of \$2 and more are tax deductible (CFN 14593; ABN 39 136 853 895).

YES, I would like to make a donation to Participate Australia.

Your support will provide:

- \$60 — 1 hour of 1:1 support
- \$160 — participation in a 1 day group outing
- \$300 — 1 day of 1:1 support
- Other: \$ _____
- I would prefer to give a regular gift of \$ _____ to be automatically charged to my credit card every: month quarter six months year.

Become a member

Members are eligible to vote at the Participate Australia AGM, join a Board committee, and access and borrow books, DVDs and other resources free. Please apply now for 2017/2018.

- \$20 Individual / Family membership
- \$50 Organisational membership
- Dr Mr Mrs Ms Miss

Name

Organisation

Address

Postcode

Phone

Mobile

Email

Donation / Membership Payment Details

- I enclose a cheque / money order payable to Participate Australia
- Please debit my credit card. VISA Mastercard American Express

Card no Expiry date

Cardholder's name

Cardholder's signature

Return to: Participate Australia, PO Box 210, Croydon NSW 2132

Our Funders

\$6,000,000 +

NSW Government

\$2,000,000 +

NDIS

\$200,000 +

Commonwealth Government (non NDIS)

\$30,000 to \$39,999

Town Hall Hotel, Newtown

\$15,000 to \$29,999

Hand Up Foundation

NSW Public Guardian (Department of Justice)

Electorate of Strathfield (Community Building Partnerships)

\$10,000 to \$14,999

Electorate of Canterbury (Community Building Partnerships)

Seat of Reid (Stronger Communities)

Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL

The Marian & EH Flack Trust

James N. Kirby Foundation

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Club Burwood RSL

The Raymond E Purves Foundation

Club Ashfield

Wests Ashfield Leagues

Canada Bay Club

Financial Literacy Australia

Sydney Motorway

ANZ Staff Foundation

Peter Wedgwood

Seat of Watson (Stronger Communities)

More Than Human

\$2,000 to \$4,999

Transport for NSW

Petersham RSL

Transurban Limited

Executive Central

\$1,000 to \$1,999

Anthony Nugent

Vincent Montano (Raine & Horne Leichardt)

**Participate
Australia Limited**

ABN 39 136 853 895

ACN 613 814 654

111 Edwin St North
Croydon NSW 2132

Participate Australia Limited

PO Box 210

Croydon NSW 2132

T 02 9799 4333

F 02 9798 5115

enquiries@participateaustralia.com.au

participateaustralia.com.au

**The United Nations
Convention on the Rights
of Persons With Disabilities**

Participate Australia supports the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and our employees are bound by the principles for which it stands.

The Convention's purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

