

Guide Dogs.



Guide Dogs Australia 2025 Social Impact Snapshot.



Measuring what matters.

Our award-winning social impact measurement framework helps us to understand where we are contributing to positive impact, where we can do better, and where we can work with others to advocate for change.

This report provides a snapshot of our impact this year. We are very grateful to all Guide Dogs Clients and their families who shared their experiences with us. Your feedback is valuable in helping us to learn, monitor and continue improving our services.

We're committed to acting on what we learn through our social impact measurement. In previous years, we learned that Clients want to see Guide Dogs speak up more for change in the community. You can read more about our advocacy work in Working together for change, on page 8.



Our Theory of Change.

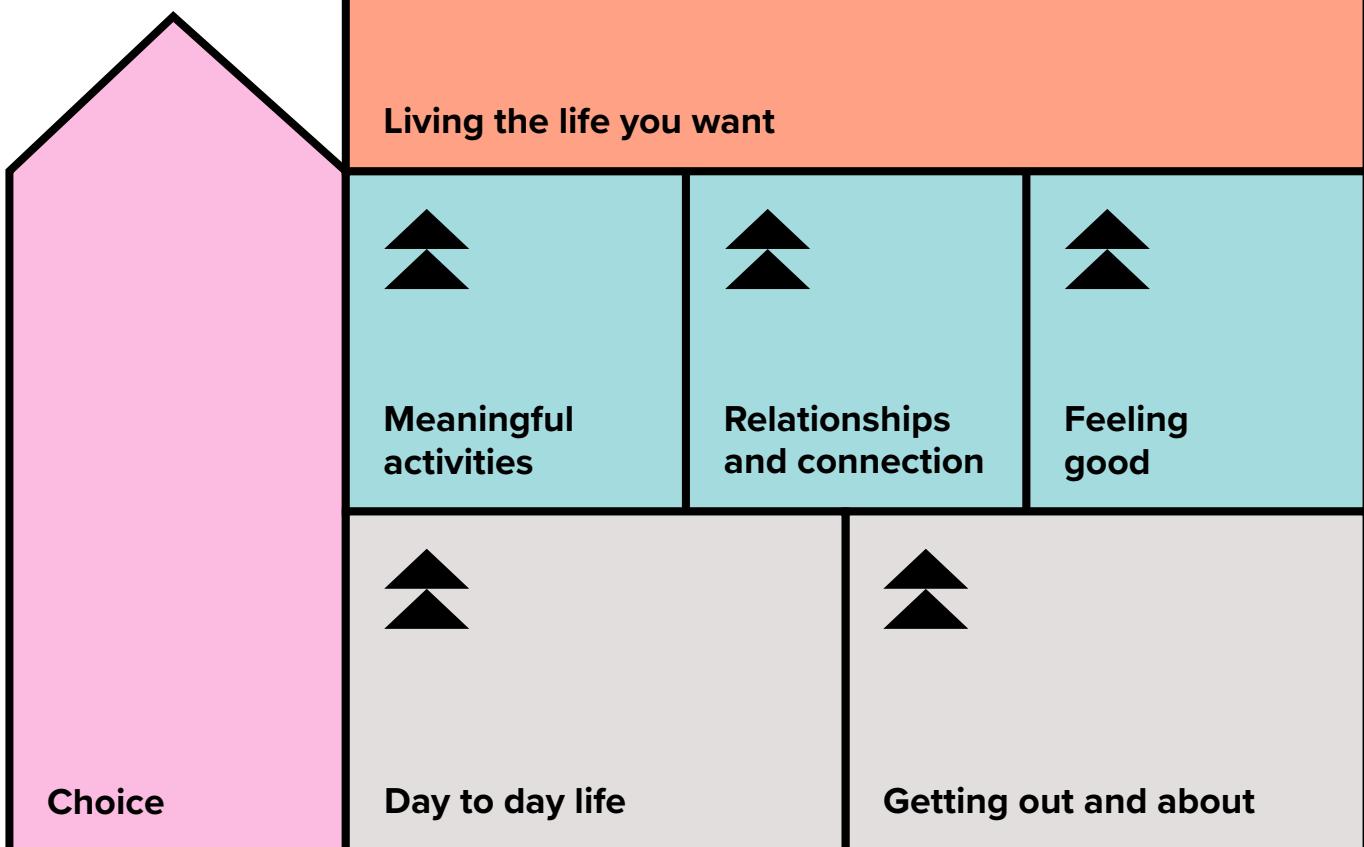
We support people with low vision or blindness to live the life they choose. We know that physical, social and digital environments can create barriers. These barriers make it harder for people who are blind or have low vision to do everyday things, connect with others, or feel positive about the future. Guide Dogs is increasingly involved in advocacy to address these systemic barriers.

Guide Dogs contributes to positive change by working with Clients and their families to build skills, confidence and access to tools and support.

These are important foundations that give people more choice in how they go about their day and get out and about.

Change doesn't happen all at once, and it is shaped by many things. We support Clients to have more choice in their daily lives so that they can do more of the things that matter to them and connect with others in ways that feel meaningful. These are important parts of feeling good. Over time, these changes add up, helping Clients to live the life they want.

Figure 1:
Guide Dogs
Theory of Change



How we measure impact.

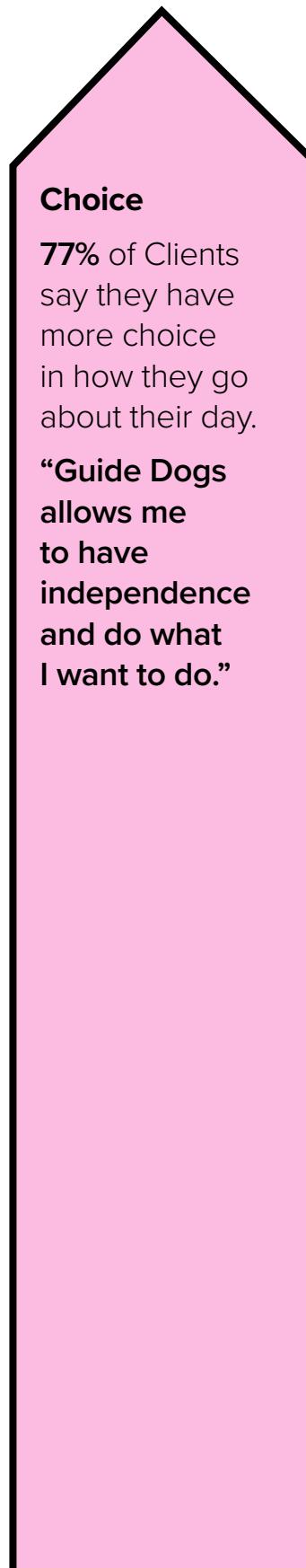
We are leading the sector in consistently monitoring, analysing and sharing data about the impact of our services. We want to know what has changed in Clients' lives since working with us. This helps us to strengthen the impact of our services and advocate for societal change.

We ask Clients to complete a social impact survey about changes in their lives since using our services. More than 300 Clients did the survey over the phone or email between April and June 2025.

Every person is different, and individual circumstances influence how people experience outcomes. We share high-level data and key insights across our seven impact domains each year. We use more detailed analysis to understand changes at a micro-level for different Client groups experiencing our services.



Figure 2:
Impact insights



<p>Living the life you want</p> <p>78% of Clients say they are more able to live the life they want.</p> <p>“It helps me feel more like me again.”</p>			
<p>Choice</p> <p>77% of Clients say they have more choice in how they go about their day.</p> <p>“Guide Dogs allows me to have independence and do what I want to do.”</p>	<p>Meaningful activities</p> <p>73% of Clients say they do more of the things that are important to them.</p> <p>“Having a Guide Dog has opened my life up tremendously. I can keep up my volunteer work a few times a week.”</p>	<p>Relationships and connection</p> <p>75% of Clients say they have made or maintained social connections and relationships.</p> <p>“I have been able to give my family independence because they don’t have to worry about guiding me. It has given my partner and children freedom.”</p>	<p>Feeling good</p> <p>73% of Clients say they feel more positive about the future.</p> <p>“I felt lost when my vision diminished, but now I feel optimistic about the future – with or without sight.”</p>
<p>Day-to-day life</p> <p>78% of Clients say they are more independent when doing daily activities around the home or online.</p> <p>“I feel safer and more able to manage meal preparation.”</p>		<p>Getting out and about</p> <p>79% of Clients say they are more independent when getting out and about.</p> <p>“Prior to this I couldn’t even go to the shops. Now I am more independent, it’s such a relief to have the ability to do that on my own.”</p>	

Living the life you want starts with choice.

Choice and control are central to how we deliver services.

Being able to live the life you want starts with having choice about how services are delivered. Our Clients told us they value working collaboratively with Guide Dogs staff to find the best way to reach their goals. Clients said that receiving tailored information, having space to ask questions, and being encouraged to try out different options at their own pace helps them to make informed choices that suit their lives.



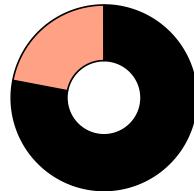
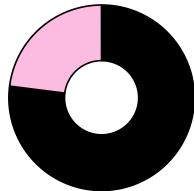
“It’s always ‘would you like to try...’, or ‘what do you think about...’, never, ‘you have to...’ They let you know you are actually in charge. They offer advice and help, but they don’t take over. This autonomy is vitally important to me.”

Guide Dogs Client.

“They gave me advice and explained it was my choice. No one had pointed out to me before that I had a choice and there were options.”

“They understand my impairment and what that means to me and the impact it has. They helped me develop strategies to move around my home and community.”

“I feel confident when taking my child into unfamiliar, larger settings. They use our real-life challenges to help us make adaptations.”



77% of Clients say they have more choice in how they go about their day because of Guide Dogs.

Clients told us that when they can do daily activities and get out and about with confidence and independence, they have more choice in how they go about their day. This means they spend more time doing the things that are meaningful to them, in the places they enjoy, with the people they care about.

“I am very independent now. I like to head out to places that are important to me, when I want and when I can.”

“I can choose the food that I want, I’m not restricted to just the ones I could see at the time.”

78% of Clients say they are more able to live the life they want because of Guide Dogs.

Living the life you want looks different for everyone. For some Clients, it means staying engaged in their community through volunteering, studying or going to work. For others, it means having the freedom to travel to new places, pursue creative hobbies or visit their loved ones.

No matter what kind of life Clients want to live, having real choice makes it possible. At Guide Dogs, we make sure that Client’s choices are encouraged, respected and supported every step of the way.

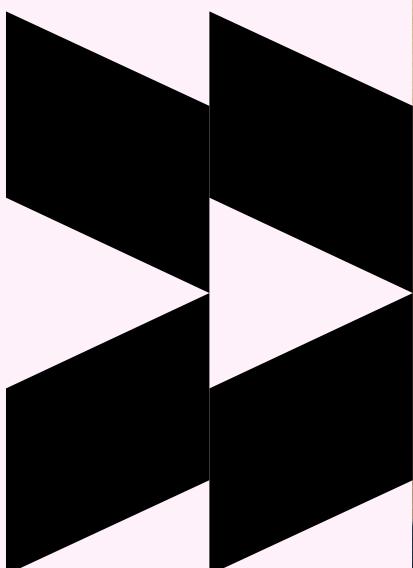
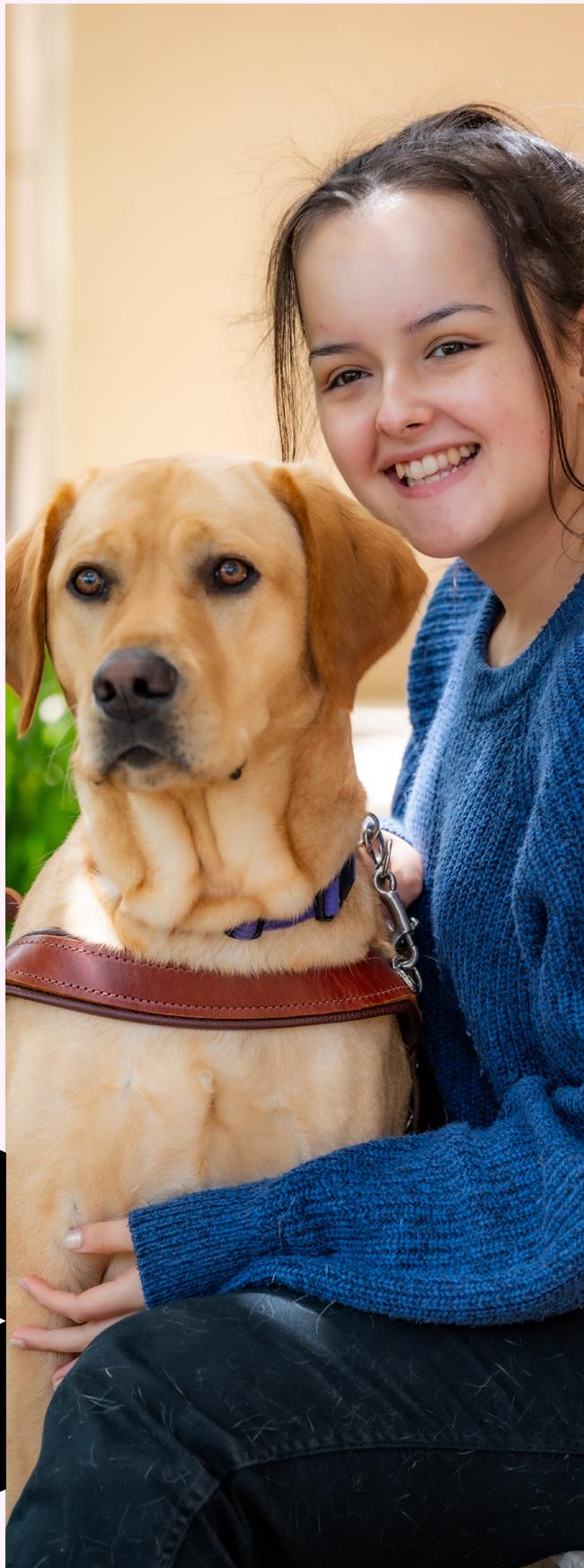
“Guide Dogs services have given me the opportunity to live the life I choose.”

“It has given me a whole new part of my life. I was so down because of my eyesight. I am now living.”

Working together for change.

In our social impact measurement and other surveys, Clients have shared experiences of inaccessibility, discrimination and systemic barriers across a range of settings.

We have an increasing focus on systemic advocacy work to remove barriers for people with low vision or blindness. The goal is to ensure everyone can enjoy the same experience of using public transport, visiting public places and spaces, accessing health and education environments, enjoying meaningful employment, and living the life they want.



This year's achievements.

A Fare Go with taxi and rideshare.

Guide Dogs Australia is leading national advocacy efforts to address taxi and rideshare refusals, a common form of discrimination against guide dog handlers.

This includes developing a national position statement and representing the sector at federal, state, and territory levels through the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport working group. We are championing reforms to promote a “fare go” for all.



NDIS registration secured for Orientation and Mobility Specialists.

After four years of determined advocacy, Guide Dogs Australia, alongside the Orientation and Mobility Association of Australia (OMAA), has successfully secured national NDIS registration for Orientation & Mobility (O&M) services. This landmark recognition affirms the legitimacy of the O&M workforce as a therapeutic support, unlocking clearer access to funding and services for people who are blind or have low vision.

We will continue to work with the OMAA to translate registration into increased access for people with low vision and blindness.

Systemic issues demand systemic reform.

This year we welcomed and participated in the Australian Government's current work with states and territories to develop unified regulatory principles for assistance animals.

These reforms will bring standardised regulations, stronger enforcement, and clearer identification and accreditation. Together with robust public education, these reforms will drive real change.



Placing Lived Experience at the forefront of everything we do.

We developed a foundational Lived Experience policy statement to make it clear how intentionally and deliberately we place people who are blind or have low vision at the absolute centre of our thinking, planning, activities and work. This policy is designed to show the value we place on peoples' lived experience and to recognise the additional work of advocacy, explanation, education and representation and emotional load it can bring.

We will soon share the policy statement on our website, and encourage feedback for further development. We also accept that some of this policy is aspirational and we challenge ourselves to implement it as effectively as possible.

National government engagement.

Overall, we provided national government engagement and submissions across 12 reviews and progressed our program of policy development with stated positions on Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, Taxi and Rideshare, and Assistance Animal reform.



What's next?

As one of Australia's most trusted service providers for people with low vision or blindness, at Guide Dogs we are proud to use our prominent voice to advocate for equal access in the community.

We'll keep working alongside Clients to challenge barriers and influence systems. This coming year, we are focused on several areas of advocacy including:

- Destination 2030 – a national aviation campaign for more accessible and inclusive travel for people who are blind or have low vision. Destination 2030 will engage airports, airlines, corporations and government in solutions for improving the end-to-end journey for travellers who are blind or have low vision. Visit the [Guide Dogs Australia Destination 2030 website](#).
- Building on the work already done around a national approach to Assistance Animals, through submissions and advocacy on the Disability Discrimination Act Review.

Guide Dogs.



Image: Ingrid Barnes and her Guide Dog Banner at Sydney Airport.

Join us in building a more inclusive Australia – where everyone can live the life they want.

For more information email advocacy@guidedogs.com.au