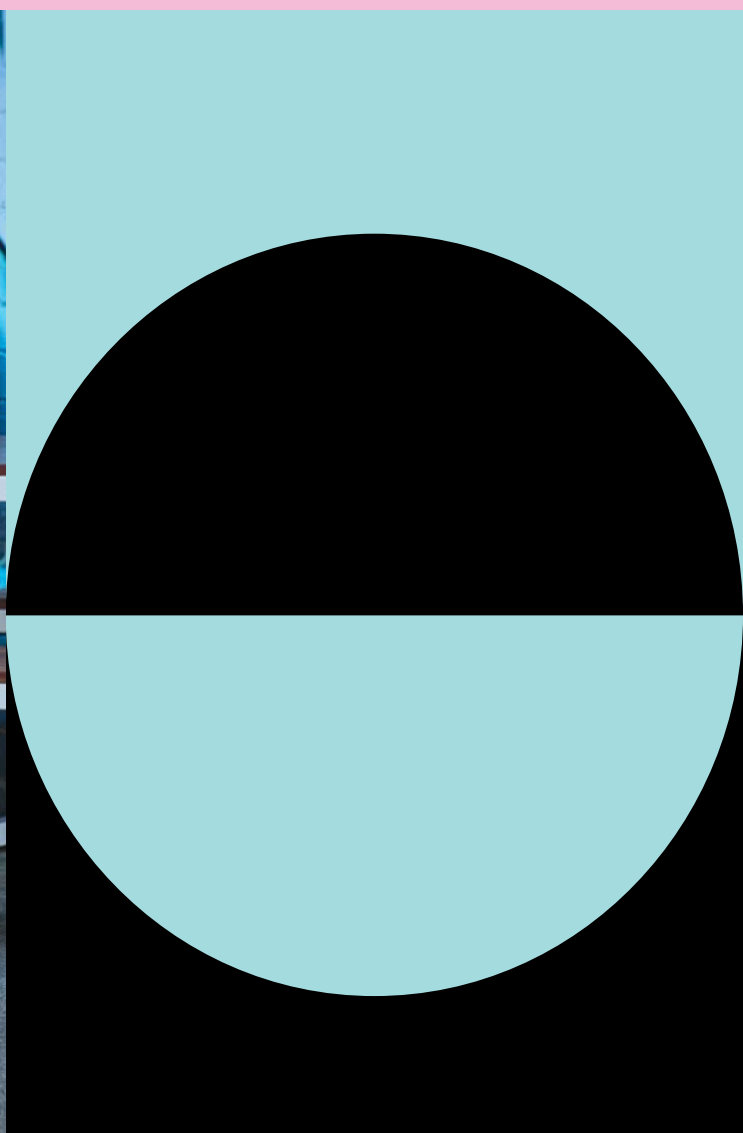


Guide Dogs.

2023

Victoria Annual Report.





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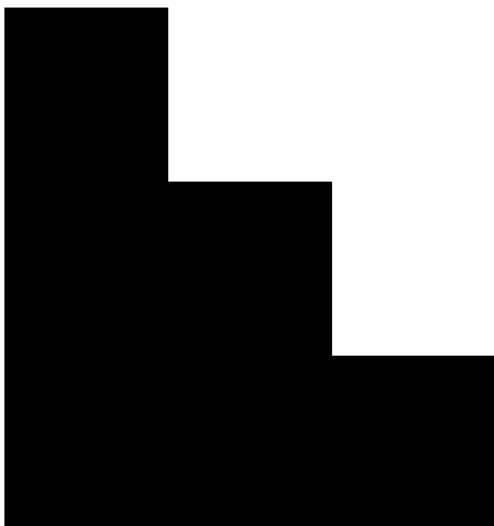
Overview.

Our vision and mission.

To be a leader in breaking down barriers so people can live the life of their choosing.

Our purpose.

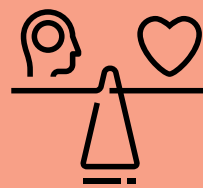
Life without limits.



Our values.

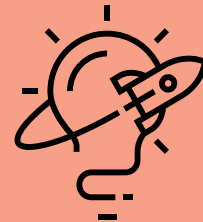
Our Clients come first in everything we do.

While not an 'official' value, our core values are all underpinned by our focus and dedication towards those in our communities who need us the most.



Lead with head and heart.

Forever focused on our purpose and mission, we combine care and careful planning to deliver successes worth celebrating.



Never stop exploring.

We're fearlessly creative. We've always asked and answered the tough questions and if there's a better way, we'll find it.



Walk the talk.

The buck stops with us. So we keep our word and keep going, no matter what.



Lift each other.

From a guiding hand to a high five, we unleash and acknowledge everyone's potential.

Report from our Chair.

A new era.



On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present our 2022-2023 Annual Report. This year marks the beginning of a new era for Guide Dogs Victoria and I am pleased to share exciting plans for our future direction.

Earlier this year, we held a Strategy Day to ensure our priorities still reflected and aligned with our purpose; life without limits. One of our goals is to strengthen our commitment to supporting our Clients and delivering services in innovative ways.

A key deliverable of this strategy, and one of our biggest achievements this year, is the completion of a major stage of the 'The Future is in Sight' Campus Redevelopment project. Following the construction of the Administration building and The Betty Amsden Education Centre, we welcomed back all of our employees to our new office in May this year. We were also pleased to host our first formal event to thank our Capital donors, who, through their generous support, have made this life-changing project a reality. Since then, the facilities are increasingly being used for social connection and education for Clients, for volunteer meetings, and for staff development. Once complete, the sensory campus will enable people with low vision or blindness to achieve their individual goals through specialist training, employment opportunities and

promoting community participation and inclusion.

My congratulations to the team on the successful delivery of this stage of the project. We are proud of the progress we have made and believe this redevelopment will provide the best possible outcomes for our dogs, our volunteers, our supporters, our employees and, most importantly, our valued Clients. Our 'all abilities' focus across the campus will enable us to deliver a diverse program of support as well as engage with our local communities. The design ensures accessibility for everyone and this will underpin our adaptability to provide support for people with low vision or blindness into our future.

The total plan for our campus includes a refurbishment of our dog facilities. This stage, including a new mobility training centre for Clients, dogs and pups, is our focus from 2025. Our current stage build has been such a positive experience, but it has not been without challenges! Our team has been very agile and we will look forward to welcoming you onsite in the middle of next year when this final stage of our redevelopment is complete.

In April this year, Aaron Horsington attended the 2023 International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) Conference in Vancouver to present on our Guide Dog

Mobility Instruction. He was invited, along with our colleagues from Guide Dogs NSW and Guide Dogs Queensland, to showcase our high standards of work. It was a fantastic opportunity to connect with international counterparts. At the conference, we were awarded the Dorothy Award for our 'Access All Areas' campaign, recognising our efforts to promote advocacy and raise awareness of Guide Dog Handler access rights. Congratulations to everyone involved in creating this campaign and being invited to present our work globally.

As we embark on our new era, there are changes to key positions. I'd like to thank long-standing Directors Anthony Kearns and Charles Thompson for their commitment, expertise and enthusiasm. Charles joined the Board in November 2014 and made extensive contributions as Chair from November 2016 to January 2019. I also extend my thanks to Tash Menon.

Transitioning from these departures, we have welcomed new members to our Board and Executive Leadership teams. In January, we were joined by new Board Directors Melissa Dixon and Malcolm Haack and, in July, we welcomed Cameron Algie. All have brought vast experience, fresh ideas and new energy and we are all looking forward to continuing to work with you.

The Board and I were also pleased to welcome new CEO Nicky Long to the Guide Dogs family in April. Nicky brings a deep experience across the not-for-profit and disability sectors and we have every confidence she is most qualified to lead us into our new future.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Iain Edwards. Iain stepped up as interim CEO for most of the financial year and led the organisation through some

challenging times. Iain has made an incredible contribution to Guide Dogs Victoria through his involvement in the past 30 years – as a Client, donor, volunteer speaker, Puppy Raiser, board director and Chairperson and, most recently, as interim CEO. Thank you Iain for your passion and commitment to the organisation and for your leadership in living a life without limits.

I also wish to pay my respects to Gordon Duxbury OAM, who passed away peacefully on 31 August with his family by his side, aged 96 years. Gordon had an extensive professional career and a very long association with Guide Dogs Victoria, being instrumental in establishing the Guide Dog movement in Victoria in 1957. Gordon leaves an incredible legacy and we will be forever grateful for his contribution to Guide Dogs. Our thoughts are with his wife Margaret and his family.

Finally, I wish to thank our loyal and committed donors, supporters, staff and volunteers. None of the important work we do for our Clients could be achieved without them. Thank you for your enthusiasm, drive and passion as we embark on our new era. We know we would not be able to push the boundaries without your ongoing support.

Dr David Cochrane

**Chair, Board of Directors
Guide Dogs Victoria**

A message from Iain Edwards, interim CEO and Nicky Long, new CEO.



Iain Edwards was interim CEO from June 2022 until April 2023. Nicky Long began in mid-April 2023 and, in the lead-up to this date, Iain provided Nicky with many touch points for a thorough handover. Nicky caught up with Iain to interview him on his time as leader.

How did you transition from Board Chair to interim CEO?

It required a shift in focus from providing strategic governance advice to executing plans at an operational level. As the new strategic and annual business plans were due for renewal, one of my first priorities was to engage the Board, Executive Leadership Team, staff and key stakeholders to create a culture of collaboration, teamwork and innovation to develop the organisation's business plan. This business plan enabled Guide Dogs Victoria to deliver on the first stage of our newly created five-year strategy.

One of the key priorities was to strengthen our culture around continuous improvement and quality and ensure we had a Client-centred focus across all our business priorities. This involved listening to the Client voice in the design, implementation, delivery and evaluation of services to ensure Guide Dogs Victoria is able to best meet the needs of

our Clients today and into the future. I'd like to acknowledge Sabrina Casey, (now retired Quality Manager), Jacqui Bond (former General Manager Dogs and Vision Services until January 2023) as well as Rachel Knight (former Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary until October 2022) for their support during this time.

How did you support the organisation to deliver these new plans?

I implemented a new organisational structure to align with Guide Dogs Victoria's purpose, with a focus on improving Client experience and outcomes. This included aligning Dogs and Vision Services to create a more connected and centralised experience for Clients and better manage our business continuity post COVID-19.

Additionally, I led the redesign of the Project Management Office (PMO) to improve our capability to deliver on key strategic projects such as 'The Future is in Sight' Campus Redevelopment project, Client Experience project and The Digital Transformation project, which developed a roadmap to build capability in our information technology systems to enable efficiencies in our operations;

improve our effectiveness in the way that we connect with our Clients, volunteers and supporters; and deliver on cyber security upgrades.

As the interim CEO I had the opportunity to influence the design and final fit out of Guide Dogs Victoria's 'Future is in Sight' Campus Redevelopment project.

Through my lived experience I was able to firsthand ensure the design of the new facility did not just create an accessible environment for our staff enabling Guide Dogs Victoria to meet the needs of our diverse workforce, but to create an environment where all of our staff and volunteers are motivated to be their best.

I was also pleased to welcome key members of our Executive Leadership Team during this time, including Penny Callaghan who joined as the new Chief Financial Officer in January 2023 and Michael Apte, the new Chief Marketing Officer who joined in February 2023.

What differentiates Guide Dogs Victoria from other organisations?

Our people and leadership – they are committed and passionate, highly skilled and competent in what they do. Our volunteers are incredibly dedicated and provide essential support to enable us to deliver for our Clients. The ongoing, unwavering support from our donors continues to inspire me. We couldn't do any of our vital work without their generosity and loyalty.

Our core focus on accessible design of everything we do including the development of the new campus is a key point of difference between Guide Dogs and other services and this means we can deliver our best for our Clients. It also demonstrates best practice for an inclusive workplace and I would like to see the standards we have created in

universal design adopted in the broader community.

What are a few of the achievements you are most proud of?

The disability reform and the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in both opportunities and challenges for Guide Dogs Victoria. I was both proud and honoured to lead a highly capable and competent Executive Leadership Team and be supported by an incredible Board to support the organisation to navigate this challenging period in Guide Dogs Victoria's history. The COVID-19 pandemic fostered an environment of agility and flexibility in how we operated and delivered services. It was incredible to witness the hard work, dedication and commitment of our staff and volunteers across the entire business from Fundraising, Marketing, Corporate, People and Culture, Dog Facilities, Dogs and Vision Services during this time.

Equally, I am proud of the work I did to strengthen our community engagement through chairing the Consumer Advisory Council and creating an environment which is culturally safe and welcoming for our First Nations people through my leadership of the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

Finally, I am most proud of representing the Guide Dogs Victoria brand through my lived experience and authentic leadership at meetings with government representatives and key policy makers in both the disability and aged care sectors. I was able to attend business events, public functions, fundraising events and media opportunities which increased corporate partnership opportunities, engagement with our Clients, supporters and donors and strengthened our brand awareness.

Leading our new future.



It brings me great pleasure to deliver my first Annual Report as the Chief Executive Officer of Guide Dogs Victoria. It is an honour and privilege to assume this position, standing on the shoulders of all those before me, to continue to strengthen our work to support people with low vision or blindness to live the life of their choosing.

I have joined Guide Dogs Victoria at a critical time. I am respectful of inheriting an iconic organisation with a long and proud history and it is exciting to shape the future direction to ensure our work with our community is at the centre of all we do and that our attitude has no bounds.

Since the inception of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Clients are positively more empowered, goals are set and supports are more clearly defined. Social change and measuring the impact of what we do to support our Clients' goals has an increased focus. We wholeheartedly support choice and control and it is my vision that our organisation retains our strong Client allyship to support personalised decisions and that we build our capability and the capacity with our services and supports to ensure their life ambitions are achieved. Ongoing, we are committed to supporting people who

may not have, or are awaiting, NDIS funding.

One of my first priorities is to be part of our sector to break down the societal barriers that limit participation and inclusion for our Clients. It is devastating to talk to Clients and hear their experiences with situations such as access refusals on a daily basis. These issues are particularly prevalent in the taxi and rideshare industry, but also on public transport and in retail precincts. There is a pressing need for change and I have already started to work alongside our Clients and in collaboration with others in the sector to champion the rights of people with low vision or blindness. I will continue to meet with governments at a state and federal level to advocate on the issues affecting a barrier-free participation in society. I am also delighted that we have restructured our Consumer Advisory Council, chaired by Cameron Algie. This committee will ensure issues are brought to our attention from our community, with real life examples, to better create a lived-experience action plan.

In order to deliver on our promise to support Clients to live a life without limits, we must continue to invest in our people, infrastructure, breadth of supports and services. This means providing a truly

inclusive and accessible environment for our Clients, employees, volunteers and our whole community, where everyone is harmonised to achieve their goals. It also means we employ the very best people who embrace our values and are passionate about the work we do. A particular focus is to employ a greater diversity of people, particularly those who are blind or have low vision. We are also looking for increased representation from people with other disabilities, as well as those people who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+ and First Nations people who share in our vision for a life without limits. It also means partnering with organisations who can amplify our objectives, particularly in the accessible technology space.

We have so much to offer all involved at Guide Dogs Victoria. What a privilege it was to open the doors and welcome staff to our new Kew Campus Administration building in May. It was a wonderful chance for our staff to reconnect, collaborate and celebrate in our co-designed new space and come back together in person after working remotely for so long. Since moving back to the Kew Campus, we have already enjoyed many Client, donor, volunteer and staff events in our new Betty Amsden Education Centre. It is a joy to have a space where our whole community can come together.

We're well on our way to completing 'The Future is in Sight' redevelopment project and we are all so looking forward to delivering our Client residential accommodation, on-site mobility training, experiential centre and sensory gardens. We will also open our café in the near future. I would like to thank and acknowledge the work of our project team, Catherine Curry-Hyde and the

'Future is in Sight' Committee members Dr David Cochrane, Nick Mescher, Bruce Brook and Penny Callaghan. You can learn more about the exciting plans for the rest of the campus redevelopment throughout this report.

Since beginning, I have met with our teams, Clients, volunteers, supporters and partners and have an overwhelming sense of positivity about our future. I'd like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our donors and everyone who supports us. We are so proud of the vital work we do to support people with low vision or blindness and we are inspired by the confidence and trust you place in us all.

Finally, I am tremendously grateful for the support of the Board and the Executive Leadership Team and the work we do in collaboration with Guide Dogs Australia and the other Guide Dog states, with whom we share excellent partnerships. Together we bring renewed energy and a shared vision for the future, including at a national level. There is much work to do, but we are all very committed to empowering a 'life without limits' and I am very excited about the future ahead.

Nicky Long

**Chief Executive Officer
Guide Dogs Victoria**

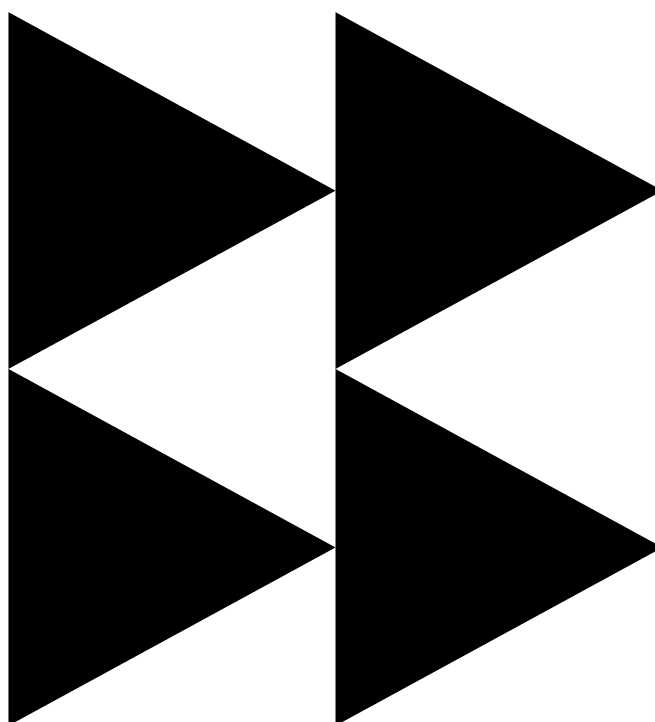
A message from our Patron.

As Patron of this important organisation, I am pleased to recognise and congratulate Guide Dogs Victoria on another successful year.

For more than 65 years, Guide Dogs Victoria has enabled blind or low vision Victorians to live independently. Their advocacy, support services and resources have helped Victorians living with blindness or low vision, and promoted their contributions to our state.

My sincere thanks and congratulations to the staff, volunteers and supporters of Guide Dogs Victoria. Your work makes our state a more supportive and accessible place for all Victorians to live.

**Professor the Honourable
Margaret Gardner AC**
Governor of Victoria





Our Clients.

About our services.

When social, physical and digital environments are not accessible or inclusive, people with low vision or blindness can face barriers to living the life they want. We work with our Clients, their families and caregivers to increase their skills, confidence and access to support and accessibility tools, giving them more choice for how they go about their day-to-day lives and get out and about. This is achieved through the following services and supports:

Adult Mobility Services.

Learn to move confidently and safely through the community.

Assistive Technology.

Identify and use the right technology to make life easier at home, at work, at school and in the community.

Children's Mobility Services.

Children aged seven to 18 explore and develop skills to reach their potential.

Early Childhood Services.

Children aged zero to seven and their families explore and develop skills to reach their potential.

Group Programs.

Learn skills and connect with similar members of the community in a fun and relaxed group setting.

Guide Dog Services.

Partner with a Guide Dog to access the community with confidence.

Occupational Therapy.

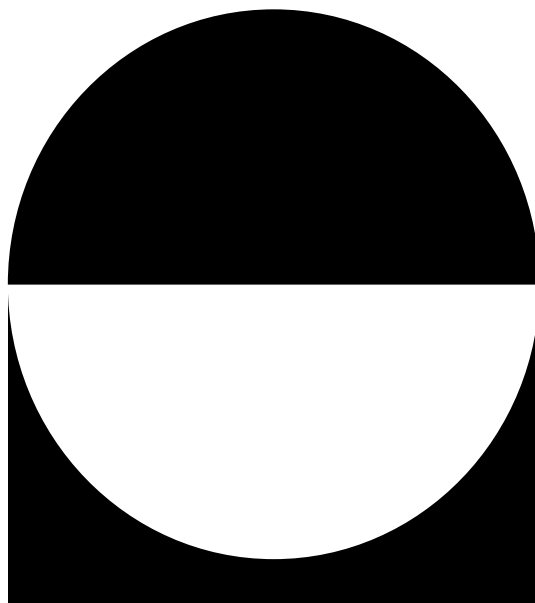
Develop practical skills for everyday living, regardless of age or level of functional vision.

Orthoptic Low Vision Services.

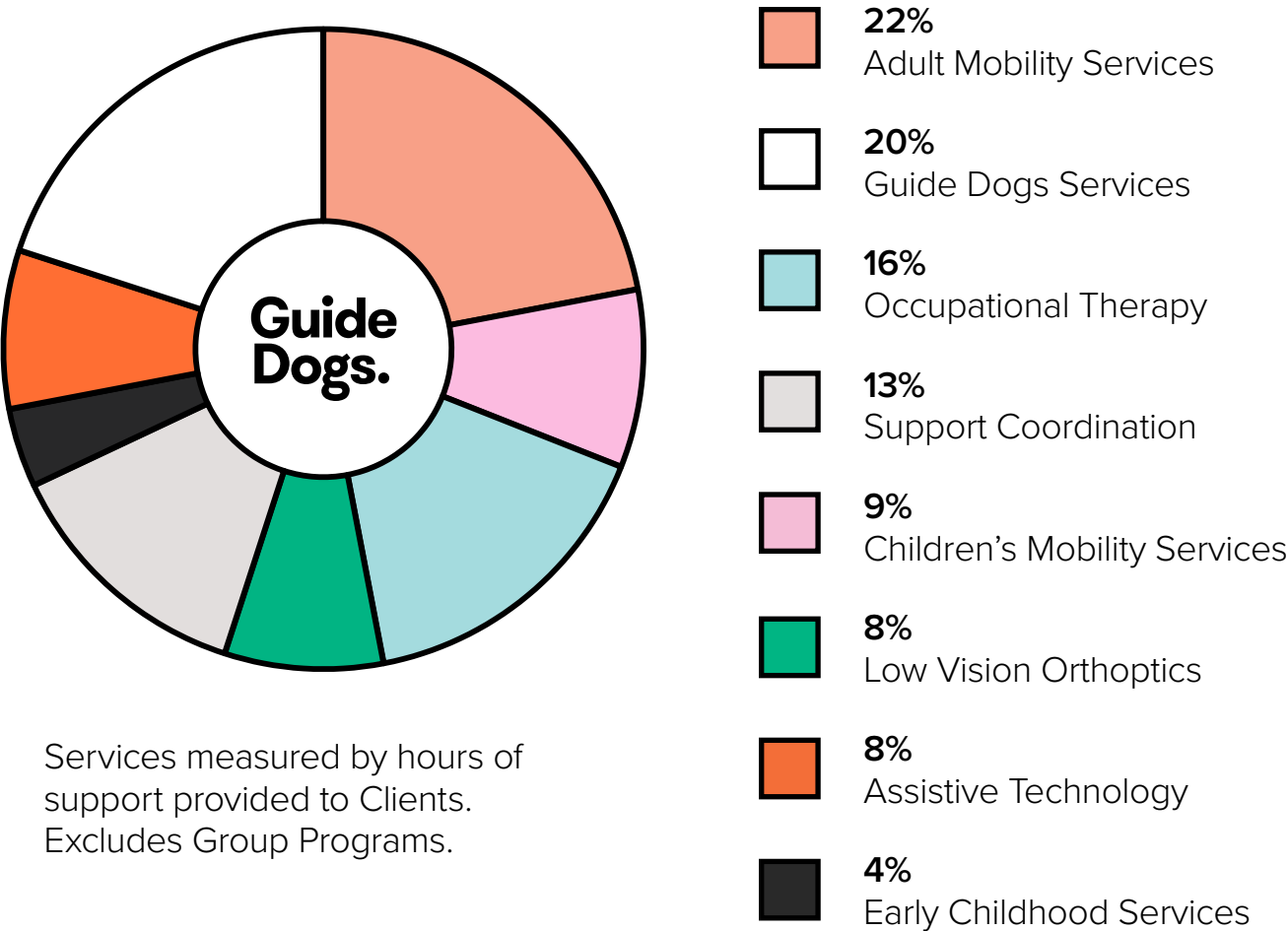
Understand functional vision, develop techniques and explore options to access visual information.

Support Coordination.

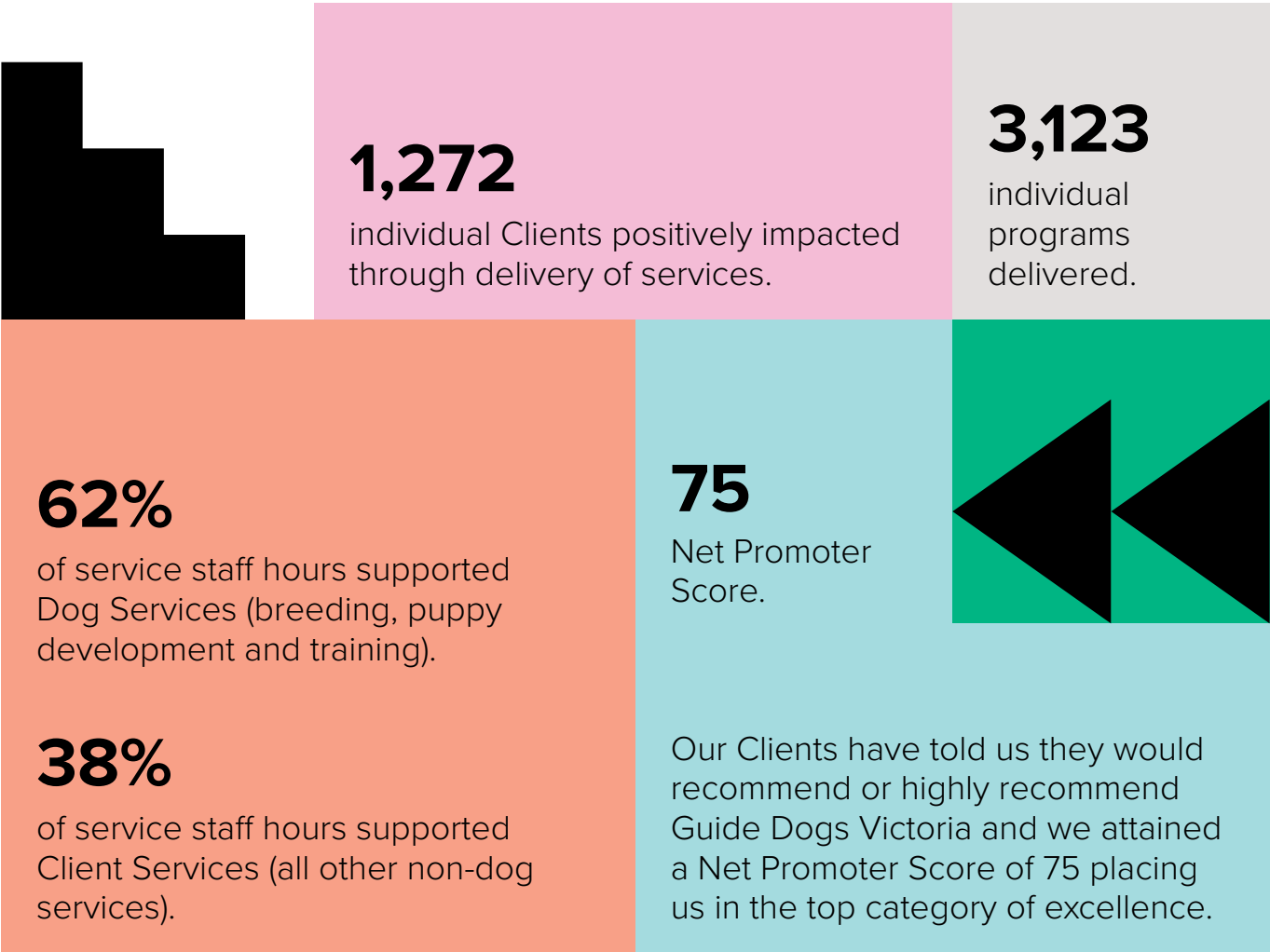
Find the right information, support and services to navigate the NDIS with a personal guide by your side.



Services breakdown
by type.



Our impact.




Group Programs.

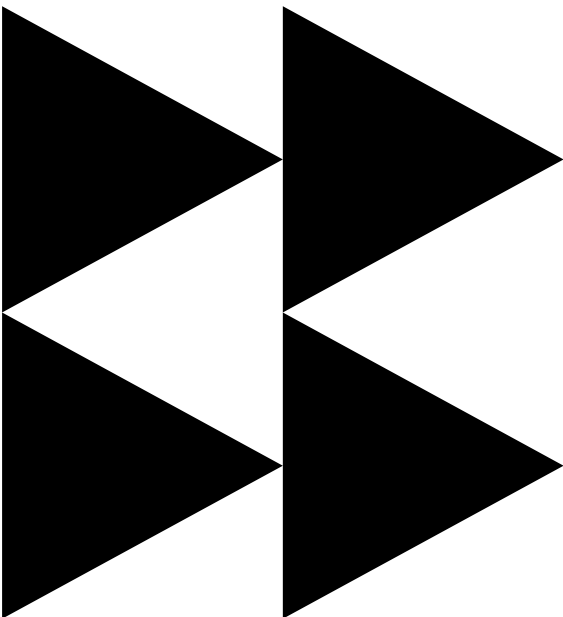
Our Connection and Engagement groups offer opportunities for our Clients and those in the broader low vision and blind community of all ages to share their experiences and make real connections.

Through our peer group service principals we want to ensure we develop, deliver and promote a holistic service model that caters for the physical and emotional needs of children and the people who support and care for them. Our aim is to co-design accessible, inclusive Client-led programs to support connection, learning and wellbeing. Current Peer groups include Young Adult Program (YAP) and Divas.

This year, we reviewed our peer groups with a particular focus on children and the use of our spaces at our new Kew Campus. Through focus groups, we gained insights about how we could co-design the space to improve functionality and appeal to Clients of all ages, particularly teenagers. Ideas included creating ‘hangout spaces’ and activities involving music and garden meeting points, which we were able to share with the architects.

This year, we supported 108 Clients to achieve greater independence and connection through:

<div>9</div> <div>Early Childhood and Children’s Mobility Group Programs.</div>	<div>14</div> <div>Young Adult Mobility Group Programs.</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Adult Mobility Group Programs.</div>	
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The Travelling Yappers head to the Gold Coast.

The Young Adults Program (YAP) is designed for young Victorians aged between 18 and 35 who are blind or have low vision. YAP provides a fun and safe space to connect with peers, share ideas, learn from one another and develop the skills and confidence required to participate in age-appropriate life activities. YAP is held 12 times per year either via zoom or in person.

In March this year, the group embarked on a trip to Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast. Guide Dogs Victoria staff accompanied nine Yappers, three of whom brought their Guide Dogs and five who are long cane users.

The group navigated through airports and participated in activities including grocery shopping, dining out and spending time at the beach, just to name a few. Of course, no trip to the Gold Coast would be complete without a day at Dreamworld! These activities encouraged the Yappers to use their problem-solving and organisational skills and provided lots of opportunity to put their orientation and mobility and navigation skills to the test.

YAP is a fantastic way to connect with others to form new friendships, enjoy activities together and share stories of lived experience.



“What I have enjoyed most about this trip is being around others who are blind or have low vision. I have learnt so much by just being a part of their group and listening to their experience.”

Following the trip, one Yapper independently booked and planned a trip back to the Gold Coast for the Easter break with her partner. She stayed at the same accommodation and planned to take her partner on all of the same activities she participated in during YAP. The confidence she gained to arrange the trip is a direct result of being part of the Travelling Yappers.

YAP is proudly supported by the Collier Charitable Foundation.



Social impact.

We support our Clients to pursue meaningful activities that are important to them and to build and maintain strong relationships and connections to help them feel more positive about the future. This year we surveyed our Clients as part of our Social Impact Measures Framework.

Day-to-day life.	73% of Clients say that they are more confident doing daily activities.
Getting out and about.	80% of Clients say they have the skills and knowledge they need to get out and about with more independence.
Meaningful activities.	77% of Clients say that they are more confident doing activities that are important to them.
Relationships and connections.	80% of Clients say they have made or maintained social connections.
Feeling good.	82% of Clients feel more confident in themselves and what they can do.
Living the life you want.	69% of Clients say that overall, they are more able to live the life they want.

Noora's story.

Five years ago, Noora felt something was wrong. She noticed that her vision was changing and it deteriorated very quickly. Living with Retinitis Pigmentosa began to limit Noora's world. Simple tasks like walking her daughter to kindergarten, cooking a meal, or crossing the street to grab a coffee became significant hurdles.

Reaching out to other providers and being turned away due to the lack of NDIS funding became frustrating. She then contacted Guide Dogs and, within a week, had received a response. She met with Orientation and Mobility Instructor Amy, and things started looking up for Noora.

Before meeting Amy, Noora had barely used the white cane she had. She was unsure of the best way to use it. But with Amy's help, Noora gained confidence and started venturing out, learning different routes, significantly improving her mental health.

After meeting with Amy, Noora was connected with other specialists at Guide Dogs, such as Assistive Technology Specialists, Occupational Therapists and Orthoptists, who made things easier for her at home. She started cooking again, continued her university degree, joined a gym and found joy in being an independent woman and mother once more.

One of Noora's favourite activities with her daughter was reading children's books together. When her vision deteriorated, she couldn't do this anymore. Orthoptist Kate assisted Noora with a piece of technology that displayed the books on a screen. She could zoom in and out, change the colours for

accessibility, and once again spend that special time with her daughter.

At every step, Guide Dogs has supported Noora to ensure she received the necessary assistance. This is possible thanks to the generous support of our fabulous donors and people who leave a gift in their Will. Guide Dogs is largely funded by the generous support of the community; without it we could not ensure anyone with low vision or blindness can access the services they need to live confidently and independently.



Access consulting.

At Guide Dogs Victoria, our Access Consulting team works tirelessly to remove barriers, ensuring people with low vision or blindness can experience the world with equitable access, freedom and independence.

During this financial year, we completed major access consulting appraisals aimed at increasing accessibility of playgrounds, skate parks and the CBD for people with differing abilities, including low vision and blindness. Key stakeholders included Playce (Playground architects) and City of Melbourne (Braille Street signage project).

We completed six major projects aimed at assisting ease of access through an environment. This involved roll out and maintenance of Beacon technology, functionality and placement of Tactile Ground Surface Indicators and secondary mobility aid technology. Key stakeholders included The Department of Transport – Metro trains and City of Moreland recreational centres and the Department of Transport.

We also worked with the Guide Dogs Victoria Campus Redevelopment team to ensure appropriate wayfinding features, including Bindi Maps, were installed throughout the campus to maximise ease of access for all our blind or low vision stakeholders and Clients.



Connected Together.

Connected Together is a national program which aims to support the growth of peer-led networks and community activities inclusive of arts and culture, sport and recreation and social and community participation for people with low vision or blindness, their carers, family members or support networks.

Funded by the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Grant Program, Department of Social Services, Australian Government, the program began in June 2021, with recent extension of the program to June 2024.

Guide Dogs Victoria leads the program consortium comprising each member organisation of the Guide Dogs Australia

Federation, which includes Guide Dogs Victoria, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Guide Dogs Queensland and Guide Dogs South Australia/Northern Territory.

Since the program began Connected Together has supported 51 peer groups across Australia, representing 2,375 people living with low vision or blindness, and enabled participation of more than 3,000 people in inclusive activities, such as adaptive sports try-outs, peer meetups, accessible arts and cultural activities, health and wellbeing classes, audiobook clubs and online digital literacy.

Evaluation to date indicates the following short-term impacts:

97%

of participants indicated increased opportunities for sharing experiences and information among groups.

98%

agreed they had increased access to diverse social networks, activities or experiences.

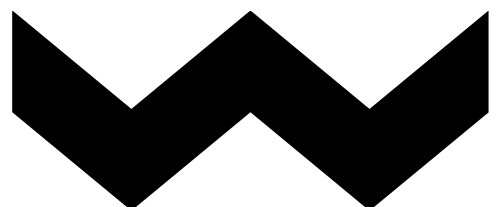
75%

of peer groups have increased participation of people with low vision or blindness.



91%

indicated increased access to availability of information and activities.



Mental Health Wellbeing.

Guide Dogs Victoria is committed to building a healthy, supportive, safe and happy workplace and environment for all our people. Post COVID-19, Guide Dogs Victoria sought funding to implement additional mental health and wellbeing supports for staff and community.

Such funding was provided by the Diverse Communities Grants Program, Department of Health, for Guide Dogs Victoria to introduce a new 12-month program in January 2023, called Working Together to Improve our Mental Health Literacy. This co-designed project was developed through consultation and collaboration with peer community networks across Victoria, to respond to this community need through prevention, early detection and intervention.

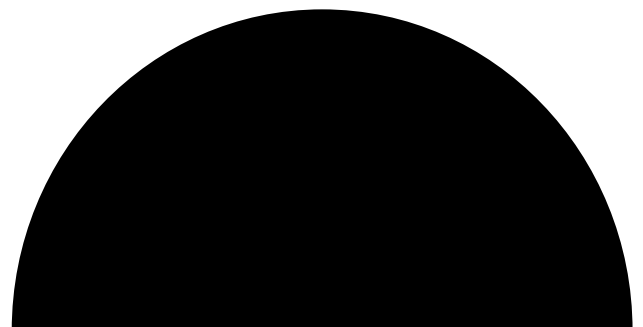
Working Together to Improve our Mental Health Literacy aims to:

- improve the ability of community peer leaders to identify and respond to mental health support needs within their groups in addition to their own selfcare;
- reduce social isolation for people with low vision or blindness, leading to improved mental wellbeing;
- improve staff wellbeing and skills relating to identifying, referring mental health concerns and understanding their roles; and
- increase accessibility of mental health training and online resources for people with low vision or blindness.



Led by the Connections team, the project is progressing well with a number of program deliverables scheduled to November 2023, including:

- Mental Health First Aid Training courses;
- an online self-care workshop for parents and carers of children living with low vision or blindness;
- increased access to accessible online mental health resources;
- the development of a mental health working group to promote sustainability beyond the life of the project.





Our dogs.

Our impact.

247

working Guide Dogs
in the community.



134

puppies born at
Cute HQ.

109

dogs matched with
their new Handlers:

36 Guide Dogs

48 Therapy Dogs

25 Other working dogs:

15 new Breeding Stock Dogs

3 Facility Dogs

4 Dogs for External Training

2 Puppy Raising in another state

1 Dog for breeding overseas.

Our Guide Dogs make a profound difference to the lives of their Handlers, families and support networks. Our Therapy Dog Program has grown immensely this year, with Therapy Dogs now placed with a diverse range of individuals and facilities, including schools. We are proud of the advances we've made with our Therapy Dog program.

Steve and Connie.

In 2019, Steve was enjoying Easter at home with his family when, suddenly, he became dizzy, and he had to be rushed to hospital. Upon waking up in hospital, Steve was confronted with the news that he had suffered a stroke, which consequently caused him to lose 82% of his vision as well as the ability to see in colour.

The sudden and dramatic change to Steve's vision and overall health impacted every part of his life. His loss of depth perception meant even the simplest of tasks such as walking down the stairs or leaving the house on his own became very challenging.

Guide Dogs reached out to Steve and his wife Debra immediately after learning of his diagnosis. It took time for Steve to come to terms with his new life and accept help, but once he and Debra agreed to receive Guide Dogs' help, they never looked back.

Guide Dogs had an immediate positive impact on both Steve and Debra's lives. With the help of Occupational

Therapists, Steve was again able to use some of the appliances around the home such as the microwave and washing machine, which made everyday living much easier. Debra was also provided with emotional support and help with navigating the NDIS.

Steve also received Orientation and Mobility training in the use of a white cane, however, living in rural Victoria made navigating with a white cane very difficult. This made Steve an ideal candidate to become a Guide Dog Handler.

Steve admits the idea of having to care for a Guide Dog was scary, but since he and Connie have been matched together, his confidence and overall wellbeing have improved significantly. Steve and Connie now have set routines together where Steve feels confident in walking into his local café or doctor's office with Connie by his side. Steve and Connie have also ventured out of town and there are even plans to fly to Queensland together.

In addition to being an incredible source of confidence for Steve, Connie has also helped alleviate Steve's feelings of inadequacy by giving him a sense of responsibility and making sure that she's happy and healthy, which has helped them form a beautiful bond together.

Guide Dogs has supported Steve throughout his journey, bringing much relief to both he and Debra. This is possible thanks to the generous support of our donors. Without your help, we could not provide people with low vision or blindness with the services they need to live confidently and independently.



Brodie and Minty.

Brodie, a 13 year old living in the Geelong area, has a neurological disorder that is so rare it hasn't even been named yet. He has symptoms of cerebral palsy, epilepsy and autism.

This means Brodie is non-verbal and his physical and intellectual disabilities mean he requires one-on-one care, which, of course, has had a huge impact on his family.

Mum Deanne says "Brodie's condition, of course, impacts him severely but also impacts the entire family's wellbeing – it is emotionally, physically and financially taxing.

"I wondered whether bringing a dog into the family would help, but was concerned that it would mean added time and energy pressures and was also worried about the safety of a dog with Brodie, so we delayed the decision for 13 years".

Meanwhile at Guide Dogs, after time with a Puppy Raiser, foundational training and assessment, dog Minty was assessed as being ideally suited to work as a Therapy Dog. Soon after, she was placed with Brodie and his family.

"Even though we've only had her for a short time, Minty has brought us absolute joy and we can't imagine life without her. We are living in the present now. Instead of rushing around, we take time to go for walks along the waterfront and the beach and spend time with her in the backyard and having cuddles on the couch," Deanne said.

"It is amazing coming home to her wagging tail and love. We have waited so long to have a beautiful dog, but it wasn't possible without getting a Therapy Dog

because of the worry about Brodie's safety and the essential training involved.

"Brodie is so much happier, calmer and entertained. The smile on his face says it all because Minty comes to him, especially when Brodie can't physically get to her.

"We have to be resilient in our household because of all the stresses and Minty makes us laugh, which is therapy in itself."

Our Therapy Dogs like Minty offer stability and comfort in every situation. Your support ensures we can continue to match these incredible dogs with people like Brodie, to provide them with a loyal companion who can help them through the tough times.



Puppy Raising is a family affair for the van Roosendaals.

When it comes to show and tell at school, it doesn't get much better than bringing in a puppy.

That was the reality for Ed and Alison van Roosendaal's children when they started Puppy Raising for Guide Dogs Victoria back in June 2022.

With Jack, nine, and Lucy, six, heading off to school and Ed stepping away from a time-intensive job, they decided the time was right to open the doors of their North Caulfield home to a potential Guide Dog.

"This is something I have always been interested in doing after seeing a friend participate in a similar program a few years earlier," Ed said.



"I had some extra time on my hands, our kids were now more self-sufficient and I was looking for a project that not only worked with our family, but also gave back to our community."

Enter Vicky.

"Victoria, or Vicky, was our first puppy and we all fell in love with her instantly," Ed said.

"She's very affectionate and loved being around all people as well as other dogs; she is very social. She can be a little sooky and cheeky at times, but that just added to her charm."

Not only did the family adore Vicky, but the children's school and wider community soon did, too.

"The whole school community has supported our family with this project and has welcomed the idea of using Victoria to teach the children about people with blindness and low vision," Ed said.

"Equally, it was a great opportunity to expose Victoria to lots of children in a busy environment and she really rose to the occasion."

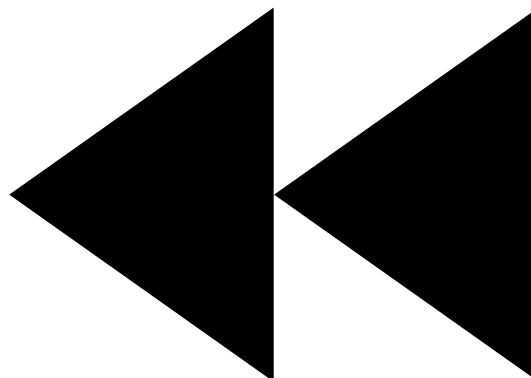
Whatever the van Roosendaal's did worked, because Victoria has progressed to Guide Dog training, and the family are already involved in temporary relief caring to get their puppy fix.



Our people.

Our impact.

Guide Dogs Victoria operates with the support of:



Staff service recognition.

Thank you to these staff for their dedication and service.

Staff with more than 25 years of service:

David Markham
36 years

Jenny Black
34 years

Pete Tomlins
29 years

Ron Heal
26 years

Kerrie Matthews
25 years

Janice Aldred
25 years

Staff with more than 20 years of service:

Katrina Ritter
24 years

Irene Grant
24 years

Kathryn Atkinson
23 years

Naomi Wallace
22 years

Elizabeth Smallwood
21 years

Jun Atobe
21 years



Our volunteers.

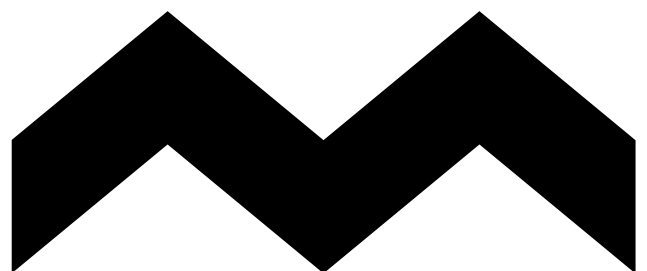
Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our organisation.

They selflessly give their time, care, expertise and energy to allow us to continue our vital work and support our Clients to live the life of their choosing. For this generous gift, we say thank you.

Our volunteers provide support in a variety of ways, including administration, transport, gardening and maintenance, events and all things puppy-related!

They assist us in all facets of our Dog Services, from breeding, kennel cleaning, feeding, walking, grooming, temporary caring, nurturing and, of course, puppy raising.

We could not support our Clients in the many ways we do without the invaluable work of our dedicated volunteers and, for that, we thank you.



Celebrating our staff – Wendy Wood.

This year, we farewelled our beloved Volunteer Coordinator, Wendy Wood.

Wendy's contribution to Guide Dogs Victoria is immeasurable; she has provided guidance and support to many hundreds, if not thousands, of volunteers throughout the years and has been a trusted colleague and friend to many.

After 19 years of service, Wendy has decided to take a well-earned break to travel and spend more time with her family.

To thank Wendy and celebrate her achievements, we marked the occasion by coming together in The Betty Amsden Education Centre for a morning tea. More than 50 of our volunteers joined us to hear speeches and catch up and chat over a scone or two.

For Wendy, leaving is bitter-sweet. She said:

“Our volunteers are the backbone of the organisation and your support and friendship over the years has made my role an absolute joy. Thank you for being such great work colleagues, your generosity and commitment to Guide Dogs Victoria is unwavering and what you enable the organisation to do is so very special.”



Our commitment to equity, access and inclusion.

Guide Dogs Victoria is committed to improving equity, access and inclusion for all stakeholders across all facets of the organisation. We strive for continual improvement in our own processes and practices to enable an equitable and inclusive world and demonstrate best practice in accessibility in all we do. We continue to assess and update our approach, policies, and practices to align with this commitment.

This year we have introduced the following strategies and policies:

- Accessibility Policy
- Diversity Strategy
- Public Holiday Substitution Policy
- New Employee On-boarding Policy
- Volunteering Policy, which includes a focus on inclusive and accessible volunteering, in line with the recently released National Volunteering Strategy
- Purchased Leave Policy, which introduces the ability to buy up to four weeks' additional leave
- Family and Domestic Violence Leave Policy, which provides for ten days paid leave
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

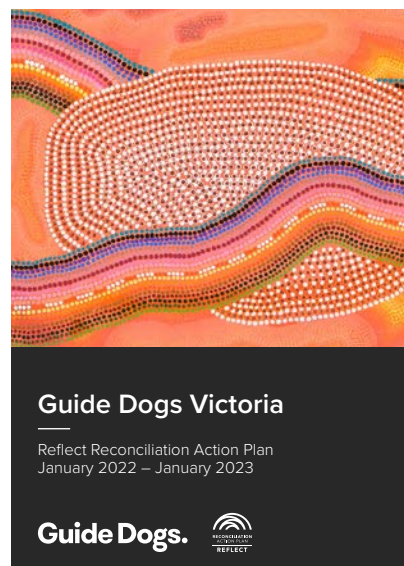
Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

At Guide Dogs Victoria, we're committed to making reconciliation part of our culture through our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (Reflect RAP). Launched in 2022, our Reflect RAP outlines the

practical actions and initiatives we will undertake to promote reconciliation, support Indigenous communities and to improve vision outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Earlier this year, we released our Impact Report which outlines some of our Reflect RAP outcomes and achievements. Case studies demonstrate what we achieved and illustrate the impact of our work; for example, establishing formal and informal mutually beneficial partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and businesses; engaging Your Mob Learning to provide Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training Courses for employees; and celebrating important events, such as National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

We acknowledge that reconciliation is a journey and our Reflect RAP is just one step in this process. We look forward to continuing this important work as part of our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as we begin the next stage of our Innovate RAP.



Midsumma Festival.

In February, Guide Dogs Victoria joined 350 organisations and more than 13,000 people to participate in the Midsumma Pride March. Our 'Life without limits' entry saw about 32 participants, including Clients and their support persons, march down Fitzroy Street dressed in colourful rainbow outfits, waving flags and holding a beautiful banner.

Our participation in the Midsumma Festival celebrates access and inclusion and demonstrates we are a culturally safe and disability-confident organisation. Thanks to our supportive team, our Clients, employees and volunteers felt included, comfortable and safe and were able to participate without any barriers to access.

Guide Dogs Victoria Client Claude/ Claudia (preferred pronouns they/them/ she/her) says:

“Having disability service providers who are openly supportive of their staff, Clients and volunteers who are in the LGBTIQA+ community is so refreshing. You can be yourself without hiding. As Guide Dog Handlers, we already face so much discrimination. To know I’m not going to face it from a provider about my sexuality is one less thing I need to worry about.”

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year’s Midsumma Festival and to Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing for its grant via the Pride and Festivals Fund for supporting our participation in Pride Parade.

We can’t wait to march again next year!



Work experience with a difference.

Meet Jake, Year 10 student and Client of Guide Dogs Victoria.

Earlier this year, Jake had a unique behind-the-scenes work experience at our new Kew Campus.

Under the supervision of Client Vision Services Manager Shelley, Jake learned the ropes of the organisation – meeting with Guide Dogs Facility Manager Janice to learn about the health of our dogs and even practicing listening to a dog's heartbeat.

He also learned about Therapy Dogs, and explored the campus, discovering all the accessibility and wayfinding features and researching how to provide advice to someone using public transport to arrive at the campus.

There was other serious business to take care of as well, including playing with puppies and rubbing elbows with Guide Dogs Victoria CEO Nicky Long, who he interviewed, and managed to score this gem of a quote from her when he asked her what motivated her to join Guide Dogs Victoria: "I have a passion to break down barriers for all people to live a life of their choosing; I feel I can offer my skills and lived experience to do that."

Congratulations, Jake,
on a job well done!



Celebrating our volunteers – Barbara Bedford.

This year, Barbara Bedford celebrates 40 years volunteering for Guide Dogs Victoria.

Barbara has volunteered in many capacities in the past 40 years. She started as a Puppy Raiser, where she raised seven puppies, two of which joined our breeding program. Barbara then began helping new Puppy Raisers prepare for their pups by providing them with support and guidance. She also became a Breeding Stock Holder, caring for Guide Dog mum Hannah, who had two litters, giving birth to 16 puppies.

In addition to all of this, Barbara initiated two new volunteer programs at Guide Dogs Victoria: our Archive Management Program, where Barbara collects, restores and catalogues our archives, including photos, footage and documents; and our Puppy Nurturing Program, where she organised



volunteers to gently handle, massage and nurture our pups from 10 days old to prepare them for their puppy raising homes.

Barbara's service and dedication was acknowledged by Guide Dogs Victoria in 2014, where she was awarded the inaugural Independence Award at our International Guide Dog Day celebrations. Her easy-going and happy disposition has made her an integral part of our organisation. She Barbara has many friends across the Campus and has been a great mentor for staff and volunteers.

Thanks Barb, you're a true gem and we all love you.

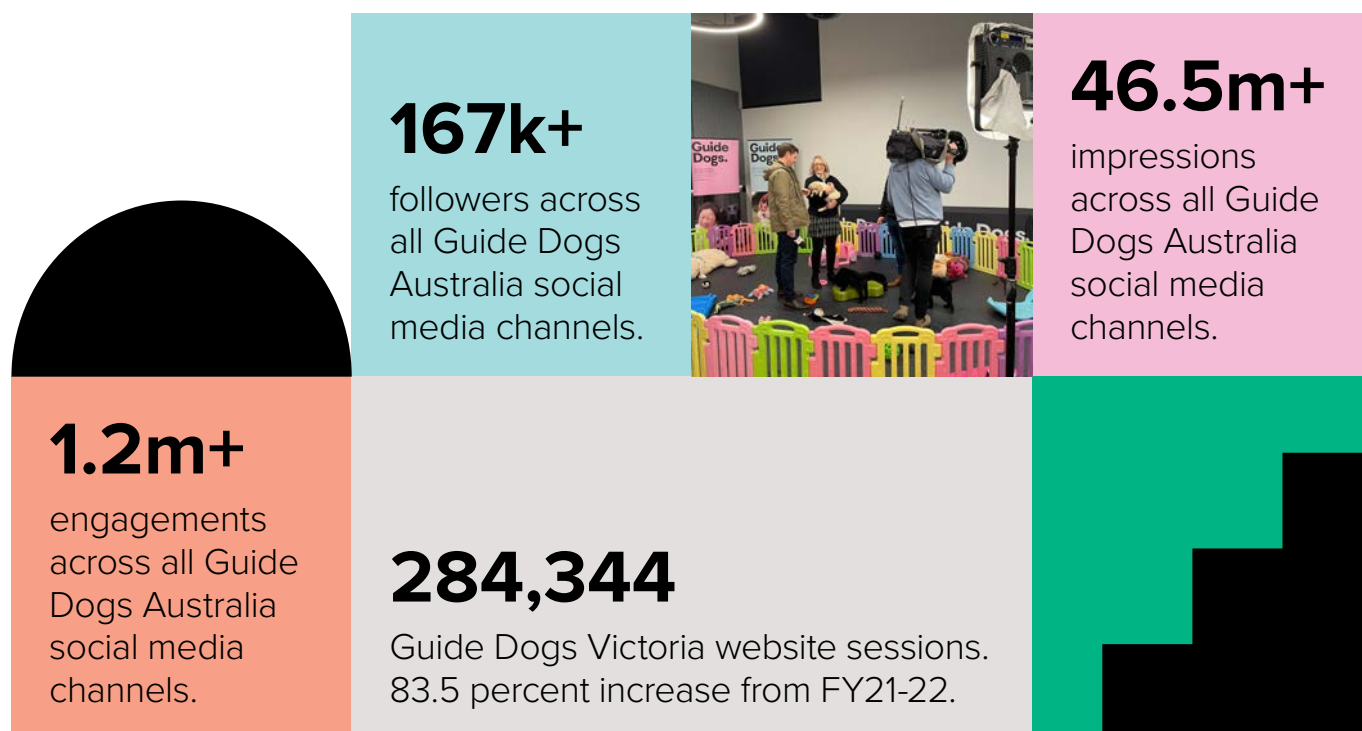




Our reach.

Our impact.

Using our voice to advocate and educate.





International Guide Dog Day 2023.

On International Guide Dog Day, we celebrate the important role Guide Dogs play in supporting people all around the world with low vision or blindness to achieve their goals and live independently.

This year, our 'Talk to the Handler' campaign called on the community to work towards better understanding and supporting Guide Dog Handlers by highlighting the issues that affect their independence. We asked our community to further their education by following our 'five top tips', accessing resources, asking someone they know with blindness or low vision about their experience, or undertaking formal training for work, then passing that knowledge on.

International White Cane Day 2022.

On International White Cane Day, we celebrate the achievements of people with blindness or low vision. It is always an important day on the Guide Dogs calendar as the **white cane** is the mobility tool of choice for most Guide Dogs Clients.

This International White Cane Day, our 'Look up. Listen up. Let me be.' campaign focused on how we can take simple steps to create a more accessible environment for everyone. It urged the public to be more aware of how they might be obstructing people with low vision or blindness, with the aim of making our streets safer and more accessible for all. Crucially, it asked people to look up from their phones and turn the volume down or off – as well as discouraging would-be helpers from grabbing white cane users, or their canes, without asking if they need help first.





Our supporters.

Our impact.

Thank you for changing the lives of people living with low vision or blindness.

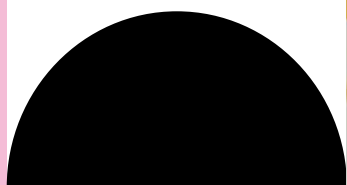
\$14.6m

raised from more than 28,000
donors and lottery program
supporters.



106

new Otus
Fellowship
members.



The Otus Fellowship was
established to honour the
generosity of our wonderful
supporters who have included
Guide Dogs Victoria in their Will.



Gifts in Wills.

Thank you for your generosity.

In grateful memory of our very special supporters whom we cannot thank in person and whose life-changing gifts were received during the past year.

Francis Abrahams Charitable Trust

Jim Adams

James Alford Trust

Betty Astbury

Nancy Balding

Valder Barrett

Peter Biffen

Wilfred and Ruby Bird Charitable Trust

Betty Bremner

Betty Bromley

Neville and Rita Brown

Linda Brown Trust

Helen Bruere

Marie Campbell

Bryan Cannan

Helen Chowaniec

John Coates

Jennifer Cook

Laurence Cook

Roger Cook

Alfred Curphey

Edna Curwen-Walker Charitable Trust

Janine David

Marie de Bavay Trust

Eardley de Motte

Marjorie Denmead

Dorothy Diffey

Ian Dodd Trust

Inez Drury Trust

Janette Dunbar

Sylvia Dungan

Nancye Durham

Jack Eadon

Donald Edwards

Judith Faithfull

John Farrell

Brendan Feehan

Joan and Ronald Filmer Foundation

Michael Galea

Eileen Galt

Edward Gerrard

Mary Godridge

Walter Goodwin

Jeanette Greedy

Pamela Hancock

Violet Harding

Jennifer Harte

Marjorie Louisa Hayes and Olivia May Cock Memorial Trust

Douglas Haynes

Oswald Hearne Trust

Margaret Henderson

William and Dorothy Higgins Charitable Trust

Inge Hofmayer

Amelia Holland

Patricia Mary Holmes Charitable Trust

Constance Hunt

Joan Hutchison

Christine Jarrett

Patricia Jean

William Jones

Mary Jones Bequest

Edith Kemp Memorial Trust Fund

Edna Kerr

Betty King

Ethel Lamont

Marjorie Lander

Kenneth Lawrence

Marie Lionnet

Kenneth Lomax

Karin Mackinnon

Kenneth Mansfield

Kenneth Martin

Joseph Mason

Annie Matthews

Gregory Mellor

Gwenneth Elsie Miller Charitable Trust

Rebecca Milne

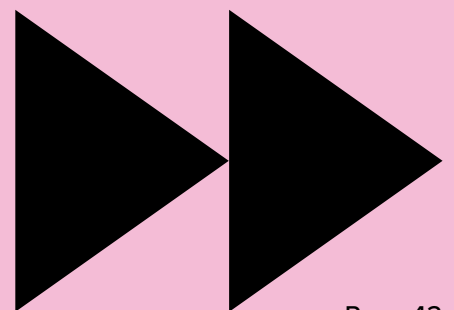
Maud Morgan

Cordula Neil

Marlene Nitschke

Edna Olson

Faye O'Neil
Winnie Palmer
Victor Pittman Charitable Trust
Lola Poynton Memorial Fund
Rose Pratt Trust
Lois Preston
Mario Proto
Margaret Richardson
Elsie Rose
Mary Saunders
William Shipperlee
Hildegard Snaith
Betty Spinks Charitable Trust
Kenneth Sprigg
Jacqueline Stephens
Merle Stewart
Aileen Stooke
Ruth and Harry Taafe Charitable
Trust
Betsy Taig
Michael Teuma
Rita Thompson Charitable Trust
Margaret Thurley
Adrianus Van de Bunt
Russell Vontom Charitable Trust
Egon Weiss
Joe White
Kathleen Ann White Charitable Trust
Gladys Williams
Ada Withers Charitable Trust



Otus Fellowship member and Guide Dog Partner.

Monica Behrend.

Our supporters are the lifeblood that keeps our mission alive and thriving. We have the privilege of shining a spotlight on Monica, a remarkable supporter of Guide Dogs, whose philanthropic spirit has had an incredible mark on our organisation. Monica started supporting Guide Dogs in her early years with her mother, who had a deep passion for supporting people living with blindness or low vision.

This history of philanthropy and a deep passion for the work Guide Dogs does is why Monica has been a dedicated supporter of Guide Dogs for more than 55 years. Monica has made the very generous decision to include a charitable gift in her Will to Guide Dogs as well as being a Guide Dog Partner, supporting the breeding and training journeys of dogs Daisy, Taj, Felix and Monsie. Monica's generosity serves as a wonderful example of what one individual can achieve when they believe in a cause. We hope Monica's generosity will inspire others to join us in making a difference. Thank you, Monica.



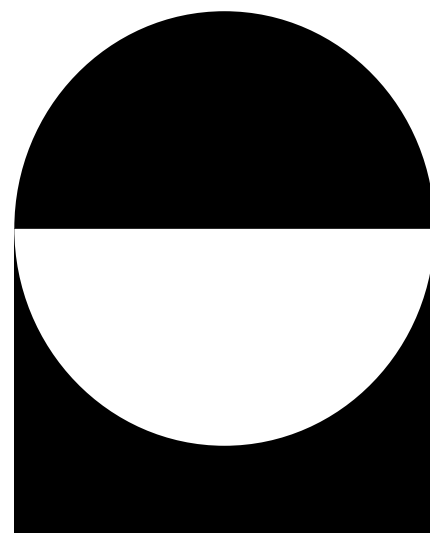
Thank you.

We would like to thank the following trusts, foundations, groups and organisations for their generous support*:

Aged Persons Welfare Foundation
Barr Family Foundation
Bowness Family Foundation
City of Ballarat
City of Greater Geelong
City of Melbourne
City of Yarra
Collier Charitable Fund
Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
Department of Social Services
Gaudry Foundation
Geok Wong Charitable Trust
Isaacson Davis Foundation
Isobella Foundation
Kel & Rosie Day Foundation
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund - Eldon and Anne Foote

Lynx Charitable Foundation
Mandy Deam Foundation
Mutual Trust Foundation
Olive Woods Trust
Orloff Family Charitable Trust
Perpetual Trustees
Pethard Tarax Charitable Trust
Sun Foundation
Teele Family Foundation
Urquhart Charitable Fund
Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

*Donations \$5,000 and above in FY22-23.



Lifelong supporter.

Betty Amsden AO DSJ.

Betty Amsden was the Vice Patron, Board member and initial Chair of 'The Future is in Sight' capital campaign to redevelop our Kew Campus. Betty was also a generous benefactor of Guide Dogs Victoria and a truly remarkable person.

For more than 35 years, Betty was an extraordinary force championing the rights of people with low vision or blindness to live rich and fulfilling lives. She believed in the power of education and training and supported the professional development of many young leaders across our organisation.

Betty believed the redevelopment of our Kew Campus was crucial to our ability to provide sustainable services to those who need it. In her own words:

“This redevelopment is long overdue and is so much more than a building. Education and independence are key – both open so many opportunities!”

Betty had a passion for investing in projects and people that would make a lasting impact to the lives of Victorians living with low vision or blindness. So it was fitting that after her passing in 2017, her foundation, The Betty Amsden Foundation, provided the funding for our Education Centre to continue her legacy.

Betty was an institution here at Guide Dogs Victoria. She was an inspiration, mentor and a dear friend to many. Her legacy will live on through The Betty Amsden Education Centre and she will continue to support people with low vision or blindness for generations to come. We are so grateful for her support.





Our gratitude.

Our National Corporate Partners.

We could not support Clients in the multiple ways we do without our generous and passionate Corporate Partners, who assist us through donations, products and services in kind, volunteering, staff fundraising and workplace giving. We are proud to partner with all of them.

Guide Dogs Victoria is a federated member of Guide Dogs Australia, which run our National Corporate Partners Program. The benefits of the program are shared across all participating states.

Some of the incredible contributions made by our National Corporate Partners throughout the past year include:



Expert Pet Nutrition™
ADVANCE™

As one of Guide Dogs longest-standing partners, **ADVANCE**™ supports the health of our growing Guide Dogs through the donation of super premium dog food for our colony of dogs. In the past year alone, it has donated 94 tonnes of food.



Boehringer
Ingelheim
NexGard
HeartGard
ParaGard
NexGard
SPECTRA

Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Australia has provided complete preventative health support for our puppies and adult dogs, with over 2,500 vaccine doses and over 30,000 doses of parasite protection, including NexGard SPECTRA®, in the past year alone. This protection means our dogs are as healthy as they can possibly be.



coles

Thanks to the generous support of its customers and team members, **Coles Group** has raised over \$14 million since 1982 from initiatives such as our iconic Donation Dogs in Coles supermarkets and Coles Liquor stores and the sale of specially marked reusable shopping bags. In the past year alone, Coles has raised over \$865,000 to support Guide Dogs remove barriers so Clients can lead the lives of their choosing.



Expr3ss!
Predictive Hiring
Technology

Expr3ss! helps businesses save money by using its predictive hiring software to match the right person to the job. In the past year, Expr3ss! has supported Guide Dogs through puppy sponsorship and funding, which has enabled Guide Dogs to continue to match Guide Dogs with Handlers, providing independence and freedom.



Since 2016, **Flybuys** has provided the opportunity for its members to redeem points earned from purchases at more than 20 retailers into much-needed donations which fund Guide Dogs' vital programs and services. As a result of this offering, Guide Dogs has received over \$80,000 in donations.



One of our valued National Partners since 2018, **Greenstone Financial Services** supports Guide Dogs through the provision of Guide Dogs Pet Insurance which, through various levels of cover, helps cover unexpected vet bills and protects dogs, cats and registered Guide Dogs.



As a valued supporter of Guide Dogs for more than 10 years, **IDEXX** provides complimentary pathology tests to support the health of our Guide Dogs puppies and adult dogs, performing 3,108 test profiles in the past year. These tests help predict and prevent health issues and enable us to create an incredibly well-bred, healthy colony of dogs.



KONG Company has partnered with Guide Dogs since 2018 to make sure our dogs' development is supported through its iconic, high-quality enrichment toys and expert enrichment advice.



Providing support to Guide Dogs since 2014, **Petstock Foundation** has organised in-store activities, Guide Dogs' Month and support for our Puppy Raising program. Petstock also champions the work we do through campaigns and staff education.



Guide Dogs and **Ritchies IGA** have been proud partners for 30 years. Through the Ritchies Community Benefit Card Program, Guide Dogs has received more than \$400,000 in donations to help support the essential work we do, ensuring Australians living with low vision or blindness can live independently.



The **TPG Telecom Foundation's** purpose is to create opportunities to improve the health, wellbeing and education of Australian communities in need. The Foundation supports Guide Dogs' CatchUp, a free, interactive and accessible online platform which connects Australians with low vision or blindness, providing opportunities to socialise, learn and gain support through a personalised, accessible online experience.



SUNNIES. SPECS. SAFETY.

Ugly Fish Eyewear is a leading Australian eyewear brand that has supported PAWGUST and additionally provides ongoing support to Guide Dogs with \$1 donated for every online transaction that includes a pair of glasses.



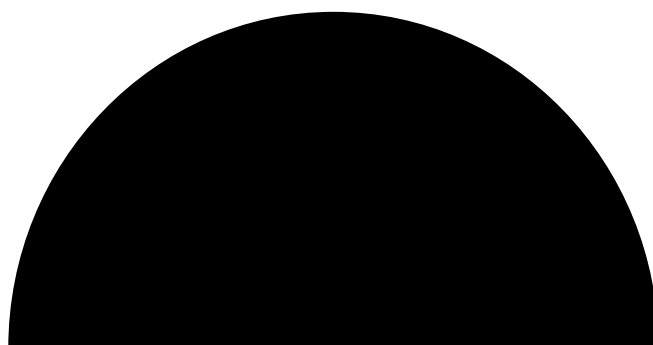
Since 1978 when our dogs were first placed in what was then known as Safeway Supermarkets in Victoria, **Woolworths** stores nationally have hosted our iconic Donation Dogs. Over the years, customer and staff donations through these dogs have raised millions of dollars and played a vital role in supporting our charity, with more than \$360,000 raised in the past financial year alone.



XL Events creates and facilitates Team Building Events. It has been working with Guide Dogs to develop the Unleashed Race to support Guide Dogs. This exciting event will give participants a glimpse into the lives of those living with low vision or blindness and provide vital funding to help Guide Dogs continue its important work.

Thank you.

We thank all of our partners for their ongoing commitment to our important work and their passion for supporting Australians living with low vision or blindness to reach their full potential.



A partnership close to our heart.

While our Clients are at the heart of everything we do, our Corporate partnerships help us keep that heart beating.

Every year for more than 10 years, IDEXX, a global leader in diagnostic solutions, has provided thousands of preventive health tests, at no cost, to help diagnose and prevent illness and keep our colony of dogs healthy.

Like all good partners, the people at IDEXX go above and beyond – providing support and creating impact in rich and varied ways. In the past year, it has not just followed the journey of Elvis, a Guide Dog Puppy, but 'IDEXXer' Zoe took on the valuable volunteer role of Puppy Raising Elvis, in the process making him an integral part of the IDEXX family. Zoe's efforts with Elvis will have a positive impact on the life of his future family or Handler in immeasurable ways.

IDEXX's mission is to enhance the health and wellbeing of animals and people and it certainly does that for the dogs at Guide Dogs, our people and our Clients. We feel the love and commitment from this partnership, which grows the values both organisations hold as sacred into a collaborative, living, breathing reality.



“We’re thrilled to be a long-standing partner for Guide Dogs and, while this is one aspect of our ongoing commitment to our communities, it’s a significant one that all IDEXXers can support and contribute to.”

Brooke Troth, Regional Marketing Leader IDEXX.



The Future is in Sight.

Kew Campus redevelopment update.

The 'Future is in Sight' involves the transformational redevelopment of our historical site in Kew, to create a state-of-the-art, contemporary, fully-accessible sensory campus. It is a progressive redevelopment project that will enable us to meet the rapidly rising demand for vision support and children's services, and ensure we can continue to provide support for people with low vision or blindness for many years to come. At the completion of the project by 2025, it will include residential accommodation, an experiential centre, onsite mobility training and sensory gardens.

This year, we completed the Administration building, our universally designed, fully-accessible space where all of our services and supports will be managed. We also delivered The Betty Amsden Education Centre, providing a multi-functional space that transforms into an auditorium. Meeting rooms can be used by our staff, volunteers, veterinary, school and community groups to gather in and learn and it will also provide a much-needed internal training space for our Guide Dogs. It can also be hired out as a function space for corporate and community organisations.

Our new café space, located in the Vet building, was completed in 2022. This not only presents another income stream, but the opportunity to partner with like-minded organisations to further our cause. We look forward to welcoming a café partner to start operating in the near future.





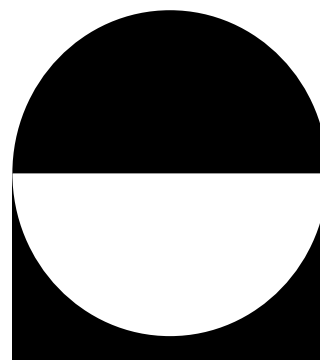
In January 2023, we began construction of the next stage being the main reception, Client residential accommodation, vision and children's services. The new Client residential accommodation will promote the development of independent living and mobility skills, and we can't wait to share more about our plans for further on-site mobility training and sensory gardens in the very near future.

Finally, we look forward to delivering a full suite of Guide Dogs Services, which will include Early Childhood Services, Occupational Therapy, Guide Dog Mobility, Adult Mobility, Physiotherapy, Acquired Brain Injury services, Assistive Technology and Orthoptics.

Thank you to FPPV Architecture, 2Construct Pty Ltd and May Construction builders who have worked tirelessly to deliver this vital infrastructure, despite the many challenges faced in the past few years. Their dedication, passion and commitment has been remarkable and we are excited to continue working with them to deliver the next exciting phase.

Most importantly, we wish to recognise this would not be possible without our Capital donors, many of whom have been long-term supporters of Guide Dogs Victoria. It is with their support and generosity towards our future plan that we can continue to lead the way in providing the highest of standards of service and support to our blind and low vision community. Their generosity helps us to attract and retain the best expertise to deliver on our Client-centred purpose.

Having these facilities for our employees to work together, collaborate and create a continuous improvement platform is what Guide Dogs Victoria has always been about. Thank you for your support to mark our new era!





Our governance.

Guide Dogs Victoria Board of Directors

as at July 2023.



Dr. David Cochrane

Chair

“It is a privilege to be Chair of an organisation that provides such a valuable service. I love that the Guide Dogs Victoria community is such a passionate and committed family.”



Nick Mescher

Vice Chair

“I am proud of the role I can play in aiding people who are blind or have low vision live their best lives with the help of this great organisation.”



Cameron Algie

“My goal is to work in overcoming the many differences existing between the sighted and blind or low-vision worlds. I believe that through advocacy and education these differences can be overcome.”



Bruce Brook

“My passion is to help deliver the organisation’s mission, wherever I serve.”



Melissa Dixon

“I am inspired to learn, contribute and make a positive difference.”



Malcolm Haack

"I am passionate about the critical role Guide Dogs plays in helping people who are blind or have low vision live the best life they can."



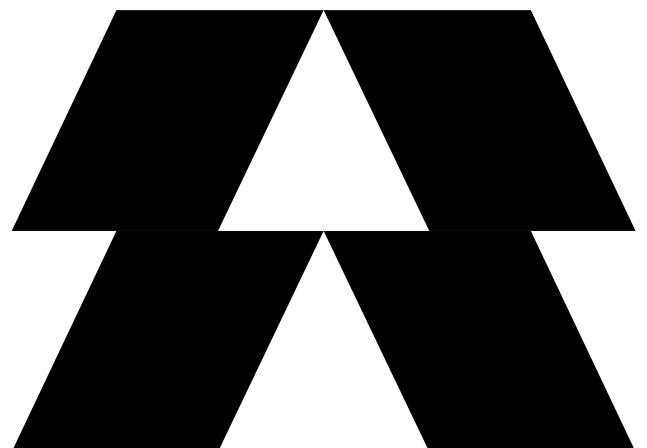
Lisa Tepper

"I am proud to be part an organisation focused on ensuring that people with blindness or low vision have the independence they need. I am firm believer that inclusion is an action we can all take every day."



Jenna Watts

"In my time at Guide Dogs Victoria, I am consistently inspired by the impact this organisation makes, improving the quality of life for the people we serve."



Thank you Iain Edwards.



We extend our deepest thanks and sincere gratitude to Iain Edwards, who served on the Guide Dogs Victoria Board of Directors from June 2011 to June 2022.

Iain has also been a volunteer Puppy Raiser, Chair of the Community Advisory Council and was interim CEO from 2022 to April 2023.

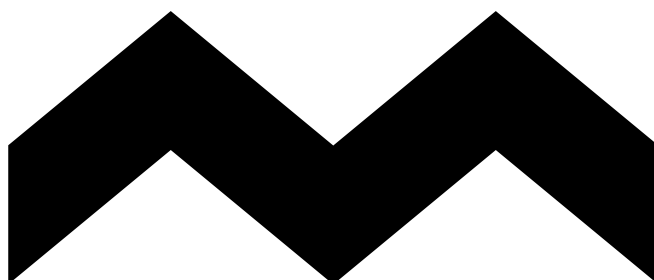
We know that Iain is an excellent example to young people and their families within the low vision and blind community of living a life without limits. Thank you for being an excellent role model to all that have met you.

Iain has resumed his executive role as Director of Operations at Peninsula Health.

Corporate governance statement.

Guide Dogs Victoria continues to publish a **Governance Commitment Statement** to promote fairness, transparency and accountability. The statement describes our key governance obligations and describes our commitment to leading standards. Our broader governance web page contains our key Board policies and further information on those who govern our organisation. These structures articulate how decision making is guided to meet stakeholder expectations of

sound corporate governance, meeting Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Governance Standards and acknowledging our responsibilities to members, donors, Clients, staff, volunteers and the communities in which we operate.





Our financials.

Revenue.

Income	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Fundraising and gift in Wills	12,405	11,296
Fundraising for capital purposes	2,228	4,957
Revenue from the provision of dogs and orientation and mobility services	4,935	5,205
Rental revenue	194	48
Finance and investment (losses)/gains	1,066	(2)
Other income	0	4
Total revenue	20,828	21,508

Expenses.

Expenditure	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Fundraising gifts in Wills	3,392	2,837
Cost of provision of dogs and orientation and mobility services	12,894	13,897
Community information and public education	869	959
Corporate services	979	837
Total expenditure	18,134	18,530

Guide Dogs Victoria's activities in the 2023 financial year resulted in a surplus of \$2.694m (2022: \$2.978m). This result incorporated an operating surplus /(deficit) prior to Capital Purpose Income of \$0.448m (2022: (\$1.979m)). The key driver of the operating surplus was a 44% increase in Gifts in Wills from our generous bequestors. Expenses of \$18.134m (2022: \$18.530m) remained consistent with the prior year, with a slight decrease in employee costs due to the challenges in recruiting allied health professionals. However, over this period, the number of Clients assisted remained consistent in the financial year 1,272 (2022: 1,285) with a small increase in the number of training and support programs delivered 3,123 (2022: 2,930).

Balance sheet.

Financial position	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	16,682	21,206
Property, plant and equipment	22,302	15,965
Other assets	3,153	2,365
Total assets	42,137	39,536
Liabilities		
Payables and deferred revenue	3,815	4,162
Provisions	1,310	1,361
Other liabilities	676	370
Total liabilities	5,801	5,893
Net assets	36,336	33,643
Total accumulated funds	36,336	33,643

There has been a movement in assets from current to non-current with the capitalisation of the completed areas of the Campus Redevelopment and the corresponding decrease in the cash held. The increase in overall assets is the ongoing capital contributions from our generous donors and the recognition of the deferred revenue contribution from the Victorian State Government.

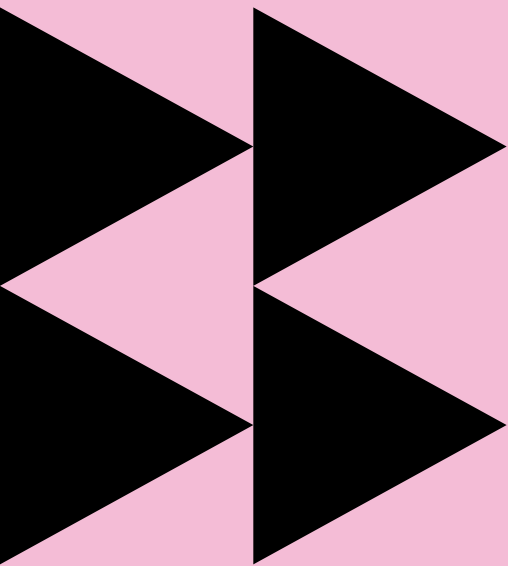




Our performance.

Performance report.

KPI	2022/2023 Full year actual	2021/2022 Full year actual	Positive / (negative) variance from prior year
Service			
Service delivery hours	24,058	28,349	(4,291)
Number of training and support programs delivered	3,123	2,930	193
Number of Clients assisted	1,272	1,285	(13)
Number of Qualified Guide Dogs	36	39	(3)
Number of Therapy Dogs allocated	48	10	38
Number of other working dogs allocated	25	32	(7)
Number of Guide Dog users	247	244	3
People			
Employee sentiment percentage	68%	69%	(1%)
Lost Time Injury Frequency rate (number of lost time incidents for every 1 million employee hours)	8.3	11.58	(3.28)
Finance			
Operating surplus / (deficit) in \$'000	\$2,694	\$2,978	\$(284)
Operating surplus / (deficit) prior to Capital Purpose Income in \$'000	\$448	\$(1,979)	\$2,427
Working Capital Position (excluding Major Capital Development) in \$'000	\$2,556	\$2,850	\$(294)
Future is in Sight Campus Redevelopment cash position in \$'000	\$8,790	\$14,107	\$(5,317)
Future is in Sight Campus Redevelopment budget \$'000	\$32,451	\$29,973	\$(2,478)



We're here whenever you need us.

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Guide Dogs.

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