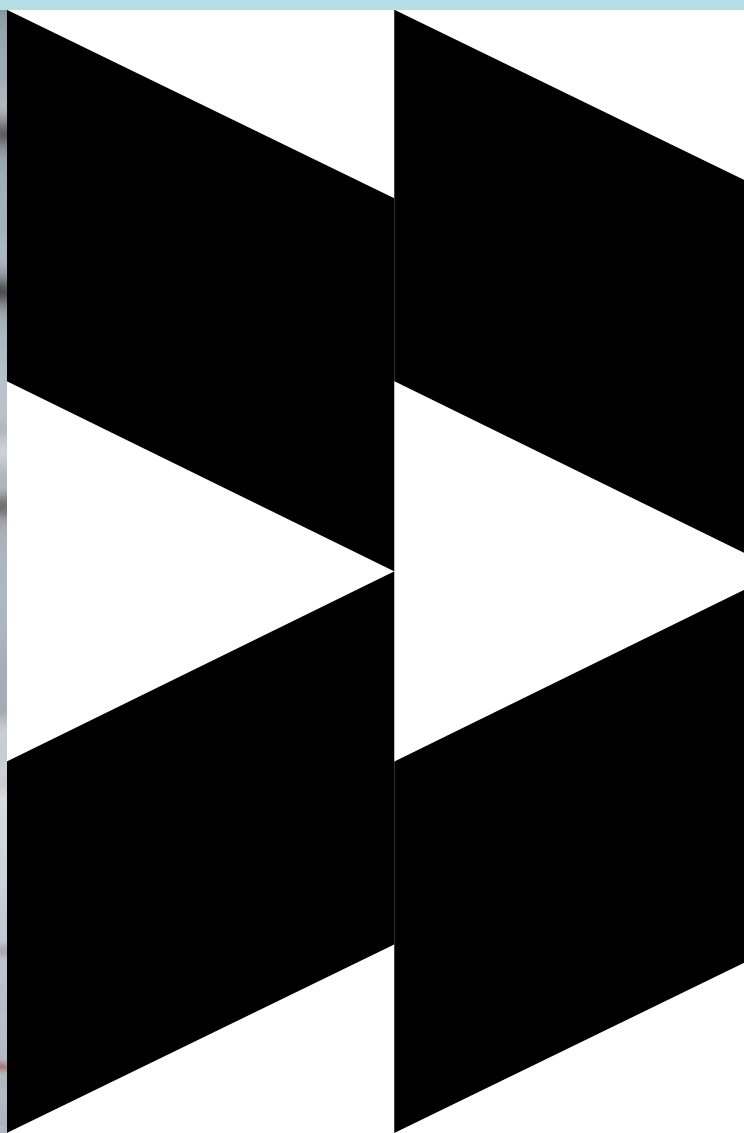


Guide Dogs.

2025

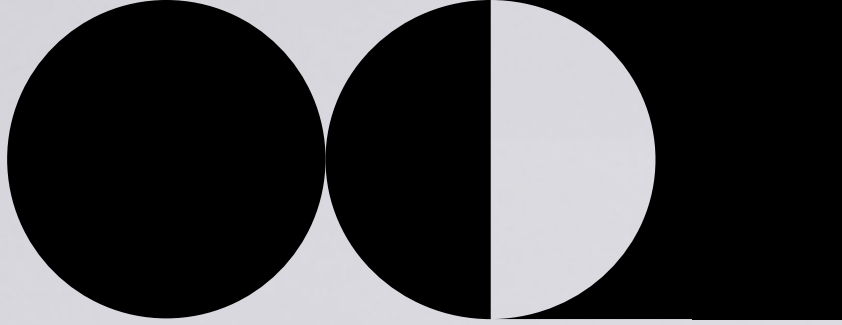
Victoria Annual Report





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Overview

Our vision and mission

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

Our Purpose

To support a life without limits

Our values.



Walk the talk

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



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.



Lead with head and heart

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



Lift each other

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



Patron Statement

As Patron of Guide Dogs Victoria, it is a great pleasure to welcome the completion of another chapter in this organisation's story of advocacy and empowerment.

This Annual Report is more than a summary of facts and figures from the past year – it represents countless acts of care and support across that time.

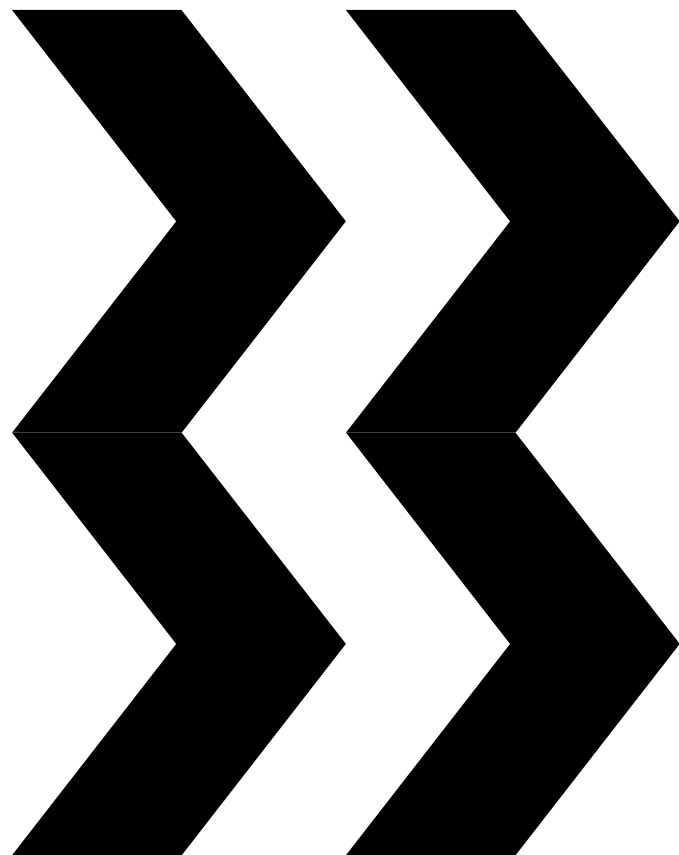
These activities have a direct benefit to so many Victorians with low vision or blindness, but they also enrich the wider community by improving access and participation by those with guide dog support.

There is always work to be done to ensure more people live active and independent lives.

Thank you to Guide Dogs Victoria for your vital work in pursuit of this mission, and for your contribution to making our State a better inclusive place for those who call it home.

Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC

Governor of Victoria





Report from our Chair and CEO

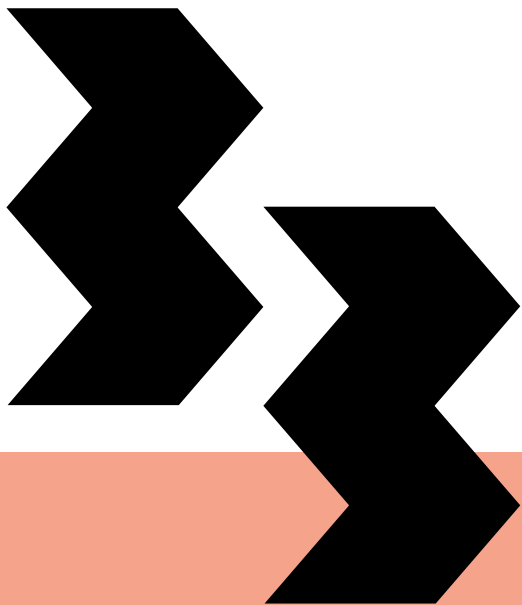
This year, Guide Dogs Victoria (GDV) has continued to strengthen its role as a vital community organisation, supporting people with low vision or blindness to live with independence, choice, and confidence. Guided by our values, we remain deeply committed to creating opportunities, breaking down barriers, and building stronger connections between people, dogs, and communities.

Highlights

This has been a year of growth and impact across every area of our work. We proudly delivered 3,459 program engagements, supporting clients to pursue their individual goals and strengthening community networks. From long standing supports of Orientation and Mobility training, Occupational Therapy, Orthoptics and Guide Dog partnerships to newer programs in Employment, Wellbeing and Psychology services, our services have touched thousands of Victorians lives and their families.

Key achievements include:

- The expansion of our diversified dog roles; specifically matching of Therapy Dog, Federal Court Dog, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Dog programs in partnership with other organisations, to increase the impact of the ways our highly trained dogs can change lives. Along with being a member of International Guide Dogs Federation (IGDF), Guide Dogs Victoria is now a member of Assistance Dogs International (ADI), and plans are underway to become an accredited ADI provider by 2027.
- The continued growth of our Wellbeing Services, supported by the Diverse Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant, addressing the emotional and social needs of our clients alongside practical support through group education.



- Expansion of Group Programs across all ages - from children to adults, these programs have been co-designed with participants, offering everything from technology trials and job interview coaching to cooking, learning and attending new sports, and social experiences.
- Our first Community Fair, which welcomed over 2,000 people to our Kew Campus. A vibrant celebration of connection and inclusion, bringing Victorians together.
- The ongoing success and growth of our volunteer community, with more than 580 individuals lending their time and expertise. More opportunities to volunteer were created while continuing growth in our ever important and dedicated 160 Puppy Raisers
- Campus opening – a celebration and official opening in September 2024, attended by our client community, politicians (State and Federal), donors, and volunteers. We were also pleased to welcome fellow blind and low vision supporters, Vision 2020 and Bindi Maps, as ongoing residents within our growing campus community. Group tours continued throughout September, October, and December, ensuring everyone had the opportunity to experience our new facilities and go behind the scenes.

Our Challenges

While this year has been full of achievements, it has also brought challenges that require agility, focus and adaptation. Our teams have done well and worked really hard to achieve in the face of some of these headwinds:

- Financial performance pressures: The year closed with a deficit of \$1.189M – a loss that was expected but it was an improved outcome against budget in what was a financially challenging year. Following the redevelopment, significant resources were directed to re-establishing programs, events, and onsite client services. At the same time, wage, facilities, and operating costs rose sharply, while NDIS pricing continues to remain fixed, increasing reliance on fundraising. Despite broader cost-of-living pressures in Victoria, both service delivery and fundraising grew, and this was underpinned by strong cost control from the leadership team.
- Looking ahead, the 2026 budget will continue to build on this momentum, positioning the organisation to operate with a positive cash flow. The budget is forecasted for a break-even operating result, achieved through cost restructuring and rebasing, as we prepare to launch a refined strategic direction from financial year 2027. This strategy, to be outlined over the coming year, positions us to expand our impact and meet growing client needs.

- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) limitations: While NDIS funding supports some of our work and programs, many clients fall outside its eligibility or do not have a package of funding to meet all their needs. Our work goes deeper than a ‘fee for service’ funding scheme - we are proud that we support people no matter their circumstances. The NDIS reforms have also challenged approval times for Guide Dogs and changes to clients funding packages and this has meant we have had to support clients in many different ways as they await outcomes. These changes have a downward effect on timing and momentum of our ability to provide support when requested and we believe in standing beside our clients until they receive the supports they need.
- Service demand: Demand for services has increased, particularly in Wellbeing and Psychology where the demand continues to grow faster than available resources. Securing sustainable funding streams for these programs is essential to meeting community need, along with attracting and retaining valuable, skilled staff. We are continuing to review our workforce model and the services we offer, seeking novel ways to manage client needs and to provide a ‘wrap around’ model into the future.





Looking Forward

As we look to the year ahead and beyond, our strategy centres on strengthening community connections while diversifying and future-proofing our organisation. Our new redeveloped facilities provide a unique opportunity to centralise and diversify our service delivery. There are so many physical attributes of the site with a state of the art design and we plan to leverage this for new ways of engagement and support.

The focus areas for the year ahead:

- **Dog Diversification:** While continuing our excellence in Guide Dog provision, we will simultaneously be growing more formally into Therapy, Court, Post-traumatic stress disorder, and other Assistance Dogs, positioning GDV as a leader in highly trained, quality provision of service dogs, having profound impact in our community.
- **Community Wellbeing Hub:** Continuing development of our campus as a centre for rehabilitation, wellbeing and capacity building services, co-designed with the community.
- **Sustainability:** Advancing our solar energy feasibility study, waste reduction initiatives, and native garden plantings, ensuring our Kew Campus is a model for environmental as well as social impact.
- **Digital and Data Transformation:** Leveraging our current technology and software to deliver increased efficiencies in our work, redefine our segmentation and digital communications. We are also ensuring we remain connected to and relevant to engage with and utilise assistive technology developments that enhance clients' connection and skill development towards their experience and participation in society.
- **Financial Strength:** Diversifying and growing revenue streams through service and support, philanthropy, gifts in wills and new corporate partnerships. There are plans for unique experiential offers that will create new ways of connecting with our generous donors.
- **People and Culture:** Continuing to foster a values-driven, inclusive, and innovative culture where our staff and volunteers feel supported, empowered, and recognised.

Closing

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our clients, volunteers, donors, partners, and staff. Together, you make possible the independence, confidence, and inclusion we strive for every day. Specifically, to our volunteer board, your efforts have diligently governed and steadied our conviction to continue our efforts to support our community in living a life without limits.

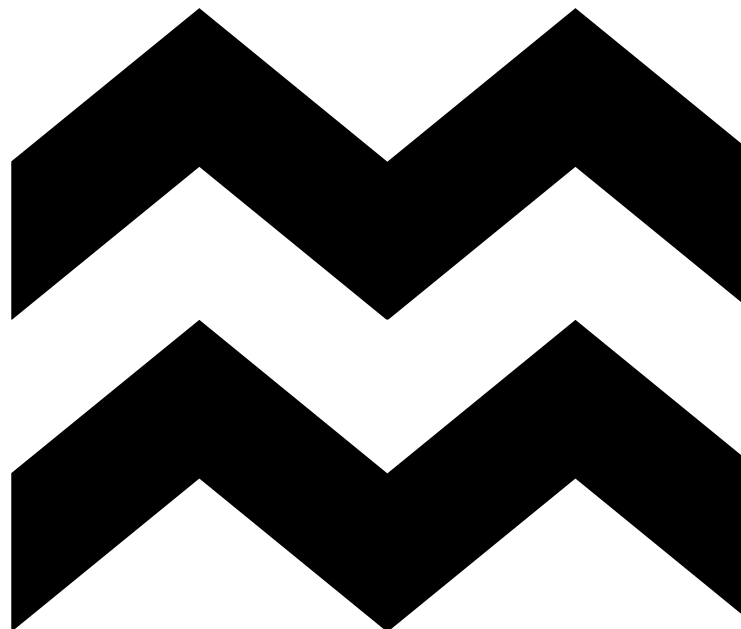
Though the year brought challenges, it also reaffirmed the extraordinary resilience and generosity of our community. We step forward with confidence, with optimism, determination, and a shared commitment to continue to deliver the highest standard of support to each and every Victorian with Blindness or low vision.



Dr. David Cochrane
Chair



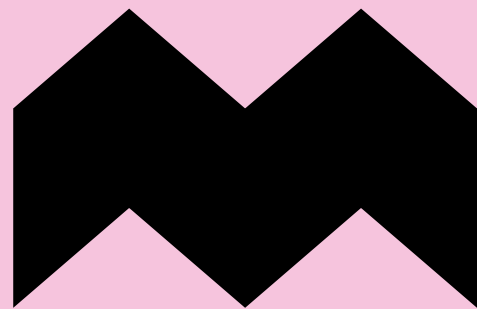
Nicky Long
CEO





Our Clients

At Guide Dogs Victoria, we exist to provide choices to empower people with low vision or blindness and equip them with the skills, tools and support to live confidently.



Our Services

More Than Support: Building Inclusive Communities Together

When spaces: social, physical, or digital aren't accessible, people with low vision or blindness can face barriers to participation. At Guide Dogs Victoria, we work with Clients, families, and carers to build the skills, confidence, and connections that support independence and participation at work, school, home, and in everyday life.

By supporting people navigate their world with freedom and choice, we also help create communities that are more welcoming for everyone.

Our model of supporting our community depends heavily on the generosity of our donors. While some services are supported by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), much of what we do is made possible thanks to the generosity of our donor community as this scheme does not cover all clients' needs and some of our clients are not eligible for accessing this source of funding support*. Your support allows us to deliver a deeper level of support and access life-changing services. Our model of support is one of self-determination towards confidence, connection, and inclusion.



Access Consulting

Ensuring workplaces, private buildings and community spaces are accessible for people with all abilities, specialising in blindness and low vision.

Adult Mobility Training

Learn to move confidently and safely through any community.

Assistive Technology

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

Children's Mobility Services

Giving children aged 0 to 18 with low vision or blindness the skills to reach their potential and build independence.

Early Childhood Services

Supporting parents and carers of children aged 0-7 with low vision or blindness and working with those children to reach developmental goals.

Employment Services

Assisting students and adult job seekers in securing and retaining employment, gaining work experience, and ensuring job readiness through support with CV.

Group Programs

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

Guide Dog Services

Supporting clients to partner with a Guide Dog to access the community with confidence.

Occupational Therapy

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

Orthoptic Low Vision Services

Support to understand the changes experienced in vision and explore ways to maximise the use of remaining vision.

Support Coordination

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

Wellbeing and Psychology Services

Offering opportunities to connect with others with low vision or blindness, access psychological or counselling support tailored to the community, and develop new skills and relationships to promote personal wellbeing.

Social Connection

Through events and partnerships with other organisations, there are tailor made experiences and ways to meet age related people and share new adventures.

*We will support clients regardless of their funding sources. A proportion of clients are not eligible under schemes such as NDIS to access a Guide Dog or other vision supports due to age (newborn to people over 65 years of age). Our team will co-develop individual clients' goals and assess needs on an individual basis.

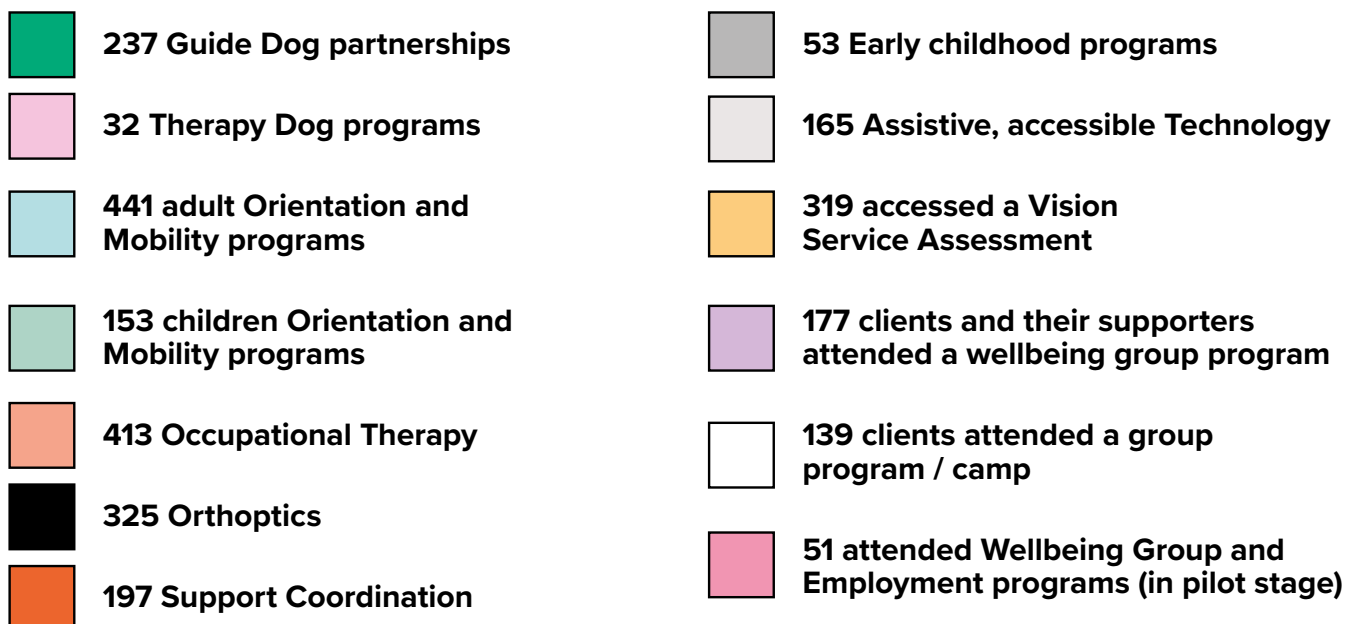
3,459 Pathways to Participation and Belonging

In financial year 2025, Guide Dogs Victoria delivered more than 3,459 program engagements, each designed to meet the unique goals of the individuals we work with, because no two journeys are the same. Many clients come to us for more than one service.

Yet the numbers only tell part of the story. Every client's success creates a ripple of impact within their personal environments: families grow more confident, workplaces become more inclusive, communities gain richer connections, and society moves closer to valuing diversity and strengthening inclusion and accessibility. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and partners, we are not just equipping people with vital skills; we are empowering them to thrive.



The Following Outlines Client's Participation Over the Last Year:



Building Resilience and Wellbeing

Guide Dogs Victoria continued to expand its Wellbeing Services, supported by the Diverse Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant from the Department of Health.

Living with blindness or low vision is not only a practical challenge, there are also emotional, social, and mental health needs that can impact daily life if left unmet. Building resilience, confidence, and strong mental health is essential for people to thrive at home, at work, and in the community.

These services focus on providing both individual support and community connection, recognising that good mental health is strengthened when people are equipped with tools for self-care and surrounded by supportive networks.

Through this funding, we delivered:

- 1:1 Wellbeing Supports: personalised care through general wellbeing support, peer counselling, and Psychology services.
- Workshops primarily led by people with lived experience: offering participants the chance to openly share, learn, and connect with others who have truly walked in their shoes.
 - Living with Blindness or Low Vision: Sharing Your Journey – creating safe spaces for adults and their support network to share experiences and strategies.
 - Confident Communication: a four-part series helping participants build strong communication skills for all aspects of life.
 - Resilient Mindset: a six-part program exploring ways to set goals, tune into self, and build inner strength.
 - Freedom of Movement: from hip-hop dance for kids to yoga classes for adults, using movement to support mental health and reduce stress.
 - Cultivating Conversations: one-off sessions for parents to connect, reflect, and support each other's wellbeing.
 - Wellbeing Game Changer: empowering adults to create their own daily "tool kit" of wellness practices and strategies.

Together, these programs are breaking down the stigma around mental health, creating spaces where people with blindness or low vision feel supported, understood, and empowered. They are helping to build the resilience needed not just to cope with vision loss, but to live well, participate fully, and belong in community.

The current grant supporting this program concludes soon. Following a positive evaluation, our goal is to secure an extension or attract new investment through philanthropy and donations to ensure this vital program continues to grow and support more people in need.



Group Programs: Growing Skills, Enhancing Futures

Guide Dogs Victoria successfully delivered new co-designed Group Programs for Children and Adults. Group Programs that focused on building the skills and connections that enhance futures towards optimising the life of one's choosing.



A Focus on Young Minds

Through camps and day programs children learned activities of daily living and new social skills. GDV delivered four overnight camps and five-day programs, supporting 42 children, aged 5–18.

These programs are designed not only to provide fun experiences, but to equip children with the skills and self-belief to find their place in the world, build lasting friendships, and follow personalised pathways that lead to happy and fulfilled lives.

Building skills for life

Across camps and day programs, children learned practical skills that build on foundations for them to thrive in community life, including:

- Navigating new environments with confidence, from bustling events like the Australian Open to local day trips, in various community settings.
- Building independence in everyday activities such as managing money, shopping, preparing meals, using public transport and exploring the city.
- Developing social skills and friendships through shared challenges, games and group activities, including navigating life cycle transitions.
- Learning to use technology - from apps to accessibility tools that enhance daily life complexities.
- Exploring music, arts, sports and recreation in ways that are inclusive and accessible.
- Personal care and grooming.

Creating community and connection

Each program created a space where children could meet peers with similar experiences, share challenges and celebrate achievements together. From paddling boats at Emerald Lake, baking and cooking preparation during camp, competing in accessible sports, or trying out a cane versus a canine, every experience was designed to meet our young clients stated goals. A pathway forward.

By practising these skills in safe and supportive environments, children are better prepared to participate fully in their communities. They leave our programs not just with memories of fun times; new friendships are forged, and steps are taken towards fulfilling their personal ambitions.

Pathway Programs



Australian Open All Abilities Day

Learn skills related to navigating new environments and managing crowds, while enjoying the tennis.

Emerald Day Out

Blind and low vision school students travelled by Public Transport to Emerald Lake for paddle boarding and dining, building confidence, independence, and community connections.

September Secondary Camp

Our September Secondary Camp was the first held in GDV's new accessible residential training facility, giving students the chance to design and take part in music, arts, city travel, and everyday living activities.

Youth Cane or Canine

The Youth Cane or Canine Program gave students the chance to explore the differences between using a cane or a guide dog, helping them make informed choices about their future mobility.

Shop Til You Drop

Teens took on the city in this Orientation and Mobility as well as Occupational Therapy program - navigating the CBD with apps, shopping with new self-conviction, and connecting with friends along the way.

Group Programs Adults: Skills for Independence, Connections for Life

97 adults participated in Guide Dogs Victoria's group programs. These programs focus on building self-belief in essential life capabilities, in the context of living with low vision or blindness and in connection with others.

Building everyday independence

Adults explored skills that support greater independence in growth and development, from trying out new technologies like Meta glasses, to learning job interview techniques, accessible makeup application, and cooking skills that offer increased variety to the repertoire of options, enhance safety, leading to a newfound confidence with experimenting.

Creating connection and joy

Our programs celebrated the joy of shared experiences. Highlights included Easter-themed cooking and mobility activities in Dine, Dog & Dash, and the ongoing Young Adults Program (YAP), where participants aged 18–35 co-designed activities such as cocktail making, high tea classes and a trip to the Yarra Valley, blending skill-building with fun and friendship.

A community that grows together

These programs are pivotal to our unique support approach. Every program, designed by the participants, provides more than practical skills; the self-created opportunities are foundations for connection, sharing of skills and creation of belonging. By learning alongside peers and trying new experiences together and friendships forged continue outside of the programs.



Independence in Action

Meta Glasses Come and Try

Adults explored Meta glasses through hands-on trials and heard firsthand how this new technology can enhance daily decisions and gather more information.

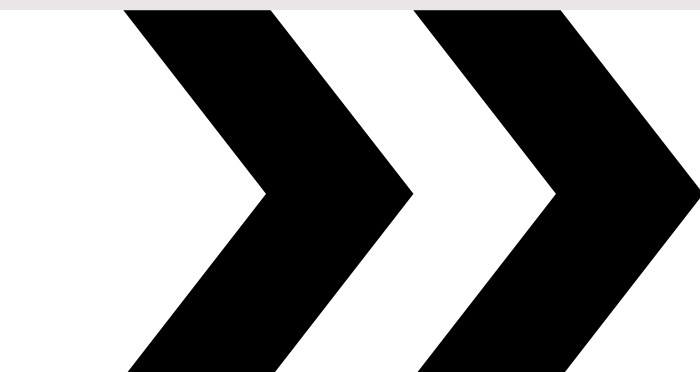


Don't Make it Up Program

Expressing yourself through make-up can be daunting if you don't know where to start. Our 'Don't Make It Up' program supported clients of all skill levels to confidently explore accessible makeup, personal image and skincare techniques.

Cook to Connect

Our Cook to Connect program brought clients together to learn or build on cooking skills, share recipes, and gain confidence in the kitchen. Our highly skilled practitioners also introduced a variety of techniques and technology to adapt to different kitchen environments .



Mastering body language for job interviews

Participants prepared for job interviews by learning about body language, practicing questions, and receiving personalised feedback.

Adults Dine and Dash - Easter 2025

A time to put creative cooking skills to the test as participants baked and decorated some delicious Easter cookies then used Orientation and Mobility (O&M) and assistive technology skills for a specially designed Easter egg hunt.



Measuring What Matters to our Community

Social Impact and Value

Over the last 3 years, Guide Dogs Australia has worked with member states to measure our social impact. Through our award-winning Social Impact Measurement Framework, we consistently monitor, analyse, and share how our services create meaningful lasting change. Outcomes are not just immediate feedback, they represent real-life progress that evolves over time, shaped by individual circumstances and supported by community. Our impact is measured across seven impact domains to see where we are contributing to positive outcomes, where we can do more, and where we can influence for wider change.

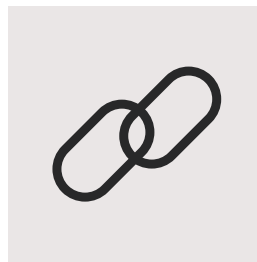
Our seven key domains include:



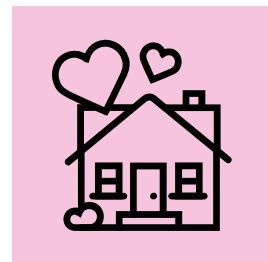
Choice



Independence



Connection



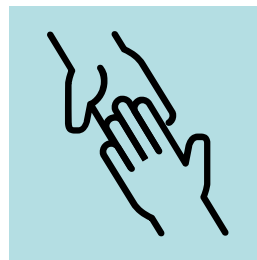
Daily living



Mobility



**Meaningful
activity**

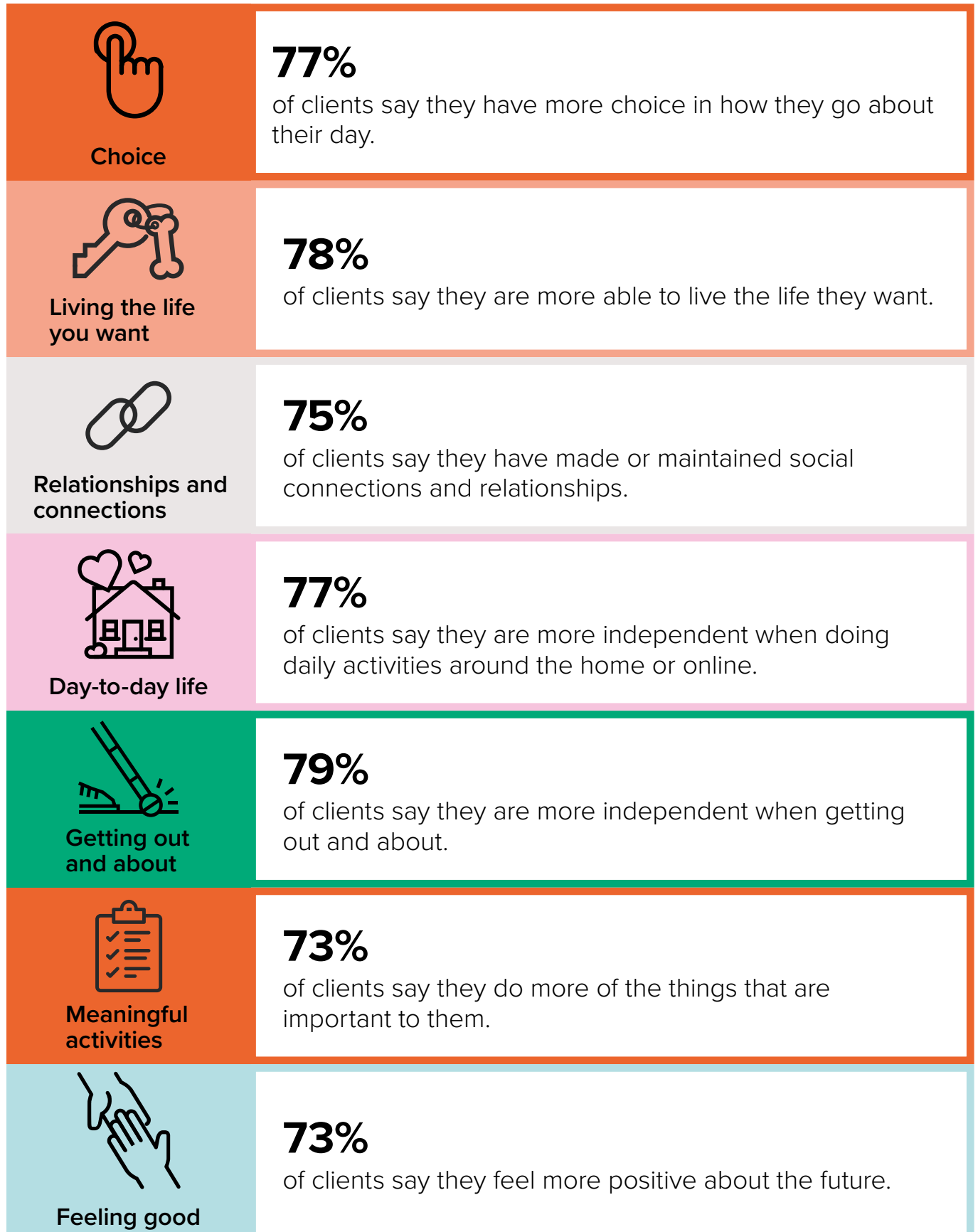


Wellbeing

This year, we are proud to have maintained strong performance across all domains, with clients telling us they feel more independent, more connected, and more positive about their futures. These insights affirm the importance of our collective effort: clients, families, volunteers, staff, donors, and partners all working together to build a community where everyone can truly live the life they want.

Our Social Impact in Numbers and Voices

Here's how people told us their lives have changed across our seven impact domains:



**“Guide Dogs
allows me to have
independence and do
what I want to do.”**

**“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.”**

**“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.”**

**“I felt lost when my
vision diminished, but
now I feel optimistic
about the future, with
or without sight.”**

**“Having a Guide Dog
has opened my life up
tremendously. I can keep
up my volunteer work a
few times a week.”**



Adua's Story



At 58 years old, Adua's life has been shaped by her independence, resilience, and strong sense of community. Living with Congenital Cataracts, Glaucoma, and other vision conditions since birth, she has always found ways to adapt and thrive. But it was in 2015 when she was matched with her first Guide Dog, Sabrina, that her world truly opened in new ways.

"With a cane, I was still independent, but there's no comparison to the freedom and confidence Sabrina has given me. She's been my angel, my friend, and my help," Adua says.

Sabrina not only transformed Adua's personal independence but also became part of her professional and community life. Working in aged care, Sabrina brings joy to residents,

providing comfort to people who are bedridden and lifting spirits during daily activities. "Sabrina even plays a role in my job," Adua explains, "When I walk with residents, she's right there beside me. People light up when she enters the room."

Beyond work, Adua is passionate about giving back and sharing her lived experience. She runs vision-impaired table tennis, speaks publicly about blindness and Guide Dogs, and facilitates Italian community Telelink calls; a role she has proudly held for over 20 years. She also enjoys tandem bike riding and fundraising for charities, always finding new ways to stay active and connected.

Guide Dogs Victoria has supported Adua with training, technology, and mobility services, helping her keep pace with the changes in her life and her needs. Most importantly, the partnership with Sabrina has given her greater confidence and encouraged her not to stay at home.

Now, as Sabrina approaches retirement, Adua is preparing for the bittersweet transition to a new Guide Dog. "It will be hard to say goodbye to our working partnership, but she'll always be part of my life," she says. "I know Guide Dogs Victoria will find the right match for me, just as they did with Sabrina."

For Adua, Guide Dogs Victoria hasn't changed who she is, it has enriched her life and given her the tools to continue living with purpose, passion, and independence.

Natale's Story

Natale has built a life filled with faith, advocacy, and community. Living with vision impairment since birth, he has always sought ways to stay active and independent, while giving back wherever he can. With support from Guide Dogs Victoria, Natale has found new confidence in everyday travel, technology, and organisation; changes that have opened doors to the places and activities that matter most to him.

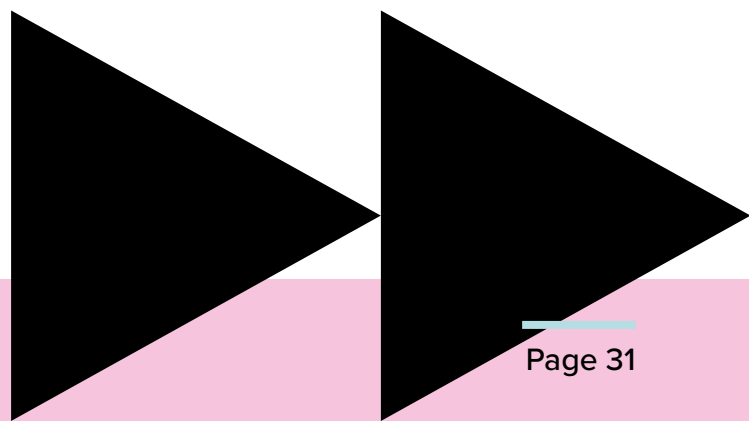
One of Natale's main goals was to attend services at St Therese's in Essendon, a parish newly merged with his own. The route involved several busy intersections that felt unsafe to navigate alone. With Orientation and Mobility training, Natale learnt how to safely cross those roads and now travels to both churches with confidence. "Being able to get there means I can contribute more to parish life," he says. "I still go to my old church, but now I have the choice to be part of both communities."

Guide Dogs Victoria has also supported Natale in the home through Occupational Therapy and Assistive Technology. Practical solutions like colour-coded power points, strip lighting in his pantry, and the use of Apple AirTags labelled with a PenFriend have made it easier to organise and track his belongings. These small but powerful adjustments have improved not only Natale's independence, but also helped his elderly mother, with whom he lives. "It's about being practical," Natale explains. "Simple things like organisation or labelling make daily life smoother for both of us."

Technology continues to play a central role in Natale's independence. With training, he has learned to use Fusion (ZoomText and JAWS), manage his devices more confidently, and integrate tech into daily routines like travelling, emailing, and even preparing to read at Mass for the first time since school - this time with the help of an iPad. While he believes Guide Dogs Victoria could expand its tech training with a "help desk" style service, Natale is proud of the skills he has gained.

Beyond his personal life, Natale is an active advocate for people with disability. He sits on the City of Moonee Valley Disability Advisory Committee, the Mable Committee, and co-chairs his workplace's Enablers Network for staff with disability and carers. "I want to contribute wherever I can," he says. "Advocacy is something I've always done, but with Guide Dogs' support, it feels easier and more effective."

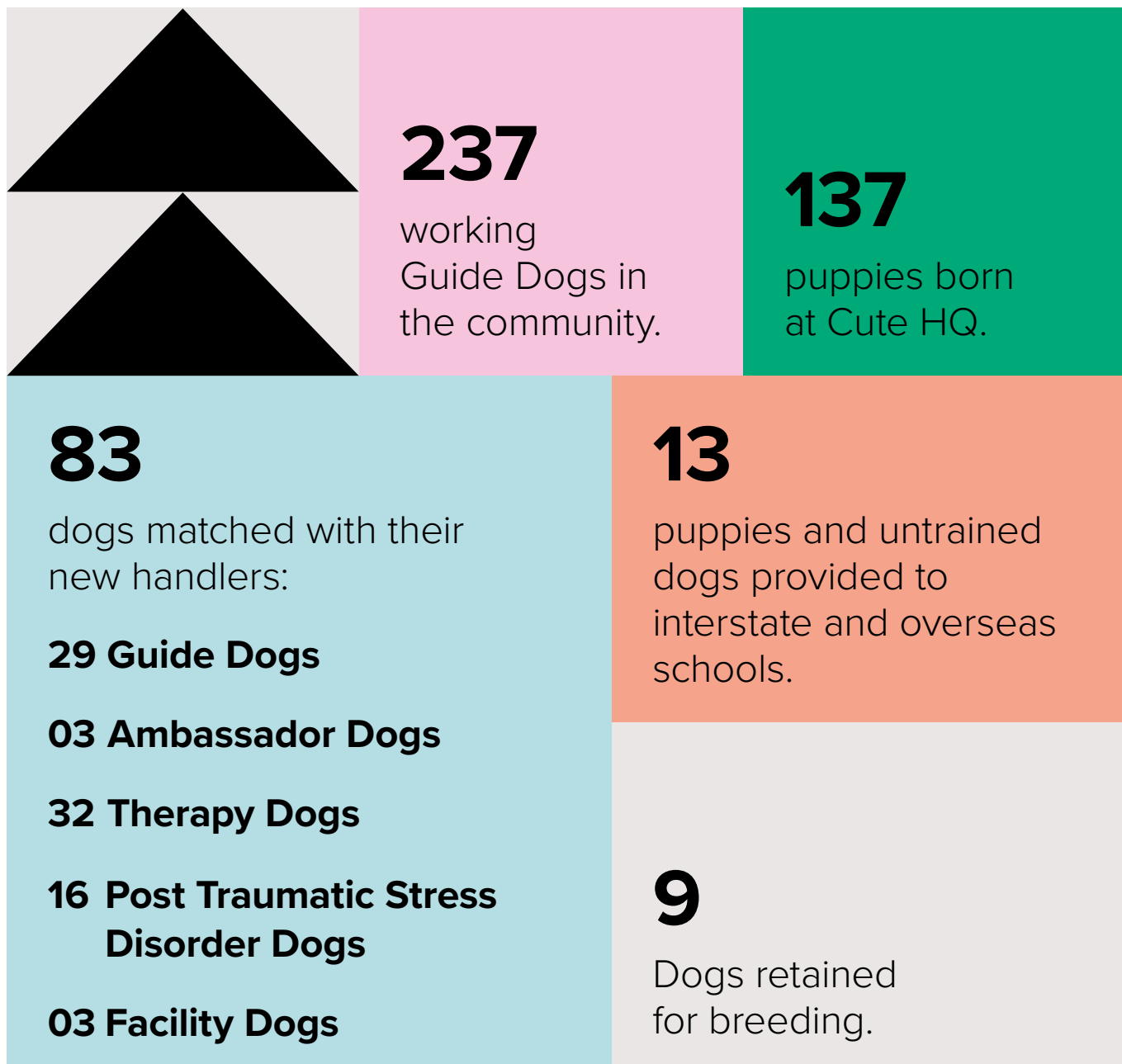
Looking ahead, Natale remains optimistic. Whether it's travel, football games, or holidays at Golden Beach, he feels prepared and confident to keep living life on his own terms. "Guide Dogs hasn't changed who I am" Natale reflects, "but it has enhanced what I do, made me more confident, and given me the tools to keep moving forward."





Our Dogs

Impact Unleashed: Our Dogs in Numbers



Building Futures Through Dog Services

At Guide Dogs Victoria we are proud to continue delivering dogs of the highest quality to clients across Victoria, interstate, and overseas.

This year, we returned to campus-based delivery of our residential training programs at our fully accessible Kew site. Across the year, 29 successful client matches were achieved, with 22 clients completing residential training and providing outstanding feedback on their experience.

With access to purpose-built training facilities, our Guide Dog Services team has expanded the range of programs available to clients. These include:



Transition to Retirement support for ageing working Guide Dogs.



Refresher training to strengthen skills in traffic navigation and obstacle work.



Extended assessments to help clients make informed decisions about the suitability of Guide Dog mobility.

Supporting International Partners and Programs

Our international connections were founded several decades ago and remain strong, with visits from partner schools in the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Japan and Singapore. This year, we provided four assessed dogs and one broodie in whelp to support our partners local programs. GDV works with accredited International Guide Dogs Federation schools and has supported several international schools with development and training of their staff and support through expertise in our long standing, highly regarded breeding program.



International delegates from the Guide Dogs, Service Dogs, and Hearing Dogs Association of Japan. Pictured from left to right: Saiga San (Guide Dog Mobility Instructor), Park San (General Manager), and Eri Mitsukawa (Interpreter).

New Dog Careers, Lasting Impact

Not all dogs become Guide Dogs, but their talents continue to make a difference. This year, 51 dogs found valued roles in other pathways externally – from Therapy and Wellbeing programs to emerging assistance dogs.

As part of our ongoing commitment to Dog Diversification, Guide Dogs Victoria proudly became a member of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) with Guide Dog accreditation, and we are working toward extending accreditation across other assistance roles in partnership with specialist organisations.





Representatives pictured from left to right: Jennifer Ball (President, Law Society of NSW), Judge Mansini (FCFCOA), Chief Justice Alstergren AO (FCFCOA), Liz Pepper (General Manager, Dogs and Vision Services, Guide Dogs Victoria), and Jordan Carlo (FCFCOA).

Paws in the Courtroom, Strength in the Community

Guide Dogs Victoria's Court Dogs program enhances wellbeing and improves the court experience. As the Guide Dogs Australia lead partner with the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, we supported three new placements this year, with more in development. Evidence shows Court Dogs lower stress (reduced cortisol) and increase oxytocin, easing anxiety and improving clarity.

Court user surveys showed universal support - 100% said having a Court Dog was positive and 100% felt supported; with respondents most often reporting they felt relaxed (78%), less nervous (77%), happy (66%), safe (52%), able to think more clearly (40%) and express themselves better (35%).

QT Melbourne Welcomes New Wellbeing Dog-Cierge

Our Wellbeing Dog placed at QT Hotel, Melbourne has strengthened community engagement through unique initiatives such as Puppies and Pilates, attracting strong public interest and raising brand awareness. QT proudly fundraises for Guide Dogs Victoria through the Pilates sessions and selling merchandise.





A Fond Farewell to Mr Walker

After years of greeting guests with wagging tail and boundless charm, we bid a fond farewell to Mr Walker on his retirement as the Park Hyatt Melbourne's much-loved Dog-cierge. More than a friendly face, Mr Walker embodied the spirit of welcome, delighting visitors from near and far and becoming an icon of the hotel's hospitality. His presence has created countless cherished memories for guests and staff alike. We thank Mr Walker for his years of service and wish him plenty of well-earned rest, treats, and adventures in his retirement.

Veterinary Services: Strengthening Care and Capacity

Our onsite Veterinary Services have significantly strengthened the care we provide to dogs at every stage of life. Community support has been instrumental in this growth, including a generous donation of an equipment package and investment in a new dental machine, enabling us to broaden our onsite services and deliver even higher-quality care.

This year, the clinic expanded its reach to include dogs entering retirement, Therapy Dogs, wellbeing checks, past breeding stock, and dogs owned by staff from our colony. These services not only enhance support for our wider community but also contribute to the long-term sustainability of the clinic.

With improved clinical capacity, deeper client connections, and a stable financial footing, Veterinary Services is well-positioned for continued growth and impact. We remain deeply grateful for our partnership with Advance Vet Care, whose 24/7 facilities provide vital support alongside our own.



Brent's Story



At 54, Brent has built a life defined by resilience and routine, with a career spanning more than 30 years. Living with vision impairment since birth, he has long relied on tools and training to stay independent. His partnership with his Guide Dog Zosh, together with technology and training from Guide Dogs Victoria, has given him fresh confidence in daily life.

A turning point came during Orientation and Mobility training when an instructor encouraged Brent to trial different cane options. “For the first time I realised I had choices, it wasn’t one model for everyone. I chose a yellow cane because it stood out more, and that small decision shifted my confidence.”

That moment of choice was bigger than a colour swap, it reframed mobility as something he could tailor. With that mindset, Brent began seeking other tools he could customise, especially technology. With support from Guide Dogs Victoria, he learned to use an iPhone, explored GPS navigation, and trialed smart glasses. “Technology opens up so many opportunities - I’m always keen to learn what’s next,” he says. The most profound change has been working with Zosh, a dog matched to his fast pace and active lifestyle. “The bond is stronger when you train at home” Brent explains. “During COVID, that’s how I trained with Zosh, and it made all the difference.” Together, they support Brent’s daily commute, his work, and his independence.

While his routine hasn’t changed much, Brent’s outlook has. Once sceptical of services and dismissive of cane users, he now champions a mix of tools - from canes and dogs to the latest tech. “I’ve seen the difference these services make, not only for me, but for others I’ve referred.”

For Brent, Guide Dogs Victoria hasn’t been about changing his life completely, it has been about strengthening the skills, technology, and partnerships that allow him to keep living the life he chooses.

Honouring Extraordinary Service to Guide Dogs

As a member of the International Guide Dog Federation, many GDV Guide Dog Services staff were recognised for their long tenure delivering Guide Dog Services through the inaugural John Groom Long Service Awards. We thank them for their long-standing service and expertise that has shaped our organisation and the way in which they have imparted their knowledge to develop the future generations for GDV.

Recognition of long-standing service	
Lyn Pandji	20 years
Elizabeth Smallwood	23 years
Jun Atobe	23 years
Naomi Wallace	24 years
Kathryn Atkinson	25 years
Katrina Ritter	26 years
Janice Aldred	27 years
Aaron Horsington	29 years
Peter Tomlins	31 years
David Markham	38 years
Marita Baker	40 years
John Gosling	50 years



The Power of Partnership: Julie, Zoey her Guide Dog, and the Healing Strength of Horses

In the heart of rural Victoria, where paddocks stretch wide and horses gallop freely, Julie is living her dream, independently and with purpose, thanks to a unique partnership between her Guide Dog and her horses.

Julie manages a busy stable that houses and trains racehorses, an environment that demands precision, care, and dedication. What makes her story remarkable is that she does it all without vision, supported by two life-changing companions: her Guide Dog Zoey, and her horses.

Julie's love of horses began at 13, when she still had vision. Those early experiences gave her the confidence and knowledge she now draws on every day. "Horses can be very powerful animals, and it takes skill to know how to work with them safely" she reflects.

Zoey plays an essential role in Julie's daily routine. On the property, Zoey guides her through the unstructured landscape to feed and water the horses, move them from paddock to paddock, and manage staff and schedules. Further Julie has the added challenge of hearing loss and Zoey provides not just navigation but also reassurance and confidence. "I used to get very anxious as I suffer with anxiety," Julie shares. "She really helps with all of that."

One of the most extraordinary examples of their teamwork is when Julie harnesses Zoey to guide her

while she leads a horse. The coordination between the two animals, each attuned to Julie's movements, is a powerful display of trust, training, and connection.

For Julie, time with her horses also brings calm and renewal. "If you're having a really, really bad day and you go out to a horse and you might just pat it and talk to it, everything else goes away. It's actually healing in some ways."

When asked to describe Zoey in three words, Julie smiled and replied: "Awesome. Nailed it with one word, just one."

Julie's story is a testament to the specialisation and personalisation of our approach to individuals. Also, reinforces the bonds we share with animals, and how independence is strengthened by partnership, trust, and care.





Our People

The Team Behind Our Mission

580
volunteers



51
new volunteers



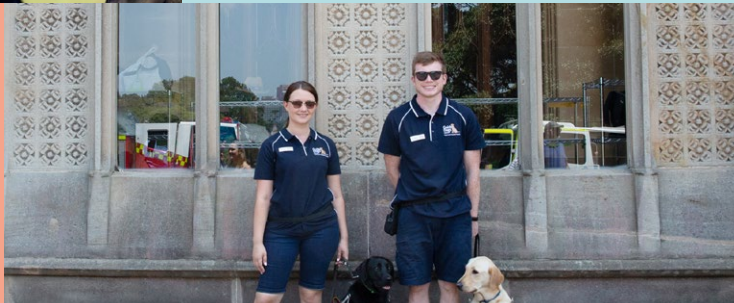
105 Million
volunteer hours



160
Puppy Raisers



138
employees



32
new starters



Celebrating Our People

At Guide Dogs Victoria, our clients come first – and it's our people who make that possible every single day.

Service Milestones

We are proud to celebrate the dedication of staff who have given more than two decades of service. Their long-standing commitment reflects not just years, but a lifetime of impact for our clients, dogs, and community.

Over 25 years of service

Marita Baker	40 years
Irene Grant	26 years
Katrina Ritter	26 years
Ron Heal	28 years
Peter Tomlins	32 years
Jenny Black	36 years
David Markham	38 years
Kerrie Matthews	26 years
Janice Aldred	27 years

Over 20 years of service

Alicia San Martin	20 years
Lyn Pandji	20 years
Naomi Wallace	24 years
Jun Atobe	23 years
Elizabeth Smallwood	24 Years
Aaron Pitt	20 years

Over 15 years of service

Simon McDonald-Kerr	15 years
Claire Yan	17 years
Hayley Osborne	17 years
Shelley Pannier	17 years
Lucie Sapulovic	18 years
Aaron Horsington	18 years
Kellie Virth	18 years
Michelle Boyd	18 years
Emily Wilkes	18 years
Diane Foster	19 years
Sally Armstrong	19 years

Reward and Recognition

Each quarter, our Reward and Recognition Awards highlight staff who embody our values in action. In 2024–2025, team members across the organisation were recognised for their creativity, leadership, and commitment to the way they do their work including:

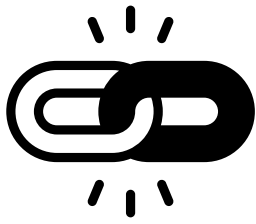
Angela Braewood	Jaime Nyberg
Christine Taylor	Janice Aldred
Greeshma Anish	Jessica Ramsden
Hayley Osborne	Lorraine Gunn
Helen Humme	Martin Earp
Shannon Manley	Monica Toscano
Simon McDonald-Kerr	Naomi Wallace
Alicia San Martin	Natalie Haidar
Diane Van Rooy	Richard Chen
Elisha Lamont	Sally Armstrong
Emma Young	Suzannah Farrell
Jade Power	Damien Nguyen
Johanna Williams	Danette Poon
Kerryn Bousfield	Danielle Kruger
Luke Price	Eamon Quinn
Megan O’Hehir	Elizabeth Smallwood
Michelle Boyd	Janet Prentice
Sandra Campbell	Lea Zhao
Stacey Ashdown	Mary Heath
Danielle Ainsworth	Megan O’Hehir
Diane Foster	

Thriving Together: Positive Employee Engagement

In December 2024, we introduced a new employee survey through Culture Amp and invited our people to share their voices through a deeper employee engagement survey. We had an outstanding 88% response rate, showing just how committed our team is to shaping the future of Guide Dogs Victoria. We will run this survey yearly, with 'pulse surveys' on a six-monthly cycle.

The feedback we received was not only thoughtful but also inspiring, with results in several areas scoring higher than external benchmarks.



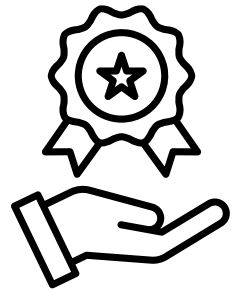


Strength in Connection

Staff highlighted strong relationships with their teams and leaders, noting a culture built on trust, collaboration, and shared purpose.

Service & Quality Focus

75% of employees agreed that we acknowledge people who deliver outstanding service here, emphasising the pride our people take in quality and client outcomes.

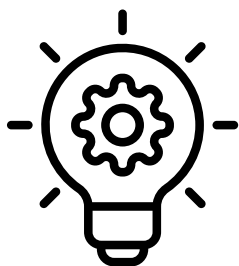
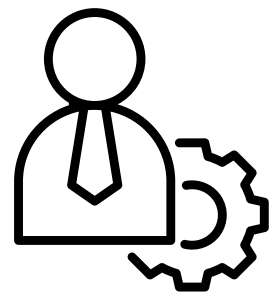


Respect

91% of employees agreed that discrimination is not tolerated at Guide Dogs Victoria, reflecting a strong culture of inclusion and fairness.

Direct Manager

78% of staff said, I have confidence in my supervisor at Guide Dogs Victoria, highlighting trust in leadership at a team level.

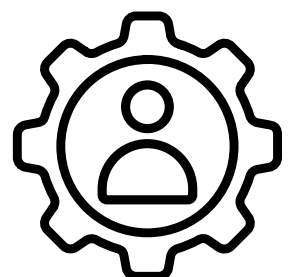


Innovation

76% of employees agreed we are encouraged to be innovative even though some initiatives may not succeed, showing that creativity and experimentation are embraced.

Enablement

89% of staff agreed we have enough autonomy to perform our jobs effectively, demonstrating confidence in the independence and capability of our people.



Hands, Hearts and Minds: Our Volunteer Community

At Guide Dogs Victoria, volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. Their generosity, dedication and know-how make it possible for us to go above and beyond in our vision for the future of people with low vision or blindness; quite simply, we couldn't do it without them.

During National Volunteer Week, we proudly take time to reflect and celebrate the extraordinary contributions of our volunteers, who are woven into every corner of our organisation, from our puppy nursery to our boardroom.



Volunteer Service Awards

May 2024—April 2025

35
Years

Judy Toma

30
Years

Carolyn Riska
Sheila Cuxson

25
Years

Andree Howden
Angela Williams
Anne Rayner

Denise Bates
Maren Buckett
Merryn Probert

Noel Smith
Sandra Harris

20
Years

Anna Moritz
Ian Buszard
Jackie Newhouse
Janette Ellis
John Raymant
Nathan Oakes

15
Years

David Ryan
Elaine Tippet
Jill Oliver
Lyndall Calleja
Melissa Lloyd

10
Years

Aislinn Lalor
Angela Cosgriff
Ashley Baumann
Bianca Barresi
Chris Lynton-Moll
Donna Lee
Elizabeth Kitchingman

Iben Barrett
Jane Hill
Jan Pobjoy
Jill Treeby
Karen Anscombe
Leo Van Der Toorren
Paul Taylor

Ronna Anderson
Sean Haley
Stephen Barker
Susan Middlemiss
Tina Congues
Yuliya Cripsey

5
Years

Andrea Whitty
Andrew Hodgson
Anita Goldsborough
Bruce Tritton
Caroline Lovick
Catherine Spruth
Darren Stapleton
Debbie Bourke
Don Page-Wood

Elle Phillips
Emma Carr
Gloria Moore
James Minas
Jan McQueen
Jeanette Woods
Jenna Watts
Jenni Tidecz
Jill Brownfield

Kellie Virth
Melissa Luke
Melissa Wartman
Nadia Leonard-Artha
Nancy Lovett
Nick McEwan-Hall
Pam Beauchamp
Pamela Eagleson
Peter McDougall

Peter Norden
Rebecca Gardner
Rob Head
Sarah Stringer
Sue Osborne
Susan Botta
Victoria Fenton
Vikki Anderson

National Volunteer Week

In May 2025, more than 100 volunteers joined us at the Betty Amsden Education Centre to mark National Volunteer Week. The celebrations shone a spotlight on the many ways volunteers support us every day, including:

- Raising and developing our future Guide Dogs
- Lending a hand in the Puppy Nursery, Kennels and Dog Recovery Program
- Supporting clients across residential, children's and wellbeing programs
- Driving puppies to their new homes or collecting donation dogs across the state
- Preserving our archives and providing vital admin support
- Helping at community events and fundraisers
- Serving on our board and committees

The event brought together CEO Nicky Long, Board Director Cameron Algie AM, our Executive Leadership Team, and staff from across GDV to say a heartfelt thank you. Volunteers with five or more years of service were recognised for their long-standing commitment, while highlights included a keynote from Erin Goedhart and a surprise visit from our adorable G-litter puppies. Fittingly, the theme "Connecting Communities" captured the spirit of our volunteer family perfectly.



End-of-Year Celebration



In December, we rounded out the year with a festive morning tea, complete with a visit from Santa and his GDV collection dog sleigh. A brand-new Christmas tree was unveiled, decorated with origami creations made by volunteers and clients in collaboration with Blind Sports Victoria, a colourful symbol of connection and creativity.

Thank You

Our volunteers are the heartbeat of GDV. Their time, energy and unwavering commitment continue to bring people together, strengthen our community, and help us create a brighter, more inclusive future.



Celebrating our Volunteers – Janette Ellis

20 years of loving support



Janette's journey with Guide Dogs Victoria began in 2005, when a local article featuring 14 black Labrador puppies - one of GDV's largest litters - inspired her to become a Puppy Raiser. Over the next five years, she raised three pups, weaving them into her daily life as a school music teacher. When asked, "How can you give them up?" her answer was simple: "It's a privilege to help make someone's life easier."

In 2009, after the heartbreaking loss of her first daughter, Talia, Janette found comfort and purpose volunteering in the Puppy Nursery, caring for newborn pups as they grew ready for raisers.

Since then, she has generously shared her time across GDV; from walking breeding dogs and assisting at the Canine Centre to supporting events and cataloguing archives for the

organisation's 60th anniversary film. Her daughter Anthea has grown up alongside GDV, fundraising at kindergarten and eagerly attending events, determined to follow in her mum's footsteps.

For Janette, volunteering has brought joy, purpose, and friendship. "GDV makes a real effort to help volunteers feel valued, which is why so many of us have stayed for decades."

Reflecting on 20 years of service, Janette says: "GDV is about so much more than training Guide Dogs. It's about respect, compassion, and building confidence and connection. It has been incredibly rewarding to contribute to this mission."

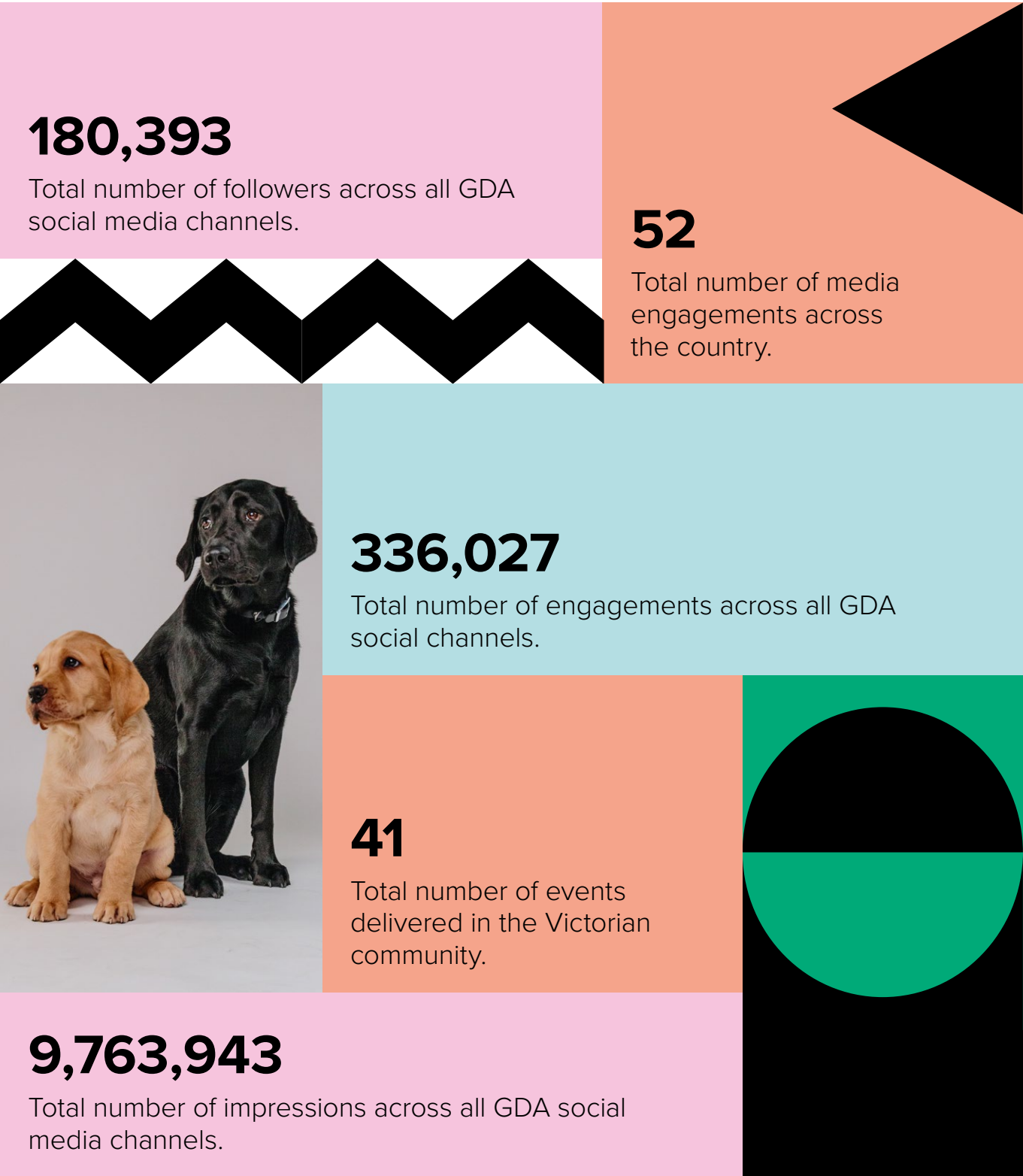
Guide Dogs Victoria is deeply grateful for Janette's dedication and warmth, which have made a life-changing difference to the blind and low vision community.



Our Reach

Raising Awareness in our Community

Using our voice and platform to advocate and education in Victoria and beyond.



Stronger Community Connections at Our First Community Fair

On Saturday 5 April, more than 2,000 people came through our doors to take part in Guide Dogs Victoria's inaugural Community Fair - a vibrant celebration of connection, inclusion, and the special role dogs play in our lives.

The day was filled with energy and joy: dog demonstrations, puppy cuddles, market stalls, face-painting, raffles, and plenty of sausage sizzles. AFL stars Jack Silvagni and Mason Cox gamely took part in a Blind AFL handball challenge, while singer Rachael Leahcar moved the crowd with her performance. Families of all generations explored the campus, learned more about our services, and experienced the warmth of the Guide Dogs community in action.

We are deeply grateful to our generous sponsors and partners who brought this vision to life. Carer Gateway and Advanced Vetcare, as major sponsors, showcased their commitment to supporting carers and animals alike. Our thanks also go to Marshall White, QT Melbourne, Boehringer Ingelheim, Coles, Bakers Delight, Bunnings Fairfield, QMS Media, Pacific Vision International, Vistech Magnifiers, Knowable Me and Budget Blackburn for their generosity,

whether through stalls, donations, or helping us share the event with the wider community.

Most of all, the Fair was made possible by the passion and dedication of our staff and volunteers, who worked tirelessly to deliver a day that was both fun and deeply meaningful.

Our first Community Fair was more than an event, it reflected our mission to foster strong community ties, celebrate inclusion, and open our campus as a place for learning. We look forward to welcoming everyone back for an even bigger and better celebration in 2026.

Save the date for
2026 – 18th April, 2026



Built to G.U.I.D.E.

Celebrating International Guide Dog Day

International Guide Dog Day 2025 saw the launch of a new campaign Not Just Trained; They're Built to G.U.I.D.E.

The campaign celebrated the extraordinary skill, precision, and dedication required for a dog to graduate as a Guide Dog and how they partner with our clients. Through a five-part video series, we showcased the journey of training, and the deep partnerships formed between dogs and their Handlers; brought to life through the five elements of G.U.I.D.E.

Grounded – staying calm and focused, even in the busiest places.

Understanding – building instinctive, wordless connections with their Handler.

Initiative – making smart decisions, even disobeying commands when safety is at stake.

Directional Focus – navigating obstacles, crossings, and finding the safest path.

Enjoyment – reminding us that, above all, Guide Dogs are playful, happy companions.

This community awareness campaign was shared throughout social media platforms and positively commented on. It deepened understanding of the remarkable skills and joyful spirit that define every Guide Dog. It was a powerful reminder of the impact Guide Dogs have in enabling independence and connection.



Guide Dogs Victoria Volunteer Ambassadors Championing Community and Amplifying Our Impact

Guide Dogs Victoria continued to grow our Volunteer Ambassador program, welcoming new advocates who share their skills, stories, and passion to champion our mission. Each ambassador plays a vital role in extending our reach, raising awareness, and inspiring stronger community connections; helping more people with low vision or blindness live the life they choose.

Guide Dogs Victoria Ambassadors Championing Inclusion, Awareness, and Support



Dilruk Jayasinha

A beloved comedian, Dilruk joined our Tax Appeal campaign in 2024, adding warmth and humour that helped raise awareness of our life-changing services. The campaign was used again in 2025, with Dilruk's presence continuing to drive engagement and empathy. He is always a supporter of our requests on social media, often creating reels for Guide Dogs to share, amplifying our message to a broad and diverse audience. Beyond online advocacy, he has welcomed members of our Young Adult Group to his comedy shows and hosted a meet-and-greet after his performance at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, creating personal and unforgettable experiences. Dilruk's mix of humour, relatability, and heart makes him a cornerstone of our ambassador team.



Dolly Diamond

A long-time supporter of Guide Dogs Victoria, Dolly is a visible and proud leader of our presence at the Midsumma Festival Pride March and ChillOut Festival. She also extends her welcome by inviting clients to her performances throughout the year, ensuring they feel seen and celebrated. A huge supporter of our social media campaigns, Dolly is always responsive to requests for content and actively promotes our mission online. In April 2025, she attended and hosted the Community Fair stage, helping to elevate the event's profile. Dolly also painted a Guide Dog statue, showcasing her creativity and deep commitment. Her blend of visibility, artistry, and advocacy makes her an invaluable partner in promoting inclusivity and diversity.



Eleanor Baillieu

Since becoming an ambassador in 2018, Eleanor has enriched the lives of countless puppies through her dedication as a Puppy Raiser. A generous philanthropist and cultural advocate, she also supports Guide Dogs Victoria online, frequently sharing content and boosting awareness across her networks. Eleanor attends events regularly, acting as both participant and connector, and is a wonderful advocate for networking. Her role ensures our message reaches philanthropic, cultural, and educational audiences, inspiring others to contribute to our cause.



Jimi the Kween

A finalist on The Voice, Jimi brings energy, inclusivity, and commitment to visibility for diverse communities. As an ambassador, Jimi continues to support us online, helping spread our message of accessibility and inclusion. Their busy touring schedule has limited in-person engagements, but we hope to collaborate more closely when opportunities allow. Jimi's profile as an artist and a lover of dogs makes them a dynamic addition to the team and a strong ally for our mission.



Joost Bakker

Internationally recognised as a pioneer in sustainability, Joost has been an invaluable supporter in the development of our Campus redevelopment project. His expertise has guided us in embedding sustainable practices into the build, ensuring it respects the environment while meeting our community's needs. Being based quite remotely, Joost is always just a phone call away, Joost generously provides advice and guidance whenever needed. His partnership represents the intersection of ecological and social responsibility, helping us build a greener and more inclusive future and there remains many more opportunities in the future to collaborate.



Lauren Phillips

Beloved voice of Melbourne mornings on Nova 100 and host of Channel Nine's Postcards, Lauren has been a hugely active advocate for our mission. She has welcomed us into the Nova 100 studio to promote the Community Fair, interviewed Nicky, and filmed content on-site to showcase our work. She is the host of Melbourne's number one breakfast show and Lauren frequently shares and responds to online requests for content, amplifying our voice across platforms. With her personal connection to blindness through her grandfather, her advocacy is heartfelt and genuine, making her one of our strongest champions in both the media and community spaces.



Andrew 'Lehmo' Lehmann

A well-known comedian and radio host, Lehmo became an ambassador alongside his son Laddie after visiting our Campus and falling in love with our puppies. He has been a tireless supporter, using his platform to raise awareness while also embracing opportunities for media engagement. In 2025, his son Laddie featured in the Herald Sun's Community Fair feature article, highlighting our cause to a wide readership. Lehmo's humour, warmth, and family-focused advocacy continue to strengthen bonds with our supporters and inspire new ones.



Mason Cox

Renowned Collingwood Football Club AFL player and advocate for the blind and low vision community, Mason draws on his own experiences with low vision to authentically champion our mission. He has supported Guide Dogs Victoria both online and in person, including as a key personality at the Community Fair in 2025, where he joined fans for the AFL competition and helped host activities. Mason also lent his voice to the media, with features on Nova and in the Herald Sun Confidential, ensuring our work reached national attention. His leadership in sport and advocacy keeps low vision representation firmly in the public conversation.



Jack Silvagni

As an AFL player for Carlton Football Club and Volunteer Ambassador, Jack brings energy and sporting passion to Guide Dogs Victoria. At the Community Fair in 2025, he was one of our key personalities, engaging with supporters, competing in the AFL competition, and helping draw media attention. Jack represented Guide Dogs Victoria in interviews and community activations that reached a wide audience. Through his profile and authentic enthusiasm, Jack continues to inspire younger generations and strengthen our community connections.



Madeleine Spark

Channel Nine personality Madeleine Spark has become a vibrant and engaging supporter of Guide Dogs Victoria. She attended the Community Fair in 2025, where she hosted the Q&A session on stage with other special guests, bringing energy and professionalism to the event. Madeleine also created and shared content that amplified our mission and showcased the stories of our clients and ambassadors. Her media presence and enthusiasm provide a valuable bridge between Guide Dogs Victoria and the broader public and she is always prepared to MC events and have a strong in-person presence. Maddy also hosted our client Guide Dog graduation held with the support of the Hyatt on the Park.



Our Supporters

Our Supporters. Our Impact.

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

Our support from the community takes many forms and flows into Guide Dogs from all over Victoria. We are very appreciative of all our supporters and are pleased to bring you a heart-warming story.

\$13.37M

raised from 25,890 donors.

1,400

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

Francis Abrahams	Grace Chong	Betty Ford
April Albrecht	John Coates	Barbara Fremlin
James Alford	Pauline Cocks	Lorraine Gubana
Amelia Eliza Holland Trust	Ingrid Coles-Rutishauser	Gwenneth Elsie Miller Charitable Trust
Maureen Ashford	Laurence Cook	Patricia Hammond
Nancy Balding	Anita Crawford	Maxine Harrison
Betty Brenda Spinks Charitable Trust	Edna Curwen-Walker	Marjorie Hayes
Marie De Bavay	Jean Davidson	Barbara Haymes
Andrew Brentnall	Eardley De Motte	Graeme Hooper
Linda Brown	Ailsa Dennis	Dora Hope
Verna Bryan	Ian Dodd	Constance Hunt
Julie Buncle	Inez Drury	Mary Jones
Sheila Burke	Sylvia Dungan	Graham Kemp
Margo Burns	James Dunne	Katherine Kingsbury
Freda Campbell	The Edith Kemp Memorial Trust Fund	The Lola Poynton Memorial Fund
Heather Castle	Lauris Edwards	Barbara Leader
Gary Chapple	Brian Entwisle	Anna Majhen
Ronald Charles	Bertha Filmer	Barbara Manton
John Chenery	Jane Foot	Margaret Marshall

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

Joseph Mason	Catherine Polinelli	Johanna Stimpson
Annie Matthews	Beulah Pontin	Joan Sutherland
Victor McEwan	Jessie Pound	Verna Tainton
Nitsa McFadyen	Dianne Rabbas	Lorraine Taylor
Malcolm McLearn	Pamela Rae	Rita Thompson
Samuel Miller	Fay Richmond	Elizabeth Thompson
Warren Mills	Helen Ritson	Ida Van Leeuwen
Dianne Mitchell	Russell Vontom Charitable Trust	Victor Russ Pittman Charitable Trust
Noel Moore	Ruth and Harry Taafe Charitable Trust	Tania Watson
Thomas Morris	Rose Pratt Trust	Johanna Van Well
John Mulock-Houwer	Joseph Sands	Kathleen White
Muriel Gauder Bequest	John Schotkamp	Wilfred & Ruby Bird
Neville and Rita Brown	Jennifer Sharp	Marjorie Wilks
Margaret Newman	Margaret Sherry	William Mansel Higgins & Dorothy Higgins
Ann Pakeman	William Shipperlee	Ada Withers
Patricia Mary Holmes Charitable Trust Fund	Beverley Skeen	
Susan Parks	Eunice Smith	
William Penrose	Graham Spencer	
Gwenda Pillar	Rosemary Stewart	

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

Access Foundation	Lynx Charitable Foundation
Advanced Vetcare	Marshall White
Australian Traffic Network	Mutual Trust Foundation
Banks Legacy Fund	Pierce Armstrong Foundation
Bendigo Bank - Community Bank Beaconsfield	QT Melbourne
Budget Rent a Car	Robert & Elizabeth Sinclair Foundation
Carer Gateway – Holstep Health	Mandy Deam Foundation
Eldon & Anne Foote Trust	The Elliott Family Trust
Enigma Charitable Trust	The Orloff Family Foundation
Isaacson Davis Foundation	The Sidney Myer Fund & The Myer Foundation
Japan Festival Committee	The Sun Foundation
Joe White Bequest	Urquhart Charitable Fund
Kel & Rosie Day Foundation	Variety The Children's Charity
LJM Foundation	Vontom Family Trust
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation	

*Donations \$5,000 and above in FY2024-2025.

Honouring Two Decades of Dedication:

Linda Siclari

For more than 20 years, Linda Siclari has been a steadfast supporter and bequestor of Guide Dogs Victoria, leaving an indelible mark on our community. What began as a love of dogs has grown into a profound commitment to helping people with low vision or blindness live with confidence and independence.

“The first time I heard about the impact the dogs have on people’s lives, I thought, this is something I want to be part of” Linda reflects. That initial connection soon became a lifelong dedication.

For Linda, Guide Dogs has come to feel like family. Her visits to Campus are always filled with warmth and good humour, yet behind the light-hearted moments lies a deep respect for the dogs, trainers, and staff who make our mission possible. “Every time I come along to something, I just feel so welcomed” she shares.

Her generosity has not only enriched her own life but also inspired those closest to her. Linda has encouraged her sister Maria and friends to join her at events such as the Otus Christmas Lunch, The Community Fair, and Guide Dog Graduation Day. Listening to clients speak about the life-changing bond with their dogs and witnessing puppies grow into working partners has only deepened her commitment.

Supporting Guide Dogs, Linda says, has given her a profound sense of purpose: “Knowing that the money I give is helping people live more independently makes me proud to be part of it. It has also brought me into this wonderful community.”

Linda’s dedication extends far beyond the present. By leaving a gift in her Will, she ensures her impact will continue for generations. “Guide Dogs has been such a big part of my life, and I wanted to make sure that support continued even after I’m gone. It’s my way of saying thank you.”

When reflecting on her legacy, Linda hopes her support will empower others to live with the same joy and freedom that the dogs bring every day. She describes Guide Dogs in three words: warm, life-changing, inspiring - with an affectionate smile, she adds a fourth: cute.

As we reflect on Linda’s journey, we honour not only her generosity, but also the spirit of community she embodies. Her unwavering support is a reminder of the extraordinary difference one individual can make and an enduring gift to the future of Guide Dogs Victoria.

A Legacy of Love: Dr Marina Keskevich

For more than a decade, Dr Marina Keskevich has been a much-loved member of the Guide Dogs Victoria family, leaving an enduring mark on our community. What began as a love of dogs has blossomed into a deep, lifelong commitment to supporting our puppies and helping people with low vision live with confidence and independence.

“The moment I first sponsored a puppy, Rex, I felt a special connection,” Marina recalls. That connection has grown over the years, and today she delights in sponsoring a golden pup named Misha – destined to change someone’s life. “When I met Misha, she came straight up and sat on my lap. I knew immediately she was the one,” she shares with a smile.

At 90 years old, Marina’s warmth, wit, and generosity continue to shine. A retired dentist and lifelong animal lover, she now faces her own vision loss with remarkable grace. “Guide Dogs Victoria means so much to so many people in different ways. For me now, it is especially personal because I am losing my own vision,” she says.

Dogs have always played a central role in Marina’s life. “Ever since childhood, I’ve always loved dogs. They’ve been companions, protectors, and family,” she reflects. Over the years, she has had everything from German Shepherds and Rottweilers to

Labradors – at one stage, she had eight Labradors at once – and today enjoys the company of her poodle, Gidget. One memory she treasures from Guide Dogs is of a dog resting his head on her feet during an event – a quiet, touching moment that has stayed with her ever since.

Marina’s generosity extends far beyond her day-to-day support. “It’s very tangible and worthwhile,” she says. “When you give, you know your support is going towards training dogs who will change someone’s life. Unlike some charities, here you can see the impact clearly.” Her commitment also inspires others: she has encouraged friends to support Guide Dogs Victoria, helping them experience the joy of seeing puppies grow into working partners.

Looking to the future, Marina has ensured her legacy will continue to make a difference. “I’ve allocated part of my estate to Guide Dogs Victoria,” she shares. “I want my support to help train more Guide Dogs and benefit future generations. It’s meaningful to support those younger than me, to give them the independence and confidence these dogs bring.”



When asked to describe Guide Dogs Victoria in a few words, Marina chooses: “Extremely efficient, welcoming, and caring.” Her hope is simple but powerful: to see more puppies like Misha grow into life-changing Guide Dogs, bringing independence, confidence, and joy to those who need them most.

As we reflect on Marina’s journey, we honour not only her generosity but also the spirit of connection, care, and lifelong dedication she embodies. Her unwavering support is a reminder of the extraordinary difference one individual can make and a lasting gift to the future of Guide Dogs Victoria.





Our Gratitude

Our National Corporate Partners

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

Without these generous partners who assist us through donations of not just funds, but volunteering time, giving products and services in kind, and workplace giving, we could not continue our vital work supporting clients in the many ways we do.

Thank you to our National Corporate Partners for your incredible support throughout the past year:



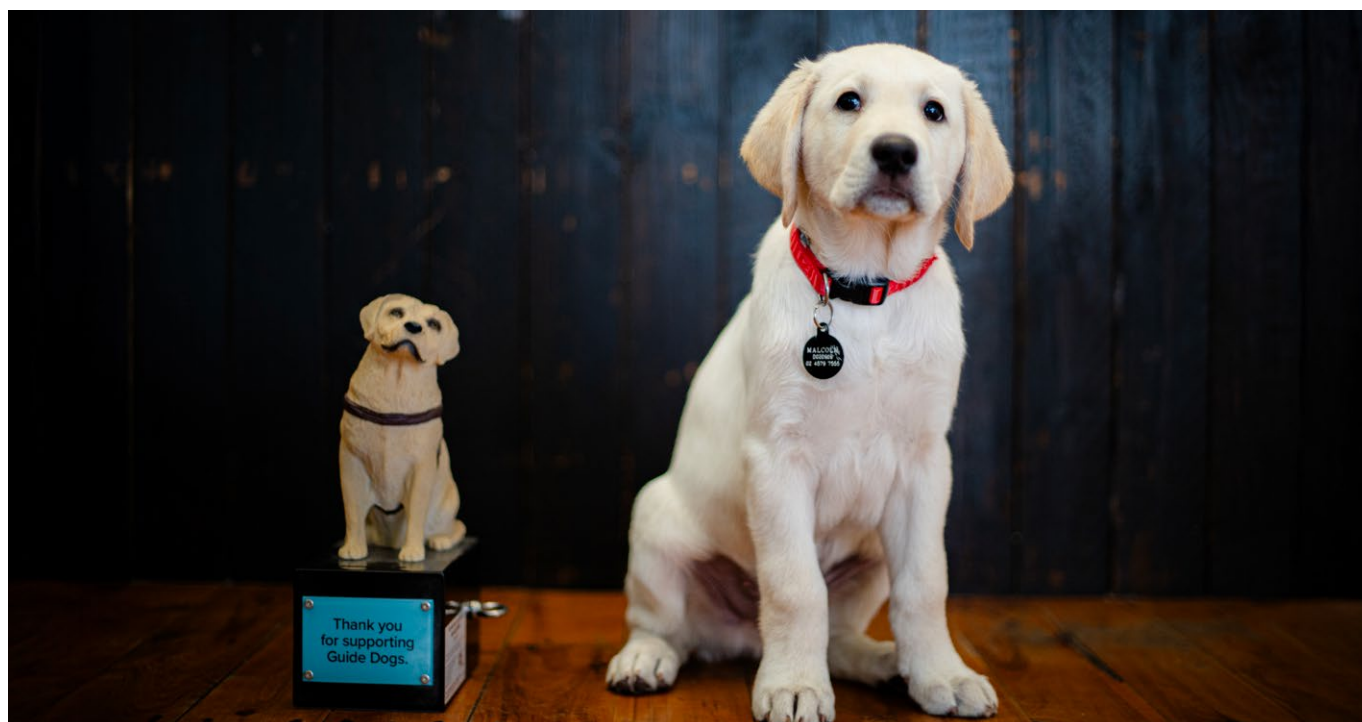
Our Donation Dogs: Powered by Community Spirit

For generations of Victorians, Guide Dogs Victoria's iconic Donation Dogs have been more than just collection points. They have been trusted companions in our shared community story. Standing quietly but proudly at the entrances of supermarkets, pharmacies, post offices and many other stores. These familiar figures have become symbols of generosity, empathy and collective goodwill.

First introduced in the 1970s, the Donation Dogs quickly captured the hearts of the public. Their gentle expressions and approachable presence made them hard to ignore. For many children, placing a coin into the slot was not only a small act of giving but also a first lesson in

kindness, compassion and the joy of helping others. A quick pat on the head or a warm hug created simple, joyful moments that left lasting impressions.

Over the decades, these humble figures have achieved extraordinary results. Together they have raised more than 11 million dollars, directly funding programs and services that support people with low vision or blindness. Today, they continue to collect close to half a million dollars annually, helping to fund the breeding and training of Guide Dogs and Therapy Dogs as well as providing essential orientation and mobility services to our clients across Victoria.

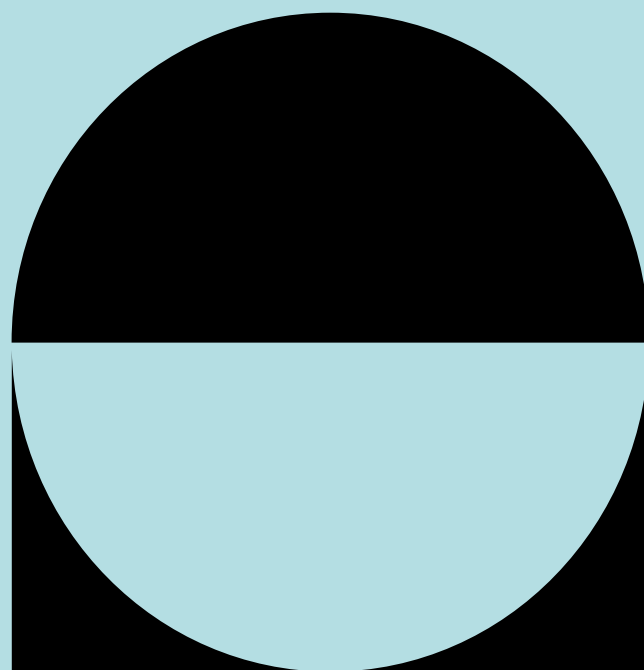


Their success, however, is only possible thanks to the generosity of the local businesses that host them. Each supermarket, pharmacy, post office and family-run store that offers a home to a Donation Dog is part of this story. It is a true partnership between Guide Dogs Victoria and the community, working hand in hand to create change.

For countless Victorians, the Donation Dogs are woven into cherished memories. Parents who once dropped a coin into a Donation Dog as children now watch their own kids do the same. This simple act has become a thread connecting generations, nurturing a culture of empathy and community spirit that continues to grow. Every dollar dropped into a Donation Dog is a reminder that life-changing impact is built from countless small contributions. Their success reflects the unwavering generosity of Victorians, proving that when a community comes together, extraordinary things can happen.

Even in a digital age where tap-and-go giving is increasingly common, these quiet ambassadors remain relevant and deeply valued. They stand as tangible reminders that small everyday acts of generosity can have profound effects, enabling people to live with greater freedom, confidence and dignity.

Guide Dogs Victoria remains committed to caring for our Donation Dogs. Each is maintained with regular touch-ups and positioned with pride, continuing a legacy that has endured for more than four decades. As they stand proudly in their familiar spots, they do more than collect coins. They connect generations, inspire kindness and help transform lives. And as we look to the future, they will continue to stand as guardians of generosity – reminding us that while the way we give may evolve, the heart of our community remains steadfast. Together, with the continued support of Victorians, these much-loved companions will keep transforming lives for decades to come.





Our Future

Building a Campus for People, Dogs and the Planet

Sustainability is a cornerstone of Guide Dogs Victoria's new Kew Campus. From its early design, the site was planned with best-practice environmental management in mind, incorporating natural light, gardens and green spaces, and sustainable materials that enhance wellbeing while reducing environmental impact.

Looking ahead, we are embedding a long-term commitment to sustainability across campus operations. Guided by our Sustainability Committee and other partners, our focus over the next three years is on reducing dependency on fossil fuels, increasing recycling, and minimising water use.

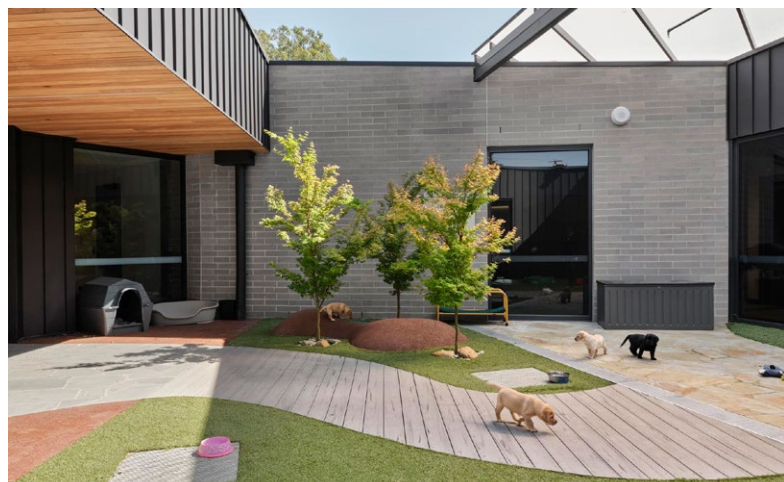
A major solar feasibility study is underway, exploring the installation of a 180kW solar array across key campus buildings. This system would reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 200 tonnes annually, with considerations for future expansion to battery storage and EV charging to support a transition to an electric vehicle fleet. We are also progressing plans to replace older gas heating systems in older buildings with more efficient electric alternatives and improving the operation of existing plant equipment to reduce energy waste.

Waste reduction remains another priority. The Container Deposit Scheme has been expanded through staff awareness campaigns, and new initiatives are being introduced to better separate and recycle waste

streams. A Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) system will also be rolled out across campus to produce compost for gardens, complementing new native plantings that will reduce irrigation needs and attract local wildlife.

The new garden plantings of native trees and shrubs now support biodiversity, provide shade and cooling, and create restorative environments for clients, staff, volunteers, and dogs alike. Volunteer planting programs continue to provide valuable support across the campus in developing and maintaining garden areas, and we welcome opportunities to partner with more individuals and organisations who share our commitment to sustainability and community impact.

Through these measures, Guide Dogs Victoria is not only creating a sustainable campus today but also investing in practices that will protect and regenerate the environment for years to come.





Our Governance

Guide Dogs Victoria Board of Directors



Dr. David Cochrane **Chair**

David, a board member since March 2017, holds a Bachelor of Economics, MBA, and DBA. He brings over 35 years of experience advising government and the private sector on commercial, economic, and financial policy.



Nick Mescher **Vice Chair**

Joining in 2019, Nick brings over 30 years of global tech leadership, a Bachelor of Applied Science, and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. His passion for innovation and digital transformation is a key asset.



Lisa Tepper **Board Member**

A member since April 2020, Lisa leads digital strategy at the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet. She brings expertise in strategy and business development from her 18-year career at Accenture, and holds degrees in engineering, science, and public policy.



Malcolm Haack **Board Member**

Malcolm joined the board in January 2023. He is Group General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer at Orica, overseeing legal and compliance affairs. With 26 years in global blue-chip organisations, he brings extensive legal expertise.



Cameron Algie AM

Board Member

Appointed to the Board in July 2023, Cameron brings lived experience with retinitis pigmentosa (RP) and a distinguished career in law. Former CEO and Facilitator, co-founder of an RP research Foundation. Author of Understanding and Managing vision loss. Current Chair of GDV's Consumer Advisory Council.



Melissa Dixon

Board Member

With 30 years in media and consumer sectors, including senior roles at Disney, Melissa joined in January 2023. Her background spans executive roles, consulting, and finance, bringing deep international experience and governance expertise to Guide Dogs Victoria.



David Simmonds

Board Member

A Director at Victoria's Department of Transport and Planning, David joined in June 2024, bringing valuable lived experience as a longtime Guide Dogs Victoria Client and former staff member. His personal and professional insights will significantly contribute to Guide Dogs Victoria's future direction.



Jane Schuller

Jane joined the Board in 2025, bringing over 20 years' clinical experience in Ophthalmology across Singapore, Thailand, the USA, and Australia. Her leadership in the eye health sector and governance roles with Vision 2020 Australia and Orthoptics Australia will strongly guide Guide Dogs Victoria's future direction.



Professor James Elder

James joined the Board in 2025, bringing extensive expertise as a pediatric Ophthalmologist and former Director of Ophthalmology at the Royal Children's Hospital. His clinical experience and lifelong commitment to supporting children and families living with vision impairment will be invaluable to Guide Dogs Victoria's future direction.

Corporate Governance

Guide Dogs Victoria promotes fairness, transparency, and accountability. Our Governance Commitment Statement describes our key governance obligations and outlines our commitment to leading standards. Key board policies and further information on those who govern our organisation can be found on our governance webpage. These structures ensure decision making meets stakeholder expectations of sound corporate governance, while meeting the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's (ACNC) governance standards, and acknowledging our responsibilities to members, donors, Clients, staff, volunteers, and the communities in which we operate.



Our Financials

Guide Dogs Victoria's activities in the 2025 financial year resulted in a deficit of 1.189M

Revenue

Revenue	2025	2024
Fundraising and gifts in wills	12,868	12,868
Fundraising for capital purposes	503	3,028
Revenue from the provision of dogs and orientation mobility services	5,608	4,739
Rental revenue	333	209
Finance and investment (losses)/gains	474	668
Other income	36	-
Total Revenue	19,822	21,512

Expenditure

Expenditure	2025	2024
Fundraising and gifts in wills	(3,132)	(2,929)
Cost of provision of dogs and mobility services	(15,409)	(14,497)
Community information and public education	(1,367)	(1,008)
Other corporate services	(1,103)	(953)
Total expenditure	(21,011)	(19,387)
Surplus before income tax	(1,189)	2,125
Income tax expense	-	-
Surplus for the year	(1,189)	2,125
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(1,189)	2,125

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Assets

Current assets	2025	2024
Cash and cash equivalents	1,318	1,106
Trade and other receivables	695	1,406
Inventories	936	987
Financial assets	772	609
Total assets	3,721	4,108

Non-current assets	2025	2024
Trade and other receivables	33	36
Financial assets	4,234	4,867
Property, plant and equipment	34,515	34,686
Right of use asset	759	773
Total non-current assets	39,541	40,326
Total assets	43,261	44,470

Liabilities

Current liabilities	2025	2024
Trade and other payables	819	1,526
Provisions	1,301	1,214
Deferred revenue	74	398
Lease liabilities	341	259
Borrowings	530	58
Total current liabilities	3,065	3,455

Non-current liabilities	2025	2024
Provisions	67	88
Lease liabilities	431	523
Borrowings	2,426	1,942
Total non-current liabilities	2,924	2,553
Total liabilities	5,989	6,008
Net assets	37,273	38,462
Accumulated funds		
Reserves	4,800	4,800
Retained earnings	32,473	33,662
Total accumulated funds	37,273	38,462

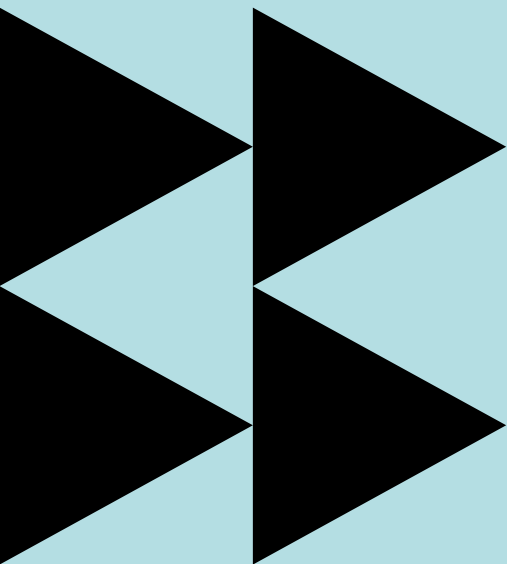
Our Performance

Performance report.

KPI	2024/2025 full year actual	2023/2024 full year actual	Positive/ (negative) variance from prior year
Services			
Service delivery hours	22,570	20,613	1,957
Number of training and support programs delivered	3,459	3,105	354
Number of clients assessed	1363	1,251	112
Number of qualified Guide Dogs	29	31	(2)
Number of Therapy Dogs allocated	32	36	(4)
Number of other working dogs allocated	19	14	5
Number of Guide Dog Handlers	237	236	1
People			
Number of staff	142	138	(4)
Number of volunteers	580	580	0
Number of volunteer hours	1,005,000	1,000,000	5,000
Finance			
Operating surplus/ (deficit) excluding depreciation in \$'000	\$341	\$3,202	(\$2,861)
Operating surplus/ (deficit) in \$'000	(\$1,189)	\$2,125	(\$3,314)
Operating surplus / (deficit) before Capital Purpose Income in \$'000	(\$1,692)	(\$903)	(\$789)



Tokyo Mington



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