




Living Proud

LGBTIQ+ Community Services of WA



ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022



*Promoting the wellbeing of
lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans,
intersex, queer, and other
sexuality and gender diverse
people in Western Australia
since 1974*

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



BARRY COSKER

Acting Chairperson

Since taking over as Acting Chair I have been constantly impressed by the dedication, commitment, passion and knowledge of everyone connected with the organisation, from employees, to volunteers, to partners, to allies.

Although I have the honour of introducing this year's Annual Report, I would like to first acknowledge and thank Lena Van Hale who has chaired the organisation since October 2019. Lena brought heaps of passion and dedication to the role and an unshakeable determination to improve the lives of LGBTIQ+ people right across WA.

As we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic the focus was on ensuring stability, maintaining strong support for staff, volunteers and community, while simultaneously adjusting to the 'new normal'. Throughout it all, we remained mindful of our vision, mission and strategic goals, and the importance of our overarching values and principles:

VALUES



PRINCIPLES



The organisation holds a special, trusted, place in the hearts and minds of the LGBTIQ+ community, and as we approach our 50th year of incorporation, I believe we are very well positioned to continue developing our service offering, increase our community reach and voice, and strive to make an even greater difference during the next 50 years.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Through a combination of external factors, the board experienced some mid-term changes to the Chairperson and Secretary office holders, although disruption was avoided through well-executed handovers. Sadly, we also farewelled Julia Morgan (March 2022), but we welcomed Erin Leahy (June 2022).

Board recruitment and succession planning remain a key organisational objective going forward.

The Living Proud Board for 2021-2022 consisted of:

- Lena Van Hale (Chairperson) to April 2022 & (Secretary) from April 2022
- Barry Cosker (Acting Chairperson) from April 2022
- Sarah Jane Hithersay (Vice Chairperson)
- Sam Gibbings (Treasurer)
- Sheldon Smith (Secretary) to April 2022
- Julia Morgan (Ordinary Member) to March 2022
- Jane Pritchard (Ordinary Member)
- Erin Leahy (Co-opted Member) from June 2022
- Sandra Norman (Staff Representative)

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2022

While the board intended to refresh the strategic plan during 2021, this ultimately was not achieved. However, the plan remains robust, and it continued to guide the organisational direction and decisions that were made. The strategic plan represents a key leadership tool which unifies everyone at Living Proud and provides clarity of purpose.

The board remain committed to the current plan, however it is pertinent to prioritise a refresh in early 2023 to ensure it continues to reflect changes in the post-pandemic political, legislative, economic, community and overall operating environment.



1. COMMUNICATE OUR VALUE

The board is passionate about communicating our brand, our values, and our relevance, to the LGBTIQ+ community.

Throughout this year this goal was met through our continued advertising, our participation in community events, our broad contributions to consultations, fostering improved relationships with government, expanding links into partner community organisations and developing our strategic alliances.

We have expanded and improved our social media presence and the quality and relevance of our content. We are already seeing tangible benefits through increased community reach and engagement. Our radio advertising continues through our ongoing partnership with RTR FM and our sponsorship of the weekly All Things Queer show. In 2023 we will be launching on LinkedIn to promote and grow our B2B fee for service activities.

2. FINANCIAL CONFIDENCE, SECURITY AND GROWTH

This goal was met through a combination of prudent financial management and hard work to secure continuation of funding and/or new funding. Consequently, the organisation's finances are stable and healthy.

The board also continues to drive a reduction in our exposure to the risk of funding being increasingly consolidated to one or two grant partners, with income diversification being a key priority. The WAPHA organisational strengthening grant will also allow for a comprehensive review and uplift to our core fee for service activities thereby creating an improved platform for stable income generation uncoupled from the fluctuations in the availability and size of discretionary grants.

We have retained the services of an experienced Bid Manager throughout the year to support the identification, assessment and grant application processes. This helped maintain our funding success rate, with the aforementioned WAPHA grant a particular highlight.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIVING PROUD BOARD

This is an ongoing goal which aims to drive a culture of continuous improvement at the board, including closing skill set gaps, developing strategic thinking, and increasing community knowledge and experience. An additional feature of this goal is to ensure the board reflects our diverse community, including youth, disability, indigenous and country representation.

Aligned to this goal is the creation and development of board sub-committees to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency. These commenced with the establishment of a Management Committee and an Events & Fundraising Committee. Additional committees will be established in 2023, including Finance and Strategy.

We are always keen to receive expressions of interest to join our board – we'd love to hear from you at admin@livingproud.org.au

4. VALUED VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY

As with many comparable organisations, we wouldn't succeed without the incredible support and contribution from our amazing volunteers. From our board members, to our peer support workers, to our casual event helpers – this goal was met as each volunteer is valued, appreciated and admired.

Due to the specialist nature of peer support work, we maintain two volunteer cohorts; one to support QLife and one to support general Living Proud activities. Pleasingly, both groups have rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. We were also able to host our annual QLife volunteer recruitment session again as part of PrideFEST 2021, and we now maintain a pool of around 35 highly trained QLife volunteers.

Due to the specialist nature of peer support work, we maintain two volunteer cohorts; one to support QLife and one to support general Living Proud activities. Pleasingly, both groups have rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. We were also able to host our annual QLife volunteer recruitment session again as part of PrideFEST 2021, and we now maintain a pool of around 35 highly trained QLife volunteers.

We did sadly lose our social media volunteer however the team quickly stepped up, upskilled, and carried on. We remain fortunate to have retained many other long serving volunteers and growing this volunteer base will be an area of focus throughout next year. Efforts here will be supported by the new Events & Fundraising Committee who will also be driving a parallel increase in event and community engagement.

5. PROACTIVE TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

This goal was met as demand for training courses, short talks and advisory services remains high. Some of this may be attributed to a post-Covid backlog as companies paused or delayed staff training, however we have also seen organic growth year on year. We continue to focus on providing services state-wide and continue to explore ways to leverage alternative formats and delivery options to increase reach and accessibility.

To create additional delivery capacity and increase the pool of training facilitators, we will commence a program of 'train the trainer' sessions to upskill project staff to supplement the training team. This additional capacity will also support our move to B2B advertising and promotion to grow fee for service income.

6. CREATE WA LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY HUB: BY LEADING THE WAY TOWARDS THE COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF A WA LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY HUB TENDER.

While this goal remains an aspiration, we are increasingly focussing on the concept of a community organisation hub / shared space to compliment the new community and event facilities being developed at the Northbridge Pride Piazza. We continue to scope interest from other partners and organisations to determine the viability and desirability across the community.

CONCLUSION

Living Proud continues to go from strength to strength with funding extended for our very successful QLife and Queer & Accessible projects, exciting new projects either underway or planned, and a comprehensive review, uplift and expansion of our fee-for-service training proposition. Combined, these measures go some way to diversifying and growing our income streams, reducing organisational risk, and creating increased financial and operational stability.

These developments will also be underpinned by further organisational strengthening activities through the WAPHA grant, including improvements to governance, updated policies and procedure toolkits, improved risk management and an increasingly strategic mindset.

The board & I are extremely proud of our progress during 2022 and we thank everyone for their contribution, hard work and commitment in achieving these successes. We are very well positioned to continue this journey of improvement and growth throughout the year to come, and we look forward to your continued support as we enter our 50th year of service.



OPERATIONS REPORT 2021–2022

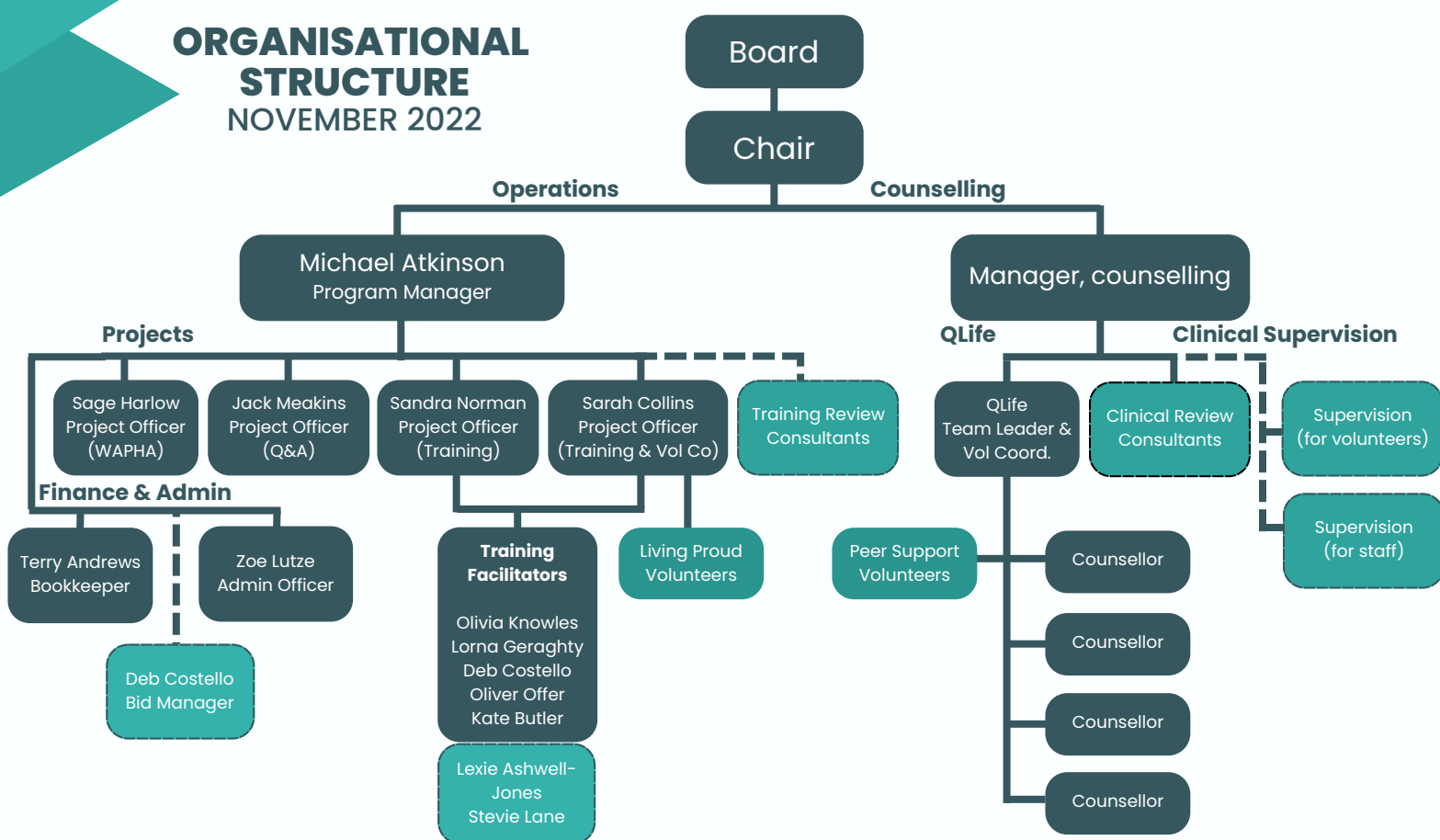
This section provides an overview of our operational activities and an update on key projects. During this period we have successfully balanced the need to:

1. Maintain excellent operational delivery of existing commitments and meet all service delivery standards.
2. Minimise the ongoing impacts on the staff and community through the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Secure continued funding & unlock new funding to continue strengthening and diversifying our activities.
4. Continue supporting the community through representation, advocacy, inclusion and being a source of strength.
5. Create a healthy and enjoyable working environment for everyone.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

NOVEMBER 2022



**Names of counselling team members redacted to preserve confidentiality*

STAFF CHANGES

We were delighted to welcome Michael Atkinson as Program Manager, with this re-established management role having responsibility for all non-counselling related project and operational activities. This change allows for a simplified organisational structure, provides improved clarity around roles and responsibilities, and facilitates a stronger team support structure across the organisation.

We were also delighted to welcome Zoe Lutze as Admin Assistant. This role provides much-needed administrative support across the organisation and improves operational efficiency and capacity.

Following the success of the Q&A Project during 2021, Sarah Collins has moved over to support our fee-for-service training activities, while also working to grow and support our Living Proud volunteer base. This change also allowed for Jack Meakins to take on additional duties and become the lead Project Officer for the Q&A project.

Having completed our office move and refurbishment under the Lotterywest grant, Sage Harlow commenced a new role as Project Officer supporting the WAPHA Organisational Strengthening project.

Living Proud congratulates all staff with new or changed roles and extends its thanks and appreciation to all staff and volunteers for their dedicated support and hard work throughout the year.

OFFICE MOVE

2021 was a milestone for Living Proud as we moved to a new office for the first time in 20+ years. Generously funded through a LotteryWest grant, we waved goodbye to our old much-loved office in City West Lotteries House and relocated to a new, larger space... in a different part of the building.

On completion of the refurbishment, we were delighted to host Stuart Aubrey MLA (Member, Scarborough) and Dr Katrina Stratton MLA (Member, Nedlands) who visited the office, met some of the team, and joined in a group discussion around ongoing issues, challenges and opportunities in the LGBTIQ+ community.

Thank you Stuart and Katrina, for your ongoing support.



As part of this grant we are also collaborating with a local artist to commission an art installation for the office which will reflect the stories, developments, celebrations, quotes, people, symbols and shapes from our rich history supporting the LGBTIQ+ community in WA.

All members of the community are invited to contribute their thoughts and memories in the design of this artwork. Please contact admin@livingproud.org.au if you wish to participate.

QLIFE PROJECT

The LGBTQI+ Health Alliance (LHA) QLife Project provides an anonymous, confidential, and peer-based national telephone counselling and a web chat service for people to discuss sexuality, sexual orientation, gender expression, sexual health and other sex, sexuality and gender diversity issues.

Living Proud has been a founding national partner supporting the delivery of QLife since 2013 and we are delighted to have again secured ongoing funding through to December 2023.

Next year will mark the 10year anniversary of the service starting and we are humbled to think of the literally thousands of community members that QLife has helped and supported over the years.

On completion of a successful pilot, and in recognition of the vital role we play in supporting the service national across multiple time zones, LHA has also now selected Living Proud to hold one of the two new national QLife Team Leader roles. This deepens our commitment to QLife and will allow for improved support, coaching & mentoring of peer workers, and greater operational effectiveness across the QLife service.

The aims of the QLife service are:

- To reduce the risk of depression, self-harm and suicide amongst people having difficulty with diverse sexuality and gender;
- Enhance the individuals' capacity for mental health and community engagement; and
- Facilitate access to a range of health and community-based services for people of diverse sexuality and gender.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact our service availability during 2021, however conversely the pandemic has also driven demand ever higher – over the last 3 years we have seen an increase in complex mental health, distress, suicide and domestic violence clients accessing QLife, often as COVID-19 has left clients on extended waiting lists and turning to helplines for support.

Our peer-support worker base remains strong with a pool of up to 35 volunteers available to support QLife shifts, complimented by our small counselling team.

As in previous years, we also successfully completed our volunteer support programs, which saw volunteers complete an intensive 2-day ASIST accredited suicide intervention training program, as well as 10 weeks of peer support skills training. Living Proud prides ourselves on providing the best possible training to volunteers so that they are able to support LGBTQI+ community members in the safest and most effective way possible.



OPENING CLOSETS TRAINING



Opening Closets is our award-winning proprietary fee for service training program which aims to:

- *Increase awareness and knowledge amongst participants of the need for LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice.*
- *Increase the competence and confidence of participants to deliver LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice.*
- *Assist organisations working towards sustained and embedded organisational change.*
- *Assist organisations in achieving LGBTIQ+ accreditation standards.*

Living Proud has been at the forefront of delivering inclusivity awareness training since 2004.

This year saw another busy schedule comprising full and half-day training workshops, customised sessions, short talks and presentations. We were again able to support some regional and remote opportunities although recognise there is much more to be done in this space. The work commencing through the WAPHA project will transform our future training proposition (content and accessibility) and further improve our capabilities through a combination of insights, scoping, feasibility, uplift and evaluation.

Fee for service activities (training, short talks, advisory/consultative support) are a key area of income growth for the organisation, and this is reflected in the additional funding secured (WAPHA), the efforts to increase delivery capacity (additional staff facilitators) and the ever-increasing demand. We also believe there are untapped opportunities in the B2B marketing space to further grow our reach and revenue.

To further improve our focus, key performance measures are being developed to help shape our overall proposition and drive desired business and community outcomes.

We are fortunate to have some very experienced and passionate staff working in this space and we are excited to see how this transformation will help us to develop and deliver a step change in our training capabilities, reaching more areas of the community than ever before, and providing long-lasting and meaningful societal change.

Progress against these objectives will be phased throughout the coming year, and in the meantime, we will also continue to support the delivery of our current training and support services in parallel.

WA PRIMARY HEALTH ALLIANCE

Organisational Strengthening Project

The WAPHA project provides funding for organisational strengthening and development activities to enhance primary health care outcomes for the LGBTIQ+ community.



Running over 12 months, this project comprises a number of foundational activities centred around improving primary health care through targeted assessment, uplift and evaluation. These objectives include:

- Ensuring inclusive, safe and effective delivery of primary health and mental support services to LGBTIQ+ people.
- Enhancing health outcomes and reducing health disparities for LGBTIQ+ clients and community members.
- Engaging and empowering LGBTIQ+ communities, individuals and organisations within the primary health sector.
- Improving experiences and outcomes for LGBTIQ+ people with mental health conditions.
- Contributing to building a more LGBTIQ+ inclusive primary health sector.
- Enhancing Living Proud's organisational capacity/capabilities by optimising internal systems and processes through the use of technology and automation.
- Improving Governance and Operational policies, procedures and practices to ensure Living Proud provides efficient and best practice service delivery.
- Building greater awareness of Living Proud's services within the primary care sector.
- Creating greater accessibility of LGBTIQ+ inclusivity training and development services across WA including to rural and remote areas.
- Identifying appropriate Clinical Governance systems which would allow Living Proud to adapt its mental health service delivery model into future.
- Building Living Proud's capacity to provide information, support and advice on LGBTIQ+ inclusive practices to the primary health care sector.

QUEER & ACCESSIBLE PROJECT



The Q&A Project is a federally funded Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Grant, which enables us to collaborate with partners, undertake impact & needs assessment studies, and work to improve the accessibility of queer spaces for people with disability. This includes ongoing community consultation and co-design through a panel of Experts by Experience.

The Q&A project was a huge success during 2021, with the highlight being the amazing PrideFEST celebrations. Q&A helped deliver a range of accessibility measures introduced to increase participation, inclusion, enjoyment, safety and comfort across all PrideFEST activities, including major events such as Fairday and the Pride Parade.

Living Proud is extremely grateful to our partners PrideWA, DADAA and Access Plus for their amazing support and ongoing commitment to improving the Pride experience for everyone in the LGBTIQ+ community.

Living Proud is also delighted that ILC funding has been secured to allow the Q&A project to continue into 2024. This allows us to build on these successes, and support even more partners and events going forward.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community Events continued to be impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, particularly during the first half of the year. We did however participate in the following:

- John Forrest Senior High School Expo
- Belmont Alliance Against depression Expo
- Pride WA Fairday
- Pride WA Parade
- Better Together Volunteering Event



REFERENCE GROUPS & CONSULTATIONS

Living Proud is represented on the following ongoing reference groups:

- WAPHA Diversity and Inclusion Reference Group
- Rainbow Futures Service Priority Group
- LGBTIQ+ Health Australia Board
- GRAI Elders Advisory Group
- Sexual Violence Strategy Reference Group
- Pride Alliance Network WA

Living Proud provided input to the following consultations:

- Alliances Against Depression Imagined Futures
- WA Community Disaster Resilience Strategy
- Director General Roundtable for LGBTQIA+ children and Young People
- Women's Report Card Roundtable
- Esther House Parliamentary Inquiry
- Mindframe Focus Group

Living Proud provided LGBTIQ+ inclusion advice to the following groups:

- State Library of WA
- Women's Health and Family Services
- Chief Justice of WA
- National Cervical Screening Program
- North Metro Health Commission
- National Mental Health Commission
- Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- WA Cervical Cancer Prevention
- WA Cricket
- SECCA
- City of Swan
- School of Special Educational Needs
- Australia Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

CONCLUSION

Living Proud continues to support a robust blend of projects and activities which improve the lives and wellbeing of the community. Importantly we are also investing and growing our fee for service activities and diversifying our grant and fee income streams to provide improved organisational resilience and stability.

Due to various factors it is clear the demand for the QLife service will only increase in future years and the ongoing funding commitment from LHA will ensure that Living Proud continues to provide this essential lifeline to the LGBTIQ+ community, not only in WA but nationally.

Again, through ongoing funding, we are delighted to confirm our signature Queer & Accessible project will once again play a central role in the design and execution of next year's annual PrideFEST celebrations to ensure another fully inclusive event which absolutely everyone can enjoy.

Finally, we are excited by what the future brings. This year has seen a number of foundations laid for future growth, funding secured to invest in and strengthen our organisation, and new initiatives scoped for 2023.

As always, our amazing staff are our greatest, most valuable asset, and on behalf of the community we thank them deeply for everything they do.



TREASURER'S REPORT

SAM GIBBINGS

Treasurer

The COVID-19 pandemic provided Living Proud with both risks and opportunities for the financial year ending 30 June 2022. Border closures, lockdowns and other mandates disproportionately affected our community, seeing an increase in demand for social and counselling support services. To address this, we were fortunate enough to receive COVID-19 relief funding through LHA to increase service capacity. We thank LHA for their ongoing support through this challenging period and extend our appreciation to funders who provided flexibility in allowing any underspend to be rolled over for future service delivery.

Living Proud remains in a strong financial position, achieving a surplus of \$299,588 this financial year. This is due to a significant and generous contribution (\$123,408) from the Commonwealth Bank and COVID-19 restrictions preventing activities such as community consultation and resource development from going ahead. As of 30 June 2022, the total cash reserves were \$995,373, a \$259,588 increase from the previous financial year, placing Living Proud in a strong and liquid financial position.

One of the largest risks to the organisation is over 80% of funding comes government. The Board is acutely aware of this risk but it is anticipated that there will be a shift towards a more diverse cash flow as recommendations from the WAPHA grant's review are implemented. We will continue to identify opportunities for diversification where possible in this period of ongoing change without compromising the quality of our service delivery.

I would like to thank our Board, staff, volunteers and in particular Terry Andrews and Cat Pazvakavambwa for their continued contribution and support in ensuring that the accounting functions are performed to a high standard.

CONTACT US



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If you require confidential support please contact QLife on 1800 184 527 or via the website between 3pm-midnight to speak with a peer supporter:

<https://www.livingproud.org.au qlife/>

