



Living Proud

LGBTIQ+ Community Services of WA



ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023



*Living Proud has been
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

Chairperson

Once again, it my privilege to introduce the Living Proud Annual Report. In the hustle and bustle of the day-to-day it's easy to forget the sheer volume of work completed, the many successes we have enjoyed, the benefits to the community we have delivered, and the great progress that's been made. This is why an Annual Report is such a powerful exercise as it reinforces our compassion, creates an enduring sense of pride and generates a deep satisfaction when reflecting back on the work that we do.

None of these achievements would be possible of course without the amazing efforts of a large number of people, both paid and voluntary, but all united in a passion to better the lives of our community. These people are the heart of Living Proud and on behalf of the Board and our community I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to each and every one of them.

Having operated for almost 50 years, Living Proud has a long and storied history supporting the WA LGBTIQ+ community. We look forward to celebrating our golden year with you and we are excited for what the next 50 years will bring, guided, as always, by our values and principles:

VALUES



PRINCIPLES



BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Board recruitment and succession planning remains a key organisational objective going forward, and we were pleased to see another year-on-year net growth to the Board membership.

The Board wishes to thank Sarah Jane Hithersay and Sheldon Smith who both stood down at the end of their term, and it extends a big welcome to Sarah Turner, Laurene Coller and Ben Nowrojee who joined as new Ordinary Members.

- Barry Cosker – Chairperson
- Sarah Jane Hithersay – Vice Chairperson (Jul 22 – Dec 22)
- Erin Leahy – Vice Chairperson (Dec 22 – Jun 23)
- Sam Gibbings – Treasurer
- Lena van Hale – Secretary
- Sheldon Smith – Ordinary Member (Jul 22 – Dec 22)
- Meaghan Holden – Ordinary Member (Dec 22 – Jun 23)
- Sarah Turner – Ordinary Member (Mar 23 – Jun 23)
- Laurene Coller – Ordinary Member (Mar 23 – Jun 23)
- Ben Nowrojee – Ordinary Member (May 23 – Jun 23)

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



STRATEGIC PLAN

In line with previous commitments, the Board undertook a full review of the strategic direction and organisational goals for the organisation. A number of goals were adjusted as a result of this comprehensive review, and the Board is confident this provides a robust foundation on which to continue growing the organisational capabilities, services and revenue.

In addition, our Mission & Vision were re-endorsed, and our Values & Principles sharpened to ensure there is clarity of purpose for all stakeholders.

The board will review further at the 6-month mark with the intent that our strategic planning remains nimble, responsive, and continually aligned to changes, threats and opportunities that arise within the environment in which we operate.



1

COMMUNICATE OUR VALUE

CONTINUOUSLY DEMONSTRATE OUR VALUE AND GROW THE LIVING PROUD BRAND

Why:

- Maintain high levels of awareness and trust in what we do.
- Communicate our value and purpose to the general community.
- Attract and retain volunteers.
- Support sustained investment from funding bodies and government.

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

This goal is achieved through a continuous focus on awareness raising, 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.

Our social media presence, the introduction of video marketing and the quality and relevance of our content have all continued to improve. In 2023/24 we will focus on re-developing our core Membership proposition.

2

DIVERSE COMMUNITY (NEW)

INCREASE AND IMPROVE OUR CONNECTION TO THE DIVERSE LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY, WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON FIRST NATIONS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Why:

- Historical disparities and compounding intersectionality demand specific and sustained additional support for these areas of the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Such groups are critically under-supported through existing support organisations and services.

This is a new goal which will help provide increased direction and prioritisation for existing and future funding opportunities and community program development. We are aware of significant unmet needs and consider ourselves well-placed to build upon the successes of previous initiatives such as the Queer & Accessible project.

3

RURAL & REMOTE (NEW)

ACCELERATE OUR EFFORTS TO BETTER SUPPORT OUR WHOLE STATE, NO MATTER WHERE PEOPLE LIVE OR WORK

Why:

- Living Proud represents the LGBTIQ+ community across Western Australia, but has historically had a limited presence outside of metro areas.
- We know community experiences and access to support services are not consistent across the state and enhanced advocacy is required for LGBTIQ+ folk outside the metro areas.

This is another new goal and is intended to help drive increased outreach activities into poorly served regional areas. By leveraging online and more efficient in-person capacity building activities we can help empower and strengthen local support structures and boost wellbeing outcomes.

QLife is particularly well-placed as a remote support framework, and new initiatives such as the online pilot for the Bi+ therapeutic discussion group and online training & consultancy modules both highlight the opportunities that exist for Living Proud to improve its reach across the state.

4

VALUED VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY

CONTINUE BUILDING, STRENGTHENING AND SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEER NETWORK AND PEER COMMUNITY

Why:

- A reliable and strong volunteer workforce is crucial to our ongoing success as an organisation.
- A rewarding, impactful and high-quality volunteer program is mutually beneficial.

At Living Proud every single volunteer is valued, appreciated and admired. We simply couldn't succeed without the incredible support and contribution from our amazing volunteers, from our Board members to our casual event helpers. Every individual makes a difference, and this goal helps ensure we make a difference to every individual.

Due to the specialist nature of peer support work, we continue to maintain two volunteer cohorts; peer support workers assigned to QLife and a casual pool to support general Living Proud activities.

Living Proud will celebrate our 50th birthday in 2024 and we will require even more volunteers than normal to help bring those celebrations to life.

If you are interested in volunteering, please email admin@livingproud.com.au

5

SERVICE GROWTH (NEW)

EXPAND THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF SERVICES THAT WE PROVIDE TO BETTER MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

Why:

- There are significant unmet community needs (gaps in service or low availability).
- Improve the health & wellbeing of the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Provide sources of additional revenue and/or funding.
- Collaboration and partnerships are core principles for sustainable growth.

There is widespread evidence that the needs of our community continue to outstrip demand (either through closed or excessive waitlists or lack of service availability in the first place). No region of WA is immune to these challenges. We also know through our work supporting the development of the WA 2018-2024 LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy that persistent gaps are likely to remain within the primary health care structure.

This new goal will allow for improved identification and deployment of new service development opportunities, access to funding and sustainable growth that directly improves community health & wellbeing outcomes.

6

TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES

EXPAND THE REACH AND IMPACT OF OUR TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY PROPOSITION

Why:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Address an unmet need from business, organisations and institutions.
- Provide a sustainable source revenue for the organisation.
- Reduce reliance on external sources of funding.

We continued to lay the groundwork for future investment in our fee-for-service capabilities, with valuable research and insights from the WAPHA funded consultancy review, an expanded delivery capacity and a deeper understanding of opportunities and market needs.

In parallel we also successfully supported and nurtured a healthy pipeline of bookings throughout the financial year, with an encouraging blend of new and returning clients. Post-training satisfaction assessment scores remain extremely high (99% positive).

7

CREATE A WA LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY HUB

CONTINUE WORKING TOWARDS THE CREATION OF A LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY SERVICES HUB

Why:

- Provide a unifying focal point of activity for the community.
- Provide a cost-effective multi-occupancy centre for LGBTIQ+ organisations to better coordinate services and support.
- Provide greater capacity to deliver a full range of services.

This is a stretch goal, but we remain constantly alert to opportunities in this space and continue to advocate for support with key financial and planning stakeholders. We also continue to scope interest from other community partners and organisations to evidence the viability and desirability across the community.

CONCLUSION

The Board and staff at Living Proud recognise the importance of having clear strategic goals that are both impactful and meaningful to the community and support the ongoing stability and growth of the organisation itself.

Our strategic planning is ongoing and dynamic, and our organisation is nimble; combined these leave us well-placed to respond positively to the constantly shifting environment in which we operate, where opportunities may quickly arise (and evaporate), new threats may emerge, and community priorities may rapidly shift.

Living Proud continues on the right trajectory to ensure ongoing financial and operational health, and increased effectiveness in community support where most needed. Renewed funding to our cornerstone QLife and Queer & Accessible projects, exciting new projects either underway or planned, and a transformative investment in our fee-for-service proposition are all indicative of our future successes.

Finally, to strengthen the foundations, we have rolled out a full suite of updated policies and standard operating procedures, developed process toolkits, improved risk awareness and created a more effective governance oversight model.

The Board & I are extremely proud of our progress during 2023 and we thank everyone for their contribution, hard work and commitment in achieving these successes.

We very much look forward to your continued support as we enter our 50th year of service.

OPERATIONS REPORT 2022–2023

This section provides an overview of our operational activities and an update on key projects. As an organisation we continue to successfully balance the need to:

- Maintain excellent operational delivery of existing commitments and meet all service delivery standards.
- Continue developing and enhancing our range of services and our service capacity.
- Secure continued funding & unlock new funding to continue strengthening and diversifying our activities.
- Continue supporting the community through representation, advocacy, inclusion and being a source of strength.
- Create a healthy and enjoyable working environment for everyone.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

JUNE 2023



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

STAFF CHANGES

The overwhelming success of the Queer & Accessible Project required us to increase capacity in this area and we were delighted to welcome CJ Jansen as an additional Project Officer. This will better position the team and project for further successes and growth going forward.

With planned investment in the Training & Consultancy services, we also took the opportunity to boost our casual training pool by accrediting additional staff members as training facilitators. This will allow us to increase training capacity as demand ramps up through 2023/24.

Finally, we were delighted to commence a pilot therapeutic discussion group with the Bi+ Perth community. This pilot will be delivered via in-person and online forums and will help us develop a much-needed additional face to face support capability framework designed specifically for sections of the community with un-met needs. Piloting initially with the Bi+ Perth community it is hoped this initiative will be adopted for other priority groups in future.

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.

PROUD & CONNECTED GRANTS



In partnership with the Mental Health Commission we were delighted to launch our new small grants initiative, the Proud and Connected Community Grants Scheme.

The aim of this program is to increase connection and build resilience within the LGBTIQ+ community, while aligning with outcomes outlined in the Commission's WA Suicide Prevention Framework 2021-2025.

The small grants were made available specifically to LGBTIQ+ community groups and organisations with the following eleven recipients awarded a total of \$150,000:

- GRAI – WA Quality of Life Survey
- Kimberley Blak Pride – Kimberley Blak Pride Festival 2024
- Out South West – Dining for Diversity Luncheon and Workshop
- Albany Pride – Albany Pride Support Group
- OUTMidWest – Regional Training Pilot
- PFLAG – Supporting Regional PFLAG+ Groups and Events
- Queernarvon – Queernarvon Festival weekend
- TransFolk of WA – Training for Peer Support Groups
- Busselton Pride Alliance Inc – Empowered and Connected Festival: Busselton
- Ending Conversion Practices WA – Development of a Conversion Practices Survivors Network
- Care Collaborative – QUILTBAG sewing workshops

Living Proud has provided a range of planning, implementation and evaluation support to grant recipients and we have been honoured to attend several of the funded activities.

This initiative supports our strategic goal to improve support into the regions. We look forward to growing this partnership with the Mental Health Commission and expanding this very successful initiative in future years to support even more grass roots activities across the state.

QLIFE & QPROGRAM

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 June 2024.

This year was a period of consolidation for the QLife service. Along with the team at LHA and our fellow state-based partner sites (Switchboard, Diverse Voices and Twenty10) our focus was on co-designing a new Model of Care and Practice Framework to ensure we continue to provide the best possible peer-based support service to Australia's LGBTIQ+ communities.



This major review saw everyone involved with QLife – service users, volunteers, staff and management, being invited to contribute and collaborate. On behalf of the community, the Board wishes to acknowledge this massive effort and thank both the Living Proud team and others who have worked tirelessly to design and adopt the new policies, procedures and resources to ensure the ongoing safety and quality of the service offered.

In parallel, the mutual benefit and reward for volunteers and QLife service users of this peer-based program remain a key focus for Living Proud and we continue to run our comprehensive QLife Peer Supporters program. This structured learning includes initial training, ASIST (suicide prevention training), direct shift support and guidance, resourcing, information sharing, ongoing reflection and professional development opportunities.

As the usage and need for QLife continues to increase, we would like to take this opportunity to once again thank our volunteers for the time and professionalism they offer the service, the LGBTIQ+ community and each other.

QPROGRAM

In collaboration with Diverse Voices, Living Proud was also funded to expand the service by co-designing QProgram, a new capacity building initiative. This initiative has two main aims:

- To offer holistic assessment and digital outreach support for existing QLife service users who engage with the service frequently or present with complex needs.
- Improve the capacity and efficacy of the QLife service to manage complex presentations, particularly suicide risk, through the provision of support, mentoring, coaching and resource development from Team Leaders.

Running as a pilot, key learnings will be captured over the funding period (until June 2025) to explore the viability of offering ongoing active outreach as a way of supporting vulnerable people in the LGBTIQ+ community. The program anticipates accepting their first referrals in September 2023.

TRAINING & CONSULTANCY



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

Our training and consultancy proposition continues to rebound strongly from the low of COVID with another full schedule comprising full and half-day training workshops, zoom training and customised talks.

The year included 82 bookings, of which 50 were for the half day opening closets and 21 were bespoke short talks. The online version of the training was delivered 5 times each over 2 x 2-hour sessions, and whilst this option is effective, the nature of the training encourages us to promote face to face delivery where possible.

The very experienced training team, and the effectiveness & quality metrics for the training itself, once again all ranked very highly in exit research with customers.

As an ongoing key growth area, we focused on creating additional capacity by expanding our pool of training facilitators and increasing our profile and footprint in regional areas. Increased regional collaboration through the Proud & Connected Grants also presents new opportunities to develop a more cost-effective local capacity building model through a train-the-trainer type approach.

Leveraging the WAPHA research project we have also identified investment and enhancement opportunities to further transform our future training proposition, which includes:

- Identification and commencement of integration of new systems.
- Proposal for new products and services.
- Development of training modules and integrated learning pathways.

Living Proud believes this will further improve our capabilities through a combination of market knowledge, effective scoping, good product development and effective planning, with delivery of new products anticipated in late 2023.

A successful training session delivered to Hope Community Services, Kalgoorlie



WA PRIMARY HEALTH ALLIANCE

Organisational Strengthening Project

Living Proud received a WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) Organisational Strengthening and Development Grant in July 2022 which aimed to support us make effective and sustainable organisational changes to better meet primary health needs and bring health benefits to the community.



This grant allowed us to undertake vital research, planning and discovery to help ensure the future financial strength of the organisation, to better identify and realise opportunities, and to continuously improve by dynamically adapting to the evolving needs of our community, members and stakeholders.

Key focus areas included income generation, ongoing research and program development, enhanced strategic relationships and enhanced operational systems and policies.

The project team successfully delivered some significant artefacts to benefit both Living Proud and the wider community:

- **Training and Consultancy Review:** With the assistance of training consultants, PrideHR, we conducted a review of our existing training and consultancy program and identified opportunities to introduce a new evidence-based Program Framework which provides insights to support prospective clients with selecting levelled packages to meet their immediate needs. We are also developing a suite of new training and consultancy products that will allow us to plan for the future expansion and sustainability of the program.
- **LGBTIQ+ Health Priorities Needs Assessment:** Living Proud engaged Curtin University to facilitate a primary health care needs assessment and consultation process to support priority setting for LGBTIQ+ health in Western Australia. An extensive literature review and program of community & stakeholder consultations have been completed. Findings and recommendations will be used to inform future advocacy work by all LGBTIQ+ community-controlled groups and services as well as government and community health services, including the WA LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy.
- **Mental Health Service Review:** Living Proud engaged Tilver Counselling and Wellness to conduct a review of our counselling services and provide recommendations to support the development of face-to-face counselling services. Tilver provided excellent guidance which is being considered by our Board and will help shape future service development.

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.

2022-2023 has been an exciting and fulfilling time for the Queer & Accessible Project (Q&A) with consistent opportunities to expand accessibility within the WA Queer Community.

We have built on our strong relationship with Pride WA and other 'founding partners' to extend the reach of the Q&A Project to a point where we are now supporting more than 30 queer groups and organisations on their 'access journey'.

One exciting new development has been a dedicated focus on access within the queer sporting community. We have opened conversations around accessibility, created opportunities for access appraisals, increased disability awareness and marketing opportunities, and much more. We have seen a flow on effect, when relevant access information is being taken up by venue managers, such as Councils, resulting in real access change for the wider community!

The Q&A Team have also supported an increased number of queer event managers to conduct access appraisals and introduce access measures that are resulting in increased participation of people with disability. A notable example was the Perth Spectres Basket-Ball held in May 2023.

The Q&A Team have continued their focus on increasing awareness of disability in the queer community. We produced a series of lived experience videos, developed a new series of access information resources, and developed and implemented a new Access Planning Workshop.



VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are vital to our success and provide valuable support to events, fundraising and general operations.

As always, we are indebted to our passionate, dedicated and amazing volunteers. Thank you for everything that you do.



The last year has seen an increase in events & fundraising activity, with a corresponding need to grow our pool of event volunteers. To facilitate this, Living Proud now holds regular online information sessions for event volunteers, we actively promote a TAFE student placement program, and we have developed new 'taster' opportunities to drive short term volunteering and create a new pathway into a longer-term volunteering commitment.

Our experienced and dedicated staff also focus on developing the best volunteer experience for maximum mutual benefit, and regularly contribute to improvements in the volunteer sector in general, for example:

- Presenting at the National Conference on Volunteering ("LGBTIQ+ People and Volunteering – Barriers and How to Address Them").
- Successfully lobbying for an LGBTIQ+ filter being added to the SEEK volunteer website. People wanting to volunteer can now specifically search for opportunities within LGBTIQ+ community.
- Published article on LGBTIQ+ volunteering in Engage, the International Journal of Volunteer Management.



FUNDRAISING

Living Proud was privileged to benefit from a number of high-profile fundraising events during the year. We extend our deep gratitude to all our fundraising partners and thank you for your contributions.



LIVING PROUD AT CHRISTMAS
in partnership with Westfield and The Scentre Group



BASKET-BALL
in partnership with the Perth Spectres



DIVAS DRAG BRUNCH
in partnership with Dean Misdale and the Proud Entertainment Group



OTHER ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY EVENTS

We maintained visibility and increased awareness through our participation in many community events throughout the year, including schools, universities and regional celebrations. We were particularly excited to have a stall at Albany Pride for the first time!

We are looking forward to attending more regional events in the coming year with another first being planned for later in 2023 when we join in community celebrations at Queernarvon (Carnarvon Pride).



ADVOCACY



Alongside celebrations and events, Living Proud also has a long and proud history of community advocacy and we continued this in 2022 through the high profile #fullequalitynow campaign. We amplified this through both Fairday and the Pride Parade. Efforts in this space continue to dominate, and we are fully committed to driving much-needed legislative changes in a number of key policy areas including:

- Abolition of the Gender Reassignment Board.
- Birth certificate reform.
- Implementation of the Law Commission Review's recommended changes to the Equal Opportunities Act.
- Amendments to discriminatory Surrogacy laws.
- Adoption of a 'rainbow portfolio' whole-of-government approach.



Dr John Byrne, Commissioner for Equal Opportunities, supporting the #fullequalitynow campaign at Fairday 2022

CONCLUSION

Living Proud has continued to build upon our strategy of diversification of services, projects and revenue, and our refreshed goals help provide further guardrails and direction for our future activities and priorities.

In parallel we have continued to support our existing projects and services through a combination of excellent service delivery and renewed funding.

It is important that we also continue to focus of providing for and to the community, to drive improved health and wellbeing outcomes and deliver what matters most. This includes reducing service gaps and addressing unmet needs and being at the forefront of advocacy efforts pushing for legislative, cultural and financial changes that benefits the LGBTIQ+ community of WA, no matter where they live or work.

Combined, the organisation successfully blends our historical roots while also going from strength to strength with increased capacity & resourcing, underpinned by improved governance, and a reliable, robust, operating model.

This sets the scene as we enter our 50th year since the organisation was founded. It will be one of celebration, but also continued investment and ongoing growth to propel us forward for the next 50 years.

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

For the financial year ending 30 June 2023, Living Proud has navigated a year of strategic growth and financial stability. Our commitment to serving the community's needs for social and counselling support has remained strong and unwavering.

This year, we focused on enhancing our financial management. The establishment of a Finance Committee, aimed at bolstering informed financial decision-making and enhancing risk management, has improved our financial governance.

The introduction of the delegations schedule and our decision to switch banks to Beyond Bank and invest in savings accounts have further strengthened our financial position.

We achieved a surplus of \$191,223, bringing our total cash reserves to \$1,187,430. These results reflect our careful financial planning and efficient use of resources.

We also continued to progress the wage review to align our staff contracts with the Social and Community Service Award (WA), enhancing pay transparency and equity. This review is ongoing and includes obtaining legal advice to ensure accurate interpretation of the award.

As we enter the 2023-24 financial year, a landmark period that marks our 50th year of dedicated service, Living Proud is gearing up for a dual focus. Firstly, we plan to celebrate this significant anniversary with a series of activities, including targeted fundraising initiatives. These efforts are not just to commemorate our rich history but also to lay a strong foundation for our future ambitions.

Simultaneously, we will intensify our efforts to diversify our income streams. This is especially vital as we anticipate the conclusion of grant funding and the re-tendering of QLife. This is strongly tied to our objective to secure the funding required to appoint Living Proud's first CEO, a crucial step in driving growth and enhancing our impact. Balancing the objectives of honouring our past while strategically preparing for future challenges is central to our mission of financial sustainability and our ongoing commitment to providing high-quality services for the community.

In closing, I thank our Board, staff, and volunteers for their dedication to maintaining high standards in our financial and overall organisational management. As we approach our 50th, Living Proud stands stronger than ever, ready to adapt and grow, while continuing to respond to our community's evolving needs.

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/>

