



# 2022

## Annual Impact Report

# Inside the report

## The overview

4	Acknowledgment of Country
5	Welcome
6	Aspect Inclusion Statement
7	Our Purpose
8	Message from the Chair
10	Message from the CEO
12	Our 2021-2023 Strategic Plan
14	Snapshot of our impact in 2022

## The detail

16	Core Strategy 01: Working in partnership with people on the autism spectrum
22	Core Strategy 02: Delivering quality, best practice, evidence-informed services
24	Core Strategy 03: Extending Aspect's reach and enhancing people capabilities
32	Core Strategy 04: Strategic investment in physical and digital infrastructure

## The underpinning

34	Our people
36	Our supporters and partners
38	Our Patron, Life Governors and Life Members
40	Our Board of Directors

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is a child safe organisation committed to protecting the rights and interests of children and vulnerable people by providing them with a safe environment. This commitment extends to ensuring a culturally safe and inclusive environment that recognises and respects individuals' heritage, relationships and cultural practices.

Aspect is a company limited by guarantee, duly registered under the Corporations Act 2001.

Aspect is a public benevolent institution with deductible gift recipient status (DGR6966) as endorsed by the Australia Taxation Office (ATO).

In addition, Aspect holds NSW Charitable Fundraising Authority Number 10991, ACT Charitable Collection Authority Number 19000299, Victorian Fundraising Registration Number 10688, QLD Certificate of Registration as a Charity Number CH2466, WA Charitable Collections Licence CC21640 and SA Collections for Charitable Purposes Licence Number CCP2016. Aspect is also authorised to fundraise in Northern Territory and Tasmania.

Aspect promotes an awareness and understanding of the national and state-based Carers Recognition Acts.

In preparing the annual report for the year ending December 2022, we have reduced our impact on the environment by retaining it on our website and producing only a limited number of copies in print.

Registered office: Level 5, 821 Pacific Highway, Chatswood 2067

ABN: 12 000 637 267

Banker: Westpac Banking Corporation and Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Solicitor: Thomson Geer Lawyers

Auditor: Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd

Investment Advisor: Perpetual Ltd

Website: [autismspectrum.org.au](https://autismspectrum.org.au)  
Email: [customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au)  
Phone: 1800 277 328  
Fax: (02) 8977 8399





## Acknowledgment of Country

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the many lands on which we work and live. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



During Term 1 the students from our satellite class at Briar Road Public School were able to join with the mainstream students to learn about an Aboriginal language. During the Dharawal language lessons the students learned about animals that live in the ocean. One animal they were particularly interested in was Gudhamaang, the saltwater turtle. Shanae Hunter, one of the mums in the class, is a professional artist. She helped the students create an artwork using the personal symbol of handprints, and the distinctive Aboriginal art dot painting style, around Gudhamaang, a magnificent saltwater turtle.

## Welcome

New campuses and exciting capital works. Progressive partnerships overseas and close to home. Raising funds to change lives. Building closer, more inclusive communities. And through it all, striving to achieve great outcomes for our students, staff and other stakeholders.

There's certainly been a lot of action this year at Aspect, and we're proud to share it with you in this Annual Impact Report.



# Aspect Inclusion Statement

**This statement highlights the importance of a culture of inclusion and the need to explicitly communicate this inclusion with our staff and stakeholders.**

The Inclusion Statement was co-developed by Autistic and non-Autistic staff in 2020. It facilitates better participation by letting people know they are welcome to be their authentic selves and encouraging them to do whatever they need to feel comfortable.

The statement is read at the beginning of formal meetings and acknowledges that strategies, such as walking around, using a fidget toy, turning off a camera during a Zoom meeting, or simply recognising that there is a child in the background, can help some people feel more productively engaged with a meeting or event.

The Inclusion Statement is also proudly displayed at all Aspect schools and offices across Australia.



Aspect wants you to know that you are welcome to be your authentic self here without judgement.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do that would make you feel more comfortable - for instance, show you to a quieter area or provide an interpreter service.

You are also welcome to use your own strategies to help you feel engaged and relaxed.



## Our Purpose

**a different brilliant<sup>®</sup>**  
understanding, engaging & celebrating the strengths, interests & aspirations of people on the autism spectrum

# Message from the Chair

"I am proud to present Aspect's 2022 Annual Impact Report"

**It has been yet another eventful year for Aspect, both externally and internally. In spite of economic uncertainty and rising inflation, we overcame challenges and pursued exciting opportunities. I am proud of the quality autism-specific services we have continued to deliver to our students, participants, families and carers.**

Annette Gallard

## Big picture shifts

After being impacted by COVID-19 for the past couple of years, we started to feel some relief in 2022, with cases and closures dropping off after the first quarter. While we cannot underestimate the longer-term effect the pandemic will have on the mental health and wellbeing of our people, it has been wonderful to see services returning to normal.

A significant milestone was the May 2022 Federal Election, which brought a new government – and with it, a commitment to developing a National Autism Strategy and an independent review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Also, of great interest to Aspect was the continued Disability Royal Commission, which included a public hearing focused on the experiences of children and young people with disability in different school environments, including special education settings. Hearing the stories presented is a strong reminder of the privileged role we play in people's lives and reinforces the importance of everything we do at Aspect to provide a safe and welcoming environment for students on the autism spectrum.

## Investing in our future

Providing contemporary, autism-friendly learning environments for our students and staff to thrive has been a major focus. Building on the works already completed in 2020 and 2021, Aspect continued to improve our physical infrastructure through the \$20m Optimisation Program of Works across our schools. Having completed major works at Riverina and Treetop schools, 2022 saw the renovation and refurbishment of Aspect Vern Barnett, South Coast, and Central Coast primary and secondary schools.

## Progress & profit

Pleasingly, Aspect has continued to grow and extend our reach with revenue up by 9% to \$133.52m and a total comprehensive income of \$21.17m. I would like to congratulate all Aspect staff for this result, which is such a clear reflection of their commitment to service delivery and their disciplined approach to managing resources. Aspect continues to be supported by our generous donors who contributed an exceptional \$5.7m to Aspect this year. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Aspect.

As you will discover through this report, 2022 marked the wrap-up of our current strategic plan, with excellent progress made across all core strategies. The Board, the Advisory Council and Aspect Executive have collaborated to develop a new, forward-thinking 2023–2025 Strategic Plan, which will comprise three new core aspirations for Aspect to be:

1. Australia's leading autism educator. Leading the way in developing and applying innovative, evidence-based education approaches that create positive outcomes for Autistic people.
2. Trusted specialist autism support. Providing pathways and foundations for Autistic people that support them to develop the right skills and capabilities to thrive in life.
3. Practical autism innovators. Showcasing what works based on our practical evidence-based knowledge and deep understanding of the lived experiences and priorities of Autistic people.

Progress was also made around Board governance, with a review of Board Committees, a revised Code of Conduct and the development of a new Board Charter. A review was also undertaken of Aspect's Advisory Council – now in its fifth year of operations – and we look forward to continuing to optimise and improve how this Council and the Board work together.

## The start of a new chapter

On a personal note, after spending nine years on the Board and three as Chair, I have made the difficult decision to step down during 2023. Being part of Aspect's evolution during this time has been a privilege, and one I have thoroughly enjoyed. We have grown from a NSW-based organisation supporting just over 2,000 students and participants, to more than doubling our reach and impact. I'm particularly proud of the more outcomes-focused approach and the use of data that is driving changes in the way we are delivering quality education and supports.

I am extremely grateful for the passionate commitment and support of my fellow Board members, who provided such exceptional vision, strategic direction and astute counsel throughout the journey. Thank you.

I would also like to thank Aspect's dedicated Executive Team, led by Jacqui Borland, who continue to drive the organisation forward. I am very confident in Aspect's future and strategic direction, and the continued focus on creating the best opportunities for people on the autism spectrum. Finally, thanks to all the staff, whose focus on understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum is unwavering.

*A Gallard*

Chair of the Aspect Board  
**Annette Gallard**



# Message from the CEO

While the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic may not have completely passed – and the Omicron variant saw some school closures and staff absences – it has certainly been pleasing to see services return to a level of normality in 2022. The challenges of the past few years have also equipped us with a new level of resilience, with strong hygiene protocols, fully vaccinated staff, and the ability to move services and teaching online, if needed.

## Continuing to grow and thrive

Under the dedicated and strong leadership of our school principals, Aspect continued to deliver best practice programs for over 1,200 Autistic students throughout 2022. Through the rollout of our Capital Works Master Plan, we're creating more purpose-built, autism-friendly school environments where students and teachers can thrive.

Another milestone for Aspect this year was successfully completing and passing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Audit, which is critical to maintaining our NDIS registration. We're still finding it challenging to meet the demand for our Individual and Community Services (ICS), which we believe is growing in line with awareness and diagnosis of autism. However, I am pleased to report that we supported over 3,000 participants across assessments, therapy, employment, adult community services and support coordination.

## Greater than the sum of our parts

Closing off our 2021–2023 Strategic Plan this year was a major highlight, with many of our achievements detailed throughout this report. I am so proud of the work that we have accomplished across each strategy. To ensure our programs, services and research reflect real Autistic voices, we are committed to co-design in partnership with people on the autism spectrum. Our programs and services continue to be underpinned by the Aspect Comprehensive Approach, applying the latest knowledge and evidence through Aspect's Research Centre for Autism Practice.

We extended our reach through working across borders (Singapore), working with new cohorts (refugees and asylum seekers) and providing new services (Aspect Extend). We are also incredibly excited to be entering new partnerships with a number of universities, including Victoria University. Through these collaborations, we look forward to developing longer-term and more contemporary options for Autistic students and participants, such as autism-friendly university campuses and workforce environments.

And finally, we invested in physical and digital infrastructure which included the acquisition of two sites for new school campuses in Western Sydney and the Hunter, set to open in 2025.

## The start of a new chapter

We're thrilled to have developed a new plan to take us through to 2025, which will continue to support our purpose. This new plan comprises a revised set of core strategies (see breakout box) that reflect changes in our external environment and our renewed focus on innovation.

## Aspect Core Strategies 2023-2025

1. Deliver evidence-based, high quality, highly valued, autism-specific education and services for our students, participants and their families.
2. Build new opportunities and create greater impact through strong partnerships.
3. Develop community understanding about autism to create a more inclusive world.
4. Position Aspect for a strong future through innovation

“Closing off another reporting period presents a great opportunity to pause and reflect on the year's many highlights with a great sense of accomplishment”



Jacqui Borland

I would like to sincerely thank all of our staff for their contribution, passion and commitment, which I see firsthand every day. I would also like to recognise the Aspect Board of Directors who generously give their time and expertise, as well as our Executive team and Leadership Network, who have provided unwavering support and dedication.

In closing, I want to acknowledge and thank all those who have accessed our services. I am humbled by the work we continue to do to support those on the autism spectrum. As we continue to grow and improve, let's strive to uphold the trusted reputation we have established within the Autistic and autism communities.

*Jacqui Borland*

Chief Executive Officer  
Jacqui Borland



# Our 2021-2023 Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan is our roadmap to delivering on our vision – **creating the best opportunities for people on the autism spectrum**. The plan is set in the context of our purpose – **a different brilliant®** – and our values – **we are passionate about people, about being positive and about what's possible** – and is underpinned by our people, our systems and processes, and our supporters.

## Our strategic goal Where we are heading

By 2023 Aspect will be the partner of choice for anyone looking for autism-specific education, individual and community services and support.

## Our strategic plan How we will get there

We have developed four core strategies that will enable us to deliver our vision and achieve our goals.

### Delivering quality best practice, evidence-informed services

- Prioritise research activities that focus on the Aspect Comprehensive Approach.
- Continuous improvement to Aspect's autism-specific education.
- Embed and regularly report on diversity and inclusion at Aspect.

### Strategic investment in physical and digital infrastructure

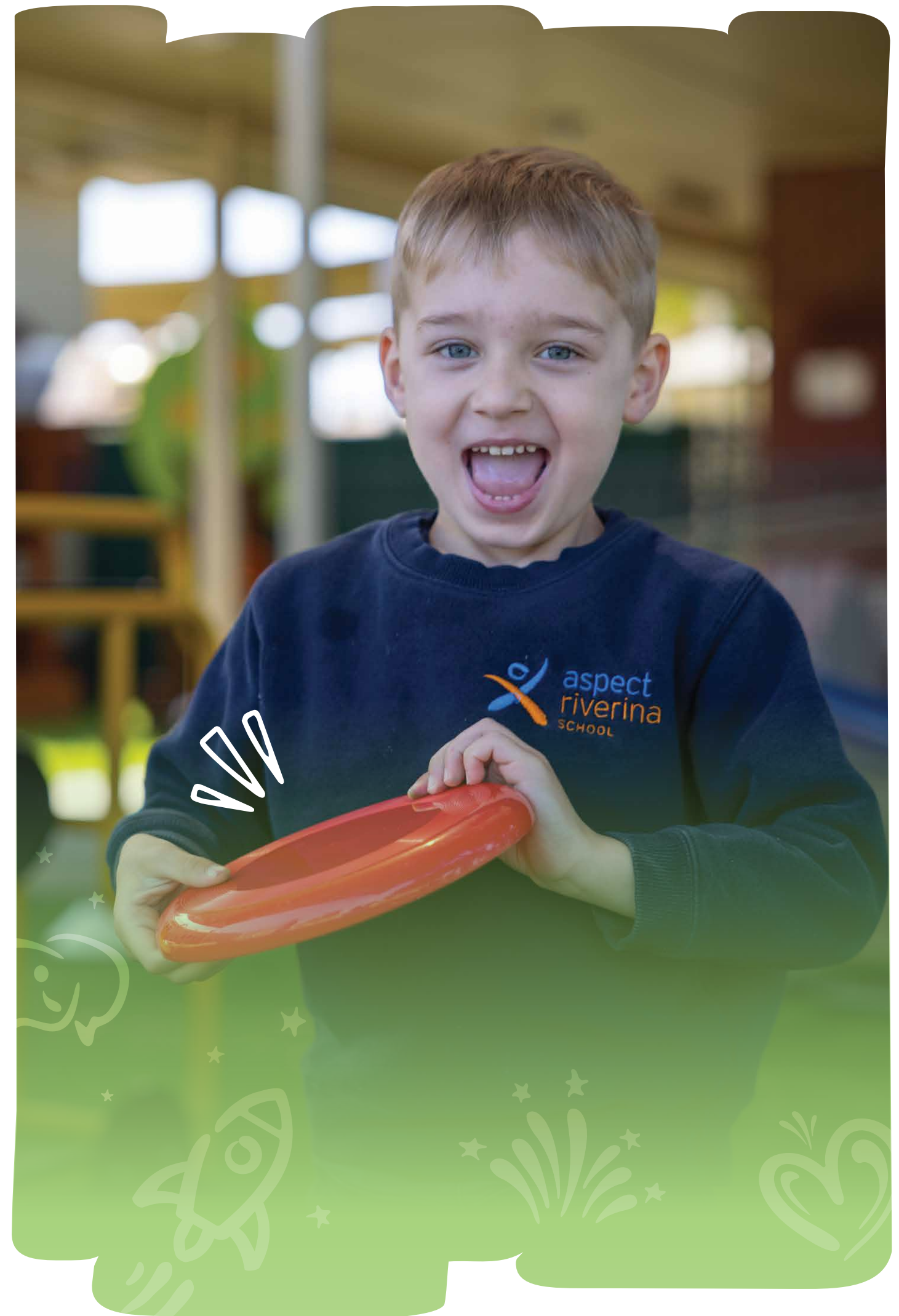
- Deliver the Aspect Capital Works Program for Aspect schools.
- Develop innovative facilities that are co-designed with Autistic people to better reflect their needs.
- Advance Aspect's digital platforms to facilitate collaboration and communication.

### Working in partnership with people on the autism spectrum

- Implement Aspect's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.
- Develop and implement the Working in Partnership with People on the Autism Spectrum Charter.
- Attract, develop and retain Autistic people across a range of roles at Aspect.

### Extending Aspect's reach and enhance people capabilities

- Train our staff and enhance our critical skills.
- Create a customer-centric culture at Aspect.
- Build Aspect's brand identity.



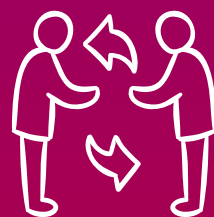
# Snapshot of our Impact in 2022



**4,200+**  
students and participants  
supported in 2022



**\$133.5m**  
in revenue



**3,636**  
regular giving  
supporters



**9** schools  
**102** satellite  
classes



**9,235**  
active participants in  
Walk and Run for autism



**623,986**  
people seeking information  
from our website  
throughout the year



**20,000**  
podcast downloads



**1,300**  
staff employed  
at Aspect



**181,016**  
people engaged on  
social media platforms



**10,838**  
enquiries about  
our services



## Core Strategy 01

# Working in Partnership with people on the Autism Spectrum

### Tick! Aspect Working in Partnership Charter approved

Since its formal approval this year, our Working in Partnership Charter has been communicated internally, bringing everyone into the loop. Presentations were made to Aspect's Executive and Managers, a video was created and screened to all staff, and a Working in Partnership workshop was held at the Leadership Network Conference in November 2022 - enabling us to develop a list of resources that our managers require to work in partnerships more effectively.

### Co-designing programs

Internally, we came together to review several of our internal initiatives, with the aim of ensuring they are all still working as well as possible.

The Aspect Advisory Council (AAC) was reviewed this year and our Communications Working Group was also redeveloped, creating a new cohort that offers the lived experience of autism.

Aspect's Think Tank has continued to provide input into various operational projects including the co-development of the Aspect Comprehensive Approach's introduction chapter, Aspect Research Centre for Autism Practice's 'Disclosure' project, the advertising collateral for targeted marketing graduate roles, Education's 'Self-Determination' and 'Thinking and Learning Preferences and the Lived Experience' projects.

### Taking action on disability access and inclusion

During the last year, Aspect's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) developed a staff survey, designed to capture feedback that will help us better support our employees. The survey results are being consolidated into a report that will be shared with leadership.

Meanwhile, the DAIP developed to carry us through from 2020-2023 was wound up this year, with outstanding autism-specific items being rolled over into a Working in Partnership Plan. This plan aims to further Autistic employment within Aspect, and will be produced by People, Culture and Safety, Working in Partnership and Autistic individuals.

### What's next for the Aspect Advisory Council?

Formed in 2017, the AAC was set up to give people on the autism spectrum a formal voice at Board and Executive levels. This aligns with our broader aim to engage with and seek advice from people with lived experience - allowing us to refine our person-centred approach and correspond with key concepts that underpin the NDIS: choice and control.

Having operated the AAC for five years, we undertook a review of the committee, looking for opportunities to improve and find ways to further amplify the Autistic voice. The review was done on the recommendation of

the Aspect Board, and was supported by key Aspect staff including our Working in Partnership Officer, Company Secretary and a Board member - with AAC members actively participating.

Every aspect of the Council was assessed, from terms of reference, purpose and responsibilities, through to meeting processes such as agendas and logistics. Through the review, there was so much positive feedback about the AAC's contribution, from both AAC members and the Board. Over the years, we also found that the Council has evolved to be more and more autism-friendly, for which the members deserve credit.

Naturally, the review identified some areas where the AAC can have greater impact - mainly in its external connections. Moving forward, more focus will be placed on strengthening relationships beyond the Board members to Executive, management and services, as well as the broader community. We also picked up some ways in which AAC administrative processes can be enhanced.

The key takeout of the review was positive: we found that the existence of the AAC has a strong and positive influence, and ensures that Autistic voices are heard and included in our strategy and decision making on a daily basis. Members also value the sense of belonging that comes from being a part of the group, being valued and listened to, and having the chance to make a difference.

## Moving beyond awareness

Celebrated each year on 2nd April, World Autism Awareness Day was developed by the United Nations (UN) in 2007 - and it's provided a great platform to educate people globally.

However, over the past decade or so, the Autistic community has expressed the need to progress beyond 'awareness' to something less passive - and in the UK, some autism organisations are already embracing the name 'World Autism Acceptance Day'.

This year, Aspect followed suit by piloting a campaign to promote 'World Autism Understanding Day' (WAUD). Co-developed with the Autistic Communications Working Group and our Autistic community, the campaign was themed 'Life on the Spectrum', and it aimed at shifting our focus from awareness to understanding and acceptance. This message resonated strongly with our audiences, and the campaign achieved enormous engagement and reach.

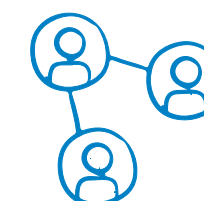


**651**  
downloads  
of the Autism  
Promotional Pack



**30,672**  
impressions of  
the WAUD landing  
page during April.  
The majority came  
organically via a  
Google search.

**Our  
Impact**



**157,000+**  
people reached via **social  
media** (compared to 13.7K  
in 2021)





## The power of lived experience

In 2022, we engaged two new team members, each of whom brings valuable firsthand experience with autism. The first is our wonderful Victorian Autism Liaison Officer, Tom, who has now been working in Adult Community Services (ACS) in Hawthorn, Victoria for 12 months.

Tom plays an important role in the onboarding process, engaging with participants and families throughout the journey; leading site walkthroughs, providing information and sharing his own experiences as an ACS participant. So far, he has onboarded nine new participants, and is intrinsically involved with ACS operations – supporting recruitment processes, Five Point Star discussions, marketing activities, and the review and development of programs. Tom has also developed his presentation skills over 2022 co-presenting numerous workshops where he has gained exceptional feedback. Along with his own lived experience and excellent communication skills, Tom has a unique ability to engage directly with participants and active support workers, and gather invaluable insights and feedback.

“The participant gradually opened up and spoke more to the Autism Liaison Officer while drawing. Tom used humour, vulnerability, sharing of his own experience, questions and reassurance to support her during the program, which took on a relaxed and informal approach with lots of choice and control about art materials and subject matter.” – observation from ACS induction

Over at Aspect Macarthur School, another individual has made a big impact: Mervyn, who is working with students in a mentoring capacity. Mervyn provides both social and emotional support, and has been busy helping all students update their Five Point Stars in preparation for their individual planning (IP) meetings. During the IP meetings, he helped each student set at least one goal related to their autism, such as self-regulation, stress or time management, asking for help when needed, and saying no. Students have been overwhelmingly positive about Mervyn's contribution. Here are just a few things they had to say:

“Mervyn is someone you can trust and go to for help.” – Jack

“He has helped me by playing sports with me and talking to me.” – Aldrin

“Mervyn has helped me with making me more outgoing.” – Chloe

“He is one of the best student mentors because he is cool.” – Stuart

## Tom's story

Our new Autism Liaison Officer shares his personal story.

I was diagnosed on the autism spectrum at age 14, and didn't do well at school. When my mum enrolled me in Aspect's Adult Community Services (ACS) program in Hawthorn, Victoria ten years ago, I was hesitant – I didn't feel like I needed it. But after the initial first weeks, I realised how much I love it here. All the people are so smart and friendly, and the activities are really fun.

When new people join, I make an effort to be supportive and get to know them – many used to mistake me for a staff member, not a participant! After a while, I thought ‘why not?’ and asked if I could work at the centre in an official capacity. Next thing I knew, I was hired to work as Autism Liaison Officer two days a week (which means I can still attend as a participant the other three days). I'm having a great time in this role – I love helping new participants settle in, especially if they feel nervous or anxious to begin with.

I think one positive of COVID was that it made us realise the importance of coming to the centre and seeing our friends. In Hawthorn, we have a garden out back next to a pub, which has a very nice café feel to it. The centre is fun, with music playing, and there's always something to do out in the community. Doing the job at Aspect feels quite easy to me. I fit in, and the other staff have helped me to improve myself in every way. When I'm on holiday, I'd just really rather be here!





## Embedding inclusion at Aspect

*This year, we have continued putting Aspect's inclusion plans into action.*

## Making an impression at Mardi Gras

Aspect was proud to show our true colours at the 2022 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras - participating in the parade, providing training on hidden disabilities for festival staff and hosting a Fair Day stall.

Designed to support LGBTQIA+ Autistic people, our staff featured a quiet 'chill out' zone with sensory regulation tools at both Fair Day and Mardi Gras, giving guests a break from the busy, noisy environment, which can be quite overwhelming for Autistic people.

Our Fair Day stall even won the award for the best overall staff stall, which was presented to our LGBTQIA+ Inclusion team at an official award ceremony in April.



## Supporting cultural inclusions

As part of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Aspect recognised important cultural days throughout the year. These included National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, when staff enjoyed a presentation by Michael West from the Sydney Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council and Guwaali. He spoke about the importance of recognising First Peoples, and gave us a brief history about Aboriginal lands in Sydney. Michael also hosted a special event for our schools and services, which included a short art course on Aboriginal iconography and presented a reading for National Sorry Day.

In late 2022, the Aspect National Office moved from Frenchs Forest to a new location in Chatswood, which is situated on the land of the Cammeraygal Clan of the Eora Nation. To recognise this heritage and cleanse the space, we held a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony.

The Aspect Inclusion Team has also been working in partnership with our First Nations Advisory Council and Reconciliation Staff Working Group to commit to the three key recommendations for organisations from "We Look After Our Own Mob". These are:

- Deepening and extending existing strategic frameworks designed to enable the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in health, education and disability services.
- Development of autism awareness training that incorporates high-quality cultural safety for use in services and institutions, both mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific.
- Review widely used autism intervention and therapy guides, special school curricula and disability services to ensure they fully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and practices.

Working closely with Aboriginal-led firm Dhiira, we are starting the review and re-build of the next Aspect Innovate RAP.



## Core Strategy 02

### Delivering quality, best practice, evidence-informed services

#### When and why do people share that they are Autistic?

Deciding whether or not to tell someone you are Autistic is a daily challenge faced by Autistic people in their workplaces, homes, communities and within their relationships. This year, the Aspect Research Centre for Autism Practice (ARCAP) carried out a study to better understand the factors that influence these disclosures - including the environments that are more conducive to disclosure, and the reactions people experience.

The ARCAP study followed a group of 36 Autistic adults over a two-month period. During this time, they recorded their thoughts, feelings and behaviours during disclosure opportunities using a smart phone. There were 153 instances where a participant shared they were Autistic, and 78 instances where they felt there was an opportunity to disclose their autism, but decided not to.

#### Where do people disclose that they are Autistic?



Following disclosure, Autistic adults were met with a range of reactions - some negative (e.g. shock, dismissiveness, disbelief that they were Autistic), some neutral (e.g. no reaction) and some positive (e.g. curious to learn more; participants felt liberated, accepted, celebrated and valued).

What was clear from this research is that disclosure experiences are influenced by context, and building a more inclusive environment should not be the sole responsibility of Autistic people. Two disclosure guides have been developed as a result, providing practical advice to Autistic and non-Autistic audiences.

#### A world-first self-compassion training module

Self-compassion is a powerful tool - it enables us to be warm and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail or feel inadequate, rather than ignoring our pain or being too self-critical. Research in the general population shows that people with greater self-compassion tend to have better mental health and wellbeing - but to date, researchers have not explored the relationship between self-compassion and mental health of Autistic people.

So this year, ARCAP conducted a study to find out whether Autistic adults' capacity to be self-compassionate (and ability to regulate emotions) impacts their mental health and psychological wellbeing.

The study found an association between self-compassion and mental health for Autistic adults - with more self-compassionate people tending to be younger, and with lower levels of anxiety and depression and higher levels of psychological wellbeing. Since self-compassion can be improved through practice, ARCAP is now trialling an autism-specific self-compassion training program - which was co-produced with Autistic people, and will be run online over five weeks.

#### Understanding Autism

Built on more than 50 years of Aspect's expertise in providing services to children, young people and adults on the autism spectrum, the Aspect Comprehensive Approach (ACA) provides guidance not only to Aspect's Autistic participants, families and carers and staff but also to the wider community.

Under the guidance of the ACA Governance Committee, and working closely with specialist staff across Aspect, the ACA 2.0 was finalised in 2022. It now includes updated comprehensive reviews of the latest autism practice literature and new input from Autistic adults. This evidence-based autism practice framework, which was co-produced with Autistic people, is now available online in full to guide Aspect staff in their day-to-day practice. ARCAP also assessed the impact of the ACA for staff in Aspect services.





## Core Strategy 03

### Extending Aspect's reach and enhancing people capabilities



**3,000+**  
participants  
supported  
across ICS



**1,200+**  
students enrolled  
at schools across  
NSW and SA



**556**  
assessments  
completed (375  
face-to-face and  
181 telehealth)



**89**  
disadvantaged  
families  
supported  
to have an  
assessment

**Sustainably  
grow our  
reach**



**69,106**  
hours of therapy  
provided



ICS services  
offered across  
all states and  
territories



**5,058**  
hours of teletherapy  
provided



**385**  
workshops and  
webinars delivered



### Working with refugees and asylum seekers

Refugees and asylum seekers often aren't eligible for National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding, but do receive support from NSW Refugee Health Service which provides a range of clinical services, and also funds disability support and autism-specific services. However, they do not have therapists as part of their team.

NSW Refugee Health Service contacted Aspect's Therapy team to see if we could assist nine families who had recently arrived in Sydney from Ukraine, Iran, China, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Nepal, Congo and Fiji.

Over the past year, 11 of Aspect's Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Psychologists have worked with these families to provide individualised therapy at home or school.

Children from six of the families also took part in a playgroup that our therapists organised, while parents attended a workshop co-delivered with NSW Health. This covered a range of important topics, such as identifying the early signs of autism, early play, language development and visual supports, toilet training, understanding and supporting sensory needs, Positive Behavior Support, emotional regulation and starting school in NSW.

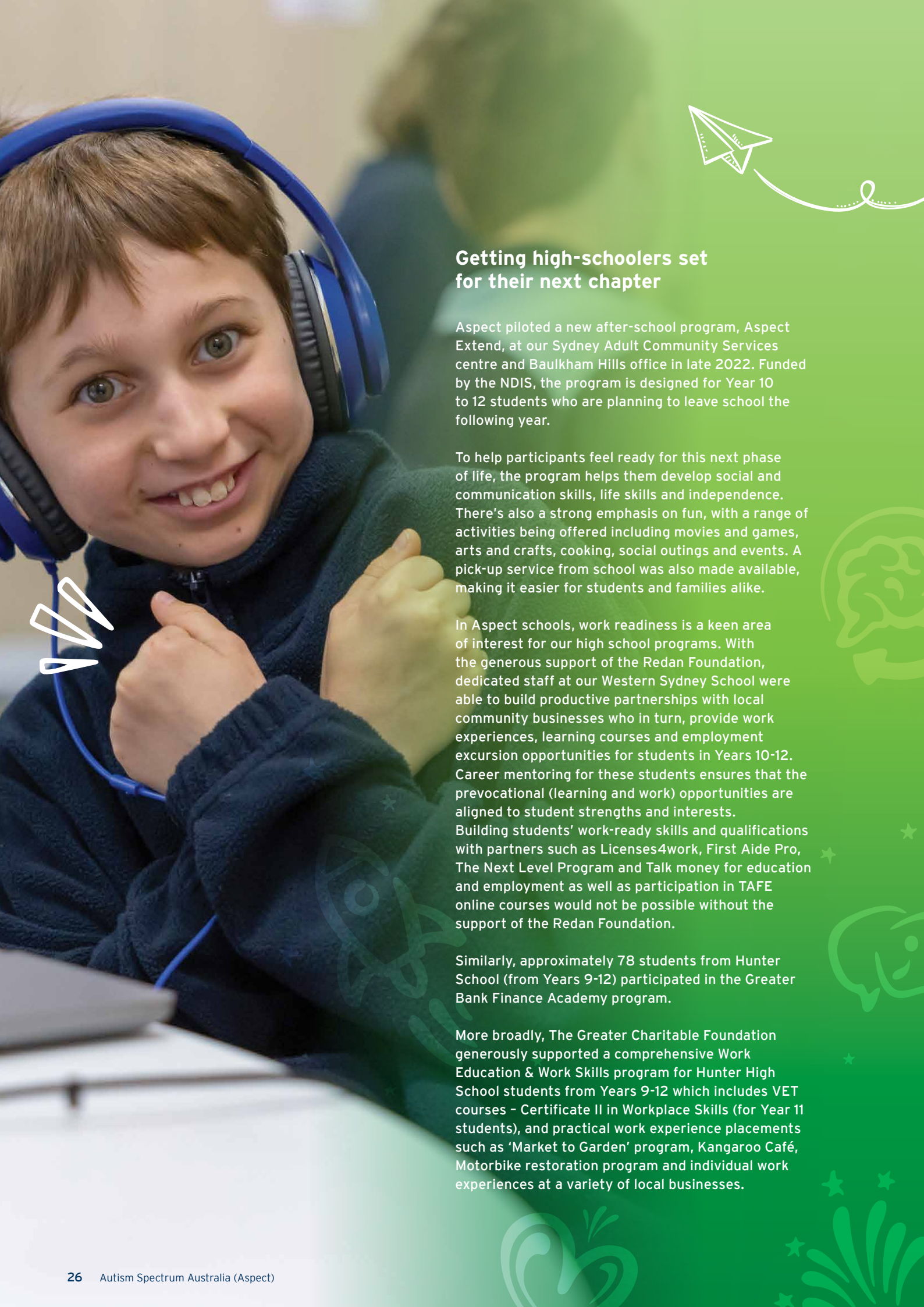
"It's been amazing to be assisting the families and children," says Anita Hemmings, Operational Leader, Aspect Therapy. "We hope the relationship with NSW Refugee Health Service will continue, so we can continue to assist this community."

### The Singapore connection

In 2021, Singapore-based not-for-profit, St. Andrew's Autism Centre, reached out to Aspect. Their team was seeking support and training to implement Positive Behaviour Support across its policies, procedures and practice.

Now, more than 100 St. Andrew's staff have received comprehensive training, coaching and consultation services. All of this has been delivered via Zoom by twelve of our Therapy Behaviour Support Practitioners and Leadership staff. In November, we were delighted to welcome nine St. Andrew's staff, who visited Aspect as part of a study trip across Sydney and Melbourne. We hope that a cohort from Aspect may visit St. Andrew's next year, and we are already discussing how to strengthen our partnership through the ongoing sharing of knowledge, insights and best practice approaches.





## Getting high-schoolers set for their next chapter

Aspect piloted a new after-school program, Aspect Extend, at our Sydney Adult Community Services centre and Baulkham Hills office in late 2022. Funded by the NDIS, the program is designed for Year 10 to 12 students who are planning to leave school the following year.

To help participants feel ready for this next phase of life, the program helps them develop social and communication skills, life skills and independence. There's also a strong emphasis on fun, with a range of activities being offered including movies and games, arts and crafts, cooking, social outings and events. A pick-up service from school was also made available, making it easier for students and families alike.

In Aspect schools, work readiness is a keen area of interest for our high school programs. With the generous support of the Redan Foundation, dedicated staff at our Western Sydney School were able to build productive partnerships with local community businesses who in turn, provide work experiences, learning courses and employment excursion opportunities for students in Years 10-12. Career mentoring for these students ensures that the prevocational (learning and work) opportunities are aligned to student strengths and interests. Building students' work-ready skills and qualifications with partners such as Licenses4work, First Aide Pro, The Next Level Program and Talk money for education and employment as well as participation in TAFE online courses would not be possible without the support of the Redan Foundation.

Similarly, approximately 78 students from Hunter School (from Years 9-12) participated in the Greater Bank Finance Academy program.

More broadly, The Greater Charitable Foundation generously supported a comprehensive Work Education & Work Skills program for Hunter High School students from Years 9-12 which includes VET courses - Certificate II in Workplace Skills (for Year 11 students), and practical work experience placements such as 'Market to Garden' program, Kangaroo Café, Motorbike restoration program and individual work experiences at a variety of local businesses.

## Ori's story

*Bruce and Nurit Thompson have generously shared the journey of their son Ori, who has been an Aspect student at the Port Macquarie Satellite class from K-10 - and in 2022 achieved a very special accomplishment, his graduation!*



Ori (which in Hebrew means 'my light') was a beautiful baby. He gave us so much joy and was reaching all of his milestones - but by the time he was about a year old, we started to worry. All of the other kids we knew were pointing, talking and playing, but Ori had no interest; instead, he paced and wanted to spin things. At 20 months, he was diagnosed on the autism spectrum: we were told by the pediatrician that he'd be non-verbal for life and we should (I quote) "get used to it". Thank goodness we did our own research and found support.

It's been a constant journey of autism education since that day. The results have been spectacular and we now have a young man with a bright future and great hopes of employment and independence.

We live in a regional area where autism-specific services were hard to find. So, you can imagine my excitement when, in 2009, I heard an Aspect school class was about to open in Port Macquarie. Ori was given a place as one of the school's foundation students - seeing him in his school uniform for the first time was certainly a memorable moment.

When Ori first started school, he could only speak about five words - and yet on the very first day, he came home with two new words. Since then, his teachers have continued to be incredible - they really seemed to care, and we loved the constant feedback and the fact that Ori was very much enjoying going to school. From an early age, his teachers were amazed at his maths capability, and how quickly he could multiply or add up large numbers. They also encouraged his other great loves: cars and computers. He loves technology and computers and has done afternoon courses where he has broken down, repaired and even built his own computer. That is his future.

Ori graduated in December 2022, and has been enrolled in Port Macquarie TAFE to study Certificate III in Information Technology. Once he has his qualification, we're hoping Ori may secure employment with either a business requiring a part-time IT position, or possibly start his own computer repair or game design business. He has also been volunteering every Tuesday this year at the Port Macquarie Library, and will continue to do this post-Aspect, with the goal of eventually doing a few paid casual shifts per week.



## Aspect signs new partnership with Victoria University

As part of our mission to create more autism-friendly, inclusive educational environments – and build employment opportunities for Autistic adults – Aspect is proud to have signed a partnership agreement with Victoria University (VU).

The five-year partnership will offer VU students who are training in areas such as speech pathology, psychology, social work and community services (at both TAFE and higher education levels) opportunities to participate in placements, internships and formal employment with Aspect. The partnership will also provide opportunities for Aspect participants to attain a recognised qualification from VU, such as a Certificate I in Work Education or a Certificate I in Transitions Education.

Aspect's autism-friendly team will consult and provide recommendations on the development of inclusive campuses for students on the autism spectrum. Meanwhile, ARCAP will look to collaborate with VU researchers in health, wellness and sport to contribute evidence-based solutions for people on the autism spectrum and their families.

"This partnership represents an amazing opportunity for our participants and staff, and for students studying at VU who are looking to embark on a career in specialised education or therapy, or who are Autistic themselves," said Aspect CEO, Jacqui Borland.

VU Vice-Chancellor Professor Adam Shoemaker agreed, saying "We couldn't be happier about our new alliance with Aspect, in such a critical area for all of us. We're particularly excited that part of the agreement will see VU qualifications offered to members of Aspect and the broader community we serve."

Minister for the NDIS, the Hon. Bill Shorten, was present for the signing ceremony and stated, "This partnership is an excellent example of how we can ensure the future disability workforce is skilled and properly trained. I hope to see more of this kind of collaboration between educational institutions and disability organisations. The better trained disability workers are, the better care they will provide to Australians with disability."

Aspect is currently liaising with a number of universities in NSW to consider similar partnerships.



## Expanding Autism Friendly

Aspect's Autism Friendly program went from strength to strength this year, working with a broad range of partners across NSW and Victoria – including museums and galleries, public transport organisations, major sporting and music venues, councils, universities, LGBTQIA+ venues, shopping centres and private companies such as The Athlete's Foot.

In November 2022, after spending months liaising with Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra and Perth airports, Autism Friendly was proud to launch the Hidden Disabilities guidelines for Australian Airports, in partnership with the Australian Airports Authority (AAA). Another major achievement was the development of the Autism Friendly 'Built Environment Design Guidelines + Checklist', which will be piloted with Aspect Property.

The Autism Friendly team also completed assessments of Aspect's new Head Office in Chatswood, Macarthur School and satellite class, ICS Hawthorn and the annual Recognition Awards.

## Autism Friendly impact

worked with  
**42+**  
companies  
across NSW  
and VIC

delivered the  
Sunflowers in Sydney  
program to **13** partner  
organisations

responded to  
**1,000+**  
requests for the  
Aspect Autism  
Alert card

trained  
**4,550+**  
people (face-to-  
face or online)



# Our impact

## Greater impact through fundraising

With the help of our supporters, Aspect raised over \$5.7 million across our programs. It is once again humbling to see the generosity displayed by individuals, organisations, trusts and foundations, with every dollar raised having a significant impact on our students and participants.



**\$5.7m**  
in total was raised to fund areas that the government does not

Key areas funded include; sponsorships for early diagnostic assessments and educational sponsorships for disadvantaged families, help build new schools, progress our community outreach programs with adults, research and autism friendly programs.



**\$89,716**  
raised at the annual Aspect Golf Day

with the funds going towards the renovations at Aspect Vern Barnett School thanks to the Epper Family.



**\$1,473,485**  
raised at the Walk and Run for autism 2022

9,235 active participants stepped up to support programs across the organisation and they remain the largest fundraising and awareness autism events in Australia.



Greater Charitable Foundation and Redan Foundation kindly funded employment of two teachers for our employment education program worth approximately **\$200k**



One Autistic student mentor employed at an Aspect School

In 2022, we hosted two events celebrating the strengths and interests of Autistic people for our key partners:

### A Night At The Museum

In May, an exclusive event at the Australian Museum brought together a mix of Aspect's most valued supporters and explored the links between Autistic people and science with an expert panel discussion.

### I Used To Be Famous

In November, a private screening of "I Used to be Famous" at the Ritz Cinemas in Randwick, Sydney was followed by a panel discussion and guest interview with Autistic actor, Leo Long. The evening explored the links between Autistic people and music.

# Holly's story

Holly is a cheeky, beautiful and spirited 4-year-old - her liveliness and joy are undeniable. And, having received an autism diagnosis at just 26 months of age, she has the opportunity to make the very most of her unique potential.



Prior to Holly's diagnosis, her parents were worried about what her future would hold. At 18-months old, she had been diagnosed with global development delay, and her mother, Michelle, started noticing other challenges that were making life difficult for her little girl. "Holly didn't turn her head when we called her name," recalls Michelle. "She didn't seem to know how to connect with others around her."

The early years of their daughter's life should have been a time to connect and celebrate small milestones. Instead, Michelle was finding it difficult to know how to communicate with Holly and understand her needs.

"Having the courage to make the first call to Aspect was one of the most important decisions I've made," says Michelle. "It was the first step

in getting Holly access to the early childhood support she so critically needs."

After receiving an early diagnosis with Aspect, Michelle was able to apply for necessary NDIS funding, which provided Holly access to a range of specialists and services, such as occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy and psychology.

"Ultimately, an early diagnosis didn't just give Holly the support she needed to thrive, it gave our family the tools we needed to give her the best start in life."

Today, Holly is attending an autism-specific preschool. Thanks to an early diagnosis and specialist therapy, she has transitioned well and is flourishing in the joys of childhood.



## Core Strategy 04

### Strategic investment in physical and digital infrastructure

#### Investing in Our Future - what's in the works?

2022 has been a massive year for Aspect's Capital Works Master Plan, with our \$20m optimisation program now well underway. Through this program, we are giving many of our schools some much-needed upgrades - and even inclement weather has not stood in our way!

Aspect Riverina and Treetop Schools have already undergone significant expansions and refurbishments, with some planned additional works still to be undertaken. This year, Aspect Vern Barnett, South Coast, and Central Coast primary and secondary schools also commenced major renovations and refurbishments. All renovations have incorporated autism-specific design improvements to support students' sensory requirements - improving functionality for all.

Along with these upgrades, we also completed the construction of a stand-alone multipurpose technology centre for senior students at Aspect's Hunter campus. The centre will deliver the practical components of the Work Education elective (Design and Technology, Food Technology, Agriculture) and other high school courses - plus, it will have designated work spaces for construction, art, computer and agricultural projects. We also have some exciting plans in the pipeline for our Western Sydney School (Wetherill Park campus), Macarthur School (Cobbitty) and South East Sydney School (Peakhurst and Marrickville).

Finally, this year has seen the exciting acquisition of two sites for new school campuses in Western Sydney and the Hunter region. Construction is expected to be underway soon for both schools with new enrolments commencing at the start of 2025. Both campuses will cater for around 72 students each from K-6. Watch this space!



#### Completed upgrades at a glance

##### Vern Barnett

New senior classroom and playground. Junior classrooms, playground and multipurpose hall to be completed in 2023.

##### South Coast

New demountable buildings for two classes of students relocating from the Bellambi campus.

##### St Pius X Unanderra

New demountable buildings for two classes of students relocating from the Bellambi campus.

##### Central Coast Primary

New classroom renovations. Completion of the multipurpose hall, external fencing, road works and playground to be completed in 2023.

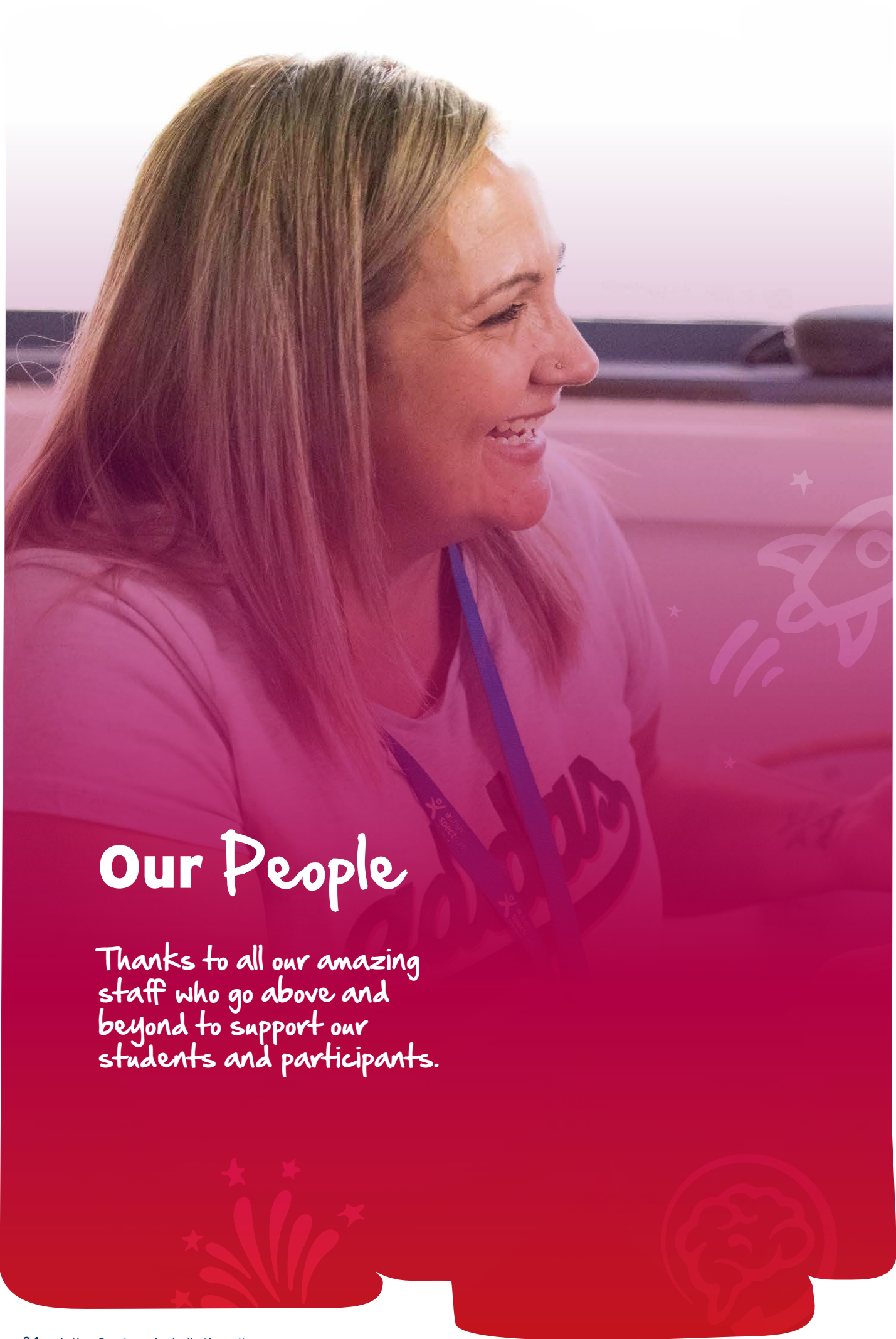
##### Central Coast Secondary

Refurbished ground floor classrooms. The remainder of the classrooms, admin block and covered outdoor learning area to be completed early in 2023.

From an IT capital investment perspective, schools have worked in partnership with technology consultants to design and develop new tech facilities that enable better digital interface in their meeting rooms using modern equipment to enhance Zoom and meeting experiences for families and our staff.



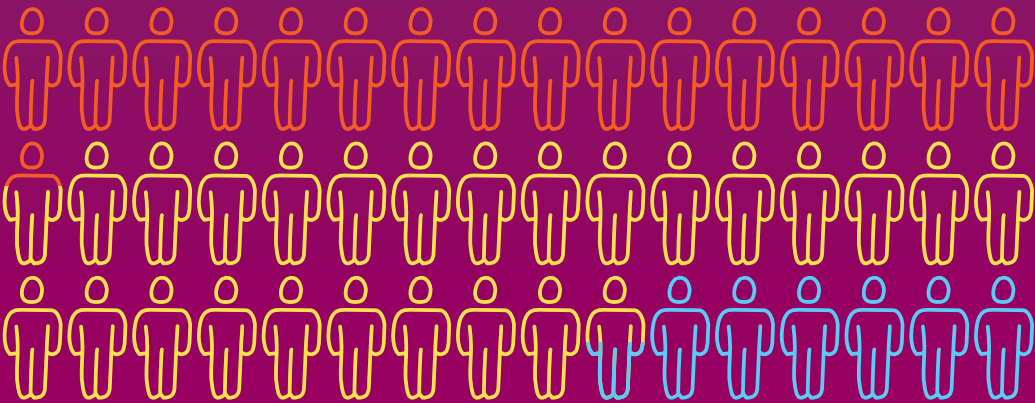




# Our People

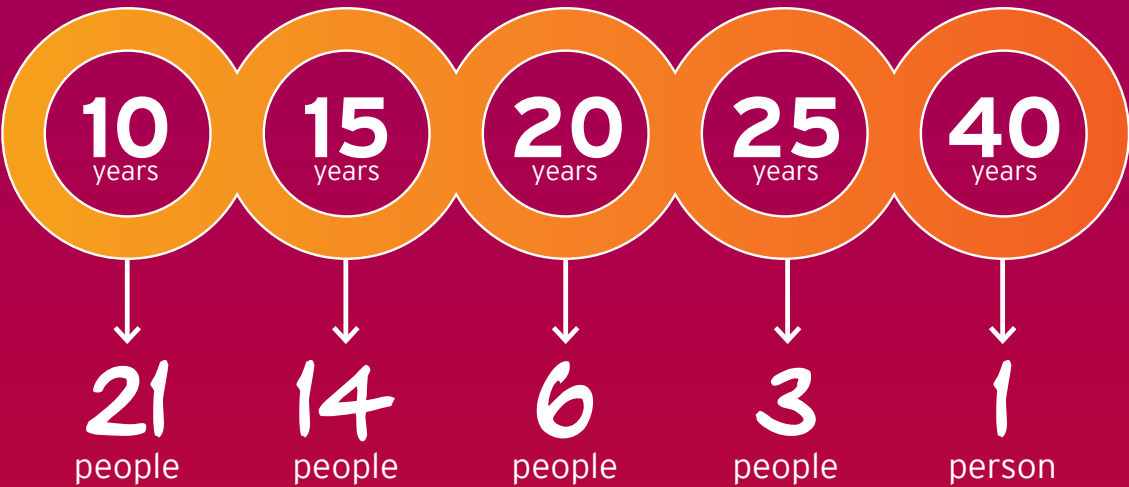
Thanks to all our amazing staff who go above and beyond to support our students and participants.

## Staff breakdown



Staff total **1,300**

## Long service awards 2022



**Alison Begg**  
Teacher at South East Sydney School

**Laraine Nakalevu**  
Teachers Aide at South East Sydney School

**Kaye Perry**  
Principal at Treetop School

**Grace Curbelo**  
Teachers Aide at Western Sydney School



# Our Supporters and Partners



## A special thank you to our major supporters

Australian Chinese Charity Foundation (ACCF)  
 Australian Turf Club Foundation  
 Clubs NSW  
 Community Building Partnership program  
 Dee Why RSL Club  
 E A and N Hulak Foundation No 2  
 Greater Charitable Foundation  
 James N Kirby Foundation  
 Jenny and Guy Reynolds AO  
 Kenneth & Peter Gibbs Foundation (Perpetual)  
 Kevin Barnes Gift Fund Endowment (Perpetual)  
 Noah's Ark Toy Library for Children with Special Needs  
 Primary Club of Australia  
 Rotary Club of Albury  
 Suan Yeo and Family  
 Sutcliffe Family  
 The Bluesand Foundation  
 The Redan Foundation Limited  
 The Wests Group Australia  
 Walter Richard Salmon Foundation (WRS Foundation)  
 Waratah Education Foundation  
 Woodend Foundation (Perpetual)



## Corporate partners and supporters

abrdrn  
 Ausgrid  
 Australian Sentinel  
 BAI Communications  
 BlueScope Building Components  
 Chater Investments  
 Compnow  
 Cotiviti  
 Danceability  
 Dell Technologies  
 Equinix  
 Experian Asia Pacific  
 Ferrari Freelance Services  
 George Weston Foods  
 Intopia  
 NDY Charitable Trust  
 Orica  
 Recruit for Good  
 Scene to Believe  
 Shoes & Sox  
 Stockland  
 The Athlete's Foot  
 VivCourt Trading  
 WestConnex  
 Wests Tigers Rugby League Football Club  
 Wilson Asset Management



## In-kind and volunteer support received from

2SAN - Australia  
 abrdrn  
 Australian Sentinel  
 Dell Technologies  
 Deloitte  
 DOOLEYS  
 Equinix  
 Fidelity International  
 Good360 Australia  
 Greater Charitable Foundation  
 Gretel Killeen  
 Janssen Australia and New Zealand  
 Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA)  
 Newcastle Jets  
 Philanthropy Australia  
 Plan Tracker  
 PwC  
 Rise and Raise  
 The Athlete's Foot  
 VivCourt Trading  
 Wests Tigers Rugby League Football Club



## Gifts in Will made by

Estate of Jane Carrigan Kuchins  
 Estate of Jann Marie Evans  
 Estate of the late Douglas Haynes  
 Estate of the late Martin William Harris  
 Estate of the late Rodney R Taylor  
 Estate of the late Steven Johnson  
 Estate of the late Yvonne Mavis Byrne



# Our Patron, Life Governors and Life Members

## Our Patron

Mr John Doyle AM



## Life Governors

Mr Adrian Ford  
Mrs Cheryl Hatch  
Mr David Epper OAM  
Mr Gerry Harvey

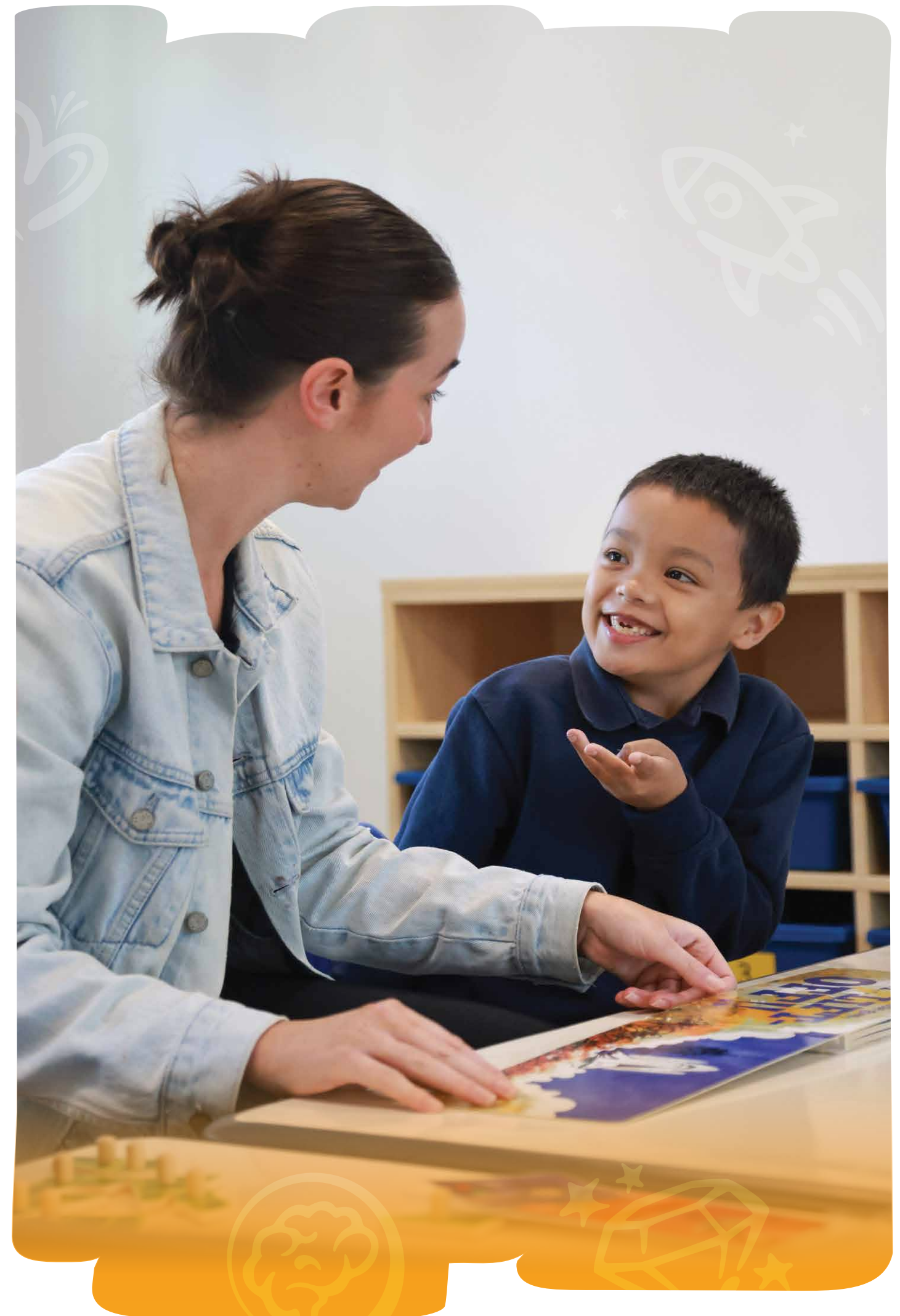
Mr Hilton Grugeon AM  
Mr Peter Werner

## Life Members

Mr Roger Q Allen OAM  
Mrs Clasina Andrews  
Ms Julie Anthony AM OBE  
Mr Mark Bowen  
Ms Judy Brewer AO  
Mr Robert Brown  
Mrs Geraldine Bryant  
Mr Henry Capra  
Mrs Barbara Cummins  
Professor Peter Dodd  
Mr Peter Drayton  
Mrs H Emanuel  
Mr Mark Fogarty  
Mr John Gerahty

Ms Julie Hamblin  
Mr Laurie Horin  
Lady Sybil Joel  
Ms Judith Johnson  
Mr Errol Larbalestier  
Mr Peter Mayne  
Mr Michael McColm  
Mr Malcolm McEwen  
Mr & Mrs Tony & Jill McGrath  
Mrs Shirley McIntosh  
Mr Richard Owens AM  
Mr Keith Perkin  
Mr Robert Pesavento  
Mr Ostilio Pisanu

Dr Gretchen Poiner  
Dr AH Polyblank  
Dr Jacqueline Roberts  
Mr Weston Ryan  
Mr Basil Sellers AM  
Mr John Shand  
Mrs Jean Slaughter  
Dr David R Starte OAM  
Mrs Margaret Stead  
Mrs Andrea Werner  
Ms Jenny Young





# Our Board



## Annette Gallard (Chair of the Board)

**Annette Gallard**, PSM, B. Soc. Stud., M. Comm, has more than 20 years' experience as a senior executive in the NSW Public Service in both the Housing and Community Services Portfolios. She retired from the position of Chief Executive of the NSW Department of Community Services in 2011 and has since focused on assisting the not-for-profit sector as a Board Member. She was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2012 for services to disadvantaged communities, particularly Aboriginal people. Annette joined the Board in March 2014 and is a Member of the Governance Committee and the Education Strategy Oversight Committee. Annette is a Member-elected Director and was elected as Chair of the Board in October 2020.

## Karen Orvad (Deputy Chair)

**Karen Orvad**, B.Comm, MBA (Exec), CA, GAICD has over 25 years' experience in Risk, Internal Audit, Governance, Board Advisory and Strategic Human Resources including executive coaching, culture assessment and change management. Karen is a former KPMG Partner and has worked with some of the world's most recognised brands in the corporate, government, financial services and not-for-profit sectors. Karen is the Chair of the Board of St George Community Housing (SGCH) and a member of its Audit and Risk, Safety and Sustainability and People and Culture Committees. Karen is an independent member of the NSW Treasury Audit and Risk Committee. Karen is a specialist adviser in the areas of risk culture and behaviour and in assisting organisations identify and address both the human and structural elements needed for effective governance. She joined the Board in 2019 and is a Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee. She was elected Deputy Chair in July 2021. Karen is a Member-elected Director.

## Paul Khoury (Honorary Treasurer)

**Paul Khoury**, B.Sc, GD Ed, MA, GD App Finance, SF Fin, GAICD has more than 30 years' experience in the Investment Management & Security Services industries across the US, UK and Asia-Pacific regions having held numerous senior positions at the Director, CEO and COO levels. Paul is currently Managing Partner of Cove Partners, a consultant to the Financial Services industry specialising in business strategy, governance, and operations transformation. Previously, he held senior roles in the areas of investment management, operations management, and actuarial consulting for several domestic and international investment managers and industry service providers. These included Link Group, State Street Corporation, Focus Investment Management, Hambros Hopkins, GIO, MIRA Consultants and IFA Australia. Paul joined the Board in March 2018 and chairs the Finance, People and Audit Committee and is a member of the Education Strategy Oversight Committee. He was elected Honorary Treasurer in July 2020. Paul is a member-elected Director.

## Robert Dolk (Director)

**Robert Dolk**, BEc, ACA, GAICD worked as an auditor with PwC Sydney and then for some 25 years as a banking executive with HSBC, Deutsche Bank, and BNPParibas in Sydney, Hong Kong, Frankfurt, Singapore, Tokyo and Paris. Since returning to Sydney, Robert has been a Non-Executive Director with Zurich Insurance Australia, Lawcover, and Alinta and was previously an Asian Development Bank Representative Commissioner for Indonesia Infrastructure Finance. Robert joined the Board in March 2019 to fill a casual vacancy. He chairs the Education Strategy Oversight Committee and is a Member of the Governance Committee. Robert is a member-elected Director.



## Marielle Latour (Director)

**Marielle Latour**, B.Ec, Exec MBA, GAICD, is a Non-Executive Director and Business Consultant that has worked across various industries including financial services (30+ years), health services and sport. She is experienced in marketing and distribution, M&A and strategy with strong commercial acumen. She is currently a non-executive director of CBHS Corporate Health Fund Pty Ltd and Member of the Audit and Risk Committees. Her board portfolio has included Deputy Chair of a mutual health insurer, Chair of a privately-owned pharmacy services business, a credit union, sports technology business network and a national sporting organisation. She joined the Aspect Board in November 2018 and is a Member of the Governance Committee. Marielle is a member-elected Director.



## Pamela Rutledge (Director)

**Pamela Rutledge**, AM, BA Dip Social Work, MAICD, FIPAA, has over 40 years' experience managing and leading complex health, community services and mental health services. In her early career, Pamela worked as a social worker in front-line mental health service delivery, and was the Executive Officer of the Richmond Inquiry, which significantly influenced the delivery of services for people with a mental illness and those with a developmental disability. Before joining the not-for-profit sector, Pamela had extensive experience in senior roles in the NSW government, including experience in health, housing, and ageing and disability. Pam moved to the not-for-profit/community-managed sector in 2009 to become CEO and Company Secretary of Richmond Fellowship of NSW and then CEO of the merged Flourish Australia (RichmondPRA Ltd), a role she retired from in 2017. She joined the Board in 2018 and chairs the Governance Committee. Pamela is a member-elected Director.



## Paul Vevers (Director)

**Paul Vevers**, PSM, GAICD, BA (Hons), CQSW, Dip Management Studies is a management consultant working in the human services area. Prior to retiring from the role, he was a Deputy Secretary at the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, with responsibility for public housing, local child protection services and some disability services. Paul started his career working as a group parent in a Rudolph Steiner residential facility in Switzerland and then had a variety of management roles in child protection in London. Since moving to Australia in 1999, Paul has had senior management roles in regional and metropolitan areas, focused on social housing, child protection and homelessness. Paul was awarded a Public Service Medal for services to homeless people. Paul joined the Aspect board in August 2018 and chairs the strategy sessions of the board. He is also a member of the Education Strategy Oversight Committee. Paul is a member-elected Director.



## Dr Emily Russo (Director)

**Emily Russo**, B.A., B.Ec. (Hons), M.I.A., Ph.D., GAICD, has over 20 years' experience in talent management, consulting, strategy, stakeholder management and academia. She advises organisations on talent management and has a background in professional services consulting in Australia and the US with firms such as KPMG and CEO Forum Group, now part of Gartner Inc. Emily is an Industry Fellow with the University of Queensland Business School and has research interests in the areas of talent management, diversity equity and inclusion in organisations, and neurodiversity in the workplace. She has numerous publications and has presented her research at international conferences, guest lectures, panel discussions, podcasts, and during media interviews, such as on ABC Radio National. Emily joined the Board in March 2020 and is a Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Governance Committee. Emily is a member-elected Director.

## Tori Haar (Director)

**Tori Haar**, BBehavSc(Psych), BA, DipGov, MDisSt has over seven years' experience in the government and not-for-profit sectors including project coordination, policy development, research administration and data analysis. She is an Autistic woman and has been active in the Autistic community since receiving her diagnosis in 2013. From September 2016 onwards Tori has worked for the Autism CRC, of which Aspect is an Essential Participant, in a variety of roles including as secretary for the Australian Autism Research Council and developing the current version of the Sylvia Rodger Academy Future Leaders program. Prior to this, she worked in the federal public service for the Department of Social Services. Tori received a Westpac Social Change Fellowship in 2019 to recognise and further her work around leadership and capacity building in the Autistic community and was formerly a founding member of the Aspect Advisory Council. Tori joined the Board in December 2020 and is a member of the Governance Committee. Tori is a member-elected Director.





# Treasurer's Report



## Overview

In my capacity as Treasurer, I'm delighted to present another pleasing result for Aspect for the 2022 financial year.

2022 was another challenging year to navigate for all of us. Against a backdrop of high inflation, increased interest rates and continued uncertain economic conditions, Aspect's strong result reflected its efficiency and ongoing effective management of resources. The Total Comprehensive Income for the year of \$21.17m was an exceptional achievement, which demonstrates Aspect's resilience during these difficult times and reinforces its capacity.

Aspect continued to invest in its quality and service offering in 2022, highlighted by capital works across several sites, including the upgrade of Aspect Vern Barnett School, Aspect Central Coast School, Aspect South Coast School and the procurement of a new school site at The Gables, Box Hill, NSW. There were further investments in Aspect's Enterprise Resource Planning system and cybersecurity to enhance key stakeholder data management as part of Aspect's commitment to quality and efficiency.

Despite the challenging external environment, Aspect was able to extend its footprint. The total number of registered students in Aspect schools increased to 1,214. Supporting choice and control by participants, Aspect's Individual

and Community Services (ICS) also provided a diversified portfolio, which included therapy, adult community services, employment, support coordination, assessment and positive behaviour support.

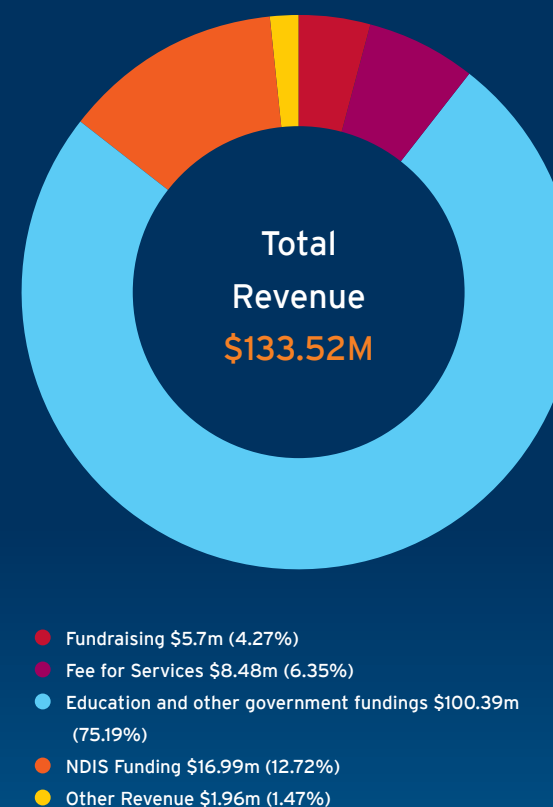
In the years ahead, the accumulated surplus will contribute the necessary funds to allow Aspect to invest in areas that are pivotal to its future success, including the following:

1. Expand Aspect's reach through upgrades of existing facilities and potential land acquisition in key target regions. In addition to the investments that are reflected in the statutory accounts, Aspect has committed a further \$17.57m towards several capital and operational projects.
2. Invest in delivering evidence-based high quality, highly valued autism-specific education and services for our customers.
3. Build new opportunities and create greater impact through strong partnerships.
4. Influence, inspire and support the broader community to include autistic people in all of life's opportunities.
5. Position Aspect for a strong future through innovation.

## Revenue

Total revenue for the year was \$133.52m (Graph 1). Government funding (Education, NDIS and other Government funding) continued to be the primary source of revenue for Aspect, representing 87.91% of total revenue, which is 1.42% higher than the previous year mainly due to the increase in education grants.

Graph 1: Source of Revenue

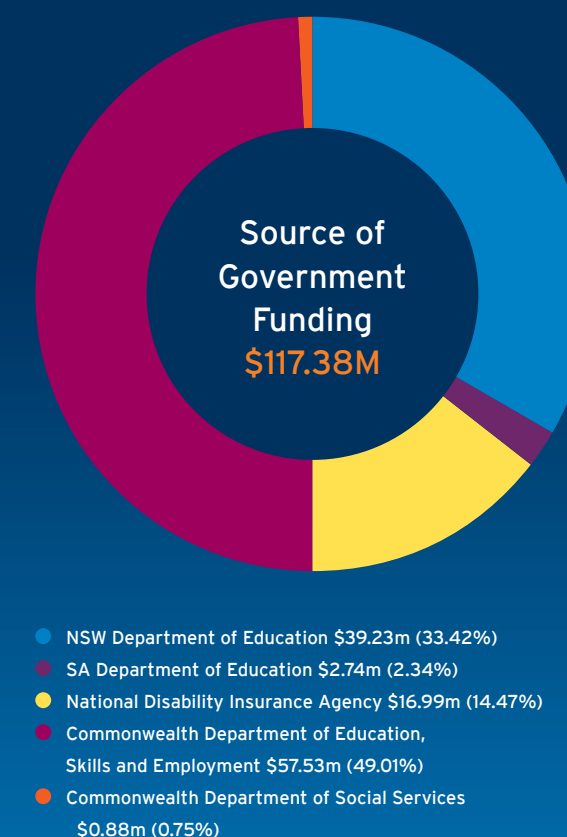


Total fees for services, including school fees, was \$8.48m (\$8.54m in 2021), which accounted for 6.35% (6.96% in 2021) of total revenue. The minor decrease in fee for services revenue reflects a challenging labour market.

Gross fundraising revenue for 2022 was \$5.7m, which was a decrease of \$0.62m from 2021. Aspect appreciates the continuing support from donors during what has been a difficult year. Fundraising continues to represent a vitally important part of Aspect's revenue that allows Aspect to provide services that are either not government funded or where the costs are not fully met.

Government funding increased by \$11.28m to \$117.38m (Graph 2) due to student numbers and per capita funding growth, a reflection of the government's ongoing commitment to autistic students and participants.

Graph 2: Source of Government Funding





# Treasurer's Report cont.



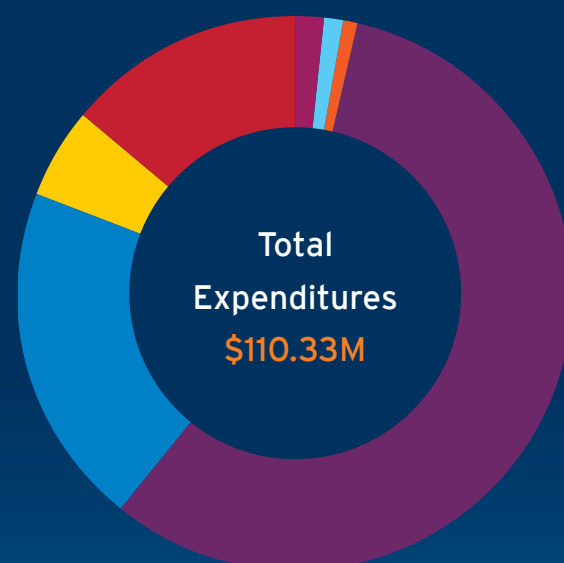
## Expenses

Total expenses for 2022 were increased by 5.89m to \$110.33m (Graph 3). This was due to staff and other costs associated with offering current and additional services. Each business unit manager was responsible for their unit's expenditure and monitored expenses closely to ensure Aspect resources were being used efficiently. The Board is appreciative of Aspect's ability to manage such a large cost base whilst continuing to strongly grow the business.

Aspect Education accounted for 57.16% of total expenses by business group, followed by Aspect Individual and Community Services 20.11%. By expense type, salary costs were \$88.97m representing 80.64% of total expenditure, which was in line with our ongoing strategy to invest in service quality and people. Other expenses, excluding salary expenses, increased by \$3.14m, from \$18.22m in 2021 to \$21.36m in 2022.

Capital expenditure in 2022 was \$16.45m compared to \$10.07m in 2021, a considerable portion of which was related to the upgrade of Aspect Vern Barnett School, Aspect Central Coast School and Aspect South Coast School. The remainder was related to a range of minor facilities improvements, and technology upgrades.

Graph 3: Where the money was spent



- Investments & Loans \$0.07m (0.06%)
- Aspect Fundraising \$1.9m (1.72%)
- Aspect Practice \$1.1m (1%)
- Aspect Research \$1.12m (1.02%)
- Education \$63.07m (57.16%)
- Aspect Individual and Community Services \$22.19m (20.11%)
- Positive Partnerships \$5.68m (5.15%)
- Shared Services \$15.2m (13.78%)

## Assets & Reserves

Overall net assets of the organisation increased by \$20.98m to \$110.49m in 2022 from \$89.50m in 2021, placing Aspect in a stronger financial position.

Aspect's Investment Reserve decreased by \$1.69m from December 2021 to \$14.99m as at 31 December 2022. The portfolio is actively managed in conjunction with Aspect's investment advisers, Perpetual, and the portfolio's performance is measured against defined benchmarks aligned with Aspect's strategic objectives, liquidity considerations, and risk profile. The Reserve will create further financial resilience and safeguard Aspect's future. It may also be used in the event Aspect needs to fund a major Board-approved capital investment that is consistent with Aspect's strategic plan or to address a significant business event.

The cash position fluctuated throughout the year and was influenced by the timing of government funding and school fees which were invoiced in three instalments. Ending period cash and cash equivalent balances increased from \$55.58m in 2021 to \$68.61m in 2022.

As for the liabilities, the service contract liabilities of \$4.99m primarily reflected government funding revenue, which was received in advance and will be expended on programs during 2023. The provisions balance, which totals \$15.98m, mainly comprises annual leave and long service leave liabilities accrued for Aspect staff members.

## Conclusion

A strong financial base for Aspect is an essential element of delivering long-term sustainable and quality services. The financial result for 2022 enables Aspect to execute its strategic plan and increase the range of services and the geographical area in which it delivers its services. The NDIS and changes in education funding provide ongoing challenges that Aspect can best respond to from this position of financial strength.

The Board and management continue to develop tools and processes to enhance Aspect's ability to engage with the changing environment proactively.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Finance team, who have continued to improve effective financial reporting processes during 2022, and the Executive team as a whole for their continued focus on supporting Aspect's financial dimensions.

Finally, I offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues on the Board, particularly those on the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee for their support during the year.

*Paul Khoury*

Honorary Treasurer  
Paul Khoury









*a different brilliant*<sup>®</sup>  
understanding, engaging & celebrating the  
strengths, interests & aspirations  
of people on the autism spectrum

**Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)**  
ABN 12 000 637 267

Level 5, 821 Pacific Highway,  
Chatswood 2067

**T** 1800 ASPECT (1800 277 328)  
**E** [customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au)  
**W** [autismspectrum.org.au](http://autismspectrum.org.au)





# 2022

## Annual Report

### Financials



# Inside the report

4	Treasurers Report
8	Corporate Information
9	Auditor's Independence Declaration
10	Statement of Profit or Loss
11	Statement of Financial Position
12	Statement of Changes in Funds
13	Statement of Cash Flows
14	Notes to the Financial Statements
27	Responsible Entities' Declaration
28	Declaration in Accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 (NSW)
29	Independent Auditor's Report



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is a child safe organisation committed to protecting the rights and interests of children and vulnerable people by providing them with a safe environment. This commitment extends to ensuring a culturally safe and inclusive environment that recognises and respects individuals' heritage, relationships and cultural practices.

Aspect is a company limited by guarantee, duly registered under the Corporations Act 2001.

Aspect is a public benevolent institution with deductible gift recipient status (DGR6966) as endorsed by the Australia Taxation Office (ATO).

In addition, Aspect holds NSW Charitable Fundraising Authority Number 10991, ACT Charitable Collection Authority Number 19000299, Victorian Fundraising Registration Number 10688, QLD Certificate of Registration as a Charity Number CH2466, WA Charitable Collections Licence CC21640 and SA Collections for Charitable Purposes Licence Number CCP2016. Aspect is also authorised to fundraise in Northern Territory and Tasmania.

Aspect promotes an awareness and understanding of the national and state-based Carers Recognition Acts.

In preparing the annual report for the year ending December 2022, we have reduced our impact on the environment by retaining it on our website and producing only a limited number of copies in print.

Registered office: Level 5, 821 Pacific Highway, Chatswood 2067

ABN: 12 000 637 267

Banker: Westpac Banking Corporation and Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Solicitor: Thomson Geer Lawyers

Auditor: Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd

Investment Advisor: Perpetual Ltd

Website: [autismspectrum.org.au](https://autismspectrum.org.au)  
Email: [customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au)  
Phone: 1800 277 328  
Fax: (02) 8977 8399

# Treasurer's Report



## Overview

In my capacity as Treasurer, I'm delighted to present another pleasing result for Aspect for the 2022 financial year.

2022 was another challenging year to navigate for all of us. Against a backdrop of high inflation, increased interest rates and continued uncertain economic conditions, Aspect's strong result reflected its efficiency and ongoing effective management of resources. The Total Comprehensive Income for the year of \$21.17m was an exceptional achievement, which demonstrates Aspect's resilience during these difficult times and reinforces its capacity.

Aspect continued to invest in its quality and service offering in 2022, highlighted by capital works across several sites, including the upgrade of Aspect Vern Barnett School, Aspect Central Coast School, Aspect South Coast School and the procurement of a new school site at The Gables, Box Hill, NSW. There were further investments in Aspect's Enterprise Resource Planning system and cybersecurity to enhance key stakeholder data management as part of Aspect's commitment to quality and efficiency.

Despite the challenging external environment, Aspect was able to extend its footprint. The total number of registered students in Aspect schools increased to 1,214. Supporting choice and control by participants, Aspect's Individual

and Community Services (ICS) also provided a diversified portfolio, which included therapy, adult community services, employment, support coordination, assessment and positive behaviour support.

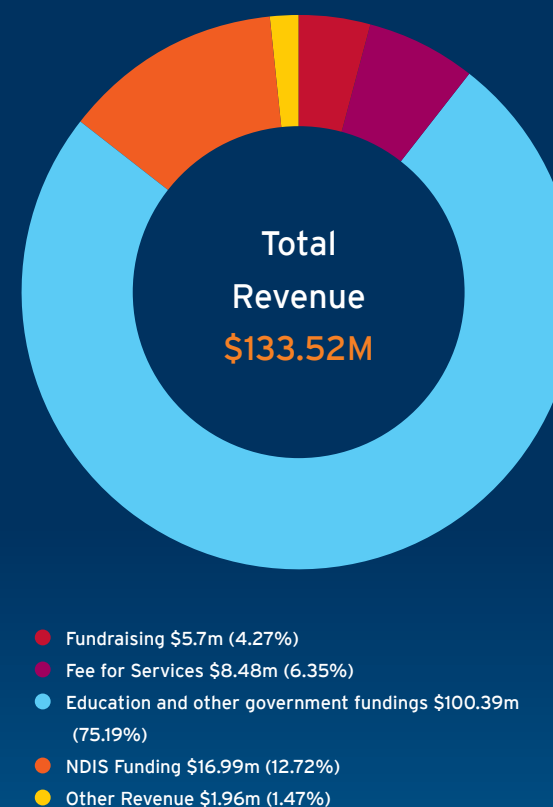
In the years ahead, the accumulated surplus will contribute the necessary funds to allow Aspect to invest in areas that are pivotal to its future success, including the following:

1. Expand Aspect's reach through upgrades of existing facilities and potential land acquisition in key target regions. In addition to the investments that are reflected in the statutory accounts, Aspect has committed a further \$17.57m towards several capital and operational projects.
2. Invest in delivering evidence-based high quality, highly valued autism-specific education and services for our customers.
3. Build new opportunities and create greater impact through strong partnerships.
4. Influence, inspire and support the broader community to include autistic people in all of life's opportunities.
5. Position Aspect for a strong future through innovation.

## Revenue

Total revenue for the year was \$133.52m (Graph 1). Government funding (Education, NDIS and other Government funding) continued to be the primary source of revenue for Aspect, representing 87.91% of total revenue, which is 1.42% higher than the previous year mainly due to the increase in education grants.

Graph 1: Source of Revenue

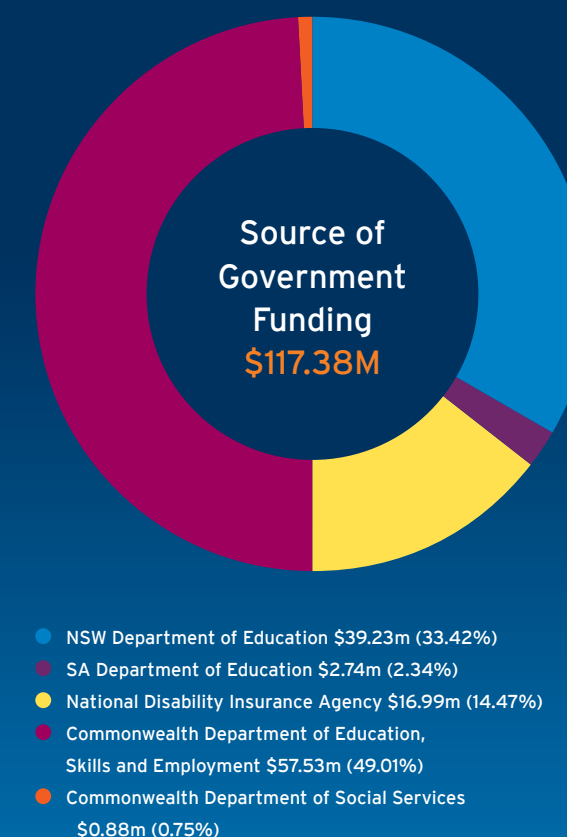


Total fees for services, including school fees, was \$8.48m (\$8.54m in 2021), which accounted for 6.35% (6.96% in 2021) of total revenue. The minor decrease in fee for services revenue reflects a challenging labour market.

Gross fundraising revenue for 2022 was \$5.7m, which was a decrease of \$0.62m from 2021. Aspect appreciates the continuing support from donors during what has been a difficult year. Fundraising continues to represent a vitally important part of Aspect's revenue that allows Aspect to provide services that are either not government funded or where the costs are not fully met.

Government funding increased by \$11.28m to \$117.38m (Graph 2) due to student numbers and per capita funding growth, a reflection of the government's ongoing commitment to autistic students and participants.

Graph 2: Source of Government Funding





# Treasurer's Report cont.



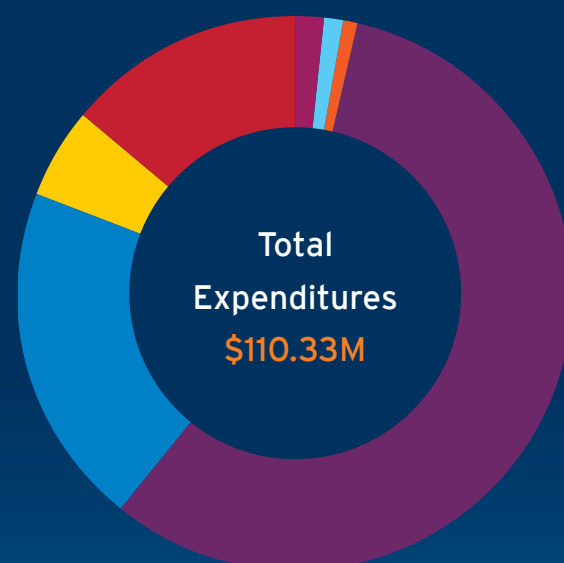
## Expenses

Total expenses for 2022 were increased by 5.89m to \$110.33m (Graph 3). This was due to staff and other costs associated with offering current and additional services. Each business unit manager was responsible for their unit's expenditure and monitored expenses closely to ensure Aspect resources were being used efficiently. The Board is appreciative of Aspect's ability to manage such a large cost base whilst continuing to strongly grow the business.

Aspect Education accounted for 57.16% of total expenses by business group, followed by Aspect Individual and Community Services 20.11%. By expense type, salary costs were \$88.97m representing 80.64% of total expenditure, which was in line with our ongoing strategy to invest in service quality and people. Other expenses, excluding salary expenses, increased by \$3.14m, from \$18.22m in 2021 to \$21.36m in 2022.

Capital expenditure in 2022 was \$16.45m compared to \$10.07m in 2021, a considerable portion of which was related to the upgrade of Aspect Vern Barnett School, Aspect Central Coast School and Aspect South Coast School. The remainder was related to a range of minor facilities improvements, and technology upgrades.

Graph 3: Where the money was spent



- Investments & Loans \$0.07m (0.06%)
- Aspect Fundraising \$1.9m (1.72%)
- Aspect Practice \$1.1m (1%)
- Aspect Research \$1.12m (1.02%)
- Education \$63.07m (57.16%)
- Aspect Individual and Community Services \$22.19m (20.11%)
- Positive Partnerships \$5.68m (5.15%)
- Shared Services \$15.2m (13.78%)

## Assets & Reserves

Overall net assets of the organisation increased by \$20.98m to \$110.49m in 2022 from \$89.50m in 2021, placing Aspect in a stronger financial position.

Aspect's Investment Reserve decreased by \$1.69m from December 2021 to \$14.99m as at 31 December 2022. The portfolio is actively managed in conjunction with Aspect's investment advisers, Perpetual, and the portfolio's performance is measured against defined benchmarks aligned with Aspect's strategic objectives, liquidity considerations, and risk profile. The Reserve will create further financial resilience and safeguard Aspect's future. It may also be used in the event Aspect needs to fund a major Board-approved capital investment that is consistent with Aspect's strategic plan or to address a significant business event.

The cash position fluctuated throughout the year and was influenced by the timing of government funding and school fees which were invoiced in three instalments. Ending period cash and cash equivalent balances increased from \$55.58m in 2021 to \$68.61m in 2022.

As for the liabilities, the service contract liabilities of \$4.99m primarily reflected government funding revenue, which was received in advance and will be expended on programs during 2023. The provisions balance, which totals \$15.98m, mainly comprises annual leave and long service leave liabilities accrued for Aspect staff members.

## Conclusion

A strong financial base for Aspect is an essential element of delivering long-term sustainable and quality services. The financial result for 2022 enables Aspect to execute its strategic plan and increase the range of services and the geographical area in which it delivers its services. The NDIS and changes in education funding provide ongoing challenges that Aspect can best respond to from this position of financial strength.

The Board and management continue to develop tools and processes to enhance Aspect's ability to engage with the changing environment proactively.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Finance team, who have continued to improve effective financial reporting processes during 2022, and the Executive team as a whole for their continued focus on supporting Aspect's financial dimensions.

Finally, I offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues on the Board, particularly those on the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee for their support during the year.

*Paul Khoury*

Honorary Treasurer  
**Paul Khoury**

# Corporate Information

DocuSign Envelope ID: 08FFFE52-C5EB-4B44-BC31-6663E0D4A889

## Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

(A company limited by guarantee and registered with ACNC)

**Corporate information**  
**ABN 12 000 637 267**

**Directors**

The following Directors were in office at the date of this report:

A Gallard (Chairperson)  
R Dolk  
V Haar  
P Khoury  
M Latour  
K Orvad  
E Russo  
P Rutledge  
P Vevers

**Company Secretary**  
M Feros

**Registered office and principal place of business**  
Level 5, Tower B, The Zenith  
821 Pacific Highway  
Chatswood NSW 2067

**Auditor**  
Grant Thornton  
Level 17, 383 Kent Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

# Auditor's Independence Declaration



**Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd**  
Level 17  
383 Kent Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Locked Bag Q800  
Queen Victoria Building NSW  
1230  
T +61 2 8297 2400

## Auditor's Independence Declaration

### To the Responsible Entities of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, as lead auditor for the audit of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2022, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd  
Chartered Accountants

James Winter  
Partner – Audit & Assurance  
Sydney, 28 March 2023

**www.grantthornton.com.au**  
**ACN-130 913 594**

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd ACN 130 913 594 a subsidiary or related entity of Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 ACN 127 556 389. 'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton Australia Limited is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions. In the Australian context only, the use of the term 'Grant Thornton' may refer to Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 ACN 127 556 389 and its Australian subsidiaries and related entities. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.



# Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

For the year ended 31 December 2022



	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Revenue from continuing operations</b>			
Revenue from the provision of services		125,863,626	114,636,716
Donations, bequests and other grant funding		5,695,174	6,318,384
Other income		1,955,228	1,691,423
<b>Total revenue from continuing operations</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>133,514,028</b>	<b>122,646,523</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee expenses	4	(88,968,824)	(86,224,009)
Transportation costs		(1,768,237)	(991,226)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4	(4,270,418)	(3,720,552)
Finance costs	4	(401,479)	(140,423)
Service costs		(6,276,033)	(5,291,255)
Other expenses		(8,834,077)	(8,077,315)
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>(110,519,068)</b>	<b>(104,444,780)</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>22,994,960</b>	<b>18,201,743</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>			
Net changes in the Fair Value through Other			
Comprehensive Income (FVOCI) financial assets		(2,011,770)	406,106
<b>Other comprehensive (loss)/income for the year</b>		<b>(2,011,770)</b>	<b>406,106</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>20,983,190</b>	<b>18,607,849</b>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

# Statement of financial position

As at 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	68,610,712	55,576,600
Trade and other receivables	6	1,457,721	687,718
Financial assets	7	745,704	296,483
Other assets	8	1,217,429	1,447,623
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>72,031,566</b>	<b>58,008,424</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Financial assets	7	25,010,750	26,677,058
Property, plant and equipment	9	47,576,350	33,749,907
Intangible assets	10	1,457,924	1,814,585
Right-of-use assets	11	8,146,347	5,133,330
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>82,191,371</b>	<b>67,374,880</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>154,222,937</b>	<b>125,383,304</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	12	5,442,481	4,410,119
Service contract liabilities	13	4,991,334	6,193,520
Provisions	15	12,771,312	13,481,567
Lease liabilities	16	2,493,116	886,823
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>25,698,243</b>	<b>24,972,029</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Borrowings	14	7,741,667	3,916,141
Provisions	15	3,203,789	2,697,638
Lease liabilities	16	7,092,978	4,294,426
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>18,038,434</b>	<b>10,908,205</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>43,736,677</b>	<b>35,880,234</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>110,486,260</b>	<b>89,503,070</b>
<b>Funds</b>			
Fair value through Other Comprehensive			
Income (OCI) reserve		(1,610,203)	376,389
Accumulated funds		112,096,463	89,126,681
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>110,486,260</b>	<b>89,503,070</b>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

# Statement of changes in funds

For the year ended 31 December 2022



	Fair Value Through OCI Reserve \$	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 January 2021</b>	820,717	70,074,504	70,895,221
Surplus for the year	-	18,201,743	18,201,743
Other comprehensive income for the year	406,106	-	406,106
Transfers	(850,434)	850,434	-
<b>Balance at 31 December 2021</b>	<b>376,389</b>	<b>89,126,681</b>	<b>89,503,070</b>
<b>Balance at 1 January 2022</b>	376,389	89,126,681	89,503,070
Surplus for the year	-	22,994,960	22,994,960
Other comprehensive loss for the year	(2,011,770)	-	(2,011,770)
Transfer	25,178	(25,178)	-
<b>Balance at 31 December 2022</b>	<b>(1,610,203)</b>	<b>112,096,463</b>	<b>110,486,260</b>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2022



	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Receipts from customers and grants		129,717,895	121,678,728
Payments to suppliers and employees		(104,466,092)	(98,588,387)
Interest received		902,578	138,443
Dividends received		598,736	571,200
Interest paid		(401,479)	(140,423)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>26,351,638</b>	<b>23,659,561</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Payments for investments		(345,463)	(19,559,979)
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(16,450,927)	(10,065,240)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>(16,796,390)</b>	<b>(29,625,219)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Increase in borrowings		3,928,085	2,527,462
<b>Net cash provided by financing activities</b>		<b>3,928,085</b>	<b>2,527,462</b>
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents held</b>		<b>13,483,333</b>	<b>(3,438,196)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		55,873,083	59,311,279
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>69,356,416</b>	<b>55,873,083</b>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



# Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

1 Corporate information

Autism Spectrum Australia (“Aspect” or the “Company”) is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. The Company is a not-for-profit entity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and under the Charitable Fundraising Act (NSW) 1991.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

The financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors (who are Aspect’s Responsible Entities under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012) on 28 March 2023.

The financial report has been prepared on the basis of historical cost and presented in Australian dollars which is the Company’s functional and presentation currency.

Principal activities

The principal activities of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) are to provide a range of services to children, young people and adults on the autism spectrum that are person-centred, family-focused and customer-driven. These include customer engagement services, diagnostic and assessment services, therapy services (speech pathology, occupational therapy and psychology) including behaviour support programs, educational services for school-aged children to prepare them for transition to environments that are not autism-specific, short term accommodation services, employment services, individually-funded and block-funded programs for children, young people and adults in response to their individual needs, strengths and capabilities. A range of support services are provided to families of people on the spectrum. As well as the provision of workshops, training and consultation to other professionals and parents in ways of working with people on the spectrum continues as does Aspect’s research program. There were no significant changes in the nature of its activities during the year.

Members’ guarantee

The Company is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is a company limited by guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$20 towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. At 31 December 2022, the total amount that members of the Company would have been liable to contribute if the Company was wound up was \$2,360 (2021: \$2,400).

Economic dependency

Government funding continues to provide the major operational income for Aspect, supported by fundraising and contribution by clients’ families for some of the services through a fee for service charge. Revenue from these three sources increased in 2022 to \$131,558,800 compared with \$120,955,100 in 2021. This represents 98.5% of Aspect’s total revenue.

2 Statement of significant accounting policies

Changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes to the accounting policies applied by the Company during the reporting period.

Summary of accounting policies

The significant accounting policies that have been used in the preparation of these financial statements are summarised below.

The financial statements have been prepared using the measurement bases specified by Australian Accounting Standards for each type of asset, liability, revenue and expense. The measurement bases are more fully described in the accounting policies below.

a. Income tax

Under Section 50-1 and 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, the income of Aspect is exempt from income tax.

b. Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Land and Buildings

Freehold land and buildings are recorded at cost or deemed cost.

Leasehold property

Leasehold property is recorded at cost and depreciated over the useful life.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

Property and equipment are reviewed each year for impairment or whenever events or changes in business circumstances indicate that the carrying value of the assets may not be recoverable. Impairment losses are recognised if expected future cash flows from the assets are less than their carrying values.

Plant and equipment that have been donated are valued at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the useful life to Aspect commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the estimated useful life of the improvement.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Class of fixed asset	Depreciation rate
Leasehold improvements (incl. buildings on leased property)	2.5-10%
Plant and equipment	20-33%
Freehold land and buildings	Nil-2.5%
Motor Vehicles	20%

Residual values and useful lives of assets are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

The carrying amount of an asset is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the carrying

amount is greater than the estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation reserve relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings.

c. Intangible assets

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Following initial recognition, intangible assets are carried at cost less:

- any accumulated amortisation, and
- any accumulated impairment losses.

The useful lives of intangible assets are assessed to be either finite or indefinite. Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised over their useful life and assessed for impairment whenever there is an indication that they may be impaired. The amortisation period and method for an intangible asset with a finite useful life is reviewed at least every financial year end.

Changes in the asset’s expected useful life, or the expected pattern of consumption of the asset’s future economic benefits, are accounted for by changing the amortisation period or method. The amortisation expense on intangible assets with finite lives is recognised in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income in the expense category, consistent with the function of the intangible asset.

Intangibles are amortised over their useful lives as follows: Computer software 3 – 5 years

Gains or losses arising from the disposal of an intangible asset are measured as the difference between the net disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset. They are recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income when the asset is disposed.

At the end of each financial year, we review our intangible’s residual values, useful lives and amortisation methods, and adjust them if appropriate. A review of intangible assets took place during the year, with those assets that are fully depreciated and no longer in use being written off.

d. Leases

The Company has leases over buildings, vehicles and office equipment.  
At the inception of a contract, the Company assesses whether a lease exists – i.e. does the contract convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

This involves an assessment of whether:

The contract involves the use of an identified asset – this may be explicitly or implicitly identified within the agreement. If the supplier has a substantive substitution right, then there is no identified asset.

The Company has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from the use of the asset throughout the period of use.

The Company has the right to direct the use of the asset i.e. decision-making rights in relation to changing how and for what purpose the asset is used.

At the lease commencement, the Company recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Company believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises of the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight-line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy. The right-of-use asset is assessed for impairment indicators at each reporting date.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Company’s incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether

there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the Company’s assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

The Company has elected to apply the exceptions to lease accounting for leases of low-value assets. For these leases, the Company recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Make good provisions

Provisions costs required to return certain leased premises to their original condition as set out in the lease agreements are recognised as a provision in the financial report. The provision has been calculated as an estimate of future costs and discounted to a present value and is revised on an annual basis.

Since these future costs are based on the Company’s past experience with similar premises and estimates of likely restoration costs determined by the Company’s management, these estimates may vary from the actual costs incurred as a result of conditions existing at the date the premises are vacated.

e. Financial assets

Initial recognition and measurement

The Company classifies its financial assets into the following categories:

- 1. financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (FVPL),
- 2. amortised cost,
- 3. financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI)

The classification depends on the purpose for which the investments were acquired. Management determines the classification of its investments at initial recognition and re-evaluates this designation at every reporting date.

Financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at fair value plus transaction costs unless they are carried at fair value through profit or loss in which case the transaction costs are recognised in the income statement.

Purchases and sales of investments are recognised on trade-date, the date on which the Company commits to purchase or sell the asset. Financial assets are derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows from the financial assets have expired or have been transferred and the Company has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership.

The fair value of financial instruments traded in active markets is based on quoted market prices at the balance date. The quoted market price used is the current bid price.

The categories of financial assets are:

Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss

A financial asset is classified in this category if acquired principally for the purpose of selling in the short term or if so designated by management. Assets in this category are classified as current assets if they are either held for trading or are expected to be realised within 12 months of the Statement of Financial Position date.

After initial recognition they are measured at their fair values. Gains or losses on remeasurement are recognised in the income statement.

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets are measured at amortised cost if the assets meet the following conditions (and are not designated as FVPL or FVOCI): they are held within a business model whose objective is to hold the financial assets and collect its contractual cash flows, the contractual terms of the financial assets give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding. After initial recognition, these are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Discounting is omitted where the effect of discounting is immaterial. The Company’s cash and cash equivalents, trade and most other receivables fall into this category of financial instruments.

Financial assets classified as fair value through other comprehensive income

Investments in equity instruments that are not held for trading are eligible for an irrevocable election at inception to be measured at FVOCI. Under FVOCI, subsequent movements in fair value are recognised in other comprehensive income and are never reclassified to profit or loss. Dividend from these investments continue to be recorded as other income within the profit or loss unless the dividend clearly represents return of capital.

The fair value of investments that are actively traded in organised financial markets is determined by reference to quoted market bid prices at the close of business on the reporting date.

Financial liabilities

The Company measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The financial liabilities of the Company comprise trade creditors, other payables, borrowings and lease liabilities.

Fair value

Fair value is determined based on current last sale prices for all quoted investments. Valuation techniques are applied to determine the fair value for all unlisted securities, including recent arm’s length transactions, reference to similar instruments and option pricing models.

Impairment of financial assets

At each balance date the Company assesses whether there is any objective evidence that a financial asset or group of financial assets is impaired. Any impairment losses are recognised in the income statement. The Company considers a broader range of information when assessing credit risk and measuring expected credit losses, including past events, current conditions, reasonable and supportable forecasts that affect the expected collectability of the future cash flows of the instrument.

In applying this forward-looking approach, a distinction is made between: financial instruments that have not deteriorated significantly in credit quality since initial recognition or that have low credit risk (‘Stage 1’), and financial instruments that have deteriorated significantly in credit quality since initial recognition and whose credit risk is not low (‘Stage 2’). ‘Stage 3’ would cover financial assets that have objective evidence of impairment at the reporting date. ‘12-month expected credit losses’ are recognised for the first category while ‘lifetime expected credit losses’ are recognised for the second category.

Measurement of the expected credit losses is determined by a probability-weighted estimate of credit losses over the expected life of the financial instrument.



**Trade and other receivables**

Aspect makes use of a simplified approach in accounting for trade and other receivables and records the loss allowance at the amount equal to the expected lifetime credit losses. In using this practical expedient, Aspect uses its historical experience, external indicators and forward-looking information to calculate the expected credit losses using a provision matrix.

Aspect assesses impairment of trade receivables on a collective basis as they possess credit risk characteristics based on the days past due.

**Derecognition**

Financial assets are derecognised where the contractual rights to receipt of cash flows expire or the asset is transferred to another party whereby the entity no longer has any significant continuing involvement in the risks and benefits associated with the asset. Financial liabilities are derecognised where the related obligations are either discharged, cancelled or expire. The difference between the carrying value of the financial liability extinguished or transferred to another party and the fair value of consideration paid, including the transfer of non-cash assets or liabilities assumed is recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

**Service contract liabilities**

Service contract liabilities generally represent the unspent grants or other fees received on the condition that specified services are delivered or conditions are fulfilled. The services are usually provided, or the conditions usually fulfilled within 12 months of receipt of the grant or fees.

Where the amount received is in respect of services to be provided over a period that exceeds 12 months after the reporting date or the conditions will only be satisfied more than 12 months after the reporting date, the liability is presented as non-current.

Where the monies are received for the Company to acquire or construct an item of property, plant, and equipment that will be controlled by Aspect then the funds are recognised as a contract liability and amortised to revenue as and when the obligation is satisfied.

**f. Impairment of non-financial assets**

At each reporting date, Aspect reviews the carrying values of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being

the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell or value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income. Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the Company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

**g. Employee benefits provisions**

Provision is made for Aspect's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees up to the reporting date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs.

Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits plus related on-costs using a high quality corporate bond rate that represents the period to the expected payment.

Aspect contributes to several contribution superannuation plans. Contributions are charged against income in the period to which they relate.

**h. Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when Aspect has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Management continues to review the probability factors used to accurately reflect the liability for long service leave for all staff.

**i. Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts.

**j. Revenue and other income****Revenue recognition policy for revenue from contracts with customers (AASB 15)**

AASB 15 requires revenue to be recognised when control of a promised good or service is passed to the customer at an amount which reflects the expected consideration. The customer for these contracts is the fund provider.

Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price
5. Recognise revenue

**Revenue from the rendering of a service**

Generally the timing of the payment for rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

**Revenue from government funding and grants**

Government and grant funding arising from an agreement which contains enforceable and sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised when control of each performance obligations is satisfied.

Within grant agreements there may be some performance obligations where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract. Where control is transferred over time, generally the revenue is recognised based on either cost or time incurred which best reflects the transfer of control.

**Income recognition policy for income streams which are either not enforceable or do not have sufficiently specific performance obligations (AASB 1058)****Grant income**

Assets arising from grants in the scope of AASB 1058 are recognised as income at their fair value when the asset is received. These assets are generally cash but maybe property which has been donated or sold to the Company at significantly below its fair value.

**Capital grants**

Capital grants received under an enforceable agreement to enable the Company to acquire or construct an item of property, plant and equipment to identify specifications which will be controlled by the Company (once complete) are recognised as revenue as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed.

For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred

since this is deemed to be the most appropriate measure of the completeness of the construction project as there is no profit margin.

For acquisitions of assets, the revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by the Company.

**Donations and bequests (gift in will)**

Donations and bequests collected are recognised as income when the Company gains control of the asset.

***In-kind donations***

Services donated by volunteers, goods and facilities donated are included at the fair value to the Company where this can be quantified, and a third party is bearing the cost. A register was maintained by the company for donations which could be reliably measured. The cost of Board members' time has not been quantified.

**k. Goods and services tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense of an item. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST components of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

**l. Reserves*****Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI) reserve***

This reserve records fair value changes at each reporting date on investments classified at fair value through other comprehensive income. It represents the unrealised fair value excess over cost for investments held.

**m. Comparative figures**

When required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

n. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial information requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgements. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Judgement applied in determining the amount of revenue

For many of the grant agreements received, the determination of whether the contract includes sufficiently specific performance obligations was a significant judgement involving discussions with several parties at Aspect, review of the proposal documents prepared during the grant application phase and consideration of the terms and conditions. Grants received by Aspect may be accounted for under both AASB 15 and AASB 1058 depending on the terms and conditions and decisions made.

Estimation of the provision for annual leave and long service leave

In determining the present value of the liability, Aspect gives consideration to expected future pay increases through promotion and inflation, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. The liability for employee benefits expected to be settled more than 12 months from the reporting date are recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at the reporting date.

Estimation and judgement for the allowance for expected credit losses

The allowance for expected credit losses assessment requires a degree of estimation and judgement. It is based on the lifetime expected credit loss, days overdue, and makes assumptions to allocate an overall expected credit

loss rate. These assumptions include historical collection rates and forward-looking information that is available.

Estimation of impairment

Aspect assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the organisation that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined using depreciated replacement cost. Depreciated replacement cost calculations incorporate a number of key estimates.

Estimation of useful lives of assets

Aspect determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

Lease term

The lease term is a significant component in the measurement of both the right-of-use asset and lease liability. Judgement is exercised in determining whether there is reasonable certainty that an option to extend the lease or purchase the underlying asset will be exercised, or an option to terminate the lease will not be exercised, when ascertaining the periods to be included in the lease term.

Incremental borrowing rate

Where the interest rate implicit in a lease cannot be readily determined, an incremental borrowing rate is estimated to discount future lease payments to measure the present value of the lease liability at the lease commencement date.

3 Revenue from continuing operations

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Revenue from the provision of services subject to specific performance obligations</b>			
School fees		7,026,677	6,941,690
Other fees for service		1,457,251	1,599,970
NDIS funding	(a)	16,989,352	15,107,393
Government grant funding subject to service obligations	(a)	100,390,346	90,987,663
<b>Total revenue from the provision of services</b>		<b>125,863,626</b>	<b>114,636,716</b>
<b>Income not subject to specific performance obligations</b>			
Donations and gift in will		5,695,174	6,318,384
<b>Total income</b>		<b>5,695,174</b>	<b>6,318,384</b>
<b>Other income</b>			
Interest income		902,578	138,442
Investment income		598,736	571,200
Other		453,914	981,781
<b>Total other income</b>		<b>1,955,228</b>	<b>1,691,423</b>
<b>Total revenue and income from continuing operations</b>		<b>133,514,028</b>	<b>122,646,523</b>
<i>Timing of service revenue recognition</i>			
Services transferred over time		7,026,677	6,941,690
Services transferred at a point in time		118,836,949	107,695,026
<b>(a) Grant funding includes the following sources of government revenue:</b>			
		<b>2022 \$</b>	<b>2021 \$</b>
<b>Commonwealth government</b>			
National Disability Insurance Agency		16,989,352	15,107,393
Department of Education, Skills and Employment		57,532,567	48,279,411
Department of Social Services		878,755	1,676,107
		<b>75,400,674</b>	<b>65,062,911</b>
<b>State government</b>			
Department of Education NSW		39,229,112	38,240,008
Department of Education SA		2,741,759	2,792,137
Victoria Department of Health and Human Services		8,153	-
		<b>41,979,024</b>	<b>41,032,145</b>
<b>Total government funded revenue</b>		<b>117,379,698</b>	<b>106,095,056</b>

4 Operating surplus from operating activities

Operating surplus from operating activities has been arrived at after charging the following items:

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
Depreciation or amortisation of:			
- Freehold land and buildings		98,532	88,277
- Leasehold improvements (incl. buildings on leasehold)		1,582,237	993,559
- Office machines and equipment		472,005	471,144
- Software		828,370	781,793
- Right-of-use assets	11	1,289,274	1,385,779
<b>Total depreciation and amortisation</b>		<b>4,270,418</b>	<b>3,720,552</b>
Finance costs			
- Bank loans, leases and overdraft interest and fees		392,435	124,018
- Finance costs (Make Good - Lease Provision)		9,044	16,405
<b>Total finance costs</b>		<b>401,479</b>	<b>140,423</b>
Net bad and doubtful debts expenses including movements in allowance for credit losses			
		(33,737)	(56,509)
Lease financing (rental payments previous year)			
		300,200	199,092
Net loss/(gain) on disposal of non-current assets			
		-	74,321
Employee benefits expense			
- Wages and salaries		76,347,803	73,212,192
- Defined contribution plan superannuation expense		7,458,190	6,786,370
- Workers' compensation insurance expense		1,114,388	1,523,656
- Employee leave benefits		4,048,443	4,701,791
<b>Total employee benefits expense</b>		<b>88,968,824</b>	<b>86,224,009</b>



**5 Cash and cash equivalents**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Cash at bank	68,610,712	55,576,278
Cash on hand	-	322
	<b>68,610,712</b>	<b>55,576,600</b>

**Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Cash Flows**

For the purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash on hand, cash at bank and cash equivalents and short-term deposits at call, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Cash at bank and on hand	68,610,712	55,576,600
Bank term deposits	745,704	296,483
	<b>69,356,416</b>	<b>55,873,083</b>

**6 Receivables**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Fees and government subsidies	1,862,829	947,125
Less: allowance for credit losses	(421,202)	(275,501)
	<b>1,441,627</b>	<b>671,624</b>
Other receivables	16,094	16,094
	<b>1,457,721</b>	<b>687,718</b>

**7 Other financial assets**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Current</b>		
Bank term deposits	<b>745,704</b>	<b>296,483</b>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Managed fund investments classified as FVOCI	14,985,750	16,677,058
Interest bearing deposit	10,025,000	10,000,000
	<b>25,010,750</b>	<b>26,677,058</b>
<b>Total other financial assets</b>	<b>25,756,454</b>	<b>26,973,541</b>

The Company holds a mixed portfolio of investments in fixed interest securities, alternative assets, property trust, Australian and international equities in its managed fund held at fair value.

The bank deposit of \$10,025,000 is secured against the borrowing facility - refer Note 14.

**8 Other assets**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Accrued income	345,045	201,853
Prepayments	872,384	1,245,770
<b>Total other assets</b>	<b>1,217,429</b>	<b>1,447,623</b>

**9 Property, plant and equipment**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Freehold land and buildings – at deemed cost	9,985,558	9,311,191
Less: accumulated depreciation	(953,290)	(854,758)
	<b>9,032,268</b>	<b>8,456,433</b>
Leasehold improvements (incl. buildings on leasehold) – at cost	44,427,702	30,014,663
Less: accumulated depreciation	(7,687,966)	(6,105,729)
	<b>36,739,736</b>	<b>23,908,934</b>
Office machines and equipment – at cost	3,429,631	2,537,820
Less: accumulated depreciation	(1,625,285)	(1,153,280)
	<b>1,804,346</b>	<b>1,384,540</b>
<b>Total property, plant and equipment</b>	<b>47,576,350</b>	<b>33,749,907</b>

Movements in property, plant and equipment are shown as follows:

	Freehold land and buildings \$	Leasehold improvements (incl. buildings on leasehold) \$	Office machines and equipment \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 January 2022	8,456,433	23,908,934	1,384,540	33,749,907
Additions	673,927	14,444,536	860,754	15,979,217
Disposals	440	(31,497)	31,057	-
Depreciation	(98,532)	(1,582,237)	(472,005)	(2,152,774)
Balance at 31 December 2022	<b>9,032,268</b>	<b>36,739,736</b>	<b>1,804,346</b>	<b>47,576,350</b>

**10 Intangible assets**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Software – at cost	4,601,589	4,129,880
Less: accumulated amortisation	(3,143,665)	(2,315,295)
<b>Total intangible assets</b>	<b>1,457,924</b>	<b>1,814,585</b>
	<b>Software \$</b>	<b>Total \$</b>
Balance at 1 January 2022	1,814,585	1,814,585
Additions	471,709	471,709
Disposals	-	-
Depreciation	(828,370)	(828,370)
Balance at 31 December 2022	<b>1,457,924</b>	<b>1,457,924</b>

**11 Right-of-use assets**

	Buildings \$	Vehicles \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 January 2022	4,621,548	511,782	5,133,330
Additions	3,948,039	354,252	4,302,291
Depreciation charge	(1,005,724)	(283,550)	(1,289,274)
Balance at 31 December 2022	<b>7,563,863</b>	<b>582,484</b>	<b>8,146,347</b>

**12 Trade and other payables**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Trade creditors	2,019,012	2,482,825
Other creditors and accruals	3,537,740	1,960,835
Net GST (receivable)/payable	(114,271)	(33,541)
	<b>5,442,481</b>	<b>4,410,119</b>

**13 Service contract liabilities**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Capital grants received to acquire or construct an asset	198,551	265,762
Payments for future services and grants received in advance	4,792,783	5,927,758
	<b>4,991,334</b>	<b>6,193,520</b>

**14 Borrowings**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Current</b>		
Bank loan – secured	-	-
<b>Non-current</b>		
Bank loan – secured	7,741,667	3,916,141

The bank loan with Westpac is secured by first mortgage over land and buildings.

**Financing arrangements**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Total facilities available:		
Bank overdraft facility	-	-
Bank loans	7,741,667	3,916,141
	<b>7,741,667</b>	<b>3,916,141</b>
Facilities utilised at the reporting date:		
Bank loan	7,741,667	3,916,141
Facilities un-utilised at the reporting date:		
Bank loan	<b>3,783,333</b>	<b>7,583,859</b>

A term deposit of \$10,025,000 is secured against the unused and used bank loans, and a further \$1,500,000 of the bank loan is secured against property.

**15 Provisions**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Current</b>		
Make-good provision under leases	553,800	695,854
Long service leave provision	8,887,566	9,297,266
Annual leave provision	2,179,946	2,338,447
Workers compensation	1,150,000	1,150,000
	<b>12,771,312</b>	<b>13,481,567</b>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Make-good provision under leases	724,205	562,391
Long service leave provision	2,479,584	2,135,247
	<b>3,203,789</b>	<b>2,697,638</b>
	<b>15,975,101</b>	<b>16,179,205</b>

**16 Lease Liabilities**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Current</b>		
Lease liabilities	2,493,116	886,823
<b>Non-current</b>		
Lease liabilities	7,092,978	4,294,426
Total lease liabilities	<b>9,586,094</b>	<b>5,181,249</b>

Future lease payments are due as follows:

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Within one year	1,083,812	1,005,680
One to five years	6,027,562	2,291,297
More than five years	4,222,195	2,712,638
<b>Total undiscounted lease payments</b>	<b>11,333,569</b>	<b>6,009,615</b>

**17 Cash Flow Information**

Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities with surplus:

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>22,994,960</b>	<b>18,201,743</b>
<i>Non-cash flows in operating surplus:</i>		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	2,152,774	1,552,980
Depreciation of right-of-use asset	1,289,274	1,385,779
Amortisation of intangible assets	828,370	781,793
Net loss on disposal of an asset	-	74,321
<b>Changes in operating assets and liabilities:</b>		
Increase in receivables and other assets	(685,510)	(31,067)
(Decrease)/Increase in payables and other liabilities	(169,825)	706,537
(Decrease)/Increase in provisions	(58,405)	987,475
<b>Net cash flows from operating activities</b>	<b>26,351,638</b>	<b>23,659,561</b>

**18 Auditor remuneration**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Audit of the financial statements	64,500	59,500
Other fees	29,650	45,385
<b>Total auditor remuneration</b>	<b>94,150</b>	<b>104,885</b>

**19 Fundraising appeals conducted during the year**

Fundraising appeals conducted during the financial period included direct mail, telephone and digital appeals, regular giving program, major gift and family trusts programme, corporate giving including payroll giving, applications to trusts, foundations & registered clubs, events including Walk for autism, Run for autism and other fundraising activities including merchandise sales, other solicited and unsolicited donations including gift in will. Gift in will generally does not fall under the definition of fundraising in the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and are disclosed below for clarity and consistency with Note 3.

Fundraising assists Aspect to create a world where no-one on the autism spectrum is left behind. Money raised supports programs and initiatives not covered by government grants or the NDIS. In particular, this income was used to fund part of the redevelopment of Aspect's schools, resources for Aspect schools, Aspect therapy services, some services for adults on the spectrum, some of the work of the Aspect Research team and work to create an autism-friendly Australia.

Fundraising funds are incorporated into other operational income and applied as set out in the Financial Statements. All funds are applied for Aspect's Charitable purposes.

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Results of fundraising appeals</b>		
Community fundraising	1,757,417	2,925,979
Individual giving	1,870,180	1,971,919
Philanthropy	1,950,744	1,233,567
Gift in Will	116,833	186,919
Income from fundraising	<b>5,695,174</b>	<b>6,318,384</b>
Less: Total costs of fundraising appeals	(1,902,928)	(2,096,481)
Net surplus	<b>3,792,246</b>	<b>4,221,903</b>
Add: fundraising income deferred in current year	292,259	314,975
Less: fundraising income deferred in prior year, recognised in current year	(350,224)	(105,334)
Cash surplus	<b>3,734,281</b>	<b>4,431,544</b>

**20 Related party transactions****a) Key management personnel compensation**

The Directors act in an honorary capacity and receive no compensation for their services. Directors may receive reimbursement for direct expenses incurred by the directors in fulfilling their roles.

Key management personnel compensation consists of amounts paid to members of the Executive. Throughout the year, there were some changes in the Executive structure in line with the current business environment. This team continued to fulfil the Executive roles.

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Total key management personnel remuneration	<b>2,411,656</b>	<b>2,124,037</b>

**b) Other related party transactions**

The Directors and other key management personnel may be donors to the Company.

Nil other related party transactions.

**21 Contingent liabilities**

Security deposit guarantees of \$745,704 secured against term deposits at Note 7.

**22 Commitments**

	2022 \$
<b>Capital expenditure commitments</b>	
Aspect Macarthur School	1,674,075
Aspect Riverina School	820,845
Aspect South East Sydney School	2,719,828
Aspect South Coast School	1,279,623
Aspect Vern Barnett School	3,639,633
Aspect Western Sydney School	6,092,151
Aspect Hunter School	1,341,366
Total capital expenditure commitments	<b>17,567,521</b>

**23 Events subsequent to the reporting date**

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) has been notified of the NSW Government's intention to grant \$13.2 million to Aspect from the WestInvest Fund, towards building a new state-of-the-art primary school campus in Box Hill and a purpose-built community connection hub for people on the autism spectrum in the Liverpool area. This proposed funding has not been contracted.





## Responsible Entities' declaration

In the opinion of the Responsible Entities of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect):

- a. The financial statements and notes of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:
  - i. giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 31 December 2022 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
  - ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*, and
- b. There are reasonable grounds to believe that Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

The Responsible Entities are the members of the Board of Directors. This declaration is signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

Annette Gallard

Annette Gallard  
Chair of the Board

Dated this 28th day of March 2023

# Declaration in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 (NSW)

On behalf of Autism Spectrum Australia (the "Company"), I declare:

1. The Company is able to pay all of its debts as and when the debts become due and payable;
2. The 31 December 2022 financial statements of the Company satisfy the requirements of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021;
3. The contents of the 31 December 2022 financial statement of the Company are true and fair; and
4. The Company has appropriate and effective internal controls.

*Jacqui Borland*

Jacqui Borland  
Chief Executive Officer

Dated this 28th day of March 2023

## Independent Auditor's Report



Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd  
Level 17  
383 Kent Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Locked Bag Q800  
Queen Victoria Building NSW  
1230  
T +61 2 8297 2400

### Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

#### Report on the audit of the financial report

##### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (the "Registered Entity") which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2022, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and the Responsible Entities' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- a Giving a true and fair view of the Registered Entity's financial position as at 31 December 2022 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b Complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

##### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Registered Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

[www.grantthornton.com.au](http://www.grantthornton.com.au)  
ACN-130 913 594

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd ACN 130 913 594 a subsidiary or related entity of Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 ACN 127 556 389. 'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton Australia Limited is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions. In the Australian context only, the use of the term 'Grant Thornton' may refer to Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 ACN 127 556 389 and its Australian subsidiaries and related entities. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.



Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor’s Report Thereon

Those charged with governance are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Declaration in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 (NSW) but does not include the financial report and our auditor’s report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Responsible Entities for the financial report

The Responsible Entities of the Registered Entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 (NSW), and for such internal control as the Responsible Entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Responsible Entities are responsible for assessing the Registered Entity’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Responsible Entities either intend to liquidate the Registered Entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Responsible Entities are responsible for overseeing the Registered Entity’s financial reporting process.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Registered Entity’s internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Responsible Entities.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Responsible Entities’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Registered Entity’s ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Registered Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Grant Thornton*

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd  
Chartered Accountants

*James Winter*

James Winter  
Partner – Audit & Assurance

Sydney, 28 March 2023



*a different brilliant<sup>®</sup>*  
understanding, engaging & celebrating the  
strengths, interests & aspirations  
of people on the autism spectrum

**Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)**

ABN 12 000 637 267

Level 5, 821 Pacific Highway,  
Chatswood 2067

**T** 1800 ASPECT (1800 277 328)

**E** [customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au)

**W** [autismspectrum.org.au](http://autismspectrum.org.au)