



2024

ANNUAL

REPORT

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As Chair of ASAN AUNZ, I am honoured to present our key activities and achievements over the past year.

In 2024, ASAN AUNZ members made significant contributions to many NDIA co-design and advisory groups, ensuring Autistic perspectives are well-represented. We have been involved in submissions to government to advocate for systemic change.



Our brand and website have been successfully revamped, enhancing our visibility and engagement with our members and the Autistic community. We have also strengthened our board governance and strategic planning processes. We are excited to end the year with the upcoming publication of our Self Advocacy Toolkit and our Pocket App.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board Members: Cheryl Koch, Tim House, Alexandra Bignell, Joanne Dacombe, and David Murphy, for their unwavering commitment to ASAN AUNZ. Special thanks to retiring Board Member Elise Muller for their invaluable contributions. I am also grateful to our key subcontractors, AJ and B, for developing our communications strategy.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Board Members who resigned during this period: Matt Bruyninckx, Evelyn Lai, Katie Turnbull, Tammie Sinclair, Andy Shim, Bronwyn Rideout, Brendan Cunnane, and trial Associate Board Member Rick Scott. Their efforts have been instrumental in our progress. I would also like to acknowledge our founding members Katharine, Tony, and Geraldine, who have been recommended for Life Membership.

As my two-year term ends, I would like to express my gratitude for the privilege of serving on the Board of ASAN AUNZ. It has been an honour to work alongside such dedicated and passionate Autistic people. As we look to the future, I am confident that ASAN AUNZ will continue to grow and thrive under new leadership.

Kind regards

**JAZ BIDGOOD**  
*They/Them*  
ASAN AUNZ Board Chair

## 02 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many autistic people contribute to making ASAN AUNZ what it is. We thank everyone who has been a part of that journey.

### THANK YOU

To our valued:

- > ASAN AUNZ Members
- > User Led Design Group
- > Staff, Contractors, Volunteers and Partners
- > ASAN AUNZ Board Members, past and present

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



We, ASAN AUNZ, respectfully acknowledge First Nations Peoples as traditional custodians of the lands, skies and waters where we live, learn, create and work. We acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the original and ongoing custodians and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



We, ASAN AUNZ, acknowledge the LGBTIQASB+ community and its significant intersection with Autistic and neurodivergent communities. We affirm everyone's right to freely identify and acknowledge their sexual and/or romantic orientation, gender identity and neuroqueer expressions. We actively advocate for the rights of our queer community, contributing to a world that is free from discrimination. We have adopted the Australian specific acronym, that includes 'SB' to represent 'Sistergirl' and 'Brotherboy,' importantly acknowledging our indigenous peoples' queer communities.

This has been a year of renewal for ASAN AUNZ, being the first full year without the active guidance of Katharine Annear, Founding Member.

## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

This year has been one of renewal for ASAN AUNZ. There have been fresh faces on the Board, progress made in improving Board sustainability and soon, completion of our grant deliverables.

### ADVOCATE

We have advocated for autistic people through submissions and contributions to policy and strategy, as well as in conversations and meetings with key decision makers and politicians.

### REPRESENT

We have represented autistic people through our participation in co-design, working and reference groups.

### EMPOWER

We have empowered autistic people through our communications with our members and social media posts.

### CELEBRATE

We have celebrated ASAN AUNZ's history on our new website and honour our Founding Members at our Annual General Meeting.

## PLANS FOR 2025

We will become more visible in the community and advocacy spaces in 2025 with more resources and content being published, along with calls for our members to help represent us.

We aim to finalise our 2025 strategy at our December Board Meeting. Please send comments to [operations@asan-aunz.org](mailto:operations@asan-aunz.org) by 31 November 2024.

ASAN AUNZ strives to be an autistic-led peak body, championing diverse and intersectional perspectives, fostering inclusive community attitudes, and achieving meaningful involvement of autistic people in decisions that affect them.

## MISSION

- > **ADVOCATE** Systemic advocacy and self-advocacy, aiming to influence policies, practices, and attitudes, ensuring accessibility and inclusion for autistic people.
- > **EMPOWER** Facilitate and foster self-determination and autonomy for autistic people to lead meaningful lives.
- > **REPRESENT** Amplify the perspectives of autistic people, and the diverse, intersectional needs of the autistic community.
- > **CELEBRATE** Community Attitudes that promote neurodiversity, increase visibility of autistic people, and showcase autistic skills to foster inclusive community attitudes.
- > **GROW** Capacity Building to provide accessible information and facilitate opportunities for the autistic community to enhance skills and share autistic expertise.

## VALUES

- > **DIVERSITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY** We embrace and amplify the diverse and intersectional experiences of autistic people through meaningful consultation and representation.
- > **VISIBILITY AND ACCEPTANCE** We promote visibility for autistic people and foster an understanding of neurodiversity, recognizing the inherent value of autistic people within the community.
- > **EMPOWERMENT AND AUTHENTICITY** We empower autistic people to actively contribute to decisions that affect them, ensuring their authentic perspectives are heard and respected.

We have advocated for autistic people through submissions and contributions to policy and strategy, as well as in conversations and meetings with key decision makers and politicians.

- > **TRANSPORT** We met with Ministers, AustRoads and the National Transport Commission, together with the Australian Autism Alliance regarding the updated AustRoads Standards for Drivers with Disabilities. We helped them understand the update's unintended consequences and are working for autistic research to be considered in future updates.
- > **INKLINGS** The program teaches carers of infants (6-18 months) with 'differences' how to observe & build connection with their child. We met Hon Emily Bourke, MLC Assistant Minister for Autism (SA) and Maggie Rutjens, Acting Director of SA Office for Autism, as well as the Inklings team from the Kids. We explained the fears autistic people have about Inklings and the need to include autistic people in research and clinical teams.

## SUBMISSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- > Submission from ASAN AUNZ regarding the Inquiry into Children and young People with Disability in NSW Educational Settings – July 2024
- > Submission by Australian Autism Alliance and ASAN AUNZ to NSW Law Reform Commission re: Section 93Z of Crimes Act 1900(NSW)
- > Draft SA Autism Strategy 2024-2029 (Pg 9)
- > AutismCRC's Report on research, co-design and community engagement to inform the National Roadmap to Improve the Health and Mental Health of Autistic People – March 2024 (Pg 3)
- > Draft National Roadmap to Improve the Health and Mental Health of Autistic People (Pg 43)
- > National Autism Strategy – Consultation Report (Pg 5)
- > DSS NDIS co-design DRCOs list - June 2024
- > Feedback on the draft National Autism Strategy (via email)

We have been working on the NDIA Information Linkages and Capacity Building Project: ASAN AUNZ Self Advocacy Online Toolkit, App, and Information Hub for the last few years. Finally, we will launch the Self Advocacy Toolkit and App over the next two months.

## SELF ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

In 2024 we reviewed the draft developed in 2022-23, updating it to:

- > Simplify words, added alternative text for images and using title case
- > Include links and ensure they are current
- > Add acknowledgements, feedback, survey, and socials details
- > Align with our brand and create web, download and printable versions.

We will be launching (publishing) this toolkit in mid-November 2024!

## APP DEVELOPMENT

Following concerns regarding the quality of the app during testing, the Board decided to engage a larger, Australian based app developer - [Enterprise Monkey](#) - to build an app with the same features but with better security and capable of future enhancements.

## **enterprise monkey**

We will be releasing the app in late December 2024!

## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE BOARD

We have worked on increasing our sustainability as a Board, including:

- > Improving Board Meeting papers and processes
- > Trialling Associate Board Members
- > Identifying opportunities for ASAN AUNZ Members to represent us



## 07 REPRESENT

We have represented autistic people through our participation in co-design, working and reference groups.

This year our Autistic voices were present in the following forums:

- > National Disability Insurance Agency
  - Disability Representative & Carers Organisations (DRCO) forum
  - Autism Advisory Group
  - National Guidelines Working Group
  - LGBTIAQSB+ Summit Advisory Group
- > Mental Health Roadmap Working Group
- > Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education
- > New Zealand - Education for All
- > Autism New Zealand
- > My Life, My Voice, New Zealand
- > VisAble (New Zealand)

### PARTNERSHIPS

We continued our partnerships with:

- > Australian Autism Alliance – Member
- > AutismCRC – Affiliate Member
- > People with Disability Australia – Organisational Member

The Board is delighted to recommend ASAN AUNZ's founding members, Katharine Annear, Tony Langdon and Geraldine Robertson be elected as life members of ASAN AUNZ for their multiple terms as board members and meritorious efforts for all autistic people.

To be elected as Life Members requires a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at an AGM. We encourage our members to join us to honour the contributions of Katharine, Tony and Geraldine.

[Register to attend our AGM here >](#)



Meeting with ASAN USA's Ari Ne'eman, 2013. Katharine second from left. Tony third from left.



Meeting with Autism CRC executive, 2015. Katharine Annear second from right. Geraldine Robertson last on right.

ASAN AUNZ has many opportunities for representation - working, co-design, reference, advisory and expert groups.

These include:

- > National Disability Agency
  - LGBTIAQSB+ Summit Advisory Group
  - Navigator Functions Co-Design Working Group
  - Workforce Capability and Culture Co-Design Working Group
  - Home and Living Co-Design Working Group
  - Participant pathway experience Co-Design Working Group
  - Participant Safety Co-Design Working Group
  - Assessments and budgeting Co-Design Working Group
  - Integrity and Fraud Prevention Co-Design Working Group
  - Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Strategy Expert Advisory Group
  - Rural and remote advisory group
  - Self-management advisory group
  - Supported decision-making advisory group
- > DRCO Accessible Communications Working Group
- > DRCO Employment Working Group
- > Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education
- > Australian Autism Alliance

We want to coordinate autistic voices by inviting ASAN AUNZ members to be representatives, working together on key themes.

This approach was used to identify and select two autistics for the NDIA's National Guidelines Working Group.

Watch our socials to see our calls for expressions of interest or reach out by email to [operations@asan-aunz.org](mailto:operations@asan-aunz.org) to let us know you are interested.



ASAN AUNZ has a growing number of members and followers.

### MEMBERSHIP

Member type	2022	2024	Change
> Full (Autistic) Members >	610	1,006	+65%
Associate (Ally) Members > All	97	197	+103%
Members	713	1,203	+69%

### ONLINE MEDIA

Platform followers	Feb 2024	Nov 2024	Increase
> Facebook likes	4,800	4,900	+100
> Facebook follows	5,375	5,929	+166
> Instagram followers	131	233	+102
> LinkedIn followers	678	815	+137
> Website visits	832	374 in Oct 2024	

### BRAND AND WEBSITE

Our new logo and stage one website were published in October 2024. We shared our origin story and how our logo has evolved and developed. We thank Angelique ‘Aj’ Joy and Brent ‘b.’ Leideritz for their collaboration in taking us on the Narrative Alchemy process.



### WRITERS PITCHES

We received a strong response to our call for pitches from writers and are working through these to continue providing resources and articles in 2025.



In the past year, there were nineteen (19) meetings - weekly until February 2024 then monthly. Monthly meetings, better Board papers and additional support helped reduce Board turnover.

## BOARD MEMBERS

These people have been Board Members since the last AGM.

NAME	PRONOUNS	POSITIONS	START	END
Jaz Bidgood	(they/them)	Chair	2022	2024
Elise Muller	(Elise/them)	Vice Chair	2021	2024
Tim House	(he/him)	Treasurer	2024	
Cheryl Koch	(she/her)	Secretary	2022	
Joanne Dacombe	(she/her)	Past-Chair	2018	
Alex Bignell	(she/her)	Governance	2024	
Dave Murphy	(he/him)	Technology	2024	
Evelyn Lai	(they/them)	Comms	2024	Nov 2024
Katie Turnbull	(they/them)		Mar 2024	Oct 2024
Andy Shim	(they/them)		2023	Jun 2024
Tammie Sinclair	(she/her)		2023	Jan 2024
Bronwyn Rideout	(she/her)		2023	Dec 2023
Brendan Cunnane	(he/him)		2023	Nov 2023
Matt Bruyninckx	(he/him)	Chair	2022	2023
Rick Scott*	(he/him)		2024	2024

\* Note Rick Scott attended as a trial Associate Board Member

ASAN AUNZ recorded a revenue of \$136,185.73 in the 23/24 financial year.

ASAN's principal source of income is Grants including the Information Linkages (ILC) & Capacity Building/Organisation Capacity Building (OCB) Grant program, and the Disability Representatives & Carer's Organisation (DRCO) Forum. Other sources of income include fees for services & consultations, and donations.



Expenses for the period were \$84,438.86, giving a profit of \$51,746.87.

As at 30 June 2024, ASAN AUNZ had total assets of \$289,857.98, which are all current assets, with \$240,166.21 in cash.

ASAN AUNZ held \$4,929.46 in current liabilities, and \$774.76 in non-current liabilities, with total liabilities of \$5,704.22 as at 30 June 2024.

As at 30 June 2024 ASAN AUNZ had equity of \$284,153.76 which included \$127,609.82 reserved for ILC/OCB grant purposes.

Kind regards

**TIM HOUSE**  
*He/Him*  
ASAN AUNZ Board Treasurer

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2024

> Assets	\$289,857.98
> Liabilities	\$5,704.22
> Equity	\$284,153.76

### COMPREHENSIVE INCOME STATEMENT

For the year ended 30 June 2024

> Income	\$136,185.73
> Expenses	\$84,438.86
> Profit	\$51,746.87

# 14 BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 June 2024

## ASSETS

Current Assets	
ANZ Cheque Account	240,166.21
Accounts Receivable	37,500.00
ANZ Business Essentials	1,000.00
PayPal Account	1,191.77
Prepaid Expenses	10,000.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>289,857.98</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>289,857.98</b>

## LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities	
GST	4,929.50
Rounding	(0.04)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>4,929.46</b>
Non-current Liabilities	
Auspiced Funds	100.00
Trade Creditors	674.76
<b>Total Non-current Liabilities</b>	<b>774.76</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>5,704.22</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>284,153.76</b>

## EQUITY

Current Year Earnings	51,746.87
Historical Balancing	4,782.18
Retained Earnings	227,624.71
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>284,153.76</b>



# 15 PROFIT AND LOSS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

## GROSS PROFIT

## OTHER INCOME

Donations	75.90
DRCO Contract	19,318.18
NDIA Grant Funding	114,291.65
Sundry Income	2,500.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>136,185.73</b>

## OPERATING EXPENSES

Accounting & Audit	6,401.61
Catering	(3,000.00)
Consultants	58,650.00
Honorariums	271.63
Insurance	1,733.12
Memberships	3,000.00
Operations Manager	2,172.50
Project Management	7,112.00
Stationery, Postage & Printing	140.25
Subscriptions	5,763.77
Sundry Expenses	2,550.22
Travel & Accommodation	(4,700.92)
Venue Hire	(750.00)
Web & Graphic Design	5,094.68
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>84,438.86</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>51,746.87</b>

## 16 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Equity includes \$127,609.82 from the Department of Social Services reserved for use for the ILC/OCB grant purposes by 31st December 2024. Any of these funds not expended on the ILC/OCB Grant will be returned to the DSS.

Recording of DRCO funding was separated from other grant funding in 2024. Prior to this DRCO funds were recorded within the NDIA Grant Funding Income line. For 2023-24 FY ASAN received \$60,428 from the DSS as part of the ILC/OCB Grant & \$73,181 from involvement in the DRCO program.



Thank you for reading our 2024 Annual Report.

### JOIN

If you're not already a member, we'd love to welcome you to our community. [Join our ASAN AUNZ community for free >](#)

### CONNECT

Feel free to reach out on socials, we would love to hear from you!



We are an Autistic-led organisation, predominantly made up of volunteers, we will get back to you as soon as we are able and have the spoons to respond, we thank you for your patience.

### ADVOCATE

If you would like to contact us regarding systemic advocacy or to invite ASAN AUNZ to be involved in any project work please email [operations@asan-aunz.org](mailto:operations@asan-aunz.org).

### GIVE FEEDBACK

We'd like to know how you feel about self-advocacy and what support you are looking for. Please let us know your thoughts by answering our [2024/2025 Self Advocacy Survey](#) or email [comms@asan-aunz.org](mailto:comms@asan-aunz.org).

