



**BAPTIST CARE
AUSTRALIA** A voice
for **hope**

Annual Report

2022 - 2023

BAPTIST CARE AUSTRALIA

A voice
for **hope**

Baptist Care Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and are committed to a positive, inclusive future for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Annual Report

2022 - 2023

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About us

Baptist Care Australia is the national representative and peak advocacy body for Baptist community service organisations and their clients. We work to bring equality and opportunity to Australian communities, advocating nationally on social issues such as homelessness, aged care and domestic violence. We hold a vision of hopeful, purposeful people, building communities where every voice is heard and valued.

Our members bring life-enriching support to their clients, residents, families and communities, with a combined 700 years of service operation. They contribute substantially to the economic, physical and spiritual well-being of Australian communities, with over 55,000 clients, 13,000 staff, and 1,500 volunteers at around 240 locations in every State and Territory in Australia. Our combined annual turnover is over \$1 billion, making us one of the most influential networks of social service providers across the nation.

Baptist Care Australia members serve people in aged care, affected by family violence and homelessness, on low incomes, experiencing relationship breakdown, living with disability and affected by multi-generational disadvantage. Services include crisis accommodation, social housing, out-of-home care for children, counselling, no-interest loan schemes, and other programs that help people rebuild their lives or live independently with the right support.



Together, we...



Employ over 13,000 dedicated staff, and engage more than 1,500 incredible volunteers...



...who provide services and supports to over 55,000 clients, across 240 locations in every Australian state and territory.



This enabled us to help...



over 27,500 older Australians in aged care



560 mothers and their children escaping family and domestic violence



more than 7,000 children and young people



provide homes for nearly 1,000 families



supply over 100,000 meals to those in need



35,000 households with low or no cost groceries

Chair's message



As I reflect on the achievements, challenges, and progress of the past year, I am filled with pride at the incredible growth and impact Baptist Care Australia has inspired across its member network, industry and government.

2023 has seen a rapid pace of change under the first-term Albanese Government, as it seeks to leave its mark on social and community services. Aged care reforms and Royal Commission recommendations have continued to roll out apace, along with consultation and development of National Plans on Housing and Homelessness, and Ending Family and Domestic Violence. These are important issues for governments to consider at both the State and Federal level, and after many decades of neglect it is pleasing to see the current Federal Government meaningfully wrestling with these challenges.

We have also continued to face growing economic pressures, with rising inflation, stagnant wage growth, narrow unemployment, significant demographic shifts and beyond our borders, geo-political and economic uncertainty. More working households are now in poverty. Our client groups are shifting. This brings ever more demand and urgency for the services provided across the Baptist Care Australia network.

It also raises new considerations for our members as charitable organisations. Fundraising, philanthropy, and volunteering are less viable when people are faced with financial challenges. Some of our employees are

struggling with such pressures themselves, taking multiple jobs at the risk of burning out. An already over-burdened social services sector is fast reaching a tipping point.

In this landscape, the strength of Baptist Care Australia as a network and an advocate becomes ever more vital. Our active engagement with members, government, industry, and key stakeholders has been critical to raise awareness and highlight solutions for these national issues. Through increasing collaborative efforts, 2023 has seen Baptist Care Australia remain at the forefront of the national policy debate in aged care, housing, community services and charities, representing the interests of our members and the wider community to successfully influence key stakeholders and policy decisions. The team has worked tirelessly to create positive change for our members and the communities they serve.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my fellow Directors during the year, who have journeyed together across a significant period of change for our Board. Shane Austin of Baptist Care SA and Peter Chandler of Baptist Care NT were on the Board with me for the full year. We farewelled several long-serving

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Directors: Jon Campbell after an incredible contribution of 14 years; Graham Dangerfield after serving 10 years as Director including several as Chair; and Russell Bricknell who served five years across the roles of Director and then Board Chair. Geraldine Lannon joined us after taking up the CEO role at Bapcare, while Mark Kolinac joined us as Director during a transition period as Baptistcare WA merged with BaptistCare NSW & ACT. David Angell has been engaged in our discussions as an interim representative from Carinity. This is a remarkable group of wise and strong leaders, whose keen insights and industry knowledge offer an invaluable contribution to the Baptist Care Australia strategic direction.

I thank the Baptist Care Australia team for their commitment and hard work throughout the year. We sadly farewell our Executive Director, Nicole Hornsby, who ended her tenure with us in August 2023. Nicole made a significant contribution to the Baptist Care Australia network, taking up a key leadership role for the network during both the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, as well as during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which she contributed to the weekly aged care peak body meetings with the then Minister for Ageing, Richard Colbeck, and the Department of Health. She also held several significant leadership roles including the: Department of Social Services Community Services Advisory Group; Services Australia Civil Society Advisory Group; National Council of Australian Baptist Ministries; National Aged

Care Alliance; Australian Aged Care Collaboration; Everybody's Home campaign; and Stronger Charities Alliance. Before this, Nicole had already made a substantial contribution to Baptist Care Australia, having been active as a senior manager at Bapcare for over 15 years. We thank Nicole for these wonderful contributions and wish her well on her new ventures! We also congratulate and thank Robyn Sampson for stepping up from Policy & Advocacy Advisor to acting Executive Director.

I am keenly aware that we have much to do, but let us forge ahead into 2024 with renewed commitment to our mission, as a strong Christian advocate for the marginalised and those at risk, and to continue to build communities where every voice is heard and valued.

We will continue to advocate for positive change, provide unwavering support to our members, and explore innovative ways to enhance our impact. The challenges ahead are significant, but so too are the opportunities for growth, collaboration, and positive transformation.

Charles Moore

Board Chair
CEO, BaptistCare NSW, ACT & WA

Executive Director's message



This year has been one of significant structural change, with the introduction of a new government, a new peak body and advocates, new Baptist Care Australia board members and a new Baptist Care Australia team. As with all change, there has been a period of adjustment as we adapt to new people and thinking, along with a new strategy and ways of working. We've seen the positive impact of these changes through the fresh sense of enthusiasm and excitement it has generated for the future, and for Baptist Care Australia's ability to create positive change for those at risk in society.

As we welcomed in the new Albanese Labor government for its first term, we've seen a renewed focus on social and community services. This is both a values-driven policy approach, and one of necessity – with Australia facing extraordinary economic conditions as we walk the fine line between “challenging” and “recession.”

High inflation, combined with low wages growth and unemployment, has seen Australia enter into cost of living conditions not seen since last century. Unfortunately this has hit many of the people we serve the most, with the impacts being seen in housing availability and affordability leading to increased levels of homelessness; food insecurity; and declines in Australia's levels of physical and mental health. And yet, we've also seen the first federal budget surplus delivered in two decades.

We've seen the need for members' services increase under national cost of living pressures, and as a result, Baptist Care Australia has worked to improve our efficiencies to likewise boost our service to members. Our team has grown this year, with new roles and skills allowing for additional levels of support and engagement with members.

This coincided with new members joining the board, with the appointment of Geraldine Lannon as Bapcare CEO, Mark Kolinac stepping into the role of Acting CEO of Baptistcare WA (with Amanda Vivian also as Acting CEO but not a Baptist Care Australia Director), and David Angell Interim CEO at Carinity. Further changes to the Baptist Care Australia board and membership occurred in March, with the announcement of a merger between BaptistCare NSW/ACT and Baptistcare WA creating one of the largest not-for-profit care providers in Australia.

Throughout the year we have supported and engaged with the new aged care peak body, Aged and Community Care Providers Association (ACCPA) which commenced operations on 1 July 2022 as the new industry association. This has shifted the way national aged care advocacy is conducted on behalf of providers, and has seen us wind up the Australian Aged Care Collaboration (AACC) in which Baptist Care Australia has played a central role in recent years.

It was agreed that remaining funds from the AACC would be best used to generate important and overdue conversations about the future funding and sustainability of the aged care sector, and as a result

Baptist Care Australia partnered with ACCPA and our sister faith-based peaks in the planning of June's vital Financial Sustainability Summit.

With all these changes across the national policy and advocacy landscape, and those closer to home amongst our team, board, membership and priorities, Baptist Care Australia has reviewed our Strategic Plan and updated it to more effectively operate in the new environment. As a result, we have dedicated the latter half of this year working in tandem with our board to consider how we might most effectively represent and support our members into the future, with our new 2024-26 Strategic Plan to be launched at the 2023 National Conference.

One final change will take place early in the new year. I have made the difficult decision to resign from Baptist Care Australia, and handover to Dr Robyn Sampson who will take up the Acting Executive Director role through to 2024, while the board undertakes the recruitment process.

I would like to thank the Baptist Care Australia board for their commitment to our mission and purpose, particularly Charles Moore as Chair who has been a fantastic support to both me and to all directors.

To the Baptist Care Australia team, I am eternally grateful for your skills, knowledge and support as we have worked together through some incredible challenges, and seen some really important wins. The passion you have for the work we do and for providing equality and opportunity to the marginalised is truly inspiring. I wish you all the very best for the future and strength as you continue the vital work of Baptist Care Australia.

Nicole Hornsby

Executive Director, Baptist Care Australia

Member Services

After the challenges and physical distance imposed by Covid over recent years, this year it has been important for us all to regroup and reconnect as a network, to share our knowledge and unite our strength.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to recommence regular visits with members, and I'm pleased to have made it out to tour a number of member sites around the country during the year. I have been particularly impressed with the level of enthusiasm demonstrated by staff across the Baptist network; after a challenging couple of years facing the ongoing trials of Covid, natural disasters, and economic uncertainty, it is inspiring to see that our staff continue to show up with genuine passion and compassion in their work supporting vulnerable Australians.

Baptist Care Australia has endeavoured to engage our members in collaborative projects and shared learnings throughout 2022-23, with a particular focus on relaunching the Collaboration Groups. Regularly meeting and working together on national projects are Support At Home (Aged Care); Communications; Housing and Homelessness; and Spiritual Care. We are also in the initial stages of convening special interest

Groups for Residential aged care; People and Culture; Information Technology; and Procurement.

The Support At Home Group has been instrumental in guiding Baptist Care Australia's policy and advocacy work around the new support at home program, generating important discussions and feeding back practical considerations for us to raise through national consultation processes with peaks and government.

With the support of the Communications Collaboration Group, we were able to negotiate a national media monitoring agreement. This has resulted in significant cost savings for members and provided media monitoring access to members who have previously found this service to be cost-prohibitive.

This year has also seen us formalise the Baptist Care Australia Member Dashboard, with members completing our dashboard survey to provide relevant statistics and insights into their organisations and services. Armed with this information and data, Baptist Care Australia is able to more effectively leverage the size and scope of the national network through powerful, targeted advocacy.

Baptist Collaboration

As an affiliated ministry of Australian Baptist Ministries, Baptist Care Australia sits on the National Council. Through this role, we hold a central role in supporting the Australian Baptist Movement and the Baptist Advocacy Roundtable.

In November 2022, Baptist Care Australia was involved in the national Baptist Strategic Thinking Forum alongside 80 other Baptist leaders from around Australia, with the aim of looking at the current environment and discerning together what future activities Australian Baptist Ministries could undertake to better support church and ministry areas.

Reflecting on the input, the National Council discerned that creating a strategic framework, rather than a strategic plan, would be the best approach. A framework allows all the various States, Territories and Agencies to continue undertaking their responsibilities, whilst aligning all of us with some key focus areas and initiatives.

Four main themes or shifts were identified:

- **Dynamic churches:** Jesus-focused, healthy, and outwardly engaged churches that are safe for all.

- **Inclusive leadership:** Leaders who are effective, inclusive, and empowering.
- **Partnering for change:** Collaborating and partnering together to make our world more just and compassionate.
- **Resourcing our movement:** To support cultural, structural and process changes to enable the Baptist Movement of Australia to effectively achieve our vision and mission.

The work of the Baptist Advocacy Roundtable was impacted by changes in the political landscape during 2022. It was agreed by the network that we would postpone the annual Converge event to later in 2023 rather than pushing forward immediately after the election, prior to the new government having opportunities to act on its election commitments.



Our team

In September 2022, we welcomed **Sharon Neal** to the Baptist Care Australia team in the role of Executive Assistant. With extensive experience providing Executive and Board support in both the Not for Profit and Corporate sectors, Sharon comes to Baptist Care Australia as a highly skilled and professional Executive Assistant who is people-focused and solutions-driven.

Sharon brings her passion for organisation and efficiency to Baptist Care Australia and is committed to enhancing productivity and improving business operations while at the same time knowing that she is contributing to the organisation's vision of building communities where every voice is heard.



Nicole Pilkington also joined the team in September 2022 in the new role of Communications Advisor. Passionate about social justice and equality, Nicole brings to Baptist Care Australia an extensive background in marketing and communications across the not-for-profit, start-up and corporate sectors.

Having worked with former peak body Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA) through the Royal Commission and Covid pandemic, Nicole has a strong understanding of the aged care and community support sectors, and is experienced in developing powerful communications campaigns to prompt positive social and political change.

Advocacy

In the fast-paced landscape of the social services sector, Baptist Care Australia's commitment to driving change and championing the needs of our members and the vulnerable remains steadfast. It is with immense pride and a deep sense of purpose that we reflect upon the accomplishments of the past year, and the ways in which Baptist Care Australia has shaped national policy outcomes through influential advocacy.

In 2022-23, we continued our relentless pursuit of a more equitable and inclusive society, where every individual's voice is heard and valued. Guided by our core values and with invaluable insights from the member network, we continued to advocate for policies that address pressing social issues and champion the needs of the most vulnerable in our society.

Through a keen focus on collaborative efforts and strengthening stakeholder relationships, Baptist Care Australia has navigated the intricate web of policymaking, to support better outcomes across Australia's aged care, housing, homelessness, philanthropy, poverty and inequality landscapes. From addressing aged care reforms and timelines, to advocating against the Stage 3 tax cuts, and calling for stronger supports for charitable organisations, we have played a pivotal role in shaping the national dialogue on critical issues.

Aged Care

Another huge year for aged care kicked off early when the newly elected Albanese government threw themselves in to aged care reform. First off the blocks was legislation to introduce 24/7 Registered Nurses in residential aged care facilities; a cap on administration and management fees in home care; a new AN-ACC funding model; expanded powers for the hospital pricing authority to include aged care; a star ratings system; a new Code of Conduct; and additional governance responsibilities for providers. An Interim Inspector-General of Aged Care was appointed, while David Tune reviewed the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. Meanwhile, the Fair Work Commission Aged Care Work Value Case continued apace, with the final determination for Stage 2 resulting in a welcome pay rise for a substantive cohort of our staff.

Baptist Care Australia worked with our members and partners to engage in these substantive and wide-ranging legislative and policy discussions in various ways. We prepared several written submissions to various consultation processes, and were rewarded by seeing our submission to the Senate Committee Inquiry on the Implementing Aged Care Reform Act quoted several times in their final report.

We also wrote to the Minister and Department with key partners to highlight key issues of concern, while continuing to value the effort to build sector-wide consensus through the National Aged Care Alliance. This year also marked the launch of the Aged and Community Care Providers Association and the appointment of Tom Symondson as inaugural CEO. Baptist Care Australia had been an active part of the work to merge ACSA and LASA into a single peak body for providers and has been active in the background to support the transition of this valued partner peak body.

Baptist Care Australia was also heavily involved in the work to generate a national conversation on the funding of aged care, contributing in the background to ACCPA's Financial Sustainability Summit held in Canberra on 1 June 2023. The Summit was an important opportunity to bring together thought leaders from across the sector and beyond to generate new ideas and assess options for ensuring Australia can continue to provide quality services for a large and growing cohort of older Australians.

Housing & Homelessness

Homelessness and housing insecurity is a complex social phenomenon that often involves multiple forms of disadvantage. We encouraged the Government to set out a vision in which every person in Australia has a place to call home, as we continued in our role on the Operations Group of the Everybody's Home campaign to advocate for housing solutions.

2023 saw the Albanese Government appoint the Minister for Housing to a Cabinet position, in a demonstration of how critical this portfolio is to the successful governance of the nation. This year we saw the release of the Draft Housing Legislative Package in December 2022 which together set out to establish the Housing Australia Future Fund, the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council, and other amendments.

While we welcomed the proposed commitments, we supported the Everybody's Home campaign conclusion that the proposed package did not meet the scale of the current crisis. Improvements were achieved after strong contestation of key elements during negotiations in Parliament, which included a guarantee of at least 9,600 dwellings; a minimum \$500 million annual spend; and indexation of the fund from 2029/30. The Senate further established an inquiry into the worsening rental crisis in Australia to the Community Affairs References Committee. The June 2023 commitment to the states of an additional

\$2 billion direct investment in social housing was warmly welcomed as being more reflective of the scale of the issue. The legislation eventually passed in September 2023. We thank our partners in the sector, including the Everybody's Home campaign, the Community Housing Industry Association, and Homelessness Australia for their efforts in this space.

During 2023, we backed advocacy to ensure homelessness services did not have their funding cut after the Federal Government decided to remove the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) funding component from the budget. This was successfully resolved in March, when the Federal Government committed the necessary \$67.5 million for homelessness services to cover the costs of the ERO. Baptist Care Australia welcomed this decision, as sustainable funding of Australia's homelessness services is essential in combatting the rising numbers of Australians facing homelessness.

Baptist Care Australia continues to advocate for the National Housing and Homelessness Plan to ensure targeted prevention becomes deliberate and evidence-based, and takes a whole-of-system approach to secure a larger supply of social housing to ensure every person in Australia has a place to call home.



Stronger Charities Alliance

Baptist Care Australia has been an active member of the Hands Off Our Charities alliance since 2018, and we were honoured to take up a central role in the March 2023 launch of the HOOC rebrand, now known as the Stronger Charities Alliance. The Stronger Charities Alliance rebrand was launched at Parliament House with the Voices of Change Report on not-for-profit advocacy in Australia, which recognises the improvements for charities' ability to advocate, but that work must continue to consolidate this position.

Dr Robyn Sampson was invited to participate in a panel discussion as part of the launch, alongside Senator Andrew Leigh (Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury); Senator Dean Smith (Shadow Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury); Senator Janet Rice (Greens Spokesperson for Charities); and David Crosbie (CEO, Community Council for Australia). Robyn pointed to the need for greater simplicity and clarity for charities to undertake advocacy, and for resources for charities to engage in the complex reforms currently underway by government.

The Stronger Charities Alliance review of the Interim Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) found alongside a number of positive recommendations there were some which could have unintended consequences. Of note is recommendation six, proposing donation and expenditure caps on Third parties, which include charities and not-for-profits. If enacted, this would likely restrict our

advocacy role during elections. Also, the move would be discriminatory towards charities since we rely on donations as opposed to industry associations. Baptist Care Australia has signed on to a letter to Special Minister of State Don Farrell and the Chair of JSCEM, Hon. Kate Thwaites, expressing concern about anti-charity donation caps.



Philanthropy

We have also been an active member of the Community Sector Advisory Group that has helped the Department develop the Stronger, More Diverse and Independent Community Sector Discussion Paper, to be released later in 2023.

This work coincides with other government policy development processes related to the not-for-profit sector and philanthropy. To further the Government's aim of doubling philanthropic giving by 2035, the Productivity Commission has been undertaking an inquiry to analyse motivations for philanthropic giving and identify opportunities to grow it further.

Baptist Care Australia consulted with our members to complete a submission, providing insight into the connection between today's Baptist social service agencies and the faith-based 'philanthropy' that underpinned their foundation. We concluded that, while philanthropy should not replace government funding responsibilities, it remains a vital aspect of the operation and viability of charities in Australia as they work to create a more harmonious society.

Poverty & Inequality

2023 saw the surging cost of living, high inflation and consistent interest rate rises have had a devastating impact for many Australians facing increasing economic challenges.

This led to significant political debate about the impacts of poverty and inequality on Australian society, supported by powerful research and shocking data. The Raise the Rate for Good campaign launched their new report, *How JobSeeker and other Income Support Payments are falling behind the cost of living*, which highlighted that 96% of people on income support who are privately renting are in rental stress, and that nearly all of those surveyed said that the inability to cover the cost of living harmed their physical and mental health. The ACOSS and UNSW Poverty and Inequality Partnership published the *Poverty in Australia Snapshot 2022*, which found that 1 in 8 Australians, including 1 in 6 children, are living in poverty. Foodbank's annual *Hunger Report 2022* revealed that over 2 million (or 21%) of Australian households had experienced severe food insecurity in the previous 12 months.

The Albanese Labor Government has shown some political will to bridge the gap of wealth inequality, however there are significant policies in play which can be expected to further entrench disadvantage and poverty for those on income support and low incomes. Baptist Care Australia and our sister faith-based peaks have called on the Government to dump the proposed Stage 3 tax cuts, proposing that these funds could instead be spent to raise working age payments to the poverty line while simultaneously building 36,000 social homes each year. Unfortunately, the Government shows no inclination to amend the Stage 3 legislation due to come into effect in 2024.

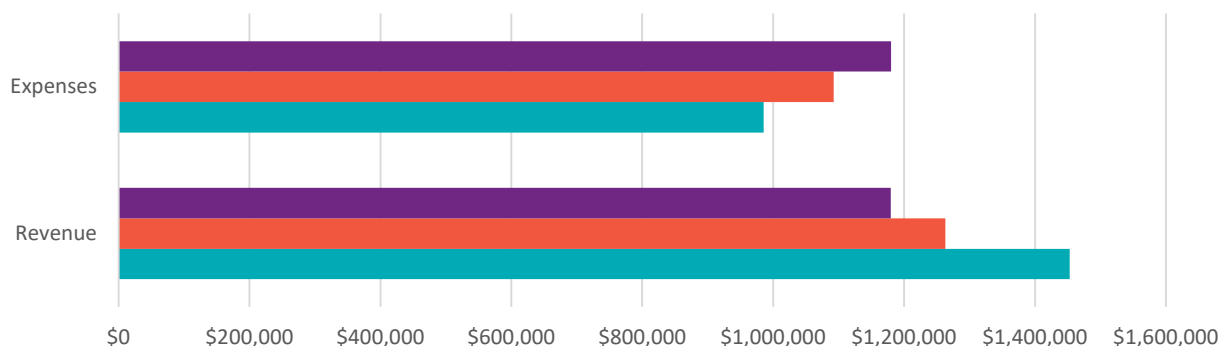
We did see a small incremental win in this year's Federal Budget, with the Government committing to increase social security payments by September 2023. This will see 57,000 single parents moved from JobSeeker to Parenting Payment Single; it lifts JobSeeker, Youth Allowance, and related income support payments by \$20 per week; and increases Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15% per cent. As part of the ACOSS Raise the Rate campaign, Baptist Care Australia has welcomed this step forward. However, we note that Australia's income support payments remain well below the poverty line and there remains much to be done to bridge the gap between Australia's wealthy and its poor.



Financial summary

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Revenue and expenditure

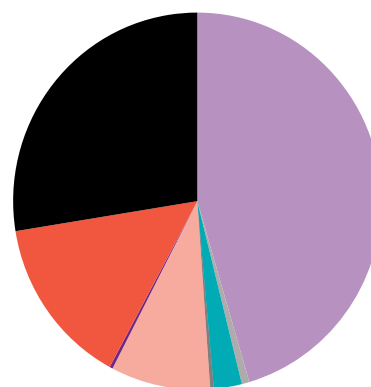


	Revenue	Expenses
2023	\$1,179,568	\$1,179,921
2022	\$1,263,084	\$1,092,212
2021	\$1,452,663	\$985,263

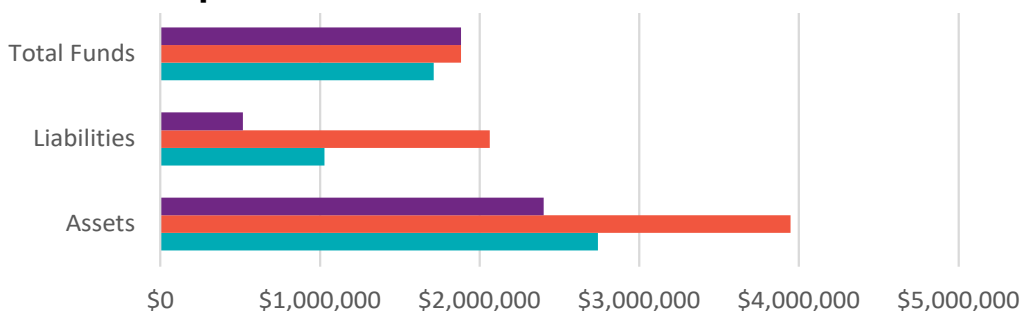
2023 2022 2021

Expenditure breakdown

- Salary expenses (\$536,188)
- Training and Conferences expenses (\$7,817)
- Website and IT expenses (\$28,976)
- Amortisation expense (\$3,768)
- Administration expenses (\$103,109)
- Conference expenses (\$0)
- Consultant expenses (\$3,226)
- Membership Fees (\$171,827)
- Member project expenses (\$325,010)



Financial position



	Assets	Liabilities	Total Funds
2023	\$2,400,001	\$516,783	\$1,883,218
2022	\$3,947,625	\$2,064,054	\$1,883,571
2021	\$2,740,791	\$1,028,092	\$1,712,699

2023 2022 2021

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