



Annual Report 2023

Richmond
Fellowship
Queensland

'OPEN ARMS, CARING SPIRIT'

Adorning the cover of RFQ's 2023 Annual Report is a bespoke artwork created by David Williams of Indigenous creative agency, Gilimbaa. This year, RFQ partnered with Gilimbaa to create a visual representation that demonstrates our commitment to First Nations people and their wellbeing.

First Nations people comprise more than 15 per cent of RFQ's clients. You can read in this Report the range of First Nations initiatives in RFQ, led by Indigenous Peoples Program Manager Juanita Johnson. By valuing the experiences of First Nations people, and bearing witness to their courage and resilience, we can ensure that authenticity and truth-telling is embedded within the fibre of RFQ.

Gilimbaa provided the following narrative that served as inspiration for the artwork.

Artwork Story

The 'Open Arms, Caring Spirit' artwork has been created to symbolise Richmond Fellowship Queensland's (RFQ's) commitment to First Nations people and their safety. At the heart of the artwork is an organisation with humble

beginnings; a pioneering community of people growing together to become a leading, future-focused mental health provider for First Nations people.

RFQ holds a special place in the hearts of those it serves. From humble beginnings it has grown to be a part of the fabric of Australia, becoming widely recognised as a place of safety, compassion, and connection. Its work is central to Australians' wellbeing; work that is led by a diverse, dedicated, and committed team with a clear and shared mission. Its mind is open to new ideas and ways of thinking, making it a leader in its field. Everyone has a purpose at RFQ.

Having served First Nations communities for many years, its cultural connections are strong. But by taking these steps to ensure all Australians can see themselves in everything it does, RFQ's ability to connect with First Nations clients, staff, and stakeholders can only grow stronger.

And by continuing to open its arms to anyone in need of support, RFQ's caring spirit will inspire recovery and hope for years to come.

'Open Arms, Caring Spirit'



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Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples are the original and continuing custodians of the land and waters. We pay our respects to the Old People, Elders and Leaders past and present and extend our recognition to their descendants. We celebrate the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's history, culture and future.

OUR VISION

A future recovered for people facing mental health challenges and social disadvantage.

We envision:

A world that fully supports people in recovery

A culture that nurtures authentic and empowering relationships

A future that inspires hope, self belief and a meaningful life

OUR VALUES

We combine the inspirational vision and values of our founders with progressive thinking, advanced research and service excellence.

Empowerment

We create environments that support and empower people. We empower people to embrace their own goals, responsibilities and choices.

Trust

Our relationships are authentic. They are built on trust and earned through respect, reliability, flexibility and humility. We trust, respect and support each and every person's recovery choices.

Compassion

We are compassionate people. We create safe, caring and inclusive environments that foster active participation, personal growth and recovery.

Resilience

We are resilient and resourceful. We help others to find their own strength, purpose and meaning.

Diversity

We embrace diversity in all its forms. We celebrate the richness of the human spirit, value difference and advocate for the dignity of each human person.

Integrity

We are honest and accountable. We nurture an ethical culture that guides our relationships and services.

Lifelong Learning

Learning is a continual journey for us. We evolve and adapt through reflective and evidence-based practices and world-leading research. We value new ideas and their contribution to influencing personal and social change.

Our values are evident in everything we do.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Deliver service excellence

Recovery supported

2. Build our strategic engagement

Connections strengthened

3. Ensure future sustainability

Growth managed

4. Influence change in the community

Awareness raised



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The Board congratulates the CEO, executive and all staff on another successful year delivering on our Vision & Strategy and I thank all Directors for their ongoing contribution.

Highlights for 2023 from the Board's viewpoint has been the extension by Queensland Health to RFQ funding through to 2027, the continued strengthening of our academic and research partnerships and the integration of our Indigenous branding developed by Gilimbaa reflecting a narrative of 'open arms, caring spirit'.

As an organisation that relies on federal and state government funding to deliver essential mental health services, we were delighted to receive the news that Queensland Health funding for RFQ would continue to 2027. This is a reflection of the high standard of delivery of the relevant programs by our dedicated teams and more generally, the high esteem with which RFQ services are held by Queensland Health mental health services.

Members of the Board who attended this year's annual art exhibition were treated to a fabulous opening night which not only showcased 270 amazing artworks in a Grand Marquee in Brisbane's King George Square, but also included popular arias from an Italian tenor, and a powerful performance of Indigenous dance by the Barrambin Yarning Group and their mentors from St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace. The evening was a great success and we congratulate all the exhibiting artists, entertainers, and the Exhibition Curator, Nicola Holly.

The Board was excited during the year to receive a presentation by Chief Leadership Officer, Alex Couley, about how RFQ is positioning itself for the future as a

'Centre of Excellence'. An important practical component for this is the joint funding with University of Melbourne Centre for Wellbeing Science of a new position – Professor (Community and Wellbeing). We were also pleased to learn that RFQ's presentation at the International Positive Psychology Association's World Congress in Vancouver was extremely well received. Congratulations to Kingsley, Alex and all RFQ staff involved with these activities.

We can look forward to 2024 and beyond with much optimism.

Rhonda Chesmond
Board Chair

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CEO'S MESSAGE

We are challenged by a world of uncertainty and rapid change. The challenge for any company is positioning for the future when a lot of the navigation is uncharted. It is easy to feel overwhelmed.

At RFQ, the work we do and the way we face our challenges are regarded as a sacred responsibility. There is also a mindset not only to be future-ready but also to be influential in that future. An organisational strength in this mindset is a commitment to data and evidence-based thinking, reflected in our investment in performance and analytics and research and evaluation activities. Most importantly at RFQ, it is also a values-driven way of thinking underpinned by our service philosophy, with a strong moral sense of our purpose.

However and while those factors in our mindset may make us future-ready, they would not necessarily help position us to be influential in our future. We need to be careful that the data and facts do not get in the way of a curious and creative way of thinking. To quote Einstein –

"Seeing what everyone else is seeing but thinking what no one else has thought."

This of course takes courage as we disrupt what may make us feel secure and comfortable. What can we do to not only be a better organisation to the benefit of people we support but also an influential one, to the benefit of people's wellbeing across the wider community?

It does give me much pleasure reporting to our community of interest that this thinking I have described continues to position RFQ to be both future-ready and influential in our future. You can read in this Annual Report for example, the considerable progress made cultivating an ecosystem of excellence in RFQ.

You will see the progress has involved dynamic partnering at the frontiers of human mental health and wellbeing research. We are especially hopeful that the proposed joint position – Professor (Community Wellbeing) – with the Centre for Wellbeing Science, University of Melbourne will be in place the beginning of 2024.

I reflect on what differentiates or sets RFQ apart, perhaps as a metaphor, our 'crown jewels'. That which is precious. I earlier referred to our service philosophy which provides the framework for our practice and how we engage with the people we support, and which the evidence indicates works.

A service philosophy would of course be merely cosmetic if it wasn't given substance by our staff. We have exceptional staff and service managers who do give substance to the service philosophy and live the values. The 2023 CEO Staff Feedback Survey administered by Best Practice Australia evidenced this philosophical and values alignment throughout the organisation, and it is this alignment I would characterise as RFQ's 'crown jewels'.

I regularly receive positive feedback about our service delivery staff and I will quote from a recent email I received from a Hospital and Health Service Executive Director –

"... a fantastic program that delivers real outcomes and support for people in our region ... in large part because of the capability and compassion of your staff."

I am very grateful that in RFQ our corporate staff and managers also live the values and are aligned with our purpose. I am also privileged to have the support of a dedicated executive team who make such an important contribution to the mindset and future thinking of the



organisation, supported by my wonderful Chief of Staff. An important feature of the 'crown jewels' metaphor is how everyone in corporate office works hard, mindful of the special work our service delivery staff do.

We know that the number of people giving their voluntary time to charitable work has been diminishing over recent decades. We are fortunate at RFQ to have directors with considerable and diverse experience and skills who are aligned with and committed to this work. I am grateful to Chair Rhonda Chesmond and all directors for the way they intelligently oversight operations as well as support me in my role.

We at RFQ very much appreciate the ongoing partnership we have with our funders. We value the trust placed in us to not only meet contract obligations but through this relationship exceed expectations to the benefit of the people supported, as well as exceeding wider community expectations.

At RFQ, we experience daily the courage of people which inspires us to do the very best we can to support their recovery. We are excited about the future where with our partners we can have an influential role in the development of programs that do benefit people's mental health and wellbeing across the community.

I encourage you to read the reports and recovery narratives in this Annual Report that provide a snapshot of the life of the organisation. I also especially encourage you

to read the artwork narrative for our Indigenous branding featured on the cover, where artist David Williams captures the spirit of RFQ. The artwork title is –

Open Arms, Caring Spirit

Kingsley Bedwell
Chief Executive

“ We have exceptional staff and managers who do give substance to the service philosophy and live the values. ”

CULTIVATING AN ECOSYSTEM OF EXCELLENCE

It has always been RFQ's destiny to be a centre of excellence in wellbeing and recovery. With an absolute commitment to each of the four strategic priorities – Deliver service excellence, Build our strategic engagement, Ensure future sustainability and Influence change in the community – excellence is deeply embedded in RFQ's DNA.

As RFQ continues on this transformative journey, a key step is to acknowledge the multidimensional nature of health. It is an intricate interplay of physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing. Therefore, a centre of excellence should not only be equipped to address mental health issues but also promote wellbeing, resilience and overall mental prosperity. The transition requires an innovative approach, one that is rooted in evidence-based practices and cutting-edge research.

To achieve this, we are partnering with leading researchers and practitioners both national and international and representing many disciplines in the field of wellbeing science: positive psychology; lived experience; social work; psychiatry; anthropology and, leadership and strategy.

The importance of lived experience

Human beings are a narrative species, we have told our history through poem, song and story. The same is true of the mental health recovery movement. The lived experience voice has been central to the entire concept of recovery. In 2024, RFQ will further enhance the expertise of our Recovery Mentors by training them in a research methodology which draws on the narrative approach. This unique 12-month project will ensure that everything we do is truly informed by our collaboration with our lived experience workforce.

Partnering with world leading researchers

The discussions to establish a joint academic position with a world leading university are very advanced. The creation of this position combined with other strategic partnerships sees RFQ becoming a nexus of innovation, research, and a hub of progressive approaches. One way in which we are realising this is the work alongside the Centre for Wellbeing Science (CWS) University of Melbourne on the

practical application in RFQ of Wellbeing Literacy, best described as the conscious utilisation of communication for and about wellbeing. In partnership with CWS, RFQ's Indigenous leadership has lead the further development of the program into a groundbreaking First Nations Wellbeing Literacy program. This world-first work was showcased at the International Positive Psychology World Congress in Vancouver. We are currently in discussion with CWS exploring new opportunities to advance the science of Wellbeing Literacy.

Investing in our people

With significant global events over the last few years impacting on community wellbeing, the Wellbeing Literacy Program has been an important investment in staff. Much coverage has been given to the particular challenges of working in the healthcare sector and compassion fatigue is a well-recognised issue for many healthcare employees. The evidence shows that Schwartz Rounds pioneered by the Schwartz Center based in Boston USA is the most effective preventative methodology.

RFQ has become a member of the Schwartz Center and we are delivering Schwartz Rounds to staff, and as the first NGO to do so. The response from participants has been unprecedented with 96 per cent of people rating the experience as either excellent or good. In 2024, the utilisation of Schwartz Rounds in RFQ will be researched.





At the same time, Stress First Aid has been made available to staff. Stress First Aid was developed by the National Center for PTSD in the USA and helps workers prevent and respond to stress.

As RFQ positions itself as a leader in the field, it is continually developing its internal leadership capacity. To this end, Mater Education have delivered another Emerging Leaders Program. The program is grounded in neuroscience and draws heavily on the teachings of Harvard Business School. The program will be delivered to a third cohort in 2024. In order to embed the learnings from these strategic partnerships, the importance of aligning with world-class learning and development processes has been a RFQ priority, and ensuring best practice in its staff development activities.

The bigger picture

Alongside the commitment to service excellence, we also appreciate our important responsibility as a custodian of public funding. Accurate data-driven processes provide efficient and effective performance reporting and decisions. To achieve data analysis excellence, a high level of integration between the Performance and Analytics and Research and Evaluation units ensures service interventions are grounded in evidence to deliver optimal client outcomes.

We recognise that a centre of excellence in wellbeing and recovery extends beyond the individual and indeed beyond RFQ. With this in mind, community wellness becomes a focal point and we are working with world leading practitioners and researchers to explore the concept of 'Collective Flourishing'.

Ethical considerations are amplified in cultivation of this ecosystem. In liaison with premier research institutions, we continue to ensure that ethics are not just adhered

to but are integral to every aspect of our services. From data handling to support services, ethics and privacy are a bedrock, ensuring the dignity and confidentiality of every client.

As RFQ looks ahead, it is exciting that the next IPPA World Congress on Positive Psychology will be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre in July 2025. We are already in discussions with the International Positive Psychology Association in relation to having a significant role in the Congress.

The ongoing journey towards a centre of excellence in wellbeing and recovery is one of integration: integrating cutting-edge research; utilising diverse expertise; introducing innovative technologies; investing in staff and lived experience and, applying ethical practices. It's about metamorphosing from a leading service provider to one that also helps shape the future of mental health recovery and wellbeing.

It has been observed that you can learn a lot about an organisation by where its corporate resources are prioritised and invested, and in RFQ the investment is cultivating an ecosystem of excellence.

Honouring the legacy of Paul Lysaker

It is with sadness that RFQ acknowledges the untimely passing of Professor Paul Lysaker. Based in Indianapolis USA, Paul was a clinical psychologist with over 35 years of experience providing recovery orientated psychotherapy to those with serious mental illness. He was president of the MERIT Institute and Professor of Clinical Psychology at Indiana University. In collaboration with QUT School of Psychology, RFQ had forged very strong links with Paul and we are currently exploring how we can honour his contribution to the field.

RECOVERY STORIES

ALEX'S STORY

A stay at the Gold Coast Transitional Recovery Service (TRS) house following a hospital admission allowed Alex to circuit-break his years-long struggle with depression.

"For years, I slowly deteriorated, cut off all relationships and rarely left the house. I was stuck in a loop that I couldn't get out of and I stopped looking after myself. I'd convinced myself that it was better for everyone, including myself, if I wasn't around anymore. I had no hope; I thought I had no future."

In the warm and welcoming environment of the house, Alex began to find himself once more.

"I truly believe I wouldn't be the person I am today without the overwhelmingly positive experience I had with RFQ. Now I'm studying to become a mental health peer worker. It's hard to believe I have gone from not even wanting to help myself to now wanting to help others."

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STEPHEN'S STORY

Diagnosed with schizophrenia at 17, Stephen went on to battle various addictions. With RFQ's support, he has implemented some drastic changes that have led to a healthier, more fulfilling life.

"In the 12 years I've been with RFQ, they've supported me to be more independent. I've been able to discuss all sorts of topics with my support workers to get clarity on various issues. I've been through quite a lot in my life, but having support workers who are good listeners has been a wonderful thing for me."

"My first RFQ support worker also got me involved with a basketball team and got me back into the gym. I've loved basketball since I was 13, but being in and out of hospital for so many years meant it fell away. Having Paul reconnect me with the sport was magic for me; a very, very special experience."

"Nowadays, I'm eating well and looking after myself. I do basketball training, coaching and play in a team. RFQ come to support me every day except Wednesday and I haven't been in hospital for over three years now. I'm on the right track now."

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ANNA'S STORY

Anna has been a client of RFQ's for two decades, attaining a level of stability and consistency she never thought possible. A tough childhood and mental health difficulties from a young age have led to many complications in Anna's life, yet her daily supports from RFQ have allowed her to live the life she wants.

"I have a full, happy life and love getting out and about. I do art therapy, go to Church and go to Thrive ladies' group. We celebrate my birthday every year at RFQ's end of year party and I always get cake. My purpose in life is to be kind and say hello to everyone. I am a friendly person and like to help others."

Anna's NDIS support worker Cynthia adds, "Anna is also a great advocate for other clients. She's got friends everywhere, everyone knows her! She's very active in the community, and that's important to her. And she's got the most incredible memory. I can tell her something in passing and she'll remember it two weeks later. She's amazing."

“ I have a full, happy life and love getting out and about. I do art therapy, go to Church and go to Thrive ladies' group. We celebrate my birthday every year at RFQ's end of year party and I always get cake. ”

BUILDING CULTURAL CAPABILITY

We place a high value on establishing meaningful activities that will prove effective in building the cultural capability of our people and services, demonstrating our commitment to improving the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Nurturing knowledge-sharing

NAIDOC Week celebrations provided a meaningful opportunity across RFQ to acknowledge the cultural and spiritual diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

In Brisbane, staff immersed themselves in a weaving session, First Nations trivia event, captivating truth-telling exercises and exploration of Indigenous tools and artefacts.

Manager Indigenous Peoples Program, Juanita Johnson and Cultural Supervisor, Lynten Johnson took attendees through an informative session on Indigenous history and the significance of NAIDOC Week. The duo was joined by Cultural Supervisors Wendy Lacey and Lefan Jard, along with Recovery Support Worker, Syl Johns, who shared personal stories about the formative Elders in their lives and what it means to be an Elder. Attendees also enjoyed the opportunity to interact with and hear the stories behind Syl's collection of family artefacts including boomerangs, clapping sticks, killing sticks, a didgeridoo and other tools.

"We have much to gain from the expertise of First Nations people, if we provide opportunities to listen and learn. I know our non-Indigenous staff really appreciated the chance to gather knowledge and ask questions in a safe and supportive environment. Through activities like this, we learn how to better support our Indigenous clients, ensuring the experience of Indigenous people is front-of-mind in everything we do," said Juanita.

In addition to NAIDOC festivities, Juanita continues to facilitate yarning sessions across RFQ, with all staff invited to partake. During the sessions, Juanita shares her personal story, inspiring others to understand the realities of our Indigenous history, while cultivating a safe space for others to reconcile and open up about their experiences.



Juanita's honesty, authenticity and generosity have been widely praised by staff, who have gained valuable insight and knowledge.

Following a successful pilot in 2022, the Cultural Supervision Project is officially underway, with three Identified Cultural Supervisor positions. The project was created to better support RFQ's 300+ clients who identify as Indigenous. The program complements and supports the Identified positions across the organisation, to culturally empower the workforce. Cultural Supervisors work with non-Indigenous staff to provide leadership, knowledge and advice that is culturally safe and appropriate.



Forging and strengthening robust partnerships

This year has been a catalyst for new and evolving partnerships across our Indigenous Peoples Program.

Kicking off with the Arthur Beetson Foundation Queensland Murri Carnival, RFQ sponsored the Brisbane Blacks (men's & women's), Southeast Queensland Crows (men's), and Murri Gummaz (girls under 15s & two under 17s). As a proud returning sponsor, our increased commitment this year served as a soft launch for RFQ's new Indigenous branding with marquees and water bottles featuring at the games. RFQ also sponsors the West Inala Rugby League Club, which provides important sporting and social engagement for local Indigenous boys and young men.

Across to the Darling Downs, the partnership between RFQ and the Jaydon Adams Memorial Foundation has entered its third year. The RFQ funded position, Wellbeing and Recovery Worker – Indigenous Identified is held by David Love-Hickson. David continues to work between RFQ (three days) and the Jaydon Adams Memorial Foundation (two days) to support Indigenous people with mental health challenges across the Darling Downs.

This year, in partnership with the University of Melbourne, the First Nations Wellbeing Literacy Program was finalised and presented at the IPPA World Congress in Vancouver, with Juanita presenting by video and Alex Couley in person. Working closely with Jacqui Francis from University of Melbourne to finalise the program content, Juanita expressed how we are now ready to engage a local community from Brisbane or surrounds to be our test site for the pilot project.

RFQ has partnered with Suicide Programs to deliver Calm Yarn, a groundbreaking First Nations version of Calm Conversations, a suicide prevention, intervention and awareness-raising program that educates staff on suicidal ideation and behaviour. It provides expertise on how best to support clients who are experiencing these issues. Stage One of the process has been completed, with Juanita and Wendy Lacey trained in delivering Calm Yarn. RFQ is rolling out the training to staff, with a view to potentially deliver the training externally.

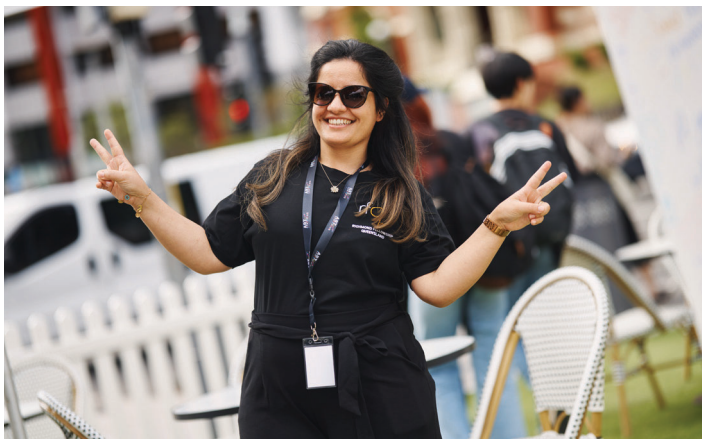
Upholding our Statement of Intent

Through its Statement of Intent, RFQ is demonstrating its commitment to improving the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. To date, all five goals have been exceeded with a review scheduled for December 2023. RFQ currently has nine (9) Identified roles across the organisation.

Indigenous Wellbeing Conference

In October, Juanita and Wendy travelled to Darwin to attend the Indigenous Wellbeing Conference. Now in its third year, the two-day conference explored topics including social connectedness; economic and social disadvantage; strengthening communities; healing from trauma; connection to culture; and, amplifying the voices of Elders and emerging leaders. Juanita and Wendy enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with, learn from and listen to valuable insights from Indigenous wellbeing leaders. Coming together with like-minded individuals and organisations was an empowering and culturally rich experience, with much knowledge gained to share with the broader RFQ team.







SEAMUS'S STORY

With a construction trade under his belt and six years' experience on the ski slopes of Canada, Seamus's path to the mental health sector was far from conventional. Yet a formative conversation with his mate started the wheels turning on what would become a fulfilling and natural career for Seamus.

"I was burnt out as a chippie and the job was taking a big toll on me and my relationship. I was over at my mate's house one day and he suggested I move into community services like him."

After undertaking study, Seamus joined RFQ in 2021 and moved into an Advanced Recovery Support Worker role. He says the secret to RFQ clients achieving great outcomes centres on empowering people to take responsibility for their lives and make their own decisions.

“I'd say there's an art in knowing when to provide a gentle nudge and when to sit back – and that's done through conversations.”

"Sometimes it's a challenge, but you can't just swoop in and try to 'save' the person or tell them what to do. You need to provide space and dignity of risk, where they can make mistakes and learn and grow through struggles. That's how people gain confidence. I'd say there's an art in knowing when to provide a gentle nudge and when to sit back – and that's done through conversations."

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We partner with government and our sector to deliver impactful, engaging initiatives within our community and to the wider public.

NAIDOC Week

This year, NAIDOC Week celebrations featured a host of community activities exploring the theme, 'For Our Elders'. In Logan, staff and clients enjoyed a Family Fun Day at the Kingston Butter Factory hosted by the Logan District Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Elders. On Brisbane's bayside, staff attended a community event at Wellington Point.

Across to the Darling Downs, the NAIDOC Family and Community Day was enjoyed by all. Over in Wide Bay, RFQ held an interactive stall where team member Kelsie drew an emu and visitors were encouraged to use paint and thumb prints to colour it in. Local Bundaberg Indigenous small business owner Nikita, of Keetz Place, also designed a custom 'For Our Elders' cake-topper which proudly adorned a cake for the team.



Queensland Mental Health Week

Queensland Mental Health Week was a hive of activity with celebrations reflecting on the theme, 'Awareness, Belonging, Connection'. Taking place from 7-15 October, staff partnered with government and non-government stakeholders to support and participate in a range of engaging events.

Southside staff attended 'Thrive by the Bay' on the Raby Bay Harbour which celebrated its eighth anniversary, as well as festivities at the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Metro North staff attended the Prince Charles Hospital's World Suicide Prevention event, engaging in valuable conversations with clinicians and consumers. Staff also hosted a stall at the Kilcoy Wellbeing Festival, showcasing RFQ programs to the community and fostering connections.

Further north in the Wide Bay region, RFQ hosted 'Connecting for Awareness' at Scarness Park in Hervey Bay.





Attracting hundreds of visitors, the respected annual event treated visitors to live music, stalls, plant-potting, sound healing, a bush tucker demonstration, barbecue breakfast and walk.

On the Gold Coast, staff attended music and arts festival, ArtBeat. Celebrating its 10th anniversary, several RFQ clients contributed artwork to the ArtBeat gallery showcase and some performed musical sets live onstage!

The cornerstone event on the North Queensland calendar was the Journeys Art Exhibition, now in its third year. Taking place in Townsville's Flinders Lane, the exhibition showcased heartfelt, moving pieces and stories by artists whose lives have been touched by mental health challenges.

RFQ staff also spread the message of mental health support, acceptance and solidarity at the Ipswich Mental Health Expo, Darling Downs Health mental health engagement event and at local schools.

This year, RFQ was again the proud sponsor of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award at the Queensland Mental Health Week Achievement Awards. RFQ Indigenous Peoples Program Manager, Juanita Johnson presented this year's award to the deserving winners, 13YARN Crisis Support Line.





Recovered Futures Art Exhibition

A mainstay on the Brisbane art scene and iconic Queensland Mental Health Week event, the Recovered Futures Art Exhibition was held from 6-12 October in King George Square.

Featuring 270 artworks by 169 artists with lived mental health experience, this year's week-long event welcomed more than 13,000 people through the doors of the Grand Marquee, the highest in the event's 32 year history. Online, the event website attracted more than 12,000 visitors, representing an increase of almost 90 per cent on last year. Artwork sales exceeded previous years, with in excess of \$73,000 sold.

Record interest in the exhibition was propelled by promotion from online and radio media outlets, including Nova 106.9FM, ABC radio, The Urban List, In Queensland, The Westender and Living in Brisbane. In addition, strategic marketing opportunities fuelled public interest – from print and online advertising through to partnerships with like-minded businesses.

Inside the Grand Marquee and in partnership with the Queensland Music Teachers' Association, visitors immersed themselves in the musical talents of emerging pianists from the Queensland Piano Competition through daily Recitals. Visitors were also captivated by Artist in Residence Chanté Ranclaud who created a masterpiece on stage.

Outside, a thought-provoking Mental Health Week campaign featuring a giant 2-metre coffee cup encouraged visitors to reflect on their own mental health. Reinforcing the purpose behind the exhibition – bringing mental health discussions into the mainstream – the campaign, 'What Fills Your Cup?' posed a blank canvas for thousands of passers-by to write down what they do for self-care.

This year, the exhibition was officially opened by Queensland Mental Health Commissioner, Ivan Frkovic. Artists, sponsors and dignitaries enjoyed canapes and a special performance by Italian Tenor, Raffaele Pierno accompanied by Leanne Warne on grand piano. A cultural dance performance by Barrambin Yarning Group from St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace featured in the Acknowledgement of Country by Marlon Riley and Eric Ellis on didgeridoo.

The ongoing success of the event continues to rely on our strong partnerships. A warm thank you to our sponsors for their generosity – Queensland Mental Health Commission, Pure Source Recruitment, RAW Commercial Projects, Collective Maintenance Services, Mater Education, Brisbane City Council, Austbrokers Comsure, MobileCorp, VisiCase and Xen Technologies.



LIVING OUR VALUES

We nurture a culture that cultivates authentic and empowering relationships. Through the delivery of quality programs, we are steadfast in our commitment to service excellence which is driven by a team of dedicated, resourceful, resilient, compassionate and values-driven professionals. We are proud of the complementary blend of these values with the expertise and experience our people possess, contributing to an inspiring workplace culture of connectedness, integrity and compassion.

Supporting our people to thrive

This year, our CEO continued his staff induction events across the organisation. These inductions are an opportunity for the CEO to connect with new staff on a more personal level and inspire new employees towards the company's mission. It is an opportunity for the CEO and staff to share their motivation for mental health work and joining RFQ. This helps nurture a healthy culture and fosters alignment and a sense of community within the organisation.

To further our commitment of fostering a culture of compassion, we proudly launched our first Schwartz Round, following our partnership with the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare. Schwartz Rounds

provide RFQ staff with a structured interprofessional forum to discuss the difficult social and emotional aspects of providing care in healthcare settings. The feedback from participants speaks to an appreciation for knowledge-sharing, with an understanding that authentic, open communication fosters a productive work environment built on trust and respect.

While supporting the emotional wellbeing of our staff is paramount, so too is ensuring they are afforded opportunities for professional development and growth. RFQ Learning is a system that provides a comprehensive suite of educational content to all staff, including evidence-based learning programs and practical research outcomes for staff to implement into their daily practices. The groundbreaking Wellbeing Literacy Program, created in partnership with the University of Melbourne's Centre for Wellbeing Science, is one of the key programs available to empower our employees to leverage tools and knowledge to prioritise wellbeing in their own lives, as well as their work with clients.

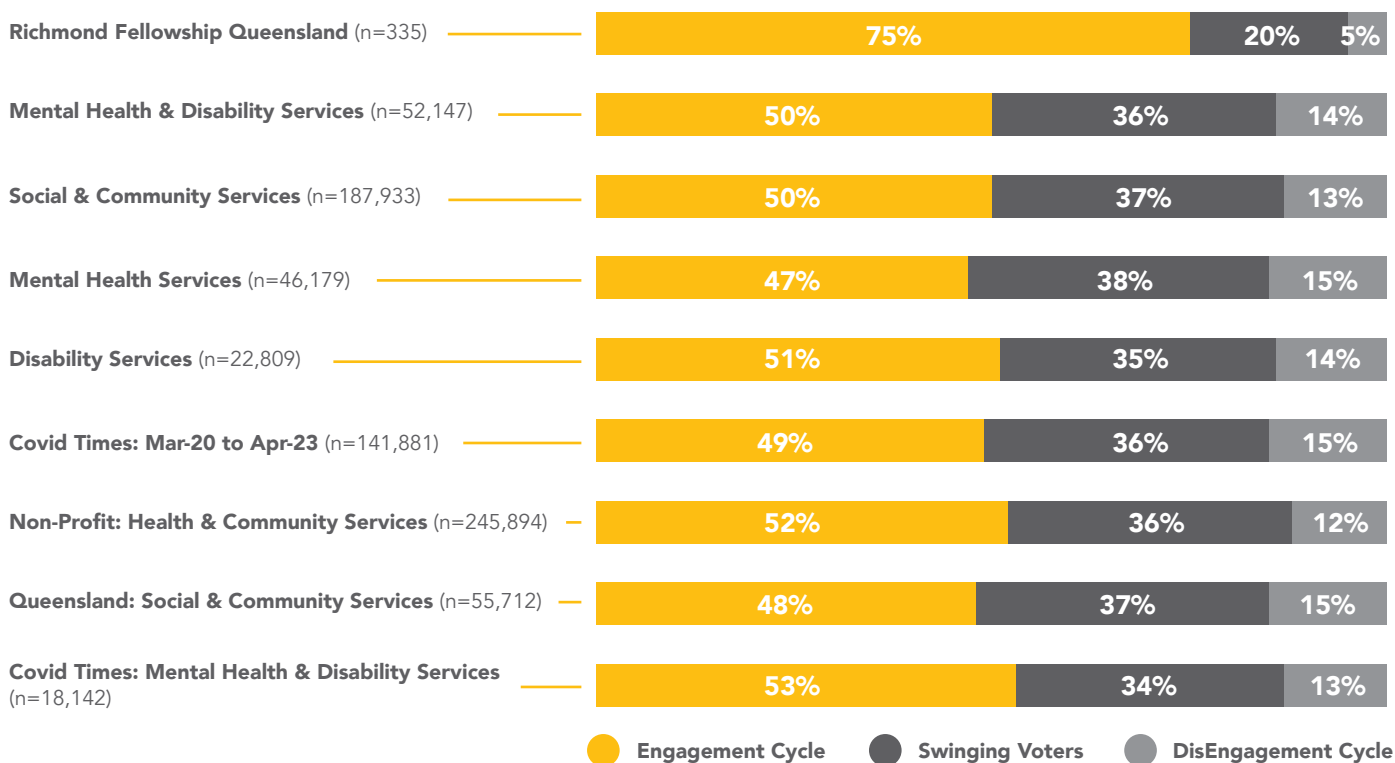
'A truly great place to work'

Earlier this year, 85 per cent of staff participated in our annual CEO Staff Feedback Survey, independently



2023 CEO STAFF FEEDBACK SURVEY

RFQ 'engagement' culture compared with industry benchmarks - Best Practice Australia



administered by Best Practice Australia. The survey measures staff engagement, highlights personal development opportunities and helps inform workforce planning. This year, 86 per cent stated that RFQ is 'a truly great place to work', an industry benchmark. The survey also showed that RFQ's staff engagement culture is at an industry high of 75 per cent, as shown in the comparative graph. The survey further highlighted the comparative diversity of RFQ's workforce.

Our annual Workplace Gender Equality report showcased RFQ's values, with RFQ meeting or exceeding equity standards. Women continue to have a strong representation in management roles, filling 69 percent of positions. The Board gender balance is five women and three men.

The importance of gender equality was further highlighted in the CEO Staff Feedback Survey, with four of RFQ's highest scoring attributes relating to gender equality. Other high scoring attributes included staff agreeing that their work was: purposeful (94 per cent); meaningful (93 per cent); useful to others (92 per cent); a source of pride (93 per cent) and, something they are competent at (91 per cent).

RFQ continues to reflect a commitment to overall workplace wellbeing within a safe work environment. While

the industry average WorkCover premium has increased, RFQ experienced a premium rate reduction, with the premium 5.5 times lower than the industry average.

Celebrating our community

RFQ's End of Year Party continues to be a highlight on the social calendar, with clients, staff, directors and their families celebrating in the Marquee at Victoria Park each year. The annual event provides an opportunity for our community to come together and enjoy themselves after a busy year. Stories and laughs abound as guests enjoy canapes and dinner alongside entertainment including hula hoop dancers, magician, caricature artist and DJ. The party remains a core component of RFQ's identity – a place where new friends and old friends converge in an inclusive, supportive and fun-filled environment.

Throughout the year, social connections are nurtured through regular staff and client barbecues. Hosting barbecues is a long-standing RFQ tradition, with clients enjoying the chance to catch up with staff, while building and maintaining connections with each other. The simple pleasure of sharing food and conversation reinforces a strong sense of community where everyone is welcome, valued and respected for who they are.

CLIENT SERVICES, PERFORMANCE AND FUNDING PARTNERS

Client services and funding partners

We are committed to the services we provide in alliance with clients and in partnership with our funders. From twenty (20) office sites and extending from North Queensland to Wide Bay, West Moreton, the Gold Coast and Southern Downs, west to the Darling and Western Downs and South Burnett, and across Brisbane, and through our national telehealth services, we deliver diverse services in partnership with our funders.

Approaching its 50th anniversary in 2024, RFQ is proud of the expertise it has developed over many years in its work with people experiencing serious mental illness. Its Hospital to Home; Housing Support; Transitions from Corrections and, Transition Recovery Support programs funded by Queensland Health are delivered hand in glove with clinical services across seven (7) Hospital and Health Services regions.

We also deliver suicide prevention; low-intensity mental health and, psycho-social support programs funded by Brisbane North; Darling Downs and West Moreton and, Country to Coast PHNs.

RFQ is the leading provider of low-intensity CBT programs under the Beyond Blue New Access brand. This includes telehealth services delivered nationally to Comcare and eighteen (18) Federal Government departments; Wesfarmers and ten (10) of its subsidiary companies and, Small Business Owners.

Service performance

Now in its second year of operation, our Performance and Analytics (P&A) Unit continues to collaborate across business units to manage data efficiently and embed a culture of continuous improvement and data-driven decision-making.

Chief Performance Officer, Olive Xing says the team's focus has centred around improving existing processes and efficiency related to data collection, analysis and reporting.

"Not only have operational processes been streamlined and automated processes implemented, but the administrative burden has significantly reduced across our operational teams. This has resulted in substantial time and cost savings, meaning resources can be more effectively allocated to client services," she said.

A notable achievement this year was the introduction of an in-house built application for client outcome measurement.

"This innovation highlights the P&A Unit's capability to support the development of the organisation and present a competitive advantage within the field. Internal stakeholders also have easy access to relevant data, allowing them to tailor their services to provide clients with what they need to succeed."

Striving for continuous improvement, the Unit also made strides in elevating reporting standards to integrate a more visual approach.

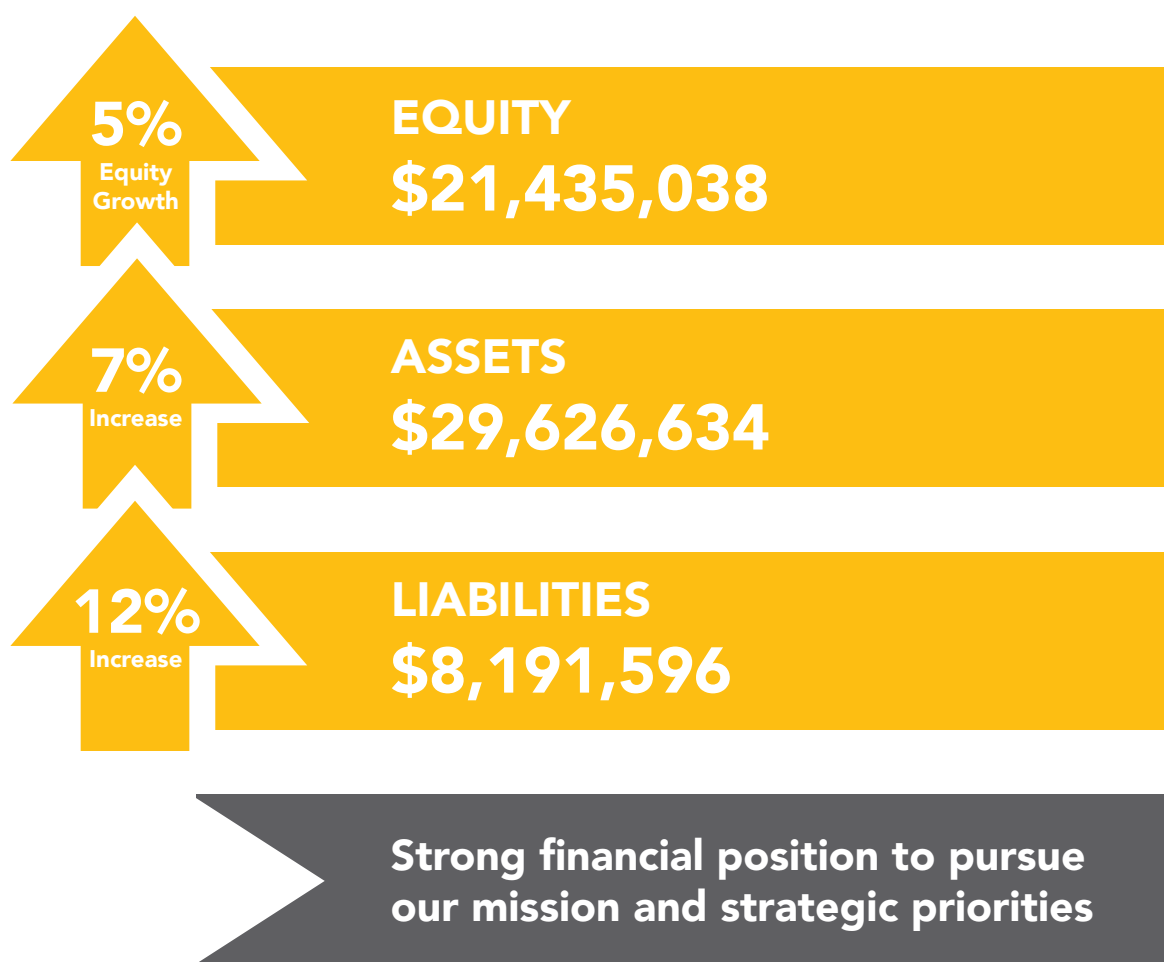
"We are proud of the professional reporting templates we have developed this year. They make it easier for everyone to understand the organisation's performance and impact in a palatable and visual format. In addition, they showcase our commitment to presenting organisational data professionally which sets a higher industry standard."



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Having finished the year in a strong financial position, RFQ is well positioned to pursue our purpose of supporting people facing mental health challenges. We continue to negotiate challenges impacting the sector while pursuing our strategic priorities to ensure future sustainability.

This year's robust results have been achieved against a backdrop of increasing economic uncertainty, inflationary impacts, an unfavourable NDIS pricing model and a highly competitive employment market. Our financial position is testament to our strong financial management which underpins our excellence in service delivery. It is further reinforced in our ability to invest in expanding and improving our services to have a greater impact throughout Queensland and nationally via telehealth services.



GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Our leaders bring a powerful mix of expertise, diversity and lived experience. Together, they provide mission-driven and strategic leadership underpinned by an unwavering commitment to our vision and values.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Rhonda Chesmond
Board Chair |
Chair Governance Committee



Ann Mealey
Director | Governance Committee
| Company Secretary



David Goener
Director | Chair Finance Committee



Keren Harms
Director | Governance Committee



Tom Meehan
Director



Maria Watson-Trudgett
Director



Caitlin Gough
Director | Finance Committee

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Kingsley Bedwell
Chief Executive



CHIEFS



Alex Couley
Chief Leadership Officer



Andrea Turvey
Chief Financial Officer



Olive Xing
Chief Performance Officer

EXECUTIVES



Larry Stapleton
Executive Manager Service
Development



Louise Davis
Executive Manager Brief
Interventions



Suzanne Desailly
Executive Manager Service
Operations



Emily Miller
Chief of Staff
Secretariat

SERVICE MANAGERS



Diana Bennet
Area Manager - Gold Coast



Karen Suey
Area Manager - Wide Bay



Laura Lattanzio
Area Manager - Darling Downs



Sue Mahoney
Area Manager - Brisbane North



Juanita Johnson
Manager Indigenous Peoples
Program



Lisa Inger
Senior Manager NewAccess
Program



Jeremy Audas
Executive Manager North
Queensland

THANK YOU

Funders

Australian Government Department of Health
Beyond Blue
Comcare
National Disability Insurance Agency
PHN Brisbane North
Country to Coast QLD
PHN Darling Downs and West Moreton
Queensland Department of Health
Neami National

Government partners

Darling Downs HHS Mental Health Services
Department of Justice and Attorney-General
Gold Coast HHS Mental Health Service
Gold Coast Primary Health Network (Joint Regional Plan – Adult and Older Persons Mental Health Partnership Group)
Metro South HHS Addiction and Mental Health Services
Metro North HHS Mental Health Services
Queensland Corrective Services
Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
Queensland Mental Health Commission
Sunshine Coast HHS Mental Health Service
Townsville HHS Mental Health Service
West Moreton HHS Mental Health and Specialised Services
Wide Bay HHS Mental Health Service
WorkCover Queensland

Council partners

Brisbane City Council
Bundaberg Regional Council
City of Gold Coast
Fraser Coast Regional Council
Ipswich City Council
Logan City Council
Moreton Bay Regional Council
North Burnett Regional Council
Sunshine Coast Council
Toowoomba Regional Council

Community partners

APM (LAC Fraser Coast)
AT Psychology
Australian Rail Track Corporation
Blue Knot Foundation
Bridges AODs
Brisbane Blacks Football team
Brisbane Housing Company Limited
BRISSC
Brook RED
Burnie Brae
BYS
Caboolture Neighbourhood Centre
CALM - Education in Suicide
Carers Queensland
Caxton Legal Service
Centacare
Central Queensland Indigenous Development
Churches of Christ Care Housing
Choice Passion Life

Coast to Country Housing Company
Community
Community Housing Limited
Disability Services Queensland
EACH Housing
Encircle
Flourish Australia
Footprints
Galangoor Duwalami Primary Healthcare
Harmony Place
Hearspace Bundaberg
Hearspace Hervey Bay
Hearspace Ipswich
Hearspace Maryborough
Hearspace Nundah
Help Enterprises
Indigenous Wellbeing Centre (LAC Bundaberg)
Jacaranda Clubhouse
Jaydon Adams Memorial Foundation
Life Without Barriers
Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Qld Ltd
Lives Lived Well
Marcus Mission
Millmerran State School
Mind Australia
Momentum Mental Health
Murri Gummaz Girls Football Team
Mylestones Employment
National Disability Service
Neami National
New Farm Clinic
OCTEC Employment Service
Open Arms
Open Doors
Open Minds
Queensland Alliance for Mental Health
QuIHN
Regional Housing Limited
Richmond Fellowship Australia
Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific Forum
Roses in the Ocean
Rural and Remote Mental Health
Safe Space
Salvation Army Crisis Relief
Southeast Queensland Crows Football Team
Standby Support After Suicide
Stride
Suicide Call Back Service
Trauma Assist
Under 1 Roof
UnitingCare Community
Wesley Mission
West Inala Rugby League Football Club
Women's Legal Service
World Wellness Group
YAMBI
Young Minds

Consultants and business partners

Absorb LMS
AccessPay
Advance Plants
All Branded Group
AMC Commercial Cleaning

Angel Marie Media
Asset Pro
Austbrokers Comsure
Australian Piano Warehouse
Bellezza Espresso by BG
Best Practice Australia
Bright Red Marketing
Burger Digital
CBT Institute
Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland
Collective Maintenance Services
Connect Plan Management
Connecting Up
Cooper Grace Ward Lawyers
Deaf Connect
Disability Services Consulting
ELMO Software Ltd
Ensuites on Tow
EPICURE
Event Letters
Fraser Coast Mates
Gilimbaa
Global-mark
GoodTel
HESTA
Insight
IAS Fine Art Logistics
Interleasing (Aust) Limited
Kindled Spirits Entertainment
KPMG Australia
Little Sprinkle Co
Mapien Pty Ltd
Maybo - Harvey Warwick Group
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McCullough Robertson Lawyers
Mike Tyler Magic
MobileCorp
Modern Concepts Design
My Colour Box
My Little Flower Shoppe
MYOB Australia
Northside Party Hire
NW Group
Optimax Agency
Paxton Hall Lawyers
Peak Marketing
Photogenia
PIF Productions
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Pure Source Recruitment
Q-Print Group
Queensland Centre for Mental Health Learning
RAW Commercial
Scout Talent
Slainte Studios
Sophie Hart Design
Summit Fleet Leasing
Surety IT Pty Ltd
Stalks and Stems
TELUS Health
The PR Firm

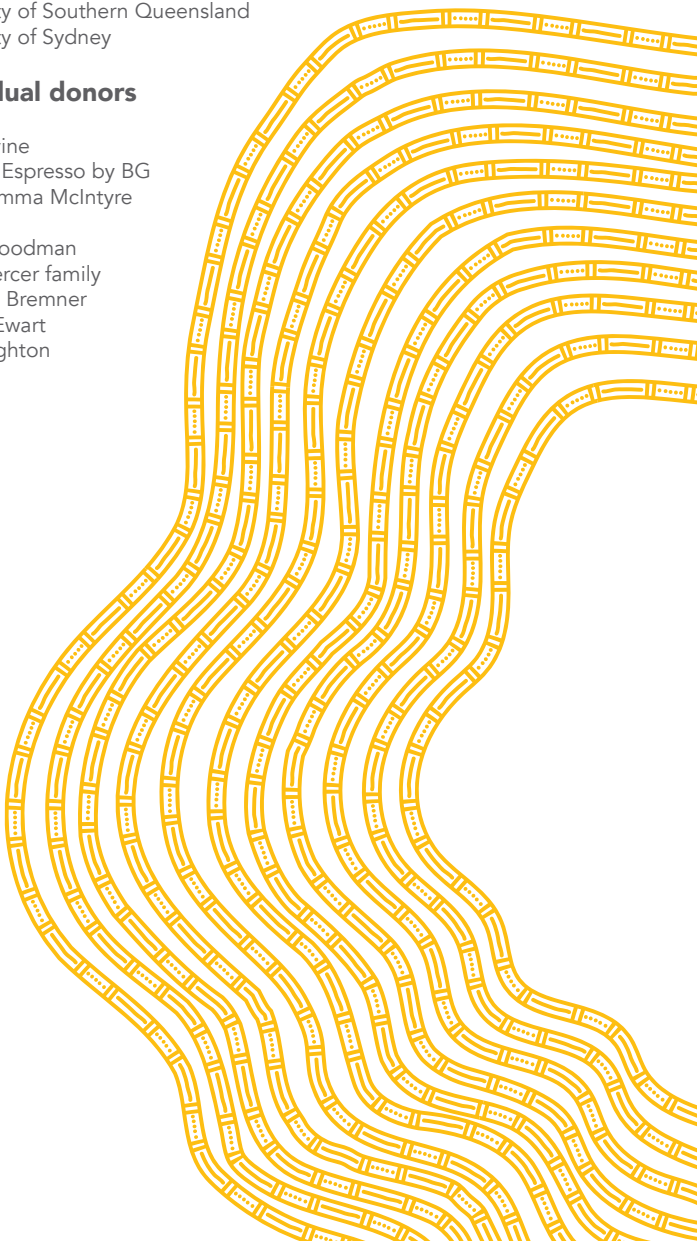
Tools for Hard Conversations
Trilogy Fire Safety
Valiant Hire
Valley Edge
VisiCase
Westpac Banking Corporation
Xen Technologies

Academic and research partnerships

ALIVE National Centre Implementation and Translation Network
Flinders University
Griffith University
Hunt Solutions
Indiana University
International Positive Psychology Association
James Cook University
Mater Education and Mater Hospitals [linked with Harvard University]
MERIT Institute
QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute
Queensland University of Technology
Schwartz Center [linked with Harvard University]
University of Melbourne - Centre for Wellbeing Science
University of Queensland
University of Southern Queensland
University of Sydney

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Ann Devine
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Cover image: 'Open Arms, Caring Spirit'
artwork by David Williams of Gilimbai



**Richmond
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