

**Queenslanders  
with Disability  
Network**

**2017–2018**

**Annual  
Report**

**QDN**

QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK  
*NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US*

**INFORM**

**CONNECT**

**LEAD**

**INFLUENCE**

INFORM

CONNECT

LEAD

INFLUENCE

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# Part 1: Introduction

## About us

Queenslanders with Disability Network Limited (QDN) is a Company Limited by Guarantee, governed by a Board of Directors, who are all people with disability.

QDN receives funding from State and Commonwealth Governments for undertaking activities around information, referral and systemic advocacy, and for specific projects that align with our work and values.

QDN's work includes:

- › informing people about important issues and working together to create change;
- › referring people onto other Government and community agencies;
- › supporting local groups of peers to lead a good life in their community;
- › helping people with disability to have a voice in disability policy;
- › projects that help improve the lives of people with disability; and
- › connecting organisations to people with lived experience of disability to help grow their business.

QDN is a member organisation. All Ordinary Members are people with disability. QDN also has:

- › Supporters – family and others who support QDN's goals
- › Supporting Organisations – corporate organisations and community organisations that support QDN's goals

Only Ordinary Members have voting rights and are eligible for election to the Board of Directors. New members are welcome. Membership is free.



**Membership Application Form**

**Who are we?**  
Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is an organisation of, by and for people with disability.

**QDN**  
QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK  
NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

**Type of membership**  
Please tick the type of membership that you would like to apply for:

Type of membership	Who	Voting Right	Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary member*	person with disability	Yes**	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	support person	No	\$0
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Organisation	organisation	No	\$35 (tax deductible)

\*By this application you are applying to be a member of the company and agree to be bound by its constitution.  
\*\*Ordinary members have the right to vote and to be an Elected Director of the QDN Board.  
QDN is covered for \$20 000 000 in Public Liability insurance coverage.

**Nominee**  
Applications for new QDN Membership need a QDN Member to nominate them.  
Please tick:

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## Our vision

People with disability are active and valued citizens.

## Our mission

Empowering people with disability to be fully included as citizens in the social and economic life of the community.

## Our values

### **AUTHENTIC VOICE:**

We are with, and for, all people with disability and ensure those with limited or no voice are heard and valued.

### **COLLABORATIVE ACTION:**

We work together to learn from the collective experiences, values and wisdom of people with disability.

### **RIGHTS:**

We believe in and model a human rights approach that recognises disability as a social issue.

### **RESPECT:**

We value human difference and diversity and build mutual respect through openness and fellowship.

### **RESILIENCE:**

We are hopeful, even about the most complex challenges, and are here for the long term.

## Our motto

**Nothing about us without us**

**Our strategic priorities include:** successful implementation of the NDIS; accessible, quality and affordable housing, health, education, aids and equipment and transport.

## Membership

QDN has the following membership numbers:

- › 895 Ordinary Members –  
and an additional 821 members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network who identify as Aboriginal people or Torres Strait Islanders
- › 581 Supporters
- › 40 Corporate Members

There are also an additional 148 organisations or individuals who receive our e-Bulletin. There have been 111 new members and supporters added to our network in this financial year and we celebrate this growing membership base.





# Chairperson's report

**Nigel Webb**

QDN Board of Directors  
– Chairperson



Influencing change and a strong voice by and for people with disability are key fundamental building blocks to our work here at QDN. The last 12 months have seen many positive changes for Queenslanders with disability, but along with that, we have seen many changes and challenges that still need to be addressed to deliver better outcomes for people with disability.

On 28 October 2017 QDN celebrated our 15 year anniversary at Brisbane City Hall following our annual general meeting. It was a wonderful event with over 120 people in attendance and we celebrated the past, present and future of QDN and the achievements of people with disability coming together as a strong network to inform, connect, influence and lead change. I would like to thank QDN members, Board Directors, staff and supporters, both past and present for their contributions, efforts and commitments to this organisation and helping to shape QDN into who we are today. We were also very pleased to have Commonwealth Disability Assistant Minister Jane Prentice and Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Kevin Cocks to award life membership, honoured supporter and recognition of service awards on the day.

Our thanks also to Deputy Director General Michael Hogan (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability) who represented Hon. Coralee O'Rourke, Minister for Disability Services on the day.

On 11 September 2017, we also saw another significant milestone in QDN's history – our move from our home for over a decade in Bowen Hills to our new office in Turbot St, Spring Hill. Whilst our hand was forced in the respect that one of the buildings we leased was sold, it gave us the opportunity to find new digs that give us the place and space to continue to do our work. It was great to be able to have both our State and Commonwealth Disability Ministers, Hon Coralee O'Rourke and Assistant Minister Jane Prentice as part of our new office opening on 18 January 2018, Minister O'Rourke to officially open the office and Assistant Minister Prentice to launch our Getting on the NDIS Grid digital story.

**“QDN is committed to ensuring that every Queenslanders with disability who is eligible can access the scheme and the supports they need to participate economically and socially in their community.”**

The Queensland State Election was held on 25 November 2017. In the lead up to the election, QDN engaged with all candidates and political parties to share our policy platforms across six areas of priority, informed by our 2017 state-wide member survey with QDN members. QDN focused on the responsibility of the Queensland Government in delivering and funding essential accessible, affordable and quality Government and community mainstream services to people with disability, and its critical role in fostering full inclusion and participation of people with disability in the economic, social, civic and cultural life of Queensland. I was pleased that QDN was funded as part of the election commitments for the NDIS Peer to Peer Advocacy project which commenced on 1 July 2018. This project has grown out of QDN's extensive work with people with disability in getting ready for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and is much needed as people navigate their way through the NDIS.

Queenslanders with disability represent almost 1 in every 5 Queenslanders which is almost 900,000 people, of which 91,000 are expected to enter the NDIS. Queensland is in a unique position as 50% of NDIS participants, that is 45,000, will be people who haven't ever received formal disability supports before. As at

30 June 2018, we had 16,704 active participants with approved plans including Early Childhood Early Intervention in the NDIS in Queensland. This is a significant number of people with disability who are able to exercise choice and control over how, when, where and from whom they purchase their supports. However, it is important to note that it only represents 59% of the bilateral agreement estimates. This means that there are still 40% of people who are either standing back hesitant about accessing or people who don't know about the NDIS yet and how it might support them. As we go into this final year of transition where 60,000 people are due to enter the scheme, it is critical that we increase this percentage of the bilateral agreement estimates. QDN is committed to ensuring that every Queenslanders with disability who is eligible can access the scheme and the supports they need to participate economically and socially in their community.

This year we have seen the offices of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) around Mackay, South West, Ipswich, and Bundaberg and more recently in the south east corner open and start working with people. I was pleased to attend the official opening of the NDIA office in Chermside on 15 May 2018. The NDIS Partners in the





## **“1 in 5 Queenslanders has a disability. Making business, government and community more accessible and inclusive makes good sense.”**

Community are also up and running and I welcomed the announcement of the Local Area Coordinators and Early Childhood Early Intervention providers for the last year of rollout. While this was a delayed announcement, which has impacted upon both people with disability and their families/carers as well as the workforce tasked with the responsibility of getting people into the scheme and developing plans, we are working with all parties to ensure we get the right outcomes for participants.

Queenslanders with disability, regardless of if they are NDIS participants or not need access to quality, affordable, accessible and safe services across health, transport, housing, education, employment, digital technology, sport, recreation and culture. We vote, we want jobs, we want good education, quality healthcare, accessible and affordable transport, we want quality services and we want to fully participate socially and economically as equal citizens. With the changing policy landscape of the NDIS and a national approach to disability, the role of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments remains clear to deliver mainstream and community services to people with disability. QDN has continued to raise these issues across all our work, and particularly around the interface issues with the NDIS which at

the end of the day are leaving people with disability in a vulnerable position whilst Governments negotiate who is responsible for what. People with disability are not concerned with who provides what, but need to know when they turn up at the hospital, or to get on a train, or at the employment service, that they can get a quality service that is able to meet their needs and deliver the right outcomes for them. It is important that we continue to find solutions to these issues, particularly the continuity of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme beyond June 2019, and the issues with the cost shifting of the maintenance of equipment within the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme and the impact on vulnerable people with disability who are on fixed incomes.

QDN has also been pleased to work with Community Services Industry Alliance through QDeNgage on a series of Digital Stories. Through the Inclusion Ready project, there are a range of stories of inclusion by QDN members in their community and the impact it can have for business, government, groups and people with disability. 1 in 5 Queenslanders has a disability. Making business, government and community more accessible and inclusive makes good sense. It enables businesses to grow their customer base, it enables services and systems to deliver

better services to everyone and it enables community to enjoy the benefits of diversity and the social and economic outcomes. QDeNgage is QDN's engagement consultancy, working with organisations, businesses, and Government to provide a range of services such as speakers, consultants, workshops and training by people with lived experience of disability.

It is a great initiative and I look forward to this work growing and developing this year and into the future.

I am also pleased to announce my appointment from August 2018 – November 2019 as Co-Chair of the National Disability and Carers Advisory Council (NDCAC). The Council is an Australian Government commitment and I am Co-Chair along with the Hon Sarah Henderson Assistant Minister for Social Services, Housing and Disability Services. The Council provides advice on issues of strategic importance in relation to the disability and carer sectors, is focused on driving the implementation of the overarching National Disability Strategy (NDS), the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the Integrated Plan for Carer Support Services, and proposed reforms to disability employment. NDCAC is an exciting opportunity to have input into these national reforms and I look forward to seeking input from members as well as updates about progress to achieve real change in these important areas.

I would like to thank all of QDN's members across the state. Your engagement, feedback, voice, experiences, efforts and energy is the heart of QDN. To our allies and supporters also I extend my thanks for our work in partnership and delivering on



common goals and outcomes. I would also like to thank our CEO Paige Armstrong and the staff of QDN for all of your work this year, on delivering on the projects and contracts, and the strategic direction and focus of the organisation. QDN is lucky to have a dedicated group of staff and on behalf of the Board, thank you for your work.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their tireless efforts this year. I acknowledge the retiring Directors, Philia Polites, Mathew McCracken and Grahame Robertson. The Board play an important role in setting the strategic direction of the organisation and the governance. In these changing times, this requires a great deal of thought, consideration and planning. It has been a momentous year, particularly around celebrating our 15 year anniversary and continuing to maintain a focus on the importance of having people with disability connected, sharing information and supporting each other.

I look forward to continuing to work with each of you to ensure people with disability are active citizens in their communities, influencing and leading change.

**Nigel Webb**

QDN Board of Directors – Chairperson

# Chief Executive Officer's report



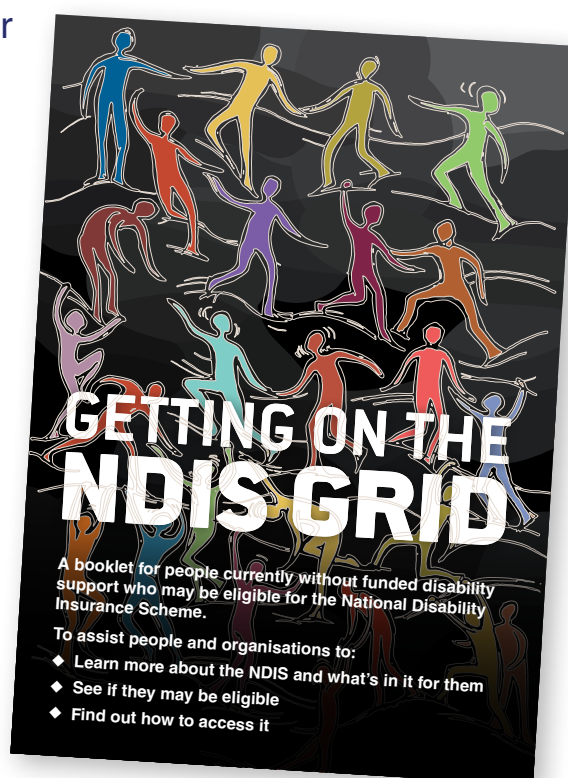
**Paige Armstrong**

Chief Executive Officer

QDN has achieved a significant amount of work in this past 12 months which is a testament to the hard work, efforts and determination of our members, peer leaders across all of QDN's work, our staff and our Board of Directors. I am proud of what the organisation has been able to deliver on, the quality of the outcomes we have achieved, and the strategic opportunities we have been able to harness to be able to influence the policy environment and the systems to deliver better outcomes for people with disability.

June 30 2018 sees the end of three of QDN's major projects, many of which QDN has been undertaking for a number of years. This includes:

- › Disability Support Organisation funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency
- › Participant Readiness – Ready to go project funded by the Department of Communities, Disability and Seniors
- › Targeted Strategies – Getting on the NDIS Grid funded through the Sector Development Fund under the Commonwealth Department of Social Services and administered through the State Department of Communities, Disability and Seniors.




**“We were able to deliver 574 activities, reaching 11,040 participants in total in locations across the state.”**

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the efforts and work of the Ready to go project. This work started as a pilot project in 2014, with a small group of peer facilitators delivering our series of three “Plan Ahead” workshops in Ipswich, Gold Coast and Brisbane specifically for people with intellectual disability. I was pleased when QDN was one of the 11 organisations funded as part of the Participant Readiness Initiative to deliver this work across Queensland. Members had told us that they were worried about people with intellectual and learning disabilities missing out on accessible, fun and interactive information to help them learn about the NDIS. So this is what the Ready to go project delivered in bucket loads, co-designed and co-facilitated by our group of 14 peer facilitators. We were able to deliver 574 activities, reaching 11,040 participants in total in locations across the state, including regional and rural areas. The project also developed an online resource “My learning passport” which made the workshop content accessible to people who couldn’t make it to a workshop or who didn’t feel comfortable in a workshop environment. The team was pleased to have a celebration of this project with peer facilitators, present and past staff, advisory group members and Board representatives to reflect on the great achievements, and celebrate the

work of Ready to go. People as leaders in their own lives is critical to the successful implementation of the NDIS, and I am pleased that QDN’s Ready to go project has focused on building the leadership and individual capacity of people with intellectual and learning disability across Queensland. Thank you to all our peer facilitators, past and present staff, our Advisory Group, QDN’s Board of Directors and to all the participants at our workshops.

Secondly I would like to acknowledge the work of the Disability Support Organisation (DSO) initiative which has established 21 local support groups across the diverse geography of the state of Queensland and supported growth and development of a strong group of leaders. This group of leaders are QDN members who have taken up the challenge of forming and leading groups of people with disability, to share information, ideas, and learnings to support each other in preparing for the NDIS. QDN’s Group Convenors have risen to this challenge and as at the end of June 2018, we had over 2000 people participating in face to face or virtual forums. Many of our local support group members who have transitioned to the NDIS have reported positive outcomes with their NDIS plans, and attributed the ideas, information and tips they learnt from others at local support group meetings as





the most helpful and practical information. The power of peers has shone through and the benefits of peer leadership and peer support have been demonstrated across all our local support groups in many and diverse ways. The local support groups have also been QDN's eyes and ears on the ground, raising important systemic policy issues as they start to impact upon people's lives and enabling us to raise these with the policy makers and put forward suggestions of how this can be improved. The Board of Directors have given their commitment to continuing to support the local support groups as they go forward. Local support groups are a key part of their community and we look forward to continuing to work with each and every member to continue to shape and lead change by and for people with disability. My thanks to each and everyone who has been involved in this work, for your commitment to peer support and peer networks and efforts in making it work.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Getting on the NDIS Grid project. This project has delivered information and engagement to almost 5,500 people with disability and workers from mainstream services during its 18 months of operation. This project was funded through the Sector Development Fund through the Department of Social Services until



Art of participatory leadership.

30 June 2018. I would like to thank the Queensland State Government and the Department of Communities, Disability and Seniors for their continued investment in this work post 30 June 2018 for an additional six months. Getting on the NDIS Grid has been instrumental in engaging with people with disability who are considered hard to reach and marginalised, and who are not currently receiving disability support. As has been mentioned by Nigel, Queensland's bilateral agreement commits to an additional 45,000 people with disability as new participants to the NDIS. We know that there is historical unmet need in Queensland for people with disability and this provides a great opportunity for this cohort to be able to access the reasonable and necessary support they need around their disability for the first time. We know that this group does not engage with traditional engagement approaches and won't turn up at a workshop, information session or initiate research themselves. The "Getting on the NDIS Grid" has been able to work in a creative and innovative way to get the message out there about the NDIS,



to engage with people where they are at, and assist people to understand what steps they need to take to make an access request to the NDIS. My thanks to our peer leaders, past and present staff, the Consortium who works with us on this project – Community Living Association, Community Resource Unit, Queensland Council of Social Services and Micah for your assistance, guidance and efforts.

One of the critical areas that QDN members and the work in our project “Getting on the NDIS Grid” has highlighted is the access process, particularly the paper work for access request forms completed by General Practitioners or Allied Health Professionals. Queensland is in a different position to the other states, given our bilateral agreement includes 45,000 new participants to the scheme. This is 45,000 new people who need to go through the full access process, including paperwork required by the agency around the person’s disability and the functional impact it has on their day to day life. This means 45,000 new participants going to the doctors and allied health professionals to assist them with completing this paperwork with limited information and training in this process. I am pleased that QDN was able to work with the Brisbane North Primary Health Network funded through the North Brisbane Partners in Recovery, to develop the “Understanding your role in the NDIS: GP toolkit”. The Toolkit was launched in May 2018 and is a great resource that is being used across the state and Australia to give practical information about the access process, what GPs or Allied Health need to focus on,

and detailed information relevant to their role all in the one document.

I was pleased to be appointed as the Deputy Chair of the Queensland NDIS Transition Advisory Group (QTAG) on 23 April 2018, which has been established to provide advice to the Minister of Disability Services, Coralee O’Rourke who is the Chairperson of the committee, on Queensland’s transition to the NDIS. QTAG provides a source of advice to ensure the voice of people with disability, families and carers and sector representatives are informing the Government’s planning and decision making during this time. I am also pleased to have been appointed to the NDIS Independent Advisory Council Intellectual Disability Reference Group as a Queensland representative. This National Advisory Group is chaired by Rhonda Galbally (NDIA Board Director) and reports to the Independent Advisory Council. Both of these committees provide an opportunity for the voice of Queenslanders with disability to be represented and influencing what is important and solutions for the future that deliver the right outcomes and support for people with disability.

QDN has also been working as one of 14 peak organisations to progress key issues within the policy environment in the Queensland context. At the 2018 Budget Breakfast, the 14 organisations shared a position statement outlining the 4 shared priority areas for action in this coming year. I am pleased to report to QDN members that all are important issues for people with disability and areas we have been actively working on including the NDIS, affordable and accessible housing, the Human Rights Act for Queensland and the Family Matters

campaign with regards to child protection services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander children and families.

I am also pleased that QDN in partnership with QCOSS has been successful in receiving a grant for a project “Changing Lives, Changing Communities”, under the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building National Readiness funding round. The work builds upon the successful work undertaken in Townsville over the past 3 years with QDN’s Townsville Local Support Group, QCOSS, and the Townsville City Council. The project involves working in partnership with QDN, QDN’s Local Support Group Convenors and the group members, and QCOSS to bring together a broad cross section of the community in community led work to bring the opportunities of the NDIS to life. QDN looks forward to delivering on this project over the next two years and I look forward to the outcomes of this important work.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank QDN’s Board of Directors for the leadership, strategic oversight and foresight in guiding the organisation forward over this past year and into the future. I would like to thank QDN’s staff for their work and efforts and commitment to the organisation and our members. My thanks also to our incredible group of QDN leaders across all of QDN’s work including our group convenors, Ready to go peer facilitators, Getting on the NDIS grid peer leaders and those who have contributed as policy champions and leaders. Finally to each and every QDN member, for being part of this organisation and commitment to ensuring that people with disability have a strong voice at the table and that we are leading and influencing change to deliver a more inclusive Queensland community.

**Paige Armstrong**

Chief Executive Officer



Minister for Housing and Public Works Mick de Brenni with key community stakeholders.

## Part 2: Our achievements 2017-18

**“Nothing  
about us  
without us”**

QDN's Strategic Plan guides our work along with our vision, mission, values and motto.

There are 4 key goals in the strategic plan

- Goal 1:**    **To promote and maintain active, vibrant networks that inform our work**
- Goal 2:**    **To let people know about the lives of people with disability and how to best talk with us**
- Goal 3:**    **To influence governments and others to bring about full and equal participation and citizenship**
- Goal 4:**    **To grow an independently, sustainable, effective and accountable organisation that reflects our values, vision and mission**

This Annual Report provides an overview of the activities, outputs and outcomes achieved by Queenslanders with Disability Network over the 2017-2018 period, reporting against our 4 key goals.

QDN also has 4 key areas of focus as we go about delivering our work, the goals of the organisation and ensuring that it is nothing about us without us.

**Inform**

**Connect**

**Lead**

**Influence**

# Goal 1 To promote and maintain active, vibrant networks that inform our work

QDN continues to undertake work to promote and maintain an active, vibrant member network that informs our projects, key activities and our systemic policy work.

A core element of the work of QDN is connecting people with disability together to share information, connect, influence, and build leadership. QDN supports members with disability to come together in different ways and locations across Queensland. QDN's state-wide network is a diverse range of people with disability with varying life experiences who contribute to informing QDN's work and key policy issues that impact directly on people in their day to day lives.

In addition, 2017 marked the 15-year anniversary of QDN's incorporation – a great opportunity to promote our active, vibrant network and its achievements.



QDN members and supporters enjoy the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary lunch.

## QDN Celebrates 15 years

In 2017 QDN celebrated 15 years since its incorporation. Our anniversary celebration was held at Brisbane City Hall and was a great opportunity to celebrate the past, present and future of QDN in grand style. It was positive to have so many members, supporters, and allies able to join us to celebrate our achievements over the last 15 years in leading and influencing change.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following QDN members who played a special role in the event: Alex Baker, Alison MacLean, Willie Prince and Tony Dee.

We also thank the dignitaries who presented our awards on the day: Commonwealth Disability Assistant Minister Jane Prentice and Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Kevin Cocks. Thanks also to Deputy Director General Michael Hogan (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability) who represented Hon. Coralee O'Rourke, Minister for Disability Services.

QDN's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary serves as a testament to the outstanding work, commitment and vision of many members, staff, allies and supporters over the organisation's history.







(1) Guests in Ithaca room at QDN 15th Anniversary Celebrations (2) Masters of Ceremony Alex Baker and Alison MacLean

## Reflections of QDN's 15 Years

QDN produced a Facebook series called 15 years in 15 weeks leading up to the 15th anniversary celebration. There are many poignant comments and reflections.

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*"QDN always push to involve ourselves as deeply as possible in any process that affects people with disability"*

John McPherson a founding member of QDN

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*"Persist and hold your ground, like minded people are the key, build collective vision and values before acting"*

Bill Garsden (life member) chaired the first Steering Committee.

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*"I remember sitting in a room at CRU many years ago with a group of people talking about the importance of an organisation of, by, with and for people with disability. I am proud to have been a part of this organisation from its humble beginnings to today. We started out sharing office space with QAI in Roma St and it was a proud moment*

*being an inaugural staff member. I think now more than ever, it is time for people with disability to have a say in the policies and decisions that affect their lives.....QDN makes this a reality."*

Karin Swift, Life Member, QDN Member and current staff member

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*"Congratulations QDN. In 1998, great excitement and expectations that QDN would be the voice for all Queenslanders with disability, including the silent and hidden people who have no family and no one to speak on their behalf. Thank you Bill Garsden, Kevin Cocks AM, Judy Collins et al, the current Board and Staff and the Network for speaking up for us all"*

Mary Kenny QDN Founding Member

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*"It was a wonderful period of time, it was based around people....people with disability as valued people"*

Judy Collins

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*"In 2000 I was involved in facilitating one of the first gatherings for QDN of people with disability in Queensland, at the Convention centre. We created a map of Queensland and asked people to move to where they were from. I vividly remember a moment when a woman from out west got on a chair and spoke up about her life. It was so powerful. We then passed a woollen thread around the room and everyone was connected by this piece of thread. It was messy, chaotic and fun. This gathering helped develop QDN's vision and still*

**"Keep going and keep empowering!"**

QDN Annual Report 2017-2018





(1) Cutting the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake (2) The table set-up for guests

*symbolises for me what QDN stands for and continues to develop – connected networks where all people with disability have a voice.”*

Jen Barrkman

*“It’s been a joy to watch the voices of people with disability with QDN build into such a powerful message of TRUTH to POWER over these years. They did it!”*

Bobby Bright

*“In the 4 years that I was at QDN the organisation grew to engage members more broadly from Cairns to the Gold Coast. With the help of many members, the regional facilitator led groups provided a space for members to come together and have their say. The Hot Topics groups were facilitator led and created a discussion space in which people were supported to discuss issues that were impacting on them. This increased engagement made QDN valuable to government developing policies and processes and service providers looking*

*to improve their offerings. QDN played a vital role in partnering with NDS and service providers to develop and finesse the Blue Skies vision that became the blueprint for the NDIS. In this celebration year I wish QDN all the best in its work as a DSO facilitating input from people with disability as Queensland transitions to the NDIS. The importance of an independent voice to support people with disabilities to direct their lives and supports can not be underestimated. Keep going and keep empowering!”*

Fran Vicary – QDN’s CEO from 2009-2013

*“I was one of the many people at the inaugural meeting at QAI to formally create QDN. As time moved on, we started to get questions about advocacy organisations wanting to know more about the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in culturally appropriate ways. I saw*

*there was a need, and we were pleased that QDN were supportive and helped in starting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland (ATSIDNQ) by giving us some funding, meeting room, office space and help with an application for our own funding. It was great to be there at the beginning along with Byron Albury and Alan Parsons and other key people to start a network that is still growing stronger every day with over 700 members now to share information and ideas and be a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.”*

Willie Prince (One of the original founders of ATSIDNQ)

**“I am proud to have been a part of this organisation from its humble beginnings to today.”**

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*“The idea behind QDN was twofold: firstly, to provide a vehicle for the many voices of people with disability to take a rightful place at the policy table to ensure the lived experience of people with disabilities were reflected in government policy; and secondly, to provide leadership and advocacy for building inclusive and welcoming local communities.”*

Kevin Cocks past Anti Discrimination Commissioner for Queensland. Kevin was fundamental in the establishment of the network and QDN.

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*“Hot Topics was formed in 2002 by a small group of people with mild intellectual disability because there was nothing around that gave us a voice. We’ve worked on housing, policy issues, connecting with governments and councils, QDN strategic plans, Roundtable discussions as well as many other areas. Hot Topics has given all members an opportunity to talk about issues that matter to them”*

Donna, Hot Topics Group Convenor who has been involved with QDN since it began.

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*“As a Mackay based member of QDN, Regional Facilitator and Local Support Group Convenor, it is great to be able to access a state-wide network of people with disability.*

*The diversity of QDN’s membership means that if I have a question about disability or any other topic, I can get answers from people with a wide range of lived experience. I can take that knowledge back to members of my local community and contribute to addressing local issues. Just as information flows through to the local level it also flows up. With members across Queensland, QDN has a strong voice on issues affecting people with disability. QDN speaks with one voice to policy makers and influences them on matters of concern to individuals and communities.”*

Gary Matthews

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*“Anything is possible with QDN and not limited by disability”*

QDN member Ted Jones

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*“QDN’s strength lies in its ability to be a strong and consistent voice, its statewide spread of members with diverse lived experiences and our supporters, allies and staff who have a passion and commitment to making sure that it is ‘nothing about us without us.’ Our history reflects enormous achievements due to the efforts and input of many people over the past 15 years and I am privileged to be part of QDN’s journey over the past 4 years. I am excited about the opportunities for QDN into the future and know that a strong, member driven organisation that represents the voice of people with disability is critical to achieving an inclusive community.”*

QDN’s Chief Executive Officer  
Paige Armstrong

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*“QDN today is a bustling network of people doing the ordinary activities everyday importantly, in their communities. QDN’s work is guided by our mission, values, beliefs, principles and is demonstrated by goals and priorities. Each is detailed via the link to our website”*

Nigel Webb, Board of Directors – Chairperson



(1) Jane Prentice MP presenting Kevin Cocks with Honoured Support award (2) QDN Life Membership Award recipients

## 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award recipients

At the 15 year celebration the QDN Board acknowledged a number of QDN ordinary members with QDN Life Membership awards, and a number of supporters and staff were recognised with Honoured Supporters and Recognition of Service awards. As John McPherson, founding member, life member and current Board Director said:

*“The inspiring thing about QDN’s beginning was how a small group of people could craft a network model that gave a voice to people with disability and appealed sufficiently to government that they funded it. Mary Kenny was particularly instrumental in this process, which was of course shaped by the values of the interim steering committee. Doing much with little, while always adhering to its core values, is an enduring QDN talent”*

The QDN Board acknowledged the following current QDN Ordinary Members of long standing who have a history of supporting QDN through service and commitment over a period of at least 5 years with **QDN Life Membership** awards:

- › Anthony Baguley
- › Donna Best
- › Fran Vicary
- › Judy Collins
- › Lyn Coyle
- › Rachel Matthews
- › Robert Ellis
- › Peter Parkes
- › Peter Tully
- › Ted Thorburn
- › Wesley Walker
- › Willie Prince

The above members join our existing QDN Life Members Bill Garsden, Mary Kenny, Karin Swift and John McPherson.

The Board also acknowledged people who are not QDN members but who have made a significant and sustained contribution to QDN with **QDN Honoured Supporter** awards:

- › Kevin Cocks
- › Lesley Chenoweth
- › Margaret Ward



**QDN Recognition of Service** awards were awarded to the following employees or past employees of QDN in recognition of sustained and diligent service to QDN, in leading and influencing organisational change and/or improvement, or in recognition of an exceptional contribution or parcel of work.

- › Greg Wagner
- › Jen Barrkman
- › Julie Granger
- › Karin Swift
- › Michelle Moss
- › Paige Armstrong
- › Russell Flynn
- › Sarah Holbert
- › Valmae Rose

**QDN's motto "Nothing about us without us" has been at the foundation of our work over the past 15 years and is testament to the power of people coming together about what is important and having a collective voice.**



Recognition of Service award recipients

## State wide member network

QDN's state-wide network is a network of people with disability who live in all areas across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations across Queensland. It is a network and knowledge base by and for people with disability, exchanging information about important issues, and offering an opportunity for people to have a voice around key systemic policy issues and experiences to deliver better outcomes for people.

Key issues for members in 2017-2018 have been transport, housing, health, employment, rights and advocacy, essential services like energy, NDIS, and key to NDIS issues have been the interface with these mainstream services.

QDN's active engagement across the state has seen an increase in membership, and this continues to be a focus – to strengthen the voice of people with disability and the diversity of lived experiences so we can ensure Queensland is inclusive for all its citizens, and everyone can have a voice and be heard.



QDN at Health Consumers Queensland Forum in Brisbane

QDN has undertaken many activities to grow and build the state-wide network including:

Stalls holding promotional material at events such as:

- › **6 September 2017** stall at the Ipswich **Fresh Futures Market Expo** to promote QDN events and projects, hosted by Ipswich Local Group Convenors Peter and Linda Tully
- › **6 September 2017** North Lakes Local Support Group hosted a stall at **North Lakes Shopping Centre**
- › **13 September 2017** Deception Bay Local Support Group – Highlighting our **Abilities in Disability Action Week stall** at Deception Bay Market Square, highlighting the arts and crafts abilities of members
- › **23 September 2017** Stall at **Brisbane Pride**, Brisbane
- › **23 November 2017** Getting on the NDIS Grid stall at the **Brisbane Homeless Connect event**
- › **16 March 2018** ATSIDNQ attended and held an information stall at **Punyahra Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health expo** at Beaudesert
- › **23 March 2018** ATSIDNQ stall at the 2018 **Cairns Disability Expo**
- › **14-15 June 2018** Stall at the **Health Consumers Queensland forum** Brisbane

## Building capacity of QDN members:

### Event Participation and Development Opportunities

Enabling people to engage and influence public policy is built on the foundations of access to information, skills development, and capacity building opportunities. QDN sees this as an essential way of growing the capacity of people with disability to be active contributors to public policy – across design, development, implementation and evaluation.

One of the ways QDN supports this is through sponsorship of members to attend a variety of events including ones that QDN has led, and others that QDN has partnered with other organisations.



Project Open Doors



North Lakes Local Support Group members at Westfields



During 2017-2018, some of these events have included:

- › Queensland Disability Housing Showcase in partnership with QShelter, 24 July 2017
- › Renting Fairness Forum, Department of Housing and Public Works, Springwood, July 2017
- › Disability Housing Showcase, Department of Housing and Public Works, July 2017
- › Micah Projects Moonlight Magic Dinner Dance, August 2017
- › 2017 Speak Out conference, Hobart, Tasmania, September 2017
- › QCOSS State Conference, September-October 2017
- › Relationships Australia Consultation, December 2017
- › Summer Foundation Supported Disability Accommodation Insights, March 2018
- › Sunshine Coast Access Advisory Network, April 2018
- › Health Consumers Queensland 2018 Annual Forum, June 2018
- › QCOSS State Budget Breakfast, June 2018

## Building capacity: Leadership development

*Local Support Group Convenor Training: August and October 2017, Brisbane. Ideas development and information sharing*

On 15 August 2017, QDN brought together new Group Convenors for training and this was an important event to provide leadership development to the 10 new groups which were established.

On 5 October and 27 October, QDN held two training days for all Group Convenors across the 21 groups that were established as part of the Disability Support Organisation (DSO) initiative. As QDN now has 30 Group Convenors, the group were split into two around geographical areas. The training was to workshop with Group Convenors on how to reflect on learnings, share knowledge and experiences as a state-wide community of practice, and look at ways of continuing to make groups sustainable into the future including possible funding sources.

*Peer Leadership training, Brisbane, 1 December 2017: Getting on the NDIS Grid peer leaders*

As part of the ongoing development of the Getting on the Grid Peer leaders, the group came together to share learnings, refine and co-design strategies to inform the work going forward, and plan for the next 6 months of work of the project.



Peer training day

### *Peer Facilitators NDIS planning development: 2 December 2017: Ready to go project*

On 2 December Ready to go Peer Facilitators took their leadership skills they developed over the last four years, to translate their teachings of others, into their own practical application and their own lives. Part of being a good leader is testing what you have been saying to others, and applying in your own life – “walk the talk.” So peer leaders came together for a learning and development day to workshop their own NDIS planning journey. Peer Facilitators and their families shared their knowledge and experience about how to prepare for an NDIS planning meeting, using their skills to support and inform each other to get ready for their own NDIS planning meeting. As part of the leadership development, the peer facilitators reflected on this experience to inform their learnings and development in working with others in the future.

### *Peer Leadership training, Brisbane 5 April 2018: Getting on the NDIS Grid Peer leaders*

As part of the ongoing development of the Getting on the Grid Peer leaders, the group came together to share learnings, have input into the final evaluation of the project and the outcomes from the perspective of peer leaders.

## **QDN's website and Member Hub**



QDN launched a new website on 30 June 2018. The website complies with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards and delivers enhanced accessibility and improved navigation. A Member Hub was also launched as a component of the website. The Member Hub, for QDN Ordinary Members only, provides a hub for offering member-specific and tailored information, news, events and opportunities to continue to develop the capacity of members. The website

continues to be QDN's primary medium of communication with members and we often channel member input and feedback on consultations, representation and policy papers.

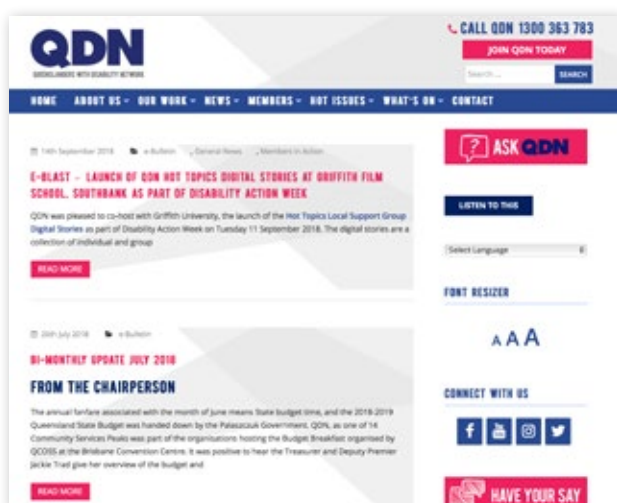
QDN website visitor traffic averaged 4,889 per month in 2018 compared to 3,829 per month for the same period last year – an increase of 27.2% in visitors to our website.

The number of website pages people *viewed* each time they came to our website also increased. Page views increased from 17,154 per month to 21,847 page visits per month.

The number of pages people *visited* on average was 5.93 pages per visit.

The number of people who chose to convert (subscribe, sign up, email us) when visiting our website increased to 54.25 per month on average in the past 12 months.

Accessibility improvements to QDN's website include a more user friendly interface, text to voice, text resizer, translation, large clickable tabs, use of graphics to support text, mobile accessibility, one touch call QDN and AskQDN contact.



## Building capacity: information and communication with members

### e-Bulletin and Member Hub

**During the 2017-2018 year, QDN produced six e-Bulletins to inform members, supporters and allies of the work of the organisation.**

**Distribution to 1462 people across Queensland**

QDN's range of information and communication with members has expanded this year to include the Member Hub, an information hub only for QDN ordinary members. The member hub provides member tailored information on topics including what's new around policy issues, accessible events, opportunities to have a say, engagement consultant opportunities, invitations to complete surveys, volunteer opportunities and a buy, sell and trade of disability related items.

The e-Bulletin is an external publication distributed by email to 1152 people and organisations and posted to about 310 people. This publication is also available through our website on a bi-monthly basis. The e-Bulletin includes messages from the Chairperson and CEO, updates on policy work and projects, policy news, a member profile, news from our allies and events information. The target group for the e-Bulletin is people with disability, families, supporters and Government representatives.



(1) Brisbane Local Support Group (2) Brisbane Hot Topics – Madelyn on TV at the ABC Studio

## Disability Support Organisations – Local Support Groups (LSGs)

In 2015, QDN was funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to be a Disability Support Organisation (DSO) to connect people with disability with peers and be a collective voice to help people move towards the life they want. The NDIA funding to QDN was provided to establish and support LSGs across Queensland and provide an opportunity for people with disability to connect with each other to help prepare for the NDIS. Not only have members supported members, and groups from different locations supported other groups to prepare for the NDIS rollout, LSGs have also contributed to and influenced systemic policy change, inclusion and disability awareness in their own communities. There are 19 LSGs across Queensland, with another two virtual groups connected to QDN's Facebook page.

Whilst funding from the NDIA ceased as of 30 June 2018, QDN's Board is committed to the groups, their value in their communities and to Queensland. QDN considers the work of LSGs and their Convenors as integral to the continuing the big picture policy work of QDN – LSGs are the eyes, ears and heart of QDN.



QDN is grateful for the work Group Convenors and LSGs have done since the beginning of the project. QDN looks forward to working with the continuing groups and has committed to providing ongoing secretariat support and working with the groups in our policy, engagement and capacity building work.

It has been another fantastic year for the LSGs, with many groups focusing on supporting each other through the NDIS application and planning process. Groups have also been engaging with their communities broadly, advocating for their rights within their local communities, sharing key issues for members on the ground and informing the policy work of QDN, attending and organising community expos, and sourcing interesting guest speakers to share their knowledge and further build the capacity of both individuals and the groups.





(1) Gladstone Local Support Group (2) Cairns Local Support Group

The following provides a summary of some of the highlights and key activities of the groups for 2017 – 2018.

## Brisbane

The Brisbane LSG has been meeting regularly and is a small but consistent group, facilitated until recently by Rachel Matthews and Geoff Cooper. Rachel and Geoff have now both stepped back, and the group now has rotating facilitation between all members. This has been a positive move, giving other group members an opportunity to develop their facilitation skills. The group has been focusing primarily on preparation for the NDIS, and general information sharing. Thanks to Rachel and Geoff for their invaluable efforts in facilitating and promoting the group.

## Brisbane Hot Topics

Brisbane Hot Topics, facilitated by Donna Best, has engaged with a variety of speakers and topics, including accessing the NDIS, transport, housing, employment and relationships. The group contributed their ideas to the naming and content of the National Self-Advocacy Website being developed by the Self-Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU). Members have also been involved in the digital storytelling project, working in partnership with Griffith University and University of Queensland

to develop individual stories and a group story about Hot Topics.

## Deception Bay

Eileen Goodenough and Rebecca Bellis co-convene the Deception Bay LSG, with assistance from supporter Roger Read. The group has been busy supporting each other through the NDIS planning process, working through access requests and pre-planning together. The group held a successful Expo during Disability Action Week in 2017 and are busy planning the next Expo for 2018. They have been successful in receiving funding support from the Disability Action Week funding round, and from local councillors.

## Kallangur

Kallangur LSG was established in June 2017 and has been led by new Convenor Elisha Wright since April 2018. The group has primarily focused on supporting each other with NDIS planning. It has also heard from Council about how to provide feedback on accessibility issues in the community.

## Mackay

The Mackay LSG meets bi-monthly and is facilitated by Gary Matthews. This year the group has participated in Workability Workforce Evaluation research and





(1) Caboolture Local Support Group (2) Jane Prentice and the North Lakes Local Support Group

provided feedback and ideas around what is needed under the NDIS to best support workers. The group also heard about healthy eating and discussed with Council the best way to communicate with them about issues members are concerned about, such as safety and accessibility.

## **Ipswich**

The Ipswich LSG, convened by Peter and Linda Tully, has been steadily growing over the past year. They have contributed their thoughts and ideas to the Workability Workforce Evaluation research, sourced interesting guest speakers, and engaged with the community promoting the group and QDN at expos and other events.

## **Sunshine Coast**

The Sunshine Coast LSG welcomed David Thomas as their new Convenor. Thanks to Peter Parkes for his work in previously facilitating and leading the group. The group has discussed a variety of interesting topics including advocacy, assistive technology and NDIS planning. Members also continue to have lunch together and spend time together socially following their monthly meeting.

## **Cairns**

The Cairns LSG, led by new Convenor Wayne Maitland, held its first meeting in

April. Peter Gurr, Convenor of the Townsville LSG, attended one of their first meetings, sharing the Townsville LSG's knowledge of the access and planning process for the NDIS. The Cairns group has been focusing on supporting each other through the NDIS process and is looking to grow the group over the coming year.

## **Sunnybank**

The Sunnybank LSG has had a busy year, attracting new members to the growing group. They have had consistently informative meetings, hearing from Fair Trade around consumer rights, continuing to support each other with their NDIS planning, and sharing information around employing your own support worker and NDIS pricing.

## **Toowoomba**

The Toowoomba LSG, convened by Sharon Boyce, has focused primarily on planning for the NDIS. The group has been attended by the local LAC and has been active in sharing information with each other.

## **Logan**

Led by David Swift and Esperance Kalonji, the Logan LSG has been meeting regularly throughout the year. The Group Convenors have been busy engaging with the broader community, attending

expos, and promoting the group. They were both interviewed for the local 'Our Logan' magazine, where they shared their thoughts and experience so far of the NDIS. David Swift has now stepped back as Convenor, and the group is taking a break at present. Thanks to David for all his work.

## **Caboolture**

The Caboolture LSG is going strong and has had a strong group of committed members, keen to share information and learn more about the NDIS and other topics of interest. The group regularly has guest speakers. Members of Caboolture LSG are looking forward to the rollout of the NDIS starting from January 2019.

## **Fitzgibbon**

Fitzgibbon LSG is ably facilitated by Group Convenors Bernadette Scalora and Meriel Stanger. The group of regular attendees get together to discuss issues of shared importance. Topics this year included the NDIS, planning for the group, NDIS pre-planning approaches and housing.

## **Gold Coast**

Bev and Warwick Best are the Group Convenors for the Gold Coast LSG. The group met regularly during 2017-2018. This year Gold Coast LSG were successful in getting a local government grant to assist the group with transport, catering and some support costs. The group have met to discuss issues of shared importance such as preparing for the NDIS and the impact to the local community of the Commonwealth Games. Occasional guest speakers added to an interesting group.

## **Gold Coast Hot Topics**

Robert Ellis is the Group Convenor for Gold Coast Hot Topics, occasionally assisted by Judy Richardson. Gold Coast Hot Topics enables people with intellectual disability on the Gold Coast to get together and discuss issues of shared importance. Main issues discussed by the group this year included employment, the Open Doors Project (in collaboration with journalism students at Griffith University), nutrition, and preparing for the NDIS. The group was successful in securing a grant from the Gold Coast City Council to assist with meeting costs in 2018-19.

## **Maryborough**

Maryborough LSG ceased having regular meetings in December 2017. QDN extends our appreciation to QDN and ATSIDNQ member Ted Thorburn for all his efforts in facilitating a local support group in Maryborough and being a valued Regional Facilitator.

## **Normanton**

Led by Tony Melksham, the Normanton Linkin' Up Local Support Group connects a small group of people including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability. In 2018 the newly appointed LAC Georgia Dray began attending meetings. Denise Robertson from People With Disability Australia (based in Mackay) has also begun supporting the group from the sidelines and occasionally linking by phone. The group looks forward to continuing to grow and learn more about services and networks in the area.

## North Lakes

Rebecca Bellis and Eileen Goodenough facilitated the North Lakes LSG in 2017-2018. The group spent time reaching out in their community, learning about the NDIS and the NDIS appeals process, having fun and getting creative, and working on their NDIS Plans.

## Townsville LSG

Townsville LSG is co-facilitated by Peter Gurr and Daniel Flynn. Preparing for NDIS Plan Reviews was a main topic among group members, alongside other NDIS topics of interest. The LAC and staff from the NDIA were regularly in attendance at meetings to answer questions from group members.

## Women's Virtual Local Support Group

The QDN Women's Virtual Local Support Group is an online closed Facebook Group open to all QDN women members. The group shares information on issues important to women with disability and provides a way to connect with others for people who find getting to meetings difficult. The group currently has 32 members and is facilitated by QDN member and staff person, Karin Swift. Throughout 2017-18 the group has shared 58 posts and had 148 reactions to our posts. The group shares information on a diverse range of topics affecting women.

## QDN Virtual Local Support Group

QDN's Virtual Local Support Group is an online closed facebook group open to all QDN members. The group shares information, tips, ideas, and supports

each other through online conversations and provides a mechanism for people to connect across the state.

## Group Convenors

Group Convenors are supported by QDN through monthly teleconferences where they can share information and ideas about facilitating groups and issues people with disability around Queensland are experiencing with the NDIS. They also share their insights about what is happening in their local area. This information has been critical to informing QDN's policy work and QDN's capacity to lead and influence change.

QDN has held 11 Group convenor teleconferences throughout the 2017-2018 financial year and has had 3 opportunities to bring QDN Group Convenors together for training and information updates, one in August 2017 for new Group Convenors and two in October 2017.

### A snapshot of highlights for 2017-2018 Local Support Groups

- › **2029 attendees across all the groups at meetings throughout the year**
- › **152 face to face meetings held across Queensland by peer led local support groups**
- › **21 established groups – 18 groups meet regularly in geographical locations and 2 virtual groups connect through Facebook**
- › **Group Convenor Community of Practice teleconference held every month**

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network Queensland

QDN has auspiced Aged and Disability Advocacy (ADA) Australia (formerly known as Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy – QADA) to operate and support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network Queensland (ATSIDNQ). QDN receives funding from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for this network.

## A snapshot of 2017-2018 highlights:

- › **821 members (a 34% increase)**
- › **5 newsletters produced and distributed**
- › **484 posts to ATSIDNQ Facebook pages**
- › **Engagement with an estimated 3,000 people across a wide range of communities across Queensland**
- › **9 yarning circles**
- › **28 email blasts**
- › **127 referrals for members and service providers**
- › **5 email distributions via Aboriginal Social Media and Communication Network of Australia which has membership of over 5000 people**
- › **ATSIDNQ Facebook page has 1101 followers**



ATSIDNQ staff engaged with communities at a range of events including NAIDOC events in Cairns, Rockhampton, Townsville, Musgrave Park (Brisbane), Toowoomba, Gold Coast and Stradbroke Island. ATSIDNQ was successful in securing a Disability Action Week grant to host a Network event 'Deadly Options Which Way' – a one-day event held for members and the public in Mackay.

ATSIDNQ has participated in a range of industry consultations, providing input on the issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in Queensland.

Over the past year ATSIDNQ reflected member feedback and experience through participation in the following:

- › A joint discussion paper with ADA Australia commenting on the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) proposal 'Improving the delivery of advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability'
- › The Network was represented at the NDIS Careers reference group to provide input on the development of the Queensland NDIS workforce marketing campaign. The Network offered insight into how to attract workforce recruitment from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and culturally appropriate story messaging for proposed campaigns



- › The Network was represented in the NDIS training requirements reference group.
- › Feedback was provided to the Public Guardian Community Visitors Program staff on how to enhance their engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander clients around the state.
- › A joint submission in partnership with ADA Australia to the Queensland Productivity Commission's Professor Bronwyn Frederick's draft report on service delivery in remote ATSI communities.
- › The ATSIDNQ Project Officer was a witness at the Joint Standing Committee on NDIS Marketplace Readiness hearing in Cairns on 14 March.
- › Provided input to Communities, Disability Services and Domestic Violence Prevention Committee public hearing into the Disability Services and Other Legislation (Worker Screening) Amendment Bill 2018.
- › ATSIDNQ was able to provide input to an ADA Australia staff member who participated in the Roundtable on Violence against people with disability undertaken by the Human Rights Commission.
- › Participation in various disability network groups to provide input
- › A question was raised by the Network live on the ABC Brisbane Focus Program with Emma Griffiths (available on podcast).

QDN looks forward to continuing to work with ADA Australia, and the work it is doing to increase member communications and engagement facilitating a stronger voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with Disability in Queensland.

### **ATSIDNQ**

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland



Willie Prince



## QDN's Peer leaders – Communities of Practice

QDN's leaders demonstrate the power of peer support and peer leadership as a way of influencing change in individual lives and local communities. QDN's work in 2017-18 focused on an approach of peer leadership and peer support.

QDN identifies the need for community to invest deeply in leaders with disability, through training and development opportunities and through communities of practice – to share information, ideas and learnings as leaders in their own lives as well as the community.

To facilitate this, QDN provided regular opportunities for our peer networks across the different projects to come together in 2017-18. This included:

Local Support Group Convenors – peer led networks to enable people with disability to learn about NDIS, and bring about change in their local communities;

Ready to go peer facilitators – peer led education and mentoring through the provision of workshops and learning activities focused on people with intellectual disability getting ready for NDIS

Getting on the NDIS Grid – co-design of project activities by peer leaders, and delivery of engagement activities with participants of the project

## Local Support Group Convenors

Local Support Group Convenors come together via teleconference for monthly meetings to assist each other in peer mentoring, offer mutual support, and create space for reflective practice about their work in their local communities. It is also an opportunity for members to discuss and action local issues and to provide feedback on big picture policy issues in line with QDN's Strategic Plan.

## Ready to go Peer Facilitators

QDN's **Ready to go peer facilitators** were a group of 15 people with disability, including intellectual disability, who worked together from 2014-mid 2018.

They delivered workshops and activities across the state, helping other people with disability learn about the NDIS and what it means for them.



11 organisations involved in the Participant Readiness Initiative. Providers 2014-2015



## Getting on the NDIS Grid Peer Leaders

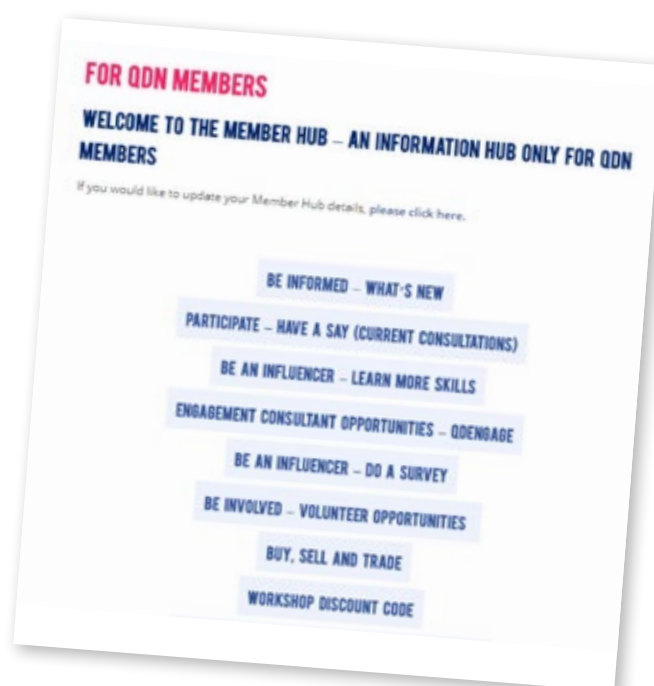
The 14 Peer Leaders on the Getting on the NDIS Grid Project came together to co-design and co-deliver the varying activities of this project which focused on engagement with marginalised people with disability who are not connected to the formal disability service system.

Community of Practice	Activity	Total
Local Support Group convenors	Teleconference	11
	Training and development	3
Ready to go facilitators	Training and development	1
Getting on the NDIS Grid	Training and development	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17</b>

## Building capacity – Peer Leaders communication and information

QDN has continued to produce a publication to assist in building the capacity of QDN Leaders through QDN's Community of Practice. The publication, QDN Voices, is a bi-monthly publication. QDN Voices is an internal communication emailed to over 60 people and its primary audience is regional facilitators, group convenors, policy champions, peer leaders, and board members. The purpose of QDN Voices is building the knowledge of emerging leaders about key policy issues, and provision of important messages and content information to support them in their work. It gives members key information when they are taking on their different voluntary roles, including giving people information about the NDIS, the changing policy environment, and what is important to people with disability. QDN Voices helps to empower our leaders through knowledge and peer leaders are encouraged to contribute content to this publication.

From June 2018 the QDN Voices publication was superseded by the Member Hub which is now the depository for content which builds the knowledge of emerging leaders and supports them in their work.



# Goal 2

To let people know about the lives of people with disability and how to best talk with us

QDN has undertaken a wide range of activities to raise awareness about the lives of people with disability and how to engage with us.

- › **10** QDN led and/or partnership events
- › **17** presentations at conferences or forums
- › Participation and attendance at **34** conferences, forums, workshops and events

## Community and stakeholder education

### QDN led and partnership events:

- › Queensland Disability Housing Showcase in partnership with QShelter
- › Changing Lives, Changing Communities in partnership with QCOS and Townsville City Council
- › Creating Peer support networks – forums in Cairns, Brisbane and Toowoomba funded through a grant from JFA Purple Orange
- › QCOS Budget Breakfast
- › My Housing Matters Workshops x 2
- › QDN 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration
- › Making Theory of Change accessible for self-advocates

## Presentations

- › **Speak Out Conference 2017**  
“Queensland Self Advocates & the Journey Out of the Shadows”, *Hobart, Samantha Matheson and Donna Best, September 2017*
- › **Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council**  
“The needs and barriers for women with disability in accessing safety and justice”, *Brisbane, Michelle Moss, July 2017*
- › **NDIS Industry Briefings**, “The Participant Perspective”, *Brisbane, Rockhampton and Cairns, Paige Armstrong July 2017*
- › **Griffith University’s Project Open Doors** Panel members, *Brisbane, July 2017*
- › **Queensland Community Alliance** *Brisbane, Nigel Webb, August 2017*
- › **Metro South Health Disability and Health Symposium** – “Leave No-one Behind”, *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong, October 2017*
- › **National Self-Advocacy Forum Melbourne**, “QDN’s work in Self-Advocacy and DSOs”, *Melbourne, Donna Best, Alison MacLean and Michelle Moss, October 2017*



- › **Disability Support Workers Conference**, *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong, October 2017*
- › **Community Legal Centres State Conference** *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong, Alison MacLean and Paul O'Dea, March 2018*
- › **Offenders Re-Entry Conference –** Department of Corrections, *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong and Morrie O'Connor, March 2018*
- › **Queensland Health Consumer Collaborative – Special Meeting NDIS**, “Opportunities and gaps: the interface between health and disability under the NDIS”, *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong, May 2018*
- › **Queensland Health NDIS State-wide Steering Committee**, “GP Toolkit”, *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong, May 2018*
- › **South Australian Council of Social Services (SACOSS) “Bright Sparks”** *Adelaide, Michelle Moss, May 2018*
- › **Sunshine Coast Access Advisory Network (SCAAN) “Universal Housing Design”** *Sunshine Coast, Wendy Lovelace, May 2018*
- › **Anglicare Southern Queensland Leadership forum for Managers** *Brisbane, Paige Armstrong, November 2018*

## Conferences, forums, workshops, and key events attended by QDN

**Housing Roadshow, Department of Housing and Public Works**, Brisbane, 18 July 2017.

**Renting Fairness Forum**, Springwood, 20 July 2017

**All Abilities State Plan 2017-2020 Launch**, Brisbane, 20 July 2017

- › **Disability Housing Showcase**, 24 July 2017
- › **Gold Coast Homelessness Connect**, 24 July 2017
- › **NDIS systems planning workshop**, Brisbane, 24 August 2017
- › **Corporate Rebels Masterclass**, Brisbane, 25 August 2017
- › **Queensland Community Alliance Founding Assembly**, Brisbane, 30 August 2017
- › **Check Up Forum**, Brisbane, 8 September 2017
- › **Brisbane Pride**, Brisbane, 23 September 2017
- › **NDIS Industry Briefing**, Brisbane, 25 September 2017
- › **Sexual Violence Awareness Month – Sexual Violence, Consent and law symposium**, Brisbane, 5 October 2017
- › **Speak Out Conference**, Hobart, 14-16 October 2017
- › **QCROSS State Conference**, Brisbane, 31 October-1 November 2017
- › **National Self Advocacy Conference** Melbourne, 26-27 October 2017

- › **Investing in the Future: What One Person Can Do**, Brisbane, 3 November 2017
- › **Summer Foundation Roundtable SDA Housing**, Brisbane, 6 November 2017
- › **National Housing Conference**, Sydney, 29 November – 1 December 2017
- › **QDN's official office opening**, Brisbane, 18 January 2018
- › **PHN Brisbane North – NDIS GP Readiness Event**, Brisbane, 5 February 2018
- › **Skilling Queenslanders for Work**, Brisbane, 13 February 2018
- › **Disability Support Worker's Conference**, Brisbane, 21 February 2018
- › **NDIA presentation**, Brisbane, 23 February 2018
- › **QAMH Forums – Queensland Transition to NDIS for Mental Health Strategic Forum & Queensland Health NGO Mental Health Services Forum**, Brisbane, 15-16 March 2018
- › **Housing Ministerial Advisory Council**, Brisbane, 27 March 2018
- › **Summer Foundation SDA insights**, Brisbane, 27 March 2018
- › **TDSA Think Big Symposium**, Brisbane, 4 May 2018
- › **Creating Thriving Communities in Queensland – Townsville Roundtable**, Townsville, 9 May 2018
- › **Opening of National Disability Insurance Agency Chermside Office** Brisbane, 15 May 2018, QDN invited as official guests
- › **QCOSS Movement for Change conference**, Brisbane 16-17 May 2018
- › **Department of Housing and Public Works Housing with Shared Support NDIS transition** – Brisbane, 7 June 2018
- › **Health Consumers Queensland Annual Forum**, Brisbane 14-15 June 2018
- › **QCOSS State Budget Breakfast**, Brisbane, 15 June 2018
- › **Metro North Health Forum**, Brisbane, 19 June 2018

## Information and Referral

QDN has continued to receive funding to provide information and referral to people requesting assistance. Across 2017-2018 QDN has provided information and referral to 266 individuals, including people with disability, family members, services and government departments. Assistance has been provided over the telephone, via email or face-to-face.

The following is a summary of the issues on which people have sought information and referral:

- › Accessibility: community venues and parks
- › CALD issues – translating information into other languages
- › Disability Services
- › Education: inclusion
- › Employment: discrimination, changing providers, job seekers
- › Housing – affordability, alternatives, information, public housing policy
- › Human Rights – discrimination

- › NDIS – access, appeals, complaints, contact details of Local Area Coordinator, eligibility, information, interface issues: continuity of care, health and transport, pre-planning assistance, self-management information, waiting times, workshops
- › Neglect
- › NDIS: access, appeals, eligibility, NDIA/ LAC contact details, pre-planning assistance, self-management, waiting times
- › QDN member issues and projects Bright Sparks, Getting on the NDIS Grid, Local Support Groups, Ready to go
- › Recreation
- › Service provider issues
- › Social support/ isolation
- › Transport

## Media Engagement: Summary of media releases and interviews

QDN has been proactive in engaging with the media and has published 6 media releases around key issues. QDN published 41 news items on our website covering a wide range of topics specific to the interests of our members during the past 12 months.

A summary of media engagement activities during this financial year include:

### Media Releases:

13 July 2017 – Open Doors paves way for better reporting on disability

15 July 2017 – Taxi Subsidy Scheme Reinstated for NDIS participants

13 November 2017 – Queensland State Election: A call to action for all candidates

10 May 2018 – Federal Budget 2018

May 2018 – QDN and QCOSS Successful ILC Grant – Changing Lives, Changing Communities

02 June 2018 – Action to address the abuse, violence and neglect of people with disability



Ready to go participants

## Summary of media related interviews and comments from across newspaper and radio:

July 2017 – Toowoomba Chronicle News article; Plans to establish local support group for NDIS. Sharon Boyce

April 2018 – Digital Capability Development, Department of Housing and Public Works – Digital Champion Video series

May 2018 – Courier Mail – Community Care magazine insert. Paige Armstrong

May 2018 – ABC North Queensland: Multiple sclerosis diagnosis takes life in new, positive direction. Peter Gurr

June 2018 – ABC Focus Program “An Evening with Focus” – live radio interview.

Nigel Webb, Paige Armstrong, Michelle Moss, Peter Tully

June 2018 – Cathy Pilecki interview - NDIA office opening. Paige Armstrong

July 2018 – Train enquiry to examine why NGR carriages don't comply with disability laws. John McPherson

A group of five representatives from QDN were involved in a very successful live ABC radio Focus Program in June 2018 where the topic was 'An evening with focus – NDIS'. The evening was an interactive panel discussion, on which QDN Board member Sharon Boyce was a panelist.

## Member e-blasts

As well as regular e-Bulletin communications bi-monthly to members and supporters, QDN pushes out e-blasts to members as critical issues or news arises important to people with disability. During 2017-2018, QDN delivered 41 e-blasts to members and supporters.

## Social media

QDN posted over 300 Facebook posts this year. We have 1356 people following and regularly interacting with our page. QDN continues to post all events on our Facebook page.

**As at 30 June 2018, the QDN Facebook page had 1,345 likes, the Ready to go Facebook page had 806 likes, and QDN's Member Facebook page (Virtual Network) had 498 members.**

## Communications, marketing and media

Through a consistent and robust approach to communications and marketing QDN has strengthened our public profile. Brand awareness continues to grow, particularly in the Brisbane region. Our social media footprint has increased and website traffic and incoming call volumes have steadily increased month by month. Our marketing and branding programs have contributed to our raised profile through physical presence of marketing and branding, our communications, and our branding across programs.

During 2017-2018, we are proud to have launched a new website, which meets the WCAG2 standards. Along with the many accessibility and navigation enhancements we have also included a Member Hub in the website. The Member Hub is a QDN Ordinary member only password protected section of the QDN website. This provides a place for QDN to share information, accessible events, surveys, news, buy sell and swap, and opportunities just for people with disability.

QDN has produced a number of resources, including workbooks and a board game, across our projects which are receiving very positive feedback from both end users of the resources and community organisations.



Getting on the Grid game



## Project delivery

### Ready to go project – NDIS Participant Readiness

QDN continued to operate the state-wide Ready to go project until 30 June 2018. The project had been funded by the Department of Communities, Disabilities and Seniors since 2014 as an NDIS Participant Readiness Initiative. The project engaged a wide range of people, including people with intellectual and learning disabilities and their families and supporters across Queensland.

Over the life of the project 2014 – 2018, QDN delivered over 570 activities across the state, reaching over 11,000 people. Interactive and accessible workshops were held in two parts (3 hour sessions over 2 days) or adapted to suit the requirements of participants.

The Ready to go project was co-designed and delivered by peer facilitators. 14 Peer facilitators facilitated workshops across Queensland, travelling many miles at times to rural and remote communities.

QDN appreciates the work of all people who have been involved in this project and the support for this work to occur.

#### **In 2017-18, Ready to go delivered:**

- › **67 activities across Queensland, to**
- › **1383 participants including people with disability and their supporters**

### NDIS Targeted Strategies: Getting on the NDIS Grid

QDN has been delivering the Getting on the NDIS Grid project since December 2016 with a consortium of partners – QCOS, Micah Projects, Community Living Association (CLA), and Community Resource Unit (CRU).

The project was funded by the Department of Social Services and was to end on 30 June 2018. The Queensland Department of Communities, Disabilities and Seniors has provided funding to continue the project until 31 December 2018.

The Getting on the NDIS Grid project is to connect with people who may not otherwise engage with services and assist them in understanding what the NDIS is and how it may support them. The target group is people with disability who currently do not receive disability support services, live in the South East corner of Queensland and who are:

- › Transient, in supported accommodation, living in caravan parks and/or experiencing housing challenges
- › Homeless, or at risk of homelessness
- › Exiting the child safety, juvenile justice or criminal justice systems
- › from the LGTBIQ community

Over the past 18 months, the Getting on the NDIS Grid project has engaged with a total of **5,497** people from the target audience, community, voluntary and mainstream organisations, faith-based groups, social housing services, caravan parks, supported accommodation facilities, neighbourhood/community centres, health professionals, support staff and friends and family.

## Griffith University – Digital Stories Project

The Brisbane Hot Topics group has been involved in an action research project, partnering with Griffith University and University of Queensland to develop a number of Digital Stories. Hot Topics members worked collaboratively with QDN and the Griffith project team in developing the skills to lead the development of their own story. Over a period of three months, the group developed eight individual stories and one group story about Hot Topics.

The individual stories were personal stories, of how people have impacted others and their communities, and dealt with challenges in their lives. The group story focused on the history of the Hot Topics group, their achievements, and what the group means for individuals and people with intellectual disability from the perspective of the Hot Topics members. The stories are set to be launched at the Griffith University Film School in September 2018.

“Stories which highlight the personal and positive impact people with intellectual disability have on our community”

## Inclusion Ready Strategic Project – By Self-Advocates

As a consortium, QDN, Community Living Association (CLA), WWILD-SVP, Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA), Parent to Parent, and Queensland Advocacy Incorporated have been working together with a group of self-advocates over the past 5 years around the voice of people with intellectual disability in Queensland. The group of self-advocates

and the consortium have been working hard to develop their ideas for Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grants. Based upon this, the group have been working with Community Services Industry Alliance (CSIA) who has been funded in partnership with National Disability Services (NDS) to undertake provider readiness in Queensland for ILC grants. The group of self-advocates from QDN's Hot Topics, WWILD, CLA, Loud and Clear and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network Queensland (ATSIDNQ) worked with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) to develop an accessible Theory of Change for people with intellectual disability to be in the driver's seat to create their own projects, and resources to assist organisations to support self-advocates in this work. These will be available in late 2018.

## Understanding your role in the NDIS – GP Toolkit

QDN was pleased to be contracted by **Brisbane North Primary Health Network** to develop a toolkit for General Practitioners (GPs) to assist them in supporting people to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The toolkit contains a range of information for GPs, Allied Health professionals and practice staff with tips to assist in completing access request documentation for patients. This toolkit will assist GPs and Allied Health professionals in the critical role they play in assisting eligible participants to provide evidence of their disability and the functional impacts on their day to day life.

## QDN Business Streams

### QDeNgage

Through QDeNgage, QDN is pleased to provide a range of services including speakers for key events. This year, QDeNgage has provided speakers/presenters and/or resources for the following engagements and contracts



Primary Health Network Brisbane North	NDIS GP Readiness Event
National Disability Services	NDIS Workability Jobs Roadshows Digital Story
Community Services Industry Alliance	Interviews and Digital Stories and Workability Jobs Roadshows
National Disability Services	Employment Marketta, Sunshine Coast, Redlands, Logan, Brisbane, Gold Coast
Office of Small Business	NDIS Small Business Roundtable
Health Consumers Queensland	NDIS Information session
JFA Purple Orange	3 x workshops in Cairns, Moorooka and Maryborough with focus on Local Support Groups
Metro North Primary Health Network	GP Toolkit
CSIA/National Disability Services	ILC Provider Readiness Workshops videos

QDeNgage Consultants have lived experience of disability and are available to share their experiences and specialist knowledge. This helps to empower organisations and enable products and services to be more inclusive, accessible and what people with disability want.

QDN will be raising the profile of our QDeNgage Consultancy work, moving into the market place ensuring there is a strong voice and focus on the issues that are important to people with disability. The consultancy work very much compliments our other work streams. The consultancy work will create opportunities for members to engage in new ways, and lead to consultancy opportunities for QDN peer leaders.

A flyer outlining what QDN offers in its business streams, which includes: Knowledge Network, QDeNgage, Our Voice and Lead Institute was released during the year and can be accessed on the QDN website.



## Fee for Service Workshops

QDN also trialled the delivery of fee for service workshops for people with disability, organisations and supporters in 2018.

This strategy focuses on QDN's desire to build a sustainable and effective organisation that builds on our core strengths and existing skills as we enter this new NDIS market economy where we can no longer rely on government funding sources alone.

"My Housing Matters" workshops were held in Brisbane on 31 January and 30 May 2018.

56% of attendees were people with lived experience of disability and 19% of attendees were their supports. Feedback about the take home workbook and other resources was very positive and 92% of attendees said the digital stories used in the workshop were very useful.





We exceeded our participant capacity with over thirty people attending to discuss, listen and learn. Most attending were people with a disability, early in their housing journey, who were able to consider what was important to them, identify the pros and cons of different housing options and to imagine what they want in their home.

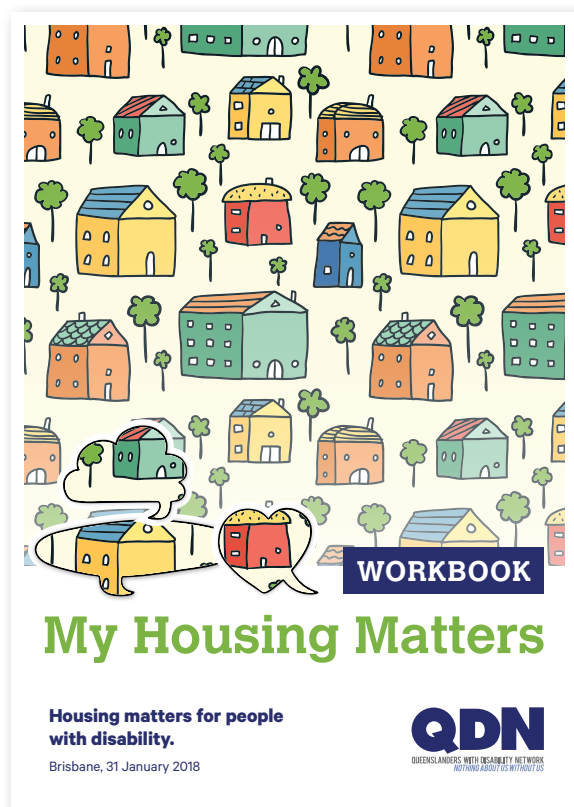
Anita, one of the attendees, proudly created her vision for her home.

*“Thanks for everything today I had a great day”*

Other feedback from participants

*“I like the fact that we were able to listen to the digital stories and connect with others on the day”*

*“I thoroughly enjoyed the forum and connecting and sharing of information”*



## Information, Linkages and Capacity Building – successful grant as part of National Readiness Round

QDN, in partnership with QCROSS, was successful in receiving an Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant as part of a recent national round. The project is called Changing Lives, Changing Communities, and it builds on the great work that QDN has been involved in over the past two years in Townsville with QCROSS, Townsville City Council and the community. *Changing Lives, Changing Communities* will host community forums in six communities across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas of Queensland. The forums will be led by people with disability, local community leaders and work in partnership with Local Councils. The forums aim to showcase people with disability as leaders and bring all parts of the community together to exchange information about community and mainstream services, talk about challenges and barriers and work together to co-create local community-owned solutions. This will be delivered from July 2018 – June 2020.

# Goal 3 To influence governments and others to bring about full and equal participation and citizenship

QDN continues to influence across Local, State and Commonwealth levels of Government through its activities of systemic policy and advocacy to ensure the voice of people with disability is represented and heard.

2017-2018 was a significant year in policy reforms affecting people with disability. QDN's members, supporters and allies have played a critical role in informing our systemic policy work and providing grass roots information to inform decision makers about the direct impacts of policy decisions in the day to day lives of people with disability.

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## **During 2017-2018, QDN made contributions at**

- › **18** policy consultations/forums and
- › Submitted **15** policy submissions.

QDN also engaged regularly and frequently with members of parliament, departmental representatives, candidates for election and key decision makers about issues important to our members and the lives of people with disability.

## **Engagement with Government**

### **State Election**

QDN engaged strongly in the 2017 Queensland State Election, delivering a comprehensive QDN platform to candidates and parties and a shared election platform with Community Services peaks. QDN also issued a joint press release with People with Disability Australia.

The QDN platform focused on the responsibility of the Queensland Government in delivering and funding essential accessible, affordable and quality Government and community mainstream services to people with disability, and its critical role in fostering full inclusion and participation of people with disability in the economic, social, civic and cultural life of Queensland.

The platform was deeply informed by the 2017 state-wide member survey with QDN members which identified the key priority policy areas and critical issues impacting upon their lives. The six priority areas and calls to action under those priorities were:

## **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**

- › commit to re-negotiation of existing bilateral arrangements with the Commonwealth around NDIS implementation in Queensland
- › commit to further investment in a range of participant and sector readiness initiatives, independent advocacy support and marketplace stewardship.

## **Leadership and participation**

- › invest and prioritise the leadership, inclusion and participation of people with disability in the economic, social and civic life of Queensland.

## **Housing**

- › commit to funding accessible, affordable, well-located housing solutions for people with disability; and
- › to adopt QDN's 4 guiding principles and recommendations to guide decisions relating to housing policy and practice

## **Transport**

- › commit to fund and provide accessible and affordable public and community transport for people with disability in Queensland
- › create a culture of meaningful engagement and consultation with people with disability within Transport and Main Roads (TMR) and QRail that goes beyond information provision

## **Health**

commit to addressing the significantly poorer health outcomes of people with disability.

## **Justice**

- › Develop and implement a Human Rights Act for Queensland and
- › Commit to ending violence, abuse and neglect of people with disability and to ensuring that people with disability can achieve their rights through the justice system.
- › QDN emailed the Election Platform document to all candidates, where an email address was available, across the 93 electorates including candidates from all parties and independents. QDN also emailed each political party's secretary/ president or leader; seeking a response to QDN's election platform.
- › QDN provided members with a State Election Advocacy Kit, which included key platform points, suggestions for effective advocacy and sample letters for local candidates and teleconferenced with group convenors to engage them in following up with the critical issues in the Advocacy kit with their local candidates.

QDN also issued a joint press release with People with Disability Australia, which called on the future Queensland Government to deliver and invest in essential, affordable, and quality Government and community mainstream services for people with disability.

The QDN Board, staff and members had many meetings and communications with candidates and parties during the campaign, with a key outcome being an election promise announced on 15 November 2017 of \$750,000 funding to QDN for peer-to-peer support across the state. QDN thanks members for their advocacy during the campaign.

## Engagement with members of Parliament

QDN has met members from major parties (the Liberal National Party, The Australian Labor Party Queensland) including Hon Sterling Hinchliffe, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Coralee O'Rourke, Minister for Disability, the Hon Mick De Brenni, Minister for Housing, the Hon Anthony Lynham, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Dr Christian Rowan, Shadow Minister for Disability Services, the Hon Chris Whiting MP, and the Hon Steven Miles MP. At the Commonwealth level, QDN has met with Assistant Minister for Social Services, Jane Prentice on several occasions, Luke Howarth MP and Terri Butler MP.

QDN also attended the QCOSS and Peaks Budget Breakfast, with a highlight being QDN mentioned in the Treasurer's speech in relation to the Peer to Peer Advocacy Support project funding promised during the election campaign and delivered in the Budget.

These meetings and events have provided QDN with the opportunity to raise the issues brought forward by members and ensure that the voice of people with disability is heard within Governments.



Representatives from 14 peak organisations at 2018 Budget Breakfast

## Engagement with Departmental staff

QDN meets regularly with Departmental Directors General, Deputy Directors General, Executive Directors and other public servants to advocate on key issues. In addition, QDN continues to strengthen working relationships with the NDIA and this year has met with the National Director and Deputy Director, Internal Communications and Engagement, Participant Change Management, and Regional Manager, Regional Directors of Community Engagement across Queensland.

## Peak body collaboration

QDN has continued to engage with Queensland peak organisations to work collaboratively around key issues, projects and collective influence on Government around key priorities during 2017-2018.

At the State Budget presentation at the QCOSS Budget breakfast, priority areas for joint action were decided and disseminated in a joint communique by fourteen community service peak bodies including:

QDN, Queensland Council of Social Services, Council on the Ageing, Volunteering Queensland, National Disability Services, Community Services Industry Alliance, QShelter, Community Legal Centres Queensland, Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, Peak Care, Queensland Alliance for Mental Health, Child Protection Peak, Tenants Queensland, Health and Community Services Workforce Council.



Key issues that QDN members have been active in – the NDIS, accessible, affordable housing and a human rights act are three of the four priorities members identified, and importantly for QDN members from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, Family Matters is the fourth. Speaking points were developed and shared and used by peak body staff at the QCOS Budget Breakfast, at which QDN hosted two tables.

QDN will continue to work together with other peak bodies, believing that we are better together and that collectively, we can make a difference. #powerofpeaks

## Policy leadership by and for people with disability

QDN believes that it is essential that people with disability are leading the policy changes and reforms that affect them in their lives. Good governance is derived from having all parts of the system involved in planning, designing, delivering and evaluating policy and services. QDN has continued to actively work in a number of policy areas, including housing this year.

### Housing policy champions

QDN's Housing Policy Champions are a group of people with disability with a key interest in achieving better housing outcomes for people with disability, and strong collective knowledge about issues and solutions for housing by people with varied lived experiences.

Housing Champions came together in a Community of Practice during the year to talk about and share integral housing issues for people with lived experience

of disability. Housing Champions finalised QDN's statement of housing priorities which formed part of QDN's election platform and was used with key stakeholders such as Queensland Shelter and Tenants Queensland. Priorities included:

**Universal Housing Design:** Housing for Life for all Queenslanders. Aiming for at least gold standard for all new housing development.

**Fair Rental for all:** Supporting the Tenants Union Campaign for all tenants' rights.

**Inclusive Approaches:** Housing that provides real alternatives to congregate care and ensures people with disability are included in their local communities.

**Home ownership:** Innovative finance solutions and shared equity approaches and partnerships.

**Accessible social housing:** Call to increase the provision and availability.

**Housing Hub:** Central hub required to promote efficiencies, inform and educate people with disability and families, develop cross-sectoral partnering and encourage innovation.

**NDIS and Housing:** Ensuring up to date, easily understood information and referral is available.

### Advance Queensland Community Digital Champions

As part of Queensland Government's Advance Queensland initiative, the Advance Queensland Community Digital Champions program aims to encourage Queenslanders to explore and enjoy the benefits of the digital age through

the stories and activities of inspirational champions.

Geoff Cooper (Brisbane Local Support Group Convenor) and Nigel Webb (Chairperson QDN Board of Directors and Convenor QDN Facebook closed page) are, again, QDN's two community digital champions in 2018. Nigel recorded a series of 4 videos in which he shared his tips around engaging with social media.

Digital literacy and digital access are critical issues for people with disability and this project is bringing awareness to people about the need for increasing people's knowledge and skills of the digital world.

## **All Abilities Plan Launch**

26 July 2017 saw the launch of *All Abilities Queensland: Opportunities for All — State Disability Plan 2017–2020*. QDN members were key figures in the development of the plan, attending consultations and providing feedback over the past several years, and feature in the accompanying awareness campaign "Everybody has a role to play".

## **International Leadership Exchange**

Michelle Moss attended the International Initiative for Disability Leadership in May 2018 in Sweden. The program included a two day 'match' which is a learning exchange with an organisation of the delegate's choice and then a 2 day conference – this year with over 460 delegates from over 24 countries.

The match chosen (with a similar purview and constituency to QDN) was the Independent Living Institute (ILI) in Stockholm – a policy development centre specialising in consumer-driven policies for

disabled persons' self-determination, self-respect and dignity.

The leadership exchange has provided QDN with a range of learnings and reflections to incorporate into future planning, initiatives and the development of international relationships with a range of Government and community leaders.

## **Policy Submissions**

In 2017-18 QDN has made policy submissions and representations and has been represented in consultations and on committees across key policy areas:

### **National Disability Insurance Scheme**

#### **Consultations, committees and representations**

- › Ministerial Advisory Group member: QTAG – Queensland Transition Advisory Group, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- › Appointment of Paige Armstrong as QTAG Deputy Chairperson to the Minister the Hon Coralee O'Rourke, Chairperson
- › QTAG NDIS Industry Briefing planning working party member
- › Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Partnership forum member
- › Queensland NDIS Workforce Strategy Advisory Group – Workability Strategy
- › Senate Joint NDIS Standing Committee – comments at Townsville meeting March 2018

- › National Disability Insurance Scheme National Advisory Group on Intellectual Disability Member
- › Queensland Health Consumer Collaborative – Special Meeting NDIS
- › Queensland Health NDIS Statewide Steering Committee representation
- › National Disability Insurance Agency – Psychosocial Disability consultations with invited stakeholders to inform review
- › National Disability Insurance Agency – Complex Needs Brisbane and Sydney
- › Queensland Audit Office NDIS Implementation review

### **Submissions**

- › QDN Response to the Productivity Commission Position Paper on National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Costs, July 2017
- › QDN Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Commission on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), September 2017
- › QDN Response to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and Other Measures) Bill 2017, December 2017
- › QDN Submission on Market Readiness for the Provision of Services under the NDIS, February 2018

## **Abuse/ Neglect/ Violence**

### **Consultations, committees and representations**

- › Not Now Not Ever – People with disability and domestic and family

violence action Recommendation 10 Workshop October 2017

- › Department of Premiers and Minister for Health – Roundtable on Child Sexual Abuse in Institutions Queensland Government Response April 2018
- › Australian Human Rights Commission – Roundtable on abuse of people with disability in institutional settings April 2018

### **Submissions**

- › Feedback to Queensland Anti-Cyber Bullying Taskforce, May 2018
- › QDN Submission on the National Redress Scheme on Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Bill, Queensland Parliament, June 2018

## **Digital Technology**

### **Consultations, committees and representations**

#### **Submissions**

- › QDN Submission on Solutions to tackle Cyber-bullying, Queensland Anti-Cyber bullying Taskforce, May 2018

## **Employment**

### **Consultations, committees and representations**

- › Department of Social Services Disability Employment Services Initiative Consultation July 2017

#### **Submissions**

- › QDN Submission on Discussion Paper: Ensuring a Strong Future for Supported Employment, Department of Social Services, March 2018

## Government

### Consultations, committees and representations

Minister's Roundtable, Creating Thriving Communities, Townsville May 2018

- › Feedback on Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors Strategic Plan, May 2018
- › Queensland State Budget Briefing June 2018

### Submissions

- › QDN State Election Platform, November 2017
- › QDN Submission on Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors Draft Strategic Plan, May 2018

## Housing

### Consultations, committees and representations

- › National Housing and Homelessness Agreement Roundtable (Department of Housing and Public Works) September 2017
- › Department of Housing and Summer Foundation Roundtable November 2017
- › Brisbane Lord Mayor's Roundtable on SDA Housing
- › Member Ministerial Housing Council
- › Australian Network for Universal Housing Design (ANUHD)
- › Queensland Action for Universal Housing Design

- › Liveable Housing Working Group Member
- › Queensland Building Plan consultation Department of Housing and Public Works

### Submissions

- › QDN Response to Social Services Legislation Amendment (Housing Affordability) Bill, November 2017
- › QDN Response to the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation Bill 2018, January 2018
- › QDN e-Bulletin Summary Home Modifications under the NDIS, May 2018

## Mobility

### Submissions

- › QDN Submission on the Senate Inquiry: The need for regulation of Motor Scooters, also known as motorised wheelchairs, Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport, Australian Parliament, March 2018

## Transport

### Consultations, committees and representations

- › Queensland Rail DDA Advisory Group
- › Transport and Main Roads Access Reference Group
- › Brisbane Airport Corporation Accessibility Reference Group
- › Public Transport Focus Group
- › Opportunities for Personalised Transport (OPT) Review Taskforce Panel



- › Queensland Rail Assisted Boarding Member delegation with Queensland Rail

## Submissions

- › QDN Submission in response to the joint application from the State of Queensland and Queensland Rail for an exemption under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, January 2018
- › QDN Submission on Brisbane Metro Bus Project, May 2018
- › QDN Submission on Draft Transport Plan for Brisbane, Brisbane City Council, May 2018

## Health

### Consultations, committees and representations

- › Queensland Transition to NDIS for Mental Health Strategic Forum working group member
- › NDIS Training Requirements Workforce Advisory Group
- › Metro South Hospital and Health Disability Advisory Committee
- › Metro North Hospital and Health Service Community Board Advisory Group
- › National Roundtable for Mental Health of People with Intellectual Disability March 2018

## Advocacy and human rights

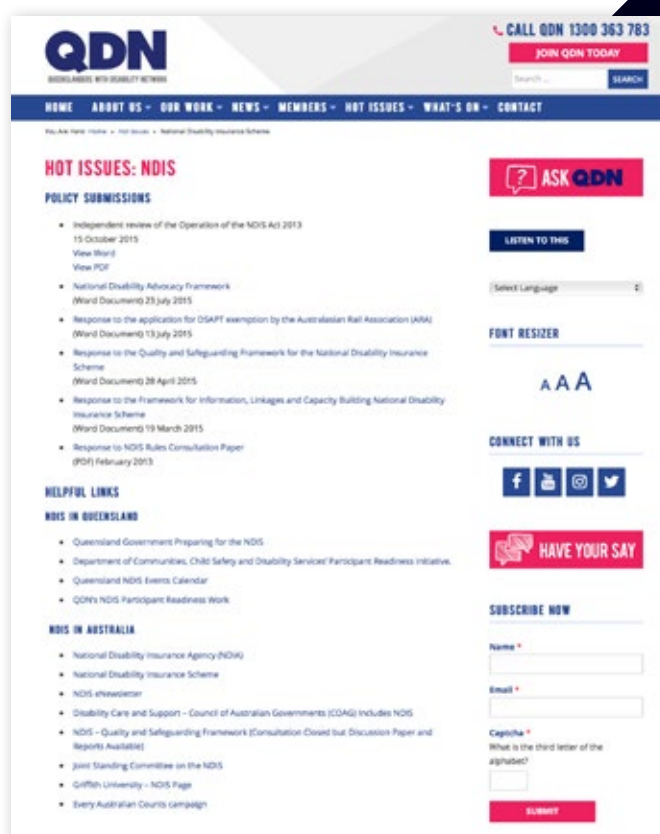
### Consultations, committees and representations

- › Disability Forensic Service System Review Advisory Group member

## Energy

### Consultations, committees and representations

- › Tariff Reform Working Group – Department of Energy and Water Supply, member
- › Energy Queensland Customer Council



## Goal 4 Grow an independently sustainable, effective, and accountable organisation that reflects our values, vision and mission



New office opening



Minister Coralle O'Rourke, Nigel Webb, Paige Armstrong and Hon Jane Prentice MP

QDN's Board of Directors and staff have continued to deliver on the strategic goal of the organisation, growing an independently sustainable, effective, and accountable organisation. In the decision making and delivery of the core work and the various projects, QDN continues to deliver work reflective of the goals, values, vision and mission of the organisation. QDN has continued to have a focus on growing its profile and reputation, and building upon the four pillars of the business plan to strengthen our work and harness opportunities for growth. The four pillars include inform, connect, influence and lead. As the organisation moves into its 16th year, QDN acknowledges the work and contribution of previous committees, board, staff and members who have strived to ensure that it really is 'nothing about us without us.'

During 2017-2018, QDN's Board of Directors have undertaken the role of corporate governance with rigor and commitment, contributing each of their skills and expertise to position QDN now and into the future.

## QDN Office relocation to Turbot Street, Spring Hill

In September 2017, QDN relocated to our new premises in Turbot St, Spring Hill. It was a significant move for the organisation, but one based upon the need to have to find alternative premises due to one of the leased spaces at Bowen Hills being sold. This situation offered opportunities to find a new space that enabled adequate space, within the same working environment for the number of staff, and an accessible office space within the inner city area. This search compounded what the organisation already knew about the challenges of the built environment around accessibility, closeness to public transport, and an accessible office building that met all our business needs. After 5 months of searching, we were successful.

The following article from Karin Swift (QDN founding member and current staff member) provides a reflection on the end of an era and the new beginnings.

*Friday 8 September 2017 marked the end of an era for QDN as we closed the doors of our Bowen Hills office. We re-opened the following Monday 11 September at our new offices in Spring Hill.*

*Moving into the office in Bowen Hills marked a significant point in QDN's development as a state-wide network of, by and for people with disability as it heralded our 'coming of age' as a newly incorporated association and was the start of us being an independent organisation. Prior to this we were co-located with our auspice organisation Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI).*

*The Bowen Hills office became the central hub of our state-wide network activities. It saw the development of QDN's Regional Facilitators located around the State who met regularly via teleconference with the Brisbane office, feeding back local issues and perspectives that informed QDN's systemic policy work. Hot Topics (Brisbane) also started meeting in Bowen Hills. It became a regular meeting space for many people with disability to discuss policy, have a voice on important issues, meet with policy makers and Ministers, develop leadership skills and celebrate our collective wins.*

*End of an era...all remember the Bowen Hills office affectionately as our first move out of home. We take these memories with us as we move on to Spring Hill, onto the next phase of the QDN journey.*

### Official Office Opening

QDN was very pleased to have the Hon. Coralee O'Rourke, Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors, officially open the new QDN office on 18 January 2018.

Nigel Webb said "The new office represents a new chapter in QDN's history and reflects its growth and the positive future ahead".

QDN was also pleased to welcome Hon Jane Prentice MP, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services to launch the Getting on the NDIS Grid Project Digital Story. It was a great event and we wish to thank everyone for your support.



## Board of Directors Strategic Planning

QDN's Board Directors held their annual strategic planning day on 18 January 2018 to reflect on our achievements and identify our priorities and strategic actions for the year ahead, our governance and stewardship of the organisation and implementation of the strategies of our business plan.

## Board of Directors Business Planning

QDN Directors and senior management have been developing and implementing business planning for several years. This year has seen QDN consolidate its business streams to build on this important work for the future sustainability of the organisation.

A range of activities have been undertaken in the 2017-2018 financial year to progress the work and promote the range of business opportunities that QDN can offer under the 4 areas of the business:

- › Knowledge Network
- › QDeNgage
- › LEAD Institute
- › Our Voice

QDN's communication and branding has focused on delivery of these activities, built upon the 4 key pillars of our work to:

- › Inform
- › Connect
- › Lead
- › Influence

A two page flyer outlining these key elements was produced and launched at the QDN office opening on 18 January 2018. This communication collateral has been promoted at all QDN events and opportunities.

Work to develop processes, templates and workflows has been undertaken, and this has been consolidated in an 'action research' approach as we have been developing, while delivering a range of activities within the business streams.

## Quality Management System

QDN was required to transition from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015 this year and completed an audit on 8 May 2018. We received the report noting that we have successfully transitioned to ISO 9001:2015. The auditor was highly complimentary of the work QDN does and the integrity with which it does its work.

## Board development

QDN's Board of Directors met regularly during the year to make decisions on strategic direction, governance, staffing and financial matters.

During 2017-18, several Board members experienced health and personal circumstances that kept them out of action for periods of time. Because of this, the Board directed the Nominations and Performance Committee to review applicants who nominated for Board Director elections at the 2016 Annual General Meeting to make recommendations for an appointed director in line with QDN's constitution. On review





(1) AGM 2017 (2) Peter and Gary

of skills and experience, the Nominations and Performance Committee recommended the appointment of Gary Matthews as an Appointed Director of QDN. Gary, Group Convenor for Mackay and an active QDN member, was duly appointed and welcomed by the Board.

Three Board Directors are not re-nominating for election at this year's AGM. QDN thanks Philia Polites for her contribution and leadership of the Board during her time since 2015. Philia has taken on the roles of Deputy Chairperson and Chairperson of the Audit and Compliance Committee and shared her wisdom, experience and knowledge generously in these roles. QDN also thanks retiring Director Matt McCracken for his service and contribution to the Board since 2014. Matt's leadership, knowledge, skills and experiences have greatly contributed to the governance, growth and work of the organisation in service to the members and the community. QDN also thanks retiring Director Grahame Robertson. Grahame has served as Chairperson of the Audit and Compliance Committee for the past year and been an active member of the Board since 2015. Grahame's leadership, knowledge and corporate experience he has brought to the Board has enriched and supported the organisation's growth and development.

The Board of Directors have worked alongside staff, assisted by the Company Secretary, to develop strong plans for the future of QDN.

Name	Position	Location	Board Director member since
Nigel Webb	Chairperson	Brisbane	2009
John McPherson	Vice Chairperson	Brisbane	2002
Peter Gurr	Board Director	North Qld	2015
Grahame Robertson	Board Director	Brisbane	2015
Sharon Boyce	Board Director	South West Qld	2013
Matt McCracken	Board Director	Caboolture	2014
Philia Polites	Board Director	Brisbane	2015
Colleen Papadopoulos	Company Secretary	Brisbane	2015
Gary Matthews	Board Director	Mackay	2018

## Staff recruitment and retention

QDN has had some changes to our staff team during 2017-2018 as projects wound up. QDN's staff team have worked collaboratively to deliver on a wide range of outcomes and the achievements reported on in this document.

QDN farewelled several staff members during 2017-2018 including Olivia Spadina, Troy Wolski, Paul Gabbert and Julie van Oosten and we welcomed and farewelled Jennifer Barrkman who was undertaking short term contract work for QDN. All staff have contributed greatly to the outcomes that QDN has achieved, and we thank them for their hard work, efforts and role in delivering on QDN's outcomes during this year.

We also welcomed new staff during the year including Louise Abson, Lisa McDermott, Rebecca Wesson, and thank you for being part of the team and the work of QDN.

Chief Executive Officer	Paige Armstrong	Current
Business Development and Operations Manager	Michelle Moss	Current
Project Support Officer	Margaret Micale	Current
Project Support Officer	Louise Abson	Current
Project Officer (Networks)	Karin Swift	Current
Project Officer (Local Support Groups)	Olivia Spadina	To 16 March 2018
Marketing and Comms Officer	Sharyn McManus	Current
Project Officer/Projects Lead	Troy Wolski	To 6 July 2018
Projects Lead	Jennifer Barrkman	From 6 November 2017 to 29 June 2018 Contractor prior
Project Officer	Paul Gabbert	To 29 June 2018
Project Officer	Julie van Oosten	To 3 March 2018
Finance and Admin Coordinator	Mark McKeon	Current
Admin Officer	Sharon Turner	Current

Project Officer (Getting on the NDIS Grid)	Lisa McDermott	From 30 April 2018
Project Officer (Getting on the NDIS Grid)	Rebecca Wesson	From 30 April 2018
Projects Lead	Denise Sands	From 28 November 2018  Prior working as Ready to go project officer

## Casual staff

Acting Finance Officer	Joanne Galvin	Current
Administration Support Officer	Cindy Hannam	Current
Project Support Officer	Maree Fairbanks	From 18 January 2018- Current

## Consultants/contractors

A number of consultants worked alongside QDN staff during 2017-18 and we thank them for their valuable contribution, and for their dedication and commitment to QDN and our members for producing quality work:

Elissa Farrow (About Your Transition), Rebecca McElroy (Bright Films Productions), Clare Locke (Clocke Designs), Geoff Trappett (Inclusion Moves), Jane Geltch (Purpose Partners), Peter and Linda Tully (ASD), ArtPartner and Staffing Options.



Full room at the 15th Anniversary celebrations



Peter Gurr at HCC forum

# Part 3: Financial overview

## Income

QDN's total income for the 2017/18 financial year was \$1,464,864 (2016/17: \$1,413,520). This was primarily comprised of:

\$406,252	QDN core business
\$320,000	<i>Ready to go</i> project
\$466,666	<i>Getting on the NDIS Grid</i> project
\$130,000	Disability Support Organisation and Local Support Groups
\$141,946	Other income

## Expenditure

QDN's total expenditure for the 2017/18 financial year was \$1,598,538 (2016/17: \$1,505,716).

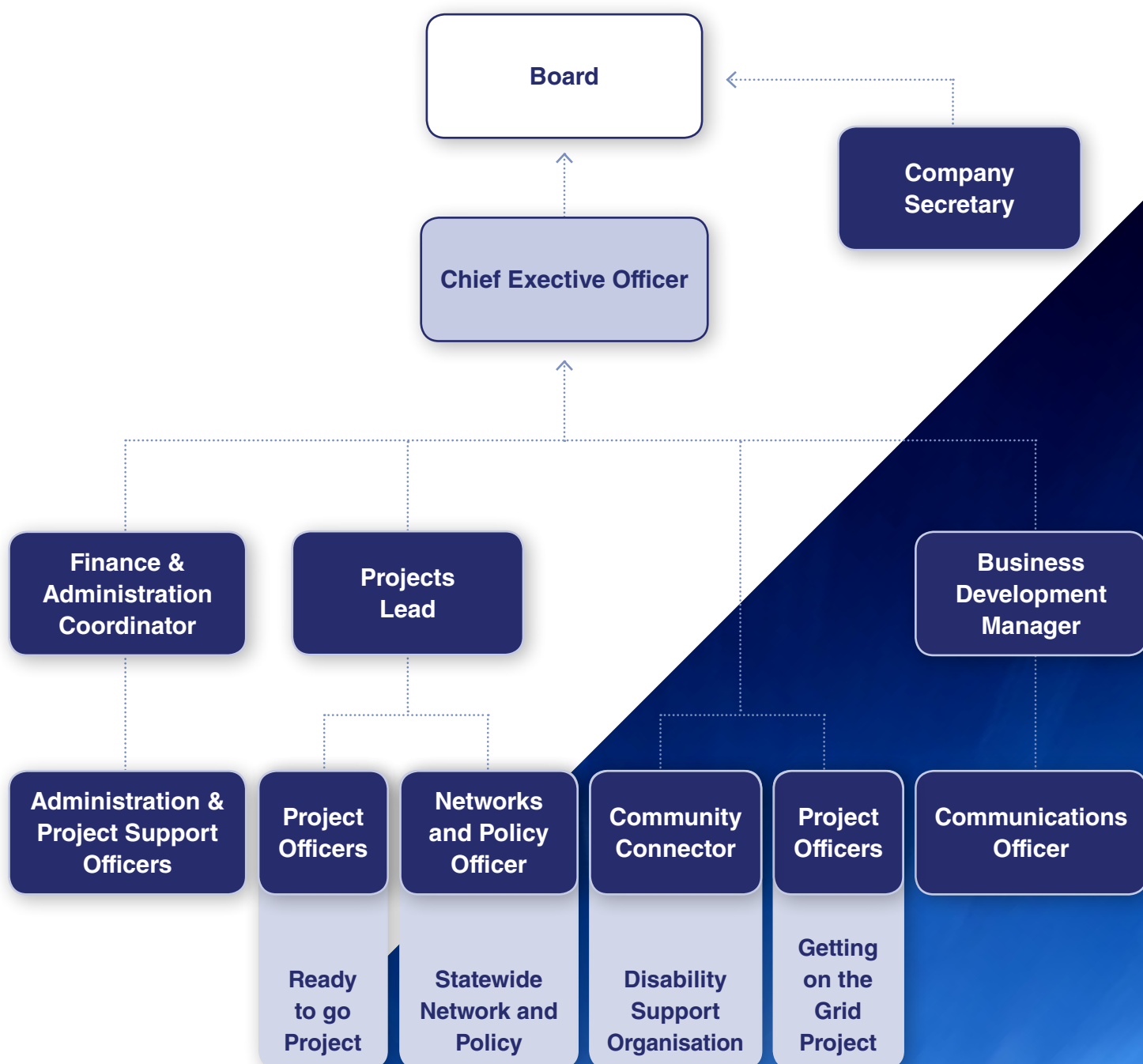
## Deficit

QDN incurred an operating deficit of \$133,674 for the 2017/18 financial year (2016/17: \$92,196 deficit), principally as a result of QDN's investment in business development activities.



# Part 4: Appendix

## Organisational structure 2017-2018



# QDN Annual Report 2017-2018



## Vision People with disability are active and valued citizens



### Policy Contributions



- > 18 policy consultations and forums
- > 15 policy submissions
- > Peak Body Collaboration

### Community and Stakeholder Education

- > 8 stalls QDN promotional materials
- > 10 QDN led and partnered events
- > 17 presentations at conferences or forums
- > 34 key events attended by QDN
- > 226 information referrals



### Information and Communication



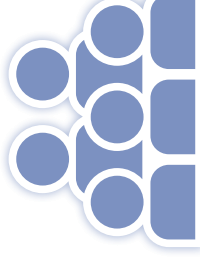
- > New website released
- > Member Hub launched
- > 6 e-Bulletins
- > 6 QDN Voices
- > 41 e-blasts
- > 58,668 visitors to QDN website
- > 27% increase in visitors to website
- > 148 subscribers to e-Bulletin

### Leadership

- > 6 Leadership development events
- > 14 peer facilitators Getting on the NDIS Grid
- > 15 peer facilitators ready to go
- > 23 LSG facilitators
- > 12 appointed Life Members
- > 3 appointed Honoured Supporters
- > 11 events with QDN member sponsored attendance
- > QDN Housing Policy Champions Community Of Practice
- > Attendance at International Leadership exchange
- > Advance Queensland Community Digital Champion

### Membership

- > 895 Ordinary Members
- > 581 Supporters
- > 40 Corporate members



### Governance and operations

- > Board governance and renewal strategic planning
- > Quality Management System recertification to ISO 9001:2015
- > Board of Directors Business Planning



## Local Support Groups



- > 21 established groups maintained
- > 2029 members across all groups
- > 152 face to face meetings held
- > Group convener Community of Practice teleconference monthly



## ATSIDNQ

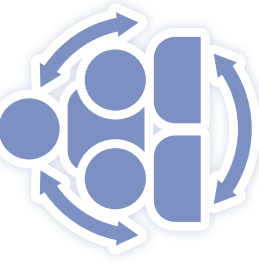


- > 821 members
- > 9 Yarning Circles
- > 5 newsletters
- > 28 e-blasts
- > Participation in 10 events/forums

## Social media



- > Over 300 posts
- > 1356 likes on QDN facebook page
- > 806 likes to Ready to go Facebook page
- > Instagram page established



## Peer Leaders - Communities of Practice

- > Regional facilitators, Ready to go Peer Facilitators, Local Support Group conveners
- > 11 state wide teleconferences
- > 6 training and development days
- > 6 QDN Voices

## NDIS Targeted strategies

- > 14 Peer facilitators
- > 18 months - engaged with 5497 people from target audience



## Media Engagement



- > 6 media releases
- > 7 media articles/interviews

## Engagement with Government

- > QDN election platform announced
- > State election Advocacy Kit for members
- > \$750,000 funding to QDN for Peer to Peer support
- > Engagement with members of Parliament and departmental staff

## QDN Consultancy - QDeNgage



- > 10 QDeNgage speakers/presenters
- > 2 Fee for Service Workshops
- > Information, Linkages and Capacity Building
  - Changing Lives, Changing Communities community forums
- > Contracted to develop General Practice Toolkit



## Ready to go NDIS Participant Readiness

- > 67 activities across Queensland
- > 1383 participants including people with disability and their supporters
- > 2014-2018- 570 activities delivered

Nothing about us without us

**NOTHING  
ABOUT US  
WITHOUT US**

## **Queenslanders with Disability Network**


is an organisation by  
and for people with  
disability.

 ph/tty 3252 8566 or free call 1300 363 783

 [www.qdn.org.au](http://www.qdn.org.au)

 [qdn@qdn.org.au](mailto:qdn@qdn.org.au)

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