

ANNUAL REPORT

Financial Year 2025



Nothing about us without us



Queenslanders with Disability (QDN)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

QDN also acknowledges people with disability who have come before us and died in institutional settings, as well as those who are still trapped in institutions or silenced by institutional practices. We take on the responsibilities of being clear about the rights of all people with disability and, where necessary, speak in an informed and considered manner, for those who cannot speak for themselves.

VALE

In the 2025 financial year, the disability community in Queensland farewelled several remarkable leaders, passionate advocates, and devoted members of QDN. We honour and remember each of them for their invaluable contributions towards creating a more inclusive and equitable Queensland for everyone.



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2024-2025 IMPACT SNAPSHOT



Membership

1,888	Ordinary members
123	Support organisations
1,006	Supporters
682	Organisational allies



Policy contributions

38	Policy submissions
27	Presentations delivered
49	Forums and consultations held
3,034	People supported through information and referrals



Community & stakeholder education and policy

56	Humanitix listings, 3,060 registrations
71	Forums and workshops statewide and online
462	Zoom meetings
6,175	Participants



Peer leadership

35	Group convenors
42	Emerging leaders
160	Peer leaders
4	Peer mentors
125	Consultants
12	Member forums

Projects related:

8	DIDRR peer leaders
12	DIDRR local champions
7	Energy champions
9	Empower co-designers
2	EsportsAble mentors
6	Inclusion consultants in Work in Manufacturing
6	Co-designers in Work in Manufacturing
7	QCommunicators in marketing



Power of Peers

32	Peer support groups
290	Group meetings
2,904	Contacts engaged
4	New peer mentors recruited
105	Attended Inclusion Matters Forums (June 2025)

In FY25 QDN continued to deliver significant achievements across leadership, policy, community engagement, and the strengthening of our network and influence.



489 Consultant engagements
85 Projects delivered for 39 customers



Projects

Key projects: DIDRR Peer Leadership, Bright Sparks, All Abilities JobMatch, Work in Manufacturing, Resilient Care program, Julian's Key, Empower, and EsportsAble.

- 50+ forums & workshops held statewide
- 1,200+ participants engaged across Queensland
- 50+ peer leaders & consultants trained and supported
- 20+ people gained internships, jobs, or ongoing roles
- New co-designed resources created in housing, energy, health, esports, and disaster preparedness



QDN and partnered events

- Queensland Disability Alliance - Federal Election Forum 2025
- Disability Action Week Webinar
- Queensland Disability Conference
- QDN Members Forum - Federal Election 2025
- Access and Inclusion: Paris 2024 and the runway to Brisbane 2032
- Co-Design Symposium



Communications & outreach

7,980 Total followers all channels
2,181 E-news subscribers

Other

Stakeholder Engagement & Co-Design Strategy

- 40+** members selected and trained for the Co-Design Team
- Led entirely by people with disability, ensuring lived experience drives reform
 - Team facilitates the Co-Design Hub, hosting labs, workshops, and resources
 - Connected with over 1,000 people statewide through community forums



ABOUT QDN

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is a state-wide, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to advancing disability rights and advocacy, led by and for people with diverse disability.

For more than 23 years, QDN has worked to advance the rights, inclusion and participation of people with disability across Queensland, guided by the motto *"Nothing about us without us"*.

Governed by a Board comprised of people with disability, alongside appointed Directors bringing additional expertise, QDN is shaped and led by lived experience.

As the **Executive Peak Body** for people with disability in Queensland, QDN represents the collective voice of its statewide network, ensuring lived experience directly informs policy, programs, and systemic reform.

Working closely with government, community and service organisations, QDN drives systemic change that upholds rights, choice, and inclusion, while amplifying the voices of Queenslanders with disability to shape a more inclusive state.

Our Vision

People with disability are active, valued and respected citizens of Queensland.

Our Mission

We lead, inform, connect and influence to empower people with disability to be fully included as citizens in the social, economic, digital and political 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.

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

Collaborative Action: Through co-design, we work together to include the collective experiences, values and wisdom of people with disability.

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 Funding Partners

QDN proudly acknowledges the support of the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments for their contributions to our projects this financial year.

Commonwealth Government

- Department of Social Services
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Queensland Government

- Department of Housing and Public Works
- Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety
- Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers
- Department of Energy and Climate

QDN also acknowledges our partners who are funded through other initiatives for their contributions to our work this financial year.



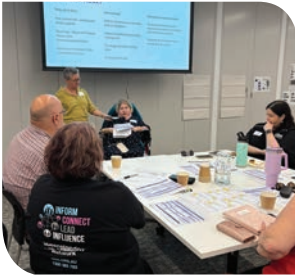
Our Operations

QDN is a strong, dynamic, and diverse organisation that works in genuine partnership with people with disability. Through co-design, co-production, and collaboration with members, communities, services, and government, we deliver impact across Queensland. By using resources strategically and placing lived experience at the centre, every effort drives meaningful change for people with disability.



Leadership and Governance

QDN's Board, comprised of people with disability and appointed Directors, are the leaders of the organisation and ensure that lived experience drives decision making. This representation defines QDN as a genuine organisation of, by and for people with disability. The CEO and senior leadership team work under the direction of the Board to advance the strategies set by the Board, deliver on organisational priorities, and provide strong governance, accountability, and impact for members, stakeholders, and funders.



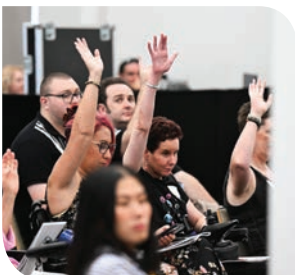
Policy

The policy team drives systemic advocacy, shaping reforms in NDIS, health, housing, transport, employment and other key portfolios important to people with disability engagement, consultation, and co-design.



Projects

Targeted initiatives build capacity, inclusion, and accessibility, co-designing real-world solutions from disaster preparedness to energy literacy.



Power of Peers

Peer-led groups connect people with disability to share knowledge, support each other, and influence change. Through these networks, members build skills, confidence, and leadership. QDN's Emerging Leaders Program further develops the next generation of disability leaders, nurturing people to step into their leadership and representative roles within their communities and beyond.



QDeNgage

QDN's consultancy arm, QDeNgage, engages member consultants to work with organisations to co-design accessible, inclusive services, products, and workplaces.



Marketing, Communications, Membership & Events

This team grows QDN's profile, engages members, and delivers events, ensuring consistent, far-reaching messages and impact.



Corporate Services

Managing finance, governance, administration, and systems, corporate services keep QDN compliant, efficient, and able to deliver its work effectively.



How we make a difference

QDN champions inclusion by celebrating the individuality, talents, and lived experiences of people with disability. Our work is led by those with lived experience, shaping policy, influencing systems, and driving real change. Through our strong network, we inform communities, connect people through peer support, and ensure people with disability have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. Every project we deliver works toward a more inclusive and accessible Queensland.

This financial year that difference was seen in action. Through our work influencing change towards safe and accessible housing, we co-designed the My Housing Options Toolkit and resources with people with disability, families and providers to give people practical tools to make informed housing choices. QDN is recognised internationally for our work in Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and this year we leveraged our expertise to build the capacity of eight Peer Leaders and 12 Local Champions across three local government areas bringing lived experience into disaster planning. Employment projects like All Abilities JobMatch matched people with disability to paid internships with 12 employers, creating new pathways to work and long-term jobs. These are just some of the real-world impacts in this Annual Report that show how QDN combines systemic advocacy with practical solutions where people with disability shape the future while influencing broader reform.

Why what we do matters

People with disability face real barriers, lack of opportunity, inaccessibility, and exclusion. QDN is tackling these head-on to drive social and economic change that empowers people to live full, meaningful lives.

This matters because it ensures voices from across Queensland are heard. In the 2025 financial year, QDN led statewide forums on housing, transport, and employment, giving members direct opportunities to speak with decision-makers. Our State and Federal election platforms equipped members with advocacy kits to raise the issues that matter most with candidates, ensuring disability remained on the state and national agenda. We partnered with the Queensland Government to co-design the Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy and through this built the capacity and competency of 40 people with disability to lead the co-design of reforms from the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review. These efforts ensure reforms are real, lived experience solutions that improve lives.

Our network

QDN is a vibrant, active community of people with lived experience of disability, united in driving meaningful change. Across Queensland, our 32 peer support groups form the backbone of a dynamic network. Beyond peer connection, QDN collaborates with a wide range of partners—from health, housing and employment sectors to community and disability services—ensuring that the voices, needs, aspirations, and rights of people with disability are understood and prioritised.

In this financial year, our network delivered 290 peer group meetings across the state, reaching more than 1,500 people. The Emerging Leaders program recruited new leaders, building skills in advocacy, communication and leadership. Through QDeNgage, consultants worked on embedding lived experience into workplaces, services and government programs. Together, this network demonstrates the strength of collective action—with this year's Annual Report showing when people with disability are connected, supported and leading, communities become stronger and more inclusive.



HEAR FROM A QDN MEMBER



Abi Makim

“QDN matters to me because it is a membership group of amazing people who are unique in their energy and capacity for participation, attention and action for positive change for our community.”



Our Board of Directors

Comprising individuals with lived experience of disability and appointed Director roles, QDN's Board of Directors is responsible for our governance and strategic direction and supports the executive team to deliver meaningful outcomes for people with disability across Queensland.

Our Directors as at 30 June 2025:



Dr Sharon Boyce
Chairperson



Des Ryan
Deputy Chairperson;
Chair of Audit and
Compliance Committee



Nerine Williams
Director; Chair of
Nominations and
Performance Committee



Alison Barber
Director



Dr Talitha Kingsmill
Director



Karen McCarthy
Director



Nigel Webb
Director



Danielle Brown
Appointed Director

Supported by:



Mark McKeon
Company Secretary



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Dr Sharon Boyce

The 2025 financial year has been a year of great change, uncertainty, and transition for people with disability across Queensland and nationally. As reforms start to happen and systems begin to shift, our community has once again shown strength, resilience, and unwavering commitment to ensuring our voices are heard and included every step of the way.

I want to begin by recognising the QDN Board for their leadership and support in carrying forward the mission and vision of our organisation. Their dedication and governance continue to guide QDN through times of complexity and growth, and I thank each Director for their time, expertise, and passion.

I would also like to acknowledge our state-wide membership network, the heart of QDN. Our members are the reason we do what we do. They are leaders, advocates, and changemakers who bring rich lived experience, knowledge, and passion to everything they do. It is through their efforts, stories, and strong advocacy that QDN continues to drive forward meaningful reform across housing, transport, health, and employment. Their contributions shape our policies, projects, and advocacy, and I thank them for their ongoing commitment to creating a better Queensland for all.

This year has also brought sadness. We take a moment to acknowledge the loss of those within our network and community, including past members and contributors whose work laid the foundations for the progress we make today. Their legacy remains deeply embedded in the work we continue to do.

As we have moved through this significant period of reform, QDN has remained a strong and trusted voice, leading critical conversations that put people with disability at the centre. We hold firm to the principle of "nothing about us without us". Our forums, events, and engagement platforms have connected more Queenslanders than ever before, ensuring that experiences from the ground directly inform policy, reform, and service delivery.

This year's activities have demonstrated the strength of working together. From our peer networks and regional communities to the Board, staff, and partners across government and industry, each of you plays a vital role. Thank you for your work, your voice, and your belief in a fairer, more inclusive future.

To Michelle Moss, our CEO, and the incredible QDN team, thank you for your commitment, leadership, and tireless efforts throughout this demanding and impactful year.

Together, we remain united in our shared purpose, to ensure Queenslanders with disability are not only included but leading the way. I look forward to continuing this important work with you all in the year ahead.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Michelle Moss

This year has been one of engagement, reform, and growing momentum for QDN and our members, including record levels of collaboration and participation. People with disability have been actively leading, shaping and influencing programs, policy and system reform at local, state and commonwealth levels.

QDN worked across regional and remote centres to ensure people with disability in these communities had the opportunity to have a voice. A key part of this work was QDN's work in the Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy. This places people with disability and stakeholders at the heart of reform, ensuring change is co-designed and informed by lived experience. It is a landmark initiative setting a new standard for inclusive policy development, with Queensland leading the way. It also acts as a vehicle for building the capacity of all parts of the system in best practice co-design which is important to enabling more people with disability and families and carers to be able to engage effectively with Government and community stakeholders who can design and deliver inclusive engagement. It is critical that two years on from the release of the Disability Royal Commission report that we continue to ensure that the recommendations are implemented and the voices of almost 10,000 people who contributed continue to be heard.

It has been positive to see continual membership growth this year and increasing reach in different Queensland communities across the state. Our network now includes more Queenslanders with disability, supporters who include families and carers, organisations, allies, and community members than ever before with a shared purpose around inclusion and accessibility.

The leadership of people with disability has been front and centre and QDN's work has had a continued key focus in mainstream services and support including housing, transport, health, disaster preparedness, digital inclusion and employment. The Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review highlighted the criticality of inclusive and accessible mainstream services and through our policy, projects, and QDeNgage, we have continued to work collaboratively with three levels of Government, businesses, and community organisations to ensuring people with disability are central to decisions shaping inclusive futures. We continue to work with partners to deliver on key bodies of work including the Voices of Queenslanders with Disability Report, key projects and disability reforms.

Members came together to engage in the 2025 Federal Election through, It's Time to Act, calling on candidates to commit to seven inclusion areas shaped by members' lived experience. With advocacy kits and tools, members engaged candidates directly, ensuring disability voices influenced policy and put inclusion firmly on the national agenda. We also brought together the Queensland Disability Alliance around shared priorities across over 30 stakeholders and organisations.

I sincerely thank our Chairperson, Dr Sharon Boyce, and the QDN Board for their strategic leadership and governance of our organisation. To QDN's leadership, staff, and peer leaders, thank you for your commitment, energy, and passion. And thank you to all our members and supporters for your actions to drive change. As we look ahead, we remain focused on building inclusive systems, creating real opportunities, and ensuring Queenslanders with disability continue to lead reform, policy, and community life.



IMPACT THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

From Parliament to community halls, QDN delivered strong, evidence-based advocacy through committees, forums, briefings, and submissions at the local, state, and national level. Our engagement spanned the breadth of Queensland, from the south east, to the far north, and as far west as Mount Isa. Across hundreds of engagements in the 2025 financial year, we amplified the voice of people with disability, influenced decision-makers, and drove change across all sector areas to build a more inclusive Queensland.





AN OVERVIEW OF OUR YEAR

QDN partners with communities, services, businesses, and government to build a more inclusive Queensland. Guided by our five strategic goals, our work during 2024-2025 reflects an integrated approach to advancing inclusion, leadership, and systemic reform, demonstrating how lived experience drives stronger networks and lasting change.

Our Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Inform

To promote and maintain active, vibrant networks that inform our work and build local capacity.

Goal 2: Lead

To enhance the capacity, leadership and influence of people with disability.

Goal 3: Connect

To build broad community awareness and change attitudes by sharing the experiences of people with disability and have their expertise valued and recognised.

Goal 4: Influence

To influence governments and others to bring about full and equal participation, citizenship, and protection of rights for all.

Goal 5: Grow

To grow an independently sustainable, effective, accountable and rights-based organisation that reflects our vision, mission, values, and principles.

GOAL 1: INFORM



During 2024-2025 QDN connected thousands of people with disability, families, and communities. These initiatives amplified lived experience, built local capacity, and provided vital evidence to shape policy, services, and community change.



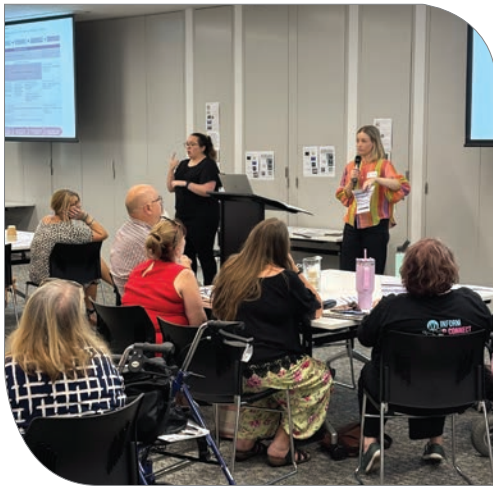
Information & Referrals

QDN connected with 7,500+ people to provide information and delivered 3,000+ referrals across health, NDIS, housing, education, transport, and more. Each connection ensured people with disability, families, and supporters accessed the right help when they needed it most. This frontline service also fuels systemic advocacy, providing real-time evidence of service gaps that informs policy and drives reform.



Platforms for Change

QDN held a dynamic mix of hybrid events, including election forums, the 2025 State Disability Conference, a Disability Action Week event, and co-design symposium, that connected communities from regional hubs to virtual settings. These accessible events, part of a commitment to inclusion, welcomed participants from across Queensland. Through these forums, QDN ensured that diverse voices were heard, informed meaningful conversations, and shaped reform across the state.



Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) Leadership

QDN continues to lead the way nationally and internationally in disability inclusive disaster risk reduction. We heard from many of our members impacted by natural disaster during the year and continue to advocate for disability inclusive disaster management responses at state and local government level. Eight Peer Leaders were recruited to co-design and co-deliver the **DIDRR Peer Leadership Program**, bringing lived experience of disability to local government disaster management planning in the Redlands, Bundaberg, and Southern Downs regions. Alongside this, 12 DIDRR Local Champions were recruited to strengthen local networks and extend reach. As the Disability Engagement Partner on the **Country to Coast Qld (CCQ) Resilient Care program** QDN engaged engaged with 224 participants including people with disability across five Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the Central Queensland region to generate solutions at the intersection of health and disaster resilience.

Other projects include:

- **QDeNgage**

Partnered with government and business to embed lived experience into planning and design, improving accessibility and inclusion.

- **Online Membership Campaign**

Attracted 187 new members and supporters, lifting QDN's membership base by 18.57% year-on-year to a record 3,017.

- **Julian's Key Health Passport - Queensland Health**

Co-designed updated tool with regional voices to improve healthcare

- **Bright Sparks**

Funded by the Department of Energy and Climate. Energy Champions co-designed and led 21 workshops across seven LGAs, boosting knowledge and tailoring resources to diverse community needs.

GOAL 2: LEAD



During 2024-2025, the team delivered 15+ projects under this pillar, building visibility, shaping attitudes, and strengthening opportunities for people with disability to lead conversations that influence lasting change.



Centring Lived Experience in Inclusive Housing Reform

QDN continues to play a leading role in advancing inclusive housing solutions under the Queensland Government's disability action plan *Partnering for Inclusive Housing with Queenslanders with Disability 2024-2027*. During this year:

- QDN commenced co-design of the **My Housing Options Toolkit** with people with disability, families and providers, giving individuals the tools to make informed choices, set goals and plan for the future while embedding lived experience into housing systems and design.
- Through an open expression of interest process, eight people with disability were selected from 48 applicants to be members of the **Expert Disability Housing Advisory Panel (EDHAP)**. QDN acts as Secretariat for the Panel which works alongside the Department of Housing and Public Works and sector representatives to influence policy and shape the disability action plan.
- QDN also partnered with the Department of Housing and Public Works, Residential Tenancies Authority, Real Estate Institute of Queensland, Tenants Queensland, realestate.com and Domain to commence **co-design of accessibility icons for private and rental listings**, improving visibility and opportunities for people with disability in the housing market.





Building an Inclusive Legacy for Brisbane 2032

QDN is embedding the voices of people with disability in planning for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games to ensure an inclusive and lasting legacy. Leveraging off our work with Urbis on the Game Changers Report, and through participation in Brisbane 2032 workshops, QDN has highlighted disability leadership and innovation, with one peer group's idea now under consideration as a Games legacy initiative.

- The **Empower Project**, the first funded Brisbane 2032 Legacy initiative kicked off with co-design by and for people with disability in partnership with Jameson Trauma Institute, Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland, Griffith University and sporting bodies to create a data framework as a foundation to tackle barriers in sport and recreation and increase participation opportunities.
- To build momentum and share international learnings, QDN hosted the online forum **Access and Inclusion: Paris 2024 and the Runway to Brisbane 2032**, which explored successes and challenges from the Paris Games and how these can inform inclusive planning and delivery for Brisbane 2032.



HEAR FROM A QDN MEMBER



Natascha Kamp

“ When I acquired my disability, I lost confidence in my ability to contribute meaningfully to society. QDeNgage helped me regain that confidence by ensuring people with disability are not just consulted, but genuinely and actively shaping Queensland's systems and services in ways that matter. As a QDeNgage consultant, I've felt safe, supported, and valued – knowing my skills and lived experience are making public transport, workplaces, government services, and community spaces more accessible and inclusive. This work has brought me purpose and joy. ”

Other projects include:

- **Inclusion Matters Forums**

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. State-wide forums in-person and online brought people with disability, families, and organisations together to explore solutions on transport, housing, and employment. Informed real solutions under Australia's Disability Strategy and strengthened peer leadership.

- **National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health**

As consortium partner of the Centre QDN continued to play a role in national intellectual disability health reform and research.

- **Federal and State Election Platforms**

Equipped members with an advocacy kit to raise local area issues with candidates and strengthening QDN's collective voice.

- **Queensland Disability Alliance**

In the lead-up to the 2025 Federal Election, disability organisations across Queensland united on a joint statement to ensure the incoming Federal Government delivered on key reforms and a strong, sustainable NDIS. Alongside this the Alliance called for accessible and inclusive mainstream services, integrated government arrangements, and adequate investment in independent advocacy. It also called for action to strengthen the disability workforce, improve employment and economic outcomes, address cost-of-living pressures, and fully implement the National Autism Strategy with state and territory alignment.

- **All Abilities JobMatch Program (Phases 1 & 2)**

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Matched jobseekers with disability to paid internships, engaging 11 host employers. Built employer confidence, enabled open conversations, and created stronger pathways to disability employment.



GOAL 3: CONNECT



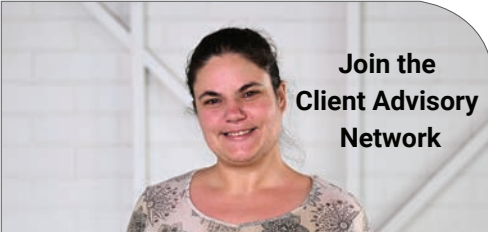
In 2024-2025, QDN brought people together, built peer leadership, and ensured lived experience drives inclusion and reform. Many of these initiatives also delivered outcomes across other strategic goals highlighting QDN's integrated approach.



Peer Support & Leadership Pathways

QDN supported 32 **Peer Support Groups** across Queensland through in-person, online, and hybrid formats, backing 34 Group Conveners with mentoring, training, and digital inclusion support. The program expanded leadership opportunities by employing Peer Mentors, delivering Inclusion Matters forums, and recruiting 22 new participants for the 2025 Emerging Leaders program. Community engagement grew through pro-active outreach via networks, and communications, while partnerships with other organisations expanded influence. Together, these initiatives amplified local voices, strengthened peer-led advocacy on issues like health, housing, transport, and employment, and reduced isolation. They also built clear pathways into leadership and employment, cultivating new leaders who are shaping more inclusive communities across Queensland.





Join the Client Advisory Network

What is the Client Advisory Network (CAN)?

CAN is a new advisory group for people who live in level 3 residential services (Commonly called supported accommodation, hostels/boarded houses). CAN is one of the recommendations from the Parliamentary Inquiry into Supported Accommodation.

CAN is about:

- Helping people have a voice about their services
- Talking together about ideas to help make services better and fairer
- Share those ideas with Government to improve supported accommodation.

Find out more

Two online info sessions will be held on

- Wednesday **28 May** 10:00 – 11:00 am
- Monday **2 June** 3:30pm – 4:30pm.

To register phone 1300 363 783 or email qdn@qdn.org.au



This is a paid opportunity!

Supported Accommodation: From Inquiry to Action

QDN continues its systemic advocacy work for the Level 3 Supported Accommodation sector, building on previous work centring the voices of residents in the Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation and our strong partnerships across the sector.

- QDN established the **Client Advisory Network (CAN)**, to ensure residents of level 3 supported accommodation have a meaningful voice in shaping the design and implementation of services and programs that impact them, particularly in the context of ongoing significant reforms.
- When two facilities closed, QDN led a person-centred, trauma-informed engagement process with residents, families and supporters. This approach prioritised safety, dignity and choice, **supported residents into new housing**.



HEAR FROM A QDN MEMBER



Semah Mokak-Wischki

“ People with disabilities and their families must lead the conversation about disability, simply because it is their lives. Respect and value of lived experience knowledge and expertise, creates strong working relationships, where disability supports, family, and cultural needs can be voiced and heard to build good lives. ”

Other projects include:

- **Moving Forward Together – Transport Conversations**

Co-designed and hosted three statewide forums, co-facilitated by members with lived experience, to strengthen accessibility of taxis, community transport and rideshare services. These inclusive spaces amplified voices in transport reform, supported members to lead discussions and produced practical recommendations.

- **Expanding Networks & Leadership**

Supported QDeNgage consultants to grow networks, secure speaking roles, and represent QDN on several advisory groups (e.g., National Injury Insurance Scheme, Queensland Primary Health Network, Dept. of Transport and Main Roads, Metro South Health). Expanded consultant leadership and visibility, increased demand for engagement work, and shaped accessibility improvements in health, transport, and digital services.

- **QCommunicators Program**

Established a co-design group of seven members to review campaigns, refine language, and set communication tone. Mentoring built into the program strengthened leadership and collaboration, ensured communications were accessible and audience-focused, and increased member pride in QDN's messaging.

- **Work in Manufacturing**

In partnership with Manufacturing Skills Queensland and BenchOn, QDN is co-designing a new platform to connect people with disability to careers in the manufacturing sector. The project will build the sector's confidence to hire and retain employees with disability, while creating pathways to meaningful careers and leadership opportunities.

- **EsportsAble**

An initiative of Queensland University of Technology funded by the Department of Social Services. Partnering with Queensland University of Technology, this project builds inclusive esports communities for young people with mental health conditions, delivering training, coaching, and events across regional Queensland while shaping future accessibility in esports.

GOAL 4: INFLUENCE



In 2024-2025, QDN shaped policy, practice, and attitudes to achieve equal participation and rights, ensuring lived experience drove reforms and systemic change. Through this work, QDN influenced government, business and communities to create more inclusive systems and opportunities for people with disability.



Emerging Leaders 2025

QDN recruited 22 new leaders into the 2025 Emerging Leaders program, equipping them with participatory leadership, advocacy, and communication skills. Delivered through training, mentoring, and peer collaboration, the program builds confidence and opens pathways for people with disability to influence at both community and systems levels. A key highlight included the **Leading for Change** workshop, where participants learned directly from experienced advocates about strategies to influence systemic reform. Many participants go on to represent QDN on advisory groups, contribute to public policy, or step into community leadership roles. For individuals, the program is often life-changing, transforming self-belief into action and building a new generation of leaders ready to shape inclusive futures.





People with Disability Leading the Reform Agenda

QDN is at the forefront of embedding lived experience in reforms arising from the Disability Royal Commission, the NDIS Review, Brisbane 2032 planning and the wider reform landscape. In partnership with the Queensland Government, QDN co-designed and launched the **Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy**—a three-year roadmap to guide inclusive engagement, and ensure people with disability are at the centre of systemic reform. Governance of the Strategy was implemented through setting up the **Disability Reform Implementation Stakeholder Committee** and QDN has partnered with mob4mob, Amparo Advocacy and Community Resource Unit (CRU) to ensure an intersectional approach. Through this strategy, QDN established a **Co-Design Hub**, supported by a four-module **Capacity Building Curriculum**, with over 40 diverse members selected from 112 applications to lead the first **Co-Design Team** intake. The Hub delivers online, in-person and hybrid labs, workshops, forums and an online clearinghouse to build leadership, strengthen collaboration and provide best-practice tools for inclusive reforms. Initial work of the Hub saw QDN join a group of organisations with expertise in early childhood supports to develop principles, a model and key considerations for government in designing **Foundational Supports**. This ensured lived experience and sector expertise shaped early design, positioning Queensland as a leader, and set a strong foundation for collaboration as national and state processes began. QDN also engaged more than 1,000 people across the state through 21 **community forums**, elevating local place-based priorities and strengthening peer networks while launching the **Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design website** as Queensland's central hub for events, training and resources, and a dedicated physical co-design space.



Other projects include:

- **Member Communications**

Delivered 87 email blasts, 17 e-bulletins, 17 video updates, and 53 eNews editions. Kept members informed, built policy champions, and strengthened a statewide network of informed advocates.

- **Voice of Queenslanders with Disability Survey 2025**

In partnership with Griffith University, QDN delivered the only state-wide survey on disability outcomes, training 10 citizen scientists with lived experience to co-lead the research. The survey gathered 703 responses from people with disability, carers, and organisations, including 109 participants from supported accommodation, a group often excluded from research. The survey has provided unique state-level evidence against Australia's Disability Strategy outcomes, amplifying diverse voices and building a stronger evidence base to drive systemic advocacy and policy reform.

- **Policy Leadership**

QDN delivered 38 policy submissions across health, housing, transport, education, and NDIS, embedding Human Rights and lived experience into every position. This work has influenced more inclusive systems, strengthened accessibility and dignity, and reinforced disability rights across Queensland.



HEAR FROM A QDN MEMBER



Paul Justice

“ QDN envisions, educates and empowers people with a disability to lead the conversations about disability about their human rights and advocating for their protection. People's lived experience voices are included and heard within communities and within their peers they connect with, to build connections with a network. Especially when they struggle to speak for themselves or encounter barriers to accessible services, amenities and supports. This empowers individuals to make informed decisions about their choices to a full and meaningful life, challenge unfair practices, and stigma, to address disparities, and navigate complex systems in their communities. ”

GOAL 5: GROW



In 2024-2025, we invested in systems, partnerships and people to remain effective, rights-based, and a trusted voice for people with disability, while also strengthening our sustainability, governance, and organisational capacity to deliver impact now and into the future.



The role and impact of the board

QDN's Board of Directors—comprising people with disability and appointed Directors bringing additional expertise—plays a vital role in ensuring the organisation is sustainable, effective, accountable and rights-based. Through its governance, planning and oversight, the Board has strengthened QDN's systems, capacity and accountability, guiding the organisation through a year of significant growth. Importantly, as leaders with lived experience, Board members ensure that people with disability remain at the centre of QDN's strategy and decision-making, helping to shape the organisation's direction and amplify the impact of our work for members and the broader disability community.



Quality framework

QDN holds accreditation under ISO 9000:2015 and operates a comprehensive Quality Management System, including a formal Governance Charter and structured Policy Manuals, ensuring that governance and operational excellence are foundational to its work. This system reflects QDN's broader commitment to high standards in accountability, efficiency, and service integrity, while reinforcing its role as a trusted, organisation governed clearly by and for people with disability.

Data governance and security

QDN has strengthened its data frameworks with a clear focus on governance, quality, and member security. This work has improved the accuracy and reliability of data, embedded robust governance protocols, and ensured systems are equipped to support members now and into the future.



Referral process redesign

The redesign of our information referral processes has streamlined workflows and enhanced the customer experience. Staff are now better able to deliver timely, accurate, and effective support, ensuring that people who contact QDN experience the best possible outcomes.

Expanding analytical capability

QDN is expanding its analytical capabilities to generate deeper insights, engage more meaningfully with people with disability, and identify trends that inform service improvement. Our CRM system is central to this progress, supporting growth in membership and extending QDN's reach across Queensland communities.



Photo supplied by the Queensland Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability and Autism Health.

People

QDN's growth is built on investing in people and strengthening leadership at every level—our Board, staff, peer leaders, and members. By building the skills, knowledge and confidence of our network, we are expanding the capacity of people with disability to influence policy, practice and reform. This investment ensures QDN remains a forward-looking, rights-based organisation, equipped to deliver impact, drive systemic change, and support people with disability to lead the conversations that shape Queensland's future.



HEAR FROM A QDN MEMBER



Amy Cooper

“ I think QDN's work is important for people with disability in Queensland because it drives real, tangible, meaningful change in so many areas of our lives, and gives people who live with disability a voice. This empowers us to speak up about what the real issues are that affect us and allows us to propose our own ideas of solutions to fix these issues. Because at the end of the day, we, as people with lived experience of disability, know best when it comes to issues that affect our lives and the ways to help solve them. When I first became a member of QDN through the Emerging Leaders Program, it was the first time I felt truly respected, seen, and heard. It gave me the confidence I needed to strengthen my voice and gave me the opportunities I needed to become an advocate for others in the disability community. I can't even begin to express how QDN's work, and mission changed my life for the better, and I'm excited to be part of the work they continue to do in the future. ”



FINANCIALS

This page shows:

- **Income:** How much money QDN made in FY2025 (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025).
- **Expenses:** How much money QDN spent in FY2025 (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025).
- **Surplus:** The difference between QDN's income and expenses (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025).

	FY2025	FY2024
INCOME		
Total revenue	\$5,685,211	\$3,922,434
Grant funding from Queensland Government departments	\$3,222,307	\$1,795,319
Grant funding from Australian Government departments	\$1,375,579	\$1,361,732
QDeNgage fees and other project revenue	\$915,789	\$601,320
Investment and other income	\$171,536	\$164,063
EXPENSES		
Total expenses	\$5,586,998	\$3,889,712
SURPLUS		
Total surplus	\$98,213	\$32,722



HEAR FROM A QDN MEMBER



Joanna Fowler

“ I would like to see inclusivity as the norm, not the exception! Whether it might be in the community, T.V and media, and more importantly in everyday planning such as transportation and accommodation. QDN helps by advocating to the relevant departments and having people with disabilities on their team to give a lived experience perspective. ”





QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

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