



Annual Report 2025 2026



QDN

QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US



Acknowledgement 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.

Welcome

More than 200 Queenslanders with disability became members of QDN for the first time in 2025–26. We welcome them to our network.

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.

QDN
QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK
NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

ABN: 26 364 844 700
A: 338 Turbot Street, Spring Hill Qld 4000
P: 1300 363 783
E: qdn@qdn.org.au
W: www.qdn.org.au





Contents

Our Impact Snapshot **04**

About QDN **06**

Our Vision, Mission and Values 07

Chairperson's Report 08

CEO Report 09

Our Governance 11

Our Operations 12

Our Impact **15**

Our Influence and Systemic Advocacy Impact 16

Our Peer Leadership Impact 30

Our Projects and Engagement Impact 34

Our Workforce **40**

Our Financials **42**

Our Impact Snapshot

Membership

2,172 Ordinary Members

152 Support Organisations

1,080 Supporters

Peer Leadership

36 Group Convenors

42 Emerging Leaders

225 Peer Leaders

8 Peer Mentors

Our Systemic Advocacy Impact

32 Policy submissions

4 Ministerial Advisory Councils

10+ Local, state and national event presentations

4 Ministerial Roundtables

20+ Meetings with local, state and federal politicians

Spoke at **3** Parliamentary hearings –

- NDIS Reform
- Inquiry into E-mobility Safety and Use in Queensland
- Inquiry into the Thriving Kids Initiative

Power of Peers

2,580 participants engaged in **30** Support Groups that held **282** meetings

Inclusion Matters Forums

6 Forums

2 online

4 in regional Queensland

488 People made community connections on big issues

Media Coverage

13+ topics raised by QDN covered in the media

32 media mentions on radio, TV and newspapers – achieved 8,760,000+ media impressions across Queensland



QDENGAGE

613 consultant participation opportunities, via a team of **130** active consultants

54 completed engagement projects



Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy

34 co-designers delivered **642** hours of co-design

560 people attended Engagement and co-design training

13 training sessions delivered

278 people engaged in forums, co-design, deep dives and consultation

400+ people with disability, families, Government and community services engaged in Community of Practice

My Housing Options

53 information sessions

28 sessions online
25 sessions in person

1,268 participants attended





About QDN

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

For more than 24 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 Australian and Queensland Governments for their contributions to our projects this financial year.

Australian Government

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

Queensland Government

- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- 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
- Queensland Health
- Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and Sport
- Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Department of Trade, Employment, Small Business and Training

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



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Dr Talitha Kingsmill

This year, our community has led courageously and with resilience in an environment of continued reform and uncertainty. With enduring strength, QDN has remained committed to ensuring the collective voices of people with disability are central to the issues that matter most.

Since the commencement of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), 2026 has been one of the most challenging years for people with disability following the introduction of the NDIS reforms. In addition to this, our members and communities continue to experience the pressures of the rising cost of living, housing affordability, together with challenges in accessing health care and transport needs.

Through all of this, QDN has remained a respected and reliable voice, leading important conversations that place people with disability at the centre. Through our forums, events and engagement activities, we have connected with more Queenslanders than ever before, ensuring lived experience directly informs policy, reform and service delivery.

The work undertaken this year continues to demonstrate the power of collaboration. From our peer networks and regional communities to our Board, staff, partners, Government and industry – every contribution has strengthened our shared purpose. Thank you for your work, your voice and your commitment to a fairer and more inclusive future.

I particularly want to thank our growing network of members across Queensland. Your commitment, shared lived experience, knowledge, advocacy and determination are creating systemic reform across housing, transport, health and employment. QDN's greatest strength has always been, and continues to be, our members – you are the heartbeat of our Network!

I acknowledge my colleagues on the QDN Board for their leadership and guidance in advancing our mission and vision during a challenging year for people with disability. Their commitment and strong governance have continued to guide QDN through complexity, change and growth and I thank each Director and the Company Secretary for their passion, guidance and systemic advocacy.

We also pause to honour those we have lost within our network and community – including past members and contributors. Their service is the foundation upon which QDN progresses today and their legacy remains an integral part of the work we carry forward.

To our CEO, Michelle Moss, and the dedicated QDN team – I extend my sincere thanks for your leadership, commitment and unwavering efforts this year. This report speaks to everything we have achieved together. Through unity in striving to achieve our shared purpose we bring about impactful systemic change and reform.

Together, the QDN Board looks forward to continuing the important work of informing, leading, connecting, influencing and growing with you in the year ahead.



CEO REPORT

Michelle Moss

This year has been shaped by considerable challenges and systemic changes for people with disability across Queensland. Through this, QDN has continued to centre people's voices as a key driver in conversations and decision making as they lead, shape, and influence programs, policy and systemic reform.

During the year we met with political leaders and decision makers in Queensland and Canberra. Bringing real stories from people with disability supported by data from our member engagement and important research including the Voices of Queensland survey was key as significant and life-changing changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) were introduced to Parliament.

As CEO I spoke at the N*DIS Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill 2026* hearing. The focus of my time was highlighting the key points of QDN's submission as raised by members, people with disability and their families, and industry.

In addition to this, we had a year of great achievements for QDN and our members. Through co-design and with champions at the forefront, we delivered major firsts including the *Small Changes, Big Difference* campaign in partnership with Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ), industry partners and the My Housing Options Toolkit.

Our Peer Leadership footprint continued to expand across rural, regional and remote Queensland, connecting and empowering more people with disability and their communities. QDN Consultants were busier than ever, engaging with all levels of Government, community and business stakeholders. Together real systemic change was delivered, with co-design and lived experience included in planning and decision making.

QDN played a pivotal role in implementation of the Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy, bringing to life a new standard for inclusive policy development. Over hundreds of hours, specially trained co-designers with lived experience engaged with Government and community stakeholders to design and deliver an inclusive program of work.

It was another year of growth and reach in membership. Our network includes more Queenslanders with disability, supporters who include families and carers, organisations, allies, and community members than ever before coming together with a shared purpose around inclusion and accessibility.

Through all this we are guided by our mission 'Nothing about us, without us' as we made strides towards our strategic goals, building a sustainable future for QDN and the wider disability community.

We continued to invest in our foundations, modernising systems, strengthening governance and empowering Peer Leadership, so we remain fit for purpose and future ready.

I thank our Chairperson Dr Talitha Kingsmill and Deputy Chairperson Dr Sharon Boyce and the QDN Board for their strategic leadership and governance. To QDN's leadership, staff and peer leaders, thank you for your commitment, energy and passion in a very challenging year. I also want to say thank you to all our members and supporters for your actions to drive change.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to strengthening inclusive systems, expanding meaningful opportunities, and ensuring Queenslanders with disability continue to lead reform, shape policy, and participate fully in their communities.



Our Governance

Comprised of individuals with lived experience of disability with particular skills and experience, QDN's Board of Directors is responsible for our governance and strategic direction and gives direction to the executive team as they deliver meaningful outcomes for people with disability across Queensland.

They have a vital role in keeping the organisation sustainable, effective, accountable and rights-based. Through strong governance, planning and oversight, the Board has strengthened QDN's systems and capacity during a year of significant systemic reform and organisational growth.

As leaders with lived experience, QDN Directors keep people with disability at the centre of QDN's strategy and decision-making, shaping its direction and increasing its impact for members and the broader disability community.

QDN's Directors at 30 June 2026:



Dr Talitha Kingsmill
Chairperson



Dr Sharon Boyce
Deputy Chairperson



Des Ryan
Director, Chair of Audit and Compliance Committee



Karen McCarthy
Director, Chair of Nominations and Performance Committee



Nerine Broome
Director



Alison Barber
Director



Nigel Webb
Director



Danielle Brown
Director



Supported by:
Mark McKeon
Company Secretary





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 with particular skills and experience, 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 through 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.







Our Impact

QDN works alongside communities, services, businesses and Government to help create a Queensland that is more inclusive. We activate our statewide membership and networks, particularly in regional communities, to gather lived experience insights that directly inform project design, policy positions and systemic advocacy priorities.

As people with disability faced more reform and change than ever this year, our work has become even more crucial. QDN operates across five strategic goals. Every piece of work we do is informed by one or more of the goals as we deliver on our mission and purpose.

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.

Shaped by our five strategic goals, our activities outlined in the following sections for the 2025-2026 financial year show a coordinated approach to progressing inclusion, leadership and systemic reform. It also highlights the role of lived experience in strengthening networks and creating enduring change.



Our Systemic Advocacy and Influence Impact

QDN is a systemic advocacy organisation that works toward long-term social change by helping make laws, rules and group practices fairer. We do this through a range of strategic activities designed to influence change and address key issues that matter to people with disability.

This financial year, we continued to engage with members and allies to inform our positions across key areas including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), housing and accessible accommodation, healthcare, education, employment, transport and E-scooters, and cost of living.

As an Executive Peak, we also partnered with other peaks, organisations and key stakeholders, as well as members, to provide submissions, representation and feedback to a range of Local, State and Commonwealth Government policy initiatives. The key achievements and progress outcomes achieved in the 25-26 financial year are outlined in the following table.

Achievements	
Submissions	• More than 30 submissions this financial year, elevating the collective voices of people with disability to inform change. • These included the *NDIS Amendment Bill* Submission, Thriving Kids Inquiry Submission, *Disability Discrimination Act* Submission, Queensland Productivity Commission Review of Construction Industry Submission, and the E-Mobility Safety and Use Inquiry Submission.
Executive Peak leadership	• Chaired four peak organisations meetings. • Partnered with 50 organisations to write a letter urging the Queensland Government to maintain the National Construction Code for houses being built in Queensland. • Hosted and chaired five Client Advisory Network (CAN) sessions. The CAN is made up of nine members, all of whom live in level three supported accommodation services, who come together to share key issues. Representatives from the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety attended.
Election platforms	• Commenced preparation to collect practical insights from people with disability to shape policy position platforms. • Held Employment forums with members to collect insights • Scheduled more forums for new financial year on a range of key issues areas.

Achievements	
Engaging with political leaders 	• Contributed to four Ministerial Advisory Councils across key issues around homelessness, procurement, volunteering and disability. • Met regularly with Queensland Government Ministers and their teams to discuss key issues identified by members and people with disability across the state. • Participated in four Ministerial roundtables. • Travelled to Canberra twice and met directly with federal policymakers and Senators to advocate on key national priorities identified by our members. • Attended meetings in Canberra with representatives from the Labor Party, Liberal Party, Greens, One Nation and Katter's Australian Party.
Raising awareness and driving systemic change 	• Delivered more than 10 presentations locally, state-wide and nationally across a range of topics including: – Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy work across Disability Reforms to the Queensland Carers Advisory Council. – Disability Awareness Training and capacity building for the Queensland Health workforce on Conscious and Unconscious Bias. – National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health Annual Conference. – CEO and Peer Leader Donna Best co-presented about My Housing Toolkit at the National Australian Society for Intellectual Disability Conference. – CEO and Peer Leader Alison Maclean presented at the National Housing Conference in Perth about peer leadership work in Level 3 supported accommodation services. – Panel speaker on NDIS Reforms at the Ageing Australia National Conference. – Queensland Health Disability Awareness Training on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction. – Urbis lunchbox presentation to planners, engineers and staff, on Inclusion and Brisbane 2032. – Panel Speaker for Co.Design4All Framework Launch. – Queenslanders with Disability, Families and Carers Insights Forum. – Keynote presentation by CEO and Donna Best at the National Disability Leadership Forum, University of Sydney. – Speaker on two panels at Australia's Disability Strategy 2026 National Forum on See Me, Hear Me, Respect Me Campaign. – Panel Speaker for the Transport Forum delivered by Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce.

Achievements	
	– Presented at the National Disability Services Conference on QDN's work in disability reforms and disability inclusive disaster risk reduction. • Met with Dr Lorraine Finlay from the Australian Human Rights Commission in March to discuss the importance of human rights in emergency and disaster responses. • Partnered with PeakCare, QShelter, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and Neighbourhood Centres Queensland on a series of five forums with a focus on prevention across disability, housing, child protection, community services through the Preventative Peaks Alliance.
QDN led events	• Hosted National Reconciliation Week event around the theme of *All In*. Aboriginal leaders and key leaders from across the disability sector came together to hear from speakers and connect. Speakers included Uncle Willie Prince, Uncle Paul Calcott and Hannah Marai. • Hosted the Queensland Roundtable, Health and Intellectual Disability with 85 attendees from Government, Community Services and Health, in partnership with National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health and Queensland Centre of Excellence, Intellectual Disability and Autism Health. • Hosted the Queensland Disability Conference 2025 with the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety with 207 attending in person and 160 online with a focus on employment, co-design for impact and towards 2032 for inclusion and accessibility for all Queenslanders. • Hosted Queensland Disability Regional Conferences 2025 in Cairns and Rockhampton for the first time with the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety and more than 100 attendees in person. • Hosted Disability Action Week 2025 webinar that brought together experts who shaped the creative landscape of Queensland to discuss access and inclusion in the arts for people with disability. More than 300 registered to listen to leaders discuss the theme 'Communicate. Connect. Create' as well as accessible communication in action in our communities and the changes we can make to improve access for all.

National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health

As a consortium partner in the National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health, QDN contributes lived experience, systemic advocacy and Queensland perspectives to national work to improve health outcomes for people with intellectual disability. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, the Centre supports implementation of the National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability and works to ensure people with intellectual disability across Australia have access to high-quality, inclusive and person-centred health care. QDN works alongside consortium partners the University of New South Wales, University of Melbourne, Centre for Disability Studies, Council for Intellectual Disability, Down Syndrome Australia, First Peoples Disability Network Australia, Queensland Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability and Autism Health and The Kids Research Institute Australia.





Preventative Peaks Alliance

As a founding member of the Preventative Peaks Alliance, QDN worked alongside PeakCare, QShelter, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak to strengthen the focus on prevention and early intervention across Queensland's human services system. The Alliance brings together disability, housing, children and families, community development and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives to address fragmented supports, underinvestment in prevention and the growing reliance on crisis and statutory responses. During 2025–26, QDN contributed to cross-sector workshops and engagement across Queensland that brought together community members, sector leaders, frontline workers and policymakers to identify barriers, share evidence and develop a common approach to prevention and early intervention. This work has informed a shared prevention typology and a growing evidence base for systemic reform, including greater investment in community-led, responses, stronger collaboration across service systems and approaches that address issues earlier before they escalate to crisis.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

This financial year, we saw the Federal Government introduce reform activities that would have significant impact on the participants, their carers and families, and the organisations that support them. QDN made submissions for the NDIS Amendment Bill Review and the NDIS Review. To do this, we hosted two forums, as well as two Peer Leader and Convenor meetings where the proposed changes were discussed in depth.

The Queensland Disability Representative Peaks Group, chaired by QDN CEO, also met to discuss the NDIS Review with representatives from the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the NDIA.

In addition to the submission, our leadership team took the key issues raised by members, supporters and people with disability to key decision makers and stakeholders. Our CEO Michelle Moss met with the Hon Amanda Camm, Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and other stakeholders as part of a roundtable to discuss the NDIS changes. Michelle Moss also attended a hearing for the *NDIS Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill* on 9 June, where she outlined the concerns about the Amendments based on the feedback from members.



Engaging with political leaders

During the financial year, QDN leadership connected with key political decision makers and their teams, as well as those across Government departments on a range of issues.

QDN leadership travelled to Canberra and met directly with federal policymakers and Senators to advocate on key national priorities identified by our members. This included representatives from the Labor Party, Liberal Party, Greens, One Nation and Katter's Australian Party. Here they shared stories from people with disability, key data, issues, challenges and barriers raised from community and ideas for better inclusion into the future.

Across Queensland, QDN, our members, our consultants, co-designers and peer leaders engaged with decision makers across all levels of Government across Local Government, State and Commonwealth to discuss the big issues and find real solutions together.

QDN leadership met with key Ministers and Shadow Ministers including Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety, the Hon Amanda Camm, Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth, the Hon Sam O'Connor and Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Hon Tim Mander.

We were also invited and attended a Budget briefing given by Queensland Treasurer, the Hon David Janetzki.

Our leadership participated in four Ministerial Advisory Council's across key issues around homelessness, procurement, volunteering and disability. We also participated in four Ministerial roundtables including:

- Ministerial Procurement Roundtable with Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Youth, the Hon Sam O'Connor.



- Ministerial Disability Roundtable with the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Hon Amanda Camm.
- Ministerial Roundtable Volunteering with the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers, the Hon Ann Leahy.
- Ministerial Disability Roundtable Thriving Kids with the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Hon Amanda Camm.

In addition to NDIS hearings, QDN attended and provided input at the Inquiry into E-mobility Safety and Use in Queensland public hearing, and the Inquiry into the Thriving Kids initiative Commonwealth Parliamentary Hearing.

Voice of Queenslanders with Disability Survey

Now in its fourth year, QDN called for people with disability to once again share their insights. This longitudinal survey provides the practical data needed by QDN, community services organisations and Government to support real systematic change into the future. This financial year saw a growth in participant numbers to more than 850, providing a stronger insight into the experiences of people with disabilities.

Voice of Queenslanders with Disability data informed our broader policy and systemic advocacy:

- The impact of changes to the National Construction Code in Queensland on people with disability
- the Small Changes, Big Difference Campaign
- Disaster Management strategies to improve preparedness for people with disability
- Media stories highlighting the experience of people with disability.

QDN continues to advocate on key issues impacting people with disability with real data from people with lived experience of disability across Queensland.

National Reconciliation Week 2026 and the theme *All In*

This year during National Reconciliation Week, QDN hosted an event where Indigenous leaders and others from across the disability sector came together to hear from amazing speakers and connect with others at this important event.

The event began with Acknowledgement of Country by Uncle Willie Prince who is a proud Kalkadoon man born on Wakka Wakka Country, storyteller and athlete. He also carried the Paralympic Torch during 2000 Olympics. Uncle Willie represented Queensland eleven times in wheelchair racing, shot put and discus and is a Life Member of QDN.

We had the honour of also hearing from Uncle Paul Calcott, a Wiradjuri artist whose works are on loan to QDN. These are displayed in the QDN office and relate to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability. Uncle Paul and his colleagues attended the United Nations Celebrations this year in New York.

Hannah Marai also spoke to the audience about the importance of cultural connection and growing up as a granddaughter of Eddie and Bonita Mabo.

There was also a special moment when Uncle Paul presented Hannah with an original artwork he painted for her grandmother Bonita Mabo when she was to meet Oprah Winfrey. The painting represents two strong black women coming together from across the sea and sharing their cultures.

The dates for National Reconciliation Week remain the same each year; 27 May to 3 June. These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey – the successful 1967 referendum, and the High Court Mabo decision respectively.

QDN recognises and celebrates the important role that First Nations people with disability have and continue to play in the community by sharing their stories and culture.







Our Systemic Reform Impact - Queensland Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy

We continued enabling experience-led disability reform as we implemented the Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy. This financial year we had 34 co-designers who delivered more than 640 hours towards designing, testing, and implementing important disability reforms under the Queensland Disability Reform Framework.

As part of delivering the strategy we partnered with Mob4Mob, Community Resource Unit (CRU), Amparo Advocacy and Griffith University. The key achievements and progress outcomes achieved in the 25-26 financial year are outlined in the following table.

Achievements	
Disability Reforms Implementation Stakeholder Committee (DRISC) meeting	• Co-chaired and provided secretariat support for the DRISC governance committee which provides advisory, monitoring and facilitation roles specifically related to the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement and Co-design Strategy. • Attended four meetings.
Disability Reforms Community of Practice QDN Co-design COP and engagement and co-design training	• Enabled four Community of Practice sessions, supporting co-designers to host and facilitate break out rooms. These sessions are opportunities to share learnings about best practice co-design and hear reflections about co-design work in a safe and supportive space. • Managed more than 400 registrations across the sessions, providing accessibility support such as Auslan interpreters and captioning. • Uploaded sessions onto the website and promoted to wider community.

Achievements	
Co-design hub	• Completed the Accessible Courts and Tribunals project in partnership with Department of Justice that involved: – A half day workshop with nine people with disability involved in courts and tribunals and 10 representatives from courts and tribunals and The Public Advocate for Queensland. – Two-hour focus group with a mothers group. • Undertook a review of the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme with Queensland Health and co-designers. • Provided consultation on a new Disability Aide-Memoire, a resource for Queensland Police Service. • Progressed four key projects with Queensland Health. • Worked with Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety to undertake deep dives and sense making sessions in Longreach, Blackall, Tambo, Barcaldine, Rockhampton, Logan, Mt Isa, including specific focus groups and forums with key stakeholders including First Nations representatives.
Information sharing and capacity building	• 560 people attended Engagement and co-design training • 278 people engaged in forums, co-design, deep dives and consultation





Our Housing Impact

This financial year, QDN continued partnering with Government, housing industry, universities and community services to improve access to safe, accessible, and inclusive housing.

QDN's housing program has continued to strengthen the voice and leadership of people with disability through co-design, policy leadership and strategic partnerships. The key achievements and progress outcomes achieved in the 2025-26 financial year are outlined in the following table.

Achievements	
Expert Disability Housing Advisory Panel (EDHAP)	• Delivered secretariat support for four EDHAP meetings to support implementation of the Queensland Government's *A Place to Call Home – Inclusive housing for people with disability.* • Supported the establishment of two specialist Working Groups of the Panel. • Supported 11 key meetings for the Panel including working group meetings and modular housing briefing meetings. • EDHAP provided annual report to the Minister with insights, issues, recommendations identified through the panel.
My Housing Options Toolkit	• Co-designed the My Housing Options Toolkit with people with disability, families/carers, support organisations, and other key stakeholders. • Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth, Hon Sam O'Connor launched the toolkit on 21 October 2025. • Delivered 28 online and 25 in person information sessions to more than 1,268 attendees to support people with disability, their families, carers, along with their housing and disability providers and workers to have informed discussions about housing options.

Achievements	
Opening Doors: Accessible icons to find the right home 	• Advanced the Accessible Icons and Descriptors project through co-design with people with disability, Government and industry partners. • Developed practical resources to improve how accessibility features are described in residential property listings. • Developed and distributed the Accessible Icons and Descriptors Guide, an Information Card for real estate professionals. • Launched a dedicated website and information card developed and distributed to real estate professionals through the Real Estate Institute of Queensland. • Ongoing engagement with industry, Government, and online property platforms to promote the use of accessibility icons and descriptors.
Small Changes, Big Difference campaign 	• Co-designed a campaign about home modifications in rentals for tenants with disabilities, homeowners and rental agents. • Launched the campaign with Assistant Minister for Planning, Housing, and Better Regulation, Rebecca Young on 1 May 2026. It was hosted by DWF Lawyers with attendees from Queensland Government, Real Estate Institute of Queensland, industry leaders, NDIA and members of the panel. • Delivered resources including campaign landing page, a series of eight posters, eight screensavers, and eight social media tiles, flyers and email signature block. • Distributed more than 200 posters and flyers to real estate professionals. • Prepared and distributed a joint QDN and Real Estate Institute of Queensland letter promoting the campaign distributed to all Queensland members of the State and Commonwealth parliaments, and the Commonwealth Minister for Housing.

Small Changes, Big Difference

Property owners, investors, and property managers play a critical role in making rental housing more accessible, inclusive and respectful.

Small modifications can make a big difference. Renters should feel empowered to request reasonable changes and property owners should be supported to say yes.

In an Australian first, representatives from the real estate industry, Government and people with disability have come together through an inclusive co-design process to raise awareness about home modifications for rentals.

The *Small Changes, Big Difference* campaign was launched in May 2026 by Assistant Minister for Planning, Housing, and Better Regulation, Rebecca Young MP.

It provides guidance on how accessibility modifications can be requested and installed in private rentals and how property owners can adopt best practice.

The campaign resources include an interactive landing page, videos, posters, flyer, screensavers and social media tiles. Featured across these are real people; real estate agents, people with disability and property owners.

Improving understanding of minor home modifications in private rental properties has positive outcomes for real estate agents, property owners and their tenants.

Many accessibility upgrades also future-proof rental properties, enhancing safety, functionality, and long-term value.

Accessible homes enable people with disability to live with greater freedom, independence, and confidence, often through simple, low-cost changes.

Something as simple as a temporary ramp, bathroom grab rail, or hoist in the bedroom can give people greater independence, choice, and control in their daily lives.

This doesn't just benefit people with disability; small changes in rentals also support ageing Australians, families, and future tenants and buyers.

We would like to thank everyone across the real estate industry, Government and people with disability who participated in the development, launch and distribution of this campaign.

Find out more online at: www.qdn.org.au/smallchangesbigdifferences





My Housing Options



In an Australian first, QDN, with the support of members, QDN Housing Champions and the Queensland Government, released the *My Housing Options Toolkit.* People with disability and their support network can now access a website with the toolkit and other key resources to explore their housing options and create a plan that works for them.

What is revolutionary about this toolkit is that it provides practical support for people with disability and their support team (including housing and disability services organisations) to have meaningful and structured conversations about an individual's housing journey.

These resources start with one simple question, identified during the co-design process – tell us about your current and past housing to help you plan for your future needs. It explores the housing experiences of a person with disability to better inform a sustainable housing outcome.

Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth, Hon. Samuel (Sam) O'Connor officially launched the toolkit and resources on 21 October 2025. He said:

"Thanks to the Queenslanders with Disability Network for your outstanding efforts leading the work on this important new resource. We're proud to support your work to help all Queenslanders have a safe, secure place to call home."

Department of Housing Occupational Therapists highly praised the 'amazing' and 'very useful' *My Housing Options Toolkit*. They said that: 'its structured worksheets, activity board and cards are excellent resources for guiding home-visit conversations, helping customers in crisis regain choice and control, and assisting long-term tenants to look beyond access issues to envision a positive future.'

During the financial year, the M*y Housing Options* website was busy with more than 32,765 views. Conversations about housing options and plans are underway with the toolkit downloaded more than 2,630 times with 1,580 other resources downloaded.

Following the launch, QDN delivered 53 free online and in person sessions for people with disability, families, supporters, providers, workers, and sector leaders. More than 1,265 participants attended one of the 25 in person and 28 online sessions.

'It was an excellent presentation, and I could immediately see the value this resource would have for both our team and the clients we support.' Manager, Neighbourhood Centre, supporting people at risk of homelessness and individuals with NDIS supports and disability.

Delivering the *My Housing Options Toolkit* was a key action under A Place to Call Home – Inclusive housing for people with disability, funded by the Queensland Government. This leading piece of work also includes a range of easy-to-read resources to support people with a wide range of disability to make a plan.





Find out more here:
www.myhousingoptions.org.au



Our Peer Leadership Impact

QDN connected people, strengthened peer leadership and ensured lived experience continued to shape inclusion and systemic reform.

During the year, our initiatives amplified local voices, strengthened peer-led advocacy on issues like health, housing, transport, education, employment, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and reduced isolation. They also built clear pathways into leadership and employment, cultivating new leaders who are shaping more inclusive communities across the state.

The key achievements and progress outcomes achieved in the 2025-26 financial year are outlined in the following table.

Achievements	
Peer Support Groups	• Supported 30 Peer Support Groups across the state. • Expanded network with two new regional groups: – Longreach Gidgee **Yarning Circle** led by a **First Nations** convener. – Mount Isa peer support group. • Grew a peer support group for **LGBTQIA+** members to more than 60 members. • Grew QDN **Women's** online peer support group to more than 100 members. This group provided input into key issues, for example helping shape a presentation on domestic violence delivered at the Understanding Pathways to Safety: Brisbane Domestic & Family Violence Forum 2026. • Launched a Digital Inclusion Peer Support Group to increase members confidence, knowledge and capacity in their digital experiences. • Captured and shared member stories through the QDN website. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing used one for their International Day of People with Disability social media campaign.
Emerging Leaders Program	• Graduated 20 successful Emerging Leaders in 2025. • Launched the 2026 cohort of 22 Emerging Leaders in March. The participants are from across the State, including Cairns, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Mackay and Mount Isa and includes leaders who identify as from LGBTQIA+, First Nations and from CALD communities. • Partnered with the University of Sydney for an evaluation process.

Achievements	
	• Celebrated success of previous cohort Emerging Leaders who: – Presented at the Disability Tech Summit 2025 – Presented on accessible and universal design as a 60 Second Challenge Finalist at TEDxBrisbane – Received the 2026 Gladstone Region Community Volunteer Award.
Inclusion Matters Forums 	• Organised, hosted and facilitated Forums in Gladstone, Mount Isa, Mackay, Rockhampton and Roma with more than 485 attendees. • Broke records in Rockhampton with the **largest regional event QDN has hosted** with 70 registrations. • Presented to Gladstone Regional Council in Chambers accompanied by Business Chamber Queensland as well as held many meetings with organisations after the Forum in July 2025. From this, a pilot project 'Workforce Evolve' was launched. • Expanded into South-West Queensland with a Forum in Roma, which led to presentations and meetings with Maranoa Regional Council Mayor and Councillors. • Forged new and stronger relationships with Regional Councils in Queensland, community organisations, advocates, NDIS partners in community, health care professionals, service providers, people with disability and their families and carers.
Peer Mentor Program 	• Employed eight Peer Mentors to support and mentor peer support group conveners and facilitate information sessions, including when all group conveners come to Brisbane in October each year for two days of Learning and Development.
QCommunicators 	• Seven QDN Members met online monthly to learn more about communications, and to give lived experience input on QDN Campaigns.



Peer Mentor and Peer Group Convenor **Karin Brady**

"I think Peer Groups are important because they bring together people who understand each other's experiences. They're a place where people can talk openly, ask questions, share ideas, and support one another without feeling judged.

I've seen people grow in confidence, make lasting friendships, and realize they're not alone.

Sometimes the conversation and a peer support group are about more than personal experiences. Members raise issues affecting their local community, and these can be shared with QDN to help identify bigger systemic problems.

This information helps inform our member's individual engagement, as well as our statewide systemic advocacy, to advocate with Governments and to Governments and other decision makers, helping improve policies, services and outcomes for people with disabilities.

As a peer mentor, I support new and existing peer leaders by sharing my experience, offering guidance. And helping build their confidence in their roles. I also enjoy creating opportunities for peer leaders to learn from each other and grow their skills. It's rewarding to see people become more confident and develop as leaders within the Peer Support Network."


QDN
QDN
QDN
QDN





Our Projects and Engagement Impact

Every project we deliver works toward a more inclusive and accessible Queensland. Through co-design, co-production and collaboration with members, communities, services and Government, we deliver meaningful change with lived experience at the centre.

This financial year, we delivered a record number of projects as well as stakeholder and community engagement activities. Our projects program achieves tangible results across our five strategic goals, particularly Lead, Connect and Influence as highlighted in the following tables.

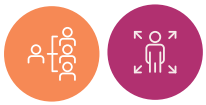
There were 54 peer leaders participating across the projects in different roles.

QDN projects were delivered through partnerships and collaboration with key Government, community services and other industry stakeholders this financial year to deliver real systemic change.

This included: Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers; Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Energy and Climate; Department of Social Services; Department of Family, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training; Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport; Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games; and Queensland Health.

For our extensive research we partnered with University of Sydney, Queensland University of Technology, University of Queensland, Griffith University and Jamieson Trauma Institute.

The key achievements and progress outcomes achieved in the 2025-26 financial year are outlined in the following table. All resources, tools and collateral were made available to QDN members, people with disability and their communities, community services, Government and other key stakeholders.

Achievements	
Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Peer Leadership Program 	• Delivered a peer leadership program that built the capacity of 11 people with disability to take part in local disaster management and responses. • Implemented the program across three Local Government Areas of Redlands, Bundaberg and Southern Downs.
Resilient Care Initiative – Country to Coast 	• Delivered a rapid resilience program building health and wellbeing outcomes across regional Queensland. • Engaged 224 participants from Rockhampton, Livingstone, Gladstone, Bundaberg and Fraser Coast.
Bright Sparks 	• Led a peer-led program helping people with disability build energy literacy and confidence in managing energy costs. • Strengthened the leadership skills of eight people with disability to become Energy Champions. • Co-designed accessible resources tailored to diverse learning needs and built collaboration with organisations across Queensland to promote energy literacy. • Facilitated 61 workshops reaching 564 participants.
Disability Pathway for the Future Leaders Graduate Program 	• Partnered with Department of the Premier and Cabinet to deliver the peer-led co-design of a Disability Pathway for the Future Leaders Graduate Program. • Appointed two Inclusion Consultants with disability and employment expertise to co-design, co-facilitate and analyse materials throughout the project. • Facilitated three co-design workshops with current graduates with disability and Government staff, including 11 students with diverse disability and intersections, and Access and Inclusion/Career Services teams engaged across four universities. • Identified the barriers and enablers shaping how graduates with disability access, experience and progress through the program. • Reviewed recruitment materials and psychometric testing.
Workforce Evolve – Pilot, Gladstone 	• Partnered with Business Chamber Queensland to deliver a six-month pilot partnership strengthening disability inclusion in Gladstone businesses. • Three Inclusion consultants worked with eight Gladstone-based businesses to undertake an inclusion health check and identify ways of improving inclusion in businesses. • Demonstrated that practical interventions, led by people with disability, can deliver meaningful, lasting change for businesses.

Achievements	
Disaster Preparedness for Disability Accommodation Settings 	• Developed a practical disaster preparedness framework for accommodation providers, including a decision-making matrix and risk assessment tool. • Completed three co-design sessions with people with disability and disability accommodation providers, in partnership with the University of Sydney and National Disability Services. • Research synthesised and translated into framework.
Inclusivity in Manufacturing Workforce Program 	• Partnered with Manufacturing Skills Queensland and The Industry Platform (formerly known as BenchON) with funding from the Workforce Connect Fund. • Co-designed and launched an online jobs portal connecting job seekers with disability to the manufacturing industry. • More than 65 job seekers engaged with disability on the platform.
E-sports-able 	• Led by QUT, QDN worked to deliver a mentoring program encouraging diversity in esports for high school students with mental health conditions. • Provided teenagers with online training and coaching to support event involvement. • Two QDN mentors delivered support across Cairns, Mackay, Mount Isa, Rockhampton, Townsville and Toowoomba.
Community Connections Tour 	• Partnered with the National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health. • Co-designed the National Community Connections Tour with eight consultants with intellectual disability. • Facilitated four co-design sessions held with people with intellectual disability.
Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research 	• Provided lived experience insights towards the development of an evaluation framework for Queensland Health's Intellectual and Developmental Disability Mental Health Teams. • Facilitated six co-design sessions with people with intellectual disability, people with developmental disability/identify as autistic, and families and carers.

During the year, work commenced or continued across another five projects:

Achievements	
All Abilities JobMatch Program 	• Engaged four Inclusion Consultants with disability to help community services employers prepare for and employ people with disability. • Established a community of practice among employers to champion industry-wide systemic change. • Connected with eight new Host Employers and eight people with disabilities employed for a 12-week internship • Three Interns secured ongoing work with Host Employers.
Shifting Bias **funded through the Australian Government's Inclusion and Accessibility Fund** 	• Co-designed training that challenges conscious and unconscious bias, builds disability awareness and strengthens inclusive practice across Queensland • Engaged eight people with disability for the Project Advisory Group and co-design. • Three co-design sessions held with people with disability and leaders across the justice sector and community services to co-deliver workshops and sessions across these sectors.
Empower - Brisbane 2032 Games Legacy Project 	• Partnered with Jamieson Trauma Institute Metro North Health, Queensland University of Technology (QUT Centre for Data Science), The University of Queensland, Griffith University, University of Southern Queensland and Sporting Wheelies to progress this legacy initiative to address barriers to sport and recreation for people with disability. • Progressed comprehensive research into sport and recreation participation data. • Led co-design targeted initiatives to address participation barriers ahead of the 2032 Games. • Delivered the Empower Symposium with 115 attendees.
Preparing for and responding to emergencies for people with communication disability 	• Commenced planning for the co-design, development and delivery of a communication-accessible disaster preparedness workshops, forums, as well as an all-hazards toolkit to support the disaster preparedness for 275 Queenslanders with communication disability. • Partnered with University of Queensland Aphasia Research Centre.
QDN Inclusion Consultants 	• Delivered the Employment Alignment Day that brought together 12 QDN Inclusion Consultants from across Queensland to share learnings, identify opportunities for growth and discuss strategic approaches for influencing change. This informed the establishment a road map to expand the QDN Inclusion Consultant role as a key driver for change in disability employment.

QDN Consultant impact

QDeNgage delivers across the three strategic goals of inform, lead and influence. Now in its seventh year, it continues to connect organisations with specialist consultants. Our QDN Consultants bring professional expertise and lived experience of disability to help make services, infrastructure, products and workplaces more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

This financial year, the program engaged with councils, local and state Government, universities, health and hospital services, and businesses, spanning 54 projects in total. Four long-term agreements successfully continued. Our pool of more than130 active consultants participated in more than 600 individual opportunities.

Our consultants served another year on the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) Disability Engagement Panel. Established in 2022, more than 80 engagements have been completed through the panel. This year QDN Consultants engagement centred on accessibility and process improvements, lived experience testing, and saw QDN Consultants featured across TMR campaigns and photoshoots.

As we continue to grow and expand QDeNgage, we undertook an external review of the program and implemented some key changes to further improve our consultancy model. Work was underway to evolve the brand identity to support sustainable growth into the future.





Hear from our QDN consultants:

Travis

"What do I enjoy? It's having an opinion. It's cool to be part of projects where you can actually see things are going to change. You're doing things that make some form of difference. And my friends have seen me on pictures at TransLink and stuff, and it starts conversations when I tell them I did a whole advertisement for accessibility on the long travel trains. And that's really cool.

Disability is different every day. So being in a consultant group that's flexible, which this is, is awesome. You can be involved as much as possible for your disability and the team are understanding. There'll be plenty of opportunities to do things."





Lily Wan Lum

"I was surprised how easy it was! The environment at QDN is very inviting. Not only in terms of staff, but also other consultants and participants.

To anyone thinking about becoming a consultant: You might think "I'm not a fit to be a consultant" or "I don't have the right experience'. I can confidently say that the amount of knowledge you have doesn't ultimately matter.

Because having a variety of people is the most important thing.

You don't understand how big of an impact that can make. Especially to those on the other side looking at that information. The variety of voices is how we get the best collective idea for everyone."



Our Workforce

In the 2025-26 Financial Year, we continued to invest in systems and our people to strengthen our organisational sustainability into the future.

QDN maintains accreditation under ISO 9001:2025 and can again report this year the operation of a comprehensive Quality Management System that supports strong governance, consistent operations and continuous improvement. This includes a formal Governance Charter and structured Policy Manuals, which provide clear frameworks for accountability, efficiency and service integrity. Together, these systems support QDN's commitment to high standards and its role as a trusted organisation governed by and for people with disability.

During the year, QDN continued to strengthen its organisational governance, quality and operational systems through the development and implementation of new and updated policies, procedures and guidelines, including in areas such as child safety, workplace health and safety and emerging organisational risks. These frameworks support consistent practice, accountability, privacy and confidentiality, effective risk management and quality outcomes for members, stakeholders and staff. QDN will continue to review and update its policies and procedures to ensure they remain current, fit for purpose and aligned with legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements.

We invested further in building capacity and a sustainable future with the introduction of Employment Hero. This system provides human resources in one place, streamlining processes, providing faster approvals, reducing paper, emails and time so our people can focus on delivering on our mission.


QDN
Person Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) Workbook
QDN

Our Financials

This page shows:

- **Income:** How much money QDN made in 2025-26 (the year ended 30 June 2026).
- **Expenses:** How much money QDN spent in 2025-26.
- **Surplus:** The difference between QDN's income and expenses in 2025-26.

	2025-26	2024-25
INCOME		
Grant funding from Queensland Government departments	$3,935,341	$3,222,307
Grant funding from Australian Government departments	$1,639,024	$1,375,579
QDeNgage fees and other grant funding and project revenue	$1,287,937	$915,789
Investment and other income	$175,195	$171,536
Total revenue	$7,037,497	$5,685,211
EXPENSES		
Total expenses	$6,941,067	$5,586,998
SURPLUS		
Total surplus	$96,430	$98,213



Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN)
ABN: 26 364 844 700
A: 338 Turbot Street, Spring Hill, Qld 4000
P: 1300 363 783
E: qdn@qdn.org.au
W: www.qdn.org.au