



AUSTRALIAN  
PROGRESS 

# Annual Report

2021-22

**The Australian Progress team lives and works on Wurundjeri, Ngunnawal, Dunghutti and Gumbaynggirr country. We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land, and pay respect to Elders past and present. Sovereignty of this land has never been ceded, it always was and always will be Aboriginal land.**



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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



### Dear friends and partners,

This year we've seen the incredible power of grassroots movements coming together to support each other, build community capacity and revitalise civil participation. From First Nations communities leading on-the-ground organising to coordinate flood relief in the Northern Rivers, to electorate-based 'Voices of' campaigns motivated by people-powered democracy and community decision making – we've witnessed a myriad of innovative approaches to community organising, civic engagement and campaigning across the sector.

The national policy agenda has shifted with the election of a new government and an unprecedented number of independents and minor parties in both houses of Parliament. This development creates a new window of opportunity to win progressive change on issues like First Nations truth, treaties and justice, economic fairness, wage growth, disability justice, climate, affordable public health, access to housing and more.

With growing community appetite and support for a more fair, sustainable, globally engaged and democratic society, Australian Progress' role in the movement is more important than ever. We are unique in the way we work cross-sector to grow skills, connect, and drive innovation, building the capacity of movements to advocate and win social and environmental change.

Shortly after the May federal election, we convened 220 leaders in Canberra and online for our hybrid Leadership 2022 conference. We met at a moment full of possibility, coming together *en masse* for the first time since the pandemic began to connect, strategise and identify ways to work together to ensure community voice and interests are at the heart of policy decision making. On the final day, leaders shared the most pressing capacity building needs to strengthen advocacy across the sector, and these ideas are already shaping our strategy and training offerings.

The Economic Media Centre was identified as one of the key capacity opportunities out of Leadership 2019, and in partnership with ACOSS we launched it at the start of the pandemic. I'm thrilled that this project has gone from strength to strength. To date we've

trained 350 diverse spokespeople from around the country, supported more than 70 small organisations, and secured 8,000+ media stories across major outlets. By supporting grassroots movements and spokespeople with lived expertise of economic injustice, we've directly shifted public narratives and enabled policy change on key economic issues, such as income support, affordable housing, gender equity and refugee rights. I'm excited to share that from August 2022, we have doubled our team to meet the extraordinary need in media capacity.

One of my proudest moments this year was supporting Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Larissa Baldwin, GetUp, Original Power and 19 First Nations Messaging and Communications Fellows to launch *Passing the Message Stick*, the results of a two year message research and narrative shifting project to find persuasive messages that build support for First Nations self determination and justice. The 120-page report and interactive website with messaging recommendations have been viewed 14,000+ times, and more than 1,500 changemakers have come to briefings.

As for what's next – we will be supporting the next stages of *Passing the Message Stick*, with two new message research projects focusing on treaty, truth and referendum, and law and justice, led by Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Larissa Baldwin, CEO of GetUp, and our new First Nations Justice Director, Amelia Telford. Big moments on our calendar next year include hosting NEXUS Australia Summit in November 2022, and working with partners to hold a First Nations summit, Common Threads, in March 2023.

To our core and project supporters, our Inner Circle, the Progress community, our board and our fabulous team – thank you for all that you do, it's a pleasure to work with you.

**Kirsty Albion**  
Executive Director

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



**Australian Progress is such a unique and special organisation within civil society, and it's been a privilege for me to step into the role of Board Chair. Our staff team has contributed to the change that we want to see in the world in so many meaningful ways that it's hard to know where to start – or finish.**

To Executive Director, Kirsty Albion, thank you on behalf of the Board for your extraordinary leadership. You approach life with an unwavering vision, incredible ambition and humility to match. You and your team have worked tirelessly – despite challenges like the ongoing Covid pandemic – to deliver a high impact program of work. Highlights include bringing together civil society CEOs and other senior leaders in Canberra shortly after the historic federal election, scaling up the scope and impact of the Economic Media Centre, training hundreds of changemakers in best practice campaign strategy and community organising, and driving forward First Nations, racial justice and disability justice strategies.

Our community has many needs in the face of intersecting health, climate, economic and racial justice crises. In response, we developed a strategic plan in 2020 with **five priority areas** to strengthen civil society. In under two years, we've **exceeded our three-year goals across these priority areas**, and dedicated time to reflect on and review our organisation's vision, mission and values. Much has changed in the world since Australian Progress was founded almost a decade ago, but our commitment to creating systems change has never wavered.

Among other things, the team has:

- **Shifted power and resources to those with lived experience of injustice**, with a focus on First Nations justice, racial justice and disability justice. We have increased the skills of 400+ campaigners with lived expertise, and shifted close to \$2M to movements led by people with lived expertise, including \$1.5M as a result of coaching, training and connections delivered through the Capacity Building Hub.
- **Increased the scale, reach and impact of community organising** by fostering growth in skills and innovation, including through a Virtual Global Study Tour and digital organising training, and coordinating movements through events like FWD+Organise, which convened 300 digital campaigners and community organisers to share skills and tactics.
- **Supported organisations to be strong and resourced in advocacy** through delivery of 200+ hours coaching and tailored trainings offered to 50 small organisations through the Capacity Building Hub. The Rapid Advocacy Fund, which distributed \$150,000 to grassroots organisations, won the Philanthropy Australia Award for Best Granting Program in FY22.
- **Fostered ambitious collaboration at the intersection of issues** through a series of interactive pre-election Strategy Workshops to share knowledge, gaps and opportunities for collaboration, and through support for cross-sector movements including Hands Off Our Charities and Raise the Rate.
- **Nurtured a strong economic justice movement** through the work of the Economic Media Centre, which trained 330 diverse spokespeople and supported them to secure 6,000+ stories; helping shift the narrative on critical issues like gender equity, racial scapegoating and income support.

This report shares many stories of progress made against this strategy, and the people behind them, as well as plans and goals for what's next.

I thank my fellow Directors for their energy and expertise, and extend my appreciation to outgoing Board members in FY22, including Karly Warner, Nick Moraitis (Australian Progress founder and former Executive Director), and Roger West (my predecessor and Chair of the Board until February 2022). We also welcomed three new board members during this time: Karen Kandur, Catherine Liddle and Andrew Hudson. I thank them all for their wise counsel and valued contributions to the Board.

Finally, a special thanks to our Inner Circle members, partners, sponsors and our community of changemakers. Each of you are so inspiring in driving to create the change we all want to see.

**Dinah Arndt**

Chair, from February 2022

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2021-22

# 68

fellows graduated across three cohorts of the Progress Fellowship, including our first ever Auslan interpreted Fellowship.

# 200+

changemakers trained through our multi-day trainings.

# 320

campaigners, community organisers, communicators and technologists trained through webinars on community organising, digital campaigning, leading small organisations, media, as well as economic policy briefings.

# 650+

social changemakers attended online and in-person events, including FWD+Organise 2021 and Leadership 2022.

# 333

spokespeople trained and 6,000 mainstream media stories secured by the Economic Media Centre.

# 50

small advocacy organisations supported by the Capacity Building Hub with 200+ hours of expert coaching, training and more – resulting in over \$1M additional funding for their advocacy.

## LAUNCHED

Launched the results of *Passing the Message Stick* – a two year message research project to build public support for First Nations self determination and justice, led by Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Larissa Baldwin, GetUp and Original Power – with a 120 page report, online launches attended by 1,500+ changemakers and an interactive website with widespread reach.



## OUR WORK

Australian Progress plays a unique role in the progressive civil space; we work cross-sector to convene and build capacity, we foster relationships that span the depth and breadth of the space, and we embrace nimble ways of working that allow us to respond to the ever evolving needs of the sector.

We exist to build the advocacy capacity of social changemakers and movements to create systemic change toward a just, equitable and sustainable society.

We achieve these outcomes by working across three key pillars:



### Skill building

- We transform the skills of community leaders
- equipping them with advocacy expertise.



### Community and collaboration

- We foster community by building relationships, sharing knowledge, and inspiring courage.



### Innovation and shared action

- We drive shared action – catalysing new ideas, funding, research and strategic support.

We multiply our impact by enabling changemakers and community movements to create systemic change – the ripple effects of this are significant for communities and our country more broadly.



# PROGRAM OVERVIEW



## Transforming the skills of community leaders

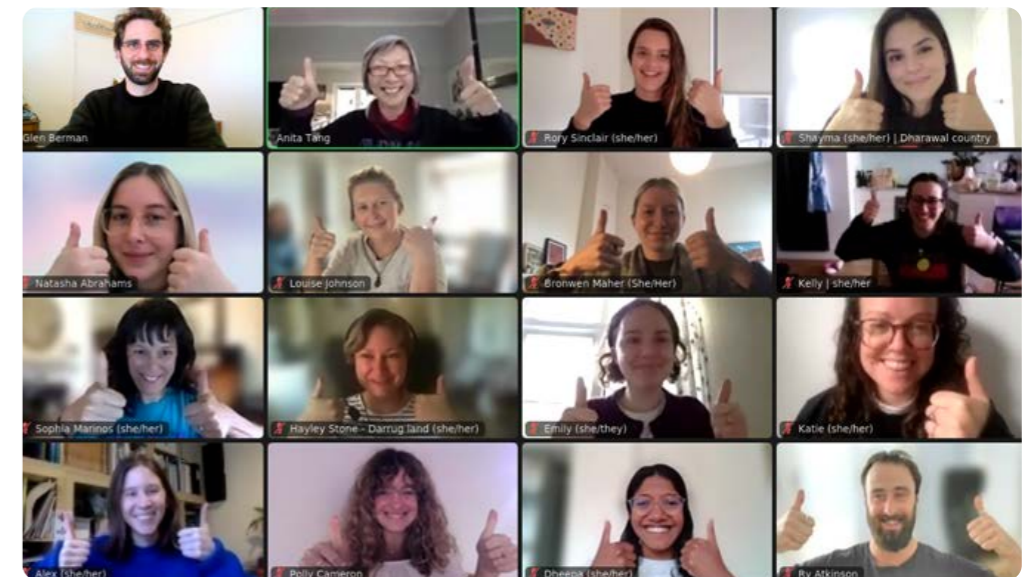
### PROGRESS FELLOWSHIP

In FY22, Australian Progress trained 68 Fellows across three cohorts of the Progress Fellowship, empowering advocates, campaigners, organisers and changemakers to advocate for a more inclusive, fair and sustainable world.

The Fellowship was led capably by Organising Director Anita Tang and Australian Progress Co-founder Glen Berman. This year, they restructured the program to include four intensive retreats with 12 weekly seminars covering a range of practical skills including campaign strategy, community organising, messaging, digital campaigning, political engagement, inclusive and intersectional movements, First Nations justice and more.

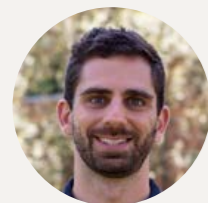
We continued to offer the National Fellowship fully online this past year to meet the challenges of the pandemic, as well as meet the access needs of participants. Our online course had the additional benefit of opening up our program to those living right across the continent and Aotearoa/New Zealand. For the first time we also ran an Auslan interpreted program with participation from deaf and hard of hearing fellows from the disability sector.

The fellows brought a range of expertise in leading campaigns and organising across a breadth of issues including consumer rights, corporate responsibility, climate change, gender rights, human rights, youth, health, disability, housing, refugees, international development, education, poverty, workers' rights, domestic violence, the arts and more.



**68** Fellows graduated from the Progress Fellowship this year.



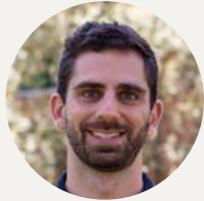
**2021 NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP (SPRING)** – Cohort #1, led by Glen Berman


- **Aimee Brownbill**  
Senior Policy and Research Advisor, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
- **Anya Saravanan**  
Lawyer, Inner Melbourne Community Legal
- **Chantelle Awhina**  
Campaigner, JustSpeak NZ
- **Emma Barker-Perez**  
Electorate Officer, Office of Tim Read MP
- **Glenn Pellegrin**  
Private Rental Assistance Coordinator, Aboriginal Housing Victoria
- **Guy Ritan**  
Creative Director, PermaQueer
- **Hannah Lai**  
Youth Programs Coordinator, Multicultural Youth Affairs Network NSW
- **Hannah McLeay**  
Campaigner, Greenpeace Australia Pacific
- **Jean Cotchin**  
Communications Offer, Every Australian Counts
- **Jeannet Henriette Kessels**  
Chair, Veterinarians for Climate Action
- **Jessica Black**  
Campaigner and Volunteer Coordinator, Environment Centre NT
- **Jim Hook**  
Communications Advisor, CHOICE
- **Kanchana Pathirana**  
Activist, Citizen Climate Lobby Australia, ACF Community Adelaide group, 350, Fossil Free SA
- **Kat O'Neill**  
Community Engagement Coordinator, Settlement Services International
- **Katelyn Jones**  
Lawyer, Consumer Action Law Centre
- **Katie Hepworth**  
Director of Workers' Rights, Australian Centre for Corporate Responsibility
- **Shirley Hall**  
Campaigns Director, Australian Youth Climate Coalition
- **Madeline Price**  
Community Organiser, Tipping Point
- **Melyssa Troy**  
Media and Communications Manager, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network
- **Meredith Lea**  
Policy Manager, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network
- **Pan Karanikolas**  
Research Assistant, Deakin University
- **Shae Flanagan**  
Campaign Manager, Fair Agenda
- **Skye O'Halloran**  
National Co-director, One Woman Project
- **Travis Larcombe**  
Digital Campaigner, Equality Australia

**2021 NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP (SPRING)** – Cohort #2, led by Anita Tang


- **Alex Söderlund**  
Digital Content Producer, Climate Council
- **Amala Ramarathinam**  
Senior Human Rights Lawyer, Human Rights Law Centre
- **Bronwen Maher**  
Communications Advisor, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
- **Courtney Venaglia**  
Health Advocacy Project Coordinator, Youth Action
- **Dheepa Jeyapalan**  
Advisor, CEOs office, VicHealth
- **Emily Sara Rosenthal**  
Justice Campaigner, JustSpeak
- **Hannah Dickinson**  
Senior Lawyer, Liberty Victoria
- **Hayley Stone**  
Senior Policy Officer, Physical Disability Council of NSW
- **Katelyn Cameron**  
Media and Communications Advisor, CHOICE
- **Katie O'Neill**  
Coordinator, Melbourne Activist Legal Support
- **Kelly Fawcett**  
Research & Policy Lead, Foundation for Young Australians
- **Louise Johnson**  
Communications Manager, Homeward Bound Projects
- **Nadia Mahroof**  
Communications Coordinator, Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
- **Natasha Abrahams**  
Manager, Policy and Advocacy, University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association
- **Noura Mansour**  
Campaigner, Australian Palestinian Advocacy Network
- **Polita Cameron**  
Director of Public Engagement & Outreach, newDemocracy Foundation
- **Riley Brooke**  
Policy & Campaigns Officer, Tenants' Union of NSW
- **Rory Sinclair**  
Senior Communications Advisor, Common Ground
- **Ry Atkinson**  
Campaigner, Amnesty International Australia
- **Shayma El-ardenli**  
Community Organiser, ActionAid Australia
- **Sophia Marinos**  
Creative Producer, Big hART
- **Thomas Feng**  
Media and Communications Manager, Youth Affairs Council Victoria
- **Aoife Carli Hannan**  
Fundraising Coordinator, Refugee Voices

## 2022 NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP (AUTUMN) – led by Glen Berman



- **Andreea Lachs**  
Head of Policy Communications and Strategy, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
- **Anna Song**  
Senior Strategist (Policy and Govt), The Sunrise Project
- **Anna Weekes**  
Executive Officer and Creative Producer, Darwin Community Arts
- **Bethany Falzon**  
Creative Producer, Diversity Arts Australia
- **Catherine Miller**  
Editor/Writer, Republic of Imagination
- **Danielle Chandler**  
Campaigner, Andy Meddick MP
- **Darlene Thornton**  
Resources Developer & Advocate, Deaf Australia
- **Eve Altman**  
Community Organiser, New Israel Fund Australia
- **Grace Orange**  
Research Analyst, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)
- **Jen Blyth**  
CEO, Deaf Australia
- **Joshua Lowe**  
General Manager, Theatre Network Australia
- **Kevin Kapeke**  
Advisor to CEO Office, Youth Policy, VicHealth
- **Mahnoor Sikandar**  
Criminal Defence Solicitor, Victoria Legal Aid
- **Nathan Hart**  
Campaigner, Climate Council
- **Peta King**  
Senior Digital Experience Manager, Cerebral Palsy Alliance
- **Philip Waters**  
General Manager, Deaf Victoria
- **Richa Sharma**  
Campaign Manager, Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand
- **Rochelle Francis**  
Chair, Rights Advocacy Project
- **Tasnim Hossai**  
Independent artist
- **Todd Pinkerton**  
Senior Campaigns Officer, Unions NSW
- **William Naughton-Gravette**  
Partnerships & Policy Adviser, Global Citizen



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS FELLOWSHIP

The Economic Media Centre's Strategic Communications for Campaigns Fellowship was created for communications leaders running long-term campaigns. The Fellowship was co-facilitated by Tony Douglas from Essential who shared his 25 years experience designing winning political communications strategies.

The Fellowship developed the capacity of 24 communications leaders to execute large-scale communications campaigns for social change. Fellows learnt how to conduct campaign and message research, develop a winning communications strategy and executive multi-channel communications. All participants left with

a fully developed communications strategy for their given campaign or cause.

Some of the organisations and campaigns that were supported throughout the Fellowship included the Ban Spithoods Campaign and #JusticeForFella, Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC), GetUp, Market Forces, Fair Agenda, Sydney Policy Lab, Common Ground, Unions NSW, North Richmond Community Health, Community and Public Sector Union, Down Syndrome Australia, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Australian Conservation Foundation, and more.

## GLOBAL STUDY TOUR IN COMMUNITY ORGANISING (VIRTUAL)

This year we launched a new initiative, designed specifically to provide leaders in civil society with the world's latest theories and practices in community organising.

We connected with speakers from across the globe exploring topics like rights of garment workers in Bangladesh and farmers in the United States, how grassroots advocacy is being achieved in the United Kingdom and Jordan, and how organising in South Africa has been scaled up through the use of everyday technology.

With a small cohort of 10-15 participants, the program was built around a three-day intensive, then half day sessions a week apart for a further month. This allowed us to engage with academics, researchers, and practitioners across different time zones, and to discuss the implications and opportunities for individual organisations and for civil society collectively.

Participants in the 2021 program included:

- **Amity Mara**  
Director Advocacy and Organising, Foundation for Young Australians
- **Anisha Senaratne**  
Human Rights Director / Racial Justice Lead, GetUp / Colour Code
- **Bevan Warner**  
CEO, Launch Housing
- **Bronya Metherall**  
GM of Influence, Cerebral Palsy Alliance
- **Correna Haythorpe**  
Federal President, Australian Education Union
- **Edwina MacDonald**  
Deputy Director, ACOSS
- **Emma Maiden**  
Head of Advocacy and Media, Uniting NSW/ACT
- **Julie Edwards**  
CEO, Jesuit Social Services
- **Kaz Uy**  
Tipping Point
- **Mel Fineberg**  
Executive Manager, Social Marketing and Communications
- **Trina Soulos**  
Community Engagement and Capacity Manager, Settlement Social Services
- **Zara Lasater**  
Head of Research and Advisory, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand



### MANAGEMENT MASTERCLASS

This popular training was repeated multiple times throughout the year, offering an opportunity for leaders from across the movement to build the skills needed to lead winning teams. With four modules – managing for excellence, recruiting superstars, creating a culture of impact and remote management – and case studies from stand-out managers from across the movement, the Masterclass is one of the most highly sought after trainings.

**96** nonprofit change makers and leaders refined best practice management skills

### ORGANISING ESSENTIALS

Organising Essentials trains advocates from nonprofit organisations and grassroots groups who want to explore a range of organising frameworks, tools and practices. The training is designed for people new to organising and those who want to refresh their thinking around organising, learn new approaches and sharpen their skills. The program ran twice in FY22, in both half-day and full-day formats.

**49** community organisers equipped with frameworks and new approaches to build power in their communities

### CORPORATE CAMPAIGNING MASTERCLASS

Corporate Campaigning Masterclass is our two-day training to build skills and knowledge to win corporate campaigns. The July masterclass participants learnt everything from foundational theory and campaign strategy, to shareholder activism, how to research corporate structures and targets, the role of litigation and risk management, creative approaches like brand jamming, as well as how to use supply chains to create market change.

**23** campaigners built their skills to win corporate campaigns

### DIGITAL ORGANISING BOOTCAMP

Digital Organising Bootcamp ran as a shared project of Australian Progress and Progressive Tech Network, bringing together a diverse cohort of organisers from across the sector to learn the strategies, models and tactics in best practice digital organising. This training equipped participants with new skills from developing a winning digital strategy to utilising the most effective online tools, with practical case studies in action from organisations and grassroots movements mobilising their communities specifically within the Covid-19 context.

**22** digital organisers built their skills in best practice digital organising





## Fostering community and collaboration

### CEO ORGANISING FORUM

We convened regular gatherings throughout FY22 with a core group of CEOs, whose organisations are most invested in community organising. This group met regularly to brief each other on their plans, share insights, provide updates on important projects with cross-sector impact, and identify challenges requiring collaborative problem solving. It was this group that recommended the value in hosting a strategy forum with a broader range of organisations to similarly share plans and identify opportunities for collaboration.

### LEADERSHIP STRATEGY WORKSHOP

In November, following discussions in the CEO organising forum, we convened a wider gathering of civil society organisations focused on organising in their communities around progressive policy changes. This two day online gathering provided an opportunity for over 30 organisations to come together for expert briefings, strategy discussions and to explore opportunities for collaboration. The event led to numerous ongoing conversations around issues of common interest.

In February, we hosted a one day reconvening of the organisations as a chance to follow-up on progress since November, and in particular to share any new research or insights established through new organising or messaging projects ahead of the election.

### FWD+ORGANISE 2021

In December, 380+ community organisers and digital campaigners came together online for two days to share practical skills, learn innovative approaches to advocacy and build cross-sector relationships needed to win systemic change.

The theme for the conference in 2021 centred around building skills and collaborations in the lead up to the 2022 federal election, along with a continued focus on centring lived experience of systemic injustice. The conference featured 50 sessions including skill shares, keynotes, workshops, masterclasses, panels, case studies and caucus meetups exploring winning strategies, case studies and innovation in community organising and campaigning.

International speakers included:

- **Tareq Alani**  
Push Black
- **Caitlin Homrich-Knieling**  
We The People Michigan
- **Bridget Todd**  
UltraViolet
- **Koketso Moeti**  
Amandla.mobi
- **Qiane Matata-Sipu**  
Project Ihūmatao



**LEADERSHIP**

Shortly after the May federal election, we convened 220 civil society CEOs and senior community leaders in Canberra and online for our hybrid Leadership conference.

For the first time since the pandemic began, leaders came together to connect and identify strategic ways to work together to ensure that community voice and interests are at the heart of policy decision making.

CEOs and leaders heard reflections on the new political context, discussed our collective agenda and opportunities to win big reform under the Labor government, and learnt about campaigns for First Nations truth-telling, treaties and referendum. The Hon Andrew Leigh MP, Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury addressed the conference, as did four new ‘teal’ independents, sharing their own stories of community organising and vision for a reinvigorated democracy and new way of doing politics.

**88%**

of participants said they built or strengthened relationships which will form the basis of ongoing collaboration

**3/4**

Three in four participants said they came away empowered to be bolder in their advocacy



“It was so valuable to connect with progressive movement colleagues after a particularly rough three years. I felt a sense of collective relief and real possibility for the first time in so long.”

– Leadership participant

## COMMUNITY ORGANISING AND DIGITAL CAMPAIGNING WEBINAR SERIES

This year we continued offering our webinar series to bring our communities together online to share lessons, learn insights and hear from the experts on best practice community organising and digital campaigning. This year we convened 500 people from our community over four webinars:

- **Lessons from the Campaign to Stop Independent Assessments**

An expert panel examining the strategy and tactics behind the campaign to stop independent assessments to the NDIS with Jean Cotchin (Every Australian Counts), Catherine McAlpine (Inclusion Australia), Dougie Herd (Community Connections) and June Riemer (First Peoples Disability Network).

- **Hear From Frontline Health Services: Omicron 2022**

An expert panel discussion from frontline health services about the impact of the Omicron outbreak including the first-hand impacts of staff shortages, Covid testing chaos and health system overload featuring Sue Bellino (Australian Nurses and Midwifery Federation) and June Riemer (First People's Disability Network).

- **Winning Reform in the New Political Context**

An expert panel discussion exploring who's who in the new Parliament, opportunities for policy reform and how to win change under the elected Labor government with Simon Banks (Hawker Britton), Meagan Lawson (Council on the Ageing) and Osmond Chiu (Community and Public Sector Union).

- **Government Relations in the New Parliament**

A skill-building presentation covering how policy reforms are made under Labor as well as insights on how to best position our campaigns to win, with policy and government relations experts Ray Yoshida (Australian Democracy Network), Daney Faddoul and Lauren Frost (Human Rights Law Centre), and Maria Poulos (Australian Conservation Foundation).

## ONLINE COMMUNITY

We continued to bring our community together through online briefings, workshops, skill-shares and through our online events, Slack and Facebook communities. This included bringing our fellowship alumni community together for a series of lunch-time workshops, and for the first time we convened policy experts from across the sector to establish a cross-sector policy network.

**1,800+**

contributors to the Australian Progress Slack Network

**1,300+**

active members of the FWD Facebook Group

**1,200+**

active members of the Organise Facebook Group





### Increasing our impact through shared action

#### ECONOMIC MEDIA CENTRE

The Economic Media Centre supports spokespeople with diverse experiences and backgrounds to participate in the media’s economic policy debates. This year we supported community based spokespeople to pitch in print, broadcast and digital media stories on a wide range of issues including housing affordability, disability justice, gender inequality, stronger social safety nets, First Nations justice, tax policy, accessible healthcare, racial justice, mental health services and refugee rights.

The Economic Media Centre is a fully philanthropically funded partnership between Australian Progress and the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). The Economic Media Centre’s three strategic goals over the long-term are to build the media capacity of community organisations and spokespeople, secure policy changes for economic equality, and deliver long-term narrative shifts on key economic issues.

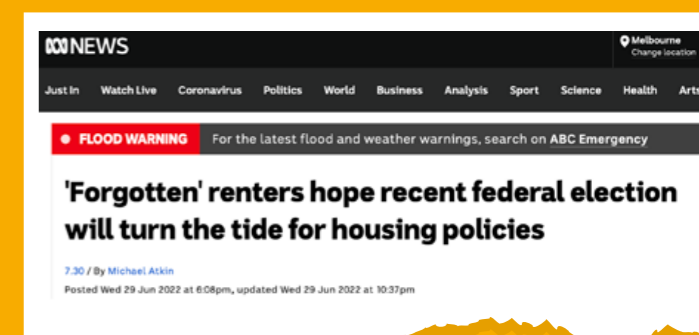
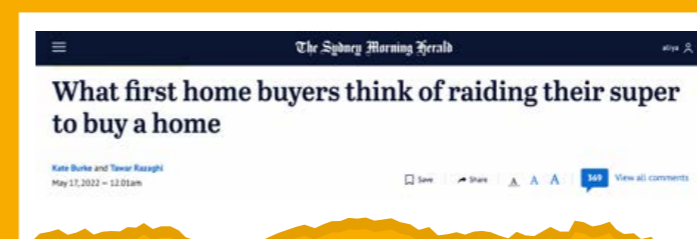
In FY22, we surpassed all key performance indicators and demand for our services continued to exceed capacity. We trained nearly 300 community advocates and changemakers through our two-day National Media Spokesperson Training program, our three-day Disabled Persons Organisations (DPO) Media Training, and through our tailored, issue specific media training programs.

We helped place over 6,000 syndicated media stories across major outlets by supporting spokespeople, small nonprofits and grassroots groups. These stories appeared in print and online for Fairfax publications including the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and AFR, News Ltd outlets in every state and territory and The Australian and extensive coverage across the AAP newswire; high profile television appearances on the ABC including Q&A



and The Drum, Channel 10’s The Project, Channel 9 and Channel 7; radio interviews for ABC RN, ABC metro and regional programs, 2GB, 3AW, 2SM, TripleR, 3CR and others, and finally, in online outlets such as Guardian Australia, ABC News, Junkee, The Saturday Paper, Pedestrian TV, and international coverage including Al Jazeera, Washington Post, and the New York Times.

The Economic Media Centre supports 70 spokespeople in the National Media Spokesperson Network, and 15 media spokespeople in the National Housing Affordability Spokesperson Bureau. In FY23 we will continue working with advocates with lived experience of economic inequality and establish a South Australian Spokesperson Network. We will grow our staff team and scale our capacity to impact important economic policy debates through mainstream media.





## CAPACITY BUILDING HUB

Democracy works best when people speak up, but too often the balance of power tips against marginalised communities. The Capacity Building Hub exists to strengthen the voices of small nonprofits and grassroots movements who represent these communities, building organisational resilience and enabling greater impact.

We supported 50 organisations within the Hub this year, delivering 200+ hours of 1:1 expert coaching, major donor fundraising training and support, training webinars, discount places in multi-day training programs, a resource hub, peer support network and tickets to sector-wide events.

The Capacity Building Hub supported organisations to raise more than \$1M for their advocacy this year. It also supported small organisations to develop robust leadership and financial management systems to survive the challenges of the pandemic and thrive beyond it.

“Being part of the Capacity Building Hub has meant I'm a more skilled and knowledgeable leader. It has really built the capacity of our small organisation and put us in a stronger position in terms of finances, governance and our digital footprint.”

– Capacity Building Hub participant



## PROGRESSIVE TECH NETWORK

The Progressive Tech Network is a dedicated collective of progressive organisations – nonprofits, unions, vendors, agencies and grassroots groups building the digital and tech capability of the progressive movement to campaign and organise. This year, we continued strengthening the membership of 40+ organisations delivering on community building, coaching and mentoring, training and skill building, resource sharing and product development.

**80+** people attended online and in person networking events

**11** Dozens of hours of coaching and mentoring provided by 11 coaches

**54** people participated in tech and digital trainings



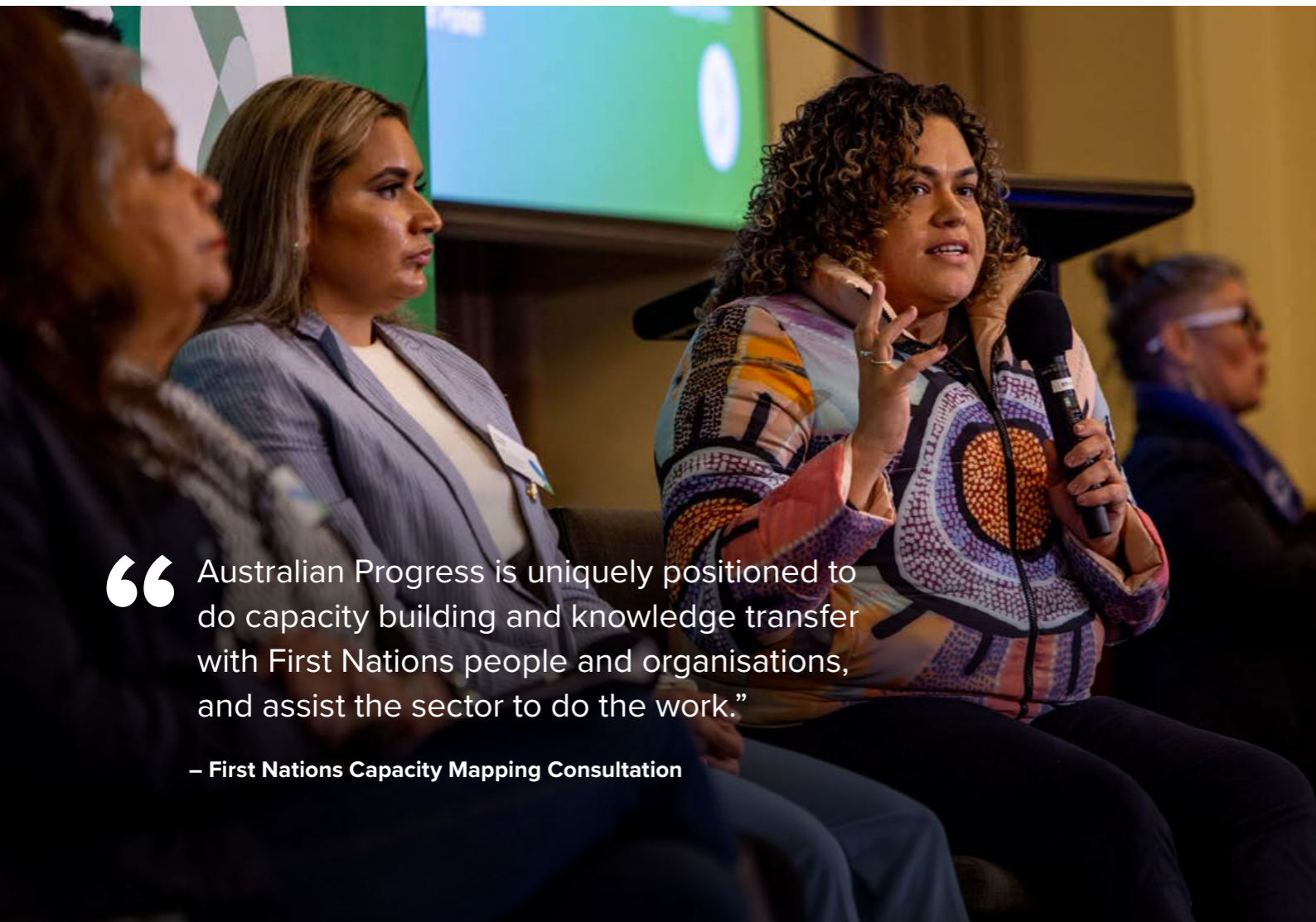
**FIRST NATIONS CAPACITY MAPPING**

At our Leadership conference in 2019, leading First Nations advocates asked us to resource a mapping project to identify key priorities for capacity building for First Nations organisations and movements. Kara Keys led this process in FY22, and through surveys, interviews and focus groups with a diverse range of First Nations advocates, she developed a list of recommendations and priorities to inform our strategy, new projects and partnerships into the future.

The survey results and consultation engagements found broad support for the work of Australian Progress and a desire for more training, skills transfers and sharing, organisational capacity building and networking opportunities delivered through strategic and structured engagement.

We intend for the First Nations justice and capacity building work to grow within the Australian Progress business plan in FY23 and beyond. What this looks like will depend on the needs and priorities identified by a First Nations-led strategy group.

Two initial offerings planned for next year include significant scaling up of our *Passing the Message Stick* narrative research project, which will kick off with a First Nations Law and Justice Messaging Fellowship. We will also work with partners to deliver Common Threads, a First Nations-only Summit for advocates to share skills and build relationships, in March 2023 in Brisbane.



“ Australian Progress is uniquely positioned to do capacity building and knowledge transfer with First Nations people and organisations, and assist the sector to do the work.”

– First Nations Capacity Mapping Consultation

**RAPID ADVOCACY FUND**

The Rapid Advocacy Fund was established in April 2020 to support grassroots organisations to participate in policy debates during the Covid-19 health and economic crises.

The project was launched with a simple theory of change – if we quickly pool gifts and inject urgent funds into strategic advocacy projects, we can centre the expertise of lived experience and community movements in the rapidly evolving policy landscape and build the capacity of grassroots organisations advocating for a fair and equitable recovery.

A joint project of the Australian Communities Foundation (ACF), Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and Australian Progress, the responsive co-funding initiative was awarded the Philanthropy Australia Award for Best Granting Program this year.

The Rapid Advocacy Fund has been one of the most responsive, nimble and urgently needed grant programs in Australian history, providing rapid support to grassroots voices with unique expertise and the ability to intervene in critical policy decisions that will shape the future of our country.

**\$150,000**

granted to 25 grassroots movements and small nonprofits

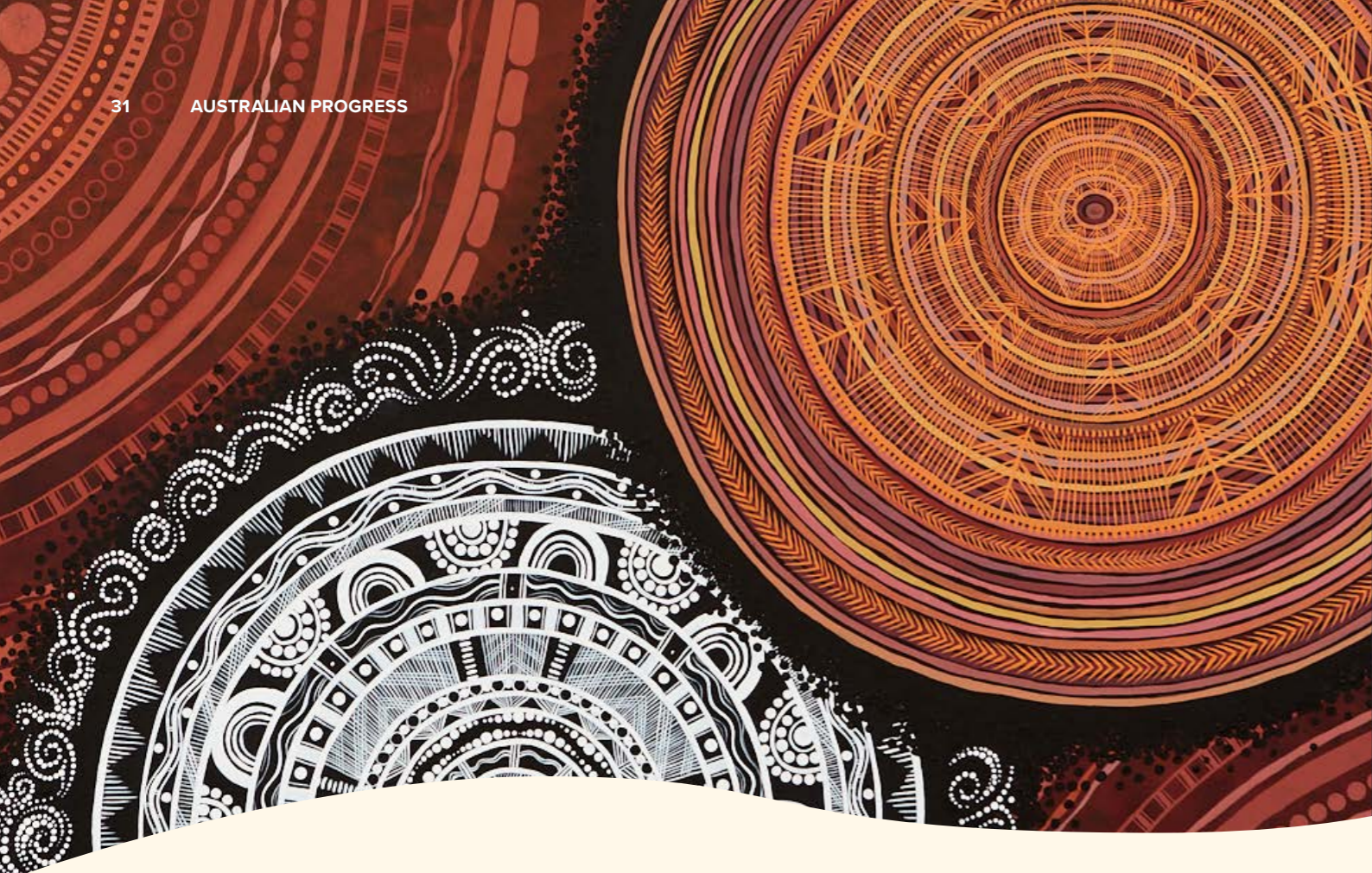
**40%**

of supported projects (10) led by First Nations or People of Colour, including Deadly Connections, Democracy in Colour, First People’s Disability Network, MYAN NSW, National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (NATSILS), Refugee Voices, Road to Refuge, Tomorrow Movement and Steve Bunbadgee Hodder Watt (with Gidgee Health)

**60%**

of projects (15) supported by people with lived experience of the issue they’re advocating for, including racial justice, intergenerational economic justice, renters rights, criminal justice, First Nations self determination, refugee rights, disability justice, unemployment and gambling





# PASSING THE MESSAGE STICK

*Passing the Message Stick* has been a three-year project to research and share the messages most effective in building public support for First Nations' self-determination and justice. Led by Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Larissa Baldwin, GetUp and Original Power, and supported by Australian Progress, this project had two initial phases before FY22, including:

- 1** A five month Messaging and Communications Fellowship with 19 leading First Nations advocates and communicators. Together, Fellows collected and analysed 3,400 messages across issues as diverse as housing, health, land rights, climate, remote communities, gender, systemic racism, identity, representation and January 26, and learnt best practice approaches to messaging that shifts persuadables and builds support for First Nations justice.
- 2** Qualitative and quantitative research to develop effective messages, including interviews and surveys with First Nations people, focus groups and a representative 'dial test'.



FY22 saw the third and most important phase of the project – sharing the results widely through a detailed 120 research report, a summary guide with seven key messaging recommendations, and an interactive website that was widely well-received and visited by more than 14,000 advocates.

We delivered messaging presentations to 1,500 changemakers and 20 key community

controlled organisations, delivered an in-depth messaging workshop for law and justice advocates, and ran a train-the-trainer program to build the skills of Fellows to present the findings widely.

*Passing the Message Stick* will scale significantly in FY23 to further build support for First Nations self determination, in particular – law and justice, building ambition for treaties, truth telling and referendum.

**“** This research project is an offering to all First Nations advocates working towards self-determination and justice for our people.”

**– Dr Jackie Huggins AM  
Bidjara/Birri Gubba Juru**



# OUR PARTNERS



## Inner Circle

The Australian Progress Inner Circle is a collection of civil society organisations working to create systems change on issues as diverse as workers rights, climate change, environmental conservation, international aid, the rights of young people, animal protection and more.

The Inner Circle community underpins our work, enabling us to deliver upon our ambitious plans and increase the number of grassroots advocates we're able to support through fully funded scholarships to trainings and events. Members financially support our mission and receive benefits and special access to a number of our key programs.

We thank our Inner Circle members in FY22, including ActionAid Australia, Australian Conservation Foundation, Community and Public Sector Union, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, Foundation for Young Australians and Victorian Trades Hall Council.

## Special thanks

Thank you to our project partners and supporters for their incredibly valuable contribution this year.

To the *Passing the Message Stick* Steering Committee and research team – Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Larissa Baldwin and the GetUp team, Karrina Nolan and the Original Power team, Eleanor Glenn from Common Cause and Qdos. And to Michael Poland for report and website design.

To the Rapid Advocacy Fund steering committee, and our project partners – ACOSS and Australian Communities Foundation.

To the Economic Media Centre Advisory Board – Andrea Ho, Antoinette Lattouf, Dr Benedetta Brevini, Deanne Weir, Jirra Lulla Harvey, and Leslie Falkiner-Rose, as well as Monique Vandeleur for your valuable contribution.

And special thanks to Lisa Lewin and Claire Turner.



## Partners

Thank you to our partners who underpin our ability to grow and focus on the most strategic opportunities to build capacity in civil society.

To our core supporters – Australian Communities Foundation, Bank Australia, Equity Trustees, Reichstein Foundation, Tripple and Vasudhara Foundation,

To our Economic Media Centre supporters – Australian Communities Foundation and sub funds, EM Horton Family Fund, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, Ruffin Falkiner Foundation, Thompson O'Shea Foundation, V&F Housing Enterprise Foundation and Wyatt Trust.

To the supporters of *Passing the Message Stick* – Australian Communities Foundation and sub funds, Ali Limb, Besen Family Foundation, CAGES Foundation, Equity Trustees, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, Mannifera and Oranges and Sardines Foundation.

To the supporter of the Capacity Building Hub – Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

To those who made the Leadership Summit possible – Australian Communities Foundation, Bank Australia, Civility, donkey wheel, Essential, Good Chat, Perpetual and Reichstein Foundation.

To the supporters of NEXUS Australia – Australian Communities Foundation, Besen Family Foundation, Coopers Investors, Gandel Foundation, Maitri, The Myer Foundation and Wheelton Philanthropy.

To our partners for the FWD+Organise conference – Bank Australia, Commons Library, Essential and Pro Bono.



# OUR TEAM & BOARD



## Team

**Kirsty Albion**  
Executive Director

**Elise Dalley**  
Impact Director

**Jessica Kendall**  
Founding Co-director, Economic Media Centre

**Anita Tang**  
Organising Director

**Aliya Ahmad**  
Co-director, Economic Media Centre & Racial Justice Lead

**Phong Trinh**  
Community & Digital Manager

**Jess Herne**  
Events & Operations Manager

**Erica Ransley**  
Admin Officer & Executive Assistant

**Hunter Lee**  
Founding Director, Progressive Tech Network (until June 2022)

**Sarah Rogan**  
Capacity Building Director (until March 2022)

**Amber Moore**  
Philanthropy Director (from February until March 2022)

**Kara Keys**  
First Nations Capacity Building Director

**Glen Berman**  
National Fellowship Facilitator

## Board of Directors

**Roger West**  
former NSW Community Services Commissioner (outgoing Chair, until February 2022)

**Dinah Arndt**  
Head of Strategic Communications, Climate Council (incoming Chair, from February 2022)

**Rebecca Milgrom**  
Co-director, Tripple Ventures

**El Gibbs**  
Communications consultant, writer and disability activist

**Luke Hilakari**  
Secretary, Victorian Trades Hall Council

**Maree Sidey**  
CEO, Australian Communities Foundation

**Clare Wimshurst**  
Head of Strategy and Governance, Unicef (Treasurer, until July 2021)

**Karly Warner**  
CEO, Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT (until December 2021)

**Nick Moraitis**  
CEO, Foundation for Young Australians (until February 2022)

**Karen Kandur**  
COO, Environmental Leadership Australia (Treasurer, from October 2021)

**Catherine Liddle**  
CEO, SNAICC (from October 2021)

**Andrew Hudson**  
CEO, Centre for Policy Development (from October 2021)

## Financial Summary

Income and expenditure for the year ended 30 June 2022. These pages represent a financial snapshot of our financial reports, prepared by auditors Thomas David & Co.

	FY 2022 (\$)	FY 2021 (\$)
<b>Income</b>		
Event and Training Income	480,721	448,118
Major Donations and Philanthropy	1,143,988	1,149,558
Contributions from Partner Organisation	58,500	105,500
Sponsorship or Consultancy Fees	121,000	82,800
Recoupment of Expenditure	-	-
Other Income	45,259	155,163
Interest Income	110	156
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,849,578</b>	<b>1,941,295</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Employee Benefits	1,112,034	888,640
Occupancy Expenses	35,117	11,407
Other Expenses	896,647	987,713
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>2,043,798</b>	<b>1,887,760</b>
<b>Net Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(194,220)</b>	<b>53,535</b>

## Balance Sheet

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022.

In Australian Dollars	FY 2022 (\$)	FY 2021 (\$)
<b>Assets</b>		
<i>Current Assets</i>		
Cash and Equivalents	1,160,711	1,030,383
Trade and Other Receivables	36,597	37,901
Other	6,831	23,596
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>1,204,139</b>	<b>1,091,880</b>
<i>Non-Current Assets</i>		
Property, Plant and Equipment	2,914	3,949
Intangible Assets	10,000	15,000
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>12,914</b>	<b>18,949</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<i>Current Liabilities</i>		
Trade and Other Payables	272,934	198,573
Provisions	11,509	-
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>304,037</b>	<b>89,463</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>588,480</b>	<b>288,036</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>628,573</b>	<b>822,793</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
<i>Current Equity</i>		
Retained Earnings	628,573	822,793
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>628,573</b>	<b>822,793</b>

# WHAT'S COMING UP



## NEXUS 2022

The 6th NEXUS Australia Summit will be held in Sydney in November. It will bring together 200 young philanthropists, impact investors, social entrepreneurs and changemakers to learn from each other. The event will build new connections and encourage participants to think deeply about how to collectively realise our vision for a more just and sustainable future. This year's theme 'Integrity and Disruption' is designed to draw out and make sense of the challenging choices emerging leaders in philanthropy, impact investing and social change face in the 'new normal' that is 2022.

## PASSING THE MESSAGE STICK

### Passing the Message Stick

The ambition of Passing the Message Stick has always been to build on the foundational research to develop persuasive messages on key issues and at key moments. Given a referendum on a First Nations Voice to Parliament will likely be held in 2023, Passing the Message Stick will scale up significantly in 2023, led by Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Larissa Baldwin and GetUp, and supported by our First Nations Justice Director, Millie Telford. We will deliver message research and narrative shifting projects to build public support for two major and timely areas of reform – law and justice, and truth-telling, treaties and referendum.

## COMMON THREADS

### Common Threads 2023

Common Threads will bring together 150 First Nations advocates and community leaders over two days in Brisbane in 2023. It was identified as a top priority coming out of the First Nations Capacity Mapping project. Designed as a space to foster new connections, share skills and identify opportunities to collaborate, Common Threads will be led by, and for, First Nations people.



### Economic Media Centre

The Economic Media Centre will continue its growth trajectory in FY23, expanding media training in South Australia, and continuing to support the housing speakers bureau. We have also developed and implemented a strategy to support our Spokesperson Network of over 100 advocates and community leaders.



### Capacity Building Hub

The Capacity Building Hub will continue to support 30 grassroots movements and small nonprofits in FY23, offering executive leadership coaching, digital capacity building and fundraising support to develop philanthropic networks and major donor capacity.





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