



2020 Annual Report

Adaptability and Resilience

New online options • Social distancing • In-home options • Learning and Development • Working from home



DistinctiveOptions
In Life

About this report

This report provides information about our activities, operations, highlights and performance on objectives for the 2019-2020 financial year. It reflects the indicators from our Strategic Plan. This report was created with input and ideas from Management, staff and participants to provide a detailed reflection about our service, our impacts and our role in the communities we serve.

Theme

'Adaptability and resilience' are the themes of this report, reflecting the incredible innovation, flexibility and positive attitudes of the organisation, staff and participants throughout this year.

Indigenous acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Audience

This report has been written for the following stakeholders: participants, their families and supporters, federal and state government partners, our local communities and partners and the Distinctive Options Directors and staff members who share and deliver our collective vision and mission.

Feedback

We welcome and appreciate all feedback on this report. You can provide feedback via the contact details on the back cover of this report.

Accessibility

This report has been optimised for screen readers and other assistive devices used by people with a disability. This report is available in PDF on our website or in other alternative formats on request to Head Office.

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MISSION

Offer real life choices for people with disabilities, their families and supporters.

VISION

Assist people to fulfil their potential and gain equality in the community.

VALUES

We provide quality services for people with disabilities to practice choice and control over their lives. We provide a unique experience through respect, flexibility and genuine intention. We apply these to all our interactions. We are distinctive and innovative by helping people live the life they want and by being the best in all we do.

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About Us

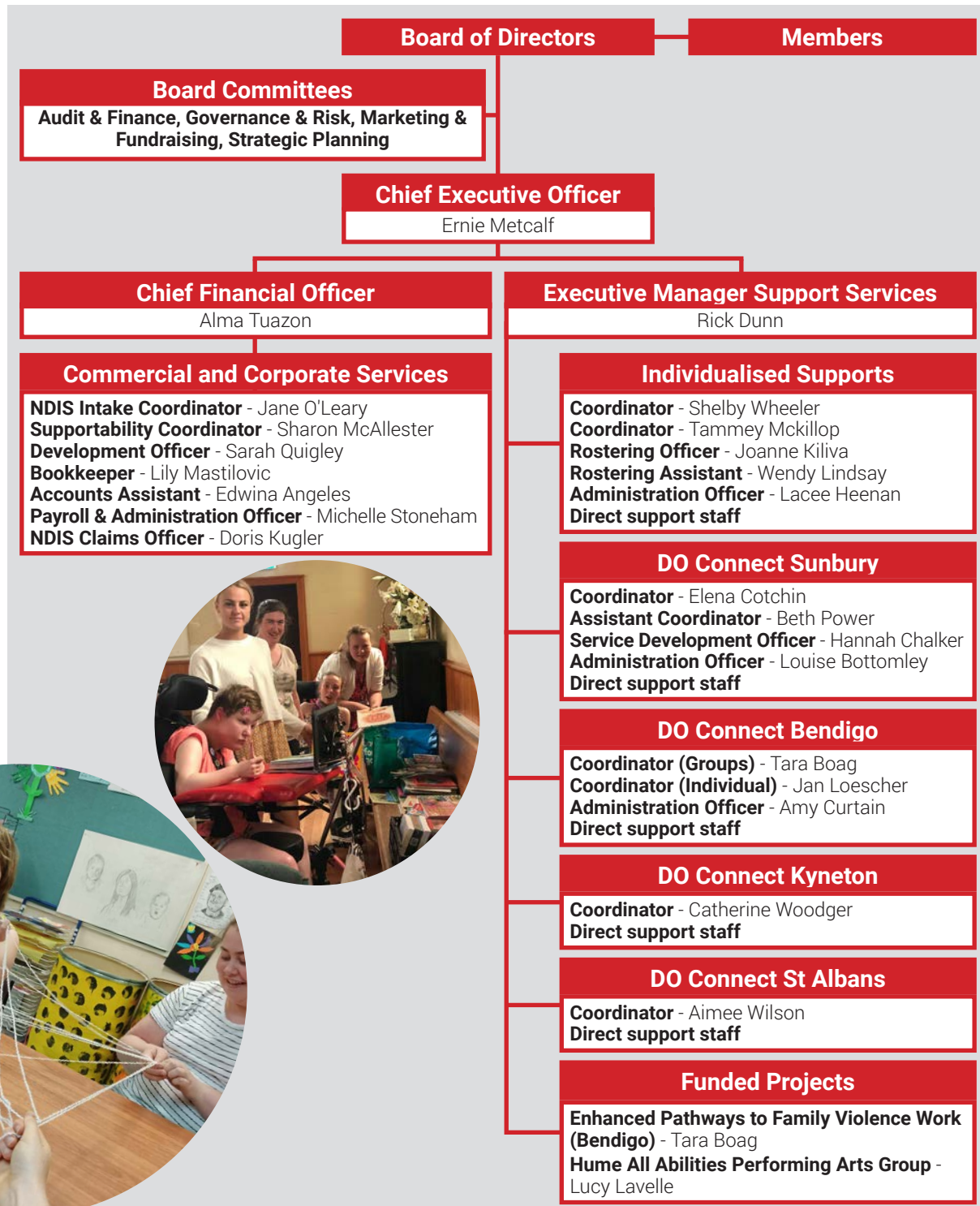
Organisation Overview



Who We Are

Distinctive Options is a not-for-profit disability service provider. Established in 1985, we provide services to children and adults with a range of group and individual support options available. Distinctive Options is made up of 197 employees and 309 participants, operating from six individual sites across the north-central-west region of Victoria.

Organisation Chart



Our History

1985	The Sunbury Adult Unit commences in May, supporting 15 participants
1987	Services include education, vocational training and supported employment
1989	The first R&R Network is formed whilst two new employment businesses are established
1993	The organisation is renamed Able Community Services with 50 participants and \$727,000 revenue
1997	A mowing service is established, participant numbers reach 69 and revenue hits \$1.27 million
1999	The organisation is renamed Distinctive Options following the acquisition of MBM Association Inc.
2004	Quality certification is achieved with National Disability Standards and ISO 9001:2000 attained
2011	The organisation has 88 participants and revenue reaches \$4.03 million
2014	Employment services are ceased with the organisation moving its focus to direct support delivery only, resulting in a decreased revenue of \$2.21 million
2017	Participants begin to transition to the NDIS and a number of new service options are introduced, with 165 participants and revenue at \$4.13 million
2018	70% of the organisation's 234 participants transition to the NDIS with revenue topping \$5.5 million
2019	The organisation is restructured, with individual and group support services the main focus of the organisation
2020	COVID-19 results in widespread changes to service delivery and support hours; despite this, the organisation ends the financial year with 309 participants and a revenue of \$9.06 million

Strategic Objectives

At Distinctive Options, we aim to grow our services to assist and empower those we support, helping each of our participants to gain equality and inclusion in the community. Everything we do is built around four key strategic objectives.

Be Resilient Our systems and processes help us grow strategically and sustainably

Be Distinctive We attract the best staff, Management and Board by investing in and supporting them to perform at their best.

Be Sustainable We are financially sustainable with a focus on profit for purpose.

Be Progressive We effectively utilise our systems and processes under the NDIS.

A summary of our progress towards each of these objectives is detailed on Page 16.

Stakeholders

Stakeholder	We engage with them by...
Our participants and their supporters	Meetings, newsletters, surveys, memos, website, social media, plain English resources, Annual Report, invitation to Annual General Meeting
Our Board, staff and volunteers	Meetings, workshops, surveys, reference groups, committees, Annual Report, invitation to Annual General Meeting
Government regulators and funders	Data submission, reports, emails, site visits, participation in external audits
Sponsors and donors	Emails, private and public acknowledgments, Annual Report, invitation to Annual General Meeting
Local communities	Website, social media, advertising (radio and print), Annual Report, invitation to Annual General Meeting
The media	Invitations to events, emails
Informal partners	Emails, social media, public acknowledgments, meetings, invitation to Annual General Meeting
Contractors and suppliers	Emails, meetings, reviews

Feedback

Feedback plays an important role in service provision at Distinctive Options. It informs the supports that we provide, the way we run our organisation and continuous improvements to our services. People can provide feedback to us in various ways, including:

- Using a Participant Feedback Form (provided to all participants when they commence and regularly throughout the year)
- Annual surveys, including the Participant Survey, Supporter Survey and Staff Survey
- Via our Facebook page
- Via email to info@d-o.com.au
- Through the Contact Us page on our website
- In person at any service to any member of staff

Some of the compliments recorded on our Compliments Register this year included:

- "Travel training has changed my son's life and given him confidence in life" – parent
- "The staff really put their heart and soul into their work" – advocate

- "Distinctive Options is one of the best companies I have worked for" – employee
- "I am very happy with my son's progress with the help of his amazing and wonderful support workers" – parent
- "Thank you so much for everything your organisation is doing to assist my daughter in having a better life" – parent
- "The care and companionship being provided to my daughter is fantastic" – parent
- "Distinctive Options remains one of the most reliable, reasonable and quality service providers" – Support Coordinator
- "I am loving the video calls with different people" – participant
- "Thank you for the great job you are doing with the Zoom sessions" – parent
- "You have done a wonderful job throughout the COVID-19 period and have done a great job providing participants with online support" – parent

Chairperson's Message



The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted society and all sectors of the economy in ways which were unforeseen a year ago. The pandemic has required the Board and Management of Distinctive Options to review and modify how we continue to deliver essential services in a safe and compliant way, protecting the people we support, families and our dedicated staff. Distinctive Options has been successful in our approach, monitoring changes to ensure high quality outcomes, innovation, financial acumen and good governance.

Every nation across the world has experienced the impacts of COVID-19 during 2020. We wait in anticipation to understand the long term affects this will have on economies and societies for years and generations to come. Australia is not immune, particularly after the second outbreak that swept across Victoria in June. As a disability service provider, Distinctive Options was forced to adapt and change the way we operate.

New ways of working have become our norm. New challenges and demands have been placed on our participants, their families, Management and staff. However, we have risen to these challenges and the Board are extremely proud of the way the organisation has operated to minimise impacts and protect the financial wellbeing of our organisation. Distinctive Options has a positive future. Despite all of the challenges, I am proud of the achievements presented in this years' Annual Report.

Strategic Achievements

The Board work with Management to set the strategic direction and risk appetite for Distinctive Options. We then monitor the progress of these plans through scorecards that monitor operational outcomes and governance. We continued throughout 2020 to work towards our 4 strategic objectives described on Page 6. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) message and Strategic Performance sections within this report provide visibility on progress towards these goals.

Governance Highlights in 2020

Throughout the report we have summarised the various aspects that were core achievements regarding governance. Specific highlights included:

- Improved terms of reference for our Board Committees (listed on Page 57).
- Improved financial and commercial acumen across the Board, with focus on cash and understanding of the financials for each revenue stream and service.
- Focus on board skills and succession planning.
- Review and validation of the organisation's risk appetite.
- Monitoring the impact of COVID-19 to ensure continuation of services through innovation, new ways of working and tight controls to protect the wellbeing of all.
- Full compliance with regulations and lockdown rules during the pandemic, with updates to all relevant policies and procedures.
- Strong financial performance with 100% of participant funding coming from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Department of Health.
- A new Strategic Planning Committee consisting of each existing Committee's Chairperson and led by the Board's Deputy Chairperson, designed to review strategic development for the coming 12 months.

I also want to acknowledge the following highlights regarding our performance through 2020:

- Between July 2019 and February 2020, support hours provided to participants grew by 12.2%, from 114,092 hours to 127,962 hours.
- A 10.6% increase in support hours, with total hours increasing from 171,138 in 2018/19 to a record 189,339 in 2019/20.
- Significantly increased cash and profits which will ensure our sustainability into the future. This is a very positive milestone for Distinctive Options in light of our performance and financial focus over the past 3 years as we transitioned to the NDIS.
- Successfully transitioned to our new organisational structure, acknowledging our new Leaders and their drive, perseverance and dedication.
- Successful implementation of a new human resources system.

Planning for the Future

This Board has always taken its role in setting the strategy for Distinctive Options seriously and each year work with Management to review the strategic direction within what has always been a 3 year plan. This year we would have been tasked with developing a new plan for 2021-2024. A decision was made to design a shorter Strategic Plan for the next 24 months, in response to the uncertainty of COVID-19 and beyond. This is described on Page 18.

Acknowledgements

In closing, I must make a special thank you to our Management team and our wonderful staff. Your hard work and dedication is a testament to the service you provide to our participants and their families and supporters. I will also call out the dedication and diversity of my board of Directors who dedicate their time voluntarily for the good of Distinctive Options.

I want to give a special mention to Terry Rodrigues as he ends his final year as a Director. Terry has been a wonderful asset to the team and over the years has held roles as Deputy Chairperson and a key member of our Audit and Finance Committee.

2021 will be my final year with Distinctive Options as I complete the third year of my third term. I will spend the final year as a Director but will not be Chairperson. It has been a privilege to have served as Chair over the past 5 years and am proud of the legacy my team have created for our organisation. In my final year, I will support the newly nominated Office Bearers to ensure a smooth transition. These roles will be determined in December 2020 at our final meeting for the year.

Anthony Aboud

Chairperson

CEO's Message



The Coronavirus pandemic forced disability service providers to review and modify how they could continue to deliver essential services during times of great stress for the community. Distinctive Options navigated this successfully through modifying our services and operations. The modifications ensured high quality, safe services continued to be provided to the people who we support.

2020 will be forever remembered as one of the greatest challenges Australia has faced due to the impact of COVID-19. Disability service providers were forced to adapt and change the way they operated, both from a support service perspective as well as from an organisational perspective. Working off-site or from home became the norm for many key staff. Online support services for participants were developed and flourished. Significant demands were placed on Management, staff, participants, their families and their supporters.

A big thank you to all our participants and their supporters for all the tremendous support and compliments received for Distinctive Options' ability to adapt, modify and continue to offer high quality, safe, meaningful support services and back office operations.

Our Operations

Given the challenges brought on by COVID-19, Distinctive Options was still able to strongly achieve its operational objectives for the year which are tied to the goals of the Strategic Plan. Distinctive Options uses two balanced scorecards to monitor organisational performance against strategic goals. One is a Governance Scorecard used at a Board level, the other is an Operational Scorecard used to monitor and measure operational performance against the strategic goals. Operational targets cascade both up and down throughout the whole organisation.

Our more detailed Operational Balanced Scorecard achieved 81.6% of the targets set. An excellent result under challenging circumstances against the four key Strategic Plan pillars of:

- **Be Resilient** – which centred on ensuring systems and processes support growth. Our organisation achieved a strong performance of 86.4% for the targets included in this section of the Scorecard.
- **Be Distinctive** – which centred on having the best staff and management, as well as raising our profile and brand awareness. Distinctive Options scored a good result with 68.3% of the targets achieved in this section, but it showed some further improvements are still needed.
- **Be Sustainable** – which centred on viability and sustainability. A strong result financially saw 86.1% of these targets achieved.
- **Be Progressive** – which centred on full utilisation of effective systems and processes for the NDIS and/or market share and growth. Another very good result was achieved here scoring 80.5% of the targets set.

The COVID-19 challenges meant that during the first Victorian lockdown in March and April 2020, the State Government made it mandatory that all group services must close. In its place, our creative staff set up a number of online group activities across all of our sites.

Additionally, they offered group services participants the option of taking up some 1-on-1 supports, which a number of people chose to do. In June 2020, the Victorian Government allowed restricted or limited group services to resume based on adequate social distancing. This continued into July 2020 following the imposed higher Stage 4 restrictions across the metropolitan region, and Stage 3 restrictions in regional areas.

2019-2020 was our organisation's first full year funded under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Leading up to the declared COVID-19 pandemic, our organisation experienced significant growth in support hours provided. Between July 2019 and February 2020, support hours provided to participants grew by 12.2%. After the impact of COVID-19 on group support hours, the end of year result was still a strong 10.6% annual increase. A fabulous result under the very trying circumstances caused by a 1-in-100 year event.

Financially, these achievements during 2019-2020 translated into Distinctive Operations performing very strongly, well above expectations, with a high profit and significantly increased cash flows. Full financial details can be reviewed in our audited financial statements contained later in this report.

The financial result means that our organisation is well placed to re-invest in our staff, services and a range of back office systems. The investments will ensure continuous improvement in our services, staff and corporate operations as well as potential new options.

The evolution of disability services has been interesting to watch under the NDIS. Where group service participant numbers were traditionally the main supports provided by Distinctive Options in the past, individualised supports are now the largest part of our total operation numbers. When the pandemic struck, this was indeed fortunate, because our 1-on-1 services have continued unabated during COVID-19. Safety of participants, families and staff, has always been our paramount concern and to this end

Management and staff quickly developed and invoked a new COVID-19 Policy to minimise all risks associated with the virus.

Our People

Back in May 2019, I reported a major organisational restructure occurred throughout the organisation. I can now proudly announce that those staff who stepped up into new senior roles became our champions of change. Through their drive, perseverance and dedication, they have continued to evolve and grow our services. Participants, families and supporters responded very positively to the changes and we have seen the benefits across the organisation through the growth in support hours and number of people accessing our services.

Staff survey results carried out during the year are also highlighted in more detail later in this report. Management notes the very positive comments that staff provided as we all worked our way through the impact of the pandemic and restrictions put in place.

Our Management Team must be congratulated for their tireless efforts during exceptionally trying times. We have a very lean team but our highly capable managers bring a multitude of skills across the disability sector and other business acumen. The team successfully balanced all the significantly increased pressures associated with the pandemic, including operations, service delivery and Board reporting.

Our Short-term Outlook

Our strong financial position means Distinctive Options is well placed to continue to operate effectively whilst the pandemic continues, and to allow further development and evolution of the way the organisation provides services and uses technology to improve our operations.

Future potential developments during 2020/21 may include:

- An expansion of our group support sites in Sunbury, along with finding a new single Bendigo site to better allow for growth in group supports.

- A review of potential employment pathways.
- Back of office enhancements, including further improvements to our new Human Resources software with a complete HR database for all staff; a review of potential new financial accounting software that will better serve the organisation, now and into the future; and an eLearning system for staff training and inductions.
- Any mergers or acquisitions that add value to our organisation, should any arise.

Acknowledgements

In closing, I must give thanks to our Management Team and to our champions of change who are constantly raising the bar and for being innovative. A special thank you also goes to Aimee Wilson, our OHS Officer, who kept in touch with all our staff throughout the pandemic to ensure their mental health and wellbeing was being monitored regularly. Thanks also goes to the Board for their consideration and support during the year, particularly the very trying times arising out of COVID-19. And finally, to all our staff. What a great performance by such dedicated and hard-working people.

Ernie Metcalf

Chief Executive Officer

Executive Manager's Report



The past year has certainly been a tale of two distinct halves with the unforeseen calamity of COVID-19 visiting unprecedented disruption on a sector already grappling with perpetual change and complexity imposed by the still evolving National Disability Insurance Scheme. The challenges have been immense at all levels within the organisation and this report is a testament to the resilience, creativity and dexterity of an organisation able to retain its focus on and commitment to delivering the best disability support even under the most dire of circumstances. It remains a source of immense pride and optimism that we continue to honour the organisation's mission, vision and values with such shared drive and purpose

There were a number of key changes in Support Service personnel made over the past year which are worthy of note. Our two Individualised Support (IS) Coordinators, Sarah Heriot and Melanie East, vacated their respective positions and remain on extended maternity leave. Tammey McKillop and Shelby Wheeler were employed as our new Coordinators and have built significantly on the great work of their predecessors. The appointment of Lacey Heenan to an IS administration support role further bolsters this area of critical support. Catherine Woodger officially vacated the role of Connect Bendigo Coordinator (Groups). Catherine will now focus exclusively on the continued development of Kyneton Group services and contribute more widely in a direct support role.

Distinctive Options was funded by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to deliver an 'Enhanced Pathways to Family Violence Project' in Bendigo with the aim of developing employment pathways and internal expertise in this important area of social policy. Heading into its third and final year, the Project has increased our capacity in this area to the extent that Distinctive Options is uniquely positioned to advise mainstream health and community services in Bendigo on the nexus where family violence and disability issues sometimes converge. The Project Leader, Tara Boag, was recently appointed the role

of Bendigo Coordinator (Groups) where she joins Jan Loescher (Bendigo IS Coordinator) in continuing to shape Bendigo services into the future. Bendigo Group and IS services are well supported by Amy Curtain who provides outstanding administration support, having assumed this role in the latter half of 2019.

Quality Service

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission assumed jurisdiction for Victoria on 1st July 2019. The Commission is the primary regulatory body for NDIS service providers, is independent of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and has oversight of the following service provider issues and areas:

- Registration and regulation of providers
- Compliance with the Practice Standards and Code of Conduct
- Complaints about NDIS services and supports
- Reportable incidents, including abuse and neglect of a participant
- Use of restrictive practices
- Nationally consistent NDIS worker screening

The Commission has extensive legislated investigative and compliance authority in these key areas of service provision and are every bit as prolific as the NDIA in terms of issuing guidelines, rules and regulations on

matters directly related to service quality and participant safety.

In July 2020, Distinctive Options achieved certification with the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework following an external audit of its service by Community Audits Australia. The auditors determined that Distinctive Options either met or exceeded each Practice Standard following an intensive two-day interrogation of our systems, processes, policies, procedures and practices. A critical element of the auditing process involved the interview of several members of staff and participants where the auditors observed outstanding levels of engagement and satisfaction. The auditors also made special mention of the obvious passion, knowledge and commitment to excellence in the many staff they consulted with.

Community Connections

One of the key NDIS outcome indicators across all Participant Plans is the extent to which service providers provide opportunities for people with disability to engage with the wider community and mainstream services. Distinctive Options continues to embrace the practice of inclusion and participation as a fundamental human right and this is reflected in its core statements of mission, vision and values. People with disability face numerous and significant barriers to inclusion and, on their behalf, Distinctive Options engages with a range of community partners to dismantle these barriers 'brick by brick'. This work is often complex, hidden from view, carried out 'behind the scenes' and requires dogged persistence of support workers and service leaders in creating and enabling such opportunities. In 2019-2020, we created numerous additional partnerships, including those listed below to further this critical work:

- Bendigo Film Making Society
- Kyneton Library
- Kyneton BUPA Aged Care
- Bendigo Disability Inclusion Reference Committee
- Bendigo Bank Accessibility Project

- Pet Haven Rescue Centre
- St Kilda Mums Association
- Bendigo City Council "All Abilities Action Plan Committee"
- Bendigo Balloon Football League
- Bendigo Food-Bank
- Bendigo Health "Cooking with Conversations"
- Sunbury Salesian College – Horticultural Project
- Salvation Army (CBD) "Homeless Support Initiative"
- St Anne's Sunbury Primary School – School Canteen
- Bendigo Community Video Peer Network
- Kyneton Daffodil Festival
- Kyneton Men's Shed
- Barista Bros
- VALID "Have a Say Conference"
- Sunbury "Random Acts of Kindness" initiative

These are but a few of the many additional associations created in the past twelve months. We are so grateful to all who partner with us to create inclusive and meaningful community connections and opportunities.

Adapting to a New World

It would be remiss of me to not mention COVID-19 and I do this only to emphasise that we share in the anxiety, stress and imposition caused to us all in managing our ongoing response to this pandemic. The impact on individuals, systems and services has been dramatic and comprehensive and continue to challenge us all in ways few could anticipate. The response at all levels of the organisation, from our cleaners to the Board can be characterised as concerted, focused and considered. Fluid demands and complexity have become the norm as we seek to preserve the health and wellbeing of our immediate and the wider community.

As face-to-face supports were increasingly restricted, our instinctive response was to develop and implement a range of creative measures designed to maintain supports and connections at a time of unprecedented

disruption. The rapid delivery and expansion of online activities via Zoom is but one example of the drive and ingenuity brought to bear by Coordinators and staff in overcoming yet another externally imposed barrier between participants and the fulfilment of their needs and ambitions.

The heightened awareness of and adherence to increased infection control measures has added further complexity to our already challenging work and we have dedicated significant additional time and resources to preserving the physical and mental health of staff, participants and supporters. From hand sanitiser to face masks, increased cleaning routines to face shields and training of staff in all of these additional measures, the task has been monumental. Maintaining regular contact with all staff and participants throughout the pandemic simply to ask how they are coping with all of this is but one initiative which exceeds the response required of service providers. I would also like to highlight the additional demands placed on all of our Coordinators and as well as our OHS Coordinator, Aimee Wilson and her OHS team (Kim Boucher, Sharon Purcell, Andrea Chandler and Beth Power) for their tireless vigilance and energy under the most difficult and demanding of circumstances.

The resilience and dedication of our service leaders and Coordinators and their capacity to continually pivot while retaining focus on the delivery of meaningful and responsive supports has been truly inspiring, as is the commitment to the continued health, wellbeing and advancement of participants shown by our dedicated front line staff and support workers.

Despite the anxiety and disruption wrought by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, there is much to look forward to in the year ahead with a number of special projects and service enhancements on the horizon as we continue to achieve great things for Distinctive Options in partnership with participants and supporters.

Rick Dunn

Executive Manager – Support Services

Year in Review

July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants in Sunbury begin volunteering at a local community drop-in centre
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants in Sunbury launch a Random Acts of Kindness initiative• Bendigo introduces overnight respite supports
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Family Violence Project starts in Bendigo• The Sunbury Rights and Responsibilities (R&R) network sell pies to raise \$129 for Motor Neuron Disease Australia.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Artwork is displayed at the local Sunbury Show, with many participants receiving recognition for their efforts• Staff and participants attend the Sunbury & Regional Community Awareness Expo to tell the community about Distinctive Options
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Melbourne Cup Parade is held in Sunbury• Participants and staff attend the Tri State Games• The Annual General Meeting takes place with over 30 attendees• St Albans begins offering extended hours activities and individualised support options for participants• Sunbury Radio Chat participants attend the StreetLife Festival to interview people about the things they love about our community
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunbury R&R network work alongside local charities - CareWorks and Sunbury Anglican Church - to create Christmas hampers for people in need• Christmas celebrations are held across all services for both participants and staff• St Albans hosts two short-stay holidays for participants
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distinctive Options moves to a 48-week program, giving participants access to group supports for an extra two weeks each year• Participants from Sunbury work alongside Bunnings to create an indigenous garden at a local community farm
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants and staff attend the annual Having a Say Conference in Geelong• A Bunnings sausage sizzle fundraiser is held to raise money for participants to attend the Tri State Games later this year
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants from the Sunbury Radio Chat program interview the director of the Good Friday Appeal• The World Health Organisation declares that COVID-19 is a pandemic
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group supports are closed under direction of the Department of Health and Human Services in response to COVID-19, with many participants moving to an individualised supports model• DO Online is launched in response to the closure, providing important social connections for isolated participants
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group supports coordinators begin planning for the resumption of safe supports
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group supports are reopened, with all services implementing strict COVID-19 safety protocols• We receive a Silver Award from the Australasian Reporting Awards for our 2018/19 Annual Report

Strategic Performance

Our 2018-2020 Strategic Plan describes the goals and direction of Distinctive Options. Now in its final year, the Plan has supported the organisation to expand in line with our mission, vision and values. It includes specific outcomes for four key objectives, described on Page 6. Our performance against the Strategic Plan is measured using a Balanced Scorecard. This tool allows the organisation to measure outcomes throughout the year, with updates made every month and provided to the Board for oversight. A summary of our results is provided below. A green result indicates that the outcome was successfully achieved whilst an orange result indicates that the outcome was partially achieved.

Be Resilient

Measure	Target	Last Year	This Year	Result
Participant and family satisfaction percentage	≥ 85%	88.6%	90%	■
Number of complaints	< 10	10	6	■
Number of compliments	≥ 30	31	36	■
Review of governance and operational policies	100%	95%	100%	■
Compliance with funding body requirements	100%	100%	100%	■
Compliance with ACNC requirements	100%	100%	100%	■
Average monthly support delivery hours	> 15,000	14,261	14,573	■
Average monthly staff hours	< 8,250	7,785	7,895	■
Hr3 timesheet system operational	31/1/20	-	4/3/20	■

Be Distinctive

Measure	Target	Last Year	This Year	Result
Permanent staff turnover ratio	< 15%	11.7%	6.9%	■
Hours of sick leave taken	≤ 4,000	3,969	2,783	■
WorkCover premium	≤ 2.02%	1.93%	2.51%	■
Number of media articles (including Facebook posts)	≥ 200	216	331	■
Website updates	> 6	-	7	■
Fundraising and marketing events	> 4	-	2	■

Be Sustainable

Measure	Target	Last Year	This Year	Result
Cash reserves and cash flow	> \$1.95m	\$1721.8m	\$3,197m	■
Current ratio (liquidity)	> \$2.00	\$2.97	\$3.06	■
Number of days cash available	> 75	86	135	■
Salaries and oncosts as % of revenue	≥ 80.3%	77.4%	75.8%	■
Debt collection (number of 61 to 90+ day debtors)	≤ 10%	10.4%	12.7%	■
Number of legal claims against DO	< 1	0	0	■

Be Progressive

Measure	Target	Last Year	This Year	Result
SupportAbility software fully functional for billing	100%	100%	100%	■
Risk register review	100%	-	100%	■
Number of participants	≥ 316	301	309	■
Growth in participants accessing services	> 5%	28.6%	2.7%	■

Several outcomes that were only partially achieved can be directly linked to the impacts of COVID-19. This includes the number of fundraising and marketing events (not possible from March) and the number of new participants and growth in supports (slowed between March to June).

Regarding WorkCover premiums, Distinctive Options had less reportable workplace injuries that resulted in lost time during 2019-2020. Time lost was 570 hours for the year, compared to 738 hours in the previous year. Unfortunately, one injury was enough to affect our premium rate, meaning the insurer pushed our organisation’s rate higher because it was a longer term injury. The reportable injury with lost time ended in 2020 some months prior to the 30th June. The chargeable rate imposed by insurers is something outside the control of Distinctive Options, even after allowing for reportable injury time lost being insignificant in regards to total staff numbers or total hours worked. It should be noted that for the new year, 2020-2021, the WorkCover rate has been reduced by the insurer.

In relation to 61 to 90+ day debtors, every attempt is made to minimise the amount of debts owing that are older than 60 days. However, because of the way NDIS funding is structured, particularly in respect to self-funded participants, or via funding intermediaries, there is always some lag time between billing and payments received. Where plans or plan dates change, a lag in NDIS portal claims can occur where claims made under old plans are rejected and new plans have not yet been advised or made available to Distinctive Options. This means although debts owing that were outstanding for more than 60 days equated to 12.5% as at 30th June, this still represents a fairly good performance given the issues detailed above.



New Strategic Plan

This year, a new Strategic Planning Committee was formed to develop a new Strategic Plan for the organisation. As described within the Chairperson's Report, the new Plan addresses the upcoming 24 months, in recognition of the uncertainty that COVID-19 has brought, with a focus on short term priorities and the organisation's need to be flexible and adaptable. The intent of the Strategic Plan is to grow our services during and beyond COVID-19 to assist and empower those we support, helping them achieve their potential to gain equality and inclusion in the community. The following short-term priorities have been identified for each strategic pillar. These priorities have been created to ensure that the organisation can adapt and thrive throughout and after COVID-19.

Be Resilient

- Develop agile, robust and accurate profit and cashflow forecast reporting systems.
- Innovation focus including developing an e-Strategy for delivering services via electronic and digital channels.
- Ensure acceptable risk appetites and tolerances support and drive organisational growth and development



Be Distinctive

- Raise our profile and brand awareness through increased social media presence, consumer-focused networking, signage, public relations and investing in dedicated public relations, media and marketing resources and capabilities.
- Collaborate with partners to expand on and develop new opportunities, diversifying income streams.
- Recruit new Directors for vacancies that fill specific skill gaps identified for a progressive disability, profit-for-purpose organisation.
- Recruit, nurture and maintain staff through an investment in training and development as our competitive advantage.
- Ensure marketing aligns with the organisation's vision, mission and values to grow Distinctive Options' brand.

Be Sustainable

- Ensure liquidity and cash flows meet operational needs whilst maintaining a Board approved cash reserve.
- Ensure financial targets adopted in the annual budget are achieved through strong operational performance.
- Take up new grant or tender opportunities that can deliver short-term or longer-term cash profits.
- Consider any mergers or acquisitions that add value to Distinctive Options.
- Ensure donors and other general fundraising delivers maximum returns for minimum efforts.

Be Progressive

- Ensure rollout of group services post lockdown does not lose participants and/or sees new participants join services.

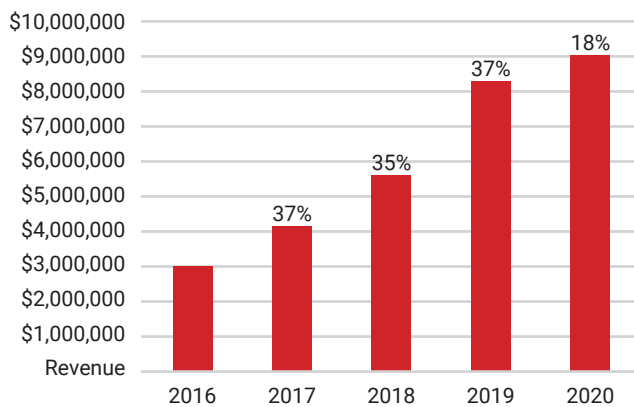


Financial Overview

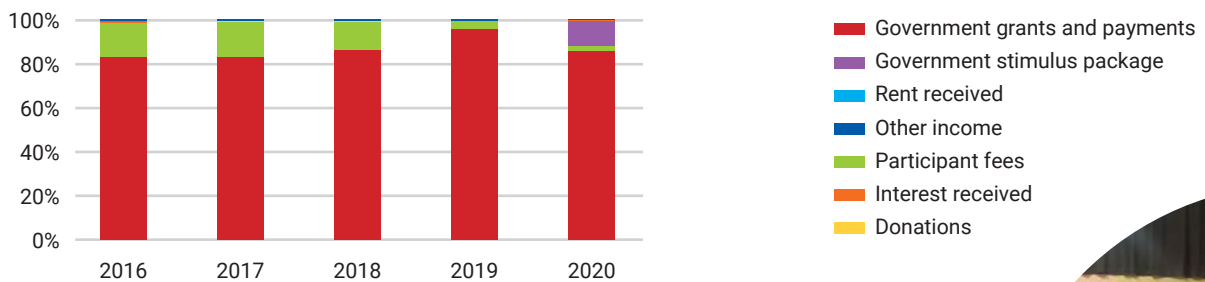
Revenue

Revenue is all of the income that Distinctive Options earned from its activities, including NDIS funding, activity fees, returns on investments, grants and donations. Despite a reduction in revenue due to the temporary withdrawal of participants during the COVID-19 lockdown period, the JobKeeper stimulus package provided by the federal government provided a welcome lifeline to enable Distinctive Options to continue to operate during an otherwise difficult period. A comparison of income over the past four years shows steady growth in government grants. The annual increase in participant numbers underpins the growth in government grants and payments.

Revenue Growth 2016-2020



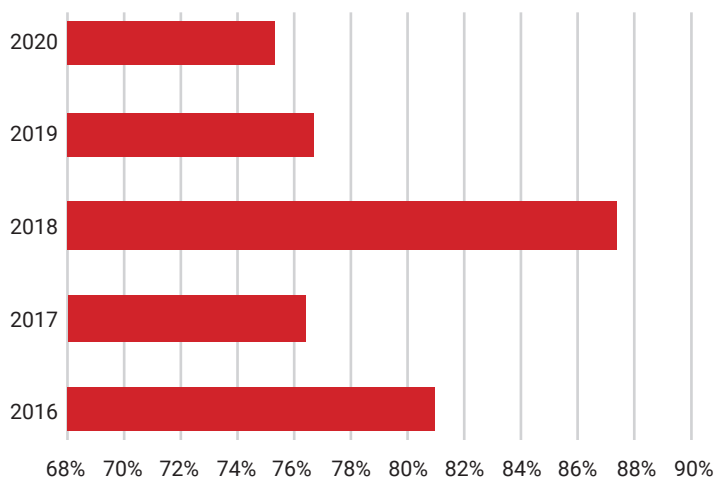
Revenue Breakdown Comparison



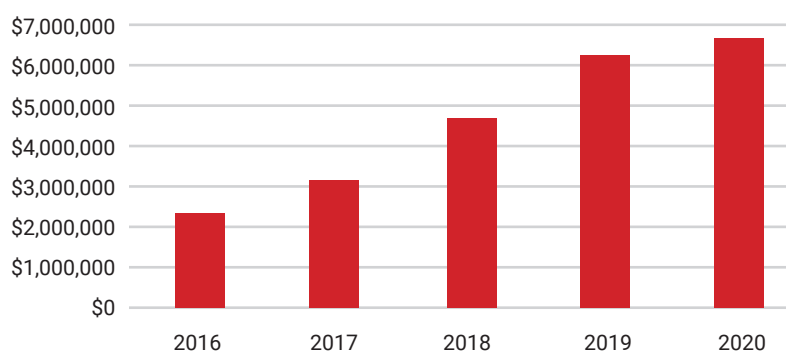
Expenses

Expenses are all of the costs of the organisation. As Distinctive Options is predominantly a service business, a significant proportion of expenditure related to employee benefits expenses. The increase in employee benefits expenses each year is directly proportional to the increase in support hours delivered to participants. As a percentage of total revenue, the 2020 year achieved the most cost effective salary expenses as it only accounted for 75.3% of total revenue. This can be attributed to the reduction in staffing hours due to temporary withdrawal of participants in March 2020 at the start of COVID-19. The application of the new Leasing Standards gave rise to the Right to Use Assets and Lease Liability in the Statement of Financial Position which resulted in an increase in Amortisation Expense of \$149,847 and Interest Paid of \$25,799 with the consequent reduction in Rental Expenses. Tight control of expenditure remains the objective of Management to maintain a cost-sustainable operation.

Employee Benefits Expenses as a % of Total Revenue

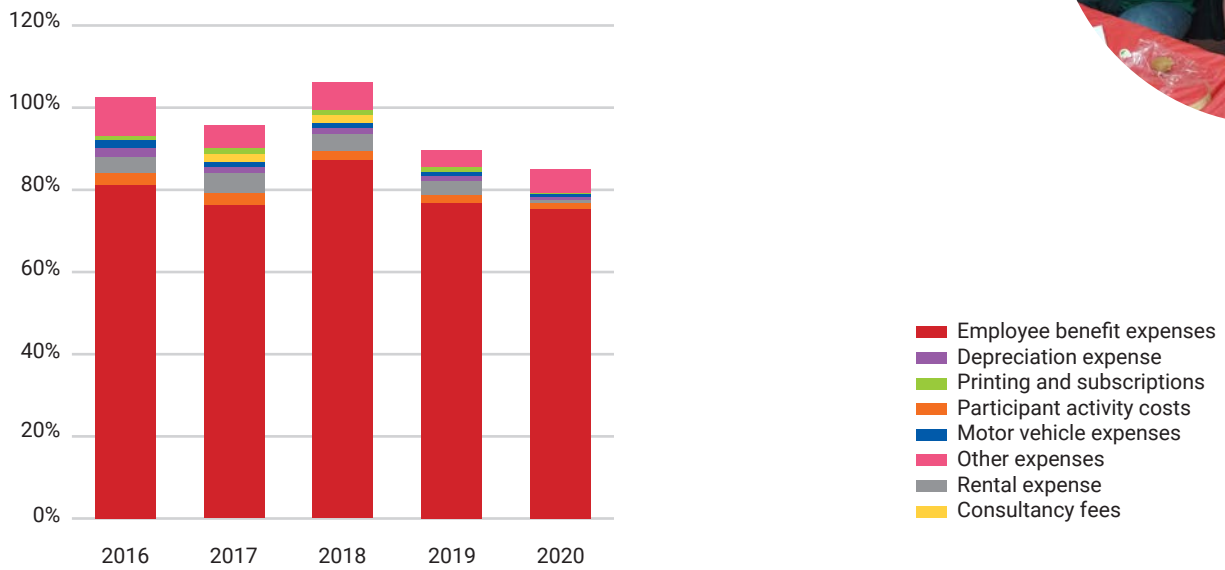


Employee Benefits Expenses





Expenses as a % of Total Revenue



Surplus/Deficit

The Operating Surplus/(Deficit) tells us how much money remains after all expenses are deducted from revenue. Distinctive Options achieved a significant operating surplus of \$1.342 million during the year. The Operating Surplus/(Deficit) comparison chart depicts the trend in Distinctive Options throughout the previous five years. The growth in participant numbers contributed up to \$843 thousand in profits in the first three quarters of the year prior to COVID-19 closure of group programs. Although funds received from the government stimulus package formed part of the surplus for the year, the directive to close the group programs hampered the company's ability to generate more profits from normal operations in the last quarter of the year.

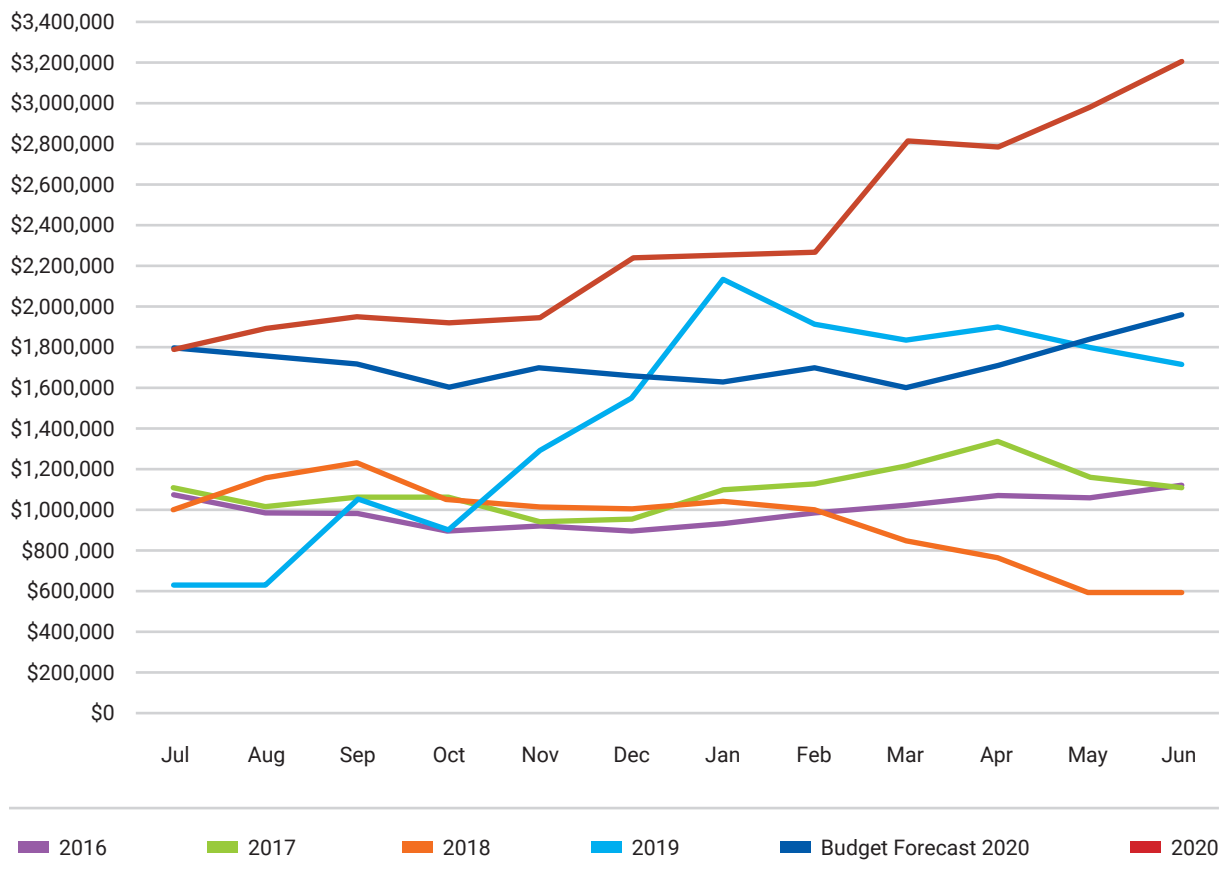
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)



Cash

Cash tells us how much money is coming into the organisation whilst cash reserves tell us how much of that cash is being saved each month. Cash reserves achieved its highest balance with \$3,197,022 at the end of year, a jump of 64% from \$1,721,850 at the beginning of the year. Cash reserves include the NDIS cash advance of \$369,740 provided during the height of COVID-19. The NDIA will recoup this amount over six months from October 2020. The graph illustrates cash reserves over the last five years. The growth in participant numbers along with the automation of debtor invoicing, billing and rigorous recovery of outstanding accounts all contributed to stronger cash position this year.

Cash Flows - July 2016 to June 2020



Alma Tuazon

Chief Financial Officer



Services

Site Profiles



Individualised Supports Sunbury and Surrounds

Established 2013

Coordinators:

Shelby Wheeler
and Tammey
McKillop

111 participants
113 employees

Activities and achievements this year included:

- Various activities, including independent daily living skills, community access, social support, personal care, physical activity, cooking and more!
- Developing of online support delivery options
- Delivery of online training for staff
- Employing a full time Rostering Officer and part time Administrative Assistant to manage growth in the service
- Successfully handing over Coordinator duties from Melanie East and Sarah Heriot as they left on maternity leave in early 2020
- Setting up a supported accommodation model for two participants to live independently
- Continuing to grow support delivery and participant numbers throughout COVID-19 as people sought out more personalised services

Future plans include:

- Support participants to re-engage with the service after withdrawing due to COVID-19
- Provide more staff training, including mental health and family violence
- Increase participant numbers and support hours

DO Connect Sunbury

Established 1985

Coordinators:
Elena Cotchin and
Beth Power

96 participants
87 employees

Activities and achievements this year included:

- Various activities, including home skills, literacy and numeracy, travel training, volunteering, community access, physical fitness, survival skills, communication, social skills, extended hours, volunteering and more!
- Several supported holidays
- Delivery of numerous extended hours activities
- Attendance at the Tri State Games and Having a Say Conference
- Volunteering for the Salvation Army and the Sunbury Winter Night Shelter
- Multiple Bunnings fundraisers
- Creating an indigenous garden for Animal Land in Diggers Rest
- Weekly radio broadcasting through Sunbury Radio Station
- Delivering high quality online activities in response to COVID-19

Future plans include:

- More extended hours activities and short stay holidays
- Development of 1:1 intensive interaction supports
- Expansion of online activities to include people with NDIS funding who are not existing participants
- Introduction of an online app to share information with participants and families

DO Connect Bendigo

Established 2016

Coordinators:
Tara Boag and
Jan Loescher

60 participants
36 employees

Activities and achievements this year included:

- Various activities, including individualised supports, community access, independent living skills, physical activity, Rights and Responsibilities meetings, advocacy, gardening and house maintenance, art and more!
- Creating a number of short films
- Holding fundraisers for charities
- Hosting two weekly radio segments at Phoenix FM
- Developing a newsletter for participants
- Delivering high quality online activities in response to COVID-19
- Working hard to ensure collaboration between Groups and Individualised Supports staff to secure better outcomes for participants

Future plans include:

- More training for staff
- Increased numbers of participants and support delivery hours
- Create new employment opportunities for existing staff

DO Connect Kyneton

Established 2017

Coordinators:
Catherine Woodger
and David Patterson

45 participants
7 employees

Activities and achievements this year included:

- Various activities, including individualised supports, sport and recreation, yard and home maintenance, newspaper delivery, photography, art, community access and more!
- Delivering high quality online activities in response to COVID-19
- Numerous volunteering opportunities, including the local radio, Kyneton Community Lunch, the Op Shop, Kyneton Food Bank and the home library service

Future plans include:

- Return to regular community supports
- Increase the number of participants
- Expand on activities and supports available

DO Connect St Albans

Established 2017

Coordinators:
Aimee Wilson

8 participants
11 employees

Activities and achievements this year included:

- Various activities, including individualised supports, community access, physical activity, travel training, art, photography, volunteering, cooking, skill development, independent living and more!
- Volunteering opportunities, including volunteering at the Royal Melbourne Show
- Attending extended hours events, including Moomba, Crown and group dinners
- Short stay holidays
- Delivering high quality online activities in response to COVID-19

Future plans include:

- Increase in participant numbers
- Further extended hours activities
- More short stay holidays for participants

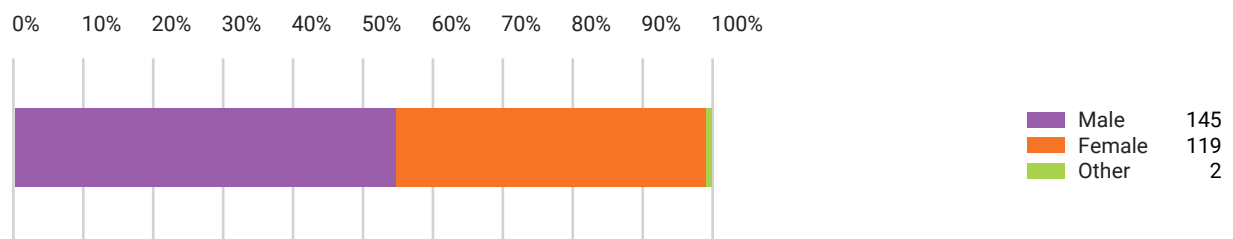


Participants

A total of 309 participants received supports from Distinctive Options in the 2019-2020 financial year, up from 301 the previous year. This section provides an overview of the demographics of the people we support.

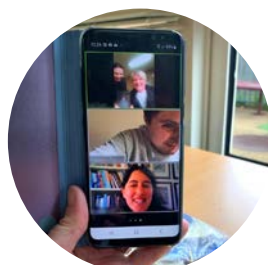
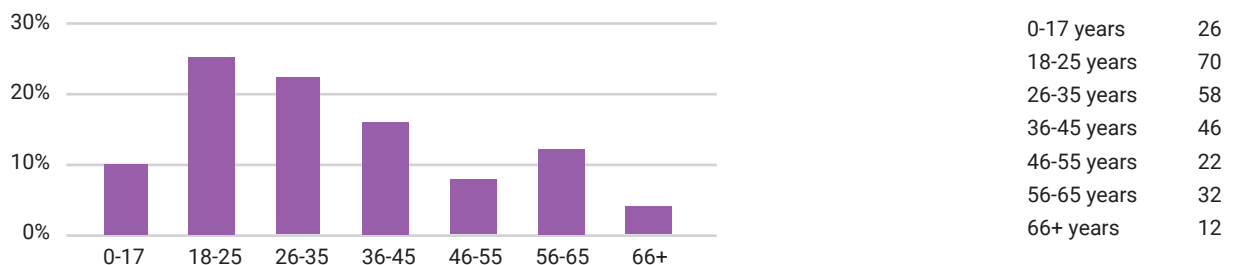
Gender

Distinctive Options has more male participants than females, with almost exactly the same distribution as last year.



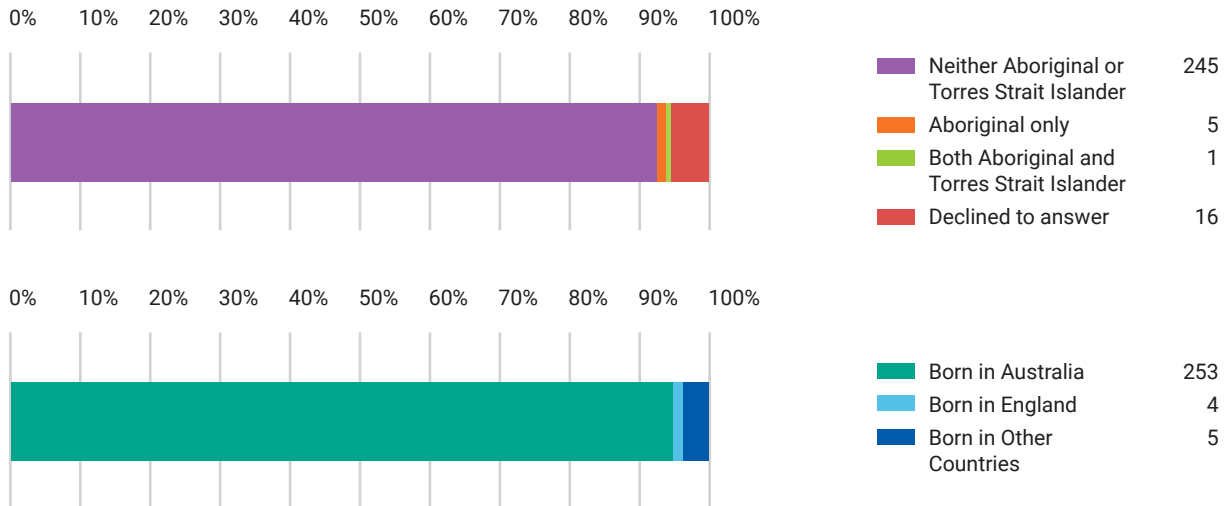
Age Distribution

Age distribution remained fairly stable from last year, with a slight increase in participants aged under 17 and a decrease in those aged 18-25. The increase in participants under 17 can be associated with the NDIS introducing more funding for respite-based supports in November.



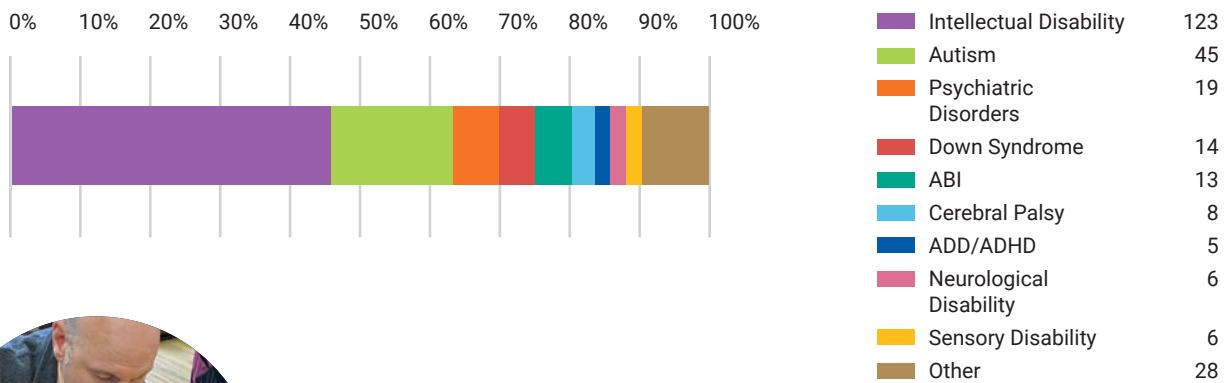
Cultural Identity

We saw a slight increase in the number of participants identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, from 1.6% last year to 2.3% this year. This is likely associated with better analysis and record keeping of cultural identity. Data for country of birth showed that 95% of participants were born in Australia, with other birth places including (but not limited to) England, New Zealand, China and Uganda.



Primary Disability

Similar to previous years, the most common primary disability for our participants is Intellectual Disability, followed by Autism and Psychiatric Disorders. Others included Down Syndrome, Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and Cerebral Palsy.

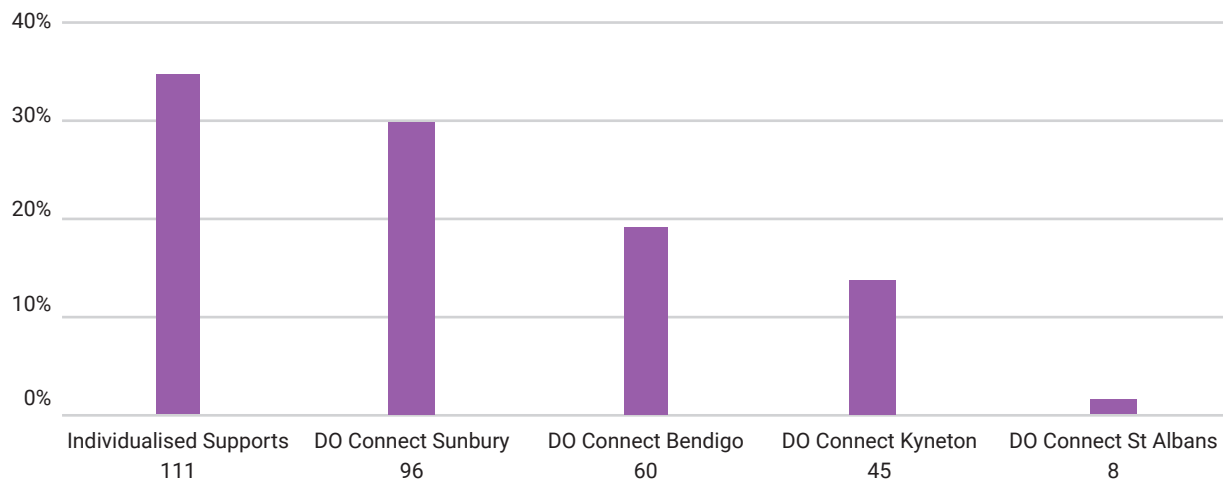


Service Delivery

Distinctive Options delivered even more hours of support to more participants this year.

Service Distribution

Many of our participants access multiple services. For this reason, the total number of participants accessing each service is higher than the total number of participants at Distinctive Options. Overall, Individualised Supports in Sunbury and surrounds was the most popular service, followed by DO Connect Sunbury.



Support Delivery Hours

Hours of support increased to 189,339 this year from 171,138 in 2019. Although hours were forecasted to be higher than this, the impact of COVID-19 resulted in a reduction in supports between April to June in 2020. It should be noted that DO Connect Bendigo, DO Connect St Albans and DO Connect Kyneton include Individualised Supports as part of their service delivery, whilst DO Connect Sunbury and Individualised Supports (Sunbury and surrounds) are separated. Average monthly hours for 2020 were as follows:

Service	Hours
Individualised Supports Sunbury and surrounds	3526
DO Connect Sunbury	6921
DO Connect Bendigo	2523
DO Connect Kyneton	1107
DO Connect St Albans	493

Surveys

The Annual Participant Survey, typically conducted in April, was deferred this year due to COVID-19. It has been scheduled for October 2020. The Family Member and Supporter Survey was held in July 2019. Completed by family members, advocates and house supervisors, it found a satisfaction rating of 91%. These results help reassure us that our services are delivering high quality, responsive supports to our participants.

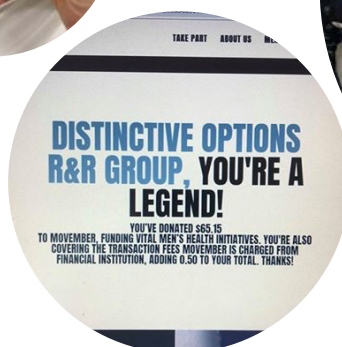
Human Rights

Distinctive Options is committed to supporting participants to be empowered about their rights and wellbeing. Each of our services and supports are designed to ensure high quality service provision that ensures human rights are respected at all times. We believe that the more informed our participants are about their rights, the greater the likelihood that they will be empowered to make informed choices and decisions. Measures we take include providing accessible information to participants about their rights and responsibilities, being aware of cultural and communication needs, assisting people to exercise their rights at all times and ensuring comprehensive systems are in place to identify and address any potential human rights breaches. There were no breaches to human rights identified in the previous twelve months.

Rights and Responsibilities Networks

Distinctive Options has three Rights and Responsibilities (R&R) Network groups that run weekly advocacy sessions in Sunbury, Kyneton and Bendigo. First launched in 1998, the groups give participants the opportunity to express their views and ideas, as well as raise and problem-solve any issues they have. Agendas are tabled and minutes are taken, with participants responsible for running the meetings and actioning any items raised. Regular agenda items include networking, community events, health and wellbeing, safety and personal business. R&R members are also invited to provide feedback on organisational issues, including document review and strategic planning. Guest presenters from the community often attend meetings to give participants an opportunity to ask questions and learn about what other groups are doing. Fundraisers are also regularly held to raise money for charities. This year our beneficiaries including Careworks, Movember, the Good Friday Appeal and Motor Neurone Disease Australia.

"We run our R&R meetings on Monday. We put things down on the agenda for Bendigo. We talk about our worries and concerns that affect us." – Emma and Heidi



Having a Say Conference



The Having a Say Conference was held in Geelong this February. The annual event gives people an opportunity to have a say about issues that affect them, celebrate ability and achievement, be actively involved in running the conference, be heard by government and politicians, and meet people from around Australia. This year's theme was "A Good Life. Are We There Yet?" This year, participants from Sunbury and Bendigo travelled to the Conference, supported by six staff members. The group stayed in Torquay for two nights, travelling each day to Deakin University Waterfront Campus to participate in a number of activities, including jewellery making, fishing and karaoke. Participants from Distinctive Options gave two presentations: Stephanie from Sunbury talked about her transition through the NDIS, whilst our Bendigo group presented Sally's Story, a short film about a woman who works at a gym. On the final night, they attended a dinner disco at The Pier where they had a great time dancing the night away.

"We did our presentation on Sally's Story in the morning and we went to the disco Tuesday night. I want to go back again." – Emma

Family Violence Project

The Family Violence Project was started back in September 2019. Tara Boag was appointed Project Officer and worked with Rick and DHHS to get the project off the ground. The aim of the project is to provide opportunities for staff and students on placement to orientate into and learn about family violence in all sectors of community services to ensure a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. Four student supervisors were selected and provided with training to educate other staff.

Kyneton Radio Program

Kyneton D.O. Connect have been running their own radio show called Radio Ga Ga at community based radio station Highlands FM. The show is music-based and features a playlist selected by the participants. The participants also read the weather report, community news, artist profiles and local events as well as announcing the songs, introducing the show and doing the end of show farewell. All the participants are involved in on air presentation and one participant is now operating the control panel and the microphones independently. The radio show provides a fantastic opportunity for people to have a voice and a presence in their local community. It is also wonderful to watch everyone becoming extremely confident at presenting. Due to the temporary closure of the station, the group did weekly Zoom sessions incorporating the format of the radio show and added new items such as positive news stories, this day in history, famous birthdays and sports news. Each week a participant would talk about a place that was special to them. The group would then look at photos and a map to learn more about that place. They are looking forward to their return to the station in the near future.





Our Year at DO Connect Kyneton

None of us knew that a pandemic was around the corner and our focus on community-based activities would soon be required to change. DO Connect Kyneton is, and always has been, a boutique service, in that it was developed for a small number of participants who were looking for more independence in their lives and greater connection in the community. Their desire was to move away from the traditional day service model and instead enjoy the flexibility that comes with the NDIA's principle of choice and control. This meant keeping connected to the local community and making the most of opportunities when they arise.

Before COVID-19 restrictions were announced, participants were actively engaged in various volunteer roles in the community. These help to develop independent living skills in real-life settings, where individual contributions are valued by others. Participants were setting up tables and chairs for the Kyneton Community Lunch – an important weekly event attracting local residents, councilors, business owners and other community members – then enjoying a sit down lunch and building relationships with others. They were presenting a live radio broadcast on Highlands FM – another valued contribution to the community while developing research, communication and technical skills in a real studio – and providing respite for the rescue dogs at Pets Haven, ensuring the animals were getting fresh air and exercise on a regular basis, as well as building trust and social skills with people. The charity's staff greatly appreciated the break and looked forward to seeing Kyneton participants every week. Within the service, a new tools and DIY activity was established. Knowing how to use a screwdriver, a hammer, or a drill, provided participants with the skills and confidence to tackle jobs around the house while developing skills in manual work, planning, OHS, and sourcing materials.

Following the onset of the pandemic, online activities were introduced for those who cannot or choose not to attend onsite. The importance of social connections to maintaining mental health and wellbeing has been well documented and, anecdotally, was found to be particularly important those who were feeling more isolated than others.

Once restrictions ease, we'll be back in the community and looking for more opportunities to reach our goals through connections with others. This may include Landcare and revegetation projects, community arts events and writing for publication. We will also support participants to attend the 2021 Having a Say Conference in Geelong and expand our activities to include evening and weekend social events. Excitingly, we are also looking to collaborate further with Individualised Supports to streamline services and increase the range of opportunities and activities available to all participants.

Thank you to the dedicated staff for continuing to support participants to pursue their goals in a COVID-safe manner at this challenging time.

Catherine Woodger
DO Connect Kyneton Coordinator





Employees

Senior Management

The Senior Management Team have the important role of providing leadership and direction to Distinctive Options. They ensure the organisation works towards the goals of the Strategic Plan and monitor our budget and risks.



Ernie Metcalf

Ernie Metcalf – Chief Executive Officer

Ernie has led Distinctive Options for four years, guiding the organisation through the NDIS transition. He holds a Master of Business Management and has over 16 years of experience in the disability sector and over 30 years of management experience. In his role as CEO, Ernie is responsible for the organisation's operations and reports directly to the Chairperson and Board of Directors. He oversees business development and growth, strategic planning and leadership. Ernie holds membership to the International Initiative for Disability Leadership (IIDL), National Disability Services (NDS) and Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD). He is also a founding member of a Victorian Disability Services CEO Best Practice Network.



Alma Tuazon

Alma Tuazon – Chief Financial Officer

Alma joined Distinctive Options in 2018 to provide financial guidance as the organisation moved into the NDIS funding model. Her role is to analyse and review financial data, report on financial performance, prepare budgets and monitor expenditure and costs. She provides financial information to the Board and other stakeholders, ensuring the organisation's financial health and security. Alma has extensive experience in business transformation, organisational restructure and change management, and has overseen finance, quality, risk management, HR, marketing, IT, business development, administration and operations. Alma is a Certified Practising Accountant by profession and is a Fellow member of CPA Australia and Financial Services Institute of Australasia. She holds a Bachelor in Accounting and a Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investments and has worked in the industry for over 30 years.



Rick Dunn

Rick Dunn – Executive Manager Support Services

Rick has worked for Distinctive Options for over 20 years, providing significant expertise about disability issues and best practice service provision. He holds qualifications in business, education, human resources and project management and is responsible for a variety of key management tasks at Distinctive Options, including operations management, strategic advising and general oversight of each of the service areas of the organisation. Rick acts as the Authorised Reporting Officer for NDIS issues at Distinctive Options. He is a member of the NDS - NDIS Issues and Sector Reform Committee.

Workforce

We acknowledge the important contribution that our employees make to Distinctive Options and recognise that they are the backbone of our organisation. They are passionate and creative and have shown tremendous resilience, flexibility and positivity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff culture at Distinctive Options is welcoming, friendly and supportive. The work can be challenging but it is rewarding and our staff are renowned for being adaptable, innovative and progressive. This culture has been ingrained throughout the organisation for decades but it is the dedication of Management and Coordinators that ensures it continues year after year. As we move into the future, we will work hard at supporting our employees to adapt to the new world of disability service delivery, with a particular focus on staff development.

Staff Profile

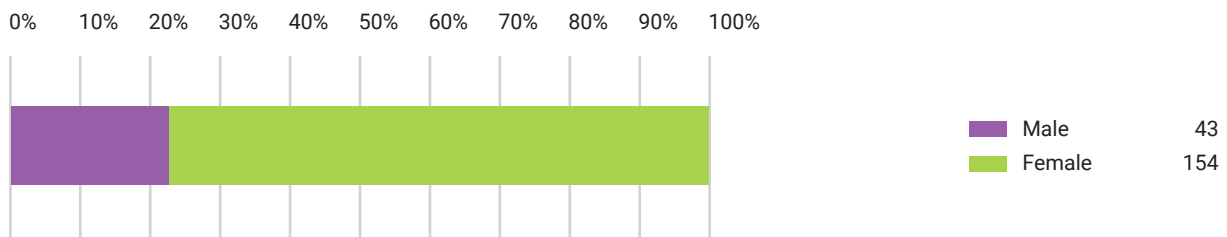
We concluded the year with 197 employees, similar to last years' number. Our Full Time Equivalent (FTE) varied due to COVID-19, sitting at 93.8 in February (79% higher than it was at the end of the previous financial year) and ending at 47.6 at June 30. This decrease is expected considering the impact of COVID-19 which reduced the number of support delivery hours from March to June. The increase in FTE pre-COVID as compared with the previous year can be directly related to our Coordinators working collaboratively to share staff across multiple areas of the organisation. Staff turnover for permanent employees in 2020 was 6.9%, down from 11.7% in 2019. This compares favourably with a higher turnover rate across the sector in excess of 20%.



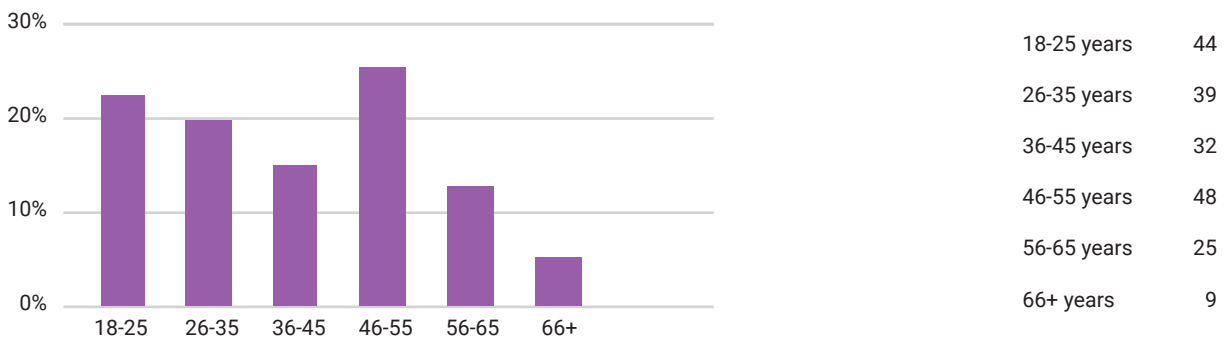
Staff Demographics

As demonstrated in the charts on Page 36 and 37, the majority of our staff are female and there is a fairly even distribution of age groups across the organisation. In regards to employment status, we saw a significant reduction in casual positions with a corresponding increase in part time roles. This year, 34% of our employees were casual, compared to 64% the previous year. This decrease is due in part to longer service agreements (and therefore more stability in work) and an increase staff development and training resulting in the ability for employees to move into part time positions. This year we saw an increase in the number of staff working across multiple services. This is extremely valuable given that many of our participants choose to access both group and individual supports and allows for consistency and expertise of staff. The service with the highest number of staff is Individualised Supports in Sunbury, followed by DO Connect Sunbury and then Individualised Supports in Bendigo. The majority of staff have worked for Distinctive Options between 1 to 2 years, however 13% have been employed for 6 or more years.

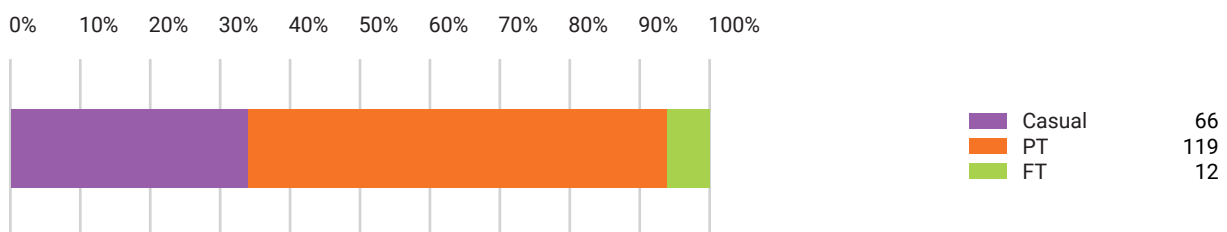
Gender



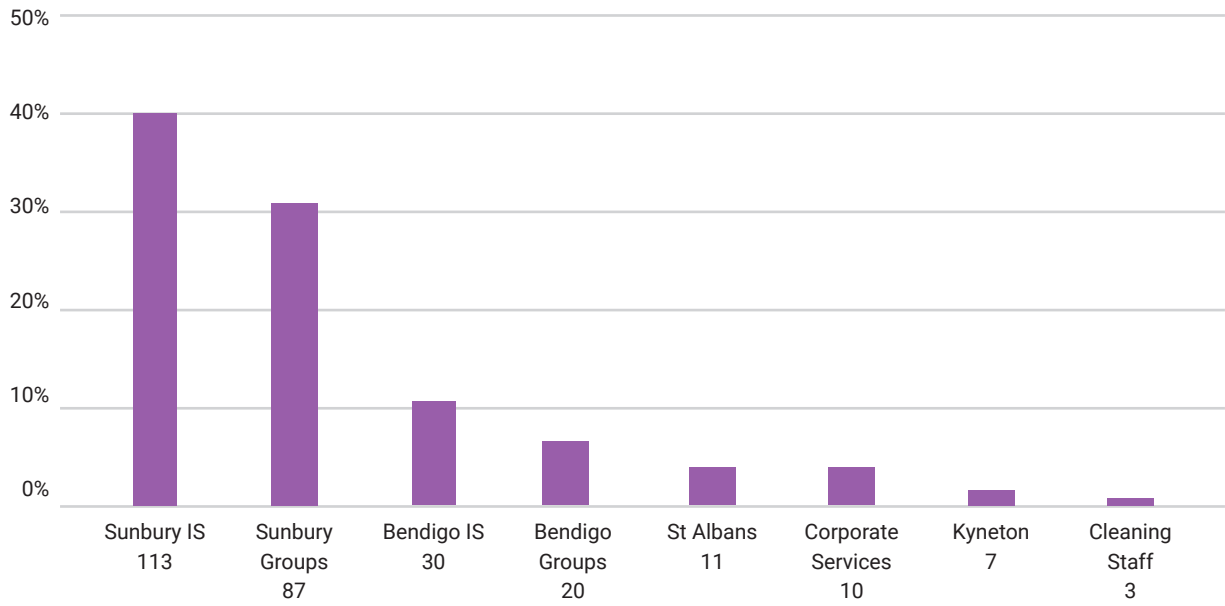
Age



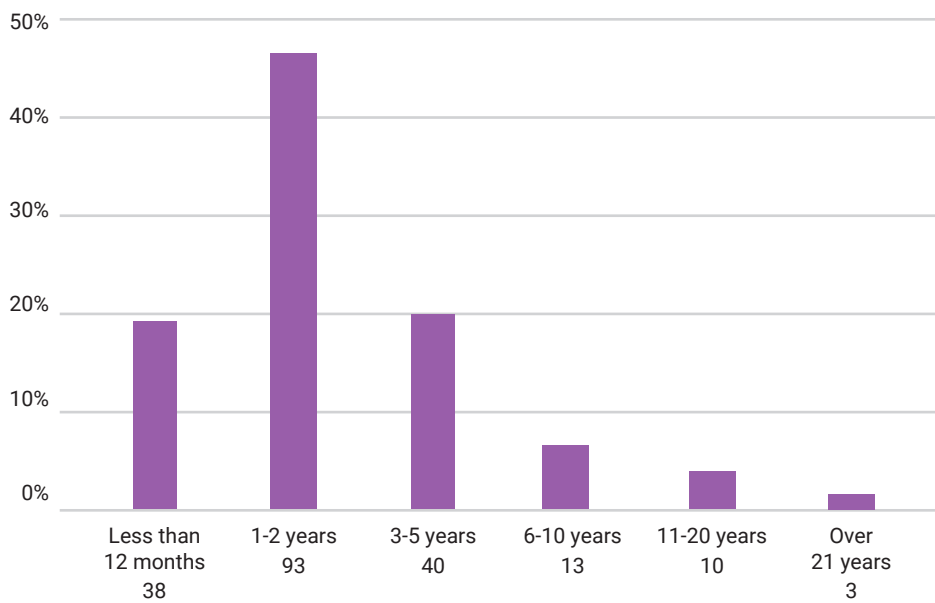
Employment Status



Primary Work Location



Years of Service



Staff Diversity

In our annual staff survey, 6% of employees reported having a disability or mental health condition. 92% of employees reported Australia as their place of birth, with other countries including the United Kingdom, Philippines and Croatia. In response to ethnic identity, 85% identified as Australian, 6% as European and 2% as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 5% of our employees speak a language other than English.

Staff Milestones

The following employees reached a milestone this year:

William Sherry 20 years

Elena Cotchin 10 years

Rebecca Fabian 10 years

Melanie Mays 10 years

We congratulate them on their milestone and send thanks for their dedication and commitment to the organisation.

Financial Information

Distinctive Options is covered by the modern Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHADS) for all staff (except the CEO who is on a personal contract). All staff are paid in line with the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO), due to expire in 12 months. Salary rates increased twice throughout the year for employees under the SCHADS Award, in line with the ERO and indexation. 2020 will bring the final year end increase to staff wages as the ERO expires. Due to the significant decrease in income from March 2020, Distinctive Options was eligible for the Australian JobKeeper wage subsidy. This saw approximately 112 staff members receive a guaranteed \$1500 a fortnight and allowed the organisation to continue employing staff and delivering supports during the COVID-19 downturn. This JobKeeper subsidy is to be extended in August and will reduce in quarterly increments from the end of September until April 2021. Superannuation is paid at 9.5% of salaries as per legislation, however a significant number of staff choose to make extra super payments each fortnight. This year, Distinctive Options entered the Victorian Portable Long Service Leave (PLSL) Scheme. The PLSL Scheme covered NDIS providers from January 1 and applies to almost all staff (excluding cleaning staff). It allows staff to take their long service leave entitlements with them if they change jobs but remain in the community services industry. Salary sacrifice is available to all permanent staff according to Fringe Benefits guidelines for charities. This is administered by AccessPay, a leading provider of salary packaging to the not-for-profit sector.



Volunteers

Distinctive Options is grateful to the involvement of volunteers who support our organisation in continuing to provide high quality services. Volunteer roles this year included Board membership and program support with participants. All volunteers are screened before they can begin and each person is supported by a structured induction program. Plans to increase volunteer numbers were delayed this year due to COVID-19. We are very grateful for the meaningful contributions made by each volunteer at our service.

Probity

Distinctive Options is required to undertake a number of probity checks to ensure the safety of all participants. This year, these probity checks included Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme (DWES) checks, Victorian Police checks, 100 point ID checks and Working With Children Checks (WWCC; for those working with children). New NDIS screening requirements were delayed due to COVID-19 but are expected to be introduced from early 2021.

Policies and Procedures

We have a Quality Management System (QMS) that holds all of our policies and procedures, as well as relevant forms and resources. These documents address a range of issues affecting the organisation, including human resources, fleet management, finance, governance, operations and more. The policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and are subject to internal and external audits.

Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment

Distinctive Options is committed to providing a workplace free from discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying. Clear information and processes around reporting and responding to these are provided to all employees within the Human Resources Policy and Procedure. Behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment or bullying will never be tolerated at Distinctive Options and any person found to have engaged in these behaviours will face disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Equal Employment

Distinctive Options provides equal opportunity in employment to people without discrimination based on personal characteristics protected under state and federal legislation, including age, disability, gender identity, parental status, race, religion and sexual orientation.

Professional Development

Distinctive Options remains committed to providing professional development opportunities to all staff. Some of the professional development accessed by staff this year included:

- Mental health first aid
- Medication assistance
- Epilepsy management
- Manual handling
- Positive behaviour support
- COVID-19 infection control



Staff are encouraged to apply for external training opportunities that interest them and are relevant to their role. The organisation also encourages support staff to complete a Certificate IV or higher in disability by subsidising the costs of this training in most cases and offering opportunities for student placements. For the 2020-2021 year, the training budget was increased significantly to ensure staff have access to multiple professional development opportunities and ensure Distinctive Options is an employer of choice.

Staff and Volunteer Induction and Orientation

A structured induction and orientation program is offered to all new employees and volunteers at Distinctive Options. This helps to ensure a seamless transition into the organisation and aims to provide a robust introduction into our workplace practices and structures. The induction and orientation process includes learning about Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), Supportability, several Codes of Conduct, Zero Tolerance, incident management and much more. From July 1, all new staff have to complete the NDIS Module 'Quality, Safety and You' as part of their induction. This is a requirement of the NDIS Commission and provides an engaging explanation of staff responsibilities under the NDIS Code of Conduct.

Supervision and Mentoring

Supervision and mentoring is an essential component of our employee performance management framework. These practices ensure that employees have ongoing opportunities to discuss their workplace performance and any issues or challenges that they are facing. Supervision and monitoring occurs both formally and informally, either directly with the line manager or in a group setting.

Staff Survey

All employees were invited to participate in a voluntary and confidential survey between March and April 2020. Ninety-two staff chose to participate in the survey (up from 46 the previous year) which collected demographic data and gathered feedback on employee satisfaction and engagement. The survey was completely voluntary and anonymous. Each of the questions were optional. Some of the results included:

- 92% of staff are happy while at work and enjoy coming to work
- 89% of staff feel that their work at Distinctive Options is challenging, stimulating and rewarding
- 89% of staff are proud to tell people that they work for us
- 90% of staff would recommend Distinctive Options to their family and friends
- 95% of staff feel that their work at Distinctive Options is meaningful

When asked what the best things at Distinctive Options are, responses included:

- Staff are friendly, understanding and empathetic
- Everybody strives to improve the service for participants and staff
- A culture of embracing change and innovation
- Being able to make a positive impact in people's lives
- Participants feel a sense of ownership and belonging
- Top quality programs



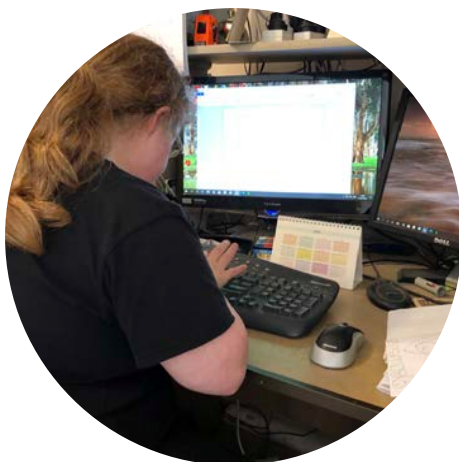
In response to what we could improve on, comments included

- More communication between Management/Coordinators and staff
- More training available for staff
- More staff input before changes are implemented
- More time for staff leadership and mentoring
- Upgrading facilities and infrastructure
- Paid time for administrative activities including program planning and writing journals

In response to this feedback, Management have budgeted for increased training for all staff in the 2020/21 financial year, as well as significant improvements to facilities and infrastructure. Both Management and Coordinators are also focusing on improving communication processes and input from staff, among other improvements.

Staff Newsletters

Monthly staff newsletters are written and shared by the Development Officer using MailChimp. The newsletters provide important information to staff across the organisation, helping to keep staff up to date. Topics this year included NDIS practice standards, external audits, COVID-19, portable long service leave, cultural and religious events, mental health management and much more.



Flexible Work Practices

Flexible working arrangements are available to employees, including flexible hours, the possibility of working from home, the opportunity to move from full time to part time employment and any other reasonable arrangement.

These flexible work arrangements were particularly important this year with significant changes in work practices to accommodate individual and government requirements regarding COVID-19.

Gender Issues

Distinctive Options demonstrates its commitment to equality in the workplace with a number of women holding key roles. This includes the CFO position, as well as a majority of coordinator roles across services. Gender diversity is also actively encouraged on the Board. Our Human Resources processes ensure that staff are paid according to role responsibilities and individual qualifications and experience and in line with the Equal Remuneration Order.





Operations

Operating Environment

Accreditations and Government Issues/Policies

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) provides funding to the majority of participants. Some funding is also provided by the Department of Health (DOH) who fund the Continuity of Support program for participants aged 65+. Distinctive Options is compliant with all regulators, with the full NDIA transition now complete. The Management team work diligently throughout the year to ensure that the organisation is compliant with legislation. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation takes place through regular internal reviews and audits. These activities ensure that we are able to meet state and federal legislation requirements at all times.

Distinctive Options is required to comply with standards, service delivery contracts and legislative obligations from both state and federal bodies. The organisation continued to balance the requirements of the NDIA and DHHS, with some transition arrangements continuing including staff safety screening and behaviour support. Distinctive Options continues to undertake the required quality assurance processes through regular independent audits against government standards. The organisation is further guided by legislation, regulation and standards regarding child protection, participant welfare, privacy and confidentiality, health and safety, industrial relations and records management. As a charity, Distinctive Options also meets the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), including submission of an Annual Financial Statement and other documentation. Financial and accounting matters are further subject to the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 and the Australian Accounting Standards.

Continuous Improvement

Important components of our Quality Management System (QMS) are regular audits and ongoing continuous improvements. Fourteen internal audits were conducted this year in a range of areas including quality management, participant safety, risk management, incidents, complaints and staff inductions. Each found potential improvements to be made which were discussed with senior management and implemented across the organisation. Continuous improvements identified were communicated to staff via email, through the staff newsletter or at staff meetings.

The Development Officer, Sarah Quigley, managed a full review and update of the QMS in July 2019, ensuring the organisation was fully prepared for the new NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework and recent external audit. The incredible efforts of Management, Coordinators and all staff were rewarded with a fantastic external audit of the NDIS Practice Standards in July 2020 which found the organisation to be fully compliant.

Environmental Responsibility and Sustainability

With a goal to integrate sustainable development into all of our activities, we are committed to minimising our impact on the environment. Some of the measures we have implemented at Distinctive Options are:

- Conserving natural resources by reusing and recycling, including recycling toner cartridges, double-sided printing and using electronic communication where possible
- Using energy responsibly
- Working with suppliers who promote sound environmental practices
- Supporting all of our participants to act in an environmentally responsible manner

Technology

Distinctive Options continues to deliver efficient and reliable technology services to support and enable business operations to deliver quality supports to participants. We continued our engagement with BigFish Technology who assist us with IT services and our use of Supportability as a Client Management System. Staff use SupportAbility to record participant activities, progress on participant goals and to sign off on shifts. As well as managing participant information, the software integrates with the NDIA and allows for processing of NDIS claims.

With the growth of the business and subsequent increase in staffing numbers, Distinctive Options introduced an integrated payroll system in early 2020. Hr3 moved all of our timesheets, payslips and leave processes online to a cloud environment. All staff quickly adapted to the new system and the entire payroll process is significant easier to manage. Distinctive Options is currently working to set up further human resources projects through Hr3, including automated workflows and an online induction system for new employees.



Privacy Issues

Distinctive Options is compliant with the following privacy legislation: Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), Information Privacy Act 2000, Health Records Act 2001 and the Australian Privacy Principles 2014. We also act according to the Notifiable Data Breaches scheme and NDIS requirements including the Code of Conduct and the Practice Standards. We treat all individuals with dignity and respect, maintaining the confidentiality of all employee, volunteer and participant information at all times. No privacy breaches occurred this year.

Awards

Distinctive Options received another silver award in recognition for outstanding work in the production of the 2019 Annual Report. This was extremely exciting for the organisation and assures us that we are providing high quality reporting to our stakeholders through the Annual Report.



Research and Development

Distinctive Options actively participates in a variety of partnerships and networks that contribute to our research and development. These opportunities allow us to stay well-informed of the latest updates occurring across the disability sector throughout Australia and internationally. As a member of the peak body National Disability Services (NDS), our management team and key staff are actively involved in various activities where important issues are discussed. The CEO and members of the Management team are active participants in the International Initiative for Disability Leadership (IIDL), a forum that brings together leaders from across the world to discuss best practice models and innovations. The Executive Manager Support Services is also a member of the NDS - NDIS Issues and Sector Reform Committee, whilst the CEO is a member of the Harvard Business Review (HBR) Advisory Council and the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD). The HBR Advisory Council brings leaders together to share their opinions on current business issues and research findings.

Risk Management

Distinctive Options recognises risk management as an integral part of good organisation management. The CEO and Board of Directors are responsible for overall risk management through the implementation and monitoring of a strategic and operational risk framework. They oversee a variety of activities to ensure that all risks are effectively identified, analysed, treated, monitored and communicated. As part of the risk management process, Distinctive Options:

- Promotes good risk management practices
- Implements procedures to reduce risk
- Recognises all staff are responsible for risk management
- Encourages the reporting of potential risks
- Trains staff in proactive and preventative practice

Risk Register

Distinctive Options maintains a Risk Register that records all identified risks to the organisation. There are three categories of risk:

1. Strategic
2. Financial
3. Operational

The Risk Register provides details about each risk, who is responsible for managing the risk and the treatments and controls to be implemented. Described on the following page are just a few of the significant risks that our organisation managed this year using the risk framework.



Area	Identified Risk	Management Strategies
Strategic	New service providers enter the market place, creating competition	<p>Ensured that Distinctive Options has innovative and targeted support options</p> <p>Remained a provider of choice across communities</p> <p>Monitored participant and supporter satisfaction</p>
Financial	Financial mis-management or fraud	<p>Ensured implementation of the Fraud Risk Management Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Monitored financial management daily with multiple levels of oversight</p> <p>Successfully undertook an independent financial audit</p>
Financial	Full or partial loss of NDIS registration	<p>Ensured ongoing compliance with all NDIS Standards</p> <p>Regularly reviewed services to ensure high quality supports are being provided and participants are achieving outcomes</p> <p>Successfully undertook an external NDIS audit</p>
Operational	No back up for core commercial staff	<p>Provided in-house training and shadowing to ensure all positions have at least two people who are able to do each commercial role (e.g. billing, claiming, payroll, etc.)</p>
Operational	Cyber threats to software, data and electronic systems	<p>Ensured all online systems (both on-premises and cloud systems) are protected via firewalls, anti-virus software and regular backups</p> <p>Ensured all cloud-based systems are maintained and safeguarded by host providers</p>
Operational	Breach of privacy	<p>Continued to implement the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</p> <p>Ensured all staff are aware of privacy standards and strategies</p> <p>Maintained a Data Breach Response Plan as required by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)</p>
Operational	Staff injured at work	<p>Implemented all measures described within the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Continued to provide an OHS Officer at each service location who meet regularly with the OHS Coordinator and Management</p> <p>Ensured all staff are aware of OHS practices</p>



Occupational Health and Safety

Distinctive Options is committed to providing an environment that is safe for all staff, participants and visitors, in alignment with the Commonwealth's Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Our OHS Coordinator continued to ensure ongoing OHS compliance across the organisation. The OHS Coordinator oversees an OHS Officer at each service area, ensuring dedicated attention to the safety needs of each location.

An OHS Schedule outlines the OHS practices of the organisation, including meetings, electrical test and tag, emergency evacuation drills and first aid/spill kit checks. Strict processes are in place for fleet management and machine use. Staff were again encouraged to access free influenza vaccinations, with 20 employees choosing to be reimbursed for vaccinations in 2020, up from three in 2019. This increase is in part due to COVID-19 raising staff awareness of the importance of vaccination and protecting participants from communicable diseases. It should also be noted that a number of staff received free vaccinations through the Government or other arrangements.

OHS Measure	17/18	18/19	19/20
Lost time	26 hours	738 hours	570 hours
Lost-time injuries	1	1	1
Reportable WorkCover injuries	0	1	6
Serious injuries	0	0	0
Manual handling injuries	0	0	0
Near misses	Not recorded	10	12

COVID-19

COVID-19 was a significant risk this year, resulting in the development and enforcement of a COVID-19 Policy and government-mandated COVID Safe Plan. These documents were regularly updated as guidelines from the government and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) changed, ensuring that they continuously reflect best practice in preventing COVID-19 in disability services. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was purchased and distributed across the service to keep staff and participants safe and ensure the organisation was compliant with government directions at all times. Hand sanitiser stations were established at each service. Staff undertook online modules in infection control and the use of PPE. Physical distancing and room occupancy limits were enforced and extra cleaning services were introduced. Staff and participants adjusted to these changes seamlessly, helping to protect one another from COVID-19. As at June 30, there were no reported cases of COVID-19 at Distinctive Options.

Strategic and Business Planning

Detailed reporting processes from Management to the Board occur monthly, quarterly and annually as part of the risk management process. These reports focus on performance towards strategic objectives and the budget, ensuring that any potential risks can be identified and managed at the earliest opportunity.

Internal Auditing

Internal auditing processes are in place to ensure that the organisation is compliant with all quality requirements, including the NDIS Practice Standards and the Child Safe Standards. Audits are prioritised according to risk and are conducted across all areas of the organisation, including governance, finance, operations, systems, processes and controls. More information about internal auditing is provided under Continuous Improvements on Page 44.

Marketing

The Strategic Marketing Plan is overseen by the Marketing and Fundraising Committee. The Plan is directly linked to the organisation's Strategic Plan, with key priorities for each objective. It is a constantly evolving document that is regularly updated by the Committee.

Marketing Activities

Marketing activities this year included Facebook posts, website updates, continued fleet advertising, newspaper articles and advertisements, attendance at expos and a new radio campaign with LightFM. Distinctive Options chose not to continue with the radio campaign, finding that word of mouth is our strongest marketing tool. We continue to work on our brand awareness in our local communities through printed and online material, video production and attendance at events earlier in the year.

Fundraising

In June 2019, Distinctive Options successfully registered as a fundraiser organisation in Victoria, a requirement of Consumer Affairs Victoria. Following this, a movie fundraiser was held in late July in Sunbury which raised over \$800. People from the community gathered at Reading Cinema Sunbury to watch The Lion King. It was a great event with strong community spirit and a shared love of the organisation. We also introduced a PayPal Giving Fund option on our website, which generated approximately \$855 throughout the financial year. We are deeply grateful for this support from our community. Plans for further fundraising events were delayed due to COVID-19 but are expected to take place in the future.

Social Media

Distinctive Options actively uses Facebook to provide information about our services and participants, with around five posts added per week. Staff volunteer their time to contribute to the page and to respond to the messages and comments left by the public. We are extremely grateful for those that give their time to raise awareness of our organisation. Facebook 'likes' continued to increase, from 1575 last year to 1724 this year. Average reach (the total number of people seeing our posts on their newsfeeds) was an average of 441 per day.





Governance

Board of Directors



**Anthony
Aboud**

Anthony Aboud *MBA*

Board Chairperson and member of the Audit and Finance Committee, the Governance and Risk Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee

Now in his seventh year as a Director and fifth year as Chairperson, Anthony brings over twenty years of experience in banking and financial services to the board. He has held a number of senior leadership roles spanning strategy, operations, process improvement, sales, transformational change and customer experience. Anthony holds a Masters of Business Administration and a Six Sigma Black Belt. He is currently working as General Manager Business Process Transformation at the National Australia Bank, utilising his financial services and change management background.



**Simon
McKenzie**

Simon McKenzie *BCom, GradDip (Legal Practice)*

Deputy Chairperson, Chairperson of the Strategic Planning Committee and member of the Governance and Risk Committee

Simon is an admitted lawyer with a commerce degree and a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Simon currently manages the office of the Public Transport Ombudsman which helps people resolve disputes about public transport issues including accessibility, and previously worked for the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman. He brings solid experience in dispute resolution, stakeholder engagement, customer advocacy, company operations and regulatory affairs. He has a proven track record in team management and leadership through organisational change.



**Terry
Rodrigues**

Terry Rodrigues *BCom*

Member of the Audit and Finance Committee

Our current longest serving Director, Terry joined the Board in 2012 and retired from the public service in 2015 after 24 years. Throughout his career, Terry held operational, supervisory, investigative and managerial roles at Melbourne and Darwin Airport. Terry brings a wealth of knowledge around policy and procedural matters. He is experienced in audits, risk management issues and the development and execution of operational endeavours. Terry previously worked in the banking sector in Karachi where he was employed as an accounts officer in Pakistan.



**Darren
Quigley**

Darren Quigley *CPA, BBus (AccLaw), AdvDip (FinPlan)*

Chairperson of the Audit and Finance Committee and member of the Strategic Planning Committee

Darren has been a Director for over six years. He specialises in accounting and law, with over 25 years of experience in senior financial management roles, predominately in the public sector. Darren is a Certified Practising Accountant. He has a degree in business majoring in accounting and law, as well as an advanced diploma in financial planning. Darren currently works for the Department of Education as a facilities manager. He is a black belt karate instructor and volunteers for the State Emergency Service in Sunbury.



**Kalma
Rathouski**

Kalma Rathouski *MSocSc*
*Chairperson of the Marketing and Fundraising Committee
and member of the Strategic Planning Committee*

Kalma is into her fifth year as a Board member at Distinctive Options. She holds a Masters in Social Science and has almost 15 years of experience in working for the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman where she gained experience in conflict resolution, investigations, stakeholders and communications. Kalma is currently taking time away from paid work to care for her family. She has a keen passion for social justice and became interested in disability after spending several months in a wheelchair following an accident.



**Derek
Jones**

Derek Jones *FCPA*
Member of the Audit and Finance Committee

Derek is a retired finance professional who has been a Director with Distinctive Options for over four years. He had a significant career in both the public and private sectors, including 15 years as a Finance Manager and Chief Financial Officer of Sustainability Victoria. Derek's areas of expertise include financial reporting, risk management, strategic planning, governance and compliance.



**Graham
Holt**

Graham Holt
Member of the Marketing and Fundraising Committee

Graham brings over 30 years of national and international experience in customer service, marketing and communications, project delivery, change management and organisational capacity building. He is currently employed as the General Manager Customer and Community Relations at Western Water where he is responsible for managing customer support programs, community engagement, network operations and water supply management. Graham has a strong understanding of occupational health and safety, the impact of culture and the implementation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).



**Nancy
Peat**

Nancy Peat *AdvDip (FinPlan)*
Member of the Marketing and Fundraising Committee

Nancy has extensive experience in financial services, previously employed with Mercer Australia and Shadforth Financial Group. Joining the Board to give back to the community and gain valuable experience, Nancy brings valuable skills in business development, relationship building, financial management and marketing capabilities. Nancy has a personal connection to the disability sector, with a grandson who has Autism Spectrum Disorder. She participates in a variety of volunteering opportunities, including assisting the homeless and raising money for diabetes.

Corporate Governance

Distinctive Options is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and registered as a charity under the Australian and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012. Ultimate responsibility for the organisation rests with the Board of Directors.

The Role of the Board

The Board are tasked with ensuring Distinctive Options achieves its objectives whilst mitigating risks. As a group, the Board provides strategic leadership and goals for the organisation, monitoring business activities and financial position and ensuring that all actions are achievable, implemented and monitored. A Board Charter is in place that describes the Board's responsibilities which each member takes very seriously.

Board Committees

The Board operates four committees that are dedicated to specific areas of the business. Each Committee has Terms of Reference that are reviewed annually. They meet regularly to discuss relevant issues and provide recommendations to the Board for consideration. Head office staff also attend Committee meetings where appropriate. A description of these Committees is provided on Page 57.

Board Meetings

The Board holds a minimum of 9 meetings per year, with no scheduled meetings for the month of January. Additional meetings are held as required. The Board met 12 times during 2019-2020, once per month from February to December, as well as another meeting for the annual Strategic Plan review.

The CEO and CFO attend all Board meetings, allowing them to present operational and financial information to the Board as required.

The Board agenda is developed by the CEO whilst minutes are taken and disseminated by the CFO. Board member attendance at meetings is disclosed in the table below.

Attendance at Board Meetings

Director	Eligible	Attended
Anthony Aboud	12	11
Simon McKenzie	12	12
Terry Rodrigues	12	11
Darren Quigley	12	11
Kalma Rathouski	12	11
Derek Jones	12	12
Graham Holt	12	9
Nancy Peat	12	10



Board Members

Each Board member volunteers their time to Distinctive Options. They receive no remuneration for their services, but may receive reimbursement for reasonable costs incurred due to Board activities. The Constitution provides an indemnity to the Directors and specifies that:

- There must be a minimum of five members (see five year comparison of Board member numbers below)
- No employees, including the CEO, can be a director of the company
- Directors are appointed for up to three terms of three years each
- Membership expires at the ninth Annual General Meeting (AGM) following their appointment to the Board
- Board meeting attendance is a minimum of 67% of Board meetings per annum

The names of each Board member, their appointment date and their maximum term expiry are provided in the Director Terms table below.

Director Numbers

Year	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Members	8	7	8	8	8

Director Terms

Director	Appointment Date	Maximum Term Expires
Terry Rodrigues	4th June 2012	AGM 2020
Anthony Aboud	12th March 2013	AGM 2021
Darren Quigley	9th June 2014	AGM 2022
Kalma Rathouski	16th March 2015	AGM 2023
Derek Jones	23rd February 2016	AGM 2024
Graham Holt	27th February 2018	AGM 2026
Simon McKenzie	27th March 2018	AGM 2026
Nancy Peat	24th April 2018	AGM 2026

Director Renominations

Director renominations took place in November at the Annual General Meeting. Director Darren Quigley renominated for another three year term and the nomination was accepted. Darren was reappointed for a final three year term that expires in November 2022. No other renominations took place.

The Chairperson

The Board Chairperson is elected by the Board and is responsible for ensuring that the Board provides high quality governance and vision to Distinctive Options, that meetings are effective, that members are skilled, and that matters are considered in a timely and transparent manner. This years' Board Chairperson was Anthony Aboud.

Accountability

As the governing body, the Board is accountable to:

- The members of Distinctive Options
- The community
- Relevant government funding bodies, including the National Disability Insurance Agency and the Department of Health and Human Services
- The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
- The laws (as amended) relating to the Charities Act, Corporations Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Disability Services Act, Disability Discrimination Act, Privacy Act and industrial relations

Conduct, Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Board members are required to comply with the relevant laws and codes of conduct. They must act with integrity, good faith, fairness and honesty at all times. They are required to be diligent, attend meetings and devote sufficient time to preparing for meetings. Each Director is aware of the Code of Conduct and the Governance Policy that describes ethical practice, conflicts of interest and confidentiality. Conflicts of interest are a standing agenda item and must be declared, recorded and responded to in accordance with the Governance Policy. A register of conflicts of interest is maintained by the CEO. Directors are also required to complete a Confidentiality Agreement as part of their induction to the Board. There were no identified breaches or corruption this year.



Independent Advice

The Board accesses independent advice from a number of sources and for a variety of reasons. For financial matters, advice was sought from financial auditors. For legal matters, advice was sought from VMIA. For industrial relations, advice was sought from Workplace Legal and Moores Legal Service. For risk management, advice was sought from Saward Dawson.

Board Review and Development

The Board periodically reviews its own performance for its development and quality assurance. This included ongoing support from Leadership Victoria's Board Mentoring Program in which governance expert Julie Green provided regular mentoring and advice to the Board.

Management Responsibility

The Board formally delegates responsibility for daily operations to the CEO and the Senior Management Team (refer to Page 34 of this Annual Report for more information). The CEO is also delegated to act as the Company Secretary/Public Officer.



Board Committees

Audit and Finance Committee

Darren Quigley (Chair)	9/9
Terry Rodrigues	8/9
Derek Jones	7/9
Ernie Metcalf	7/9
Alma Tuazon	8/9
Anthony Aboud	1/1
Rick Dunn	1/1

The role of the Audit and Finance Committee is to review financial reports, endorse budgets, ensure the organisation has adequate funds and resources, liaise with the financial auditor, monitor liquidity and viability ratios and review new business cases. The Committee report monthly to the Board and works closely with financial staff to ensure appropriate financial management throughout the organisation.

Governance and Risk Committee

Simon McKenzie (Chair)	4/4
Anthony Aboud	4/4
Ernie Metcalf	4/4
Alma Tuazon	1/1

The Governance and Risk Committee is responsible for reviewing governance and risk documents, overseeing the appointment and recruitment of Directors, holding the CEO accountable for implementing risk and business plans, ensuring the Board has a succession plan in place, ensuring regular evaluations of Board performance and reviewing external quality assurance reports and findings. They report to the Board after each meeting.

Marketing and Fundraising Committee

Kalma Rathouski (Chair)	5/5
Nancy Peat	4/5
Graham Holt	5/5
Ernie Metcalf	5/5
Rick Dunn	3/5
Alma Tuazon	4/5
Sarah Quigley	2/5

The Marketing and Fundraising Committee is responsible for reviewing marketing and fundraising strategies and plans, reviewing and acting upon participant and supporter feedback surveys and developing and monitoring the Fundraising Action Plan. The Committee was expanded to include the Management Team and the Development Officer. They report to the Board after each meeting.

Strategic Planning Committee

Simon McKenzie (Chair)	2/2
Anthony Aboud	2/2
Darren Quigley	2/2
Kalma Rathouski	2/2
Ernie Metcalf	2/2
Rick Dunn	1/1
Alma Tuazon	1/1

This Committee was established to review the Strategic Plan to develop an interim Plan to cover the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. A new Strategic Plan for 2020-2022 was established to drive short term performance during these challenging times. The Committee comprises the Board Chair and Committee chairs, along with the CEO. The Committee reports to the Board after each meeting.



Finances

Profit or Loss

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

		2020	2019
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	4	9,062,736	8,282,170
Employee benefit expenses		(6,821,217)	(6,408,567)
Client program costs		(121,904)	(167,129)
Rental expense		(87,444)	(253,141)
Depreciation expense		(53,938)	(106,537)
Motor vehicle expenses		(73,582)	(80,259)
Telephone costs		(39,258)	(58,179)
Computer expenses		(100,868)	(124,343)
Consultancy fees		-	(28,804)
Interest Expense	9	(25,799)	-
Training		(35,716)	(20,785)
Repairs and Maintenance		(24,613)	(27,252)
Printing		(18,414)	(25,194)
Subscriptions		(15,361)	(29,012)
Equipment Leases		(7,517)	(7,302)
Board of Management costs		(3,199)	(1,887)
Amortisation expenses	9	(149,847)	-
Other expenses		(141,873)	(122,201)
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year		1,342,186	821,578
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		1,342,186	821,578

The full financial information and accompanying notes can be viewed online at <https://www.distinctiveoptions.com.au/about-us/publications/>

Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	2,762,689	1,340,628
Trade and other receivables	6	851,264	504,910
Financial assets	7	434,334	381,222
Other assets	8	25,828	27,694
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		4,074,115	2,254,454
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Right of Use Assets	9	655,302	-
Plant and equipment	10	230,739	274,442
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		886,041	274,442
TOTAL ASSETS		4,960,156	2,528,896
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	9	152,068	-
Trade and other payables	11	684,523	324,830
Provisions	12	488,079	415,042
Other liabilities	13	45,823	65,685
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		1,370,493	805,557
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	9	512,434	-
Provisions	12	86,488	74,784
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		598,922	74,784
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,969,415	880,341
NET ASSETS		2,990,741	1,648,555
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		2,990,741	1,648,555
TOTAL EQUITY		2,990,741	1,648,555

The full financial information and accompanying notes can be viewed online at <https://www.distinctiveoptions.com.au/about-us/publications/>

Equity and Cash Flows

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

2020

	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2019	1,648,555	1,648,555
Surplus for the year	1,342,186	1,342,186
Balance at 30 June 2020	2,990,741	2,990,741

2019

	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2018	826,976	826,976
Surplus for the year	821,579	821,579
Balance at 30 June 2019	1,648,555	1,648,555

The full financial information and accompanying notes can be viewed online at <https://www.distinctiveoptions.com.au/about-us/publications/>

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from customers, government and other funding	8,701,200	8,780,275
Payments to suppliers and employees	(7,098,132)	(7,644,798)
Interest received	22,987	14,990
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	20 <u>1,626,055</u>	<u>1,150,467</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	16,804	-
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(27,039)	(32,356)
Redemption/(Placement) of term deposits	(53,112)	(583)
Net cash used by investing activities	<u>(63,347)</u>	<u>(32,939)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Lease payments	(140,647)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	<u>(140,647)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	1,422,061	1,117,528
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	1,340,628	223,100
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	5 <u><u>2,762,689</u></u>	<u><u>1,340,628</u></u>

The full financial information and accompanying notes can be viewed online at <https://www.distinctiveoptions.com.au/about-us/publications/>

Director's Declaration

Principal Activities

Distinctive Options' principal activities are to provide viable and sustainable disability support services to people in line with the organisation's Constitution and as a registered public benevolent institution (charity) and a deductible gift recipient.

Short and Long Term Objectives

Under Distinctive Options' strategic plan, its short and long term objectives are centred on the strategic intent to grow our services to assist and empower those we support, helping them to achieve their potential to gain equality and inclusion in the community.

Strategy for Achieving the Objectives

Distinctive Options' strategy for achieving the objectives is contained within the organisation's Strategic Plan around four key pillars: Be Resilient, Be Distinctive, Be Sustainable and Be Progressive. Distinctive Options has key strategic objectives which underpin these pillars.

Performance Measures

Distinctive Options uses a Balanced Scorecard to measure operational performance against the strategic objectives. A summary of the results from the Balanced Scorecard are contained within the Annual Report. Some of these performance measures are based around maintaining and growing Distinctive Options' competitive advantage.

Members' Guarantee

Distinctive Options is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of, and for the purpose of winding up of the company, the amount capable of being called up from each member and any person or association who ceased to be a member in the year prior to winding up, is limited to

\$NIL for members that are corporations and \$20 for all other members, subject to the provisions of the company's constitution. At June 30 2020, the collective liability of members was \$160 (2019: \$160).

Board of Directors

Details and skills relating to each Director are included in the Annual Report in the Governance section.

Other Items

The CEO is the appointed company secretary and public officer for Distinctive Options.

Meetings of Directors

During the 2019-2020 financial year, 34 meetings of Directors (including Committee meetings) were held. Each Director's attendance rate at meetings is provided in the Governance section of the Annual Report. Board meetings are generally held on the final Tuesday of each month, commencing at 6:30pm, at the head office, Suite 12, 36 Macedon Street, Sunbury.

Auditor's Independence Declaration

The lead auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 30 June 2020 can be found on Page 66.

Director's Declaration

Distinctive Options Ltd


ABN: 89 090 842 470

Directors' Declaration

In the opinion of the Directors of Distinctive Options Ltd:

- a) The financial statements and notes of Distinctive Options are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:
 - i) Giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
 - ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; and
- b) There are reasonable grounds to believe that Distinctive Options Ltd will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors.

Director 
TERENCE RODRIGUES

Director 
Graham Holt

Dated this 29th day of October 2020

Auditor's Independence Declaration

Distinctive Options Ltd

ABN: 89 090 842 470

Auditors Independence Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2020 there have been no contraventions of:

- a. the auditor independence requirements of the 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- b. any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Seward Dawson



Jeffrey Tulk
Partner

Blackburn
Dated: 29 October 2020

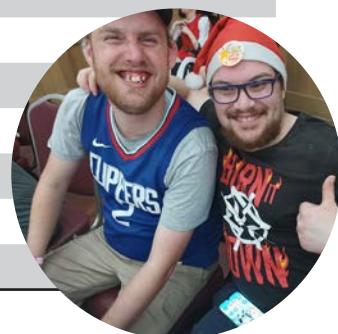
Glossary



Accreditation	Validation that an organisation meets quality standards
Balanced scorecard	Framework for measuring performance against strategic goals
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction for which a response or resolution is expected
Continuous improvement	A structured ongoing effort to improve processes and services
Governance	The system by which an organisation is controlled, operates and is held to account
Incident	Acts, omissions or events that occur in connection with support delivery that have or could have caused harm
NDIA	The organisation who implements the NDIS
NDIS	The funding provided by the Australian Government to people with a significant and permanent disability
Participant	A person who received disability supports
Provider	A person or organisation that provides supports to people with disability under the NDIS
Risk management	A process used to identify, assess and treat risks to the organisation
Sector	The organisations providing disability supports and the peak bodies that represent them
Standards	Specific requirements about how an organisation should function
Strategy	An organisation's plan for achieving its vision
Worker	Employees, contractors and volunteers engaged by a provider

Abbreviations

ABN	Australian Business Number
ACN	Australian Company Number
ACNC	Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
AGM	Annual General Meeting
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DO	Distinctive Options
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NDS	National Disability Services
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
QMS	Quality Management System
R&R	Rights and Responsibilities



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Thank You

Government Funders

National Disability Insurance Agency
Department of Health and Human Services
Australian Government Department of Health

Grant Providers

Hume City Council
Department of Health and Human Services

Donors

Carolyn Den Brinker

In Kind Supporters

Bunnings

Get Involved

Donate

Every donation we receive is an investment in providing great services to people with disability. As a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) organisation, all donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Donations can be made through our Giving Fund at www.paypal.com/au/fundraiser/charity/3500192

Leave a Bequest

You can choose to leave a bequest to Distinctive Options in your Will. This legacy provides a significant contribution to the work that we do in the community and helps to secure the future of Distinctive Options. Call us today on 03 9740 7100 for more information.

Volunteer

Distinctive Options values the contributions of volunteers to support the work that we do. You can play a significant role in improving the lives of people with a disability by sharing your time and skills. We are always seeking volunteers to work directly with our participants and to support our community and fundraising activities.

Work With Us

Distinctive Options offers staff exceptional opportunities to develop their career in the disability sector and to gain problem solving skills, people management skills and innovative practice experience. We offer a supportive team environment and flexible work hours.

Spread the Word

If you like what you read in this report, please let other people know about us and the services that we provide.





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Email: info@d-o.com.au

Website: www.distinctiveoptions.com.au

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