



# CITIZEN ADVOCACY IMPACT REPORT

REFLECT AND SUSTAIN  
JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024



**Mission** = Enable tailored support and advocacy for people with disability, empowering them to live their best life.

**EMPOWERMENT | COMMUNITY | CONNECTION | RESPECT**





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# WELCOME



## Reflecting on Impact, Sustaining Change

Welcome to Citizen Advocacy's 2023-2024 Impact Report. The final year of our 3-year series of reports has a focus on reflection and sustainability. This has been a great opportunity for us to reflect on what makes our program good, what needs improving and what we can do to sustain it in the long-term.

Reflecting on the past year, we've assessed our previous goals and made strategic adjustments to better address the evolving needs of our proteges, volunteers, and the volunteering and advocacy sectors. The changing social and economic landscape, coupled with rising costs of living and family pressures, has made it more challenging for individuals to commit to volunteering, so a creative approach has been required!

A huge part of what makes our program successful is the unwavering dedication our volunteers show year after year. We have been lucky enough to witness this firsthand at several events we have hosted this year, including honouring some of our long-term matches at a special afternoon tea funded by VWA in May.

Throughout the year, we've maintained our commitment to continuing an excellent volunteering program by engaging directly with the community through outreach initiatives and expanding our online presence to reach a wider audience.

Staff and board members have dedicated time to think about sustainability going forward, creating a new strategic plan to directly align with our ongoing goal of continuing to make more valuable matches between caring community members and those with intellectual disability.

As always, we are so grateful for the support of our dedicated advocates and board members. Their passion and hard work are essential to our success. Without our loyal staff, the program would not be running, so a big thank you to our team of superstars!

Enjoy reading!

## The Team at Citizen Advocacy

# YEAR AT A GLANCE

## MARKETING

Branded promotional material for recruitment

Consistent format created for quarterly newsletter

Easy Read newsletter for protégés

## PROCESS

New, more efficient coordination process developed

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

26 networking events

143 Facebook posts

4 events hosted

39 x info given to matches on events/training

22 contacts re recruitment including presentations

68

Potential Client Enquiries

32

Orientations given

115

Advocate Expressions of Interest

# SUPPORTING OUR MATCHES

## VOLUNTEER WEEK AFTERNOON TEA

At this year's event we celebrated all of our matches with special recognition going to those with 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service as a volunteer advocate.

Thirty-two advocates were awarded, eight of them in person during the afternoon tea. A photographer captured these special moments and we enjoyed additional support from external volunteers who helped to set up and serve food throughout the afternoon. We've already got our thinking caps on for next year!



***"We love seeing everyone and talking with other people."***

## TEN PIN BOWLING

We invited all of our matches to a ten-pin bowling event at Strike bowling, Carousel. Everyone enjoyed catching up and having fun together, testing out their skills against CA staff and board members!



***"Thanks to all the CA staff for coming along and making us feel so welcome. Give yourselves a pat on the back."***

## FOCUS GROUP

Advocates came together to share their experiences as an advocate. It was a privilege to listen to their stories about being a volunteer, the impact of their role and what it takes to be a volunteer advocate.

Advocates described a sense of belonging, knowing the value of the work being done. They enjoyed connecting with other advocates during the session.

Overall, the advocacy role was described as being unique and an opportunity to give something back to the community.



***"I think we all make a difference in so many ways at different levels."***

# FROM THE BOARD



While it has been another exciting year for Citizen Advocacy, we have also taken the time to reflect on our past as well as how we can adapt for the future. One thing always remains the same: Citizen Advocacy's commitment to supporting our protégés and advocates, ensuring that our organisation is sustainable and continues to make a positive impact well into the future.

Earlier this year, we had the pleasure of celebrating all our advocates and protégés during a special afternoon tea, where we honoured long-term matches with well-deserved awards. It was a powerful reminder of the positive influence Citizen Advocacy has on the lives of those involved, strengthening the bonds within our community.

We believe in the incredible work our organisation does to support our community, and we have been actively building and enhancing connections within the disability, advocacy, and volunteer sectors. As we continue to promote our efforts, we are eager to expand our reach and share our mission with the wider community.

The Board has also taken steps to update our Strategic Plan, ensuring it reflects the evolving needs and challenges facing our community. The Board and staff recognise that there may be some uncertainty in the sector following the NDIS Review, however, we are prepared to navigate the future with a focus on adaptability as well as sustainability.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our volunteers and staff members, whose dedication and hard work have been vital to our organisation's success throughout the year. Your commitment enables us to continue making a meaningful difference, and we look forward to your ongoing support as we move forward together.

Thank you for being part of our journey.

**Jo Barron - President**  
and the Board of Management

# REFLECT AND SUSTAIN

This year we focused on strengthening our connection in the disability, advocacy and volunteer sectors, engaging at local and national levels. We are raising awareness of our program, working together, building strong connections and long-term sustainable relationships in these areas.

## DISABILITY

We connected with a range of disability employment services, presenting to teams from APM and MatchWorks, reaching over sixty of their staff. Other employment services shared information about our program directly with their teams and on social media. We continue our relationship with Mission Australia, consulting with them to deliver ongoing training events for our advocates.

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## ADVOCACY

We engaged with advocacy agencies, endorsing the Speak up! for Independent Advocacy campaign run by the Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA). The campaign highlights the growing demand for advocacy and its lack of funding. We also attended networking meetings, connecting with other advocacy organisations and services.

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## VOLUNTEER

Attended the 2023 VWA conference - Reimagine the Volunteer Experience. Advertised Citizen Advocacy roles on key volunteering platforms VWA/Seek/GoVol. Presented at two Step Into Volunteering events in Belmont and Woodvale libraries. Attended x 12 networking events with third party organisations. Connected with local governments supporting volunteering in their local communities.

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## LOCAL COMMUNITY

Met with two MLA's (Hillarys and Nedlands) to discuss disability advocacy and received their endorsement. We distributed leaflets for advocates and people with disability in libraries and community centres. Regular announcements on four local radio stations. Social media posts on community group pages promoting Citizen Advocacy.

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# MATCH STORY



## Supporting long-term advocacy

### Pauline, Georgia and Gail's story

Pauline wanted to continue her relationship with Georgia but didn't feel able to fulfill her advocacy role and meet Georgia's needs as before.

Citizen Advocacy staff visited Georgia in her home for an updated assessment of her needs and she agreed to having another advocate, knowing that her link to Pauline would not be lost.

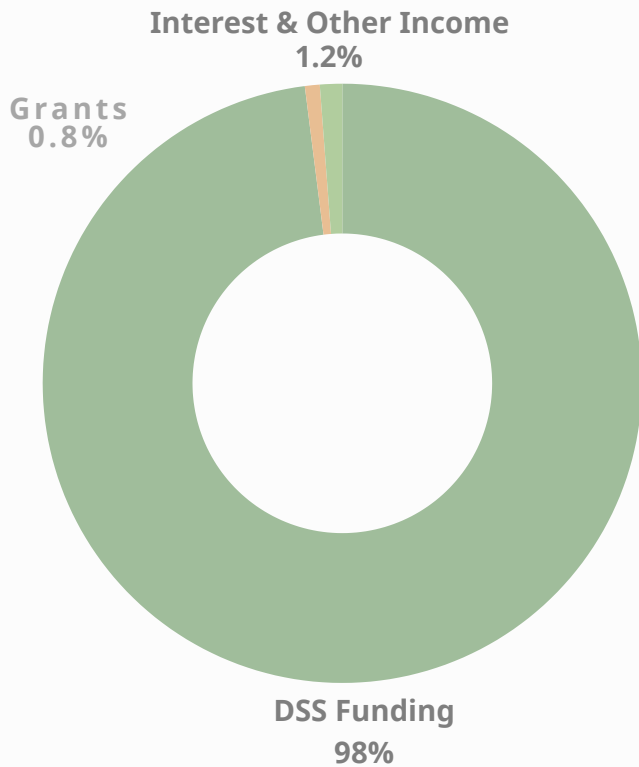
Georgia was feeling lonely and a bit down, missing companionship and someone she could talk to about her concerns and things she needed help with. We found Gail who became Georgia's new advocate.

Georgia and Gail have spent time together building Georgia's confidence and motivation to re-engage with hobbies she enjoys. They visit local garden centres and cafes and Georgia is visible again in her local community. Georgia's feels less lonely and is back out, working in the garden she had neglected, supported by Gail who also shares a love of nature and being outdoors.

**We continue to support our advocates to ensure people with disability can access and receive the support they need.**

- Georgia would struggle without advocacy support.
- She is happy, confident and connected with her advocate.
- Long-term advocacy is not affordable as a paid option.

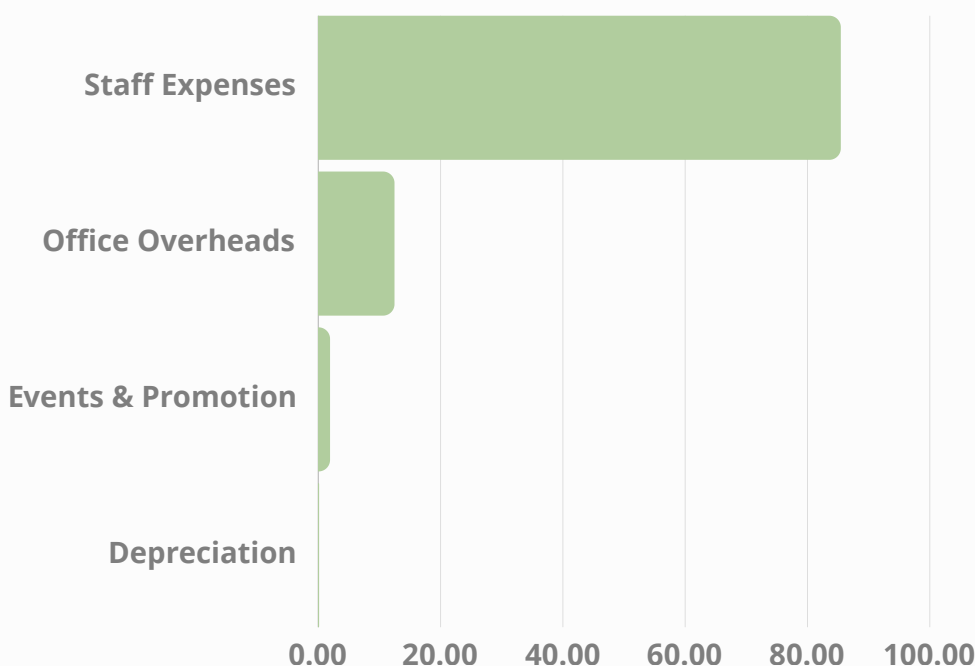
# FINANCIALS



In FY 2023-2024 our main source of income was federal funding through the Department of Social Services National Disability Advocacy Program.

We also received a grants from the Lotteries Commission and Volunteering WA

Our main expense is staff costs. We have the equivalent of 3.08 full time employees running the program at Citizen Advocacy.





## WHAT'S NEXT

As we move forward into an uncertain landscape within the disability and advocacy sectors, our focus will be on sustaining our current efforts and continuing to reflect on our progress. There will always be people that need our help, and we want to continue to provide a great service to them.

Implementing our annual action plan in alignment with the strategic plan, whilst engaging in feedback processes will allow to gain insights into the program's effectiveness. This process will enable us to learn, adapt, and ensure the long-term viability of the program.

We look forward to sharing the results of our efforts in next year's impact report.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS





## **Get in touch with us**

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