

Annual Report

1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021



Enhancing the capacity of people with a disability and their supporters to create a community strengthened by the inclusion of all!



Belonging Matters Inc



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Boronia Vic 3155



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(03) 9739 8333



belongingmatters.org

Consults

People with disabilities/families

528 consults**109** people**Consults**

Professionals

403 consults**118** people**Webinars****19** webinars**827** participants**Webinars - Country Victoria****11** webinars**133** participants**Presentations****5** presentations to**270** participants**Peer Leadership****3** peer groups to **39** people**9** leaders with disabilities**8** family leaders**Websites****3** websites**9643** users**32698** page views**Projects****NDIA**

Designed by Me: Resources for Inclusion

Community Employment Partnership

My Home, My Way (with NACBO)

Individual Living Options Mentor (with NACBO)

Other

Building Community Networks

Belonging Matters' Advisory Council (BMAC)

Facebook**1441** views**32,408** reach**3608** engagement**Publications Distributed****826** Tip Sheets**70** Periodicals**83** Books**13** Guides**Film and Video****1** documentary**25** presentations**Talks That Matter****221** public videos**32,064** mins watched**7,823** views**197** subscribers

Providing capacity building resources to enable people with a disability the same opportunities in an inclusive and welcoming society.

Belonging Matters' Overview

Vision: A Community Strengthened by the Inclusion of All

Mission: To inspire, educate and build capacity at the grass roots to assist people with disabilities to live valued lives in the community

Overview: Belonging Matters is a values-driven education, information and advisory service developed in 2003 by people with disabilities, families and others who were concerned about the systemic exclusion of people with a disability from their communities. Since then we have developed a range of capacity building resources using various mediums including film, publications, workshops, conferences and retreats. These resources are designed to shift attitudes and create opportunities for people with disabilities to pursue mainstream employment, education, authentic community inclusion and valued roles. We do not focus on a person's disability or diagnosis nor do we aim to sensationalise their disability or create pity. Instead we aim to portray people with disabilities as valued citizens with abilities, strengths and passions who have contributions to make to society. Thus, shifting mindsets positively and preventing the amplification of difference often portrayed through the media and other sources about people with disabilities.

Aims: To build the capacity and skills of people with disabilities, families and their supporters to encourage them to become better connected to their communities, pursue typical options and pathways that are available to other citizens, take up valued roles and pursue self-determination/direction. This will be achieved through a range of tools such as educational and training events and various informational resources and personalised consultation.

To give personalised, practical, follow up advice directly relevant to an individual's lifestyle, situation and culture to enable them to become better connected to their communities, pursue typical options and pathways that are available to other citizens, take up valued roles and pursue self-determination/direction.

To harness the strengths and skills of people with disabilities and families and build their confidence through information, reflection, supported decision making and practice.

To strengthen informal support networks and reduce the reliance on paid services through providing people with advice and information on community connection strategies, self-direction, Circles of Support, House Sharing with non-disabled peers; thinking creatively about support and the implications of paid supports.

To provide mechanisms for peer support and leadership through networking opportunities such as training events, referral to others who have pursued typical pathways and provide leadership opportunities for people with a disability and families/supporters to enable them to mentor and inspire other people.

Guiding principles:

Belonging Matters believes that people do better when they experience:

- The same opportunities and rights as their fellow citizens
- Belonging and social inclusion in the community
- Valued social roles
- Lifestyles that enhance their individuality and uniqueness
- Self-determination and empowerment
- Lifestyle arrangements that focus on their strengths, abilities, interests and passions
- Freely given relationships from people who love and care about them (family and friends)
- Respect, self-worth, dignity and self esteem
- Compassion
- Welcoming environments and people in them
- Responsive, flexible and creative supports and opportunities
- Support processes that are people friendly



President's Report

Adam D'Arcy

It's hard to believe but COVID19 carried on and has continued to disrupt 2021 as much as 2020. Yet here we are, still finding innovative ways to deliver services, maintain connections and navigate safety and public health concerns. With all the challenges that have emerged there is hope that new ways of doing things will help enhance services as we all navigate our way back into community participation and the 'new normal'.

Through all of this Belonging Matters has had to navigate its own path and find its own innovative ways to manage all the deliverables of the five Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grants. What this process has showcased is the amazing people who make up Belonging Matters. Their willingness to step into new technologies, provide insight and feedback and still be flexible about their working conditions is what makes Belonging Matters the unique organisation that it is.

In November, 2020 Belonging Matters met online with a range of stakeholders, including people with a disability and families, to develop our strategic plan. This process was creatively facilitated and the valuable input from contributors will guide the efforts of Belonging Matters for the next 3 years.

As the phases of the roadmap out of lockdown fluctuate, so too will the responsiveness of Belonging Matters to meet whatever challenges lay ahead to ensure that we can continue the vital work that we do for individuals, with families and within the broader community. Belonging Matters has continued to restructure and adapt as we move through this landscape and is always looking at the best ways to meet our outcome objectives.

Through all of this Belonging Matters has continued with the integral work that it does with individuals and families who look to Belonging Matters for support, education and leadership on how to best effect positive change in their lives. With the hard work that people put into achieving their goals, we have witnessed significant achievements for individuals, watching them take more control over their own lives and develop meaningful roles and relationships.

It is these outcomes that drive the organisation to keep working harder to ensure that the importance and value of capacity building is recognised and continues.

Now, as much as at any time in the past, it is important that the voices of people with disability are heard, valued and respected. For this reason, the resources that are provided by Belonging Matters, such as information sharing, webinars, Circles of Support, Roles Based Planning, Talks That Matter, community linking, participation in focus groups, involvement with peak bodies and other like-minded organisations are distributed, accessed and utilised to ensure they reach as many people as possible.

I would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who provide donations, sponsorship and funding for the work we do.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the Belonging Matters team, who worked throughout the year and did whatever they could to ensure positive outcomes for people.

I would like to thank my fellow board members for their time and commitment throughout the year. I would also like to thank Jon Adams, who retired from the board in June 2021. He has served on the board for six years, providing insight and leadership. Jon has also been a great supporter of our work and we have appreciated his efforts and relationship over many years. He is sadly missed. We wish Jon all the best for the future and hope that our paths continue to cross.

However, the biggest thank you goes to our CEO, Deb Rouget. Deb works tirelessly to ensure that the vision of the organisation is upheld. It is her passion and dedication to the outcomes for individuals, as well as the service as a whole, that makes Belonging Matters what it is. I am sure that I echo the sentiments of the board and all those who have benefited from her work when I say that I don't know what we would do without her and that our gratitude is immeasurable.

Adam D'Arcy



Treasurer's Report

Mark Glascodine

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report and the audited financial statements of Belonging Matters Inc. for the year ended 30th June 2021.

As Victoria faced extended lockdowns due to COVID-19, it was a very challenging year again, in terms of delivering on five National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grants. These grants were then transferred to the Department of Social Services (DSS) from 1 October 2020 with very little consultation and notice. The five grants, included the completion of one Economic Participation grant and commencement of another successful grant application to continue the work; an Individual Capacity Building grant for the core work of Belonging Matters; a National Information Grant (in conjunction with the National Alliance of Capacity Building Organisations NACBO, in which Belonging Matters is the lead organisation), and a second Individual Capacity Building Grant for an Individual Living Options Mentor role in which Valued Lives are the lead organisation. This meant managing more staff hours, developing more innovative solutions and collaborating on a national level with NACBO. Well done staff.

Our Net Profit from Ordinary Activities was \$18k (\$94k in 2020).

Income through NDIA, ILC Grant funding was \$568k (versus \$468k in 2020) but includes carry over funding for the 2021-22 financial year.

Apart from the ILC grant income, the Belonging Matters' team managed trading income of \$34k (versus \$55k in 2020).

As grant activities and deliverables increased, staffing and other costs have increased. This has meant increased hours for existing staff and beginning the recruitment process for 3 new staff. Total expenses of \$621k (versus \$553k in 2020, versus \$264k for 2019, in the pre NDIS world).

Total Current Assets at the end of the financial year were \$1,203k (versus \$989k in 2020). Our Total Current Liabilities were \$961k (versus 765k in 2020), predominantly for the ILC grant liability for the next 2 years to cover capacity building activities, staff leave provisions and other entitlements. The Net Assets of Belonging Matters at year-end were improved to \$233k (versus \$214k in 2020, versus \$120k in 2019).

As the Belonging Matters' Treasurer, I would like to thank my Board colleagues for their interest in and support for prudent financial decision making. I also recognise the dedication and innovation of the Belonging Matters' team to work through such a difficult financial period, together with the impact of COVID-19 and the lock down in Victoria. I'd like to commend our bookkeeper, Tracy Ireson, for her outstanding bookkeeping throughout the year and for working with Deb to run the QuickBooks accounting system. I'd like to also thank both Deb and Tracy for their careful day-to-day management of Belonging Matters funds. I would also like to thank Carly Delany of RJ Sanderson and Associates Pty Ltd (Certified Practising Accountants) in preparing our audited financial statements.

If you would like to view the full financial statements for 2020/2021 financial year, please contact the Belonging Matters' office.

Mark Glascodine



CEO's Report

Deb Rouget

In Hugh Mackay's conclusion at the Gandhi Oration, at the University of New South Wales in 2017, he commented on our growing disenchantment with the state of our nation and how we often look to Australia's leaders to solve the problems. He described a growing tendency to disengage from serious social issues such as inequality of income, homelessness, health, well-being and the fragmentation of neighbourhoods and communities.

However, as Mackay points out, we can all make a difference. "We can have a powerful influence on the state of the various communities we belong to – in the neighbourhood, the workplace, the university, the church or other faith community, the sporting association, the book club or other community organisation. How we contribute to the miniatures of life – in our own family, street, suburb or town – will ultimately help to determine the big picture" (Mackay, 2017). Through our capacity building work with individuals with disabilities, we often witness how people with a disability contribute to the miniatures of life, through their interests and by taking up valued roles in the community. In turn this has a big impact on changing attitudes and the state of our nation!

In Victoria, most of the year was spent in lockdown due to COVID-19 and the opportunity for people to connect to their local communities was hampered. Yet we continued to see the people with a disability, their families and allies we journey alongside push through the challenges and become creative in the way they contribute and connect to their communities. Some people had workplaces that supported them to work from home and four people had microbusinesses that either began or flourished.

Those intentional efforts to develop friendships with a range of community members paid off with online meet ups, Circle of Support meetings and even an online dinner club. Some people joined other online groups, for example an online yoga, hobby and crafts groups, taking online courses and music lessons and even joining a gardening group. Some took a break at a friend's house.

Some people took up new hobbies at home e.g., refurbishing furniture, gardening, painting and body building. Two people moved into their own home and in between lockdowns one person participated in a community biathlon.

In regard to our work at Belonging Matters, we experienced our second stint in lockdown. However, this time we were prepared and the work continued through the wonderful efforts of our team all working from home and online.

After just recovering from our funding transition to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), we were notified that our Individual Capacity Building funding would be transferred to the Department of Social Services (DSS). This was a decision that was made without consultation and meant we would now report to a new funding body. It was disappointing that the only capacity building funding in the NDIA, was now situated elsewhere. However, we are grateful for the funding that we receive that enables us to shift mindsets. We continued work on the Designed by Me – Resources for Inclusion project (Individual Capacity Building, 3 year grant); successfully applied for another Economic Participation grant to continue the work of the Community Employment Partnership with Rotary; continued work on the My Home, My Way project in conjunction with the **National Alliance of Capacity Building Organisations (NACBO)** (National Information 3 year grant); and began work on the Individualised Living Options project with NACBO (Individual Capacity Building, 2 year grant).

Although, not the same as meeting people in person, webinars increased our reach, especially into rural and remote areas. We reached 960 people with a disability, families and professionals through 30 webinars and reached 270 participants through 5 online presentations.

After postponing our two-day, Towards a Better Life workshop in 2019, we worked with John Armstrong to convert this important Social Role Valorisation (SRV) training into 6 live webinars. This was a huge success and one of the first online SRV events in Australia! We would like to thank John for working with us on this initiative. We also had wonderful success with two webinars focused on succession planning. A big thank you to Jeremy Ward and Margaret Duncan. Other topics included Understanding Intellectual Disability, Circles of Support, Harnessing the Power of Valued Roles, Life After School, Exploring Individualised Living Options and My Home My Way (a workshop developed and delivered in conjunction with NACBO). In addition, we partnered with Gippsland Disability Advocacy Incorporated, Sunbury, Cowbaw Community Health and ConneXtions to deliver webinars specifically for people living in country Victoria.

A big thank you to these organisations for working with us so that people living in rural and remote communities have access to capacity building resources focused on inclusion.

People continued to engage with our online resources, stretching our impact well beyond our physical presence. Our **Belonging Matters**, **Talks That Matter**, and **19 Stories** websites attracted 9643 users and we reached 32,408 people engaged through **Facebook**.

Our online video library continues to grow. **Talks That Matter (TTM)** now hosts 221 public videos with 7823 views on YouTube this year. A highlight this year was the production of a video called **“No Bias”**. This video is focused on Michael’s role as a valued contributor, member and player of his local lawn bowling club. A big thank you to Michael and Elwood Bowling Club for not only sharing this wonderful story of but providing an example to other clubs about what real inclusion looks like. Our documentary filming this year was greatly impacted by COVID-19, however we produced 25 video presentations, 12 available in Talks That Matter and 13 training videos for the Community Employment Partnership project.

We continue to invest in the leadership of people with disabilities and their families. This year 9 people with a disability and 8 families shared their story through our publications, videos and webinars. We facilitated 3 peer groups, one facilitated by a parent. We thank all of our leaders who generously share their stories and time to help people think about a good life.

Building Community Networks (BCN) aims to empower people with an intellectual disability to pursue a full, meaningful and inclusive life with the support of an unpaid Circle of Support. This year BCN facilitated 8 Circles of Support online. Although online Zoom meetings worked well for some people, some people found it difficult.

During COVID-19, we continued to provide mentoring and consultations to people on the phone, via email and in online meetings. Our consultation service provided 528 personalised consultations to 109 people with a disability and their families. In addition, we provided 403 consultations to 118 agencies, professionals or researchers.

The work we do is not done in isolation or alone. I'm extremely grateful to all of the people who constantly challenge the negative and stereo-typical assumptions of people with a disability and Autism. A huge thank you to the tireless efforts of our staff team. Like everyone, we have missed our face-to-face connection with the people and families we journey alongside and each other.

I'd like to say a big thank-you to:

- Caroline Towers for her behind the scenes work in supporting the team and in particular setting up and managing the technical requirements of our online events. In addition, the flare she adds to our publications and marketing,
- Teresa Micallef for her thoughtful work in regard to Circles of Support and nurturing a wonderful team of facilitators. It has also been a pleasure to work alongside Teresa this year to design and deliver our webinars and peer groups,
- Owen Hourigan, for producing "**No Bias**" - a wonderful video about genuine inclusion and waiting in video preproduction mode with great patience throughout COVID-19. Thanks also to Owen for his efforts on script writing, a new podcast series and continually adding new information to our 3 websites,
- Patricia Wilson, for her the significant resource development and research for the Community Employment Partnership, which placed us in an excellent position to receive a second grant to continue our work with Rotary. In addition, Pat worked on the redevelopment of the Belonging Matters' Advisory Council,
- Emily Raymond for helping us to caption videos, run the office and process evaluations.
- Our facilitators - Justine Hall, Lauren Mandel, Rachel Catchlove, Ellie Kleid, Pat Wilson, Caroline Towers and Isha Kaur for the incredible work they do to assist people with a disability to create or sustain a Circle of Support.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to:

- Tracy Ireson for her efficient and superb bookkeeping,
- Leigh Harrison from Guarana IT and Michael Johnstone from Solstone for their IT advice and CRM development,
- Carly Delany from R.J Sanderson and Associates for our financial auditing,
- People, Culture Solutions for their pro-bono advice in regard to human relations,

- The National Alliance of Capacity Building Organisations (NACBO) who are an incredible support and source of wisdom!

The NDIA and DSS for recognising the importance of capacity building in creating change and for funding our work, and

- The Belonging Matters' Board of Management (BOM) for their valuable contribution and remaining clear about our values and vision in a turbulent year. A big thankyou to Jon Adams, who after 6 years of service to the Belonging Matters' board, resigned on the 4/6/21. Jon has over the years been a much-valued supporter of our work and we wish him well for the future.

We look forward journeying beyond lockdown and look forward to meeting again with a cup of tea!

Deb Rouget

Financial Reports

Directors' Report

Your Directors present this report on the entity for the period 1st of July 2020 to the 30th of June 2021.

Directors

The names of each person who has been a Director during the year and to the date of this report are:

Adam D'Arcy (President & Chairperson)

Jon Adams (Secretary, resigning on the 4/6/21 after 6 years of service)

Mark Glascodine (Treasurer/General Member)

Toni Reeves (General Member until 4/6/21, Secretary from 5/6/21-30/06/21)

Delia Fisher (General Member)

Principal Activities

The principal activity of the entity during the year was in the provision of capacity building services, information and advice to assist people with a disability and their families. No significant changes in the nature of the entity's activities occurred in the period.

Operating Results

Our Net Profit from Ordinary Activities was \$18k (\$94k in 2020) which includes unspent monies from grants due to COVID19 and carry over funds which will need to be expended in the next financial year.

Auditor's Independence

The Auditor's declaration of independence can be found below.

Membership Fees

The Belonging Matters' Association membership fees were \$35 Standard and \$25.00 Concession

Signed in accordance with the resolution of the Board of Directors.



Adam D'Arcy (President) 13/10/21



Mark Glascodine (Treasurer) 13/10/21

BELONGING MATTERS INC

ABN 93 429 506 771

Detailed Profit and Loss Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Income		
Trading profit	34,619	53,550
Grants received - non recurrent		52,382
Grants received	567,929	482,814
Contributions received - members	1,709	1,200
Conference & presentations	11,287	16,478
Donations received		5
Cash flow boost government subsidy	23,662	39,437
Interest received	430	880
Total income	<u>639,636</u>	<u>646,747</u>
Expenses		
Advertising and promotion	8,185	2,609
Audit fees	3,390	2,936
Bank fees and charges	334	315
Eventbrite fees	238	309
Paypal Fees	403	375
Bookkeeping fees	5,697	5,202
Cleaning and rubbish removal	50	
Computer & website costs	16,272	22,515
Conference and seminar costs	6,068	25,420
Consultants fees	69,764	155,902
Depreciation-office equipment & computer	2,128	9,030
Depreciation - Right of use assets	17,220	15,785
Fees & charges		53
Insurance	5,896	1,610
Interest charges on right of use assets	681	1,200
Legal fees	345	
Light & power	2,024	2,688
Meeting expenses	1,815	604
Office administrative costs	14,122	247
Postage & courier fees	968	131
Printing & stationery	3,133	3,996

BELONGING MATTERS INC

ABN 93 429 506 771

Detailed Profit and Loss Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Provision for annual leave	(6,544)	13,396
Provision for long service leave	12,901	2,666
Rates & land taxes	2,211	705
Repairs & maintenance	368	278
Staff amenities	1,260	570
Staff training	2,220	4,735
Superannuation	36,699	22,157
Telephone	3,390	4,687
Travel, accom & conference	6,268	3,570
Wages	397,995	241,254
Workcover	5,913	7,970
Total expenses	<u>621,414</u>	<u>552,915</u>
Net Profit from Ordinary Activities	<u>18,222</u>	<u>93,832</u>

BELONGING MATTERS INC

ABN 93 429 506 771

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		\$	\$
<hr/>			
Service's Funds			
Opening balance		214,396	120,564
Net profit / (loss)		18,222	93,832
Total Service's Funds		<u>232,618</u>	<u>214,396</u>

Represented by:

Current Assets

Cash Assets

Cash at bank	360,493	146,780
Cash at bank	774,881	774,629
Cash at bank - Event Brite	3,658	385
Security bond on premises	2,926	2,926
Cash at bank - Bendigo Entitlements	51,693	42,516
Paypal account	435	1,481
Cash on hand	23	125
	<u>1,194,109</u>	<u>968,842</u>

Receivables

Trade debtors	<u>5,424</u>	<u>1,418</u>
	<u>5,424</u>	<u>1,418</u>

Inventories

Finished goods - at cost	<u>3,514</u>	<u>2,380</u>
	<u>3,514</u>	<u>2,380</u>

Other Financial Assets

Amounts owing June Bas & cash flow boost	<u></u>	<u>16,232</u>
	<u></u>	<u>16,232</u>

BELONGING MATTERS INC

ABN 93 429 506 771

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<hr/>			
Current Tax Assets			
GST payable control account		39	(18)
		<u>39</u>	<u>(18)</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>1,203,085</u>	<u>988,856</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment			
Office & computer equipment		49,800	40,777
Less: Accumulated depreciation		(37,498)	(35,370)
Right of use - leased assets		48,789	48,789
Less: Accumulated amortisation		(33,005)	(15,785)
		<u>28,086</u>	<u>38,411</u>
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>28,086</u>	<u>38,411</u>
Total Assets		<u>1,231,172</u>	<u>1,027,266</u>

BELONGING MATTERS INC

ABN 93 429 506 771

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Current Liabilities			
Payables			
Unsecured:			
Trade creditors		352	17,215
Creditor BAS		26,430	
Superannuation payable		11,245	7,131
		<u>38,027</u>	<u>24,346</u>
Financial Liabilities			
Unsecured:			
Lease liabilities-principal repayment		16,002	16,653
		<u>16,002</u>	<u>16,653</u>
Current Tax Liabilities			
Unexpended grants funds		887,534	698,120
		<u>887,534</u>	<u>698,120</u>
Provisions			
Provision for annual leave		19,603	26,147
		<u>19,603</u>	<u>26,147</u>
Total Current Liabilities		<u>961,166</u>	<u>765,266</u>

BELONGING MATTERS INC

ABN 93 429 506 771

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Non-Current Liabilities			
Financial Liabilities			
Unsecured:			
Lease liabilities - principal repayment			16,002
			<u>16,002</u>
Provisions			
Provision for long service leave		37,388	31,603
		<u>37,388</u>	<u>31,603</u>
Total Non-Current Liabilities		<u>37,388</u>	<u>47,605</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>998,554</u>	<u>812,870</u>
Net Assets		<u>232,618</u>	<u>214,396</u>

Belonging Matters Inc. Board of Management Declaration

The Board of Management has determined that the entity is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements

The Board of Management declares that:

The financial statements and notes present fairly the entity's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performances for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting practices described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the Board of Management's opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Adam D'Arcy (President)

13/10/21



Mark Glascodine (Treasurer)

13/10/21