

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO VALUED COMMUNITY LIVES
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BELONGING MATTERS INC.

ANNUAL REPORT

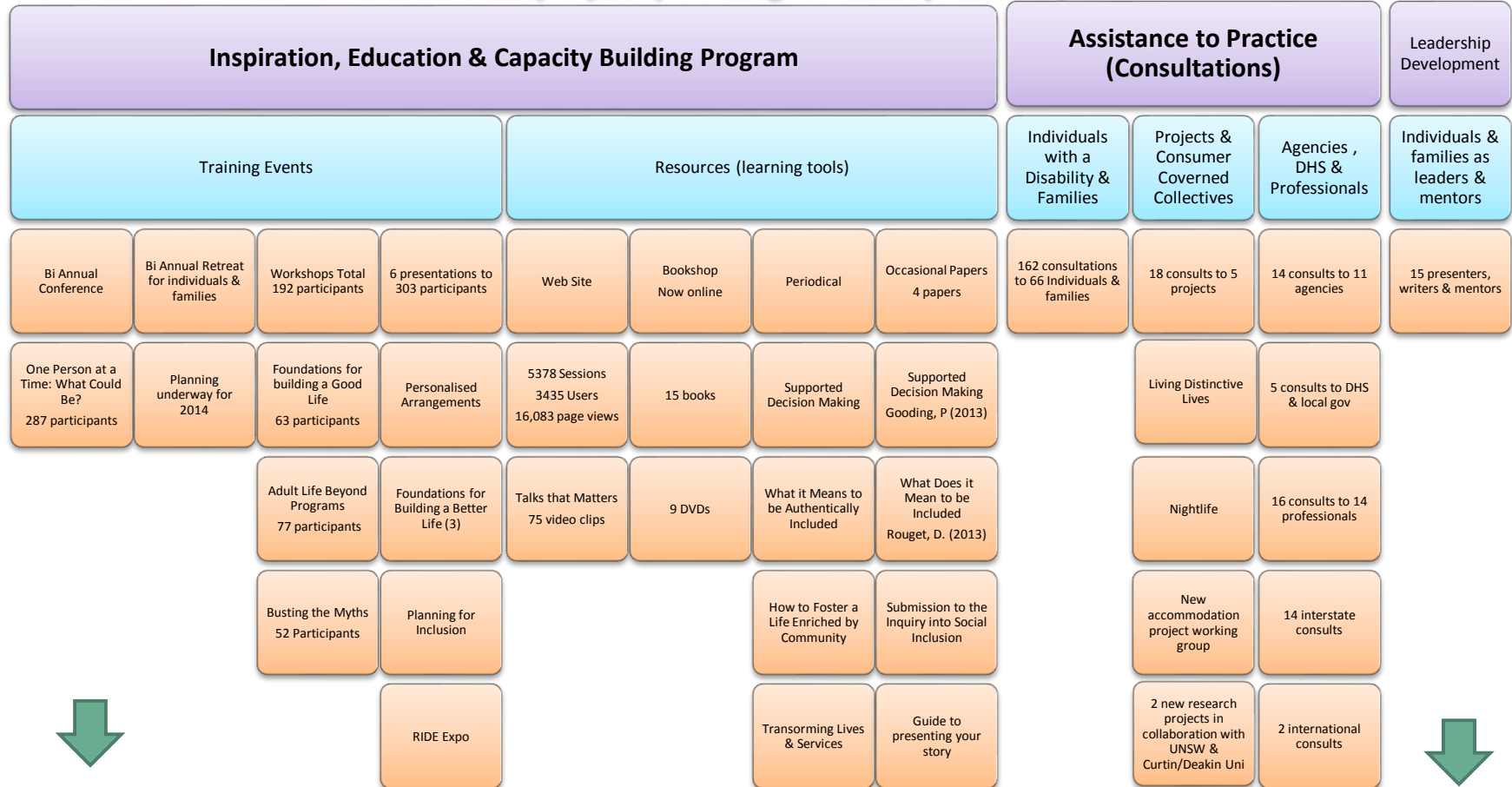
July 1st 2013 – June 30 2014

Investing in Capacity Building for People with a Disability & their Supporters



Belonging Matters

Overview of community capacity building work completed July 2013- June 2014



Enabling good lives for people with a disability that are uniquely tailored, empowering, purposeful & enriched by typical opportunities, belonging and valued contribution to the community

President's Report

Delia Fisher

Looking back on the past financial year, I feel incredibly proud of what we have achieved at Belonging Matters. This was our first year as an incorporated association after being auspiced by Melba for nearly 10 years.

Our small team has delivered great results – providing advice and support that makes a difference to the lives of people with a disability and their families, and helps them connect and contribute to their communities.

Our bi-annual conference took place last August, and attracted around 300 attendees across the two-day program. More than 20 presenters, including Graeme Innes, Mary Keady and Tim Costello, embraced the conference theme of 'What Could Be', covering empowerment, authentic social inclusion, individualisation and innovation. Our next conference will be in August 2015, and we are already on the look-out for people who can share their story about community and belonging.

The issue of funding and fundraising is always a high priority for community organisations like Belonging Matters, to enable us to continue and extend our work. We have been successful in securing recurrent funding from the Department of Human Services which allows us to plan with more certainty, and continue our busy program of events, and we are grateful for their ongoing support.

Our membership continues to grow, and I'm delighted to hear that every week individuals are showing their support for our work by taking up membership. Our 'Talks That Matter' video library is popular and provides inspiration to many.

This past year we organised a number of events that were well-attended. Feedback from participants such as "inspirational" and "life changing" reinforces the wonderful work of everyone at Belonging Matters.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our CEO, Deb Rouget, together with the Belonging Matters team: Community Inclusion Facilitator, Leeanne Kolmus; Events Organiser, Jackie Holmes; and Office Assistant, Emily Alexander. Thank you also to Matthew Slater for managing our social media, Owen Hourigan for the many improvements to our website and Tracy Ireson for your wonderful work as our bookkeeper.

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank retiring Board members Ronda Held and Maureen McLeish who have made an invaluable contribution to Belonging Matters over the last few years. I'd also like to thank our current Board members Lisa Harris, Lorraine Baloyi and Roger Pallant.

I have been involved in this organisation since its inception in 2001, and have seen firsthand the difference we make to the lives of people with a disability and their families. I am proud of our achievements and I look forward to us continuing and extending this rewarding work in the year ahead.

CEO's Report

Deb Rouget

Nelson Mandela was one of the most dignified and visionary leaders of our time. He protested peacefully and tirelessly with great sacrifice for what he believed in – an end to South Africa's policy of segregation and discrimination based on race. He once said "*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world*".

I was thinking about this quote – about how education has the power to help change our mindsets and our world. Our actions, after all, are a result of what we believe and think. At the heart Belonging Matters' work is a deep seated belief that people with a disability belong to the community. As a result of holding this belief, our efforts are focused on following typical pathways that are open to all community members. This belief steers us away from options that segregate people with a disability from the community.

Values based capacity building, story-telling and sharing wisdom are some of the ways in which we challenge the marginalisation and segregation of people with a disability. In this regard we begin to open people up to what is possible. For example, at our recent community vision building retreat for families, we met a young man called Brodie. Brodie is the type of guy you like instantly. During the retreat participants were encouraged to write down their beliefs. Brodie and I sat together and after a few moments he said "*I believe that I can do anything any other young person can do*". Brodie had just anchored our entire retreat! As a capable, young adult who had just left school, you might assume the world is Brodie's oyster. For example, he would be going to University, start a career, take a gap year, travel overseas or change his mind about his course preferences!

However, this is not the case. Brodie attends a day program for people with a disability. He is on a separate path - a path of segregation on grounds other than race. Interestingly his mum had never been exposed to thinking that her son could pursue typical opportunities with support. Over the weekend, with investment in their thinking, both of their visions changed dramatically as they created a big vision that drew on Brodie's interests, gifts and talents in very typical ways. Education about inclusive, valued and typical pathways holds the power to change Brodie's future and that of many people. This is the work at the heart of Belonging Matters. Assisting people like Brodie and his mum to create and pursue a vision for a full, meaningful and inclusive life. The same vision that we hold for all of our children. His mum wrote to me after the retreat and said "The retreat was an incredible experience for both of us...your work is actually helping us make fundamental shifts in thinking and therefore our lives."

We work behind the scenes to encourage and provide the space for people with a disability, families and others to develop their lives in a meaningful and inclusive way and to share their stories. It's also a space where people who passionately and unashamedly believe in social inclusion can connect and renew.

This year we held our One Person at a Time Conference - What Could Be, delivered 3 seminars and gave 6 presentations with an overall attendance of 782 participants. We produced 4 periodicals and wrote 2 papers focused on inclusion, supported decision making and service transformation. We developed a guide to assist people presenting their stories and we made a submission to the Inquiry into the Social Inclusion of People with a Disability in Victoria. We made a massive investment in our online education and capacity building strategy by further investment of our web site (which contains an array of free resources as well as an on line bookshop. We also invested in the development of Talks That Matter - our amazing new online video strategy which aims to make learning accessible and affordable with the click of a mouse! We assisted with the development of 18 leaders with a disability and/or families to share their stories and/or mentor others and we provided 162 consultations or vision building conversations to 66 individuals and families. We also provided 18 consultations in regard to project development and 51 consultations to professionals and agencies!

I would like to thank our small but dedicated team - Jackie Holmes for her outstanding event organisation and administration. Jo Walters (who left us in March for Bendigo) and Leeanne Kolmus for their thoughtful conversations with people and families. Emily Alexander for her administration support and Tracy Ireson for bookkeeping. A special thanks to Owen Hourigan who gave life to our online efforts and our vision to share story tellers with the world through Talks That Matter! How fortunate we are to have such a hardworking and passionate team!

I'd like to also thank our board of management for their clarity of vision - something that is not easy to hold in a market of growth, mergers and commerce. But as Tim Costello reminded us this year at our conference "*Commerce doesn't define us – community does*"! We farewell a couple of board members this year, Maureen McLeish and Ronda Held. Thank you so much for your thoughtful contributions and hard work over many years - we will miss you.

I'd also like to thank Michael Kendrick, who really from our humble beginnings over 10 years ago has always encouraged and supported our work.

I'd like to finish with a quote from Mary Kealy's conference presentation. She said "*Respect is to look again at the person. If you break down the word respect, 're' means again and 'spect' means to look.*" I think it's important for us to look again and again, to see the real potential of all people to create a world where everyone belongs and where no human being is set apart because of race, disability, religion or difference.

Treasurer's Report

Lorraine Baloyi

The financial position of Belonging Matters is strong even though I report a loss for the financial year of \$27,471.00. This is mainly attributed by once off expenses incurred during Belonging Matters' transition as an incorporated association. This includes once off expenses incurred towards the development of Belonging Matters' website. The Board made a decision to utilise retained earnings to improve Belonging Matters online resources. From the investment made, a sum of \$13,486.25 was generated from a newly implemented online resource 'Talks that Matter'. The Board envisions revenue will continue generating from online resources such as 'Talks That Matter'.

As mentioned earlier, the financial position for the year is represented by a deficit of \$27,471.00. From the time Belonging Matters became an incorporated association, income has increased significantly to that of the previous year. This is noted from grants received from Government, workshop income and from interest income. Expenditure is represented predominantly as conference and seminar costs, computer and website costs, wages and consultancy fees. The net assets for the financial year are \$40,871.00.

I thank the Board for their support, their skills and dedication towards Belonging Matters' financial affairs. The Board will remain vigilant to ensure Belonging Matters' sustainability and continuity of work.

I also thank staff of Belonging Matters, Tracy Ireson the Bookkeeper and Graeme F Delany (Graeme F Delany Pty Ltd) Certified Practising Accountant for the audited financial statements and his support of Belonging Matters. If you would like to view the full financial statements for 2013/2014 financial year, please contact the Belonging Matters office.

BELONGING MATTERS INC
Detailed Profit and Loss Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Income		
Trading profit	1,768	-
Grants received	179,195	26,927
Contributions received - members	2,591	-
Conference & presentations	86,798	16,147
Donations received	1,559	6,300
Sponsorships & licensing fees	2,182	-
Interest received	623	2
Other income	-	100
Total income	274,716	49,476
Expenses		
Accountancy	1,570	-
Advertising and promotion	3,438	1,325
Bad debts	391	-
Bank fees and charges	196	15
Eventbrite fees	1,126	-
Paypal Fees	1,292	217
Bookkeeping fees	6,350	1,600
Computer & website costs	13,001	2,403
Conference and seminar costs	50,165	860
Consultants fees	13,926	321
Depreciation-office equipment & computer	4,487	710
Fees & charges	383	-
Insurance	857	497
Interest - Australia	625	-
Lease payments	1,109	471
Light & power	2,498	72
Meeting expenses	555	-
Office administrative costs	1,389	1,195
Postage & courier fees	1,072	155
Printing & stationery	8,317	282
Provision for annual leave	12,885	793
Provision for long service leave	977	172

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Audit Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.

BELONGING MATTERS INC
Detailed Profit and Loss Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Rates & land taxes	1,955	-
Rent on land & buildings	17,322	2,737
Repairs & maintenance	959	250
Replacement of minor equipment	-	870
Staff amenities	1,015	345
Staff training	390	146
Superannuation	11,990	1,194
Telephone	1,872	786
Travel, accom & conference	2,088	-
Wages	133,731	13,506
Workcover	4,256	562
Total expenses	<u>302,187</u>	<u>31,485</u>
Net Profit (Loss) from Ordinary Activities	<u>(27,471)</u>	<u>17,990</u>

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