

Year in Review 2018-19

"Expression Australia supported me to get my NDIS package. Wow! It has changed my life lots"

Amy, Deaf community member (Tasmania)



"It is great to see that Auslan training assisted in making a difference to the communication at a workplace and made it inclusive for the Deaf employee"

Trisha, Auslan trainer

"With Expression Australia's support, we now have peace of mind at home with our new visual alarm systems in place"

Sylvia, audiology client



"Expression Australia has provided exceptional ongoing support to me in my workplace, including Deaf Awareness Training and Auslan classes for my colleagues"

Dan, employment client

"The Expression Deaf Grant allowed us to share our love of AFL with the Deaf community by interviewing AFL stars and celebrities in Auslan"

Simon, grant recipient



"Expression Australia assisted me to study for my learners permit, look for a new house and prepare to apply for a new job"

Kerry, NDIS client

Highlights and Achievements

2018
-19

Deaf Identity

We supported 10 community initiatives through our Expression Deaf Grants, across these areas:

!	Access to information.....	1
🎭	Arts and culture.....	3
🏃	Sports and recreation.....	3
🔗	Technology.....	1
👤	Youth.....	2

We taught

1,715

hours of Auslan
in schools



More than **500 people**
and **30 organisations**
attended the 2018
Deaf Expo.



Deaf Interests

31% of our **399 staff** identify as Deaf and our employee engagement score is **82%**, which is **2%** higher than the average in our industry.

1,162 people attended our
Deaf Awareness Training.



We are creating **DeafNav**, a national website providing information about, and raising awareness of, the needs of people who are Deaf and hard of hearing. Funded by the NDIA through an ILC grant.

We held **7 Hearing Awareness Training sessions** at workplaces, which reached 160 people, and provided them with information on how they can support their colleagues who are hard of hearing.

Communication and Access

We provided

43,276 hours

of language and interpreting services through Auslan Connections – a joint venture with Deaf Services.

We produced

80 Auslan video
projects



which provide the Deaf community with access to critical information.

1,102

people attended our
Auslan Community Courses



In particular, the *Deaf Community and Police* video series we produced with the Victoria Police has had

191,586 YouTube Views

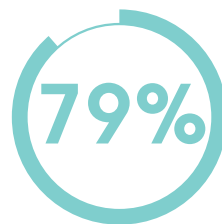
We funded an interpreting course for **19 native Auslan users** to increase the pool of certified Auslan interpreters.

Participation and Inclusion

We have provided NDIS support work and coordination services to over **400 people** – helping them to access the community and get the most from their NDIS plans.



of **WorkingOUT job seekers** remained in employment at the end of 18-19 financial year (a 5% increase from 17-18).



of **people** our employment services supported are still employed after 6 months.

Partnering for Innovation and Service Growth

As part of the Victorian Government's Early Childhood Language Program (ECLP), children at over **20 kindergartens** across Victoria will learn in Auslan for up to 3 hours per week.



With support from the Telstra Foundation, we began developing **Auslan Anywhere** – a crowd sourced Auslan learning and sharing app that celebrates our language and culture, and raises awareness of Auslan.



Through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) our **audiology service delivered 622 hours** and our **Specialised Support Services provided 653 hours** of support to people over 65, who are Deaf and hard of hearing, to live independently, look after their health and wellbeing, and stay connected to their communities.

We partnered with Melbourne Polytechnic and got a commitment from Government for funding to build **a new home for Expression Australia and the Deaf community in 2023.**



Our partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic will also **increase opportunities for learning and teaching Auslan.**

Partnering to Increase Impact

We supported

617 people in VIC and 28 people in TAS

through the Drop-in Support Service – a project led by Deaf Can:Do and including Deaf Services, the Deaf Society and Expression Australia – to provide people who are Deaf and hard of hearing with increased access to high-quality information and public services.

We employed

191 Auslan interpreters

through Auslan Connections – a joint venture with Deaf Services – to provide quality language services for Deaf and hard of hearing Australians.



In partnership with the **Australian Digital Health Agency**, we delivered a series of info sessions across Australia that educated the Deaf community about *My Health Record* and how people can control their digital health information.



We promoted Auslan at the MCG as part of **our partnership with Collingwood Football Club** when they played Port Adelaide during the 2018 AFL season.



We again **partnered with ABC News** to broadcast their national news bulletin in Auslan for International Day of Sign Languages on 23 September 2018.



Financials 2018-19

Financial Report

We achieved a surplus and continued to achieve excellent outcomes against our 2015-2020 strategic plan.

Service planning and redesign continued in the lead-up to full roll-out of the NDIS, which included maintaining service continuity for clients transitioning to the NDIS. The pace of transition to NDIS has been slower than anticipated. This delay in growth of NDIS services has been offset by transition funding from DHHS.

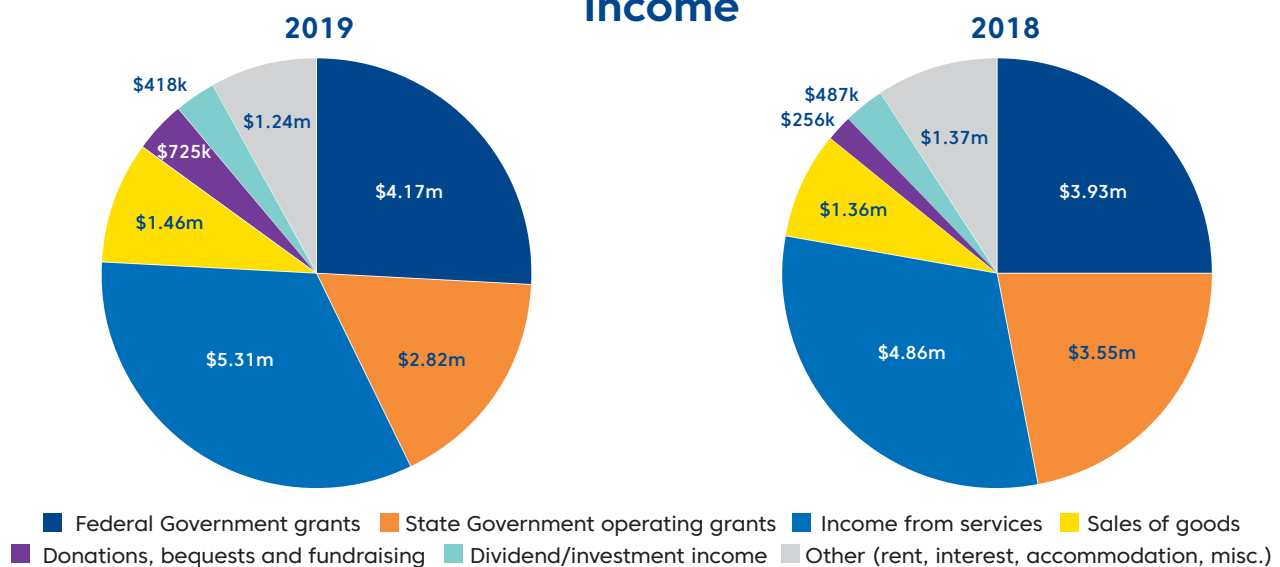
Our **interpreting service**, Auslan Connections, has again performed strongly with service levels up 3% this year after a 13% increase in the previous year. Our **employment service** had a quieter year with income down 20% under the new Department of Social Service contract arrangements.

Our **audiology service** had a good year with income up 6%. Our **Auslan courses** had an excellent result with services up 72% following a 41% increase in the previous year.

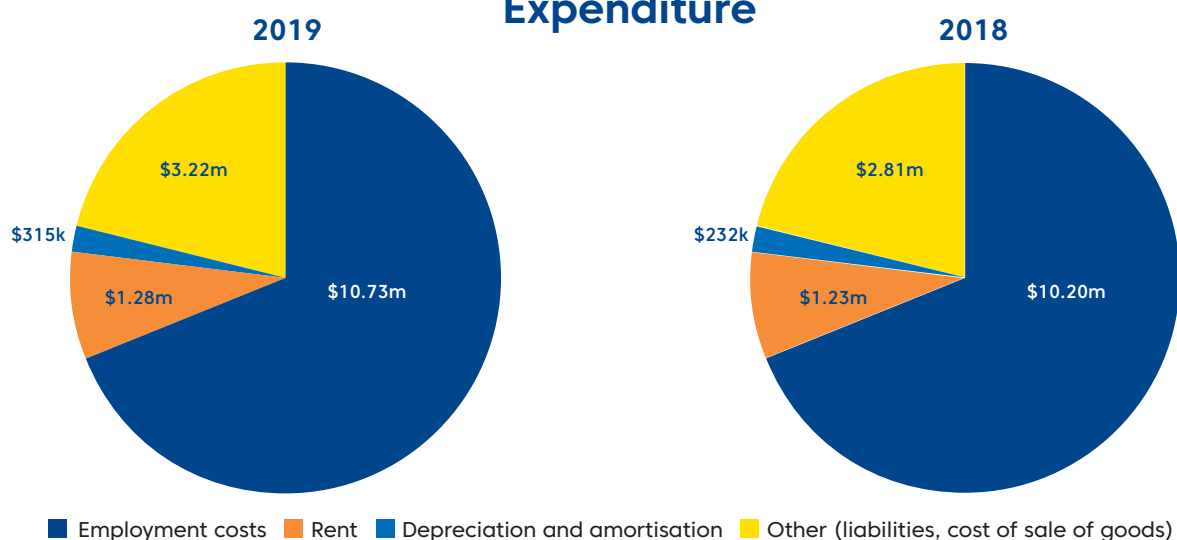
In Tasmania, we continue to have a strong focus on the development of our service and business model under the NDIS, which has included but is not limited to community engagement, capacity-building and Auslan for families.

The total investment portfolio has performed well against our market-related benchmarks this year. During the financial year there was no significant change in the organisation's affairs.

Income



Expenditure



	2019	2018
Net Profit	\$582,250	\$1,338,796
Unspent grants for special projects	\$82,745	\$935,531
Underlying net profit	\$499,505	\$403,238
Underlying comprehensive income	\$542,312	\$821,579
Net assets	\$27,491,766	\$26,866,710



President's Message

This year our passion and commitment to our Victorian and Tasmanian communities continued to shine through.

We successfully launched our 'Auslan-first' rebrand of Expression Australia after extensive consultation and collaboration with Deaf and hard of hearing communities and other stakeholders. Nothing makes me prouder than seeing someone use Expression Australia's sign name or seeing the logo (which also originates from Auslan) displayed on our buildings and printed material, or even at the footy.

Our work on *DeafNav* and *Auslan Anywhere* highlights our community-led focus. Our consultations with Deaf communities have guided these projects, which will positively showcase Deaf language and culture across Australia. I am excited to see these projects come to fruition.

I would like to thank all of those who have supported us this year. This includes the Chair and Board, and our CEO, staff and volunteers.

Our partners and stakeholders have also played a critical part in our ability to meet our vision of an accessible and inclusive society for all.

Most importantly, I would also like to pay my respects to, and thank, the Deaf community across Victoria and Tasmania. You are at the core of everything we do. Thank you.

Hilary Fisher
President



Chair's Report

We have had another very satisfactory year as we continue to transition into the new NDIS environment.

We remain financially strong and sustainable, recording another underlying surplus, which was assisted by transition funding from DHHS to offset the slower than expected transition to NDIS.

All our businesses performed as well as could be expected in the challenging environment, and our sustainability is underpinned again by excellent returns on our invested reserves.

This enables us to continue to offer a large amount of unfunded services, which add value to the lives of our clients.

We continue to put the Deaf community at the centre of all we do, and the rebranding has been particularly successful in raising the profile of the organisation and the needs of our clients across Victoria, Tasmania, and the rest of the nation.

Our new partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic is particularly important as not only will it provide a new home for Expression Australia, but also a focal point for the Deaf community in Victoria.

I would like to thank our President, Hilary Fisher, and our fellow Directors for all their support and commitment over the year. They all give selflessly of their time and expertise, and contribute significantly to the high standing our organisation enjoys with all our stakeholders.

I would particularly like to thank Chris Mathieson, her Senior Management Team, and all members of staff for their unflagging efforts to provide efficient quality services to meet the needs of the community that we are all proud to serve.

Garry Fowler
Chair



CEO's Report

Our achievements demonstrate our pride in being part of the community that we serve.

This year, our Annual Report is presented in a new format that highlights some of our proudest achievements and demonstrates the impact Expression Australia has in the lives of our clients and community.

We have tried to provide a more visual and less English-based summary of our work over 2018-19, so we hope you like it!

Over the past twelve months, we continued to work alongside Deaf and hard of hearing people to understand and learn about the NDIS and the significant changes it's having in their lives. We also focused on supporting other people who experience barriers or marginalisation.

The Deaf community in Victoria is dynamic, strong and vibrant. In Tasmania, the community is growing and strengthening. We are honoured and proud to be a part of these communities and the others we serve.

I would like to thank every person that has been involved in the critical work we do. Every individual – employees, volunteers, donors, partners, funders and stakeholders – contributes to our impact and success.

In particular, thank you to our Board, our management team and all our staff in doing a fabulous job throughout the year.

Christine Mathieson
CEO

NDIS story



Tony Tao, NDIS client

Tony is hard of hearing and uses **Australian Sign Language (Auslan)** to communicate. Tony also has cerebral palsy, a physical disability that affects his movement.

In 2017, Tony began working with Expression Australia to manage his NDIS plan.

When Tony's previous support worker asked him if he would like to change to Expression Australia to aid communication, Tony said that he would.

Tony says: ***"At my previous agency there wouldn't always be Auslan interpreters, so sometimes they would just write notes to me to communicate. I didn't feel that was right."***

Cath is Tony's support worker at Expression Australia and she knows Auslan.

It is important to Tony that he is able to communicate easily.

Tony says: ***"I use Auslan so it was much easier for me to communicate because the staff at Expression Australia know Auslan."***

Cath helps Tony to access services through his NDIS plan, including:

- occupational therapy (OT)
- speech therapy
- Auslan interpreting

The NDIS provides Australians with a disability to access the support they need to participate in everyday life.

Cath is supporting Tony with his next goal, which is to get an electric wheelchair funded via the NDIS.

An electric wheelchair would allow Tony to access public transport.

Tony says: ***"At the moment I always have to stay at home. Being able to use public transport would allow me to go out more. I would like to go to the city more and go out to meet friends."***

Because **communication is a priority for Tony**, he suggests that other people find the agency that best suits their communication needs.

Tony says: ***"People who are Deaf and hard of hearing should consider Expression Australia because they are very easy to communicate with."***

Employment story



Sarah Loukes,
Employment Access
Coordinator

Sarah works at Expression Australia to help people find and maintain employment.

Sarah says: ***"It's incredible when one of my clients are offered their 'dream job'. But it is seeing the small wins people have along the way that make my work the most rewarding."***

Sarah says that **communication is a common barrier** her job-seeking clients face because they may:

- be unable to speak on the phone due to hearing loss
- struggle with visual cues or written text as a result of low vision or blindness
- have English as a second or third language

Sarah met Rachael* when Rachael came to Expression Australia for support to find a job.

Rachael had previously run her own business, but domestic violence had severely affected her mental health and robbed her of her career.

Sarah strives to create a safe, welcoming and inclusive space in which Rachael can achieve her work goals.

Rachael says: ***"Sarah is working with me to find the right opportunities to achieve my work goals, at the pace I need."***

Sarah supports Rachael to feel heard, respected and comfortable. This helps Rachel open up about her challenges and needs.

Rachael says: ***"I feel very, very grateful for the support Sarah is providing me."***

Rachael's journey to rebuild her life and re-join the workforce is not over.

But Sarah has seen Rachael achieve enough small wins along the way that she knows Rachael's work goals will soon become a reality.

****Rachael's name has been changed to protect her privacy.***