

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

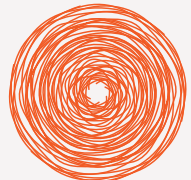




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VISION

A mentally well community without judgement where all people are accepted equally.

OBJECTIVE

To support and advocate for mental wellness and recovery through the delivery of quality services to people whose lives are affected by mental illness.

RESPECT

To recognise the right of all stakeholders to be listened to and to be able to make informed choices.

COMMITMENT

To provide quality services to support mental wellness and recovery.

INTEGRITY

To provide quality services that are of the highest ethical standards and are noncoercive, non-exploitative regardless of age, gender, cultural background, social status, sexual orientation, disability or religion.

OUR VALUES

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Vanessa Harris Chairperson

Vanessa is currently employed at the Menzies School of Health Research as the Biyamarr ma Manager and was previously the CEO for the NT Mental Health Coalition and FORWAARD. Vanessa is a local Territorian who's grandmother was a part of the Stolen Generations. Vanessa also has an extensive career in Aboriginal Health, Commonwealth Government, and within the Aboriginal Community Control sector.

Joy Green Vice Chairperson

While her initial impetus was to advocate on behalf of her son, Joy's reach has extended to all people with a mental illness and their carers. In 2008 Joy was nominated for the Australian of the Year Award and was consequently awarded the NT Senior of the Year for her work in Mental Health.

Luciana Baronio Secretary

Luciana Baronio joined the MIFANT Board as Secretary. Luciana has brought a wealth of knowledge to the Board both as the Secretary and has utilised MIFANT's services as a carer. Luciana has a Bachelor of Business from Darwin University and an MBA from Canberra University. Luciana is a locally born territorian with experience in Computer Technology, and Education and Training.

Laura Milne Ordinary Member

Laura is the Operations Manager of Hibiscus Shoppingtown. The centre encourages community engagement activities and events throughout the year which enhances a family friendly community environment. Laura has seen firsthand the impact of mental health in the community and nominated to be on the MIFANT Board to support the work of MIFANT in the community and brings a wealth of knowledge and compassion to the Board. Laura's interest includes supporting community wellbeing programs.

Maureen Booth Ordinary Member

Maureen Booth has been a member of MIFANT for approximately 6 years and more recently a committee member. Maureen cares for her partner of 24 yrs who suffers from PTSD. Maureen has lived in Darwin since 1978 and is interested in mental health having had friends and family who also struggle.

John Theo Fernando Ordinary Member

Experienced Senior Finance and Commercial Professional with a proven track record across diverse industries and sectors, including Not-for-Profit, Shipping & Logistics, Tourism, Supply Chain, Trading, and Consulting. Theo's background includes expertise in strategic business management, finance business partnering, government grant administration and acquittal, commercial project management, audit, and IT/accounting systems.

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Chairperson's Report

This year, MIFANT has persevered through ongoing challenges within the framework of the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme). Despite the hurdles it has faced, MIFANT remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering a wide array of essential services to its participants. These services encompass support coordination, recovery coaching, individual supports, as well as social and community participation initiatives. Additionally, MIFANT extends its offerings to include short-term overnight accommodation, all centered on prioritising the preferences and well-being of the individuals it serves.

Also during the year, MIFANT celebrated three decades of providing mental health services in the Northern Territory. Festivities took place at our three NT centers (Darwin, Tennant Creek, and Alice Springs) which showcased community diversity with various attendees, speakers, and activities. MIFANT takes immense pride in maintaining its unwavering focus on promoting mental wellness and recovery within the community. This mission is continually achieved through a multifaceted approach, supporting people from age 6 to 65 to maintain good mental health.

Over the past year, the MIFANT Board has demonstrated remarkable growth and resilience. The infusion of new Board members has brought fresh perspectives and expertise to the organisation, even as we bid farewell to a long-serving and dedicated Board member. This dynamic shift underscores the organisation's commitment to evolving and adapting to the changing needs of its community.

In expressing gratitude, we extend heartfelt appreciation to both past and present staff and board members for their unwavering dedication and support of MIFANT's mission. The collective efforts of these individuals have been instrumental in advancing our organisation's goals and objectives.

A special recognition is also due to Lorraine Davies, whose continued leadership and unwavering commitment to MIFANT have played a pivotal role in the organization's ongoing success.

Vanessa Harris
Chairperson





Executive Officer's Report

This year has seen the unusual circumstances of both unprecedented positive and less favourable situations affecting the organisation.

The positive aspects have encompassed commemorating three decades of delivering mental health services in the Northern Territory. MIFANT hosted celebrations at each of our three centres across the NT (Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs) and it was truly heartwarming to witness how each centre's festivities beautifully reflected the diversity of their respective communities, featuring a wide array of people, speakers, activities, and culinary delights.

With the presence of our founding member, Joy Green, gracing each of these events, the celebrations provided a remarkable opportunity for us to appreciate the extent of our long-standing commitment. It is a commitment that we are incredibly proud of and has undeniably, positively touched the lives of countless people, supporting their mental well-being, and ultimately contributing to a better quality of life.

The less favourable aspects this year, have been a shared experience among almost every organisation and business across Australia, where the effects of staff shortages have touched all facets of service provision. In light of this, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our dedicated staff members who have frequently gone above and beyond, and taken on additional responsibilities to ensure people have received the support they required.

Despite these challenging circumstances, our staff dedication has enabled us to continue to maintain the delivery of high-quality services, a commitment that is clearly evident in the positive outcomes of our mid-term audits assessing compliance with both the Mental Health Standards and NDIS Quality Standards.

MIFANT's NT representation with national bodies Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia (MIFA) and Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA) has also seen strong advocating for the needs of people with a mental illness and their families and friends to ensure services for those without an NDIS package continue. MIFA has remained at the forefront by organising the National Psychosocial Support Advocacy Alliance, a coalition consisting of 35 organisations, including MIFANT. The primary focus of this alliance is dedicated advocacy for the establishment of a comprehensive national support program catering to the needs of those requiring psychosocial support within their communities who don't have a NDIS coverage.

Additionally the tireless lobbying efforts of Mental Health Carers Australia over many years will culminate in the development of a funded Mental Health Carers Peak Body, set to launch in early 2024. This milestone represents a significant step toward ensuring high-level advocacy for people who care for someone living with mental health challenges into the future.

In conclusion, as we reflect on the past year and the collective efforts that have shaped our journey, we will carry forward the inspiration and determination we've witnessed within our organisation. We've faced challenges head-on, and upheld our commitment to continue to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those who are affected by mental ill health.

As we embark on the next chapter, we understand that our mission is far from complete. There is always more we can do to make a difference and consequently we will continue to strive to support good mental health in our communities.

Lorraine Davies
Executive Officer

CELEBRATING 30 years!



First Board Members



Governor-General Event 2022



Carer Group 2010



Alice Springs Carers Week Dinner



Joy and Mike Green Meeting with Health Minister Carmen Lawrence 1992



Participants at Petes Place 2010



Greg and Eric at the Mental Health Week Dinner



Carers Event at Parliament House



Alice Springs 30yr event



Joy and Mike Green (Founding members). Joy receiving Senior of The Year Award in Canberra



Group Activities at MiPlace Hub



Live Vibe Music - Kids writing and recording their songs at Tennant Creek



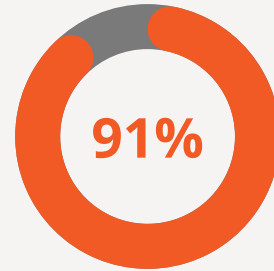
Art Workshop at Miplace Hub

2023 HIGHLIGHTS



362

People helped at MiPlace Hub

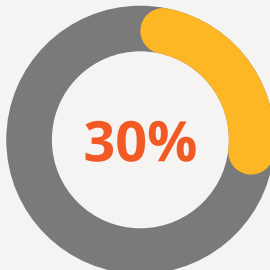
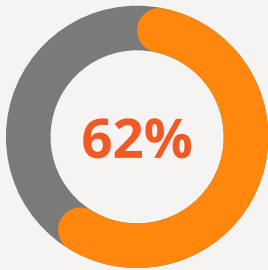


Percentage of adults who have had a positive experience



1442

Number of Group Activities at MiPlace Hub



Among the children and youth who received support, **62%** expressed a positive level of satisfaction, while **30%** reported a neutral satisfaction score.

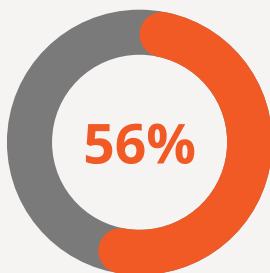
1211

Children and youth supported



3059

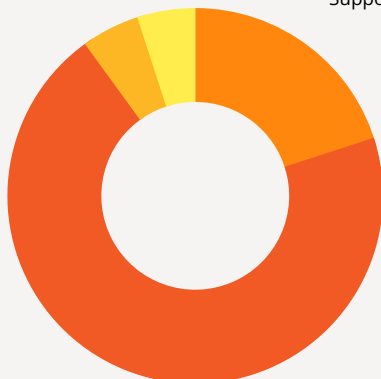
Support sessions for children and youth



56% of all individuals supported by MIFANT identify as First Nations people



Short Term Accommodation 5% Daily Living 5% Support Coordination 20%



Social and Community Participation 70%

38

Individuals receive NDIS services

MIFANT Team offers NDIS services with a focus on various support categories. Our services primarily consist of **70%** social and community participation, **20%** support coordination, **5%** daily living support, and **5%** short-term accommodation.



OUR PROGRAMS

Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia (NT) (MIFANT) is a not for profit charitable organisation that has been operating in the NT for over 30 years. With services in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs, MIFANT provides recovery based support to people living with a mental health condition, their families and carers and also early intervention to children and young people at risk of developing a mental illness.

Our services include **MiPlace Hub, Individual Support, Cool Program, NDIS Services, and MiTrack Program.**





MIPLACE HUB

Mi Place Hub provides a safe and non-judgmental space for participants to share their experiences, emotions, and challenges with others who may be facing similar issues. Sharing with peers has helped participants foster personal growth and resilience while supporting emotional wellbeing and recovery. This sense of belonging and understanding has helped reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness and promoted a sense of community and connection.

Activities over the year that have supported participant's recovery journey's have included art and craft, board and card games, pool competitions, relaxing in the garden, participant meetings, music and singing.

At MiPlace Hub, participants also have had the opportunity to learn daily living tasks as part of their recovery journey. These tasks serve as tangible goals that not only enhance practical life capabilities but also contribute to improved mental well-being by instilling a sense of purpose, and self-worth.

Participants choose their own activities based on where they are on their own recovery journey and can be as simple as wiping down a table to the complexity of choosing a recipe and cooking a cake from scratch to share with the group. Other activities have included gardening, laundry and cleaning.

MiPlace Hub also supports a range of activities that connect to the wider community. These activities include promoting special days throughout the year such as Schizophrenia Awareness Week where Mi Place Hub had a public Open Day and Art Competition and Anzac day where a speaker from the Darwin Military museum was invited to talk about the history of the Anzac's. Other special days that have been celebrated each with their own unique activities have included Naidoc Week, Mental Health Week, Book Week, Melbourne Cup, RUOK day and Australia Day.

As well as special days a monthly speaker from the community is invited to assist participants to know what is available in their community and where to get help. Speakers have included a Dietitian, Consumer Affairs (Scams and Tenancy Advice), Anti Discrimination Commission, Centrelink, St Johns Ambulance and the RSPCA.





"I love to come to this place, I get to see my friends and hang out"



"Great company for me as I live alone"

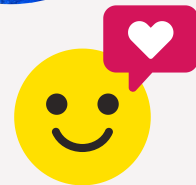


"I was sad about my life but now I've got friends and I'm happy"

"I like it, I get to enjoy myself in a happy group"



"Great place to hang out, a very friendly environment"



" People help me here"





COOL PROGRAM

The Cool Program offers a vital community access initiative, providing regular activities for people to be engaged with their community.

These outings are significant for participants living with a mental health condition, granting them access to experiences they might otherwise miss out on, while also encouraging social connections. This program plays a fundamental role in addressing the needs of those living in solitude or facing social isolation, empowering them to actively engage in their community.

Participants of the Cool Program actively design the outings they would like to attend, ensuring a sense of joint ownership and relevance. While most outings come at no cost, some may require a modest contribution to cover expenses for activities like ten pin bowling, mini golf, cinema outings, and Saturday lunches.

In 2023, MIFANT participants derived great value from Cool Program outings that not only enriched their lives but also connected them to all that the Darwin region has to offer. Cool participants have had amazing encounters with the NT flora and fauna on trips to Litchfield, Lake Bennett, Berry Springs, Shoal Bay Coastal Reserve, Charles Darwin National Park etc and apart from the physical benefits of being outside in nature, participants have experienced the positive psychological effects on their mental well-being.

The Cool Program has also provided opportunities for both educational and thought-provoking experiences through visits to Darwin Military Museum, WW2 tunnels, Batchelor Historical Tour and Qantas Hanger Museum. And for participants with a passion for the arts, outings to the Fringe Festival, city art galleries and street art walks have delighted and inspired.

In choosing activities, Cool Program participants have ensured that the wishes of each member of the group are considered with a wide range of activities undertaken. The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with comments such as **"I love being able to get out bush"** and **"It's nice to go out with friends"** reflecting their appreciation for these outings.





KARAMA COTTAGE

Karama Cottage is a multi-use overnight stay accommodation for people living with a mental health condition or caring for someone with a mental health issue.

Karama Cottage provides short-term supported accommodation for participants living with a psychosocial disability who have an NDIS plan.

At Karama Cottage participants can relax or learn independent living skills with support from recovery workers.

Karama Cottage also offers respite accommodation for people caring for somebody with a mental health condition.

Karama Cottage is an elevated style house located on a quiet street in Karama, offering a warm and welcoming atmosphere designed to help guests relax.

The house is close to shops, bus routes, bike tracks, Holmes Jungle Park, and Crocodylus Park.

Accommodation options vary according to the needs of the people requesting to stay at the house.

Options include weekend breaks, overnight stays, or longer breaks, and can also be regular planned stays or one-offs. The options are tailored to support the person's needs.





MITRACK

ALICE SPRINGS & TENNANT CREEK

MITRACK in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek has been fostering strong relationships with families and stakeholders in the Barkly region. Our primary goal is to proactively prevent the early onset of mental illness. To achieve this, we employ evidence-based strategies through a combination of case management and group activities at our centers located in Reg Harris Lane, Alice Springs and Paterson St, Tennant Creek.

We provide participants and their families with essential support, information, and strategies necessary for identifying and facilitating the actions required for successful outcomes.

MITRACK offers unique opportunities for individuals to engage in activities that are typically beyond their reach in remote Australia, including video production, songwriting, graphic design, reporting, and interviewing.

Participation in these types of group activities can have a profound impact on the well-being of our youth by promoting a sense of connection, fostering resilience, and enhancing positive mental health outcomes empowering our young people to navigate life's challenges with confidence and support.

Our outreach team also ensures a consistent message on the prevention and early intervention of mental illness in youth in the remote NT towns Elliott and Ali Curung.





MITRACK

ALICE SPRINGS & TENNANT CREEK

Here's a snapshot of some of our group activities:

Art & Craft

Art provides children with a means of self-expression. It allows them to convey their thoughts and emotions, often subconsciously. Creating art is a powerful tool for managing one's internal thoughts and feelings, transforming them into tangible forms.

Cooking

Cooking is not just about preparing meals; it fosters bonding and social skills development. It creates a sense of belonging and shared interests. When parents and caregivers are supported to cook with their children, it sends a powerful message of worthiness and capability. Cooking also helps children practice vital healthy eating and meal preparation skills.

Body & Mind

Music plays a significant role in reducing anxiety and stress. It has the power to instill calmness, making it an invaluable tool for children with anxiety. Music helps regulate emotions and provides a much-needed respite from overstimulation.

Gardening

Gardening activities have a profoundly positive impact on the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of our participants. Being outdoors in nature allows children to learn through hands-on experiences, enhancing their gross and fine motor skills. Gardening engages all five senses, with regular exercise of sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Sensory gardens offer a variety of textures, visual contrasts, and fragrances. Growing vegetables also encourages children to explore and expand their palates, as they are more open to trying foods they have been involved in growing and nurturing themselves.





NDIS SUPPORT

MIFANT is a specialised boutique mental health service that offers customised supports and services for people who experience mental health challenges.

We have been providing peer led supports for more than 20 years, and are pleased to offer the following services for people with a psychosocial disability:

- Support Coordination and/or Recovery Coach;
- Group and Centre Based Activities
- Social & Community Participation
- Short Term Accommodation

The role of Support Coordinator is many and varied. They are the go-between and facilitator who assists NDIS participants to understand and implement their plan, connect them to community or mainstream services, anticipate, mitigate and manage crises, and build the participant's capacity for self-direction whilst the role of Recovery Coach is to develop a recovery plan with the client, based on their strengths, preferences and needs.

A Recovery Coach also provides emotional and motivational support to the client, by building a trusting and respectful relationship, listening to their concerns and celebrating their achievements.

MIFANT's Support Coordinator/Recovery Coach service has grown significantly in the past year, thanks to the referrals from Local Area Coordinators and the positive feedback from our clients and their carers.

We have built valuable relationships with service providers locally to ensure our clients are receiving the best possible support when they need it. We have negotiated with these services to work within our clients' NDIS budgets to work towards meeting their goals. The rapport we have ensures that we have quality Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Exercise Physiologists and Behavioural Support Practitioners able to assist our clients within a short period of time.

As with all NDIS participants, in the past year, our clients have experienced highs and lows on their NDIS journey. We have achieved terrific success for some clients and hit road blocks with others. No matter what barriers our clients are facing, we have always done our best to help them, their families and care givers overcome any obstacles and get a positive outcome.





NDIS SUPPORT - OUR SUCCESS



01

Navigating the pathway to NDIS funding for a client who had been trying to access the NDIS since last year



02

Finding suitable SIL accommodation and funding for a young person that could no longer remain at home with his family



03

Linking clients to meaningful, paid work options so they can contribute to the workforce



04

Finding competent Allied Health Practitioners to provide assistance to our clients to purchase appropriate Assistive Technology that will improve their quality of life



We are always responsive to the changes in the NDIS and refining our systems to ensure our clients receive the best quality mental health services possible.

Good mental health is a vital component of well-being and quality of life for many people and we look forward to another 12 months of growth and working with our clients to live their best life.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MIFANT has remained dedicated to fostering community engagement throughout the past year. This proactive approach to mental health outreach and awareness has shown in a series of events and initiatives designed to open up conversations, provide information, and create a sense of support and belonging.

One of the standout moments of MIFANT's community engagement efforts was the **Annual Open Day and Art Exhibition**, held to mark **Schizophrenia Awareness Week and Mental Health Week**. This event offered individuals the opportunity to socialize, gain insights into available mental health services, and witness the positive outcomes of recovery. The events were both informative and enjoyable with live music, workshops and BBQ lunch.

MIFANT extended its outreach by participating in various expos and community events, such as the **All Abilities Expo 2023**, **Schizophrenia Awareness event at Raintree Park**, and the **World Suicide Prevention Day NT Forum 2023**. These appearances served as platforms for educating the public about the mental health services available and how MIFANT can provide assistance.

MIFANT hosted the annual **Mental Health Week dinner** during October 2022. The theme for this year's dinner was **"the voice of lived experience"** which highlighted the value and importance of listening and learning from people with a lived experience of mental health challenges. The event provided a platform for our speakers to share their stories and insights, helping to educate and promote understanding as well as empowering all who listened to be advocates and agents of change in the mental health field.

Our local and interstate speakers included Matt Runnalls who is an international mental health advocate who has lived with his own mental health challenges and survived suicide attempts. Donna Didlick spoke about developing the peer led network **"Finding North"** and our local speakers Hayden Sandrey and Chelsea Moyd Monagle both spoke of their experience living with mental health issues and supporting others through working as recovery coaches.

MIFANT also hosted children's workshops in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek during Mental Health Week, providing essential insights into boosting children's self-esteem, which involved interactive games to enhance self-awareness and confidence.

MIFANT's commitment to community engagement will continue in the coming years. By continuing to host events, exhibitions, and workshops, MIFANT aims to foster an environment where individuals can openly discuss mental health, receive support, and ultimately work towards improved mental well-being. **These efforts are critical in reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness and ensuring that individuals have access to the resources and support they need.**





NATIONAL PARTNERS

MENTAL ILLNESS FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIA (MIFA)



MIFANT is the NT member of the Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia (MIFA) a national alliance of not for profit mental health service providers. MIFA provides an Australian voice to international mental health networks as well as national voice representing a federation of organisations around the country. Over the past year, MIFA continues to advocate for National Reform in the Mental Health sector with the National Psychosocial Support Advocacy Alliance who together with 35 other leading mental health organisations are addressing the gaps in psychosocial supports so people stop missing out on the services they need to support their recovery.

MENTAL HEALTH CARERS AUSTRALIA (MHCA)



Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA) was initially founded through the grassroots efforts of mental health carers. MHCA currently works at a national level to advocate on behalf of mental health carers. This year MHCA has been focusing on becoming a National Mental Health Carers Peak Body.



NETWORKS

MI NETWORKS



Mi Networks is an initiative by the Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia. Mi Networks promises that we can help connect people with a mental illness, their carers and families to the information and services they need. Mi Networks will provide relevant and up-to-date information and will link people to the best programs and services to suit their requirements. Mi Networks promises that people can expect this personalised service at every location.

SANE AUSTRALIA



In partnership with SANE, Mental Illness Fellowship provides an online forum for people living with a mental illness and another forum for families and friends of people living with a mental illness. The forums provide a free, peer-to-peer service where carers and people living with mental illness can link up and share stories, tips and offer support. The forums are anonymous and moderated to ensure they remain safe and welcoming for all members of the community. Both forums can be found on our website.



OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to acknowledge and appreciate our amazing supporters all across Australia. Your support helps us achieve our goals and make our vision a reality.

We receive support in various ways, including financial, volunteering, national systemic advocacy and provision of services to name a few. These financial contributions enable MIFANT to play a crucial role in promoting mental health awareness and supporting our community's mental wellness and recovery.





BOARD REPRESENTATION

Our staff and board members sit on various boards and committees that ensures the choice of those with mental illness and the families and carers represented. The boards and groups listed below are those where decisions are made that can influence state and national policy.

- **Mental Health Carers Australia**
- **Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia**
- **Our Way Our Say Headspace forum**

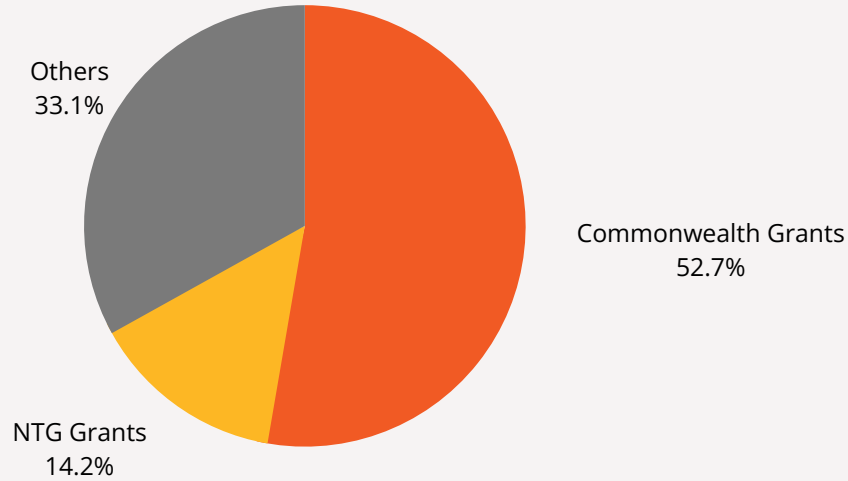
TREASURERS REPORT

The MIFANT audit this year was conducted by **BDH Consulting Pty Ltd**. In the opinion of the auditor the financial reports presented fairly and the financial performance of the organisation as at 30th June 2023 ended in accordance with accounting policies to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Act.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Income

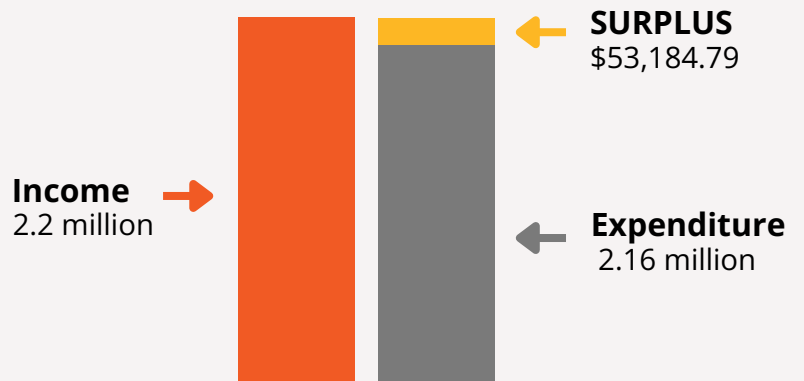
The total income in 2022-23 was **2.22 million**, an **increase of 7.28%** from 2021-22.



In 2022-23, our financial summary shows that we received \$1,167,531.43 (52.7%) from Commonwealth Grants, \$315,000 (14.2%) from NTG Grants, and \$732,706.97 (33.1%) from other sources.

Expenditure

Our total expenditure in 2022-23 was **2.16 million**, resulting in a **surplus of \$53,184.79** for the year.



Financial Position

	2023	2022
Total Assets	1,317,111.02	1,414,951.92
Total Liabilities	328,735.20	479,760.89
Net Assets	988,375.82	935,191.03
Total Member's Funds	988,375.82	935,191.03



Contact

Information

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If you have any questions or wish to access our services, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. Our dedicated team is here to assist you.

Your needs and concerns are important to us, and **we're ready to help.**

