



Specialist
Disability
Accommodation
Alliance

Annual Report 2025

Creating a thriving +
ethical specialist **disability
accommodation market** that
generates **positive outcomes** for
people with disability





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**Through
collaboration
with government
and the NDIA,
our members and
other stakeholders,
the SDA Alliance
addresses complex
policy challenges
and inspires
systemic change.**

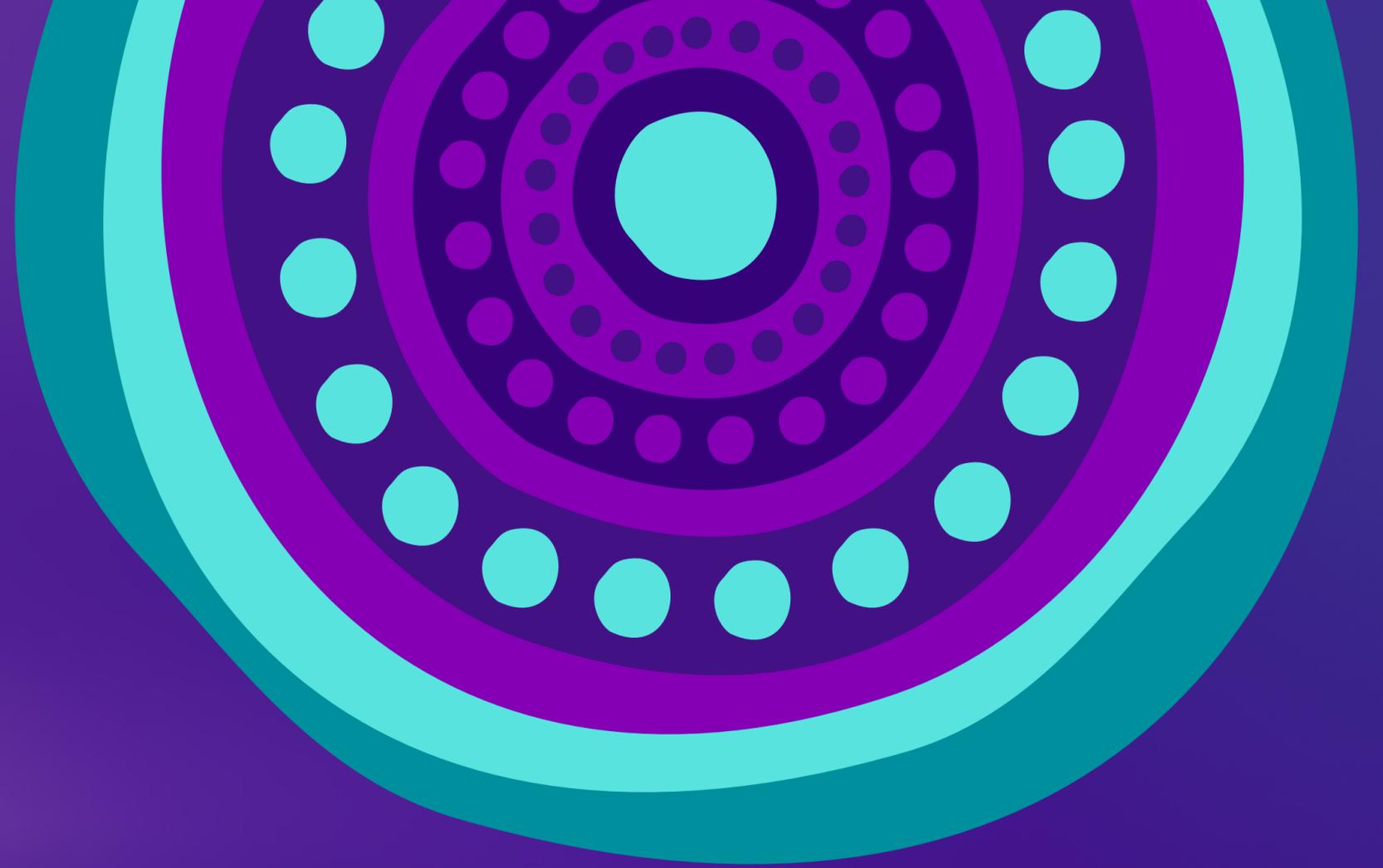
MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR + CEO	4
OUR IMPACT	5
ABOUT THE SDA ALLIANCE	6
OUR PRINCIPLES	7
POLICY & ADVOCACY	8 - 9
LINA'S STORY	10
JUSTIN NIX PROGRAM	11
SDA ALLIANCE 2025-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN	12
RYAN'S STORY	13
SAFEGUARDING SDA PARTICIPANTS	14
SDA ALLIANCE MEMBERS	15
WITH THANKS	16
FINANCIAL REPORT	17

Annual Report 2025





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Acknowledgment of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, the SDA Alliance acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



Message from our Board Chair + CEO

This year has ushered in a number of changes across the sector including a new political landscape.

Annual Report 2025

Since Senator Jenny McAllister's appointment as Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the SDA Alliance has met with her on several occasions to discuss key issues impacting the specialist disability accommodation (SDA) market. We look forward to continuing to develop this relationship and working collaboratively with Senator McAllister and her staff to drive a policy framework that is best placed to deliver safe housing for people with disability.

Promoting best practice SDA continues to be our priority and forms part of our ambitious goals outlined in our 2025-2028 strategic plan. Best practice SDA includes appropriate regulation to protect SDA participants and engaging investors that understand the complexity of the sector. These issues were highlighted by the ABC's Four Corners report (of which we were part): a well-regulated SDA system is essential if we want to achieve social outcomes for people with disability and economic results that ensure the scheme's sustainability.

Nation-wide, our strength as an alliance continues to grow - acting as a catalyst for deep impact. This year we increased both our membership and sponsorship: we now proudly have 73 members nation-wide. We are delighted to welcome Corrs Chambers Westgarth, CBRE and ANZ as our new sponsors - they join National Australia Bank, Bunnings Trade and Hafele as SDA Alliance sponsors. The collective expertise of our members positions us to develop creative solutions to complex challenges and influence the policy agenda across the country. We now represent over 40% of the SDA market - this means close to half the market is committed to delivering well located, quality housing that enables people with disability to receive high quality care and create positive outcomes.

Our principles drive our work - they imbue our actions and dictate our strategies. Collaboration is one of our principles: it underpins our work with government and is key to us developing trusting relationships that lead to positive outcomes for people with disability. Our engagement on the NDIS Reform Advisory Committee has become a key driver in our ability to collaborate with government on their response to implementing NDIS reforms, including in response to the Independent Review into the NDIS and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Over the past year, we have continued to work with key Commonwealth government agencies including the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and a range of government departments across the states and territories.

In this Report we showcase some of our impacts over the past year. Thank you to all who played a part - our dedicated staff and board, our members & sponsors and SDA participants. Together, we have worked towards creating a thriving SDA sector that is ethical and guided by the voices of people with disability - and for this we are grateful.

Michael Lynch, Board Chair + Jeremy Hope, CEO



Our Impact

We have **73** members Australia-wide.



\$2 billion
Investments Represented

73
Australian Members



Together, we:

- Represent approximately \$2 billion of committed institutional investment in specialist disability accommodation
- Have delivered over 3375 homes with a further 890 under development
- Will provide housing to 6031 people with disability



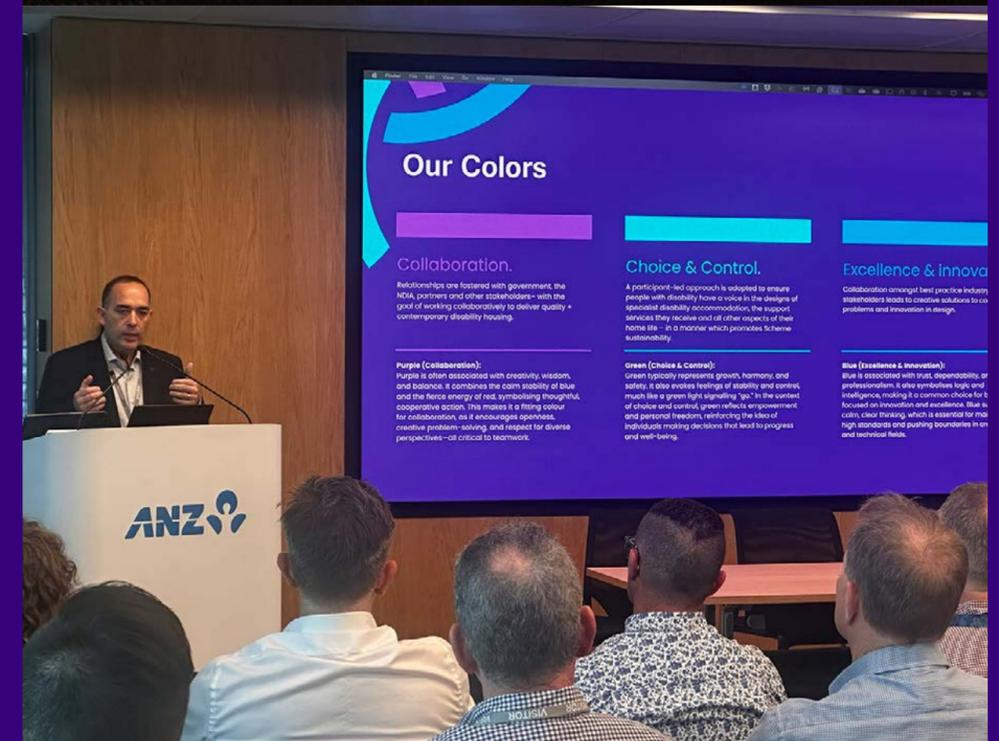


About the SDA Alliance

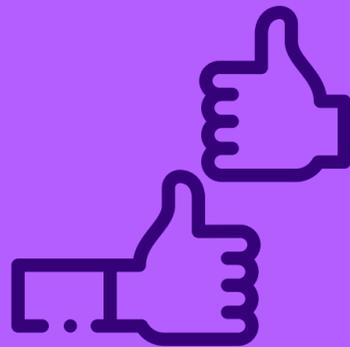
As a national peak body, we represent SDA market participants across the country. We aim to drive better housing outcomes for people with disability that enhance independence, wellbeing, and quality of life.

Our members include SDA providers, institutional investors, developers, builders, financial institutions, allied health professionals and industry consultants.

Our members make a significant impact on the lives of people with disability – by providing housing that is safe, innovative and designed to serve the needs of SDA participants.



Our Principles



Collaboration:

Relationships are fostered with government, the NDIA, partners and other stakeholders– with the goal of working collaboratively to deliver quality + contemporary disability housing



Participant Choice & Control:

A participant-led approach is adopted to ensure people with disability have a voice in the designs of specialist disability accommodation, the support services they receive and all other aspects of their home life – in a manner which promotes Scheme sustainability.

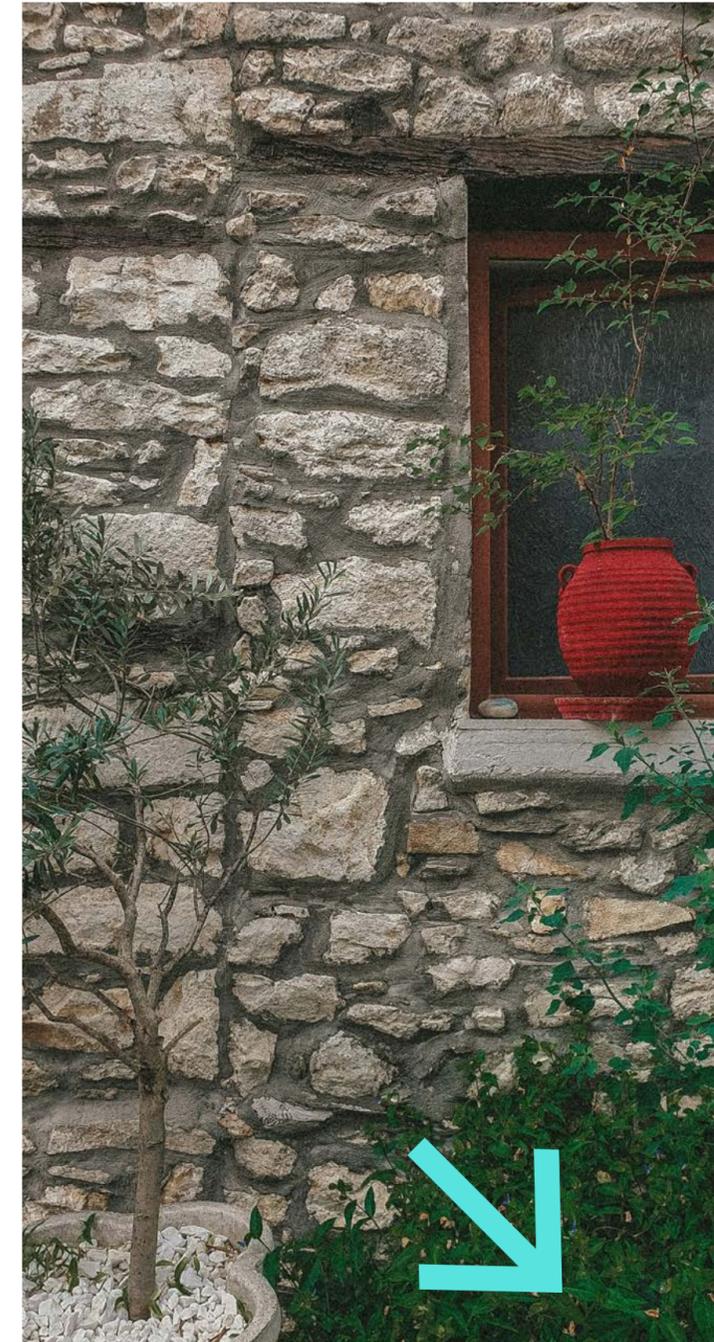


Excellence & Innovation:

Collaboration amongst best practice industry stakeholders leads to creative solutions to complex problems and innovation in design

This year, we addressed a range of issues impacting the SDA sector – working with governments, members, academics and other stakeholders across the sector.

- We have engaged regularly with the NDIA working collaboratively to address key issues including provider claims and payments, data integrity and aligning participant funding and supports with participant goals and needs.
- We have met with Senator Jenny McAllister, Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, on several occasions raising issues such as market stewardship and addressing recommendations from the NDIS Review and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.
- We spoke out about the importance of creating a responsible and ethical SDA market, where investment in SDA is undertaken by sophisticated investors, such as institutional investors, that possess the expertise to analyse and understand the market and the ability to scale to reduce risk. Retail investors (essentially non-professional, small scale investors) investing in SDA properties can have detrimental effects on the market – and most especially SDA participants – given the risks. We have raised this issue in the media (including in ABC's Four Corners program and an SBS report) and with government.
- We have advocated for the SDA Design Standards to be clear, flexible and forward thinking in order to support innovation and person-centred design to ensure participant needs, including those requiring robust homes, are met. We are supportive of the government's announcement of the SDA Design Standards Review and look forward to participating in those consultations to advocate for good outcomes for the SDA sector.
- We have engaged with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, ACCC, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Department of Social Services and a range of government departments across the states and territories. Together, we are addressing challenges impacting the SDA sector and causing barriers for people living with disability.
- We have spoken about issues impacting SDA participants – including access to SDA funding, availability of quality and well-located specialist disability homes and transitioning residents from legacy stock and group homes into modern, participant-centred housing options with:
 - Hon Kate Washington MP (NSW Minister for Families and Communities)
 - Honourable Sam O'Connor MP (QLD Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth)
 - Senator Jordon Steele-John (WA)
- We have advocated for the need to mandate the separation of the provision of housing and support: this is fundamental to ensuring people with disability are afforded appropriate protections from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- We participated in national consultations regarding NDIS Supports Rules and the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan.
- We have collaborated with our partners across the housing and disability sector to tackle some of the biggest housing challenges confronting people with disability. We proudly presented at the National First Nations Housing and Homelessness Forum in Adelaide, DSC Annual NDIS Conference 2025 (Melbourne), and PowerHousing Australia Community of Practice forums.



Investor Subcommittee

The SDA Alliance investor subcommittee brings together institutional investors and financiers across the nation – they represent the largest and most experienced investors in SDA.

Our investor subcommittee works directly with the NDIA and government to facilitate growth in institutional investment in SDA and raise issues that impact the flow of capital into the SDA market.

Over the past year, the subcommittee has raised a number of issues including:

- Operational frictions to investing
- Tax exemptions for SDA
- Key attributes of the NDIA's market stewardship role
- Addressing market failures (e.g., unevenness of location factors; insufficient funding for robust properties)
- Clarity and transparency from the 2023 NDIS Price Review including a response to recommendations

SDA Participant Reference Group

This year, we established the SDA Participant Reference Group – a committee comprised of people with lived experience of disability who are eligible for and/or living in SDA.

The Group provides insight, feedback, and guidance to the SDA Alliance, supporting participant-led policy, practice, and market development.

The Group's expertise will inform our work and benefit the wider SDA sector. We look forward to working in partnership with all members of the Group.



Subcommittee on State-Owned Existing Stock

The SDA Alliance Subcommittee on State-Owned Existing Stock comprises sector experts and SDA Alliance members with experience working nation-wide and at scale on disability housing: it is dedicated to working together to support SDA participants residing in existing stock and improve the overall SDA system.

Over the past year, the subcommittee has met with state governments in SA, WA, NSW, QLD and Victoria with the purpose of working collaboratively to address challenges people with disability confront in terms of transitioning from state-owned existing stock to well-designed, quality specialist disability accommodation.

The work of the subcommittee has been driving our state and national level advocacy on state-owned existing stock.

SDA and Supported Independent Living (SIL) Subcommittee

This year, we established the SDA and SIL subcommittee which brings together SDA providers and investors, SIL providers, people with disability, and practitioners.

The subcommittee aims to support collaboration between SDA providers, SIL providers, people with disability and other key stakeholders to identify and address complex operational and practice issues.

Developing, promoting and sharing best practice to advance tenant rights, safeguards and quality of life forms a cornerstone of the subcommittee's work.



Lina's story



Lina (name changed) was in hospital for over a year.

Lina has a condition which leaves her permanently disabled from the chest down and restricted to her bed; she was also battling cancer and cognitive impairments.

The situation was urgent: she could not be discharged from hospital until she secured a safe, accessible home that met her functional needs and supported her personal and lifestyle choices.

[Vera Living](#) worked with Lina's brother and guardian, Isaac (name changed) to find a suitable home. Location was a big factor: the home needed to be close to amenities as well as Lina's family. Lina had established supports in place and bringing those supports with her to her new home was a key decision maker.

While most of Lina's family lives in Sydney, Isaac lives in Perth. During a trip to Sydney, Isaac visited one of Vera Living's inner-city apartments. After viewing the apartment and speaking with the Vera Living team, Isaac knew this place would be ideal for his sister.

Isaac and the entire family were thrilled that Lina could finally be discharged from hospital.

Located close to her family, Lina's new home offers 24-hour care and the ability to choose her own supports. Isaac and his family feel reassured by the safety and stability this home offers.

Lina has now settled into her new home, embracing the independence of living on her own – something she has always wanted to experience.

Justin Nix program

We are very proud to have launched the Justin Nix Future Leaders Program which aims to inspire and empower rising young leaders across Australia

Founded in 2024, in honour of Justin Nix – a passionate, generous and respected leader in the disability sector – the program is designed to support the development of the next generation of leaders living with a disability.

The future leaders program includes:



The opportunity to serve on the SDA Alliance Board for 12 months (or up to two years maximum).



Training through the Australian Institute of Company Directors



Leadership mentoring by the SDA Alliance CEO



Nicole Smith

We are delighted to welcome Nicole Smith as the inaugural recipient of the Justin Nix Future Leaders Program. Nicole is a writer, performer, disability advocate, and wheelchair user based in Naarm. Holding qualifications in both Behavioural Science and English, she has a professional background in Communications and Marketing. In 2024, she received a Creative Australia grant to produce a ten-episode interview podcast that highlights the work of disabled artists. Since mid-2022, Nicole has worked as Information Officer at Guardian Living.



Justin Nix

Driven by a passion for universal design, Justin Nix has devoted his career to creating accessible built environments for communities across Australia. For more than three decades, Justin held executive positions in disability and housing across the not-profit, private and government sectors. Throughout this time, Justin witnessed profound changes in people's lives as they transitioned into a home which allowed them to live more independently and embrace community life more fully.

The 2025 inaugural program is made possible through a generous contribution by Justin Nix and sponsorship by Australian Unity, Harnest Constructions + Guardian Living Australia.



SDA Alliance 2025-2028 Strategic Plan

As the national peak body, we are focused on building a best-practice SDA market, informed by lived experience and evidence. We seek to set standards, guide policy and reform, and support a sustainable and ethical ecosystem that generates positive outcomes for participants.

Member Support & Services

- Partner for Success
- Strategic Member Value-Driven Services
- Facilitate Collaboration
- Empower Informed and Ethical Practice

Market Resilience & Best Practice

- Promote and foster best practice
- Equip SDA providers with practical tools and insights.
- Embed participant voice in all quality and design decisions.
- Enhance market stability



Government Relations

- Foster open dialogue with all levels of government
- Drive Sustainable Systemic Reform
- Demonstrate Sector Leadership

Sector Education & Advocacy

- Educate – Elevate – Evolve
- Empower through education
- Articulate lived experiences to shape reform
- Build sector capability



Safeguarding SDA participants

As a national peak body, reporting poor practices in the SDA market directly to the ACCC, NDIA and NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission continues to be an important part of our work. Our monthly reports provide government agencies with evidence regarding unethical and unacceptable practices which have potentially harmful effects on the market and SDA participants.

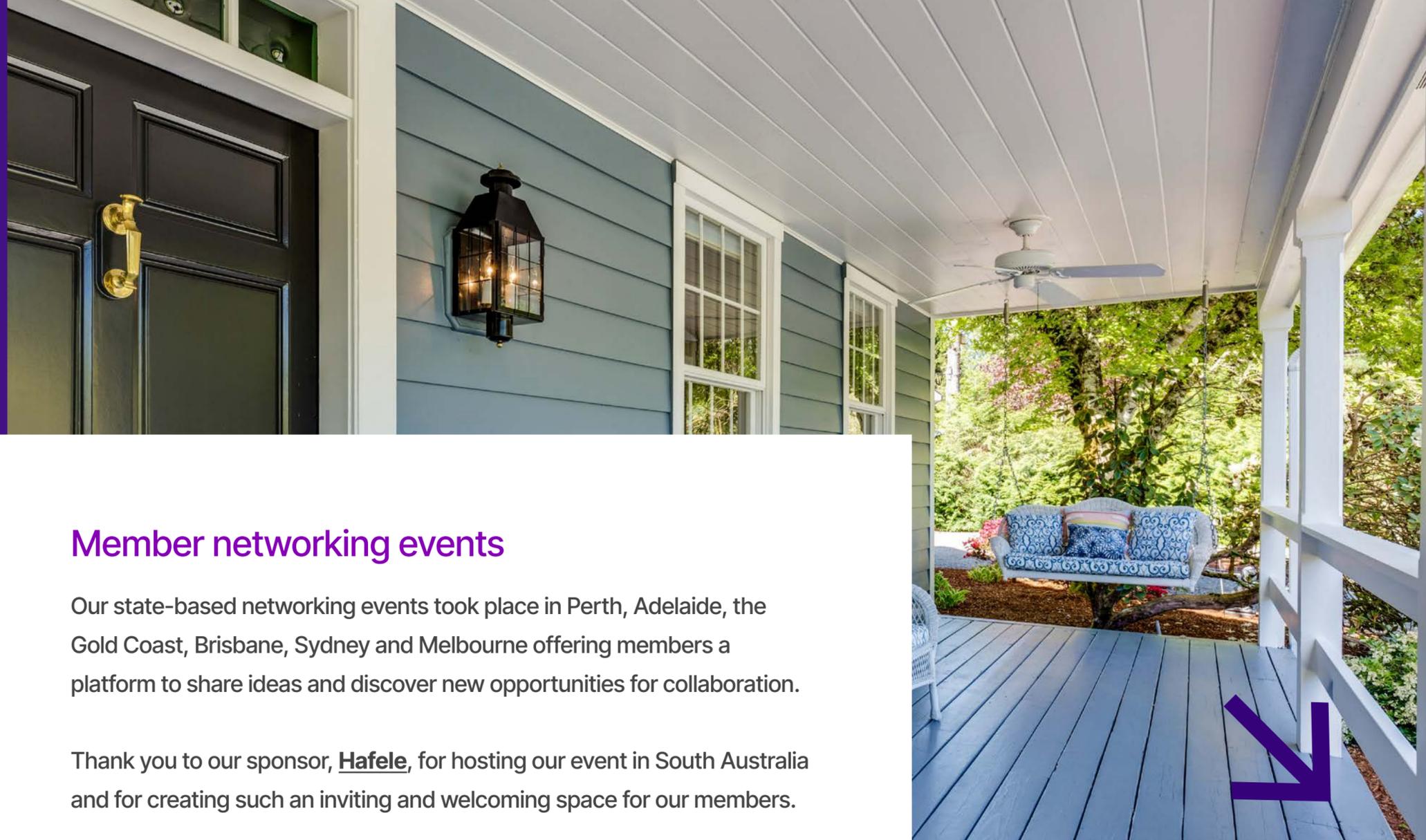
Robust regulation and appropriate safeguards are essential for the SDA market to deliver safe, modern housing for people with disability.



This year, we have reported a growing number of entities regarding the following concerns:

- Advertising and promotional material that may be making misleading or deceptive representations and claims regarding SDA
- Claims of inflated investment returns
- Claims of guaranteed investment
- Misleading claims in relation to investing
- Unethical and profiteering behaviour
- Practices which present risk to participant safety, privacy, dignity and rights

SDA Alliance members



Member meetings

This year, our quarterly in-person member meetings were held in Sydney and Melbourne. Our wonderful line-up of speakers included NDIA representatives, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission representatives, economists, legal specialists, researchers, sector experts and academics. We are grateful to all our speakers for sharing their valuable insights, expertise and fresh perspectives.

We extend our thanks to our sponsors Corrs Chambers Westgarth and ANZ for generously hosting our meetings.

Our online meetings (which take place in between our in-person meetings and are attended by government representatives) have featured expert presenters from across the sector, such as Housing Hub. We are very appreciative to all our guest presenters for sharing their market intelligence and unique insights of the housing and disability sector.

Member networking events

Our state-based networking events took place in Perth, Adelaide, the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne offering members a platform to share ideas and discover new opportunities for collaboration.

Thank you to our sponsor, Hafele, for hosting our event in South Australia and for creating such an inviting and welcoming space for our members.

We would also like to thank our member, Australian Unity, our sponsor, National Australia Bank, and our partner, Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer for hosting SDA Alliance Board Meetings in Melbourne and Sydney over the past year.

Annual Report
2025

Ryan's story

Barry and Cathy O'Sullivan's search for a specialist disability home for their adult son, Ryan, began several years ago – they felt a deep desire to find somewhere that would truly feel like home.

Ryan, who lives with high support needs and communicates non-verbally, required a space that would not only meet his physical requirements but also provides safety, dignity, and stability for the long term.

After years of navigating a complicated housing landscape, the O'Sullivans were introduced to Apollo SDA.

Adopting a participant-led approach, the Apollo team worked to ensure Ryan's daily needs and comfort were central to every design decision. They involved the O'Sullivan's and son Ryan in every step of the process - from early design discussions to the smallest functional details.

Ryan's family and support team have seen how Ryan's new home has changed his life.

One of the most meaningful, enjoyable and therapeutic inclusions for Ryan has been the magnesium hydrotherapy pool. The pool has quickly become part of his weekly routine, offering both physical and emotional benefits.

"The magnesium pool has been incredible for Ryan," Cathy says. "It's not only calming for him, it's something he truly looks forward to every week."

These details demonstrate the difference that participant-led design can make: homes that work for the person who lives in them. The O'Sullivans speak candidly about what that means to them as parents.

"As we get older, one of our greatest fears has always been what happens when we're no longer here," Barry explains. "Now, that fear is eased. We know Ryan's safe, supported, and surrounded by people who care."

"It's not just a house," Cathy adds. "It's Ryan's home, and it's changed our lives."



With thanks

We are deeply appreciative for the ongoing support of all our sponsors.

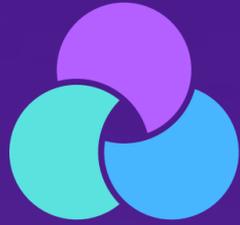


Our sponsors are passionate about improving the lives of people with disability – their expertise and generosity is invaluable to the SDA Alliance.

Over the past year, our sponsors have strengthened our work in many ways including assisting us to address complex challenges and drive best practice across the specialist disability accommodation sector.

They have also hosted member engagement events across the country – providing wonderful spaces for our members to collaborate, share information and build relationships across the sector.

Annual Report
2025



Financial report: summary

"During 2024-2025, the SDA Alliance increased its impact nationwide on account of experiencing substantial growth. This year, our sponsorship increased by 72% on the year prior. We grew our associate support base by 53% and our membership by 10% (increasing the number of SDA providers among our membership). We have also experienced a 19% increase in overall revenue.

These robust financial results drive our sustainability as a trusted voice advocating for quality housing and supports for people living with disability."

Jacob Edwards, Board Treasurer

	2025	2024	2023
Membership Fees	319,865	289,895	256,500
Sponsorships	138,500	80,500	65,000
Supporter Fees	25,273	32,975	38,500
Associate Fees	20,475	13,388	13,500
Investor Committee Fees	10,000	1,667	0
Interest and Other Income	2,593	6,487	2,814
Government Grants	-17	7,852	0
Total Income	516,689	432,763	376,314

72% ↑
Sponsorship increase

53% ↑
Associate support growth

10% ↑
Membership increase

19% ↑
Revenue increase



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