Specialist
Disability
Accommodation
Alliance

2026 Annual Report



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Acknowledgment of Country

Respect for Country. Connection to community.

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.



Message from our Board Chair

Our strength lies in our shared commitment.

Over the past year, we have witnessed some of the most significant changes to the disability sector since the inception of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in 2013.

As an alliance, our strength lies in our shared commitment to improving the lives of people with disability. Our collective voice has driven our response to the reforms, helping us achieve bold goals and deliver far reaching impact. This year, we were invited to appear before the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs as part of its inquiry into the NDIS Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill 2026. This was an important opportunity for us to highlight the impact of providing safe, quality SDA on the lives of individuals and families prior to the passage of this legislation through Australian Parliament.

It is exciting to see the impact of collaboration – one of our defining principles as an organisation. Over the past year, we have continued to work with Senator Jenny McAllister (Minister for the NDIS), the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to bring about positive outcomes for the SDA sector. Our engagement in government advisory panels such as the SDA Design Standard Technical Working Group and the SIL Commissioning External Stakeholder Advisory Group position the SDA Alliance to impact ongoing reforms.

As we continue to grow, so too does our expertise. We are very proud to welcome our newest members to the SDA Alliance.

We are also pleased to welcome Omnisure, Infinite Automation and Colliers as our new sponsors. With 77 members and sector sponsors nationwide, together we represent approximately 40% of the SDA market – this means thousands of people with disability have access to quality, accessible homes and the chance to live in communities of their choice.

We would like to thank Jeramy Hope for serving as the SDA Alliance CEO for the past three years: we are grateful for his leadership through a period of continual change and challenges in SDA. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Owen Jourdian and Astrid Timmers who have both stepped down from their roles as board directors: they leave behind a legacy defined by leadership and dedication to improving disability housing.

We have commenced the search for the next CEO of the SDA Alliance. The board remains confident that we will attract a high-quality leader to drive our continued advocacy and to ensure that the SDA Alliance is at the forefront of important discussions with respect to SIL commissioning and the SDA Price Review in 2028.

In this Report we showcase some of our impacts over the past year. We are grateful to our dedicated staff and board, our members & sponsors and SDA participants. We couldn't achieve what we do without you.

Michael Lynch
Board Chair



Our Impact

We have 77 members and sponsors Australia-wide.

Together, we:

- Represent approximately $2.25 billion of committed institutional investment in specialist disability accommodation
- Deliver approximately 4000 homes that can provide housing for up to 8000 people with disability



Better housing.
Greater independence.

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 and sponsors 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

01
Collaboration

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

02
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.

03
Excellence & Innovation

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

A stronger collective voice

This year, we addressed some of the most pressing issues impacting the SDA sector.

We collaborated with governments, members, academics, partners, and other stakeholders to tackle complex challenges and inspire systemic change.

We met with Senator Jenny McAllister and her senior advisers raising issues such as market stewardship, the impact of NDIS reforms and aligning participant funding and supports with participant goals and needs.

We contributed significantly to the SDA Design Standard Review process. We are a member of the SDA Design Standard Review Technical Working Group - an advisory body which supports the review of the next edition of the SDA Design Standard. We developed a comprehensive SDA Design Standard Review submission which includes more than 20 recommendations for action. In prominent media appearances, we advocated for home fire sprinklers to be mandated in SDA.

We continue to collaborate with government to resolve systemic challenges within SDA. This has involved engaging regularly with the NDIA and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to address key issues such as provider claims and payments, market stewardship, data integrity, and the importance of efficient SDA approval processes. Our advocacy has also included working with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Department of Social Services, Australian Human Rights Commission, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and a range of government departments across the states and territories.



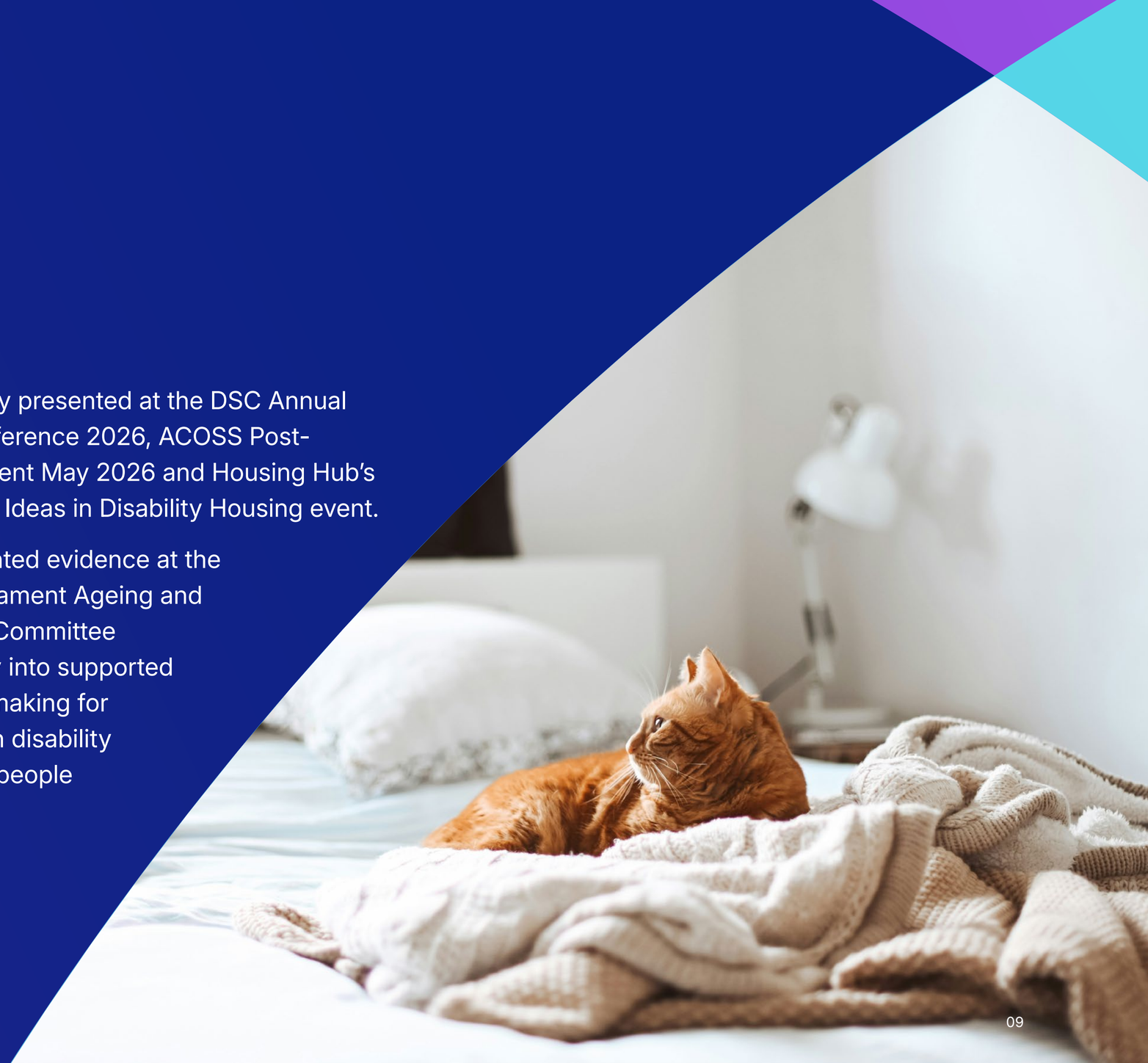
Lived experience. National influence.

In the midst of major disability reforms, we urged the Australian government to consider the impact of housing on Australians with high support needs. We participated in government advisory groups, appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, and attended the National Press Club in April 2026 where Minister Mark Butler announced changes to the NDIS.

We have collaborated with our partners, joining thought leaders from across the country to share our insights into disability housing.

We proudly presented at the DSC Annual NDIS Conference 2026, ACOSS Post-Budget Event May 2026 and Housing Hub's Disrupting Ideas in Disability Housing event.

We presented evidence at the NSW Parliament Ageing and Disability Committee (an inquiry into supported decision-making for adults with disability and older people in NSW).



Submissions & publications

A voice in national conversations

We submitted several submissions to parliamentary inquiries, consultations and other reform processes, which provide a unique voice to national conversations on housing and disability as well as actionable recommendations to inform policy and legislation.

We launched, Participant Stories, which showcases the lives of Peter, Carl, Angela & her son, Nelson. These long-form stories offer personal insights into their specialist disability accommodation journey.

We published the Investing in Specialist Disability Accommodation Position Statement, which includes four actionable recommendations which seek to support a responsible and ethical SDA market.



Our working groups

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. Over the past year, the subcommittee has raised several pressing issues that impact the flow of capital into the SDA market.

To improve efficiencies, the subcommittee has advocated for the NDIA to appoint a single point of contact between the agency and investors. It has also called on the NDIA to adopt a strong market stewardship role which includes (but is not limited to): building and maintaining market confidence, setting stable rules to enable all stakeholders to make long-term decisions and collaborating with stakeholders (including participants) to ensure the delivery of best practice SDA.

Participant Reference Group

Composed of people with lived experience of disability who are eligible for and/or living in SDA, the Participant Reference Group provides insight, feedback, and guidance to the SDA Alliance, supporting participant-led policy, practice, and market development.

This year, the Group's expertise has informed many aspects of our work including the development of our 2026 SDA Best Practice Guide.

We appreciate the significant contribution the Group has made to the SDA Alliance and look forward to our ongoing partnership.

SDA and Supported Independent Living subcommittee

Bringing together SDA providers, SIL providers, and people with disability, the subcommittee addresses complex operational and practice issues at the intersection of housing and support.

Over the past year, the subcommittee has directed its advocacy efforts towards the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA). Meeting with senior representatives from the DHDA, the subcommittee provided input regarding the government's proposed SIL commissioning model and discussed the impact of other government reforms on participants – this includes the importance of legacy SDA being considered within the NDIS new planning framework.

Drawing on their shared expertise and interviews with participants, the subcommittee has developed a substantial and trusted evidence base which clearly demonstrates the experiences of participants in practice. This includes an in-depth understanding of whether participants currently living in legacy SDA wish to remain living in their current home with upgrades or move to alternative housing.

Delivering best practice SDA

This year, we launched our new SDA Best Practice Guide. Promoting best practice SDA continues to be our priority and forms part of our ambitious goals outlined in our 2025-2028 strategic plan.

Developed based on deep engagement with SDA Alliance members and our Participant Reference Group, the best practice guide offers guidance on several major areas of SDA. The publication, which has been shared widely across the sector, includes 27 recommendations for government action.



Brodie's story



Brodie lives in one of Adelaide's most established and vibrant inner-city neighbourhoods. Nestled among cafes and heritage landmarks, his home is close to the gym where he trains daily. A dedicated swimmer, Brodie is currently in training to compete in the 2028 Paralympics in Los Angeles.

As an access and assistive technology consultant, Brodie has spent many years working to bridge the gap between architectural design, clinical needs and smart-home technology.

Helping others to transform their lives in ways that have been so instrumental in his own life, has been a driving force throughout his career.

"Having a disability to the extent that I do means you're always trying to push the boundaries of what's possible and find new ways of doing things," Brodie says.

Two years ago, Brodie had the opportunity to apply his expertise in universal design principles and assistive technology to a very personal project: a specialist disability accommodation (SDA) home for himself.

Brodie collaborated with New Dawn Housing, an SDA provider in South Australia, to renovate an existing two-bedroom property.

Brodie worked intimately with the project team to co-design and modify the house, from initial design stages to project completion.

While the home was designed to match Brodie's physical requirements and independence goals, he also wanted to ensure the property was seamless to use for future tenants if he ever moved away.

"I was mindful of things such as blind automation and a full hoist rail from the bedroom to the bathroom, which I can manage without," Brodie explains. "However, things like that allow for more autonomy within a roster of supports, for whoever may live here in the future."

The home features two bedrooms and a separate overnight support room, providing a dedicated space for support workers during overnight shifts. This was a major drawcard for Brodie, who requires overnight support when health issues arise and his support needs fluctuate.

Brodie, who lives alone, values his privacy and this home's thoughtful design offers just that.

"Having the autonomy to have my own life while accommodating support staff or loved ones is ideal," Brodie says.

Brodie’s story continued

For Brodie, the ability to have choice and control over his decisions, including his support providers, is fundamental.

Brodie’s housing provider, New Dawn Housing, is separate from his care support services which are delivered by different disability service providers.

Brodie is adamant that housing support and care support should be delivered by two separate entities as it promotes safety and autonomy for participants.

People should have the right to choose who provides them with support irrespective of where they live, Brodie explains: “Changing an entire support system is disruptive because support workers need time to build trust, understand capacities and develop a rhythm with the people they are supporting.”

Right now, Brodie receives supports daily by a team of trusted support workers which he has structured to work around his work schedule. However, finding a team of great support workers took time, and the turnover rate has been significant, Brodie says.

When selecting a service provider, Brodie looks for honesty and clarity. A good service provider is one that genuinely understands what their client is trying to achieve, Brodie says: “Providers need to stay connected to the people they are supporting. You’re working with people and for people, so relationships must be balanced. It’s one thing to cover a roster, it’s another to service it effectively.”

The art of pushing boundaries

Living in SDA has transformed Brodie’s life in many ways and this has created a foundation from which he can continue to redefine limits and discover the edges of possibility.

Today, that is taking the form of training for the 2028 Paralympics.

“SDA has enabled me, a person with a significant disability, to use the capacity I do have and to live a life outside of supports,” Brodie says.

“You can’t put a price on how humanising it is to experience life on your own terms.”



The next generation of leadership.

Founded in 2024, in honour of the late 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.

We are delighted to announce Andrea Selvarajah as the successful recipient of the 2026 Justin Nix Future Leaders program.

Andrea is a communications professional with a passion for using storytelling to create positive social impact. With extensive experience across the not-for-profit sector and experience living with a hidden disability, she approaches her work with empathy, compassion and a deep commitment to helping people feel seen, heard and empowered.

As part of this program, Andrea will:

- Serve on the SDA Alliance Board
- Undertake training through the Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Receive leadership mentoring by the SDA Alliance CEO

Andrea Selvarajah
2026 program recipient



A lasting contribution



Driven by a passion for universal design, Justin Nix 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 program is made possible through a generous gift by the late Justin Nix and contributions by Australian Unity, Harnest Constructions, Guardian Living Australia and Justin's friend, Emma Thaus.

Justin Nix
1970–2026

A thriving, sustainable and ethical SDA market.



Member support & services

- Partner for success
- Strategic member value-driven services
- Facilitate collaboration
- Empower informed and ethical practice

Sector education & advocacy

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

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

Safeguarding SDA participants

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 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 homes deeply embedded in the principles of best practice SDA – including design, safety and participant choice and control.

This year, we reported concerns about

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



SDA Alliance members

Member meetings

This year, our quarterly in-person member meetings were held in Sydney and Melbourne.

Our line-up of speakers included representatives from the NDIA, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. We also hosted researchers, industry leaders and sector experts including Rosemary Kayess (Disability Discrimination Commissioner), Dan Stubbs (Victoria's Public Advocate) and Mark Whybro (Chair: Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition Australia + Adjunct Fellow at Western Sydney University).

Special thanks to guest speakers: Tom Harley (dual AFL Premiership winner and AFL Chief Operating Officer) + Matthew Levy OAM (five-time Paralympian, author, motivational speaker and inclusion advocate).

We are grateful to all our speakers for sharing their ideas, insights and expertise.

Thank you to our sponsors Corrs Chambers Westgarth and ANZ for generously hosting our meetings.

Online events

Our online events including our inaugural member-led online innovation gatherings have featured expert presenters from across the sector, such as our member, Canopy SDA. We are very appreciative to all our guest presenters for sharing their market intelligence and unique insights of the housing and disability sector.

We would also like to thank our members, Australian Unity and Synergis, as well as our sponsor, National Australia Bank, for hosting SDA Alliance Board Meetings in Melbourne and Sydney over the past year.



With thanks

Our sponsors are passionate about improving the lives of people with disability.

We are grateful for their generous support which helps us to achieve our goals.

This year, our sponsors hosted member events in Sydney and Melbourne - providing a dynamic space for our members to access market intelligence and build long-standing industry relationships.

Our sponsors' expertise is a strong part of the SDA Alliance collective voice: it helps us to drive best practice, adapt to changes and seize market opportunities.

Financial report

Income (AUD)

	2026	2025	2024
Membership fees	383,486	319,865	289,895
Sponsorships	112,500	138,500	80,500
Supporter fees	22,345	25,273	32,975
Associate fees	19,530	20,475	13,388
Investor committee fees	10,500	10,000	1,667
Interest and other income	2,810	2,593	6,487
Government grants	0	-17	7,852
Total income	551,171	516,689	432,763

20%

Growth in membership revenue

7%

Growth in total income

“Over the past year, we have experienced a 20% growth in membership revenue leading to a 7% growth in total income. These financial milestones enhance our sustainability and strengthen our ability to advocate for greater access to high-quality housing for people with disability.”

Jacob Edwards, Treasurer

Specialist
Disability
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Alliance

Common ground. Better outcomes.



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