2020/2021

Annual Report

NATIONAL ETHNIC DISABILITY ALLIANCE

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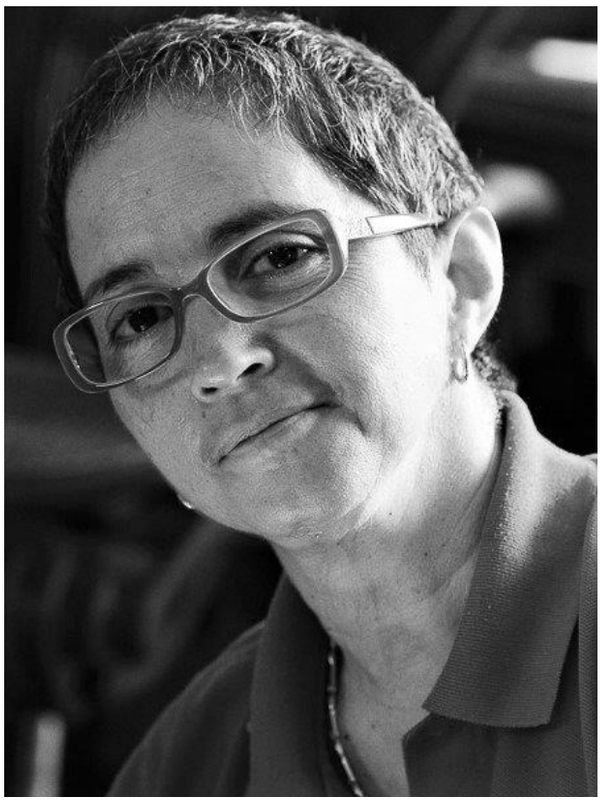
PRESIDENT'S REPORT



What a year it has been for NEDA, during this ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to start my report by acknowledging the traditional owners of the country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.

I pay my respects to them and their cultures, and to their Elders both past and present future.

NEDA during the COVID-19 Pandemic

At NEDA, the renewal of our Strategic Plan in Canberra was cancelled at the last moment due to state lockdowns and jurisdictions closing their borders.

During the second half of the year, our work turned to educating the community on getting the vaccination. That itself was a process in itself: we had to make sure we were getting the right messages out and educating people on the importance of being vaccinated. Whilst this was all happening, the NEDA governance team had to think on their feet and work through issues impacting staff members.

We closed the NEDA office and staff members worked from home. As the President, I joined the regular staff meetings and ensured everyone was travelling okay.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (END)

Changes at NEDA

During this period, some big changes happened internally – our CEO took sick leave for the first time since he started at NEDA and our Manager of Policy, Jane Flanagan stepped down in her role to take up a new position at another organisation. We managed to navigate through this period of big change thanks to our sterling team spirit. We miss Jane and are thankful to her for her immense contribution in bettering the lives of CALD people with disability.

On a governance level, our Council welcomed new board members from South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales. I wish to again welcome all our board members very warmly and look forward to collaborating with them in the new year.

There were no changes to the Executive Officer positions on the NEDA council. At the last AGM, it was decided to carry over those positions for an extra 12 months to enable NEDA to transition safely through the pandemic.

Our CEO will share all the projects that NEDA has undertaken during the past year in his report. I urge you all to have a read.

2020-2021 will be a year that no one will forget in a very long time due to COVID-19.

I am personally very proud of the NEDA Staff, CEO and Council Members for the work you all did in stepping up and performing high standard work and projects during this difficult period.

2021-2022 will be my final year as President and I am looking forward to working with NEDA on some exciting new activities.

CEO'S REPORT

I am so very proud of the people that make up the NEDA team.

Hello and welcome to the end of another year and another CEO Report.

I first want to thank my incredible team who have, like all of you reading this, suffered and endured the most challenging year imaginable.

The impact of having the team fractured, working from home, not having the input, thoughts and ideas that you have with a team floating about the office was debilitating.

Not being able to support each other felt callous and for some of us lonely, but despite the best efforts of COVID-19 we made it and did terrific work as well.

COVID-19 kept up its unrelenting attack on all people around the world, with its assault having a massive impact on people living with disability (PWD). In Australia, a country built on migration, it was devastating, and it seemed intent on wreaking as much havoc as it could on those people most at risk.

CEO'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

Our members, the culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) community living with a disability were cloistered by culture, language and religion. The task at NEDA was to ensure that:

I) Information, services and the process of engagement were accessible for all Australians.

II) New and emerging communities were not left behind.

III) The Government were properly guided with regards to language.

IV) The translation of resources were available to all.

For NEDA, this wasn't a story of 'dropping tools and moving on' to this new important work - we had to run different jobs as our day-to-day responsibilities were no less important because of COVID-19.

During this pandemic, the NEDA team sat on more than ten COVID-19 specific reference groups, offering advice to Government, both state, territory and federal, about issues as diverse as language selection, messaging and communications, at-risk communities, and how do we better support people in care and people from new and emerging communities. This work will be ongoing. COVID-19 will be something we will learn to live with, but we must not get blasé about it. We must be vigilant and ready for when it returns and it will continue to morph and evolve and we, as a nation will need to adapt to protect those most at risk.

Close to thirty years ago, I suspect that NEDA was born around a kitchen table by a group of people wanting to change the lives of CaLD people living with disabilities by representing them and their direct advocacy services to Government as a peak body. Since that time, NEDA has ebbed and flowed in size and strength and moved from one city to another while going about its mission.

CEO'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

These last twelve months have seen us reach staffing numbers that we did not think would be possible, with the team hitting between ten and eleven staff numbers, working across a wide range of projects.

This year we turned a health surplus of approximately $1263,286.57 this was again due to several factors beyond my prudent fiscal management. It was in fact, largely in part due to the community connectors project, the built in administration fees and the combined fees attributed to the other projects.

This growth is not sustainable given that several of the projects mentioned in this document have finite longevity but it has provided a healthy 'war chest' in the event of a crisis.

We currently provide advice to the Government and other organisations on the following projects/initiatives: **The Disability Royal Commission, *the NDIS, *the NDIA quality and safeguards commission, *the National Disability Strategy, *The Disability Gateway (DSS), *The National Multicultural Advisory Group with Social Services, *National Accessible Public Transport Advisory Committee (NAPTAC), CaLD Strategy Refresh Summit, *The TIO Consumer Panel, Independent Advisory Council CaLD leaders, *NDIS Commission Disability Sector Consultative Committee, *EnCOMPASS Multicultural Aged Care Connector Advisory Group, *The Embrace Alliance with the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) and Mental Health Australia (MHA), *the National Disability Vaccination Roundtable with Minister Reynolds, *the National Anti-Racism Framework Multicultural Advisory Group, *the COVID-19 Disability Community of Practice, *NSW Health and NDIS Providers Forum, *ILC Consultation with Swinburne University, Disability and Health Sector Consultation Committee, *State and Territories Electoral Commissions as well as the Federal Electoral Commission.*

These are just some of the consultations that NEDA participates in regularly.
All NEDA staff are engaged in these consultations.

CEO'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

Apart from these groups, NEDA has continued to work with like-minded organisations within the Disability Representative Organisations (DRO) and Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPO) community and multiple universities in areas of research.

We continue to develop world-class data that is sought after by both the community sector and Government and we continue to supply data to the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Australian Electoral Commission.

Our data has driven the translation of resources for the NDIA/ NDIS, DSS and several communication platforms regarding translations for the pandemic. This work has been called upon by various universities and other peak bodies within the disability space.

Here is a list of Submissions that we made in 2021:

- Dominic Golding's Witness Statement to the Disability Royal Commission
- NEDA's Submission in response to a public consultation on the English language requirement and on the sponsorship framework for the partner visa program
- Joint Submission in response to 'The efficacy, fairness, timeliness and costs of the processing and granting of visa classes which provide for or allow for family and partner reunions' This is a joint submission with MDAA
- Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the use of Independent Assessments in the NDIS
- NEDA's Submission to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee's inquiry into the purpose, intent and adequacy of the Disability Support Pension - July 2021.
- Brief Submission to the Joint Standing Committee - Inquiry into the future of the NDIS

These were the major submissions for the year. Apart from these, we supported member organisations with DRC submissions and workshops, and supported DPOs and DROs with data and communication resources.

CEO'S REPORT (PROJECT WORK)

NDIS Community Connectors

Our most significant project for the financial year was the NDIS Community Connectors Project. Most of the team were engaged in some way with this massive project that involved working with around 40 ‘connectors’ across the ACT, NSW and WA to engage with CaLD PWDs who were eligible for NDIS support. This project required a whole different approach, as it placed us in the realm of "service provider/ individual advocacy provider." We partnered with FECCA, pooling resources and developing a collaborative process. The evaluation is due soon and will, when ready, be published on the NEDA website.

Disability Royal Commission

This project felt the total weight of COVID-19 with hearings being postponed and the consultation process derailed. A significant component of the work was working with NEDA members on the engagement process for consumers to tell their stories without fear. A handful of consultations occurred when borders were open, but for the most part, the process was conducted via Zoom. This project will continue for some time, given that the royal commission has been extended. Please view the animations that NEDA produced for the CaLD disability community, as well as the fact sheets in language on the NEDA website.

Our voices, our lives, our way

This project is a collaboration between LGBTIQ+ Health Alliance and is directed towards capacity building within the CaLD LGBTIQ+ PWD community. It is an ILC grant. This project aims to build the individual and collective capacity of LGBTIQ+ PWD to strengthen existing knowledge and skills to increase social connection, self-advocacy and community engagement, to contribute to the longer-term aim of improved health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ PWD. The project works within a framework of co-design, where sector experts, DPOs, community organisations and LGBTIQ+ people with a lived experience of disability are engaged in the design process to help determine the training content and delivery. The project design and delivery phases are inclusive of LGBTIQ+, First Nations and CaLD PWD.

CEO'S REPORT (PROJECT WORK)

Linkage, Information and Capacity (ILC) Project

This project aims to build the knowledge and skills of Interpreters and translators on the NDIS and disability so that they can interpret accurate information to NDIS professionals while working with CaLD people with a disability and their family members. NEDA and NAATI will use the feedback from the workshops to develop a national-centred NDIS and disability training modules for NAATI's 20,000+ practitioners. We have held workshops in QLD and the acquired feedback will go towards the development of resources. COVID-19 has put a stranglehold on our ability to conduct workshops and hold gatherings.

DSS Disability Gateway

NEDA continues to provide translation and language supports that are appropriate for PWD. We have been contracted to liaise with DSS to identify languages, provide translation support, conduct community reviews, and help develop a multilingual website for the Disability Gateway. This is being done through a staged approach and final translations will be available in June 2022, while NEDA remains on a retainer to assist with the upkeep of the multilingual website. So far, we've provided the initial translations as proposed by the DSS for their soft-media launch.
Please have a look at the site at: https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/

Embrace Collaboration between FECCA and MHA

Mental Health Australia has partnered with the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA), and the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) to deliver the project. Embrace Multicultural Mental Health (the Embrace Project) is run by Mental Health Australia and provides a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds. It provides a national platform for Australian mental health services and multicultural communities to access resources, services and information in a culturally accessible format. The Embrace Project builds on the important work of previous national multicultural mental health projects - including the MHiMA and the Multicultural Mental Health Australia project - and works towards an equitable mental health system that reflects and responds well to the needs of Australia's multicultural population.

CEO'S REPORT (END)

Additional Notes

- Please note that the above-mentioned projects were the main projects for the financial year. Apart from these, we again supported our members in their work with research, data and comms resources, as well as collaborative work with our fellow DROs and DPOs.
- We have collaborated with six universities: ANU, Charles Darwin, Swinburn Uni, Uni of Sydney and UTS, and with DROs and DPOs such as DANA, PWDA, WWDA, CYDA, Inclusion Australia and FPDN, to name a few, in joint initiatives.
- Our monthly Newsletter has a reach of 474 subscribers, we have over 4000 followers on Facebook and Twitter, and our newly launched LinkedIn page has acquired over 100 followers in a short span of time.
- NEDA produced 7 DRC animations, 6 DRC fact sheets in 11 languages and a DRC glossary of terms in 8 languages - please view them on our website.
- Migration/ Disability Fact Sheets are also available on the NEDA website.

All this work would not have been possible without the very talented team at NEDA, people who go the extra mile, are relentlessly persistent and passionate about the work they do and the lives they change.

From our communications being our window to the world, to the data that keeps us informed and advises others, to our bookkeeping that keeps us afloat, the solid research and policy development that informs Government and our members, the special one-off projects that stretch us to look beyond and push us forward, I am very proud of our fantastic team of people who live and breathe disability rights for CaLD Australians.

As CEO, I am truly honoured to work with these people. I want to take the opportunity to thank the NEDA president Margherita Coppolino. Without her support and that of the NEDA council, none of this would have been possible. A special shout out to the NEDA treasurer, Michael Maguire who keeps us fiscally responsible.

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the accounts for the 2020/ 2021 financial year.

Our Auditor, Warren Caitlan, as mentioned by the CEO several weeks ago has had a family crisis and the Audit is not finalised, the numbers presented in this document are the current MYOB numbers from the profit and loss and balance sheet for the ROFY, they should not greatly differ from the pending audit.

NEDA had a total income of $4,875,921.08

This was inclusive of $300,000 core funding received from the Australian Government's Department of Social Services. NEDA received additional funds via contracted work with several stakeholders utilising the NEDA data cube and a special project with the National Disability Insurance Agency; the National Community Connectors Project (NCCP).

NEDA's net assets at the end of the financial year were: $1,818,552.13 with our total liabilities amounting to $333,253.23

TREASURER'S REPORT (END)

NEDA is working to a tight budget to maximise outcomes from limited resources. The total expenses at the end of June 2021 were $3,646,323.63, which produced an operational surplus of $1,263,286.57,

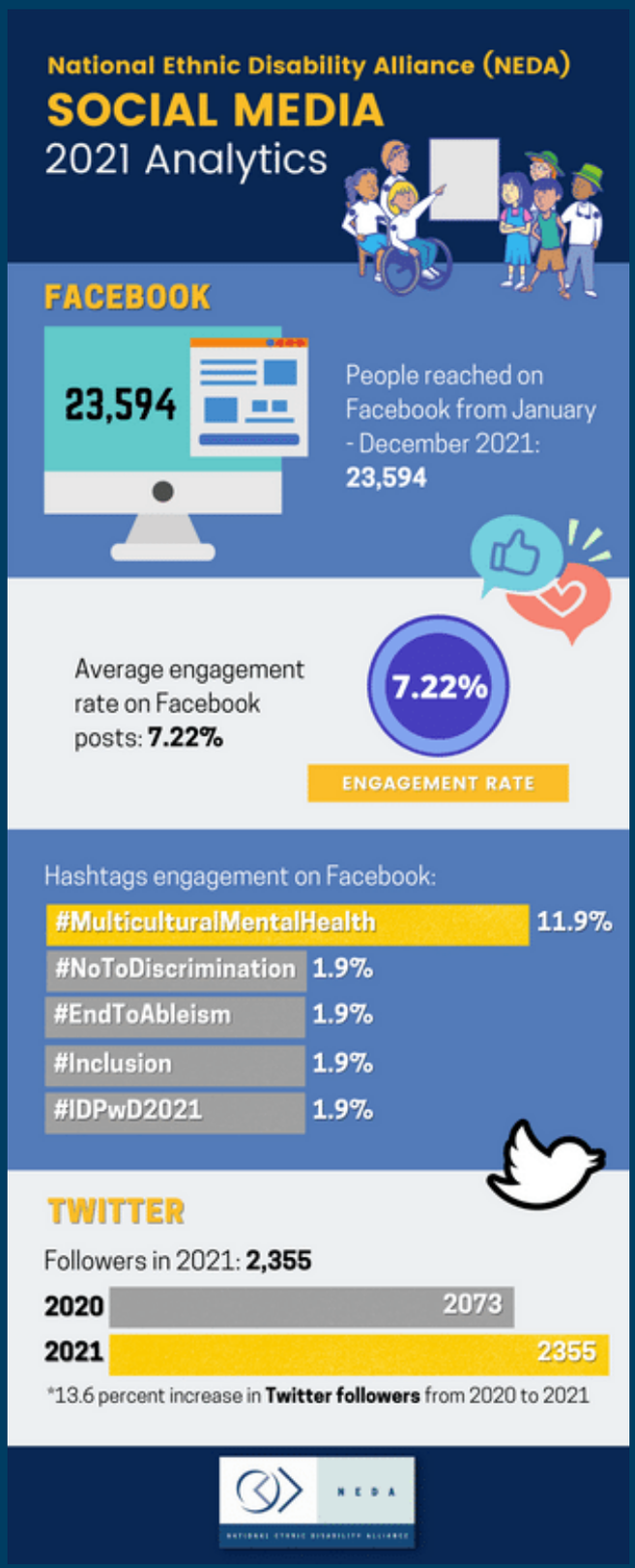
Please note that this surplus is a reflection of a COVID-19 year that created less travel and had the flow-on effect of no face-to-face meeting for the NEDA council, this yearly meeting is a big expense item within the NEDA budget and the lack of this meeting and its associated travel and other expenses ie ; accommodation for council members and NEDA staff and no international travel to the UN.

Again, it is obvious that our CEO has been expanding our resources base, widening our remit with regards to external projects designed to bring in extra funds and resources, to future proof our base in accordance with the outcomes of the NEDA strategic planning day, held several years ago.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend both the NEDA CEO and our valued team for their efforts, both within their very specialised work and their conscientious efforts to maintain fiscal responsibility.

I will present the final audit early in the new year when it is completed.

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS



SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS 2

2020-2021 IN IMAGES

With the ongoing COVID-19 situation, many events were affected, despite this the NEDA team participated in a number of forums and discussions throughout the year.

CEO Dwayne Cranfield and friends from the disability sector, meeting with new NDIS minister Linda Reynolds.

President Margherita Coppolino GAICD, facilitating consultations with Ethnic Communities' Council Victoria on the new State Disability Plan and review of the Disability ACT.

CEO attending the launch of the National Disability Strategy, along with representatives from our partners organisations.

CEO and Dominic Golding, who oversees our Disability Royal Commission (DRC) work, chairing a DRC Focus Group discussion in the Northern Territory, along with our member organisation Multicultural Council of the NT.

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