

autismWest



WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



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**A COMMUNITY WHERE
YOUNG WESTERN AUSTRALIANS
WITH AUTISM ARE ACCEPTED,
CELEBRATED AND SUPPORTED.**



ABOUT AUTISM WEST

A community where young Western Australians with autism are accepted, celebrated and supported.

Autism West is a Western Australian not-for-profit providing unique opportunities for young people on the autism spectrum to gain skills and experience, enabling them to connect successfully with others and the world around them.

Using a strengths-based approach, we facilitate a number of special interest programs within our social groups. The overall aim is to engage and motivate participants, build feelings of self-worth and increase resilience.

At Autism West, we help our members to develop:

- friendships with similar young people;
- a sense of belonging;
- team work and project management skills including critical thinking;
- advocacy skills;
- feelings of self-worth and purpose; and
- individual and team skills in their areas of special interest such as coding, film making, robotics, art, and digital media.

As part of our strategy to raise awareness about autism, Autism West is proud to present the annual Autism West Symposium, which is a unique event for Western Australia.

The annual symposium creates a space for all members of our community and their stakeholders to listen, share and grow their knowledge of current thinking in autism.

OUR SERVICES

In 2017, we operated social groups for young people with autism in three locations throughout the Perth area; Claremont, Fremantle and Marangaroo. The social groups create an environment that is supportive and engaging for individuals that are at risk or experiencing social isolation. The participants plan activities using a strengths-based approach and involving their special interests. Through this approach, the participants work towards their own individual goals.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

2017 has been a significant year of change for Autism West.

We are extremely proud to announce our success in becoming an approved NDIS service provider. This increases our capacity to offer services to families and individuals as they plan for their future, ensuring they are involved in decisions about their service direction. From an organisational perspective, it validates the strategic direction of our services.

Autism West secured and has settled into a dedicated space to call home at Fremantle Hospital, which gives us room to grow and service more individuals and families.

This year saw the consolidation of our strengths-based approach in Autism West's social groups as we expanded the range of special interests projects. We have, through the projects, demonstrated the talent and competence of our participants.

Our young adults screened their documentary, 'A Slice of Life', in April this year. Our young coders did Autism West proud in the State Lego Robotics Competition in August, and we showcased the artistic talent of our community in November with an exhibition at the Victoria Park Centre for the Arts.

Some of the key achievements for 2017 include:

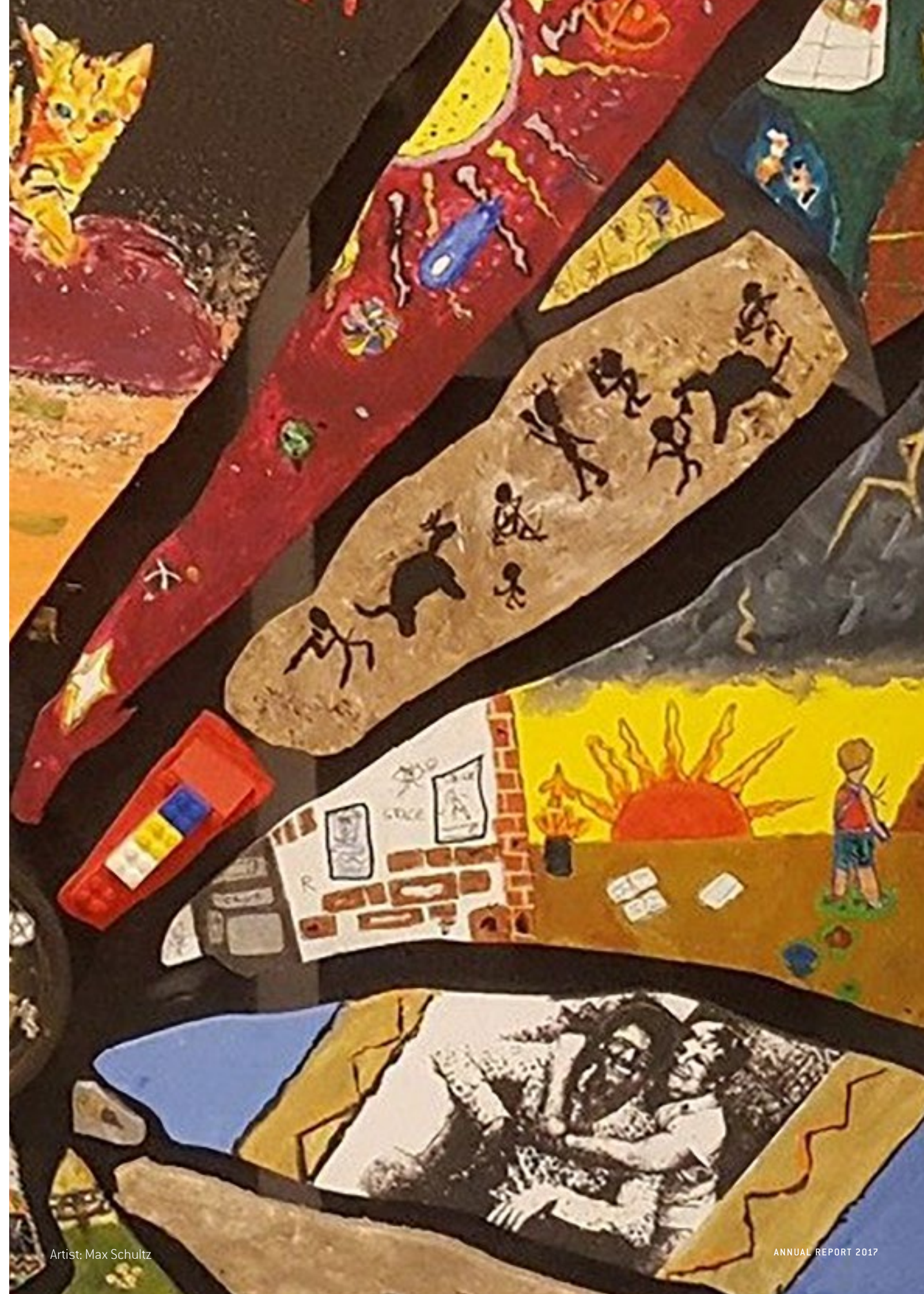
- success in becoming an approved NDIS Service Provider;
- securing our new premises at Fremantle Hospital;
- The Big Picture Autism West Symposium;
- Autism West becoming a formal partner with Venues West; and
- building new partnerships and alliances, whilst nurturing existing ones.

This could not have been done without a dedicated team of staff, board members, committees, interns and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly all year.

We appreciate their efforts and pass on a huge thank you for all their hard work and commitment. This year we bid a fond farewell to Gabriella La Bianca, who has begun her journey in motherhood. She will be greatly missed and has been invaluable during Autism West's early years.

As Autism West grows, I am delighted that we continue to make a difference in the lives of many people. We are working towards building a community where young Western Australians with autism are accepted, celebrated and supported, and I am excited to see what we will achieve in 2018.

Silvana Gaglia
Chairperson





CEO'S REPORT

Under the strategic direction of the Board, Autism West reached significant mile-stones in 2017.

I would like to thank the leadership skills of the Board, in particular, Chairperson Silvana Gaglia, who was a key support this year to the operations team.

I would like to thank our committed and passionate staff and volunteers who have worked hard to ensure a smooth transition for our participants and I look forward to the return of our CEO Alison Davis in 2018.

Some of the highlights for 2017 were:

- Establishment of the Autism West Youth Advisory Council, which enables young people on the autism spectrum to help to inform the strategic and operational objectives of Autism West.
- We increased the number of social groups running across Perth Metro locations to 10.
- Representatives from Autism West delivered presentations at the Asia Pacific Autism Conference, Sydney, AES Conference and the WAATA Conference on Autism West's strengths-based approach.

- Autism West partnered with Curtin University to research a strengths-based approach in STEAM for young adolescents with autism.
- We were invited to exhibit at the 2017 Telethon Beneficiaries Expo and 50th Anniversary of Telethon.
- A number of community supporters donated their skills and time to fundraise for Autism West.

Louise Sheehy
Acting CEO

ORGANISATIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Revenue	18.6% increase overall 47.45% increase in direct services revenue
Programs and services	20% increase (from 8 to 10 groups)
Enrolment Capacity	Average enrolment capacity of 76%
Membership	13% increase from 745 to 842
Social Media	Twitter: 305% increase Instagram: 498% increase Linked In: 18% increase Facebook: 148% increase

Autism West will kick-start 2018 by implementing processes for the roll-out of the NDIS in July across our Fremantle groups. We will also be expanding our social groups to a new location, Rockingham, where we will be able to provide support to the Rockingham-Baldivis- Mandurah area. This will also be the first of our sites eligible for the NDIS.

In 2018, we will also be working on developing employer awareness materials and increasing community outreach to schools.

Our fastest growing demographic is our young adults.

As we work more closely with our young members, a key area of focus will be on the development of our Incubator Project to attract funding and corporate sponsorship.

Our Incubator Project will enable us to provide business mentoring for exceptionally talented individuals, as well as enabling us to employ them for their expertise in their areas of interest to work with, and act as role models to, our younger members.

Autism West is proud to be able to showcase the talents of young people on the autism spectrum, and to assist them with their careers, and we look forward to continuing our work in this area.

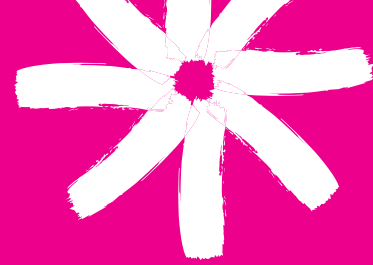


WE HAVE A NEW HOME

Situated near the heart of Fremantle, we now have our own space with a dedicated entrance underneath Fremantle Hospital. The move has increased our accessibility via public transport, while also providing our members and groups the chance to explore new and exciting excursions and activities within the area.

The City of Fremantle and local businesses have welcomed us with open arms, and we look forward to continuing to explore and nurture collaborative relationships with local Fremantle businesses and organisations in 2018.

In July 2017, Autism West said goodbye to the Town of Mosman Park and our home with Rocky Bay, relocating to our new home in the City of Fremantle.



2017 SYMPOSIUM



The Autism West Symposium is the flagship event held by Autism West each year, aiming to educate and raise awareness about autism within the community.

Over 200 individuals attended this year's Autism West Symposium – The Big Picture – which explored life beyond childhood as those on the autism spectrum move into adulthood. There was a focus on individual strengths and challenges, transitioning to independence and meaningful employment. Representing a wide range of perspectives, speakers from across Australia and overseas delivered insightful and thought informative presentations, and feedback has been incredibly positive. The speakers line-up included those such as:

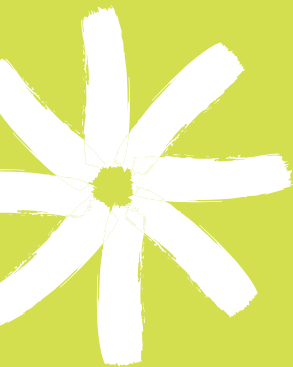
- Kerry Magro, once non-verbal, now an international public speaker
- Jeanette Purkis, author, speaker and autism advocate
- Graeme Simsion, best-selling author of 'The Rosie Project'
- Carla Burn, Network Leader and Mentor at the iCan Network
- Matthew Schnieder, Managing Director and Co-Founder of Optika Solutions.



NEWS

Autism West, our events and programs garnered considerable media exposure throughout 2017, including:

- International speaker, Kerry Magro, was interviewed on ABC Radio, Mornings with Geoff Hutchison, ahead of his appearance at the Autism West Symposium in November
- Kathy Lette flew into Perth for a Talk Series event hosted by Autism West, and was featured in an article in The West Australian and interviewed by Today Tonight
- Autism West and our TOBY app were featured on Channel 7 News
- The auctioning of Rose, the Autism West heifer – raising \$4,750 for Autism West – was featured on GWN7 News
- Autism West CEO, Alison Davis, was interviewed by the Mix 94.5 team ahead of World Autism Awareness Day and the Team Sprint Cup
- Autism West participants produced a radio program in collaboration with [Pirate88Radio](#).



OUR COMMUNITY

Autism West receives no Government operational funding, relying on community support to deliver its services.

It is because of the grants, sponsorship and donations we received from our generous supporters in 2017 we have been able to:

- Develop our special interest programs, including Visual Arts, Music, Radio and Digital Media
- Showcase the talents of some of our amazing artists in a number of art exhibitions across Perth
- Continue to grow our successful Telethon Holiday Makers Program
- Provide gainful employment to people with autism doing things they love, while providing inspirational role models to our young participants
- Establish our Youth Advisory Council
- Reward and recognise our members, volunteers and staff.

Our major supporters throughout 2017 were:

- Act-Belong-Commit
- Department of Communities
- Kirby Swim
- Lake Karrinyup Country Club
- Lotterywest
- Mimi and Willy Packer
- Perth Business Network
- Sisters of Charity Foundation
- Somers & Partners
- Tate Foundation
- Telethon
- VenuesWest
- Wesfarmers
- West Australian Golf Club
- Carcione Foundation
- Gerard Daniels
- The Owston Family.



OUR TEAM

The Autism West Team grew in 2017, and now includes:

- Alison Davis, Chief Executive Officer
- Louise Sheehy, Operations Manager
- Mandy Orso, Office Administrator
- Scott Sadler, Administrative Assistant
- Janine Ripper, Marketing and Communications Coordinator
- Trudi-Anne Gribble, Holiday Program and Volunteer Coordinator
- Samantha Wovodich, Program Coordinator
- Olivia Colja, Special Interest Program Coordinator
- Tania Rodwell, TOBY Manager
- Eleanore Calvezzi, TOBY Social Media Manager.

We are also fortunate to have an incredible team of casual staff who facilitate our social groups, as well as an enthusiastic and committed team of volunteers and interns.

Our Board

The Autism West Board consists of:

- Silvana Gaglia (Chairperson)
- Karl Paganin (Deputy Chairperson)
- Adam Shephard (Treasurer)
- Jennifer Grove
- Nicole Kerr
- Stephen Morris
- Andrea Jones
- Mark Di Silvo.

We thank you for your continued support and dedication to Autism West.

Our Ambassadors

We thank our wonderful Autism West Ambassadors:

- Michael Malone
- Professor Lyn Beazley
- Regina Ledo
- Christina Holly
- Wayne and Belinda Owston
- Scott Sadler.



2016-2017 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

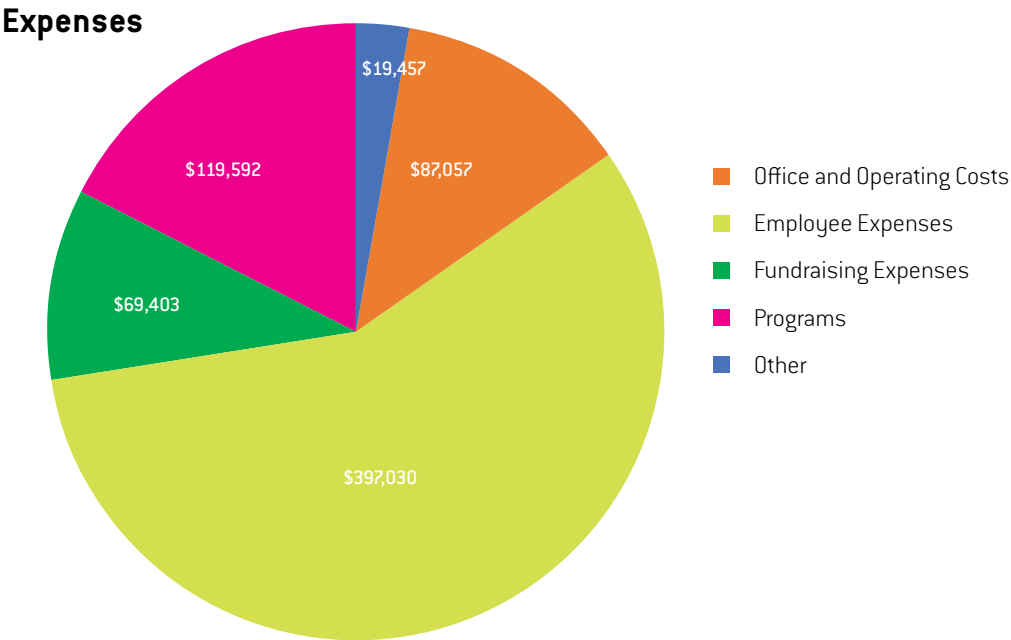
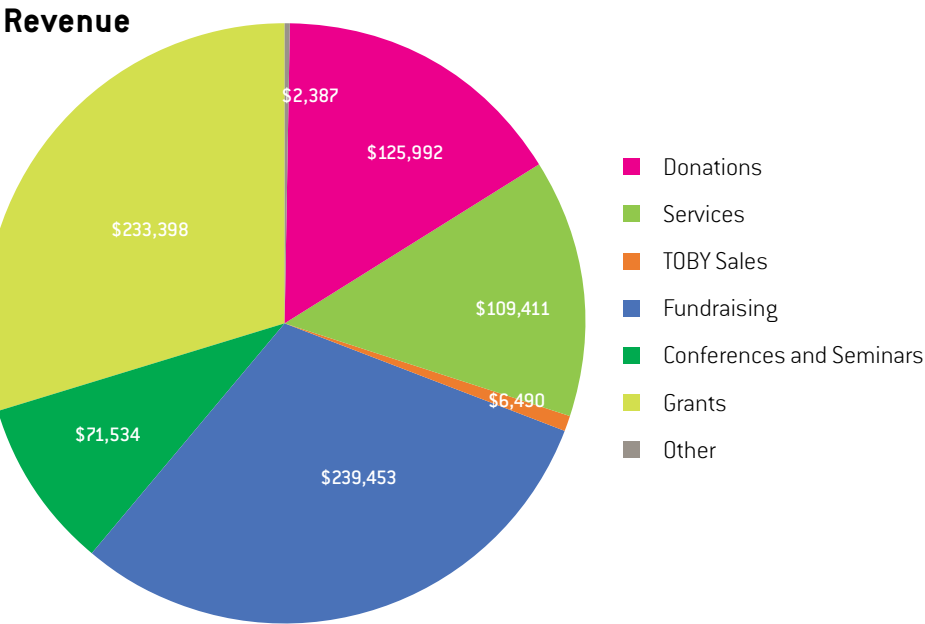


Autism West continued its operational growth with service revenue delivering \$109,411, an increase of 47%. Autism West returned a surplus of \$96,126, which increases Autism West's cash reserves to \$454,026.

As in 2016, grant revenue contributed 30% of overall revenue, which was matched by fundraising at 30%. Autism West receives no Government operational funding, and it continues to fund its operations through fundraising, donations, sponsorship, project grants and service fees.

Operating Results	2016-2017	2015-2016
Revenue	\$788,665	\$664,765
Expenses	\$692,539	\$639,163
Surplus/Deficit	\$96,126	\$25,602

Working Capital	2016-2017	2015-2016
Total Assets (Current and non-current)	\$510,865	\$394,069
Total Liabilities	\$58,839	\$36,169
Equity	\$454,026	\$357,900



2018 AND BEYOND

2018 will see Autism West implementing processes to enable our participants to utilise the NDIS, which continues to roll out throughout Perth. Autism West will keep our participants up to date with updates in this fast changing environment.

Autism West social groups continue to grow, with the addition of groups in Rockingham.

We will continue to focus on empowerment of our participants, and we look forward to the development of our newly established Youth Advisory Council.

Fundraising will be a key focus for the Board and staff at Autism West to enable the organisation to continue to be financially sustainable.

2018 marks ten years since the establishment of Autism West and we look forward to celebrating this milestone with the Autism West Community.

