



Aussie Hands



ANNUAL REPORT

2025

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Annual Report

January - December 2025

Vision

The Aussie Hands Foundation exists to provide support, understanding and encouragement to individuals with a hand/upper limb difference and their families.

Purpose

Aussie Hands achieves this through:

- Supporting individuals with a hand/upper limb difference, their families and community.
- Providing opportunities for connection, networking and sharing of information.
- Raising awareness and celebrating achievements of people with a hand/upper limb difference.
- Supporting research into hand/upper limb differences by co-founding the Australian Hand Difference Register (AHDR).

Key Programs and Services

The Aussie Hands Foundation provides the following programs and services to its members and the wider community.

- Support - which includes a private and public social media group and a Peer Support Network for one-on-one mentoring.
- Events – local events and workshops around Australia.
- Information and Resources – a comprehensive website, Online Resource Toolkit and information about prosthetics, daily living aids and counselling services.
- Research – co-founder of the Australian Hand Difference Register with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.
- Awareness and Advocacy – promoting inclusion and celebrating difference.

Governance, Funding and Membership

The Foundation is governed by a voluntary Board of Management to provide strategic direction and oversee operational activities.

As a registered charity, the Foundation operates through individual donations from supporters, grants, fundraising initiatives, corporate sponsorship and in-kind support.

The Foundation welcomes members from across Australia, including:

- Individuals born with a hand difference.
- Individuals with acquired hand injuries.
- Parents and families of individuals with hand differences.
- Healthcare professionals and associated professionals.
- Supporters and interested individuals.

With over 1,360 members, Aussie Hands represents one of the largest communities of its kind in Australia, providing vital connection and support to families who might otherwise feel isolated.

Highlights and Reflections



- This year, Aussie Hands celebrated its 25th Anniversary on Saturday 18 October with a special event held at the Royal Children's Hospital Foundation. This was attended by many Aussie Hands members, with speakers including Dr Gladys Liu, City of Melbourne Councillor VIC; Mr Andrew Wheeler, Sentinel Foundation; Assoc Prof David McCombe and Prof David Coombs from the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne VIC. Articles were published in the Ross House December 2025 Newsletter and by Key Change Communications (refer to the Media section).
- Aussie Hands participated in a few Grill'd Local Matters campaigns.
- The Sentinel Foundation's commitment of \$30,000 over three years will continue to support Aussie Hands activities to the end of 2026.
- Phase 1 of the Salesforce membership database audit was completed, with assistance from Monash University interns.
- Volunteers continue to play a crucial role in Aussie Hands, assisting with various projects throughout each year. The focus remains on supporting members, raising awareness, and ensuring Aussie Hands continues to provide valuable resources and connections to our members.

Board of Management

The Aussie Hands Board of Management is comprised of individuals with a broad range of skills and experience in community, health, legal, financial, and not-for-profit sectors. In addition, many of our Board Members have a personal connection to our hand difference community.

President/Chairperson

Ms Elizabeth Borg

Vice President

Vacant

Treasurer

Mr Tonchi Dean

Secretary

Ms Elizabeth Borg

Board Members

Mrs Fiona Passmore
Ms Kate-Louise Grey
Mrs Karina McCosker

The Board of Management met on 26 March (AGM), 15 April, 13 May and 25 November 2025.

Ambassadors

Our Ambassadors, Rozanne Biddle and Dave Serpell, were involved in a wide range of activities to enhance the profile of the Foundation, by engaging regularly with members and raising awareness of hand differences in the Australian community.

Membership

As of December 2025, there were 1,364 Aussie Hands members from around Australia and overseas.

State/Territory	2024	2025	Increase	% Increase
ACT	15	15	-	-
NSW	286	314	28	10%
NT	9	11	2	2%
QLD	202	232	30	15%
SA	59	66	7	12%
TAS	49	54	5	10%
VIC	447	464	17	4%
WA	145	157	12	8%
Overseas	n/a	51	-	-
Total	1,212	1,364	152	13%

Financials

We appreciate the contributions of Tonchi Dean and Ryk Eksteen, who have been part of our team since 2023. Tonchi has continued his role as a volunteer Financial Officer and Treasurer, while Ryk Eksteen has conducted the independent audit. Their support and commitment are greatly valued.

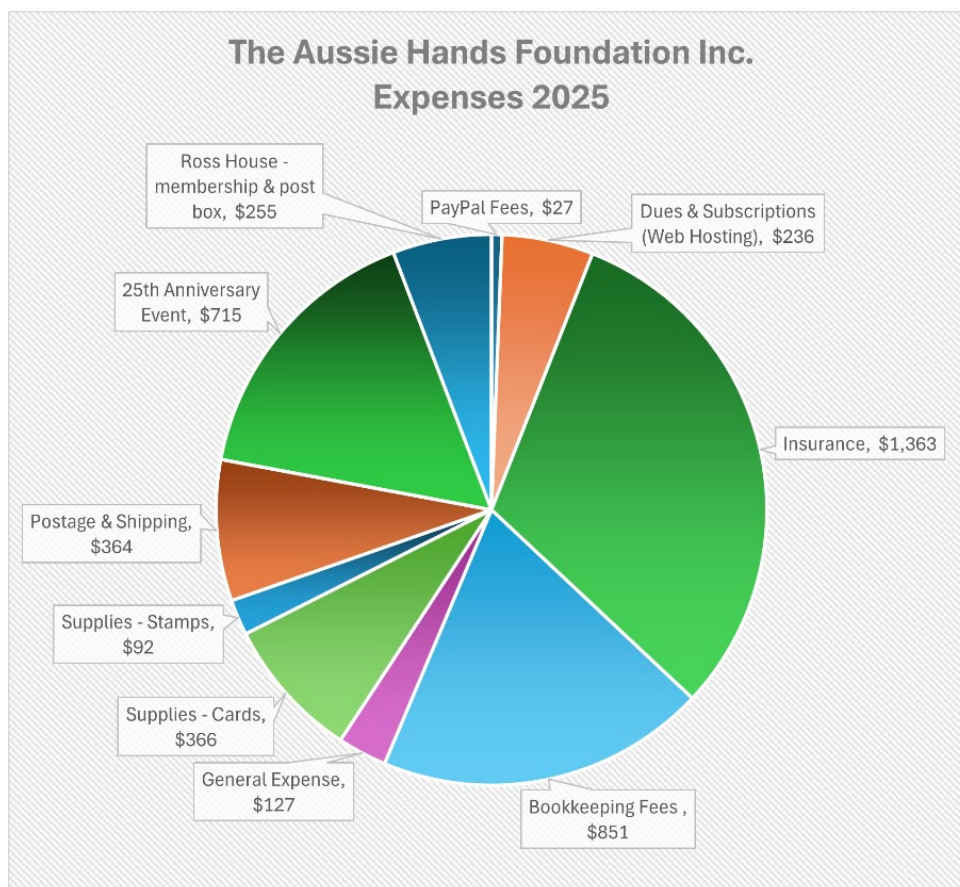
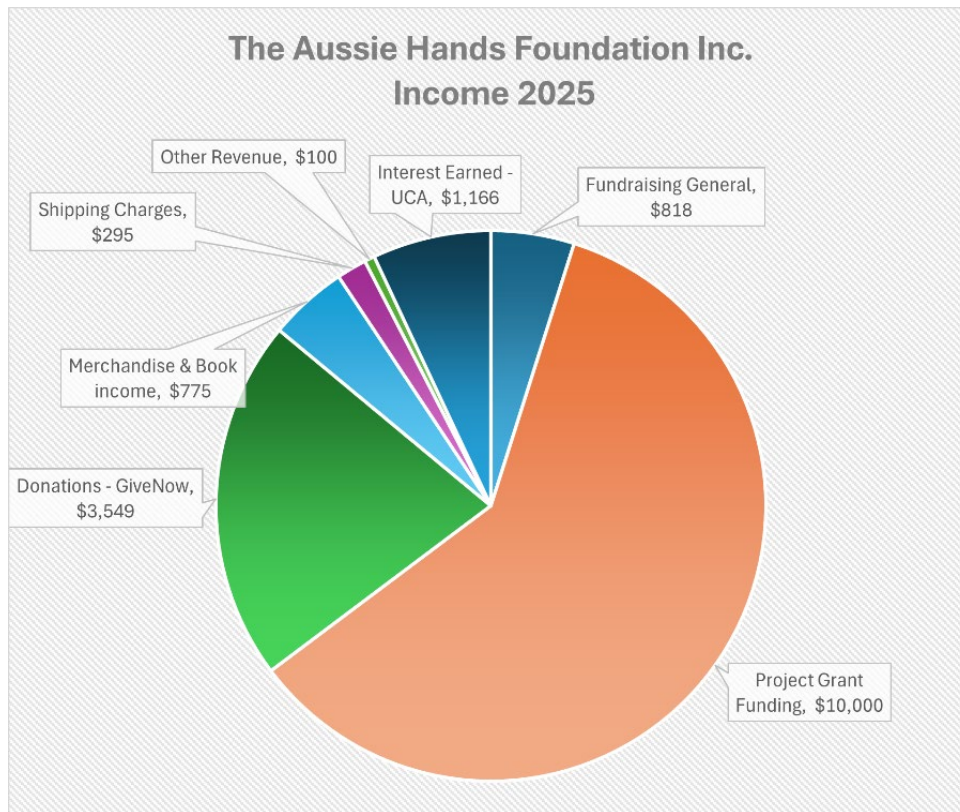
We extend a special thanks to the Sentinel Foundation for its continued generosity and dedication to The Aussie Hands Foundation Inc. We also sincerely appreciate the ongoing support of our donors and sponsors, whose contributions enable us to continue our work.

In summary, for the year ended 31 December 2025:

Total Income	Total Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
\$16,703	\$4,396	\$12,307
Total Assets	Total Liabilities	Net Assets
\$88,137	-\$124	\$88,261

The audited report by Frederik Ryk Ludolf Eksteen is available on request or can be found on the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission website.

Financials



Australian Hand Difference Register (AHDR)

Since its inception in mid-2017, the Australian Hand Difference Register (AHDR) had registered over 2,860 participants by the end of 2025, continuing to make significant strides in understanding and supporting children born with upper limb differences across Australia.



The AHDR aims to:

1. Determine the number of children born with a hand/arm difference in Australia.
2. Investigate possible causes and risk factors.
3. Provide essential data to help plan and allocate services.
4. Identify participants for future research opportunities.
5. Explore the physical, social, and emotional impacts of hand differences in children.
6. Develop evidence based approaches to better manage and support children with hand differences.

The AHDR team works closely with clinical teams from Australia's major paediatric hospitals and participating private clinics, ensuring comprehensive and collaborative support.

Exciting research initiatives during 2025 included:

- The Appearance Study which explored how children aged 5 years and older feel about the appearance of their hands and its impact on emotional wellbeing.
- The APPLe Study which interviewed adolescents aged 13 to 19 about their priorities regarding the appearance and function of their hands, as well as understanding parental experiences and support needs following diagnosis.
- Workshop with Aussie Hands participants. Feedback from the AHDR:

“A big thank you to everyone who joined our online family workshops! We ran three sessions in August and enjoyed having families take part from all over Australia.

We really appreciate all the ideas and feedback you shared. Our discussions covered topics such as how we communicate with families, ideas for research projects and general feedback about the register. We've already started putting some of your suggestions into place, and we're looking into the bigger ones to see how we can make them happen.”

- Publication in the Journal of Hand Surgery (European Volume) titled “An analysis of the functional and psychosocial impact of congenital upper limb differences using PROMIS: data from the Australian Hand Difference Register”.

The AHDR remains grateful for the ongoing support of The Aussie Hands Foundation Inc., the McNally Family Foundation, and the Australasian Foundation for Plastic Surgery, whose contributions have made this work possible.

For more information and updates, visit www.mcri.edu.au/ahdr.

Volunteers

At the heart of Aussie Hands is a village of volunteers. Aussie Hands is filled with talented and passionate people who share our vision, live our values, and embrace innovation for those with hand differences. A big thank you to each one of our volunteers.

- President and Founder: Elizabeth Borg
- Treasurer and Finance Officer: Tonchi Dean
- Auditor: Ryk Eksteen
- Operations Lead: Elizabeth Borg
- Secretary (Acting): Elizabeth Borg
- Social Media: Kate Louise Grey
- Graphic Design Consultant: Karina McCosker
- Marketing Consultant: Fiona Passmore
- IT Consultant: Bruno Gorton, Gina Barri-Rewell
- Website Consultant: Vinnie Chen
- Salesforce Administrator: Kanchana Karvannan
- Salesforce Consultant: Dyan Sethupathi
- Ambassador VIC: Dave Serpell
- Ambassador WA: Rozanne Biddle
- Birthday Cards Coordinator: Andrea Murray
- Online Shop Coordinator: Colleen Birtwistle
- Database Consultant: Jen Port
- Interns: Naufal Althaf

Events

- Teddy Bears Picnic – 16 March (SA)
- Picnic – 23 March (QLD)
- Fundraising Event – 23 March (VIC)
- Aussie Hands event – 30 March (VIC)
- Meet Up Sunday – 27 April (NSW)
- Easter Egg Hung 27 April (SA)
- X-Limb Workshop – 25 May (VIC)
- Autumn Picnic – 25 May (VIC)
- Morning Tea & Play – 25 May (QLD)
- 25th Anniversary Celebration - 18 October (VIC)



Partnerships

Aussie Hands continues to collaborate with like-minded organisations to raise awareness of 'hand differences'. These partnerships help us share knowledge, raise awareness and connect our members with valuable resources and support.

HOSPITALS

- The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne VIC
- Monash Children's Hospital Clayton VIC
- Women's and Children's Hospital Adelaide SA
- Princess Margaret Hospital for Children Perth WA
- The Children's Hospital at Westmead NSW
- Sydney Children's Hospital NSW
- Queensland Children's Hospital Brisbane QLD

RESEARCH

- MCRI - Murdoch Children's Research Institute

PROFESSIONALS

- AHTA - Australian Hand Therapy Association
- Australian Counselling Association
- Australian Psychological Society

SUPPORT GROUPS

- Amputee Association of NSW
- COSHG - Collective of Self-Help Groups
- GSNV - Genetic Support Network of Victoria
- Limbs4Life
- LimbKids TAS/VIC (ceased 2018)

DEVICES

- Free3D Hands
- X-limb

VOLUNTEERING

- Boroondara Resource Volunteer Centre
- My Community
- Our Community
- Pro-Bono
- Volunteer Match

INTERNATIONAL

- Active Hands UK
- AtIha Onlus MELMI Milan Italy
- Lucky Fin Project USA
- Reach UK
- OHMI UK

Marketing and Communications

In 2025, Aussie Hands focused on celebrating our 25th Anniversary, expanding our social media presence, developing a refreshed brochure for prospective & new members and stakeholders, and creating a Welcome Kit for those joining our community.

A special 25th Anniversary logo and banner was created for the website and social media posts during the year, and event materials were designed to help celebrate the occasion.



Website

Our website remains one of our main marketing tools, allowing stakeholders and prospective members to understand what we do, how we help the hand difference community and to take steps to join the organisation. The 25th anniversary banner was displayed on the home page during the year.

The following metrics demonstrate an increase in users to the website compared to 2024.

Metric	2025	% change from 2024
Users	5,778	+18%
New Users	5,755	+19%
Page views	14,075	+4%
Top 5 pages visited	Home page Stories 'What Happened to your hand' book About Us Events	

**Aussie Hands Website Users
- 2024 v 2025**

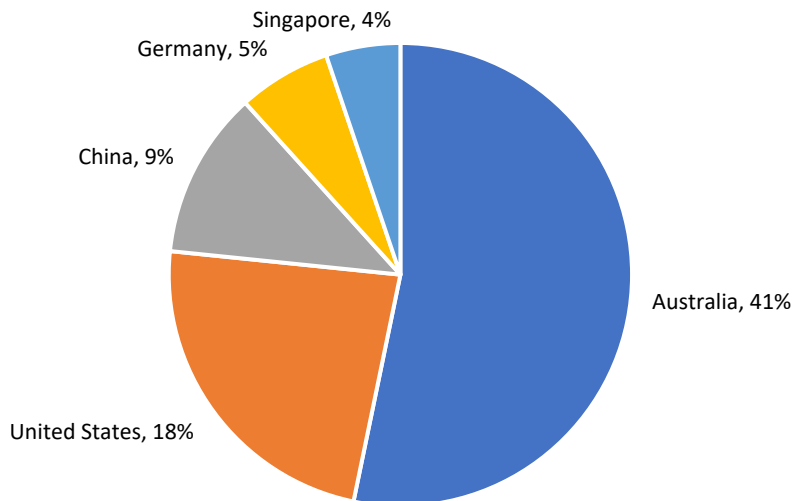


**Aussie Hands Website Page Views
- 2024 v 2025**



Website

Users to Aussie Hands Website in 2025 by geographic region



Social Media

- The countdown to our 25th Anniversary was marked with a series of posts over 25 weeks highlighting what Aussie Hands has achieved over 25 years.
- Awareness campaigns for Limb Difference Awareness Month and disability advocacy events. This included the lighting up of bridges & landmarks around Australia including: Victoria Bridge in Toowoomba; Shine Dome in Canberra; Matagarup Bridge in Perth; King George Square, City Hall, Kangaroo Point Bridge, Story Bridge, Wickham Terrace Park Architectural Wall in Brisbane; Breakfast Creek Bridge in Newstead; Victoria Bridge and Reddcliff Place Sculptures; Moreton Bay, Gold Coast, and Bolte Bridge in Melbourne in the Limb Loss & Limb Difference Awareness Month colour orange.
- Member highlights and stories in the 'A Good Read' series.

Metric	Facebook
Views	29,663
Interactions	673
Followers	881



Media

- Key Change Communications published a story about the Aussie Hands 25th Anniversary Celebration.
- Ross House included a congratulatory article about our 25th Anniversary in their December Newsletter.

Fundraising

Aussie Hands participated in a fundraising partnership with the *Grill'd Local Matters* program.

Member Stories

Existing member stories on the Aussie Hands website were highlighted in our social media platforms to help share the experiences among the hand difference community and increase the sense of belonging, understanding and acceptance.

Goals for 2026

- Launch an annual Aussie Hands Day or Month, with a dedicated fundraising campaign to raise awareness in schools and communities.
- Distribute the new promotional brochure to schools, hospitals, clinics.
- Finalise the Welcome Kit for new members.
- Create a promotional video.
- Continue work on Aussie Hands operational and membership database.
- Strengthen relationships with partners and expand participation in the Australian Hand Difference Register (AHDR).
- Develop donor recognition programs and encourage bequests.

The year that was...

Thank you to everyone at The Aussie Hands Foundation for your commitment in our special 25th Anniversary year. We have strengthened our community and continued supporting individuals with hand differences and their families.

Elizabeth Borg, President and Secretary, 2025