



ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018 | AEIOU Foundation

aeiou
FOUNDATION
for children with autism

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WELCOME TO AEIOU FOUNDATION

CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

At AEIOU, we provide the foundation for children with autism to grow and reach their full potential. We also provide genuine support to families, giving parents and carers a range of skills and tools to help them with their child's development in the home and community. We instil confidence in families that they, and their child, can look forward to a lifetime of opportunities.

Since establishing the first centre in 2005, AEIOU has grown to be a leader in the provision of autism-specific early intervention. Our therapy and care, based on evidence and a commitment to research and assessment, gives children the chance to develop essential life skills, independence, confidence and inclusion.

With our headquarters in Brisbane, Queensland, we operate nine centres and support more than 250 children and their families each year. We employ more than 200 staff members across the organisation who share a vision that every child with autism in Australia will have access to quality, affordable, evidence-based early intervention.

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AEIOU Foundation is a registered charity (CH1818) under 'The Collections Act' of 1996 and is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient under the Subdivision 30-BA of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

OUR REPORTING PROCESS:

This is the ninth annual report submitted by AEIOU Foundation, documenting AEIOU's financial, operational and community performance for the financial year ending 30 June 2018. Your feedback is welcome. Please email communications@aeiou.org.au

ABOUT AEIOU

1 in 100 Australians are diagnosed with autism

*The Open Paediatric Medicine Journal 2012

Autism affects

4 boys to every 1 girl



The latest EDIA report states: **“Research has shown that due to the nature of human brain plasticity, the earlier the intervention, the larger the impact on outcomes”** (Hadders-Algra, 2011).

AEIOU supported **390** children throughout the financial year



AEIOU operates **nine** early intervention centres, including:
 • Bray Park, Bundaberg,
 • Camira, Gold Coast, Nathan,
 • Sippy Downs, Toowoomba,
 • Townsville, and Brighton (SA).

AEIOU delivers early intervention to children diagnosed with **Level 2 and Level 3** autism

AEIOU employs
 • Full-time - **161**
 • Part-time - **66 staff**



FOUNDATION

What is autism

Autism is a lifelong neurological developmental disorder, which according to research published in The Open Paediatric Medicine Journal, 2012, is diagnosed in 1 in 100 Australians. Research also indicates autism is four times more likely to be diagnosed in males than females.

Autism is part of a spectrum often referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). While no two people with autism are the same, they generally share two main areas of difficulty, commonly referred to as the 'dyad of impairments'. These include:

- Social and communication, including difficulty with body language and verbal communication, reciprocal conversation, emotional and social reciprocity and managing structured parts of the day.
- Thought flexibility, including difficulty with hyper, or hypo-sensitivity to sensory input, routines, repetitive behaviours and rituals.

“AEIOU Foundation was established to provide families with quality, affordable therapy and care for their young child with autism. Raising a child with autism isn't easy. It can be isolating, you can feel helpless, and many fear the future. At AEIOU, our families find unique support, not only from our staff, who understand each child's potential, but also from each other.”

Dr James Morton, AM, Founder and Director.

There is no established cause or cure for autism, however evidence demonstrates early intervention, delivered within a program that meets the Guidelines for Good Practice 2012, will provide children with the best opportunity to reach their full potential.

Our Mission

To enhance the lives of children with autism and their families and benefit the community through early intervention learning, along with practical and caring support.

Our Vision

To be recognised as the leading provider of quality early intervention for children with autism and to ensure every child is given the best opportunity to reach their full potential in life.

Our Values

S.T.E.P.

Support

You can rely on AEIOU for expert guidance and a commitment to each member of the Foundation's family.



Teamwork

A collaborative, inclusive team working together to create bright futures.



Excellence

Driven to be the best, we are leaders in the delivery of quality, evidence-based early intervention.



Passion

We're inspired by the difference we are making in young lives. We love what we do.



Our Philosophy

AEIOU Foundation believes early intervention should be a right, not a privilege.

AEIOU Foundation believes all children with autism:

- Can learn and have the right to an education
- Benefit from therapy based on individual needs
- Learn using different learning styles and at different rates
- Are individuals, with differing personalities, needs, wants, interests and levels of ability
- Require flexible routines in their daily program to cater for their individual needs
- Should receive evidence-based early intervention and access to appropriate assessment
- Are entitled to a balanced program that bridges the gap between the home, AEIOU Foundation and the community
- Benefit from families and staff working together.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It was with a great sense of honour that I accepted the role of AEIOU Foundation Chair this year. Since joining the Board of Directors in 2016, I have been impressed by the quality of the service delivered at AEIOU, the commitment of our staff and the resilience of our families. AEIOU began as a dream of one family: Dr James Morton and his wife Louise established AEIOU with just 12 children and six staff in a small church in the Brisbane suburb of Moorooka. Today, we enrol more than 250 children across the service and I'm proud to note these children all make great individual gains in their development, and families also find support, respite and hope.

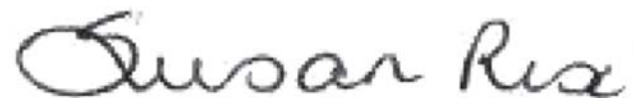
Any disability service provider can attest to the significance of the challenges presented by the rollout of the NDIS; it is a major reform. However, with it comes opportunities, and that includes the chance to review and improve what we do and how we do it. As part of this, we're looking at how we can offer greater value to our families. This includes the individual therapy we deliver, and how we transition children to their next learning environment. We have also considered how we can improve and simplify administrative processes internally.

While there's been some time for consolidation during this period, there's also been a focus on growth. Construction commenced on our Logan centre in November 2017, and we anticipate the centre will be operating by August 2018. This is a centre which represents true partnerships; made possible with \$1 million in funding from the Australian Government and \$1 million in funding from Queensland Health, along with vital support from our corporate donors and community partners.

The centre will have the capacity to enrol an additional 50 children each year, while also working with Griffith University to support research, professional training and more.

We were also delighted to receive \$4.5 million in capital funding from the Australian Government to construct a new centre on the northside of Brisbane. This will nearly double our capacity, eliminating the waitlist experienced in the region and provide extraordinary opportunities for training, support, research and school engagement.

I am excited to steer AEIOU Foundation into this next phase and take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Dr James Morton AM for his stewardship of AEIOU Foundation to date. I also thank each of AEIOU's Directors, Executive Management Team, the staff across our service and the families we support.



Susan Rix, AM
AEIOU Foundation Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

There's something special at AEIOU, and that's our great sense of community. The connection we share with our families and the bond established with the young children we support is second to none, and we also welcome long-term support and partnerships across a broad corporate and community base. This year, we have continued our path of considered growth, with a plan to reduce waitlists and improve access to affordable therapy and care. We have also prioritised our families, with a goal to provide expert support during the rollout of the NDIS.

To date, AEIOU is operating in four NDIS sites, and in July 2018, this number will expand to seven, with sites including Brisbane, the Gold Coast, and Logan.

I am delighted to note we are increasing our footprint: AEIOU has commenced construction on a new, purpose-built centre in the Queensland city of Logan, set to open in August 2018. We are also planning to establish a centre of excellence in Bald Hills in 2019, which will eliminate the waitlists currently experienced in the area.

In January, AEIOU partnered with the Queensland Government's Autism Hub to pilot a new transition support program across state and private schools in the Gold Coast region. Not only has this benefited the students and their families, it has provided opportunity to connect with schools and provide valuable strategies and tactics.

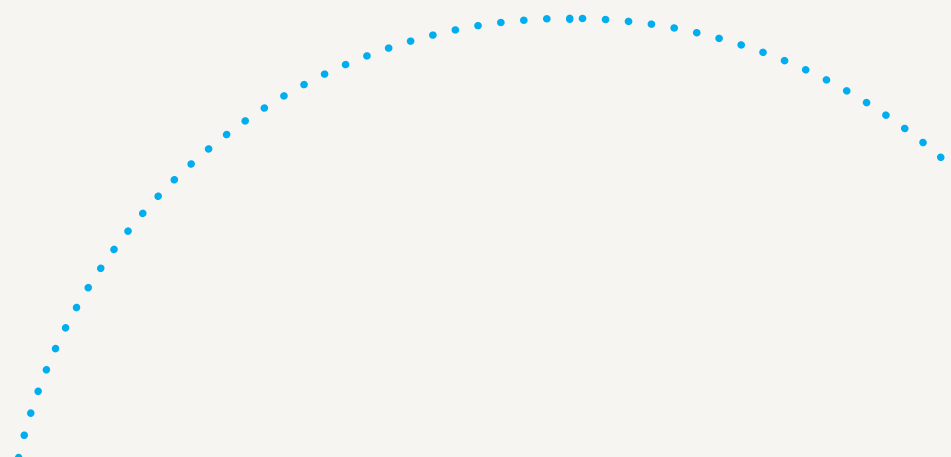
Research remains essential to our daily operations, through our Autism Research and Innovation Committee (ARIC), and our involvement with the Autism Cooperative Research Centre. And we also remain a committed, founding partner of the Griffith University's Autism Centre of Excellence.

Leading AEIOU Foundation during such a period of growth is both rewarding and humbling. As Dr Colin Zimbleman, PhD., said, 'Autism offers a chance for us to glimpse into an awe-filled vision of the world that might otherwise pass us by'.

I am grateful to work in this awe-inspired world every day. I'd like to thank our Board of Directors, staff, families, and our supporters, donors, volunteers and strategic partners for their generous and ongoing support. AEIOU Foundation sincerely values your commitment to helping us continue to be an affordable and effective autism early intervention provider.



Alan Smith
CEO



CONNECTING FAMILIES TO THE NDIS

Connecting families to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has been a priority at AEIOU this financial year. As well as transitioning our service to the NDIS in Camira (Ipswich) and Bundaberg, we focused on ensuring effective processes and procedures were in place to assist remaining families in Nathan, Logan and the Gold Coast to transition at the turn of this financial year.

The transition to the NDIS has not been all smooth sailing. While we have worked hard to build relationships with access partners, there has been inconsistency in funding plans across the service. We have advocated for families to the highest levels of government and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), for more consistent packages that will secure families at least 20 hours of specialised group early intervention, as recommended in a report released by the NDIA in February 2016.

These efforts, including engaging with NDIS access partners and sharing information with families, have been crucial to securing relevant and necessary supports for children and families seeking access to the Scheme.

Community engagement has been an important strategy for AEIOU transitioning to the NDIS. Our NDIS Support Coordinator has paired with program and centre managers to run community information sessions through the state, primarily in Brisbane, Ipswich, Bundaberg and the Gold Coast. The campaign is ongoing and plans are in place for events in Brisbane's north, as well as the Sunshine Coast, in the second half of 2018.

Our South Australian service is dramatically impacted by the low levels of support families are receiving from the NDIA. Despite advocacy, community workshops, stakeholder engagement, employing a South Australian executive director to drive engagement, and forming a South Australian Steering Committee. Families struggle to receive the reasonable and necessary support to facilitate access to AEIOU's service. This has not only impacted families at a crucial time in their children's lives, it impacts the service itself, which is at a critical point.

We are committed to ensuring children with autism have the best chance to reach their full potential. AEIOU will continue to work with the NDIA, stakeholders and community to ensure families can access affordable and effective autism early intervention and family support, and have access to research and training that will help them develop essential life skills, independence, confidence and inclusion.

Greg Johnson
General Manager



A family story



“Autism had built a fence around our Emma, and we just had to unlock it.”

The Foster Family

Receiving Emma’s autism diagnosis provided much-needed validation for us; that it wasn’t just me doing a terrible job at parenting. Our family had been struggling for some time and were doing everything on our own without outside support. While part of me didn’t want to label her, another part of me knew the diagnosis would open up doors to get help. Now, through AEIOU, we are the success story I never dreamed would happen.

Emma was always very physically advanced, but it was as though her mind hadn’t caught up with her body. She didn’t speak like the other toddlers, she bit my husband and I almost on a daily basis and I envisaged needing to change her nappy as a 10-year-old. I didn’t know what was going to happen to her when she grew up. Would she live with us forever? Would she ever have a job? I feared us dying because who else could look after her? Before AEIOU, we grieved for the future we had imagined for our first child.

The biggest difficulty for Emma when starting at AEIOU was settling into a new routine and having expectations set for her. She was challenged for the first time. We knew all this personality and intelligence was inside her, but we hadn’t been able to break through on our own. Because she couldn’t communicate with us, there was so much frustration working against us as a barrier.

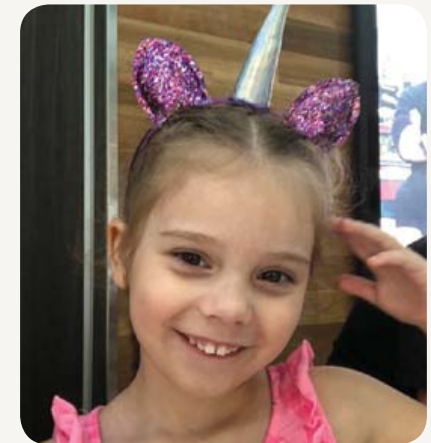
Now, she is like a different girl. Her personality shines. She’s goofy, silly, plays and pretends. So many things you’d expect of a child her age. She can talk and tell us when she’s angry, rather than kicking and biting. I feel like the mum of every other four-year-old who never stops chattering. I try to remember the time I wished she would talk. The transformation almost seems like magic.

Emma is teaching herself to read. She knows all the colours and letters of the alphabet. She is also toilet trained, something that, with the right support, she picked up almost straight away. Her diet is still a work in progress and our biggest ongoing challenge but, compared to where we were, it’s not as high of a mountain to climb anymore. And, the staff are there to support us all the way.

I’m so grateful that now I can dream about Emma’s future again. What’s she going to do, what she’s going to be. I thought I’d lost that. I can’t see anything out of reach for her now. She loves sea animals so maybe she’ll want to be a marine biologist. All our lives have just changed 100 per cent.

If I could reach out to other families in the same boat as us a few years ago, I would encourage them not to shut the doors. There’s help out there and people who want to work with our kids. We also need to hold our kids in the highest regard, because they’re just capable of so much.

By Ali Foster





OUR EARLY INTERVENTION MODEL

Early intervention for children with autism is important to build a child’s capacity. AEIOU provides supports to children to develop life skills and independence to improve their quality of life. AEIOU helps children to achieve individual goals by providing group-based learning opportunities delivered by a transdisciplinary team. Our service aligns with the Guidelines for Good Practice (Prior and Roberts, 2012). With a commitment to best practice, AEIOU has an in-house research and assessment team.

AEIOU supports children to develop skills across five areas:

- Communication: ability to comprehend and use language or alternative communication method
- Self-help skills: dressing skills, hygiene skills, and self- help skills related to mealtimes and toileting
- Play: the ability to play appropriately with a variety of toys
- Social: the ability to engage socially with others (joint attention skills, cooperative and interactive play with others etc.)
- Emotional regulation: teaching a child to appropriately express their needs and wants and learn toleration skills while reducing behaviours of concern

The transdisciplinary staffing model employed at AEIOU ensures each child has input from the fields of speech pathology, occupational therapy and behaviour analysis. All therapists and educators work cohesively to implement and develop strategies and therapies. AEIOU provides a minimum of 20 hours of therapy per week, as recommended in a report by Roberts, Williams, Smith & Campbell (2015) and released by the National Disability Insurance Agency in February 2016.



A child’s progress is monitored and tracked through individualised data collection on particular goals, and observational data. This enables staff to monitor the effectiveness of a strategy, make adjustments if necessary and provide feedback to parents on their child’s progress.

Parents are supported to work on their child’s individualised goals in the home and community environment. Parents are assisted through workshops, individual planning meetings, written strategies, informal conversations with their child’s team and, where appropriate, a home/community visit by a transdisciplinary team member.



2017/18 YEAR IN REVIEW

July 2017

- AEIOU presents a submission to the Australian Government Productivity Commission's position paper on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) costs
- AEIOU moves central office to Woolloongabba
- AEIOU Toowoomba exhibits at the Baby and Toddler Expo
- Camira centre transitions to the NDIS



August

- New video series launched highlighting family experiences, and outcomes of AEIOU's early intervention service
- CEO attends NDIS 2.0 Forum in Melbourne



September

- Jurassic Jam supports AEIOU Foundation for the third year
- Ulton Race Day supports the Bundaberg centre
- Laser Beak Man opening night, written by Ambassador Tim Sharp, opens in support of AEIOU



- Gold Coast staff present at the Raising Happy Kids Educational Expo
- AEIOU sponsors the Asia Pacific Autism Conference in Sydney
- New Director of People & Performance appointed

October

- Bundaberg centre transitions to the NDIS
- Inaugural Champions Challenge for Team Jacob and AEIOU
- Take A Hike Brisbane registers a record 660 participants
- Inaugural Coronis Golf Day supports AEIOU Sippy Downs
- Team Jacob Boutique Beer lunch supports AEIOU
- AEIOU Adelaide attends Kyd-X Expo



November

- AEIOU provides the Hon Peter Dutton MP with a submission on the reinstatement of Behaviour Analysts on the Eligible Skills Occupations List
- AEIOU sponsors the UQ Occupational Therapy student conference

- First sod turned at AEIOU Logan

Government, Griffith University and AEIOU representatives turned the sod on the new AEIOU Logan centre, which will provide early intervention for up to 50 children per year, and collaborate with Griffith University to create training pathways for disciplines including behaviour therapy, speech and language pathology, and occupational therapy.



- AEIOU is the beneficiary of five Melbourne Cup events
- AEIOU AGM held 27 November
- New centre opens at Brighton SA

December

- Chairman Dr James Morton, CEO Alan Smith and GM Greg Johnson meets with National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) CEO Rob De Luca
- AEIOU thank you function for supporters, donors and key stakeholders



Jan 2018

- Establishment of Gold Coast school transition pilot in partnership with the Autism Hub

Feb

- Pat Welsh joins AEIOU as our newest ambassador
- AEIOU Camira exhibits at the Defence Community Expo, Amberley
- AEIOU Townsville exhibits at the Defence Community Expo, Oakey
- 2018 Chain Reaction Ultimate Bike Challenge - New Zealand



AEIOU Foundation was chosen as the co-beneficiary of the 2018 Queensland ride. The event, which included an AEIOU Hutchinson team, exceeded fundraising expectations, presenting AEIOU Foundation with \$500,000.



- AEIOU launches new video on the people who deliver AEIOU's service

April

- Take a Hike Toowoomba celebrates eight years
- AEIOU Adelaide exhibits at the Pregnancy, Babies and Children's Expo

- Let's Get Awesome for Autism inaugural community day, Brisbane

This inaugural event to raise awareness of early intervention for children with autism was celebrated in Brisbane's Kurilpa Park. And included lighting the city blue and launch of the book Turning Turtle by former AEIOU parent Paulette Moser.



- Susan Rix AM is elected Chair of AEIOU Foundation's Board of Directors following the resignation of founder Dr James Morton AM.

Under Dr Morton's guidance, AEIOU grew from enrolling 12 children in one centre in 2005, to enrolling more than 250 children across nine centres. Dr Morton has been instrumental in driving change in policy and funding, and tireless in his pursuit to ensure best-practice therapy can be affordable for every family, regardless of income. "I made the decision to step back from my position as Chair with the full support of the directors, and because it's good governance to do so. After serving AEIOU as Chair since its inception, it is time to invite new leadership," Dr Morton said.

May

- Rotary Art Spectacular supports AEIOU for the fifth year
- Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull MP announces \$4.5 million to build an autism-specific facility on Brisbane's north side

The Honorable Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull MP, Minister for Home Affairs, the Honourable Peter Dutton MP, and Federal Member for Petrie Mr Luke Howarth attend AEIOU Bray Park



to announce funding for a \$4.5m autism-specific AEIOU centre on Brisbane's north side. The new centre will replace AEIOU's Bray Park centre, and will be a hub for research and training.

- Chain Reaction thank you event held

June

- Let's Get Awesome for Autism month
- Griffith Sport Logan Family Fun Run supports AEIOU
- Take A Hike Townsville celebrates 10 years
- Government extends block funding to support children until they transition to the NDIS

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Our board

Ms Susan Rix (AM)

Chairperson (from April 2018)



Susan is a chartered accountant and partner at BDO (Qld) Pty Ltd. She has over 35 years of practice specialising in business advisory services. During the past 25 years, Susan has served on a

number of government owned corporation boards and statutory authorities and has extensive experience in governance and risk. Susan currently serves on boards in the not-for-profit sector and holds a variety of committees and advisory roles.

Dr James Morton (AM)

Chairperson (until April 2018) and Founder



James and his wife Louise established AEIOU Foundation following their own experience when their son Andrew was diagnosed with autism. Together, they had a vision to ensure more

Queensland families would have access to life-changing early intervention. James is an active Chairman of the Foundation and is committed to creating a national program that will provide unprecedented support to Australian children with an autism diagnosis.

Mr Peter Kelly Director



As an Executive Director at Three Plus Pty Ltd, Peter provides strategic advice to the organisation on media and government relations, community engagement, branding and marketing. He is also a lead on the crises

and communication plan. Peter has two nephews who have an autism diagnosis, and both were unable to access full-time early intervention. He is committed to supporting AEIOU's growth to ensure more children have access to high-quality, evidence-based early intervention.

Mr Euan Morton Director



Euan has been a key supporter and a Director of AEIOU Foundation since its inception, inspired by his nephew Andrew, his brother James and his family. As a consultant on economic and policy

issues, Euan provides expert advice on cost-benefit analysis of early intervention and autism AEIOU Foundation's productivity commission submission, and peer reviewed studies into the cost-benefit of autism and early intervention.

Mr Scott Reading Director



Scott has been a member of the AEIOU Board of Directors since 2007. His son William attended AEIOU Foundation's program at Moorooka shortly after it was established.

Scott is also a Board Director for the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Autism CRC) which brings together a large collaboration of universities, state governments, international organisations, community groups and industry.

Dr Bev Rowbotham Director



Bev joined the AEIOU Board of Directors in 2015. She is Director of Haematology with Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology. She currently holds the positions of Federal Councillor for the Australian

Medical Association (Pathology craft group) and Clinical Lead of Pathology for the National E Health Transition Authority. She is the past President of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (2007-2009) and past President and Chair of the Association for Childhood Language and Related Disorders (2001-2012). Other notable positions include Director Avant Mutual Group and Director RCPA GAP Pty Ltd.

Executive Management Team

Alan Smith CEO



Alan joined AEIOU in April 2009 as CEO. He was motivated to join the organisation after witnessing the challenges experienced by his wife's cousin, who has autism. This year,

Alan oversaw the design and construction of AEIOU's 10th centre for children with autism, making great strides in his commitment to deliver a national program which is accessible to all children diagnosed with autism in Australia.

Alan also oversees the research and assessment division at AEIOU, and the fundraising program.

Greg Johnson General Manager



Reporting to the Board, Greg oversees AEIOU Foundation's Finance, Operations, Corporate Affairs and People and Culture departments. He is responsible for the delivery of strategic goals

related to these areas and is committed to ensuring every child and family enrolled at AEIOU both now and in the future receives excellence in therapy and care.

Laura Denholm
Director People and Performance



Laura Denholm's career in human resources spans more than 15 years, across a range of non-profit and commercial organisations. Laura's passion is customer service. She believes in a collaborative

approach to operations and utilising the talent and ideas of the team to build practical solutions that work.

Yolanda Borucki
Operations Manager



Yolanda has more than 20 years' experience in the delivery of childcare/ disability services both within Australia and internationally. She holds multiple qualifications in Children Services and

Teaching and has worked in a variety of childcare and special needs settings in Australia and New Zealand. Yolanda has been with AEIOU since 2010 and has worked across the organisation. She works to ensure the smooth running of all operational matters across AEIOU centres including program, staffing and issues management.

Karen Descovich
Fundraising Manager



Karen has more than 15-years' experience as a fundraising specialist in the children's disability sector. Prior to moving into the not-for-profit sector, Karen delivered events internationally for

several corporate organisations. She made the decision to bring her experience with events into an area where she felt she could make the biggest difference. Karen, and her fundraising team, not only raise much-needed funds to grow AEIOU and fund research, but also increase awareness of what we do.

Deborah Whiteoak & Petrina Smith (job share)
Corporate Affairs Managers



At AEIOU, Deborah and Petrina share responsibility for all corporate communications activities, including the management of the Foundation's brand and reputation, media relations, government and client relations and corporate publications.



Seeing the impact of AEIOU's early intervention first-hand, and how it changes the lives of young children with autism and

their families, drives their commitment to support AEIOU to achieve its goals, maintain excellence in service delivery, and be recognised as a leader in autism early intervention.

Louise Hargrave-Smith
Finance and Administration Manager



Louise joined AEIOU Foundation in 2008, and manages the organisation's budget, while also leading her team to coordinate accounts receivable and payable, enrolments, parent fees and all

administration requirements. She enjoys supporting new families as they enrol in the program and witnessing the growth and development each child achieves before transitioning to their next education setting.

Dr Madonna Tucker
Research and Assessment Manager



Dr Tucker brings to the organisation more than 25 years' experience in research and clinical practice. Her doctorate in the applied behaviour analysis field allows her to provide expert advice

in the research realm and contribute to the evidence-based early intervention delivered by AEIOU Foundation.

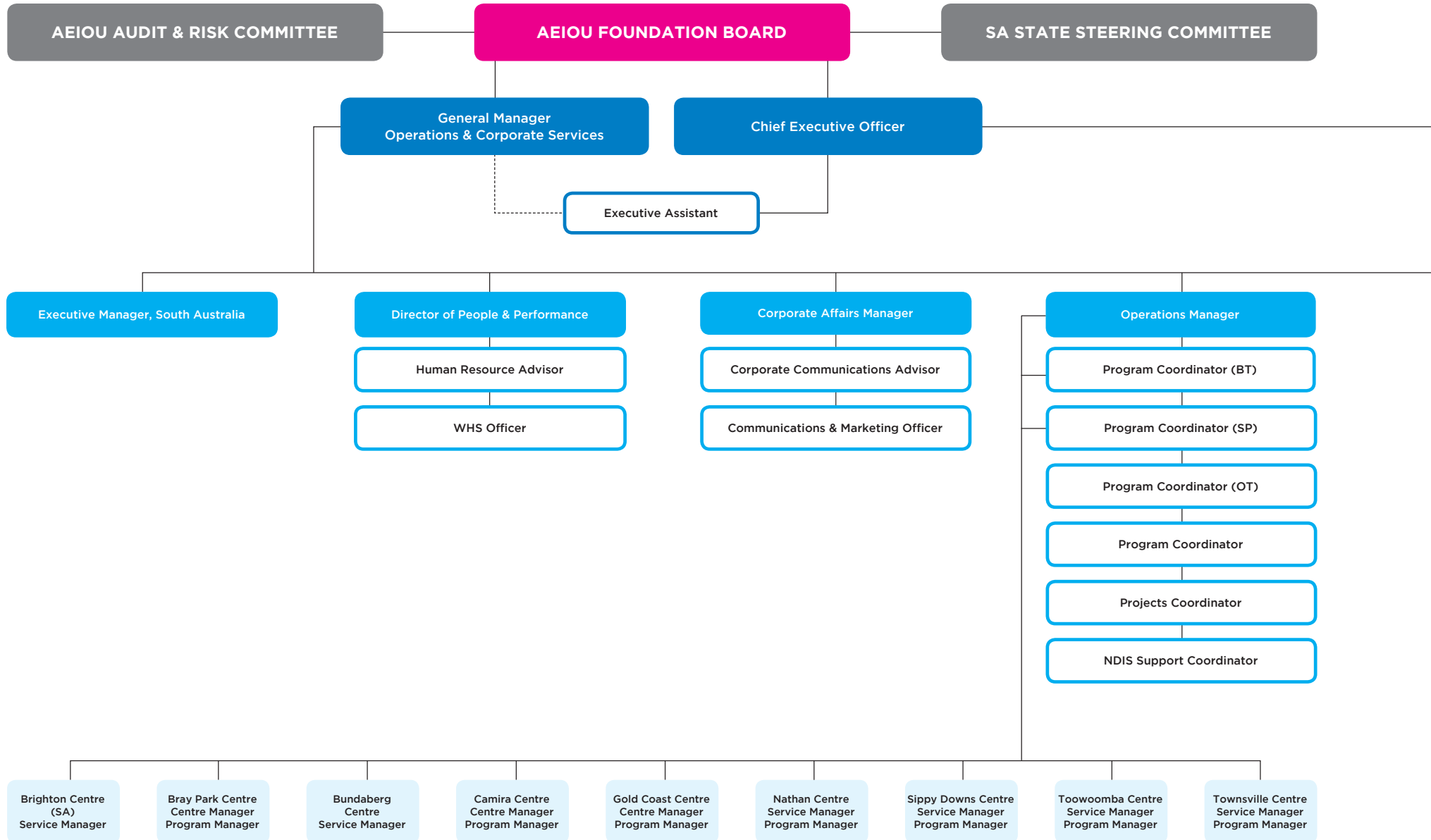
Matthew Clapham
Chief Financial Officer

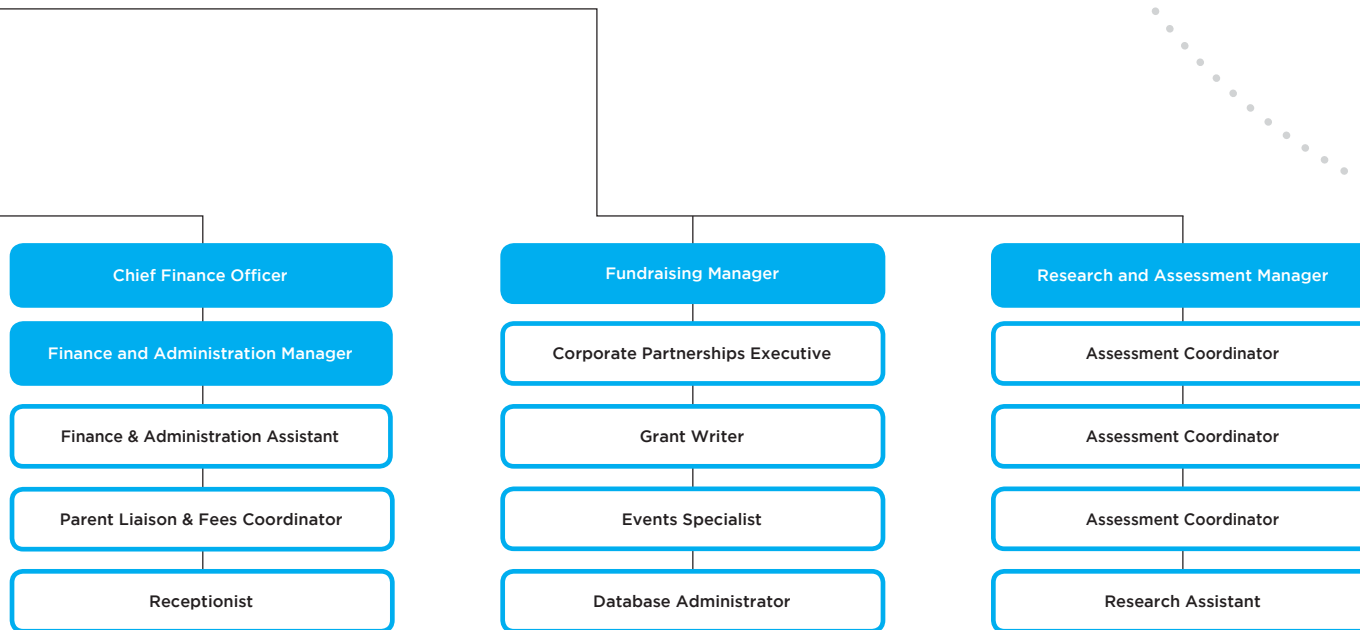


Matthew joined AEIOU in April 2018 bringing 20 years of experience in financial management both in Australia and Europe for commercial and not-for-profit organisations.

He is responsible for the delivery of financial strategic objectives of AEIOU's board and is committed to identifying and implementing continuous improvement to business systems and processes which support the needs of all current and future families accessing services at AEIOU.

AEIOU Organisational Chart





 Executive Management Team (EMT)

A family story



“Everything AEIOU has done has built opportunity for Heidi to be able to participate in a mainstream education environment. They have given her the ability to interact with her peers and make friends.”

The Rabig Family

Kiya Rabig and her family were living in the country town of Port Augusta when they first noticed delays in their daughter Heidi’s development after her first birthday. At the time, they could not imagine their observations would result in an autism diagnosis which would see them uproot their life and move to Adelaide to give her the support she needed.

They soon discovered AEIOU Foundation and Heidi, four, began attending the Brighton service in early 2018. At that point, she was non-verbal and, among other things, the family were hoping to make progress with her toilet training, establishing a routine and learning to interact with other children.

“From the day of our first meeting, with the goals we put in place for Heidi and the way they structured their therapy, we were very impressed,” Ms Rabig said.

“It almost sounded too good to be true, but AEIOU has lived up to every standard and goal they have put forward.”

In a few short months, Heidi was fully toilet trained, could sit still and attend in class and would respond to her name. She also continues to make promising progress with her verbal communication skills as she moves on from the Picture Communication Exchange System (PECS).

“Everything AEIOU has done has built opportunity for Heidi to be able to participate in a mainstream education environment. They have given her the ability to interact with her peers and make friends.”

Kiya’s advice to other parents on a similar journey is simple.

“Don’t give up on your hope and dreams for your family and children and don’t be afraid to speak up when it comes to your little ones.”



CONNECTING IN THE WORKPLACE

Gender Equality

AEIOU has successfully regained compliance with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Act)*, after its annual reporting of its workplace data, policies and practices. These specifically cover areas of equal pay, full and equal participation of women in our workforce, access to leadership roles and elimination of discrimination, particularly around general and family/caring responsibilities. AEIOU is continuing to utilise tools and resources from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency in our workforce and gender equality strategies.

Partnership with “Diverse Werks” 2018-2023

AEIOU has signed a five-year CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) Program in partnership with Diverse Werks. This program helps AEIOU engage with CALD children with autism, their families and communities. Our workforce strategies include creating a workforce that is culturally competent, *recruiting for purpose*, i.e. attracting candidates from CALD backgrounds and matching them to our centres. In addition, we intend to develop partnerships with migrant communities and create further training pathways.

Quality Assurance

AEIOU has instigated a full review of its Quality Assurance framework, in preparation of the NDIS re-accreditation and Human Services Quality Audit. A Quality Assurance Officer was appointed to modernise our system, ensuring our processes are streamlined, staff and parent friendly and we are meeting best practice against the relevant legislation and regulations that govern our industry.

Workplace Health and Safety Audit

AEIOU engaged an external workplace health and safety (WHS) organisation to conduct a WHS Systems Compliance / Hazard Identification Audit at AEIOU centres. We successfully met our legislative duties and compliance and there were no gaps identified in our Safety Management System. Our WHS Officer continues to work with the centre management team in an annual WHS maintenance audit, with the next external audit due in 2020.

Eligible Skilled Occupations List

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection made changes to its combined Eligible Skilled Occupations for subclasses 457 and 186, which saw the removal of 272,314 Psychotherapists. This is a specific pathway for Applied Behaviour Analysts and Therapists to work within Australia and they are critical in the delivery of evidence based early intervention for children with autism at AEIOU. AEIOU provided a submission to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection to reinstate Behaviour Analysts and Therapists on the Eligible Skilled Occupations List and the reinstatement was successful.

With only 62 Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBAs) currently working in Australia, AEIOU recognises there is a need to encourage skilled immigrants to ensure longevity of high-quality early intervention strategies.



BUILDING STAKEHOLDER CONNECTIONS

AEIOU is committed to working with stakeholders to boost awareness and supports for children with autism. The following projects are two highlights from 2017/18.

Autism Hub

Collaborating with the Queensland Department of Education's Autism Hub, the Transition to School project was initiated and piloted on the Gold Coast, with the aim to research and evaluate supports children access as they move from early intervention into the state school system. Its mission is to provide children with the best possible chance of successfully learning in their new school environment. Each child has individual needs including classroom attendance, learning capacity, and social and behaviour skills, and AEIOU's collaboration with staff in children's new school settings aims to better equip participants for success and enhance learning opportunities.

Since commencing in December 2017, AEIOU's Transition to School project manager Lauren Reddington-Smith has engaged with eight schools, providing information and training to teachers and support workers to assist 15 children and their families in the program. Feedback from the project will be evaluated by the Autism Hub, to inform future direction.

A real highlight of this initiative is developing relationships with the Autism Hub and schools, and gaining greater knowledge on their policies, capabilities and constraints. Seeing teachers progress their own skills to better support students is another positive outcome.

Logan Together

With the building and construction of a new early intervention centre in Logan, AEIOU benefits from informed insights and local networking opportunities which connect us with community.

Logan Together is a community movement focused on changing the lives of children and families in Logan for the better. With similar missions, our connection with the organisation gives us the opportunity to work with disability and children's service providers in the region and enables us to reach out to families seeking AEIOU's early intervention service.

As well as attending the Logan Together conference, we are members of the Logan Together NDIS strategy group, a collective of organisations supporting local families with information on accessing the NDIS.

First sod turned on Logan's new centre for children with autism

Construction AEIOU's new centre in Logan commenced in November 2017.

To mark the occasion, Federal Member for Forde, Mr Bert van Manen was joined by City of Logan Mayor Luke Smith and Griffith University Pro Vice Chancellor Linda O'Brien, together with AEIOU Foundation Director Peter Kelly, to turn the first sod on Thursday 23 November 2017.

As part of the innovative Meadowbrook Health and Knowledge Precinct and located at Griffith University's Logan Campus, the development is made possible with Federal and State Government Funding, including a \$1 million National Stronger Regions Fund grant, and a \$1 million grant from Queensland Health. Griffith University donated the land via a long-term lease.

The project will create 50 full-time early intervention placements for children with autism and will facilitate collaboration with Griffith University to create training pathways for disciplines including behaviour therapy, speech and language pathology and occupational therapy.

This milestone development will provide better support for local families caring for young children with autism, and significant research pathways and partnerships, which can benefit the community.

The AEIOU Logan Centre for Autism will feature four purpose-designed classrooms, a motor-skills therapy room, playground and modern facilities for research, parents and staff.



LOOK AT HIM NOW!

Bruce Asher was our 2016-2017 Annual Report cover star, and it's safe to say he has flourished since starting Prep in a mainstream classroom at Park Lake State School in January.

Here he is, pictured on his first day, as captured by proud mum Elizabeth.

"On the first day, he just got up and got dressed in his new uniform! There were no tears and he just said "bye mum" when it was time for me to leave. He's a bright, beautiful child and I couldn't be prouder of the person he's growing up to be. I am just so grateful to AEIOU for all their help along the way."

Bruce now joins his big sister, who is in Year 3.

Key stakeholders on this project include Griffith University, Logan Together, Logan City Council and other local organisations. With intelligent design by Buchan Architects, and construction by Hutchinson builders, as well as fit-out funding from Chain Reaction Foundation and the Wantz Committee, we are creating a centre of exceptional standard.



RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

The Research and Assessment Team (RAT) focuses on three key areas: assessment, research, and the AEIOU curriculum. The RAT is a collaborative team, liaising with a broad stakeholder group of children, families, staff, individuals and organisations who participate in research. The past 12 months have resulted in successful partnerships and outcomes.

Staffing

During this reporting period, we welcomed three new staff members: Gillian Montague, Joanne Teo, and Linda Pigott; and welcomed back Sandra Lariviere from maternity leave. We also had several volunteers spend time gaining experience in working with children with autism and conducting research. The reason for this growth is to accommodate the increase in research and assessments required across the organisation. We would like to thank all families and staff who have played a role in the assessment and accumulation of data.

Assessment

Assessments are an integral part of our practice at AEIOU. Assessments are conducted with children at intake, 12-month intervals and when children exit. We conduct standardised assessments, which measure children's abilities compared to children of a similar age. For the first time, this year the RAT conducted assessments with every child attending AEIOU. We also reported the results of these assessments to parents and their transdisciplinary teams. For some families, this report was used as supplementary information to provide to the NDIS for their child's planning meeting.

Research

Research at AEIOU is a collaborative effort, working with leading organisations which are world-wide research efforts. The RAT is responsible for undertaking research to increase our knowledge in autism. We collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to ensure our research is not only evidence-based but contributes to the wider autism research community.

AEIOU is also proud to be an active participant in the following:

The AEIOU Research and Innovation Committee (ARIC) is a scientific collaboration between AEIOU and individuals from external agencies who have expertise and interest in undertaking research in ASD. ARIC oversees and facilitates research that has the potential to provide benefit to children with ASD and their families. This year, ARIC met 10 times and examined nine project applications, of which three were approved to be conducted within AEIOU and four were approved to be promoted for families to participate in externally. The proposals covered a range of topics, including transition to primary school and gaining stakeholder perspectives, and factors contributing to the rejection and abandonment of AAC systems for children with complex communication needs to visual attention to print vs pictures during shared book reading in pre-schoolers with autism.

The Autism Cooperative Research Centre for living with autism (Autism CRC) conducts research in autism across three programs: Program One (Diagnosis), Program Two (Education), and Program Three (Adulthood). AEIOU is currently involved in several projects across Program One and Program Two, including studies into ASD subtypes, longitudinal outcomes of children, and transition issues for children when they leave AEIOU. These studies are progressing well and important findings with practical applications are emerging.



Dr Tucker, AEIOU's Research and Assessment Manager, represents AEIOU at **Autism CRC's Research and Development Committee** meetings. As an essential participant in the Autism CRC, the meetings are an opportunity to be involved in the review of project applications, make decisions on funding, and gain updates on Autism CRC milestones. Being part of this collaboration, allows AEIOU to provide input into the future direction of research in ASD in Australia.

Dr Tucker attends the **Queensland University of Technology** (QUT) School of Psychology and Counselling Enhanced Head of School Advisory Committee (HoSAC) meeting twice yearly. This committee engages external stakeholders, including government and non-government services, with QUT staff and psychology students. Outcomes include the potential to participate in and contribute to research projects and networking opportunities. These meetings include both academic and community organisations, whereby discussions are held on how research can be collaborative with community and government service providers.

AEIOU works closely with **Griffith University** on various research projects as well as through the **Autism Centre of Excellence** (ACE). ACE not only trains staff to work with children with autism through its Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies and Master of Autism Studies, but also produces much needed research, such as conducting the *Longitudinal Study of Students with Autism (LASA) Project*. AEIOU is a research partner of this project and some children in our service are being followed to ascertain a longitudinal view of how they are progressing in school and at home. ACE will shortly relocate to our new AEIOU Logan centre, which will increase our capacity to collaborate on projects.

AEIOU Nathan, an Autism-Specific Early Learning and Care Centre (ASELCC) is one of six federally government-funded community-based intervention centres providing specific support to children with ASD. This year, the Queensland ASELCC was part of a submission to the

Department of Social Services (DSS) to extend the ASELCC funding. This submission was accepted and all six ASELCC centres across Australia have been further funded for 18 months. The ASELCC group of centres provide autism support to families across Australia and AEIOU is proud to be at the forefront of the service. The Department saw the need for this type of service to continue to provide much-needed early intervention to families of young children with autism. Dr Tucker attended ASELCC meetings in May 2018, and presented on two projects: *Debunking, Autism Treatment Myths* and *Supporting Best Practice in the Assessment and Treatment of Minimally Verbal Children*.

Other research collaborations

- Dr Tucker and AEIOU CEO Alan Smith met with Professor Delphine Odier-Guedj from the **University of Quebec**. Possible collaboration was discussed around developing interactions; and the Panda platform (for video data storage and analysis).
- Dr Tucker was invited to be a member of the **Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR)** 2018 conference organising committee, which will be held in December.

Curriculum outcomes

AEIOU is working towards a formal evaluation of its autism specific curriculum. A working party has been established, called the AEIOU Educational Curriculum Working Party (AECWP), and it is situated under the auspice of ARIC. Membership comprises external academics from QUT and Macquarie University, and AEIOU staff. The working party meets monthly and all members are investigating frameworks and possible funding options to gain assistance in this evaluation. A grant proposal has been submitted for funding for 2019 for a project titled "Parental perspectives on early intervention services for children with autism".

Research project updates

- *Debunking, Autism Treatment Myths*. Paynter, J., Keen, D., Trembath, D., Fordyce, K., Joosten, A., DeBlasio, A., Hoppenbrouwers, G., Ecker, U., Imms, C., **Tucker, M.** This project examined how staff understand evidence-based practices and are trained in this area. Results indicated that the optimised professional development training presented to staff did have a positive effect on their understanding of evidence-based practices. It was, however, not sustained change. Results indicated that professional development training needs more than one session of training and that on-the-job coaching and/or mentoring may be required to sustain long-term changes.
- *Supporting Best Practice in the Assessment and Treatment of Minimally Verbal Children*. Trembath, D., **Tucker, M.**, Hudry, K., Pye, K., Muckett, C., Fordyce, K., Hoppenbrouwers, G., DeBlasio, A., Webb, S., Joosten, A., Grove, R., Paynter, J., Westerveld, M., Mahler, N., Rose, V., Keen, D., Eapen, V., Reilly, S., Iacono, T., Dissanayake, C. The aim of this project is to better understand speech and language development in children with autism. This project has both qualitative and quantitative focuses. For the qualitative data, three focus groups have been conducted so far with staff at all the ASELCCs. Over 80 predictor behaviours were identified from those groups and a survey is being completed to narrow and prioritise these possible spoken language predictors. For the quantitative part of the project, 10 children were recruited from the Nathan Centre and eight from the Gold Coast centre. Overall, 73 children have been recruited from seven centres across Australia (including all 6 ASELCCs). The results will investigate how children have progressed with their spoken language after 10 months of early intervention.

- *Transition to Primary School: Stakeholder Perspectives: School Readiness, Positive School Entry and Participation.* Girdler, S., Fordyce, K., **Tucker, M.**, DeBlasio, A., Miller, S., Falkmer, M., Black, M., Beamish, W., & Masi, A. The study aimed to identify and explore the perspectives of parent/primary carers, ASELCC staff preparing children for school (sending staff), and teachers in the child's next learning environment. This study is a national one, with five ASELCCs and four universities involved. Parent interviews and a staff focus group were completed. Data will be analysed by Curtin University.
- *Study of an early intervention program for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Predictors and outcomes.* Eapen, V., Grove, R., Aylward, E., Joosten, A., Miller, S., Van Der Watt, G., Fordyce, K., Dissanayake, C., Maya, J., **Tucker, M.**, & DeBlasio, A. This research project looks at the impact of early intervention for ASD in pre-school age children. All six ASELCCs are involved in this study across Australia. For Queensland, children were recruited from our AEIOU Nathan Centre and data and assessment results are entered into an ASELCC national database. A combined examination of all children's data across the nation is completed annually and this study is accumulating one of the largest databases of records in Australia in relation to children with autism.

Successful grant submissions

- *Novel Examination of spoken Language in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.* School of Allied Health Sciences Strategic Research Grant. Trembath, D., Westerveld, M., Sulek, R., Rose, V., Paynter, J., **Tucker, M.**, Keen, D., Vivanti, G. \$15,000.
- Examining the visual attention to print vs. pictures during shared book reading in pre-schoolers with autism. \$10, 000. Queensland Registration Board Legacy Research Grant, Westerveld, M., Paynter, J., **Tucker, M.**, Sulek, R.

Publications

- Trembath, D, Westerveld, M., Teppala, S., Thirumanickam, A., Sulek, R., Rose, V., **Tucker, M.**, Paynter, J., Hetzroni, O., Vivanti, G., & Keen, D. (submitted). Profiles of Vocalization Change in Children with Autism receiving Early Intervention, *Autism Research*.
- Taylor, A., Beamish, W., Paynter, J., & **Tucker, M.** (submitted). Designing a Model of Practice for Australian Teachers of Young School-age Children on the Autism Spectrum. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*.
- **Paynter, J.**, Luskin-Saxby, S., Keen, D., Fordyce, K., Frost, G., Imms, C., Miller, S., Trembath, D., **Tucker, M.**, & Ecker U. (submitted) Evaluation of a template for countering misinformation—Real-world Autism treatment myth debunking, *Plos One*.
- **Paynter, J.**, Davies, M. & Beamish, W. (2018). Recognising the “Forgotten Man”: Fathers’ experiences in caring for a young child with autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 43(1), 112-124.
- Eapen, V., Grove, R., Aylward, E., Joosten, A., Miller, S., Van Der Watt, G., Fordyce, K., Dissanayake, C., Maya, J., **Tucker, M.**, & DeBlasio, A. (2017). Transition from early intervention program to primary school in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics*, 8; 6(4): 161-179.
- Fulton, A., **Paynter, J.**, & Trembath, D. (2017). Gender Comparisons in children with ASD entering early intervention. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 68, 27-34.
- **Paynter, J.**, Ferguson, S., Fordyce, K., Joosten, A., Paku, S., Stephens, M., Trembath, D., & Keen, D. (2017). Utilisation of evidence-based practices by ASD early intervention service providers. *Autism*, 2, 167-180.

Conference attendances and presentations

Asia Pacific Autism Conference (APAC) conference 2017 was attended by Dr Tucker, in Sydney. Dr Tucker represented the organisation at many informative presentations. AEIOU also staffed a conference exhibition booth and this was worthwhile to talk to parents and clinicians about the services we provide. Before the conference, the Autism CRC Participants Day was attended, and this was very informative. Input was provided into the future strategic direction for autism research.

Paynter, J., Luskin-Saxby, S., DeBlasio, A., Frost, G., Fordyce, K., Imms, C., Keen, D., Miller, S., Trembath, D., Tucker, M., & Ecker, U. (2018). *Early Intervention Providers’ Knowledge and Use of Autism Intervention Practices: The Challenge of Misinformation.* Poster submission to the International Society for the Study of Behaviour Development, Gold Coast, July.



CENTRE HIGHLIGHTS

Sippy Downs

AEIOU's Sippy Downs centre has been the grateful recipient of several fundraising endeavours throughout the past year which have been channelled into improving the centre's outdoor spaces. In addition to the \$20,000 raised from the inaugural Coronis Real Estate Golf Day in October 2017, the centre was the beneficiary of a generous \$50,000 grant from long-time AEIOU supporters, the Bryan Foundation. The money was used to fit-out an entirely new playground, which has become an important part of the centre's evidence-based program. The colourful equipment has also been regularly used by the centre's mainstream classrooms, often as part of inclusive outdoor play sessions with children from both streams. Staff have reported positive responses from the joint interactions, which has led to the implementation of wider social games among the rooms.

During the year, the centre received a donation from takeaway restaurant Grill'd, after taking first place in the public voting system as part of their Local Matters program. They also held a successful in-house Mother's Day raffle across the mainstream and ASD service.

New Centre Director Monique Dowd was also successful in her application for a Kelloggs' Breakfast Bar, which was set up in the parent lounge in mid-2018. This service is open for all families and children to access, and they are encouraged to help themselves to a bowl of cereal during the hectic morning drop-off.

Adelaide

It was a momentous end to 2017 with the opening of Adelaide's new facilities at Brighton in the Minda precinct. In the same quarter, AEIOU Brighton welcomed new Executive Director - South Australia, Louise Davies. Louise is enjoying the opportunity to strengthen relationships with high level stakeholders and local partners, while strongly advocating the benefits of AEIOU's early intervention service.

In addition to Louise's efforts, centre staff are increasing their visibility and cementing their standing as the number one choice in early intervention through involvement in local expos. Most recently, staff manned a booth at the Adelaide Pregnancy, Baby and Children's Expo, which in 2018 celebrated its 27th year, as well as the KYD-X Kids & Youth Disability Expo, held in October 2017.

With more intimate class sizes, the children benefit from plenty of highly engaging (and sometimes messy) hands-on activities, and you'll often find them cooking and gardening. They also use these opportunities to promote inclusion with the children from the mainstream childcare room, with many activities undertaken in a joint capacity.

Townsville

Children at AEIOU's Townsville centre are thoroughly enjoying their new playground, including sandpit and bike track, which was kindly funded by the Department of Communities in 2017. Since then, staff have enjoyed teaching bike handling and road safety skills and the children love their new wheels, which were covered by a donation from WANTZ, and provided at cost price by Bike Fix Townsville.

The centre also received an impressive donation of \$2,200 following a fundraising initiative by young student Tilly Davis from The Cathedral School of St Anne and St James, who was inspired after her brother attended AEIOU some years ago.

During Autism Awareness Month in April 2018, the centre held a 'Go wild with blue day', where staff and children dressed in blue and got creative with colour coordinated craft and play activities. The same month, families attended a community excursion to Dan Gleeson Park to enjoy a 'Teddy Bears Picnic'. The children brought along their favourite teddies, played games together and snacked on festive pink and blue foods.

Townsville mother Ali Foster and her family, including daughter Emma, were also interviewed for a feature story in a May 2018 edition of the Townsville Bulletin. In the article, titled "Dreams Restored", Ali shared their experiences navigating through Emma's diagnosis and the amazing transformation they have witnessed in the past year with AEIOU.

Bundaberg

After managing AEIOU Bundaberg for the past two years, Service Manager Kerri-Leigh Bacelar handed the reins over to Amanda Rogers. For the first time since opening in 2012, the regional centre is currently at full capacity, with 12 full-time equivalent enrolments. This milestone reflects increased visibility in the local community and strengthened relationships with the allied health fraternity and NDIS access partners Bushkids, which centre staff are committed to maintaining.

The centre has reported great progress over the past year, with the current cohort of children demonstrating improvements in receptive language and imitation skills, as well as classroom attending.

Bray Park

A real highlight at Bray Park this year was a visit by Honourable Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull who used the centre as the setting for a major federal budget announcement in May.

Families and staff were the first to hear about a \$4.5 million autism-specific facility, which will be built on Brisbane's north side and is set to become not only a Centre of Excellence for families, but an outreach hub for research and training.

During the visit, Mr Turnbull, Minister for Home Affairs, The Honourable Peter Dutton MP, and Federal Member for Petrie Mr Luke Howarth MP, toured the centre with AEIOU Founder Dr James Morton AM, and spoke with current and past parents about the positive outcomes achieved.

The announcement heralds even more exciting times ahead for AEIOU and we look forward to construction starting in 2019.

Children at Bray Park have been using the skills they are learning to engage with community. A highlight was a visit by Ocean Life, where children discovered sea creatures, and an excursion to Chipmunks Play Centre. These experiences are an opportunity to generalise the skills they work on at AEIOU, educate members of the community about autism and assist families to engage with the community.

Staff also represented AEIOU at the Moreton Kids Expo, which provided local families with information on services in the region.



Toowoomba

Marking a decade of making a difference in Toowoomba, the local centre is well recognised in the community for supporting families and changing lives.

This year, in Autism Awareness month (April), crowds of supporters united for the annual Take A Hike event, which raises awareness and funds for AEIOU's early intervention program. It was wonderful to see Toowoomba Grammar School students participating and getting into the community spirit of the event.

Also raising awareness in the region, is the colourful taxi emblazoned with AEIOU. Black and White Cabs Toowoomba kindly donated the use of their "moving billboard" for six months. There was great excitement when the driver popped by the centre to show the beautiful artwork to the staff and children. They also gave the children an opportunity to sit inside the taxi, providing many of them with a new experience.

Camira

There was great change at our Camira centre in July 2017, with the NDIS roll out across Ipswich. Staff and families worked together to receive supports for specialised group early intervention, to ensure children continued to receive high-quality intensive therapy and care.

The centre also featured in local news, with two families featured across local newspapers highlighting the importance of advocating for children with autism. The centre also worked with AEIOU's NDIS Support Coordinator to provide the public with information on early intervention and the NDIS, at community workshop events.

Nathan

With Brisbane families transitioning to the NDIS in July 2018, this year has been spent upskilling families with the tools and information they require to receive the necessary supports to access our early intervention program. Workshops were held in the centre, and in our Central Office, and parents were provided with an newly created NDIS Planning Booklet, to assist them determine goals for their child and family.

The centre also enjoyed many fun activities, including dressing up as superheros, enjoying Christmas, Easter and mother's day crafts, welcoming a visit by the local firemen, and of course spending time in their own Nathanville. This unique space is not only fun, it is developing many skills including communication, social and play.

Gold Coast

The Gold Coast centre has been operating for five years this year, and is already recognised as the leading provider of full-time early intervention in the region. The service has not rested on its laurels, putting in continuous improvement measures, and raising its profile to prospective families, and partners.

A highlight of this 12 months has been working with the Autism Hub to develop a transition to school program for children with autism. Centre manager Lauren Reddington-Smith has visited schools in the region,

As well as taking part in the Raising Happy Kids Expo which provides information to families on services for children throughout the region, the team is preparing for the Gold Coast Disability Expo, Gold Coast Kids and Parenting Fair and the Gold Coast Inclusive Communities Expo.

OUR SUPPORTERS

LYNN WRIGHT MEMORIAL FUND

The Lynn Wright Memorial Fund was inspired by the powerful story of a woman who was a tremendous support to families of children with autism and, through her legacy, continues to be so.

Lynn encouraged and supported her daughter Louise Morton, and son-in-law James, when they took on the challenge of establishing AEIOU Foundation. The Mortons, inspired by their own son with autism, have built an organisation which has grown to nine centres, and is recognised as a leader in evidence based early intervention.

The Lynn Wright Memorial Fund was established to recognise Lynn's encouragement and support. Led by a volunteer committee including Louise Morton, Jane Harris, Belinda Power and Karen Catsoulis, the Fund is designed to ensure all families have equal access to early intervention at AEIOU Foundation and provides financial assistance to those in need.

In 2016-17 the Lynn Wright Memorial Fund assisted 14 families, bequeathing more than \$22,500.



FUNDRAISING

Challenging, interesting, and rewarding are three words which describe the efforts of the fundraising team this financial year. The aim was to focus on activities that allowed us to connect with communities in which our events took place. Increasing engagement not only helped raise much-needed funds to build the capacity of our centres, it also gave us the opportunity to forge new long-term relationships, which we look forward to fostering in years to come.

The support of new organisations and businesses not only improves our capacity to provide life-changing early intervention, it is recognition that AEIOU is highly valued by families, colleagues and the wider philanthropic community.

Here is a taste of some of our events in 2017/18:

Take A Hike

With events in Townsville, Toowoomba and Brisbane, hundreds of families, friends, supporters and staff donned their trainers and trekked for children with autism in this year's Take A Hike events.

Schools, community organisations and sporting groups all joined in the fun, highlighting that Take A Hike is a must-do on the calendar, and doing more than raising funds - it's also raising awareness.



Jurassic Jam

Several of Brisbane's leading businessmen traded their suits for rock attire, to show their worthy skills as true music performers in Jurassic Jam 3. Held one of Brisbane's



most popular music venues, The Triffid, the stellar lineup consisted of Roger the Cabin Boy, Mardi Wilson, Shag Rock, Rick Hopkins, Jump the Shark, The Manilows, The Vinyl Frontier, and The Handovers. We thank them, and The Triffid, for pulling together a great crowd to support the children and families attending AEIOU Foundation.

Let's Get Awesome for Autism

Autism Awareness Month is all about promoting inclusiveness through awareness, and this year AEIOU Foundation invited everyone to the party with a Family Fun Day in South Brisbane on Sunday 29 April.

The free *Let's Get Awesome for Autism* community event included plenty of activities suitable for the whole family, including a tailored Ginger Sport program, African Drumming, Ocean Life Marine Interaction, jumping castle, face painting, craft and food trucks. Thanks also goes to Rotary for assisting on the day.

Special guests included Federal Assistant Minister for Disability Services Jane Prentice, Seven News sports journalist and AEIOU ambassador, Pat Welsh and former AEIOU parent Paulette Moser, who used the event to launch her book, *Turning Turtle*, a firsthand account of the hardships and triumphs of parenting triplets, two with autism.

Coronis Golf Day

Children with autism on the Sunshine Coast are now having a whole lot more fun with updated play facilities, thanks to a \$22,000 donation from Coronis North Lakes.



A cheque with the proceedings from the inaugural Coronis Golf Day was presented to AEIOU's Sippy Downs centre, following the graduation and Christmas party.

Coronis staged the event to support staff Adam and Toni Empringham, whose son attends the Sippy Downs centre.

Do-A-Trek

On Sunday October 8, leaders in Queensland's engineering industry laced up their boots for the inaugural Do-a-Trek for Autism, a challenging 42km hike from Mt Glorious to Brisbane.

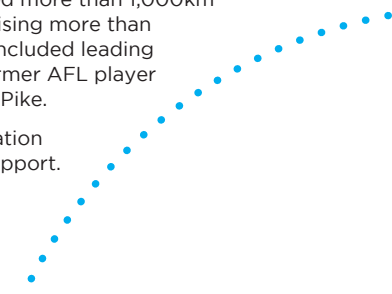
With their focus on supporting children with autism at AEIOU Foundation, the participants undertook the challenge to raise awareness and much-needed funds for the foundation to help these kids reach their full potential through access to early intervention.

Chain Reaction

In March, cyclists tackling New Zealand's tough terrain in this year's Chain Reaction Ultimate Corporate Bike Challenge broke fundraising records, providing unprecedented support to chosen charities AEIOU Foundation and Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland.

The group of Queensland riders cycled more than 1,000km from Christchurch to Queenstown, raising more than \$1.34 million. The 58-strong peloton included leading Queensland executives along with former AFL player Jamie Charman and cricketer Kirsten Pike.

AEIOU thanks Chain Reaction Foundation for their ongoing commitment and support.



SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Social media allows AEIOU to connect and share our story with current and potential families, generous donors, and the wider community. It's no surprise our top performing Facebook posts are videos of our little superstars reaching milestones. We encourage you to follow along and keep up-to-date with all our news. You can find our Facebook page at facebook.com/AEIOUFoudation and Instagram at [@aeioufoundation](https://www.instagram.com/aeioufoundation). In 2017/2018 we reached hundreds of new people, gained greater awareness and realised the potential of our digital assets.



Facebook

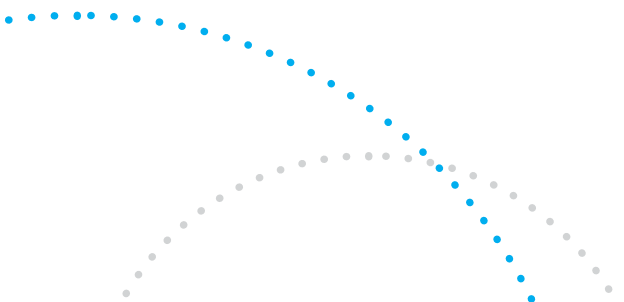
Total page likes: 13,679

Website visitors from social media: 7,769



Top 8 performing Facebook posts

<p>18 May</p> <p>Prime Minister visits Bray Park</p> <p>10,358 reach 2,114 clicks 232 likes 20 comments 33 shares</p>	<p>1 May</p> <p>39th year - 2018 Rotary Art Spectacular</p> <p>9,772 reach 508 clicks 81 likes 1 comments 8 shares</p>	<p>16 April</p> <p>Hello Africa drumming for Let's get awesome for Autism</p> <p>8,461 reach 247 clicks 20 likes 0 comments 2 shares</p>	<p>2 April</p> <p>Happy Autism Awareness Day!</p> <p>7,071 reach 168 clicks 123 likes 0 comments 47 shares</p>
<p>21 November</p> <p>Charlie introduces himself</p> <p>9,739 reach 2,324 clicks 266 likes 60 comments 32 shares</p>	<p>8 September</p> <p>William the carrot conqueror</p> <p>14,880 reach 1,517 clicks 251 likes 27 comments 51 shares</p>	<p>29 August</p> <p>William recites his favourite story</p> <p>10,163 reach 1,160 clicks 215 likes 18 comments 18 shares</p>	<p>14 August</p> <p>Tammie & Oliver</p> <p>18,293 reach 1,761 clicks 200 likes 13 comments 71 shares</p>



SUMMARY FINANCIALS

Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Revenue	2	17,486,605	13,817,090
Less: expenses			
Employee benefits expense		(11,336,652)	(10,600,319)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(639,485)	(414,425)
Occupancy expense		(399,469)	(296,330)
Advertising expense		(139,725)	(100,518)
Event costs		(228,053)	(293,666)
Repairs, maintenance and cleaning expenses		(298,981)	(295,204)
Travel costs		(102,040)	(61,057)
Insurance expense		(130,447)	(140,042)
Bad and doubtful debts		(361,189)	(4,230)
Professional services fees		(251,305)	(202,542)
Telecommunication expenses		(148,223)	(148,047)
Loss on disposal of plant and equipment		(230,562)	(2,303)
Motor vehicle expenses		(49,608)	(36,528)
Classroom and education		(60,430)	(64,443)
Finance costs		(41,338)	(402)
Other expenses		(750,932)	(784,126)
		(15,168,439)	(13,444,182)
Surplus for the year	3	2,318,166	372,908
Other comprehensive income			
<i>Items that will not be reclassified to profit and loss</i>			
Revaluation of property, plant and equipment, net of tax		-	821,297
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	821,297
Total comprehensive income		2,318,166	1,194,205

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2018	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,714,786	2,084,818
Receivables	5	527,777	356,185
Other assets	6	101,840	160,509
Total current assets		2,344,403	2,601,512
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	7	14,120,772	10,839,510
Intangible assets	8	15,240	23,306
Total non-current assets		14,136,012	10,862,816
Total assets		16,480,415	13,464,328
Current liabilities			
Payables	9	1,035,900	893,862
Borrowings	10		7,899
Provisions	11	451,658	400,753
Other liabilities	12	168,254	233,958
Total current liabilities		1,655,812	1,536,472
Non-current liabilities			
Borrowings	10	502,381	15,022
Provisions	11	192,765	197,161
Other liabilities	12	95,618	
Total non-current liabilities		790,764	212,183
Total liabilities		2,446,576	1,748,655
Net assets		14,033,839	11,715,673
Equity			
Reserves	13	5,114,061	5,114,061
Retained surplus	14	8,919,778	6,601,612
Total equity		14,033,839	11,715,673



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