



2024 - 2027

Strategic Plan



setting the context

STAR Victoria was established in 1970 when parents of people with an intellectual disability recognised, as they were trying to improve the circumstances for their own children, that it was essential to change community attitudes to intellectual disability.

Then, as now, we are committed to equity and full community inclusion and participation for people with intellectual disability, from pre-school through to adult education and employment, recreation, and all aspects of ordinary life.

We have celebrated many successes, including the closing of institutions and ending forced sterilisation of women with intellectual disability. STAR has played a leading role in the transition toward inclusive schooling and support for self-advocacy by those with intellectual disability. We have been present and active through periods of immense change in our sector, and we are respected by decision makers for the depth of our knowledge and quality of our advice.

We also know that much remains to be done. Changing community attitudes underpins all our work, yet people with intellectual disability are still marginalised and forced to the fringes from early in life.

The introduction of the NDIS has changed how people with disability access supports and services, giving them consumer power and rights. However, the foundations for inclusion go well beyond the scope of the NDIS and require support in all areas of life, starting with education, and into adulthood, meaningful employment, parenthood, and dignity in later years.



The **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability** exposed chronic failures in how people with disability access supports, education and employment, and the discrimination they face despite advances in technology and international recognition of their human rights. There were many examples of exploitation by newly established NDIS service providers, caused largely by a failure to provide effective consumer protections for people with disability who for the first time had consumer power but little experience in how to use their consumer rights.

In this period of significant change for people with disability, this strategic plan builds on and reinforces STAR Victoria's priorities and gives us clear direction to increase our impact and work with our partners and stakeholders to achieve our goals.

The next three years will set us many challenges – and many opportunities. The following pages set out our strategic plan and what it means for STAR Victoria. This plan balances our ambitions with what is achievable and sets a clear course for STAR now and in future years. We have focused on where STAR Victoria's unique experience and strengths can make a real difference for people with intellectual disability, and their families.



John Slattery
President



James Teeken
Vice-President

Who we are

STAR Victoria is an independent community organisation, based in Victoria, dedicated to working with people who have an intellectual disability and their families. We work together to speak up for their rights, to fix the laws that stop them from living fully inclusive lives of their own choosing and to change community attitudes towards people with intellectual disability.



What we do

We share information and skills and build capacity with people with intellectual disability, their families and support networks. We advocate for change using evidence-based research, case studies, policy proposals and presenting the case for change to decision makers, including government, agencies and service providers. We share the stories of real people from our individual advocacy to highlight the barriers that people with intellectual disability experience, and their successes and contribution to society. We encourage champions for change to help us change the views of those who don't realise that discrimination and exclusion are making our communities weaker.



our vision

same rights, same value, same worth, all people.

An inclusive, equitable and respectful society where people with intellectual disability and their families are able to fully participate and have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

our values

STAR is guided by the principles of equity, justice, accessibility and inclusion, and the guiding principles described in our Constitution.

We are



Respectful

We treat all people with dignity and value.



Inclusive

We believe that all people have a right to be appreciated as valuable members of our community.



Passionate

We are committed in heart and mind to the goals of STAR Victoria.



Collaborative

We openly work with and support others to achieve our goals.



Honest

We are transparent about our work and what we have achieved.

our organisational goals

To be a voice for people with intellectual disability and their families by:



Campaigning for change to laws, policies and practices that give people with an intellectual disability and their families the right to live their lives the way they want to.

Supporting people with intellectual disability and their families to be effective advocates through individual advocacy and support.



To be a resilient and effective organisation, we need a strong financial base, an engaged and active membership and Committee of Management, and a reputable public profile with key stakeholders.

our strategic priorities

1. parents with intellectual disability

STAR works to systematically create changes in policy and practice that supports, informs, enables, encourages and assists parents with intellectual disability to have the same rights as anyone else.

What we aim to achieve: Changes in practices and policies for parents with intellectual disability through Child Protection and the courts to protect their rights consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability (UNCRPD) and the Charter of Rights for Parents and Carers with Disabilities Involved with Child Protection in Victoria.

We will do this by:

- Using the lived experience of parents with intellectual disability to challenge unfair laws, policies and practices.
- Identifying and partnering with other organisations to maximise reach and influence.
- Strengthening our relationship with courts and Child Protection to influence the change.

2. inclusive education

STAR supports the rights of children and young people with intellectual disability to participate and be welcomed into inclusive mainstream schooling.

What we aim to achieve: inclusive education for all children and young people.

We will do this by:

- Promoting the benefits of inclusive education.
- Working with government to change policy settings and redirect resources from specialist schools to mainstream.
- Providing information to parents, educators and inclusive education champions.

our strategic priorities

3. empowering people

STAR recognises the expertise of people experiencing inequality due to their disability and will use their lived experience to challenge the laws and policies that prevent them from living the life they want to live.

What we aim to achieve: Disability is no longer a barrier to people having the right to choose their own life path and goals.

We will do this by:

- Building a team of self advocates who can tell their stories in their own way as champions for change.
- Building a supporter base in government, business and civil society to challenge prejudice against people with intellectual disability.
- Engaging in public and policy debates for and with people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

4. our team

We will support people to speak up for their rights and be powerful change agents.

What we aim to achieve: A stable team of staff, volunteers and self-advocates, including people with intellectual disability, speaking up for change and informing STAR's systemic advocacy work.

We will do this by:

- Providing training and mentoring programs for staff, volunteers and self-advocates.
- Creating spaces and opportunities for them to speak out.
- Appointing dedicated staff to support our work.

our strategic priorities

5. our members

We know our membership makes us strong. That's why we will refresh and rebuild STAR's membership base and volunteers.

What we aim to achieve:

- members who are committed to inclusion and the goals of STAR Victoria.
- members who are engaged in STAR's work as active volunteers.

We will do this by:

- Sharing positive and useful information to members through newsletters, social media and events.
- Providing meaningful opportunities to contribute as a volunteer to our activities.
- Forming relationships with high profile individuals to help champion change.

6. our team

STAR is a resilient and vibrant organisation. We are visible in our community and a thought leader in the debates around the rights and interests of people with intellectual disability and their families. We have financial stability and diversity of income to support new and existing projects.

What we aim to achieve:

- Identify new income sources to support our work.
- Grow our income and capacity to deliver across the range of activities described in this plan.

We will do this by:

- Maintaining positive and respectful relationships with our core and project funders.
- Acquitting all grants on time.
- Maintaining and publishing accurate financial records and reports.
- Seeking funding for projects aligned with our priorities.