



# AGOSCI

## BUSINESS PLAN *2015-2020*

## **1. PURPOSE OF BUSINESS PLAN**

This Business Plan is a set of management decisions created to ensure that AGOSCI is successful in achieving its goals over the next five years. Input into the business plan has come from the leadership team, and the goals identified by AGOSCI's members. It states what AGOSCI plans to do, how it will do it and what it needs to achieve it.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

AGOSCI (formerly Australian Group on Severe Communication Impairment) was founded in 1981 by a group of professionals who saw the need to promote information exchange about severe communication impairment (now known as complex communication needs) and issues related to people with Complex Communication Needs (CCN). The first meeting was held in that year in Brisbane, at the Australian Association of Speech and Hearing Conference.

AGOSCI aims to lobby for the rights of people with CCN, increase public awareness of CCN and to provide relevant educational and professional development events across Australian networks.

Membership of AGOSCI is for all people impacted by CCN including people with CCN, family members, and relevant professionals.

It is managed by a leadership team with executive and non-executive members and takes input from its broad membership base.

### 3. PURPOSE OF THE ORGANISATION

The AGOSCI statement of purpose is:

*AGOSCI is a national inclusive organisation with the focus on addressing the impact of complex communication needs on individuals, their families, workplaces and society.*

*Our vision is that people with Complex Communication Needs participate fully in all aspects of life. We aim to build capacity of society to achieve our vision.*

*AGOSCI meets its aims through a range of activities including:*

- *Hosting of conferences promoting best practice in management of Complex Communication Needs.*
- *Provision of professional development activities*
- *Systemic advocacy around issues relating to Complex Communication Needs*
- *Hosting activities which provide opportunities for the community to engage in sharing information around Complex Communication Needs.*

The aims of AGOSCI are:

- Education for professionals, people with CCN, and the wider community, about CCN
- Communication Access for all
- Sharing of information among all persons involved with CCN

AGOSCI is voluntarily run, and is a non-profit organisation. It is an interest group, and not a professional association, so it strives to be inclusive of all people connected to the CCN field.

## 4. EXECUTIVE

The AGOSCI leadership team currently consists of:

1. Executive Committee
  - a. Chairperson
  - b. Secretary
  - c. Treasurer
  - d. 8 x State/Territory Representatives – one for each state unless otherwise shared; and Vic State Rep is also the *Consumer Affairs Victoria Secretary* (see later)
  - e. Editor of the In-Focus magazine
  - f. A consumer representative
2. The PD (professional development) Coordinator
3. The AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) Communities Coordinator
4. Other (as deemed appropriate in the future)

This team provide a focus for developing AGOSCI and for organising AGOSCI activities on both a state and national level. It conducts general meetings regularly; it endeavours to meet in person once per year, and via teleconference once every 6-10 weeks.

### Roles:

1. The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer fulfil traditional expected committee roles
2. State Reps have a targeted responsibility to:
  - a. Actively promote the aims of AGOSCI in their state/territory
  - b. Maintain and build AGOSCI membership
  - c. Develop forums for networking and sharing information
  - d. Organise state events

- e. Organise the National Tour within their state/territory
  - f. Attend AGOSCI Executive Teleconferences. If the Representative is unable to attend, a delegate should attend
  - g. Submit a state/territory report for each AGOSCI In Focus
  - h. Encourage AGOSCI members to submit articles for inclusion in the AGOSCI In Focus
  - i. Follow financial guidelines as set out in the Treasurer's Package
  - j. State Reps may also take on an additional portfolio role
3. Editor of In-Focus Magazine
- a. To undertake all actions to publish two editions of the magazine per year
  - b. To engage with an editorial committee to support editing – this committee is nominated by the Editor, and endorsed by the Executive
4. PD coordinator
- a. To negotiate with speakers of distinction in the field of CCN for National Tours and Conferences to presenting in Australia
  - b. To formally invite, liaise and support invited speakers
  - c. To liaise with the executive and conference event organisers
  - d. Can be supported by a PD Coordinator Assistant if needed
5. The consumer representative
- a. provision for a dedicated voice for people with CCN in all decisions made in AGOSCI
  - b. assist in increasing the membership of those who use AAC
6. AAC Communities Coordinator – to support the linking of the people with similar needs and interests in the Australian AAC community.



## Consumer Affairs Victoria Secretary (formerly known as the Public Officer)

AGOSCI is incorporated with Consumer Affairs Victoria. Consumer Affairs Victoria recently changed the title of the contact person from Public Officer to Secretary. The CAV Secretary role is to:

- lodge an annual statement with CAV within a month after the annual general meeting
- apply to CAV to change the association's name or rules
- notify CAV of:
  1. a change to the association's registered address
  2. their appointment as secretary or any changes to their details
  3. a special resolution to wind up the association or distribute its assets
- dealing with requests to restrict access to information in the association's register of members
- adding or removing delegates of the association

## Current portfolios

1. Listserve and website – currently with WA state rep
2. Scholarships – currently with Tasmanian state rep
3. Mentoring – currently with NSW state rep
4. Social Media – currently across Victoria, SA, and NSW state reps

## **5. STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS**

AGOSCI has a number of strategic documents that support its business:

1. Statement of Purpose
2. Rules of the Association

These are available for perusal via the organisations website.

## 6. KEY AREAS OF INTEREST FOR AGOSCI

Implementation of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (for example):

- Signing and gesture systems
- Low/light technology communication options
- Voice output technology including speech generating devices, software and apps for mobile devices
- Switching and mounting options for technology

Mealtime issues related to disability

Saliva Control

Encouraging research

Consumer advocacy and stories

Literacy and AAC

## 7. MEMBERSHIP

Anyone interested in complex communication needs can become a member. This includes people with complex communication needs, family and community members, organisations, and professionals (such as teachers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and rehabilitation engineers).



Membership numbers for the past five years are:

2014 = 230

2013 = 180

2012 = 326

2011 = 288

2010 = 320

Membership benefits includes

- Twice yearly AGOSCI In Focus magazine
- Discounted rates for AGOSCI events – the National Tour, the biennial conference, and other professional development event.
- Access to apply for scholarships

## **8. COMMUNICATIONS**

AGOSCI has a number of formats for information exchange.

1. Website

The website has been operational for 6 years. This provides an opportunity for AGOSCI to publicise itself, and act as a source of information for members and the community.



## 2. Listserv

This has provided a forum for the wider AAC community for 11 years. It is accessible to members and non-members alike. Use of the listserv for non-members is an encouragement for them to consider membership in the future. Social Media use guidelines support listserv users to communicate effectively and safely.

## 3. Social Media

AGOSCI has had two Facebook pages for 4 years. One is an information page, while the other acts as a discussion forum page. AGOSCI also started a Twitter account 3 years ago.

## 4. In-Focus magazine

The magazine has been an important part of AGOSCI since 1982. It has remained popular in despite the advent of electronic communication formats.

## GOALS OF THE ORGANISATION

The AGOSCI executive consulted the AGOSCI listserv in 2014 to ascertain direction for the organisation. Members of the listserv are a mix of AGOSCI members and non-members. 114 people responded and about 75% of respondents were members.

The executive discussed the feedback, and finalised the following organisational strategic goals:

- 1. Membership**
- 2. Information exchange**
- 3. Scholarships and grants**
- 4. Advocacy and support**
- 5. Financial sustainability**
- 6. Learning and Development**

## 1. MEMBERSHIP

GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHO	OUTCOMES	WHEN	BUDGET
<p>a. To continue to maintain membership database.</p> <p>b. To build current membership numbers</p> <p>c. To attract a wider cross section of those interested to the membership</p> <p>d. Find ways to make membership easy and attractive for people with CCN</p> <p>e. To increase access to information about AGOSCI available to members and potential members, particularly focussing on regional areas</p> <p>f. Update the organisation's pamphlet</p>	<p>a) Creation of membership databases for each State and Territory within each State and Territory. These should offer information of addresses., contact numbers and email addresses</p> <p>b) Membership information to be retrieved from the AGOSCI website through a secure section.</p> <p>c) Membership forms are always available at State activities including network meetings, PD events and the National Tour.</p> <p>d) Create new member's package to be distributed to new members including an electronic version.</p> <p>e) Update AGOSCI PowerPoint package for use to promote AGOSCI</p> <p>f) Updated pamphlet to be distributed to new members and interested people, such as sponsors of conferences and state and territory events</p> <p>g) Explore options for setting up electronic membership form on the website with payment facilities (including credit card) available</p>	Executive and leadership team	As per goals	ongoing	nil

## 2. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHO	OUTCOMES	WHEN	BUDGET
1. Maintain web page that contains information regarding national and state news and other relevant information and links	a) Maintain <a href="http://www.agosci.org.au">www.agosci.org.au</a> b) Seek better access methods to the website for people with disabilities c) Continue to gather new information to be placed on website d) Seek support from web host on how to make our site more affordable and efficient	WA state reps  Executive and leadership team	As per goal	Ongoing	\$1850
2. Maintain and update Social Media use in AGOSCI	Continue to support the AGOSCI community communication strategy by promoting, monitoring, and maintaining the Facebook and Twitter accounts.  Consider merging our 2 Facebook accounts – one is for posting information, and the other acts as a forum.	Vic state rep  SA state rep  Executive and leadership team	As per goal	Ongoing	nil
3. Continue with production of the In-focus magazine twice yearly	a) Remain an affiliated publication of ISAAC b) Continue to pay an editor to put the magazine together	In-Focus editor  Executive and leadership team	Publish two editions per year	Annual	\$8000 per annum
4. To maintain listserve in its current format	a) Continue to maintain as a forum for support and discussion amongst members and the broader Australian AAC community b) Continue to have a moderator to support adherence to rules of use	WA reps  Executive and leadership team	As per goal	Ongoing	Nil – hosted by ILC WA

### 3. SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHO	OUTCOME	WHEN	BUDGET
1. To administer all aspects of scholarships and grants offered by AGOSCI to people with CCN.	a) Develop and document effective processes for scholarships and grants including procedural steps, timelines, roles and responsibilities	Tasmanian rep  Executive and leadership team	Scholarships and grants successfully awarded.	Ongoing every 2 years	nil
2. To support attendance of people with CCN, their families and carers at AGOSCI conferences and National Tour	a) Determine guidelines and selection criteria b) Draft application forms and prepare letters c) Advertise Consumer Scholarship in the AGOSCI In-Focus and on the AGOSCI Website and listserve. d) To continue to allocate AGOSCI funds toward scholarship use e) Concession rates available for all events.	Tasmanian rep  Executive and leadership team  Conference organising committee	Clear information forwarded to interested applicants in a timely fashion  Scholarships awarded	Ongoing every 2 years	10% AGOSCI's cash in bank at end of year preceding conference year.
3. Evaluate existing scholarships and grants, and re-structure to reflect current areas of need	a) Collect data on scholarships and grants awarded in last 5 years  b) Research current unmet needs by reviewing requests for funds form individuals and groups in last 5 years	Executive and leadership team	Increased level of support to target groups and individuals through scholarships and grants.	ongoing	nil
4. To monitor new opportunities for grants that will help AGOSCI further its cause	a) To continually monitor government and philanthropic bodies for new grant opportunities as they arise	Executive and leadership team	More grant funding comes into the organisation so that our purpose is furthered.	ongoing	nil

## 4. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHO	OUTCOME	WHEN	BUDGET
1. For AGOSCI to maintain financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Consider membership fees regularly</li> <li>b) Consider future possibilities to support the Australian AAC community in a NDIS world.</li> <li>c) Consider appropriate fees for workshops and conference so that the membership is encouraged to attend, yet the organisation remains viable</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per goal	Ongoing	nil
2. Seek DGR status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To follow through with legal support to get AGOSCI registered with DGR Status so it can receive tax deductible donations in the future</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per goal	2015	\$5000

## 5. ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHO	OUTCOMES	WHEN	BUDGET
1. To increase public awareness about people with complex communication needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Maintain links with professional organisations (such as Speech Pathology Australia) and other bodies (such as ISAAC) to promote complex communication needs (CCN)</li> <li>b) Offer members the opportunity to coordinate an organisational response when governing bodies seek feedback from relevant organisation.</li> <li>c) Maintain website, listserv, Facebook, and PD opportunities.</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per strategies	Ongoing	nil
2. Create an AAC Communities Coordinator	To create a contact point, supporter, and creator of AAC communities in Australia so they can be better supports for each other	<p>AAC Communities Coordinator</p> <p>Executive and leadership team</p>	As per goal	2015	attendance at NCMs ~ \$500pp (depending on flights/accommodation needs)
3. To increase the influence that people with CCN have in AGOSCI	<p>Appoint and support ongoing rep on the AGOSCI executive</p> <p>Continue to have information and supports that are relevant to people with CCN</p>	<p>Person with CCN rep</p> <p>Executive and leadership team</p>	As per strategy	2015	As per item 2
4. To monitor the portfolios of work allocated, and adjust accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To regularly evaluate the needs of current portfolios</li> <li>b) To consider new portfolios as needs arise – such as Patron, and NDIS.</li> <li>c) To monitor the capacity of portfolio work of the state reps</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per strategy	Ongoing	Nil
5. To provide mentoring opportunities for people working in the field of CCN.	To setup a mentoring program for all AGOSCI members, where experienced people can provide support to less experienced members.	Executive and leadership team NSW rep	As per strategy	2016	nil
6. To explore ways to improve AGOSCI's lobbying potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) to explore the roles that a lobbyist could play for AGOSCI and its members into the future</li> <li>b) to explore the financial viability of employing a lobbyist</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per the strategy	2017	Unknown at this stage.
7. For AGOSCI to stay	a) to consider AGOSCI's future role within an NDIS model	Executive and	As per the	2016-	Unknown at

informed and respond accordingly to the needs of people with CCN in the NDIS.	b) to respond with changes accordingly with regards to the needs of its members, people with CCN, and the public	leadership team	strategy	2019	this stage.
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## 6. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHO	OUTCOME	WHEN	BUDGET
1.Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to promote the conference as Australia's leading AAC conference promoting best practice, development of skills and knowledge, and networking.</li> <li>b) Continue with biennial format</li> <li>c) Continue to rotate around Australia</li> <li>d) Consider remote or less populated states for a future conference – Tasmania or WA</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	Conference occurs every 2 years	Biennial	approx \$200,000 expenditure. Aim is to break even at minimum. \$10,000 profit is goal to meet annual running expenses.
2.National tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue with biennial national tour, to alternate with the conference</li> <li>b) Consider streaming into an advanced and beginners to cater for the diverse needs of the membership</li> <li>c) Consider formats to promote wider access to workshop, including live streaming or video teleconference</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	National Tour occurs every 2 years	Biennial	Approx \$30,000 expenditure. Aim is to break even at minimum. \$10,000 profit is goal to meet annual running expenses.
3.Other workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to host other workshops as supply and availability deems possible</li> <li>b) 'Set up and implement a process for listing other events related to AGOSCI's key areas of interest on the website</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	Workshops offered regularly	Ongoing	Cost neutral. Lit intensive ~\$30,000 expenditure, projected income ~\$7,000
4.Information formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to seek information about increasing accessibility to people who cannot attend PD in person, such as webinars, video recording of presentations, etc...</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per strategy	ongoing	Nil
5. To continue to consider the networking, support, skill and knowledge needs of people with CCN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) to liaise with the AAC Community Coordinator</li> <li>b) to consider opportunities for people with CCN to meet face to face</li> <li>c) to link people with CCN within the Mentoring program</li> </ul>	Executive and leadership team	As per strategy	Ongoing	Nil

