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Our Board

Peter Withy
Chair

Matthew Holden
Treasurer and Deputy Chair

Melvin Mansell
Board Member

Juliette East
Board Member

Jonathan Bands
Board Member

Kirin Sampson
Board Member

Our Team

Kate Ellis
Chief Executive Officer

Julia Jones
Director of Operations
& Early Childhood

Abbey Belton
Project Officer

Bec Hughes
Director of Professional Learning

Brodie Evitts
Professional Development Officer

Janet Leske
Manager, Read to Me
& Community Programs

Alyson O’Brien
Publishing Director,
Little Book Press

Cathy Beckwith
Graphic Designer

Nathalia Veras
Digital Marketing Officer

Joe Cook
Stock and Distribution Manager

Bianca Watson
Business Support Officer



Who is Raising Literacy Australia?

Raising Literacy Australia (RLA) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to enriching children's lives through literacy. We promote and help to develop early childhood literacy right across Australia.

We support families to read, talk, play, and sing with their children from birth through universal and targeted programs. We do this by

providing books and resources to nurture the development of young children and provide information for parents to encourage rich home learning environments.

In 2020, RLA celebrated its 15th birthday. Over this time, we have established picture book libraries in vulnerable communities, created new picture books for our free

Reading Pack program, and gifted over two million books to South Australian families.

By purchasing books through our publishing arm – Little Book Press and through your generous donations, we can continue developing early childhood literacy across Australia.

We aim to nurture children's literacy development and help to establish a love of books.

Our Vision

Every child thrives in their early years and develops strong foundations for lifelong learning

Our Mission

Improve children's neurodevelopment through early language and literacy development and break cycles of disadvantage by providing integrated educational support, programs and resources to families, children and communities.

Chair's Report

Positive evolution.

That is a fair summation of the 23/24 financial year at Raising Literacy Australia.

We started the year strongly thanks to the sound foundations of the 22/23 year which saw us move from some financial uncertainty to one of security for our range of programmes.

It also marked our more formal involvement in the world of book retailing with Little Book Press becoming a client of Affirm, a publishing and distribution organisation based in Melbourne. A raft of new titles and an exciting troupe of new artists and writers will be gracing stores such as Kmart in the years to come.

Our Professional Learning arm moved from strength to strength in the Victorian School Readiness system, now broadcast from our new premises at Hilton.

The windows of our premises proudly showcase the Words Grow Minds marketing campaign which will enter its second year; a campaign

that is the public affirmation of how fourteen organisations involved in zero to three learning, plus a farsighted State Government, can come together to create a culture of talking, singing, reading and playing with children from birth.

For this successful year, we publicly thank and congratulate our small but tireless team led by never-say-never Kate Ellis.

I believe our Board played our role in the year, a Board that believes in participation rather than pontification, and I would like to thank Matthew Holden (Vice-Chair and Treasurer), Juliette East, Kirrin Sampson, Melvin Mansell and Jonathan Bands.

Finally, our thanks to everyone who assisted with everything from invaluable guidance to highly valued funds and please, stick with us, as we grow in a world finally learning the incredible value of early education.

Peter Withy
Chair



CEO Report

If 2022/23 was a year of change, 2023/24 has instead been one of growth and new opportunities for Raising Literacy Australia.

Following the compelling evaluation of our Words Grow Minds program pilots, the South Australian Government have now supported us to roll out Words Grow Minds right across the state. This has included a comprehensive media campaign with our characters Bobble and Bib spreading the word about the importance of early childhood brain development across our televisions, radio stations, billboards, buses and trams.

We have also developed a suite of free, online professional development modules to ensure that all professionals working with children under 3 and their families are delivering consistent messaging about the power of positive interactions in the early years.

Complimenting these initiatives we worked to develop, produce and distribute 21,000 resource packs ensuring that families across South Australia literally have all the tools they need to talk, read, sing and play with their baby every day. These packs are in addition to the book bags delivered to every

baby born in South Australia and every child in an approved pre-school program.

Whilst we have been flooded with positive feedback about the program we are working with The Kids Institute to monitor the introduction of the program and ensure that we can robustly evaluate its effectiveness and impact on children across South Australia.

Raising Literacy Australia's publishing house, Little Book Press has also had a recent expansion in both sales and reach. After establishing ourselves with a mission to focus on quality early childhood picture books, we have now worked to ensure that more children in more parts of Australia get a chance to enjoy these publications. We have partnered with Affirm Press who are now distributing Little Book Press books to bookstores and libraries right around the country. This has led to great results for our authors and illustrators who benefit from increased royalties, great news for the children who are loving our publications and also for our important early literacy programs who benefit from any increase in sales. The Little Book Press commitment to high quality publishing has once again

been recognised in national awards with Mike Dumbleton and Lucinda Gifford's *Hair* making the Notables List for the Children's Book Council of Australia awards.

The Read To Me program holds a special place in our hearts here at RLA. In partnership with Department of Child Protection this program ensures that every young child in out of home care gets access to regular deliveries of quality books to wherever they are located. We have been delighted that the Lang Family Foundation have supported us to expand this program to now also include play adjuncts and activities. We know that this addition will further increase the amount of time that children and their carers spend bonding together and improve outcomes for these children.

Finally this year we have seen a huge increase in the uptake of our professional learning programs. We have seen increased demand for all five of the workshops that we offer to early childhood educators and library staff on the foundations of early literacy. We have also seen large growth in our Building Home Libraries program which is our most intensive program focussing on providing

multilayered support and regular book gifting for vulnerable children.

As always we would like to thank our partners in the South Australian Government, News Corp and the incredibly generous program partners at Variety SA, Carthew Foundation,

Cochrane's Transport and the Lang Family Foundation for all of their support. I would also like to recognise the mighty efforts of our amazing team of staff and volunteers on making this such a successful year.

As we look forward to the year ahead we are keen to solidify

the big steps taken over the year and also look to expand our focus on outreach to vulnerable communities and the children who can benefit from our work the most.

Kate Ellis
CEO



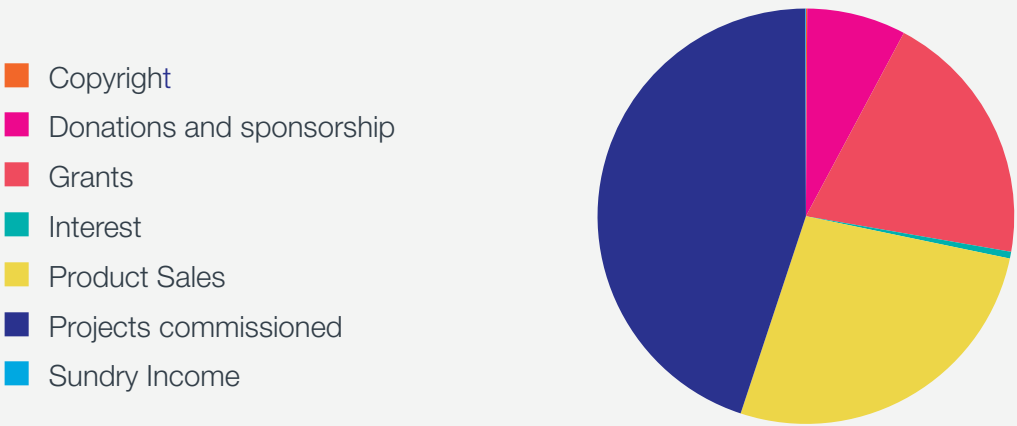
Financial Report

The financial position of Raising Literacy Australia Inc. continued to strengthen in 2024. Funding for our projects, particularly the Words Grow Minds program, was the major source of revenue. This was supported by increased Product Sales via our Little Book Press initiatives, and crucial support from sponsors and donors. We do expect our revenue may reduce in the next few years, as several key projects reach their conclusion. The team are working hard to secure funding for additional projects which will further support our organisational goals and objectives.

Revenue

INCOME	2024	2023	Variance
Copyright	3,783	4,363	(580)
Donations & Sponsorships	286,802	83,843	202,959
Grants	744,275	700,024	44,251
Interest	19,573	5,327	14,246
Product Sales	999,896	410,878	589,018
Projects Commissioned	1,673,841	704,255	969,586
Sundry Income	1,888	-	1,888
Total	3,730,058	1,908,690	1,821,368

Breakdown of 2024 Revenue



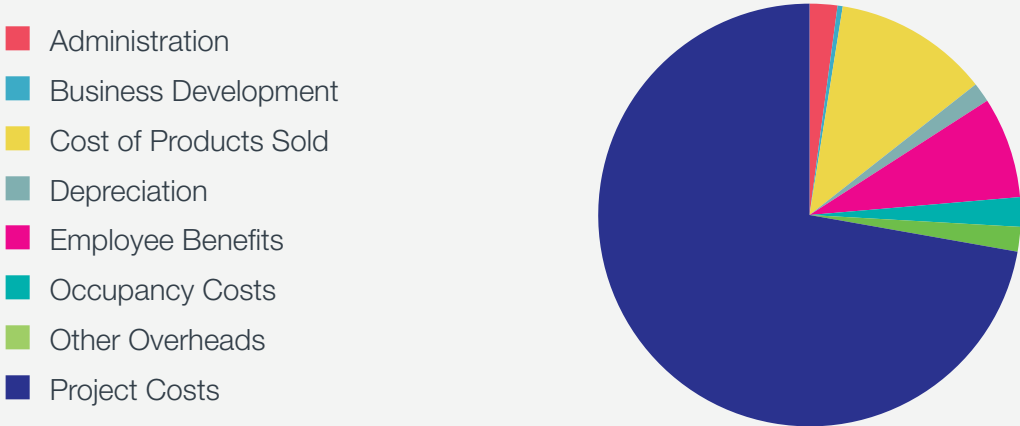
With the additional revenue received by RLA, it was imperative that this funding was directed towards projects. With additional revenue from Projects Commissioned of \$969,586, we saw additional expenditure on Project Costs of \$1,032,650 – representing a greater than \$1 for \$1 commitment towards new projects from the funding sourced.

RLA has experienced significant changes in its overhead structure over the recent years, including moving to new premises, our own warehouse facilities and additional staffing costs to support the organisation overall. Pleasingly, when assessing these costs as a percent of our overall revenue, costs such as Administration and Employee Benefits are kept to a manageable level, which means more funds are directed towards our programs.

Expenditure

EXPENDITURE	2024	2023	Variance
Administration	68,680	44,428	24,252
Business Development	12,792	73,288	-60,496
Cost of Products Sold	384,324	170,284	214,040
Depreciation	48,660	26,611	22,049
Employee Benefits	250,425	248,120	2,305
Occupancy Costs	72,678	28,617	44,061
Other Overheads	61,027	52,844	8,183
Project Costs	2,335,853	1,303,203	1,032,650
Total	3,234,439	1,947,395	1,287,044

Breakdown of 2024 Expenditure



Summary

Overall, the 2024 financial year saw Raising Literacy Australia Inc. record an overall net surplus of \$495,619. This represents a \$534,324 turnaround from the previous year position of a \$38,705 loss (after restatement). This outcome is just reward for the passion and drive which continues to be shown by our growing team.

The surplus has allowed RLA to invest in the team and infrastructure it requires to continue to deliver great outcomes to the community, while retaining a healthy cash balance to ensure future stability.

We are anticipating that future years may not see a similar result, therefore it has been important to preserve funding to allow projects to continue in years where funding is reduced.

Our recent Strategic Planning sessions are helping to shape and identify future opportunities to grow our organisation and further strengthen our Balance Sheet to ensure successful long-term outcomes.

Matthew Holden
Treasurer

Founding and Program Partners

We couldn't do what we do without a range of founding and program partners:

Founding Partners

State Government of South Australia

News Corp, Australia

Program Partners

Department for Education

Department for Child Protection

Variety SA, the children's charity

Carthew Foundation

Cochrane's Transport

Lang Family Foundation



Little Book Press

Recent Releases

