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2025-26
Annual Report

Advancing excellence in
learning for a better future

Contents

1 National President's Report

3 CEO's Report

4 A Year of Capability and Growth

5 Strengthening Membership and Community Value

6 AITD Conference 2026

7 Excellence Awards 2026

8 Local Leadership, National Connection

9 Learning and Development Activities

10 Research, Advocacy and Professional Leadership

10 Governance, Team and Leadership

12 Our team and professional partners

14 Our Strategic Focus Ahead



National President's Report

Stewardship, community and the contribution of our volunteers

As I reflect on the 2025–26 financial year, the word that keeps coming to mind is maturity.

This year has been less about launching the new and more about building depth into the foundations we have already put in place — as an organisation and as a Board.

For the first time in many years, AITD has a full Board, with representation from every state across Australia. We have benefited from the continuity and experience of returning Directors, alongside new Directors who have brought fresh perspectives, new ideas and different experiences to our conversations. Together, this combination has strengthened the depth of our discussions, challenged our thinking and helped us continue to mature as a Board.

That same sense of maturity can be seen across AITD.

Following the launch of our Capability Framework and Capability Assessment last year, we have continued to develop tools and resources to help members put the Framework into practice. Importantly, we have used data from the Capability Assessment to better understand where our members want to build their capability and used those insights to shape our learning offering. The courses developed in response have proven very popular, reinforcing the value of listening to our members and using evidence to guide where we focus our efforts.

We have continued to grow our partnerships, building on strong foundations of trust and mutual purpose. Our Annual Conference returned to Brisbane for the first time in many years and, together with the Excellence Awards, was a wonderful success. It was particularly pleasing to see the support of our local Divisional Council members, who generously provided their time and energy both in the lead-up to and throughout the event.

We also received a record number of nominations for our Emerging Professional Scholarship. Having expanded the scholarship last year to reach a broader group of people building their careers in Learning and Development, it has been wonderful to see that opportunity embraced.

Individually, these may seem like quite different achievements. Together, however, they tell a story of an organisation continuing to mature — building on what works, listening to our members and strengthening the foundations from which we can grow.

Of course, there is always more we would like to do.

As a not-for-profit membership organisation with a team of just four employees, we need to continually balance our ambitions for AITD and our members, with the resources available to us. We are incredibly fortunate to have a wonderful network of volunteers who give generously of

their time, expertise and energy. Their contribution enables AITD to have an impact far beyond what the size of our organisation might suggest, and on behalf of the Board, I extend my sincere thanks to each of them.

I would also like to acknowledge Ben and the AITD team for everything they have achieved this year. In particular, Ben has continued to strengthen AITD's partnerships and relationships, helping us build connections that support both the sustainability of the organisation and the value we can provide to our members.

And on a personal note, I want to acknowledge our Vice President, Amy Martin. Amy has continued to be my guide, my think-tank and my friend. Leadership is rarely something we do alone, and I am enormously grateful for her support, perspective and willingness to challenge my thinking.

As we look ahead, perhaps one of the most exciting pieces of work underway is exploring what AITD Certification could look like.

This is something our long-term members have been asking for over many years, and it represents an important opportunity for AITD and our profession. It is also a significant undertaking, and one we are deliberately not rushing. We want to listen, learn and do the work required to get it right.

There is plenty more to look forward to, including taking our Annual Conference to the ACT for the first time in 2027.

As we move from building foundations to expanding our influence, I am excited about what comes next. We have strong foundations, a Board with greater maturity and depth, an incredibly committed team and volunteer community, and members who continue to challenge and inspire us.

Thank you for being part of AITD and for continuing to support our profession and each other.

Abbie Taylor FAITD
National President, AITD



The AITD Board at the 2025 Excellence Awards



CEO's Report

Building on strong foundations to deliver greater value for members and the profession

As we reflect on 2025–26, I would like to thank our members, volunteers, facilitators, presenters, judges, sponsors, partners and employees. AITD is a community-led organisation, and the achievements in this report reflect the expertise, energy and commitment of people who care deeply about learning and development.

This was the first year of the AITD Strategic Plan 2025–28. The plan brings our work together around three priorities: delivering member value, strengthening recognition of AITD as the peak body for learning and development professionals, and ensuring sustainable operations for long-term impact. Our focus was on strengthening the foundations that support each of these priorities while continuing to deliver the services our members value.

The profession continues to change rapidly. Artificial intelligence, evolving workforce expectations and growing pressure to demonstrate organisational impact are reshaping the work of learning and development (L&D) professionals. AITD responded through contemporary professional development, practical resources, research, networking and opportunities to recognise and share excellence.

The year also delivered strong organisational performance. Operating revenue increased by 15% to $1.61 million, supported by growth in course activity and member-related revenue. AITD recorded a surplus of $66,984, consistent with the previous year, and closed the year with net assets of $1.41 million. These results strengthen our capacity to invest in member services and the profession.

Capability building remained central to our work. We expanded and refreshed learning opportunities, grew in-house delivery, progressed the practical application of the AITD Capability Framework and established the foundations for self-paced learning. The AITD Conference and Excellence Awards again brought the profession together, celebrating the people and organisations advancing workplace learning across Australia and New Zealand.

Behind these achievements was sustained work to improve the systems and processes that shape the member experience. The website and customer relationship management (CRM) system introduced in the previous year provided a stronger platform, but their implementation also required persistence and refinement. The team continued addressing usability, process and data issues while maintaining services and supporting members.

I am grateful to the AITD Board, Divisional Councils, committees, volunteers and national team for their contribution. Together, we have strengthened the Institute and created more opportunities for members to build capability, connect with peers and help shape the future of the profession.

A YEAR OF SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Stronger Board capability, increased member support, improved website and CRM usability, and continued financial sustainability.

A Year of Capability and Growth

Progress across member value, professional leadership and sustainable operations

The Strategic Plan 2025–28 positions AITD to advance excellence in learning through stronger member value, greater professional leadership and sustainable operations. In its first year, the Institute focused on building the capability and infrastructure needed to deliver the plan while maintaining the quality and accessibility of its established services.

Across the year, AITD invested in professional capability, refreshed learning opportunities, research and member resources. The Capability Framework progressed from launch into practical application, with continued mapping of courses, resources and future certification pathways against contemporary professional capabilities. This work is strengthening the connections between the capabilities practitioners need and the development opportunities AITD provides.

The learning portfolio expanded with new programs, including Strategic Partnering & Influencing in L&D and Measuring Learning Impact & Design for ROI. AITD also continued strengthening its delivery of emerging and evidence-based topics through AI Essentials for L&D Professionals and Neuroscience for Learning Design and Delivery. The first self-paced courses, built on the foundational principles of AITD's established programs, are due to launch shortly, providing practitioners with a flexible and accessible way to develop their skills.

Alongside these developments, AITD expanded its online resource library and member-only content.

Practical tools, professional guidance and contemporary insights provide support that members can draw on throughout their careers, complementing formal learning and opportunities to connect with peers.

Membership and learning activity contributed to positive financial growth, while the Conference, Excellence Awards and divisional events created opportunities for growth, collaboration, recognition and the exchange of ideas.

Together, these outcomes demonstrate progress across all three strategic priorities, supported by the community and volunteer contribution at the heart of AITD.



Strengthening Membership and Community Value

Investing in benefits, people, systems and professional connection

AITD membership brings together practitioners from corporate, government, consulting, education, not-for-profit and supplier organisations. United by a commitment to learning and capability development, members form a professional community that shares expertise, supports career growth and advances practice.

Throughout 2025–26, AITD strengthened member value through expanded learning opportunities, enhanced professional resources and more ways to connect and contribute. This work brought together the Capability Framework, research, professional learning, divisional activities, the Conference and Excellence Awards, supported by improved access to digital resources.

As AITD's financial sustainability strengthens, so does its capacity to reinvest in the services, resources and expertise that support members throughout their professional journey. Members benefited from a growing resource library, practical tools and guides, course and event discounts, professional indemnity insurance benefits, thought leadership and networking opportunities. These offerings extend the value of membership beyond individual courses and events, providing access to contemporary learning and practical support at member rates.

The year also saw the launch of the AITD blog, featuring articles, insights and perspectives from practitioners and industry leaders. It continues to generate strong engagement and complements the magazine and other communications as an avenue for sharing ideas, experience and emerging trends. We sincerely thank Jenna for her many years of creativity, professionalism and dedication in shaping the magazine and maintaining its high standard.

Delivering these benefits depends on the people, systems and processes behind the member experience. During the year, AITD continued refining its website, CRM platform and operational processes to improve access, administration and service delivery for members, volunteers and stakeholders.

Investment in people remained a priority. Learning and development specialists were engaged to support course development, enhancements to the Capability Framework and future professional standards initiatives. Following the end of the reporting period, the Membership Officer role was expanded to full-time, strengthening support for members and divisional activities across Australia.

Employees, volunteers, contributors and partners all play an important role in creating opportunities for learning, networking and professional growth. As organisational capability grows, AITD is investing in the infrastructure, support and governance that enable volunteers to facilitate professional discussions, strengthen communities of practice and deliver valuable member experiences.

AITD continued refining its policies, organisational processes and key performance indicators. This supports clearer responsibilities, consistent service delivery and effective governance, while helping the Institute monitor progress, assess the value of its offerings and maintain a sustainable operating model.

Looking ahead, AITD will continue listening to members and improving accessibility, capability development and community connection. This includes considering the responsible application of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, alongside the cybersecurity requirements of its operations and services. Ongoing feedback and evaluation will guide improvements to keep membership relevant, valuable and responsive to the profession.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Expanded** member resources and launched the AITD blog.
- **Engaged** learning and development specialists to support course and Capability Framework development.
- **Continued** enhancing the website, CRM and operational processes.
- **Achieved growth** of more than 10% in LinkedIn community engagement.
- **Strengthened** volunteer support, policies and organisational performance measures.
- **Expanded** the Membership Officer role to full-time after the reporting period, increasing support for members and divisional activities.
- **3% increase** in members during the year.



AITD Conference 2026

Building L&D Capabilities: Value, Impact and Agility

The AITD Conference was held in Brisbane from 13 to 15 May 2026, bringing the learning and development community together for ideas, practical learning and professional connection.

The program reflected the changing needs of the profession, with sessions exploring capability, impact, neuroscience, leadership, learning design, technology and the practical realities of delivering learning in organisations. Keynote and practitioner sessions offered fresh perspectives alongside examples delegates could apply in their own workplaces.

Connection remained central to the Conference experience. New initiatives included the Learning Wall, Meet the Speaker, speed networking, and networking opportunities for emerging practitioners and Fellows. Delegate feedback identified networking and informal conversations as some of the most valued aspects of the event. Participants highlighted the opportunity to compare experiences, test ideas and reconnect with the wider profession.

The post-event survey also provided clear direction for future events. These insights are informing the development of the next AITD Conference, to be held in Canberra from 28 to 30 April 2027, while reinforcing the value of bringing the profession together.





"The opportunity to learn about contemporary trends in learning and what other organisations are doing was the most valuable part."

AITD 2026 Conference delegate

Excellence Awards 2026

Recognising quality, innovation and impact across the profession

On 14 May 2026, more than 200 people gathered at the Sofitel Brisbane to celebrate the AITD Excellence Awards. The Awards recognise outstanding achievements in learning and development and provide a platform for sharing effective practice in Australia and New Zealand.

The 2026 entries demonstrated the breadth of the profession. Award-winning initiatives addressed leadership development, artificial intelligence, diversity and inclusion, employee onboarding, organisational learning culture, gamification and the use of technology to improve workplace performance.

Camp Australia received the Best Blended Learning and Best Leadership Development awards for its Aspiring Leaders Program. Grant Thornton Australia was recognised for Best Capability Building Program through its AI Capability Uplift Program, while the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade received the Best Diversity and Inclusion Program award for Understanding Indigenous Australia.

Other organisational winners included ANZRP and HR Consulting for Best Learning Culture in an Organisation; Adbri for Best Onboarding or Induction through its Driver Induction and Onboarding Program; and Kent Relocation Services with Yarno for their use of gamification or simulation in learning. Full details of the winners and their achievements are available on the AITD website.

Andrew Lawson (*shown bottom left)* received the Dr Alastair Rylatt Award for L&D Professional of the Year in recognition of his contribution to instructional design, facilitation, mentoring and applied neuroscience. AITD congratulates every finalist and winner and thanks the volunteer judges whose expertise, care and commitment underpin the integrity of the Awards.



"The Awards set benchmarks for our members by recognising, rewarding and sharing, quality and innovation across learning and development."

— AITD Excellence Awards 2026







Local Leadership, National Connection

Volunteer leadership and divisional initiatives

Throughout the year, AITD's Divisional Presidents and Councillors led a diverse program of local initiatives that helped members learn, connect and share professional practice. As volunteer leaders and ambassadors for the Institute and the profession, they contributed their time, expertise, professional networks and local knowledge to strengthen their communities and the broader work of AITD.

Across AITD's six Divisional Councils, volunteers identify the issues that matter locally and translate them into professional development, practical learning and networking opportunities. Their role in planning and delivering these activities is described on the AITD website, helping members understand how they can connect with and contribute to their local community.

The year's program reflected both the diversity of the profession and the creativity of its volunteers. Themes included solving workplace challenges through collaborative mastermind sessions, building AI agents for learning, understanding the "Invisible Curriculum", simulation-based learning, emotional intelligence, creativity and play, AI sensemaking, and high-performing learning teams.

"Networking and professional connections remain one of the most important outcomes members seek from AITD."

— AITD Benefits Survey 2025

Conference conversation events, networking breakfasts, coffee catch-ups and community-building activities created further opportunities for practitioners to exchange ideas and strengthen professional connections. These varied formats helped local communities bring people together around shared interests and practical challenges.

This activity extended AITD's reach beyond national programs. Events were delivered or planned across Canberra, Sydney, Parramatta, Newcastle, Brisbane, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide and Perth, reflecting the different interests and needs of local communities.

Strong participation in initiatives such as Building AI Agents for Learning, The Invisible Curriculum, QLD Creativity Night, Discover the Power of Simulation and the collaborative AITD Mastermind events demonstrated the value members place on practical learning, professional conversations and peer connection.

We recognise and thank every Divisional President and Councillor who served during the year, along with those whose earlier contributions established the communities and relationships on which current Councils continue to build. Their commitment reflects AITD's values of Leading, Connecting and Sharing and strengthens the professional community at the heart of the Institute.

COMMUNITY IN ACTION

- **Local leadership** Divisional Presidents and Councillors creating opportunities for learning, networking and professional connection.
- **Creative programming** Topics ranging from AI and simulation-based learning to leadership, creativity and workplace challenges.
- **Community connection** Events and activities across metropolitan and regional communities.
- **Partnerships and collaboration** Local relationships and expertise supporting member value and accessible learning.
- **Professional insight** Emerging practitioner needs, ideas and opportunities informing AITD's work.

Learning and Development Activities

Contemporary capability building for a changing profession



Behind every AITD course, workshop and learning experience is a community of organisations, facilitators, volunteers and learning professionals committed to strengthening the capability of the profession.

We sincerely thank the corporate, government and individual clients who chose to learn with AITD during the year. Their trust, engagement and feedback continue to shape the learning portfolio and ensure programs reflect the realities of contemporary workplaces. Whether participating in a public course, engaging AITD for in-house learning or partnering on capability development, their involvement contributes to the strength and sustainability of the profession.

We are equally grateful to our facilitators, both longstanding contributors and those who joined us during the year. Their expertise, generosity and commitment to professional practice enable AITD to deliver learning that is practical, evidence-informed and applicable in the work-place. The willingness of experienced practitioners to share their knowledge is a defining strength of the AITD community.

As the profession evolves, so does AITD's approach to capability development. Course reviews, content updates and facilitator onboarding share a common purpose: to deliver greater value to members and support the broader learning and development community. Investment in contemporary content, practitioner expertise and quality learning experiences helps professionals at every career stage navigate change and create impact within their organisations.

LEARNING THAT EVOLVES WITH THE PROFESSION

- **Ongoing updates** to established courses, including Instructional Design and Facilitation Skills.
- **Continued growth** in AI-focused learning for L&D professionals.
- **Expanded** facilitator capability and expertise across the portfolio.
- **Further alignment** of learning programs with the AITD Capability Framework.
- **Strong growth** in in-house learning partnerships with corporate and government organisations.

Research, Advocacy and Professional Leadership

Strengthening recognition of the profession through evidence, insight and influence

AITD continued to strengthen its contribution to professional research, thought leadership and advocacy, connecting evidence with the practical challenges facing learning and development professionals.

A significant focus during the year was the delivery of two major research projects led by Beth Hall. The first, Redefining Capability for an AI-Enabled Workforce, explored how artificial intelligence is reshaping organisational capability requirements and the implications for L&D professionals. The research highlighted growing expectations around adaptability, human-centred capabilities, team-based performance and continuous readiness in an increasingly AI-enabled workplace.

The second project, Measuring Leadership Capability Beyond Attendance, examined how organisations assess the impact of leadership development beyond participation and satisfaction measures. Drawing on case studies from Australian organisations, it identified practical approaches to measuring capability development, behaviour change and organisational impact.

We sincerely thank Beth for championing and leading both initiatives. The projects contributed valuable evidence and practical guidance for practitioners while strengthening AITD's role as a source of professional insight and thought leadership.

Research also informed AITD's advocacy work. Through its submission to the Australian Bureau of Statistics review of occupational classifications, AITD advocated for greater recognition of the breadth and increasing sophistication of contemporary L&D practice. Drawing on industry evidence, practitioner experience and labour market analysis, including advertised L&D roles, the submission highlighted the profession's diverse specialisations in strategic partnering, learning experience design, digital learning, learning technologies, analytics, capability development and performance improvement.

This work sought to ensure national workforce classifications better reflect the realities of the profession. Improved recognition supports more accurate workforce data, greater visibility of emerging capability requirements and a stronger understanding of the contribution L&D professionals make to organisational capability, productivity and performance.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate AITD's commitment to advancing the profession through research, evidence-based advocacy and professional leadership.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY IN ACTION

- **Two major research projects:** capability in an AI-enabled workforce and the measurement of leadership capability and impact.
- **Evidence-based advocacy** to the ABS supporting recognition of the expanding scope of modern L&D practice.
- **Practical insights** contributing to professional and workforce conversations.

Learning and development has evolved from a training delivery function to a multidisciplinary profession encompassing strategy, design, technology, analytics and performance consulting.

Governance, Team and Leadership

Sound stewardship supporting long-term impact

AITD's continued growth and stability reflect the commitment of directors, volunteers, employees, contractors and partners who contribute their expertise in service of the learning and development profession.

The Board provided strategic leadership and governance throughout the first year of the Strategic Plan 2025–28. Under National President Abbie Taylor, now in her fourth year in the role, it maintained a strong focus on professional excellence, member value, financial sustainability and sector leadership.

We acknowledge Vice President Amy Martin, serving in her third year in the role and bringing deep expertise in learning technology, innovation and digital capability. Together with Directors Mehri Doyle, Bradley Coumbe and Gerard Grant, the Board provided valuable oversight, strategic guidance and support through another year of organisational growth and development.

The Board was further strengthened during the year by the appointments of Trish Denison as Treasurer, Jana Clyde and Jessica Otto (Colucci). Collectively, they bring additional expertise in finance, governance, education, workforce capability and learning practice. We also thank former Treasurer Sandeep Kirpalani for his dedicated service and contribution to AITD's financial stewardship.

Alongside its strategic oversight, the Board continued work on policy updates and risk strategies, while exploring how research can inform AITD's future direction. These activities support clear responsibilities, consistent decision-making and the Institute's long-term sustainability.



The AITD Board *(left to right): Trish Denison - Treasuer, Ben Campbell - CEO, Mehri Doyle, Amy Martin - National Vice President, Abbie Tayler - National President, Jessica Colucci, Brad Coumbe, Jana Clyde and Gerard Grant.*

Our team and professional partners

The people behind AITD's programs, services and operations

Behind every initiative, program and member service is a small, highly committed national team.

Under Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary Ben Campbell, now in his fifth year with the Institute, AITD continued building on the transformation and renewal of recent years. Working with the Board, employees and volunteers, Ben has overseen sustained growth, stronger financial performance and expanded services to members and the profession.

We recognise long-serving team member Lu Carney, now in her seventh year with AITD, whose knowledge, professionalism and commitment have provided continuity through substantial change. Alex Macaulay, in her third year with the Institute, continued to strengthen the member experience and support operational excellence.

Our thanks extend to the wider team, including Sarah Cassells, Sally Wood, Cheryle Walker and Haylie Campbell, together with the facilitators, volunteers and specialist contractors who support AITD's work. Their dedication enables the Institute to deliver professional development, events, communications, certification initiatives, research and member services across Australia.

We also acknowledge our professional partners and suppliers, including DFK Accountants, T&H Digital, Dolores Knox, IVE and Surry Hills Printing. Their expertise and reliability support AITD's operations and help maintain high standards of service for members.

AITD's achievements are the result of collective effort.

The stewardship of the Board, the dedication of the team, the generosity of volunteers and the support of partners provide the foundations on which the Institute continues to grow, innovate and strengthen its contribution to the profession.



Financial Report

Growth with discipline and continued capacity to invest

AITD delivered another positive financial result in 2025–26. Operating revenue increased by 15% to $1.61 million, driven primarily by course activity and increased member-related revenue. The Institute recorded a surplus of $66,984, consistent with the previous year.

Course fee revenue increased by 42% to $646,783, reflecting increased delivery and the expansion of in-house learning. Member-related revenue increased by 17% to $401,050. Conference fees remained a major revenue source, with the Conference generating a net surplus of $67,345 after associated expenses.

Costs increased as AITD supported higher activity and continued investing in operations, systems, learning and member services. Employee expenses increased by 8%, course delivery costs rose in line with activity, and administration costs reflected the support required for a larger and more capable organisation.

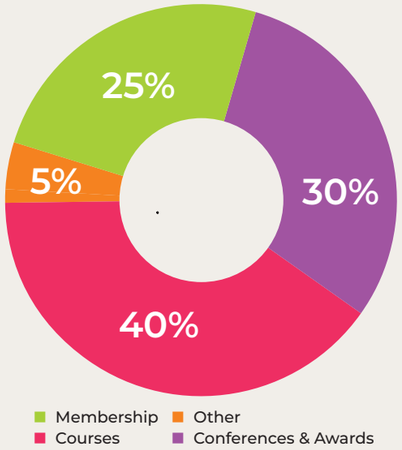
Investment included continued development of the CRM, capability assessment work and member resources, alongside improvements to courses and services. This reinvestment supports AITD's strategic priorities and strengthens the foundations for future member value.

AITD closed the year with cash and cash equivalents of $1.47 million and net assets of $1.41 million. This position provides stability and the capacity to pursue strategic priorities while managing future opportunities and risks responsibly.

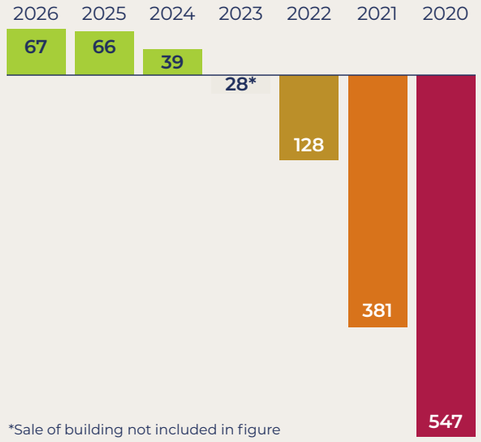
2025–26 GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

- 3% membership growth
- 3,500+ course and event registrations
- Expanded course portfolio
- Two major research projects
- Capability Framework in practice
- Expanded member resources and new AITD blog

Revenue



Profit & Loss ('000's)



*Sale of building not included in figure

Our Strategic Focus Ahead

From building foundations to expanding influence

The first year of the Strategic Plan 2025–28 focused on building foundations. AITD enters 2026–27 with stronger systems, a growing learning portfolio, a financially sustainable base and clearer insight into the priorities of members and the wider profession.

The next phase will build on these foundations while maintaining the plan's focus on member value, recognition of AITD as the peak body for L&D professionals, and sustainable operations. Expanding AITD's influence and strengthening the member experience are connected ambitions: both depend on relevant services, credible professional leadership and an engaged community.

For members, this means continuing to integrate the Capability Framework into learning and professional resources, developing contemporary programs and creating more opportunities to connect, share practice and contribute. AITD will also continue improving the systems and services that make these benefits easier to access and use.

For the profession, the focus is on strengthening research, insight and professional leadership. As artificial intelligence, workforce transformation and expectations of organisational capability reshape how learning is designed, delivered and measured, AITD's role is to help practitioners navigate change and strengthen recognition of their contribution.

Sustainable operations will support this work through disciplined growth, responsible investment and continuous improvement. The aim is not simply to increase activity, but to ensure services and benefits remain accessible, relevant and connected to the real work of L&D professionals.

With the support of members, volunteers, partners, the Board and the national team, AITD is well positioned to advance excellence in learning for a better future.



OUR FOCUS FOR 2026–27

- **Member value** Practical capability resources, contemporary learning and professional connection.
- **Professional leadership** Research, insight and stronger recognition of the profession.
- **Capability** Continued integration of the Framework across member development.
- **Community** National and local opportunities to connect, share and contribute.
- **Sustainability** Disciplined growth, responsible investment and continued improvement.



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