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2024

# Annual Report





# Contents

04.	A message from our National President	10.	AITD Conference and Awards
06.	CEO's report	11.	Membership
08.	Strategy	12.	Courses and competencies
09.	Divisions	13.	Learning & Development in the workplace





## A message from our National President

The past financial year has seen the fruits of our labour really pay off in terms of building a much more sustainable business model. For the first time in many years, we are back in the black, and I'm sure I do not need to tell you how much of a relief that is.

This achievement has come from not only cost management and finding efficiencies in our operation, but also from creating offerings that Learning & Development professionals want to be a part of.

Our Board this year has a nice mix of returning Board Members as well as some new faces.

Amy Martin, representing members from QLD/NT is our Vice President, Sandeep Kirpalani has continued on as Treasurer, Gerard Grant, representing our members from VIC/TAS, and Ben Campbell as CEO and Company Secretary provide us with continuity, consistency, and corporate knowledge. This cohort has been joined by Vanessa Trower representing NSW, Brad Coumbe for WA, and Mehri Doyle for ACT. Our new Board Members bring with them a changing dynamic, increased governance, and (as we are all volunteers) the extra hands are particularly appreciated.

Let's now take a look in the rear-view mirror at the year that was.

Last year our Excellence Awards we had a record number of nominations, with the Gala Dinner held on the Gold Coast. Everyone had a fabulous time. Feedback we received was that it would be good to speak with the winners about their work. With this in mind, we changed things up this year by holding our Excellence Awards

cocktail style, allowing for more networking, and time to chat with our winners at the end of the formalities. We think we have struck gold with this event format and will be looking to repeat this in 2025.

Our annual Conference was held in my hometown of Adelaide this year, with fabulous views out to the Botanical Gardens vying with our speakers for the attention of our audience. Speaking of audiences, attendance was up about 20% on last year, which really reinforced that L&D professionals don't mind gathering in locations other than Sydney. Our amazing speakers captured the hearts and minds of our attendees with their varied range of topics, as they generously shared their wisdom with the group.

Our strong focus on living our Values, is really starting to be embedded now. Leading, Connecting, and Sharing are regular topics of discussion at meetings, local events, our conference, and as articles in our *Training & Development* magazine. These Values are important to us, as they become a call-to-action for our employees, volunteers, and members alike. I encourage you to spend a moment thinking about how our Values may have come up for you.

As we continue to chip away at delivering all that is in our Strategic Focus Areas for 2024-2028, we have taken steps towards growing our membership base. Recently, we employed Alex, as our Membership Engagement Officer. Alex has an extensive background in this space and is already having an

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impact. As a member of AITD, if you have not already met with Alex, I want to actively encourage you to reach out and introduce yourself.

This year has been productive and rewarding for us at AITD. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and Thank Ben and the AITD Team for all their hard work. Their dedication to our organisation and its' members is exemplary and I look forward to working with them in the year ahead on projects such as: a new Members Database, a refreshed website with increased capability, launching our new Competency Framework, as well as a few other things that shall remain under wraps – for now.

As a not-for-profit membership organisation, we would not exist without the generosity of our volunteers. Many of these wonderful individuals give their time, energy, and love of what they do, without the need for public fanfare. That said, I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for what they do. I see, firsthand the hours they give, so selflessly, and on behalf of the Board I would like to say Thank You.

Abbie

**Abbie Taylor**

*AITD National President*

# CEO's report



## AITD's Performance Improvement Overview

The Australian Institute of Training and Development (AITD) has made significant strides in improving its overall performance and situation over the past 2 years. By focusing on strategic changes, governance improvements, and member engagement initiatives, AITD has positioned itself for growth and increased impact.

## Purpose and Strategic Plan Changes

AITD has simplified its Purpose and Strategic Plan to focus on excellence in training and development for a better future, concentrating on core business areas where it excels. This refined focus has enabled AITD to be more targeted in delivering high quality services to its members and community, aligning its activities with the evolving needs of the training and development sector.

## Governance Improvements

AITD has taken substantial steps to enhance its governance structure and processes. The Constitution was changed to attract a wider talent pool in place of only drawing from poorly represented divisional committees. Role descriptions have been put in place, and new talented and generational change members are being brought onto the board. Bringing the CEO onto the board also significantly improved the speed and accuracy of company secretariat responsibilities.

## Financial Growth

Between 2015 and 2022, AITD accumulated losses totalling \$1 million, putting the company at risk of

insolvency. To maintain cash flow, AITD sold its office suite. In 2022, under new leadership, the organisation triaged the outflow of funds, streamlined operations, moved online, and fostered a culture of support and care.

The financial recovery started in April 2022 and continued through to 2024. AITD's revenue grew by 32.9% from 2022 to 2023, reducing its net loss from (\$128,000) to (\$28,000). These first year efforts resulted in the first positive cashflow in seven years (of about \$2K, excluding the \$711K inflow from the office suite sale). By Y/E 2024, AITD achieved its first surplus since 2015, with a surplus of \$39K. This turnaround reflects prudent financial management and strategic investments, positioning AITD for sustainable growth.

## Membership Growth and Engagement

AITD has made notable progress in stabilising and growing its membership base, particularly amongst corporate members. While overall membership numbers have remained relatively static, the organisation has implemented strategic initiatives to prioritise retention and growth activities. These strategies include enhancing member value through more personalised contact, high quality magazine and the major event and member recognition activities.

## Education and Events

AITD has made significant advancements in its

education and event offerings. The annual AITD conference has seen a resurgence in popularity and attendance, with successful events in Sydney (2023) and Adelaide (2024) driving engagement and growth. The organisation has introduced more targeted webinars, and popular networking activities driving by state/territory divisions, more closely supported by the CEO.

An important step in AITD's revitalisation has been the focus on rebuilding divisional volunteer group engagement. The organisation has successfully grown engagement from lack lustre attendance to almost full committee representation across each of its divisions.

Additionally, AITD has embarked on a comprehensive process of updating all its course materials, working with L&D specialists to ensure content remains relevant and aligned with industry best practices.

## Policy and Advocacy

AITD has significantly strengthened its policy and advocacy efforts. These steps include effectively positioning itself as a peak industry organisation, increasing engagement with federal and state governments in an advisory capacity and commissioning market research. The organisation has begun to delineate and define its unique contribution to workforce development and learning.

The organisation was also able to speed up the development of updated policies with the assistance of generative AI. Additionally, a new Code of Professional Conduct was introduced, setting clear ethical standards for AITD members and a benchmark for professional practice.

## Public Awareness and Communications Strategy

AITD has implemented a more process-driven approach to effectively communicate and market its initiatives across various platforms. The organisation

has achieved a 20% growth in its already large LinkedIn presence and is expanding its reach on other social media platforms. Taking an integrated and holistic approach to communications has seen attendance climb at events and momentum gained in networking and event activities.

## Leadership and Culture

Improved culture was a key feature driving the changes that were required for operational sustainability from April 2022 onwards, addressing the concerns of staff, working with the board to redefine strategy and contain costs, and painting a positive picture of the future. Improvements in governance, leadership, and staffing have contributed to AITD's overall performance gains. This includes refined stewardship of the resources in our care, better accounting reports, continuous improvement activities and aiming to bring the best out amongst team members.

In conclusion, AITD has made significant progress across multiple dimensions, adapting to challenges and embracing digital transformation. The financial turnaround, from accumulated losses to achieving a surplus, demonstrates the effectiveness of implemented strategies. Moving forward, AITD will continue to focus on enhancing member engagement, leveraging technology, and diversifying revenue streams. The organisation remains committed to its role as a leading voice in the training and development sector, with ongoing attention to governance, leadership development, and organisational culture being crucial for sustaining these improvements.

**Ben Campbell**  
Chief Executive Officer



## Strategy

The AITD board, CEO, divisions and AITD partners continue to actively pursue our three tier strategic plan, focussing on:

- 01. Providing value to AITD members**
- 02. Building our reputation as the peak body for L&D professionals**
- 03. Operating sustainably to ensure AITD's future.**

The outcome to date includes operating surpluses over the past two years, the growth of divisional members, significant increases in engagement within AITD Conference and Excellence Awards and the active participation of AITD members in a range of advocacy and industry capability development initiatives.

Changes to the AITD constitution and bylaws have widened the available pool of talent available to our community for governance activities, with an expansion of community representation across Australia. The work on AITD values, skills and risk considerations and policies have led to a more detailed specification of the roles and responsibilities of the board and divisions, helping drive both stability, accountability and data driven decision making within AITD's governance and operational remit.

## Divisions

The size of our divisional groups doubled throughout the year, with all divisional groups now at capacity, with exception of Western Australia. This coming year our focus will be on developing and rolling out a more enhanced divisional strategy to build our local networking and event impact, as well as encouraging increased member engagement and growth from each area.

Thank you to all divisional presidents and councillors for your contribution to the development and collegiality of our sector.





## AITD Conference and Awards

The AITD Conference held in June 2024 in Adelaide SA and the AITD Awards held in October 2023 on the Gold Coast QLD both attracted a lively community of L&D practitioners and clients to enjoy the environment, grow and learn together.

The AITD Awards continue to be the industry benchmark for excellence, with positive flow on impacts for the sector in terms of recognition, peer endorsement, benchmarking and marketing benefits.

AITD Conference received glowing reviews from participants, with thanks to all those who contributed to its success – and there are many people! Our deepest appreciation to you all.

This coming year we will combine AITD Conference and Awards which will be held 21-23 May 2025 at the Sofitel Melbourne.



## Membership

A big thank you to all our members for renewing and joining AITD for all the variety of reasons you have including career support, networking, resources and case studies. As a not for profit organisation, our focus is on investing back into the L&D community to support your career objectives, and there are many different forums and avenues that this occurs. We are so proud of the work and investment of time and energy that the L&D community invests into AITD for the betterment of the profession.

We're delighted to employee an inhouse membership engagement officer Alexandra Macaulay, helping to lift our service levels and support of our community.





## Courses and competencies



Our team of amazing facilitators and coordinators have done a great job over the past year delivering to a wide variety of professionals, corporates and government groups both online and in person across Australia.

We're thankful to them and all our course participants for their active participation and feedback, enabling us to continuously improve our training implementation.

Progress toward updating our courses and introducing new courses aligned to an AITD designed competency framework is now well underway. Multiple teams of volunteers are now hard at work validating competency categories, rationalising competences and establishing their related proficiencies for the benefit of our sector. We are very appreciative for all involved and in particular the work of our Project Lead Michelle Ockers.

## Learning & development in the workplace

This research was conducted through a survey of AITD members in May-June 2023, with results shared in the September 2023 edition of *Training and Development Magazine*.

98%



of learning and development (L&D) professionals agree reskilling and upskilling is a **crucial part of an organisation.**

Training and development contribute significantly to the health of an organisation through the way it shapes the work environment and engages employees

% strongly/somewhat agree that training and development contributes to:

82%

Positive company culture

79%

Employee retention

78%

Organisational growth

77%

Productivity

64%

Attracting new employees

L&D professionals believe training and development is delivered best in-person

% who believe L&D is extremely/very effective

81%

Instructor-led classroom training

81%

Blended learning

60%

Social learning

58%

Virtual instructor-led training

50%

E-learning

39%

Mobile learning



### L&D IN THE FUTURE



L&D professionals believe the following trends will have the most impact on the workforce in the next 12 months:

59%

Reskilling / upskilling

58%

Artificial intelligence

57%

Coaching / mentoring

47%

Microlearning

47%

Personalised / individualised learning



# Excellence Awards 2023

Thursday  
19 October 2023



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