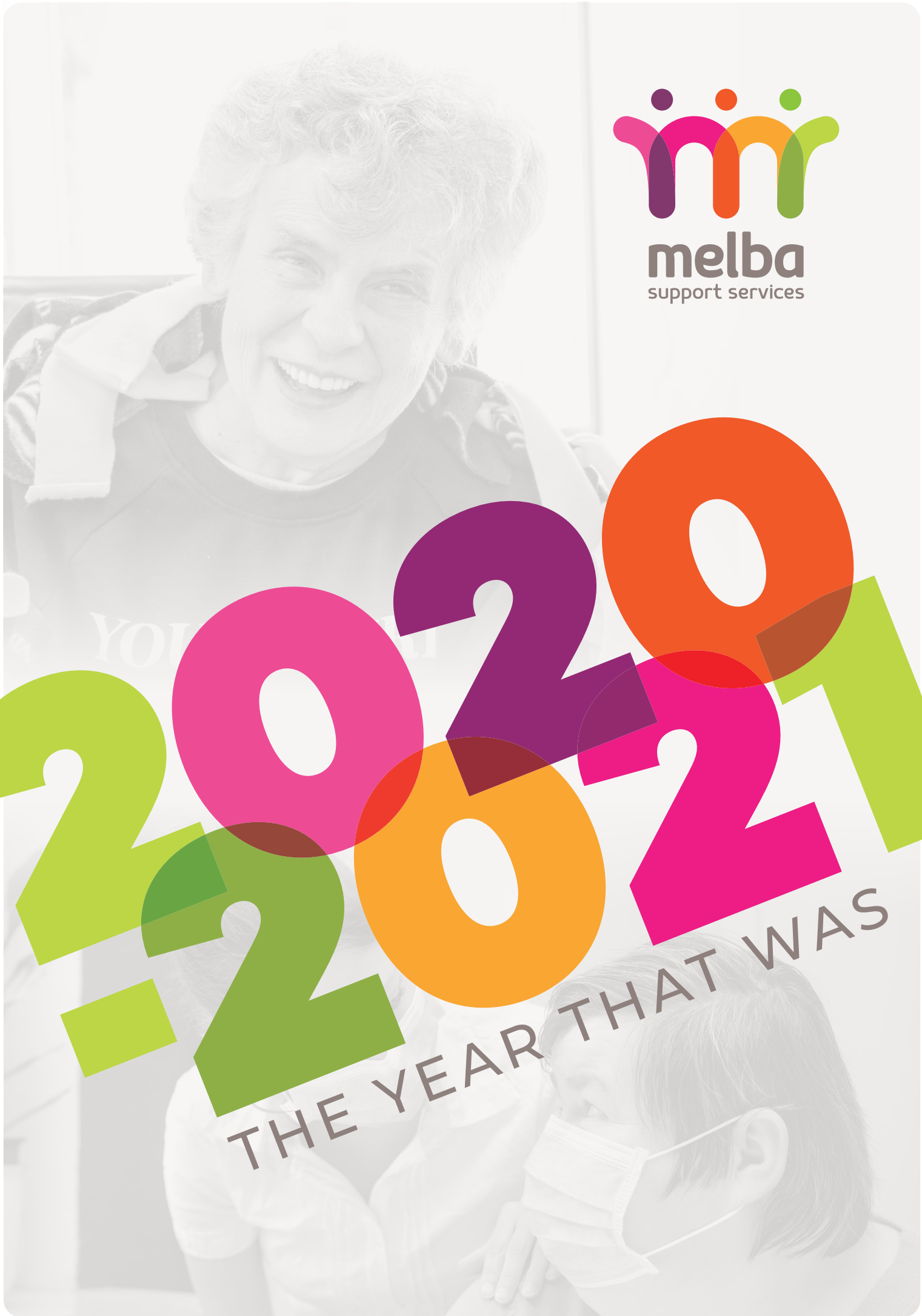


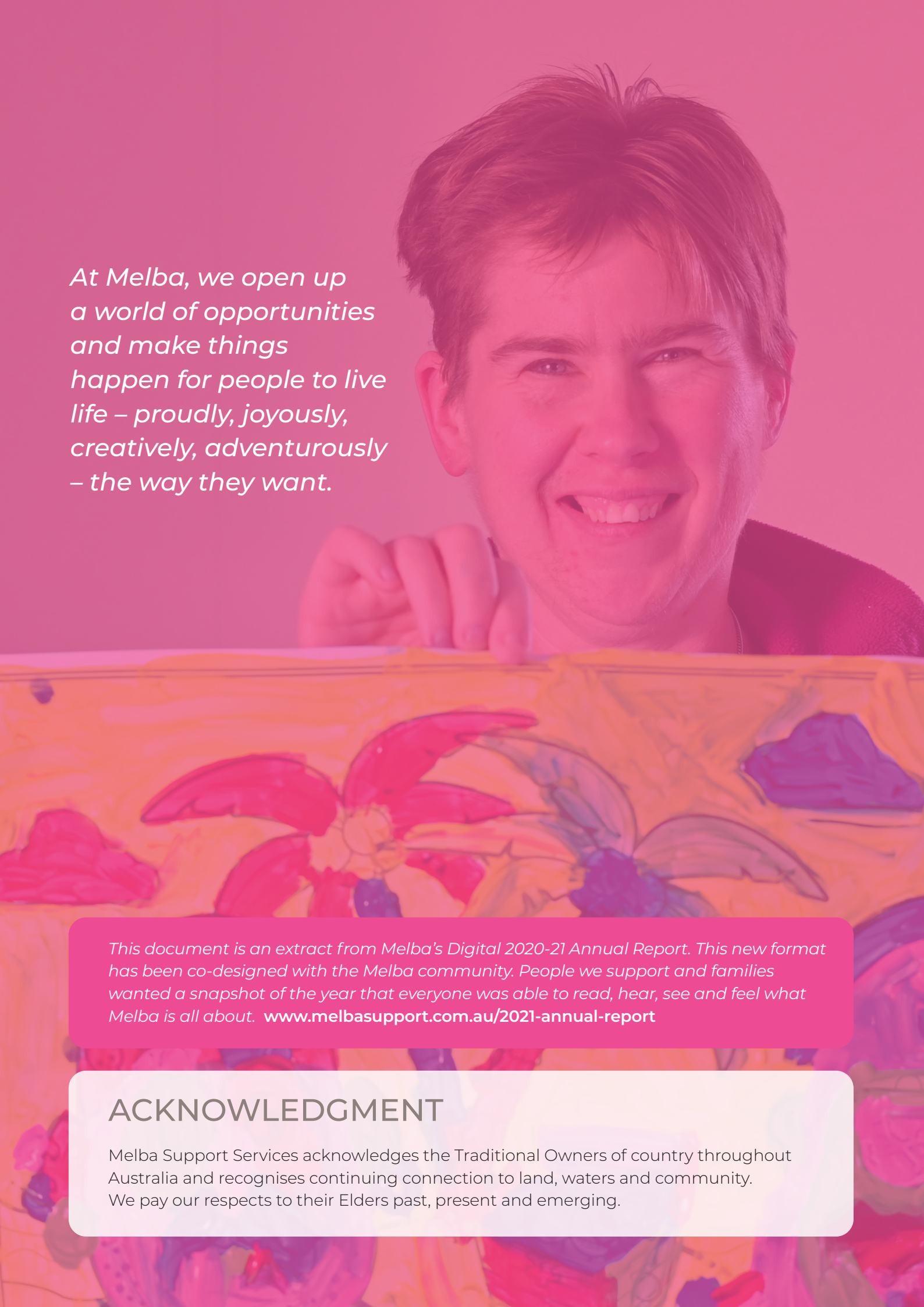


melba
support services

2020-2021

THE YEAR THAT WAS





*At Melba, we open up
a world of opportunities
and make things
happen for people to live
life – proudly, joyously,
creatively, adventurously
– the way they want.*

This document is an extract from Melba's Digital 2020-21 Annual Report. This new format has been co-designed with the Melba community. People we support and families wanted a snapshot of the year that everyone was able to read, hear, see and feel what Melba is all about. www.melbasupport.com.au/2021-annual-report

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Melba Support Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognises continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

ABOUT US



WHO WE ARE



Melba makes a difference by empowering people with a disability to live the life they want.

For nearly 50 years we have been supporting people to dream big, be happy and do what they choose and value.

At Melba, we open up a world of opportunities and make things happen for people to live life – proudly, joyously, creatively, adventurously – the way they want.

OUR VISION



A society that values the individuality and rights of all people.

OUR PURPOSE



To open up a world of opportunities for people to live a fabulous life.

WHAT WE DO

- ✓ Community and Lifestyle – Arthur Creative, Day Support and Community Connections programs, Supported Recreation and Holidays, Individualised Support
- ✓ Community Participation
- ✓ Enterprises – Able Bake House, Arthur Creative and Yarra Ranges in a Box
- ✓ Individualised Supports
- ✓ Short Term Accommodation and Assistance (STAA) Respite for Adults and Children
- ✓ Specialist Disability Accommodation
- ✓ Support Coordination
- ✓ Supported Independent Living (SIL)
- ✓ Practice, Quality and Safeguards – Person-Centred Planning, Communication, Complex Health, Quality/Practice and Positive Behaviour Support

OUR VALUES



STAYING TRUE TO OUR PURPOSE



2020–21 has brought many unexpected challenges to the world, our environment, and people who are part of our community. We have faced natural disasters such as storms and a global pandemic that continues to impact our communities today. Yet, through our enriched history and resilience, our organisation has held constant and stayed true to our purpose.

The story of Melba Support Services started 49 years ago, so we are only one year short of a significant milestone.

The organisation has been through many chapters, and our next chapter is constantly evolving. However, despite where we are along the journey, our desire to see people achieve excellent outcomes and live the best possible lives remains. We are, and always will be, the same quality, values-driven organisation you know.

With that, we are pleased to present our Annual Report for 2020–21. It's a report that outlines the year, and the stories and Melba moments that have inspired us and added to our rich history.



KEY STATS SUMMARY



Supporting great people
across Victoria



80+

SIL group homes,
townhouses, units
and apartments



4

Day Support
and Community
Connections programs



9

STAA respite
properties



1

Creative Arts
program



6

Offices:
Lilydale, Dandenong,
Ballarat, Morwell,
Horsham and
Bairnsdale



+

Individual supports
across Victoria

NUMBER OF STAFF



1,400

PEOPLE SUPPORTED



1,282

HOURS OF SUPPORT
DELIVERED



1,400,000

STAA - RESPITE
PROVIDED TO



237

THE YEAR THAT WAS



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Melba's response to COVID-19

As an essential service provider, Melba continued to provide supports and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We ensured our operations teams and support workers were trained in COVID-19 safety protocols, and provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We followed the Australian Government's health advice at all times.

Our teams were out in the community every day; they knew the challenges people we support were continually facing due to the pandemic.

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the people we support and our staff. Despite the complexities of the pandemic, our team pulled together day in and day out to keep people safe and ensure they continue to receive the support and services they require.

Our staff are incredibly important at Melba. That's why the Board made the decision very early on during the pandemic response to ensure our staff weren't financially disadvantaged when needing to take time off work to get COVID tested, or await results, or when losing shifts when a service was temporarily closed. Melba also introduced LifeWorks check-ins to discuss the health and wellbeing of all staff teams and service areas.



Our staff went above and beyond to ensure continuity of support despite the unprecedented challenges.

Survey results showed that 9 out of 10 families rated Melba's response to the COVID-19 pandemic as "good" or "excellent".

A big thank you to everyone for playing such an essential part in our COVID support and response effort.

Getting behind the vaccination campaign



Through the vaccination campaign with Aspen Medical, Melba facilitated:

551 Vaccine doses delivered to supported people.

642 Vaccine doses delivered to staff.

297 Vaccine doses delivered to other local eligible people (families, carers, local smaller frontline teams).



We ran vaccination hubs in Morwell, Sale, Tralalgon and Lilydale, which were also used by other local disability service providers. The Lilydale Hub space is also being used for at least 2.5 days for vaccinations for local service providers and their eligible population.

Melba promoted Aspen's Dandenong Vaccine Hub to other disability providers and eligible people in CALD communities. Melba also engaged with Interchange Outer East to run hub and in-reach clinics.

A huge thanks to everyone who made the vaccination campaign possible and supported its success.



Hayley Dean gets vaccinated.



Christine Brewer waiting after vaccination.

THE MELBA WAY

Melba's purpose is to support people to live a fabulous life. 'The Melba Way' is how we go about doing this. Each person is individual and unique. The Melba Way honours and sustains this uniqueness by creating, maintaining and refining an individualised service, minute by minute, hour by hour and day by day. Melba does this one person at a time! Melba's approach is driven by the people we support and is built on a human rights values-based framework.

During 2020–21, Melba commenced a new project called The Melba Way Project. This project identifies the priorities we need to put across all teams and services, to deepen our understanding and practice of The Melba Way.

It is overseen by the Melba Way Steering Committee which includes 16 staff members from across all services and regions, and chaired by the CEO, Hayley Dean. The next stage is to develop a Melba Way Council represented by people we support, family members and staff.



FOCUS ON QUALITY AND OUTCOMES

DURING 2020–2021:

Hayley Dean commenced as the new CEO of Melba on 7 September 2020.

We bid farewell to Glenn Foard after a wonderful eight years as CEO. Glenn was instrumental in growing Melba over that time, whilst always keeping the people we support at the heart of everything we do.

Despite COVID-19, we became busier in Support Coordination. A positive that came from the pandemic was that NDIS rolled over people's existing plans if the participant's current plan or funding was adequate.

We established the Disability Royal Commission Working Group to keep abreast of recommendations from the Commission and examine how Melba can implement these emerging recommendations.

We supported 31 people to move from their family home or alternate accommodation such as aged care, into accommodation that better meets their needs.

We successfully completed independent audits under the NDIS Practice Standards and Victorian Human Service Standards for Melba. As a result our registration renewal was approved, and Melba is registered as an NDIS provider for a further three-years.

We successfully transitioned all Melba services to the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework. This transition involved updating operational processes under the NDIS practice standards and changes to procedures for incident reporting, complaints management, behaviour support planning and restrictive practice reporting. It also included training staff to implement the new reporting requirements.



FOCUS ON QUALITY AND OUTCOMES

DURING 2020–2021 MELBA:

Successfully launched our first electronic feedback and incident management system (FIMS) across services in all regions. FIMS is a key enabler for Melba's positive speaking up culture by facilitating timely reporting and response to incidents and feedback. FIMS also supports Melba's quality practice governance framework by facilitating data and trend analysis.

Provided mandatory induction, refresher training and coaching support to all staff in Melba's contemporary support approaches, including human rights, person-centred active support, trauma-informed positive behaviour support and complex health supports. Over the course of the year the team facilitated more than 208 training sessions.

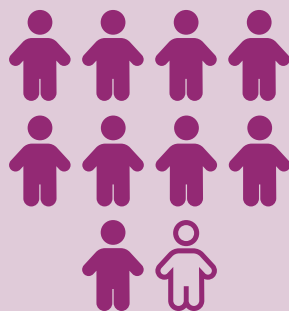


Continued to expand our research program through collaborations with tertiary institutions. This collaborative work included a focus on tenets of contemporary practice. Some examples include implementation of a feedback survey in the transferred services with people supported, staff and families and participation in a study conducted by the University of Technology Sydney to evaluate the effectiveness of staff mealtime assistance training. Our partnership with La Trobe University evaluated the link between organisational culture in supported accommodation services, staff satisfaction and achievement of outcomes for people supported.

Surveyed and collected information from people we support, family members and staff. Feedback from surveying families during the year included the following snapshot:

Continued our response to COVID-19, including developing COVID-19 protocols and infection control training for staff and establishing COVID-19 vaccination hubs to improve access to the vaccine for people we support.

9 out of 10 families believe that Melba...



is honest and ethical in its interactions

displays zero-tolerance for violence, abuse and neglect

is committed to providing people with a disability choice and control over their own lives

CONSOLIDATION

DURING 2020–2021 MELBA:

✓ Successfully navigated the transfer of staff from DHHS on 1 January 2021.

✓ Completed the final step to transition government accommodation services to Melba. This included transferring supported people over to NDIS funding. In mid-April 2021, Melba transitioned all supported people living in transferred group homes and those receiving Short-Term Accommodation and Assistance (STAA) services across to the NDIS.

✓ Undertook a project involving people we support, Operations Managers and SIL teams, on how Rosters of Care will guide service delivery into the future.

✓ Established a new Project Management Office (PMO).

✓ Commenced work on consolidation of ICT such as implementing a new accounting software package and payroll system.

✓ Employed a General Counsel, recognising that, as we have grown, we now need an inhouse legal role.

✓ Saw Employee Assistance Program utilisation increase as a key line of support. Melba launched a new LifeWorks app as part of a staff health and wellbeing initiative.

Melba takes violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability very seriously and as such has welcomed the Disability Royal Commission. Safeguarding the rights of people we support is a fundamental part of our culture, systems and processes.

As such, we established an internal Disability Royal Commission Working Group to:

- Oversee Melba's communication plan about the Disability Royal Commission with the people we support, their supporters and staff, including ensuring that people are aware of the Disability Royal Commission's activities and progress, ways that they can raise questions or concerns about the services they receive, and the supports available to tell their story to the Disability Royal Commission.
- Direct Melba's response to requests for information from the Disability Royal Commission, if requested.
- Provide a mechanism to monitor and comprehensively respond to the outcomes of the Disability Royal Commission, ensuring continuous improvement of services provided to people we support.





COLLABORATION

During 2020–2021, the collaboration between staff to provide services in challenging situations was outstanding, with a focus on finding solutions for people supported.

In the Central Highlands and Wimmera Region, staff across multiple teams worked closely together to provide a 24-hour program within the home of a person we support. This person had many challenges, and groups within Melba collaborated to provide a service that allowed her to experience a happy and full life.

In addition, there was a great outcome which involved assisting the community in lockdown, as part of Anchor's grant. The grant provided finances to cook 3000 meals for the underprivileged throughout COVID-19, including people experiencing homelessness and young mums and kids who were disadvantaged.

This involved the Able Bake House cooking meals for people without a safe home in Lilydale and surrounding areas. This was an initiative we were incredibly proud to be part of.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

DURING 2020–2021 MELBA:

- ✓ Opened a new three-bedroom Supported Independent Living (SIL) service in Rosebud. It is a large, bright home for three people who now have a secure future living independently with like-minded people.
- ✓ Opened the Anderson Street site, offering homes for up to 15 people in 13 individual units. The site opened in March, and the 15 people are now living in their own homes, fully exercising choice and control with the support provided by Melba over their own lives.
- ✓ In partnership with Anchor, opened a new Supported Independent Living (SIL) service in Mount Evelyn in December. The site offers five one-bedroom homes and the residents are very much enjoying their new homes.
- ✓ Met increasing demand from people to have their supports provided the way they want. For example, by August 2020 Melba had employed at least 20 extra casual staff for the South region, and another 15 staff to fill ongoing positions. We filled nine House Supervisor vacancies and created three new Outcome Lead positions.
- ✓ Established the new Morwell office.



CHALLENGE

The disability sector is experiencing workforce issues with staff shortages. During the year, we worked on solutions to help address this at Melba including efficient recruitment and creative marketing recruitment initiatives.

Our fabulous Human Resources Business Partners and Coordinators are working hard to progress recruitment, and hopefully further easing of restrictions will allow more group recruitment in the future.

MELBA MOMENTS



HUMAN RIGHTS

Melba's ARROW group expanded across the state

ARROW has 38 active members with representation across all services and regions, with six regional meetings held monthly. ARROW continued to meet during the pandemic, online and in-person when possible. A key outcome was a video submission to the Disability Royal Commission in response to the Commission's rights and attitudes issues paper.

In the video, ARROW members and their family supporters spoke of their experiences of community attitudes towards people with disability and how community attitudes impact on their right to be heard, respected, and involved in society.

How the transfer to NDIS funding provides opportunities for people we support



Jonathan is still relatively new to being supported by Melba. He is a Ballarat resident in the Melba Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) at Cherry Court. He recently transferred to the NDIS and is also able to access day placement in the community through his NDIS Plan.

Jonathan's story featured in the first Melba Monthly Families newsletter in August 2021. He is excited about being able to receive supports and told us some of the things he loves doing.

When Kerry is getting the bus ready to take Jonathan and the housemates somewhere, he has the task of checking that the bus is in order before they set off. He checks the indicators are flashing properly, the horn is working, and cleans inside the bus when it's needed.

When they go out Jonathan loves getting chips and gravy in Central Square.

His House Supervisor, Ash, said he's very helpful at the house. He loves to do things when he's asked like washing the dishes, putting the seats up on the table and mopping the floor, cleaning his room, and any other tasks.

Jonathan's goals over the next 12 months include staying in the Melba SDA house on an ongoing basis, keeping in touch with his family, and accessing the community. He really wants Melba to arrange camps outdoors that he can go on to enjoy nature.

FLEXIBILITY

Staying safe during the many COVID lockdowns

At Melba, we all had to work very flexibly during 2021–21 due to the constant and intense changes caused by the pandemic. For example, we proved we could adapt and respond very quickly when our children's respite house in Reservoir Road, Frankston was converted to a COVID isolation site in five days!

This meant we had the ability to support people in a specific facility with staff ready to be called upon in the event of a COVID outbreak. Fortunately, we never needed to use it.

In addition, there were incredible connections across services during the year. This included when staff from Community Connections were redeployed to SIL services.

A great benefit was the wonderful connections between the staff and the people they were supporting in other services, who were not part of their usual service area. For example, people from the SIL services appreciated the opportunity to be supported by other staff members who were flexible and adaptable during the COVID response.



CREATIVITY

Arthur Creative were able to hold workshop sessions online.

Not only that, these sessions were run through the five separate lockdown periods.

The online groups used both zoom and messenger so lead artists could deliver workshops in photography and drama and 1:1 workshops in visual art.

The Arthur online gallery was popular, and artists gained new skills, uploading their artwork to the Arthur Facebook page.

Arthur has an Instagram account where the online photography group shared their photos and projects they are working on, and visual art groups had their artwork displayed and shared digitally.



Across the workshops various themes were explored and expressed through the arts: nature and the seasons, what it means to be inside and isolation. The ability to express these experiences using art assists with understanding and acceptance of the circumstances.

31 artists attended face-to-face workshops on visual art, drama, screen printing, film, and sculpture.

Online workshops included drama, song writing, photography and art and 22 people attended these classes.

Some families chose not to attend the studios during COVID-19 restrictions and Arthur accommodated people through digital platforms where possible.

PASSION

Saying thank you to our valued staff members

Melba sent a small thank you gift to every staff member, including hundreds (and hundreds!) of Able Bake House cookies and Melba mugs. This was to help recognise their dedication and effort to help keep people we support safe and well during COVID-19.



**THANK
YOU**



FUN

Our end of year events went to a fun online format

Due to COVID-19 restrictions on the number of people that could gather in one space, Melba held its end of year celebration event and awards ceremony online. This was so that as many people could join in as possible.

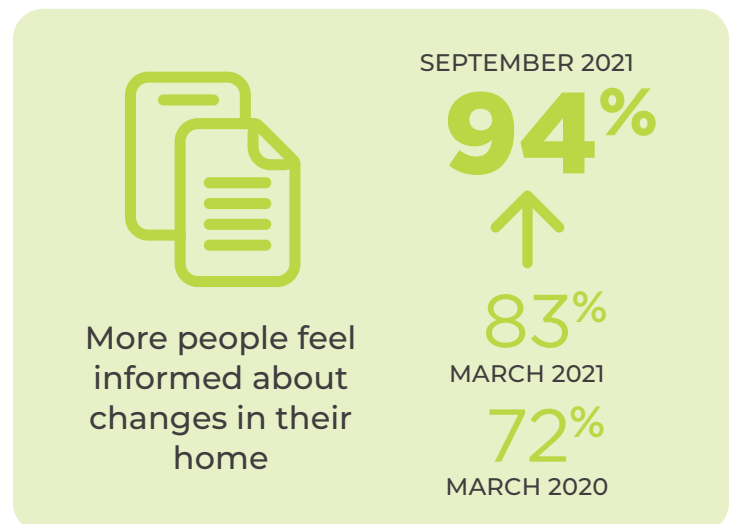
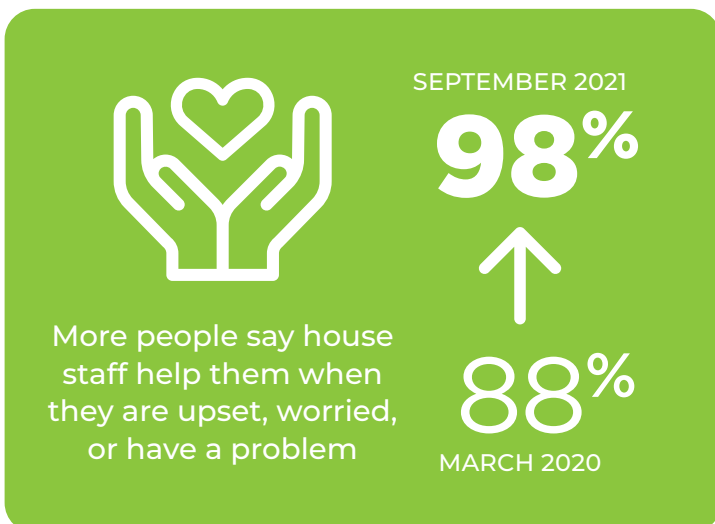
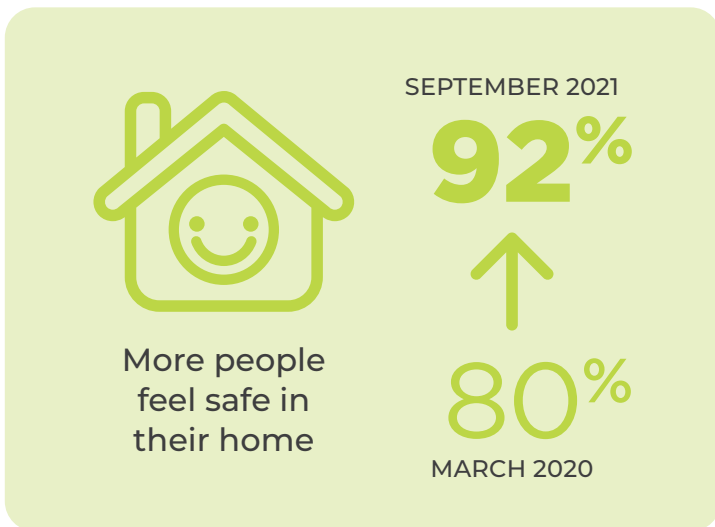


FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US



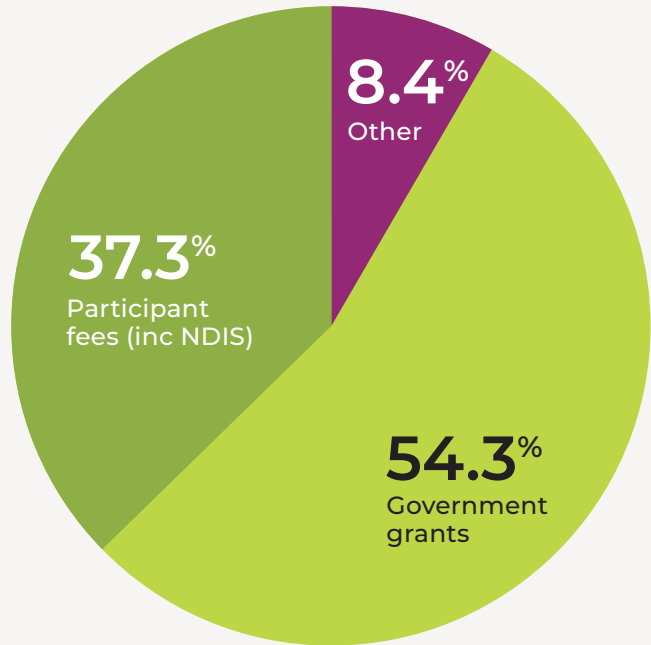
We asked for some feedback from people we support from services which transferred to Melba.

Here is a snapshot of what we heard.



FINANCIALS

REVENUE:
\$121,431,843



EXPENDITURE:

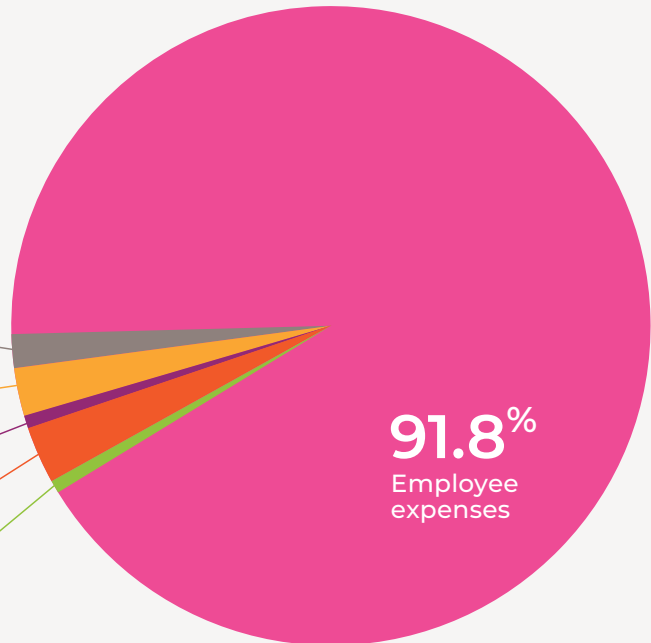
Depreciation and
ammortisation **1.6%**

Other operating
expenses **2.5%**

Occupancy
expenses **0.5%**

Office expenses **3%**

Maintenance
expenses **0.5%**



Melba continues to be financially secure and well managed. We manage the money we receive carefully, making sure that we provide for our future, and can continue to fulfill our purpose of opening up a world of opportunities for people to live fabulous life. Details can be seen on the ACNC website.

Michelle Marcantonio, Treasurer, 2021.



Melba Support Services acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.



Without the help of Melba Support Services, we wouldn't have been able to get our son vaccinated. Melba also gave us excellent support through lockdowns and during a three-week blackout we suffered from storm damage during COVID-19 lockdowns. The additional help was deeply appreciated. Melba has been the BEST thing to happen to our son.

Despite COVID-19 and lockdowns, he has probably enjoyed the best year of his entire life with Melba this year. We hope to find ways that Melba can help him to grow and experience life more fully into the future. We are so grateful and we cannot thank the service, management and staff enough.

– PARENT OF A PERSON WE SUPPORT



THE JOURNEY AHEAD

Next year Melba turns 50 and there will be many celebrations in store. It will be a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the journey that Melba has had over these five decades.

During this milestone year, we will also consider what the next 50 years looks like for Melba Support Services, and for the disability sector in general.

Melba's approach will continue to be driven by people we support.

Regardless of where the journey goes over the next 50 years – this will always be our set path!



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS IN 2022

GLOSSARY

ARROW Advocacy, Rights, Representation, Outcomes and Worth

CALD Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

DHHS Department of Health and Human Services

DSS Department of Social Services

EAP Employee Assistance Program

FIMS Feedback and Incident Management System

HRBPs Human Resources Business Partners

ICT Information Communication Technology

NDIS National Disability Insurance Scheme

PMO Project Management Office

PPE Personal Protective Equipment

PQS Practice, Quality and Safeguards

SDA Specialist Disability Accommodation

SIL Supported Independent living

STAA Short-Term Accommodation and Assistance



**MELBA.
LIVING LIFE!**



www.melbasupport.com.au