



Heart
Foundation

*Annual
Review*
2021



Our Purpose

**We are leading
the fight to save
Australian hearts.**



Our Vision

Towards an Australia free of heart disease.

Our Mission

To reduce heart disease and improve the heart health and quality of life of all Australians through our work in Risk Reduction, Support, Care and Research.

About Us

Here at the Heart Foundation, we remain passionate about our role as the peak body for heart health research, education and advocacy programs in Australia.

Our mission – to reduce heart disease and improve heart health and quality of life for all – gives us a clear focus on supporting the more than 4 million Australians¹ who are currently living with diseases that affect the heart and blood vessels, and on keeping families together for longer.

Over 60 years, we've delivered major pieces of work that have reshaped the health care landscape in Australia, from playing a central role in the development of the automatic pacemaker to identifying the link between cholesterol and heart disease. Since our inception in 1959, we've invested an incredible \$680 million (in today's dollars) into world-leading research programs, including \$13.9 million in 2021 alone. Today, we continue to fund a broad program of heart research that serves those at greatest risk of cardiovascular disease, including women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.





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Message from the CEO & Chair

2021 was a year of huge highs and challenging lows. As the COVID-19 pandemic stretched into a second year, we took the opportunity to refocus and re-commit to our vision of a future free of heart disease.

Our approach was guided by Connecting Hearts, the Heart Foundation's new three-year strategy. Built on three key pillars (Risk Reduction, Support and Care, and Research) and two organisational enablers (Financial Sustainability and Growth, and Our People) Connecting Hearts captures both our organisational priorities and our aspiration to continue leading the way in heart disease research and programs in Australia.

Under the Risk Reduction pillar, we delivered our national Heart Foundation Walking program to more than 200,000 people. We also launched the Heart Health Check Toolkit and new Absolute Cardiovascular Disease Risk Guidelines which support general practitioners to integrate Heart Health Checks into routine patient care and conduct evidence-based evaluation of heart disease risk in the community.

In the Support and Care pillar, we launched the My Heart, My Life program nationally. More than 5,000 people have signed up for this six-month initiative, which provides free resources to help participants understand and manage their heart health following a heart event.

Through our Research pillar, we maintained our position as the largest non-government funder of cardiovascular research in Australia, providing 76 grants to some of the brightest minds in the country. Two of these grants, awarded through our





Strategic Grants program, provide \$1 million dollars each to improve the mental health of people living with heart failure and to help men develop heart-healthy eating and exercise habits.

But 2021 wasn't all smooth sailing. Like many charitable organisations, the Heart Foundation was significantly affected by the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. Not only did we experience a decline in revenue, necessitating a review of our business activities, but we struggled to deliver a number of our community fundraising and research initiatives. Our Heart Health Check numbers also declined.

In addition to these external factors, our Group CEO, Adjunct Professor John Kelly AM, announced his departure this year. To ensure the continuity of our operations, Professor Garry Jennings AO has stepped into the role of interim CEO while the Board conducted an executive search for the CEO role. Garry has been the organisation's Chief Medical Adviser since 2016 and was a board member from 2002-2012.

Despite the magnitude of the challenges we faced this year, we believe that our achievements in 2021 will lay the foundations for our future growth. As always, these achievements were only possible due to the unwavering support of our volunteers and financial supporters. Even amid the uncertainties of a global pandemic, our inspiring donors gave a combined \$39.5m across our philanthropic giving programs. In turn, we were able to invest another \$13.9 million into world-class research that has real potential to turn the tide on heart disease.

These incredible outcomes demonstrate not only our successes this year but the strong relationships we continue to build within the communities we serve. Our thanks go to all our volunteers, supporters, corporate partners and the great team at the Heart Foundation who stand beside us as we lead the fight to save Australian hearts.



Professor Garry Jennings AO
Interim CEO



Mr Chris Leptos AM
Chairman

THANK YOU

Corporate Partnerships



Give With Heart Day



MyMarathon



Government



Workplace Giving



Thank You for Your Support

The generosity of our remarkable donors has been a shining light during the global challenges of the last 12 months. Their unwavering support for the Heart Foundation's vision of a future free of heart disease has enabled the continuation of our vital heart research, education and programs. We are indebted to each and every one of you who share our passion for saving Australian hearts.

Donors and Fundraisers

Thank you to everyone who supported the Heart Foundation through regular giving, one-off donations or by fundraising for one (or more!) of our campaigns. Every dollar you gave and raised will help keep families together.

Volunteers

Not all donations are monetary – our incredible team of volunteers keep our programs and events running by giving generously of their time. As life post-pandemic begins to unfold, we look forward to further strengthening our volunteer relationships as we make our way into 2022.

Bequests

Leaving a gift in your will is an incredible act of kindness that safeguards the wellbeing of future generations. We thank everyone who gave this lasting gift to the Heart Foundation this year.

Workplace Giving

Thank you to all the employees who chose to support the Heart Foundation through regular workplace giving, as well as to the employers who matched their contributions. Your generosity will make an important difference to individuals, families and communities across the country.

Philanthropy

Our major donors and philanthropists make a significant contribution to our quest to prevent heart disease. We could not do what we do without you – thank you.

Corporate and Government Partners

Building strong and fruitful corporate partnerships is vital to the Heart Foundation's success, both financially and via the relationships and networks through which we share our work. We thank our corporate partners for walking the path towards better heart health with us.

Health Care Workers

We would also like to acknowledge our incredible health care community – surgeons, medical specialists, general practitioners, nurses, Aboriginal health care workers and others – who continue to care so tirelessly for people living with heart disease. Amid the challenges of COVID-19, your courage and compassion inspired us all.



Connecting Hearts Strategy

2021 was the first year of our new Connecting Hearts Strategy, a three-year plan that will guide the work of the Heart Foundation between now and 2023. Connecting Hearts is built on five strategies for impact, along with five key values that shape the way we work.

These strategies are interconnected and underscore our current organisational priorities. Combined with our values, which articulate who we are as a company, we have created a strong foundation on which we can continue building towards our goals.

Strategies for Impact

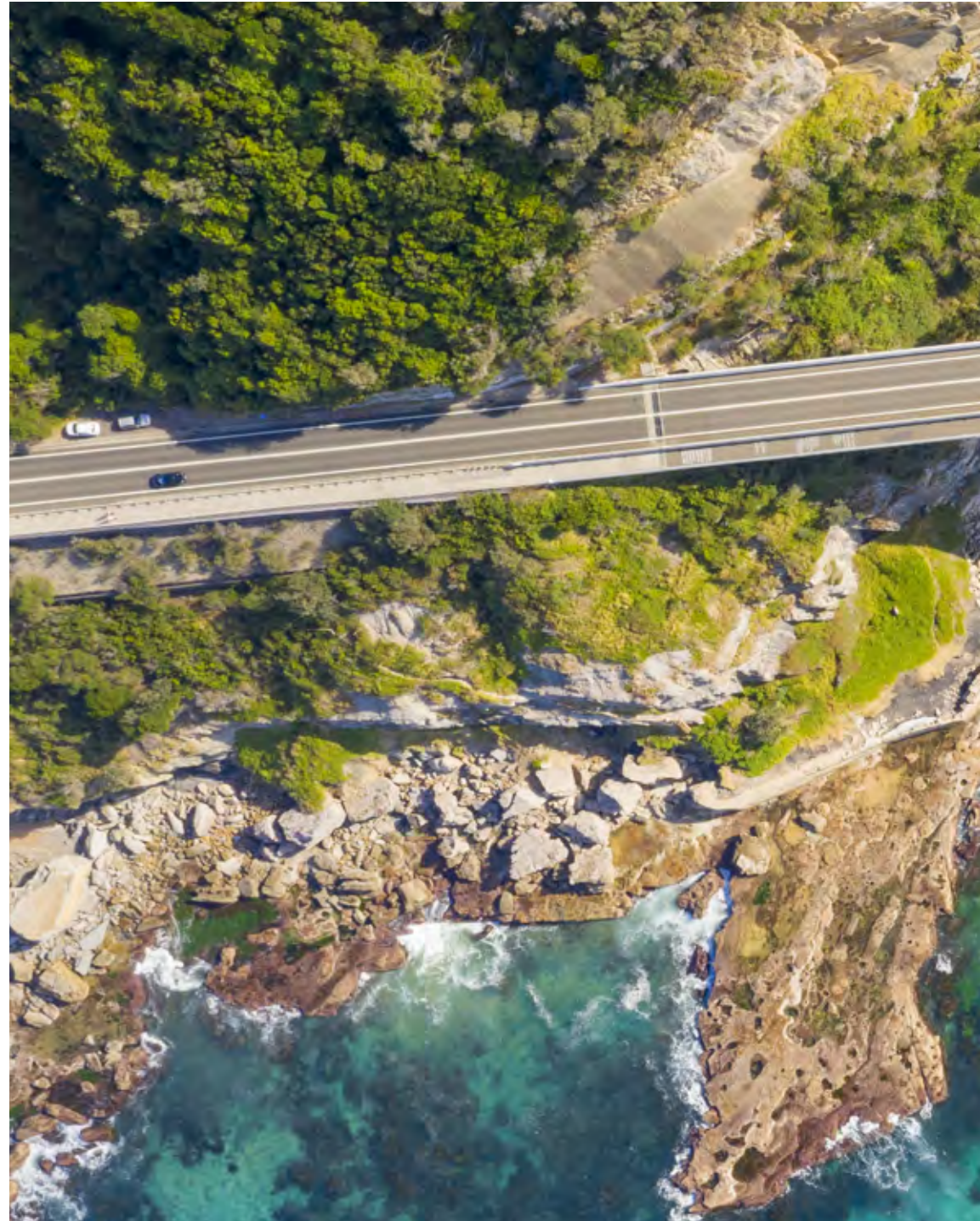
Strategic pillars: Risk Reduction, Support and Care, Research

Organisational enablers: Our People, Financial Sustainability and Growth

Our values: Stronger together, Make a difference, Change the future, Build connections, Act with integrity

Connecting Hearts shares many similarities with our previous strategic plans. We remain, as always, deeply committed to funding world-leading heart research, as well as to delivering initiatives that support and care for the Australian community. Closer to home, we continue to recognise the crucial importance of investing in our staff as key to our ongoing success.

Where Connecting Hearts differs is that it must guide our organisation through the aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic. As restrictions continue to ease and we begin to resume the patterns of our pre-COVID lives, Connecting Hearts will provide the structure we need to start recovering from the disruptions that have impacted our core business over the past two years. In that sense, Connecting Hearts is the start of a new era, not only for the Heart Foundation but for heart disease research, education and programs in Australia.





Our Achievements in 2021



Heart Health Checks

263,012 (cumulative) Heart Health Checks completed



Food and Nutrition

Developed five-point Food and Nutrition Strategy



Advocacy

Continued to advocate to federal, state and local governments to influence policy and funding for people at risk of, or living with, Cardiovascular Disease.



Heart Age Calculator

1.96m (cumulative) Heart Age Calculator completes



Research Funding

Invested \$13.9m in heart health research



Patient Engagement

Added conversational AI chatbot technology to the Heart Foundation website, which supported 2,923 people



At-risk Communities

Drafted new Equity Strategy for communities most at risk of CVD



Financial Sustainability and Growth

Achieved \$49.5m in revenue



Patient Support Program

Supported 5,400 people (cumulative) through the My Heart, My Life Program



Strategic Grants

Invested 13% of total research funding into strategic grants



Our People

Completed an organisational re-alignment to meet our strategic objectives



Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Risk Reduction

Encouraging more people to take action to manage their heart health.

Summary

Heart Foundation modelling released this year shows that more than 100,000 heart attacks could be prevented in the next five years if all Australians at high risk were on the right medications. It's statistics like these that remind us of the importance of risk reduction to prevent heart disease before it strikes.

Our work in the Risk Reduction pillar is grouped into the following themes:

- **Screening and risk management**, including learning about heart health and risk factors and increasing uptake of the Heart Health Check and Heart Age Calculator.
- **Lifestyle factors**, such as increasing awareness of heart-healthy habits, including food and nutrition, physical activity and reducing tobacco/vaping use.
- **Equity**, including focusing on people and communities at increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

Achieving our mission relies on strong relationships with key stakeholders and partners who can help us empower and inform consumers, support and engage health professionals and professional organisations, and influence policymakers to take action. Together, we can help individuals, families and communities across Australia live longer, healthier lives.

The following pages capture some of our key Risk Reduction achievements in 2021.



Heart Health Checks

In April 2019, after rigorous campaigning by the Heart Foundation, Heart Health Checks were temporarily listed on the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS). This resulted in subsidised checks being made available to Australians aged 45 years and over and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 30 and over. These preventative health assessments are delivered in general practice and support the early detection of heart disease risk factors. In 2021, more than 100,000 Australians saw their GP for a Heart Health Check.

In May this year, the Federal Government announced that Heart Health Checks will remain on the MBS until 2023. The Heart Foundation welcomed the additional funding but, with modelling showing that a staggering 1.8 million Australians are missing out on the medicines they need to manage their risk of heart attack or stroke, we will continue to push for the checks to be permanently covered by Medicare.

Launching the Heart Health Check Toolkit

Our new Heart Health Check Toolkit supports general practice teams to integrate Heart Health Checks into routine patient care. The Heart Health Check Toolkit is a one-stop digital resource designed to assist general practice staff to easily assess and manage heart disease risk in line with the latest guidance. It offers a range of tools and resources, including assessment and management templates, quality improvement tools, patient engagement resources and many more. Since its launch, the Toolkit has had over 36,000 unique users, far exceeding our initial 12-month target. It's also resulted in over 98,000 unique page views, with 29.6 per cent of users returning one or more times. The top three resources – the Heart Health Check assessment plan, the My Healthy Heart plan and How to Conduct a Heart Health Check – have collectively been downloaded 1500 times and are now integrated into the clinical software of over 5,100 general practices across Australia.

New Absolute Cardiovascular Disease Risk Guidelines

On behalf of Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, we are leading the update of the 2012 Absolute Cardiovascular Disease Risk Guidelines, which form the clinical foundations of the Heart Health Check. This initiative brings contemporary evidence and clinical expertise together to innovate the way clinicians assess and manage cardiovascular disease risk. We have brought together nine expert advisory groups, more than 50 clinicians, researchers, and consumers to inform the updated guidelines. We are currently developing a new risk prediction calculator for the assessment of cardiovascular disease risk.





Funding Success

This year, we celebrated the injection of almost \$2 million into increasing the uptake of Heart Health Checks across Australia and supporting Australians living with heart disease, particularly those living with mental illness.

This funding included:

- \$1 million under the Heart and Stroke Action Plan for Protecting Australian Hearts to fund a national Heart Health Check education and awareness program
- an additional \$850,000 from Heart and Stroke Action Plan for:
 - Mind CVD (\$350,000), which will provide psychological support and resources for Australians after a heart event (including families and carers).
 - Heart of the Community (\$500,000), which will fund the expansion of the My Heart, My Life patient support program into at-risk regions across NSW, QLD and the NT.

Personal Walking Plans

The launch of the Heart Foundation's Personal Walking Plans was one of our major achievements for 2021. These free, six-week walking plans have been designed to help everyday Aussies access the surprising health benefits of walking, a low-impact exercise option that can reduce the risk of heart disease; help maintain healthy blood pressure, cholesterol and weight; and enhance emotional wellbeing.

Personal Walking Plan participants complete a two-minute online assessment about their current exercise habits and receive a walking and strength development plan that's tailored to their current activity levels. They also receive regular emails and text messages to keep them motivated as they progress through their plan. Designed by our physical activity experts and reviewed by consultants at Exercise and Sports Science Australia, these walking plans were developed in response to a Heart Foundation survey that revealed while 65 per cent of adults know that exercise can lower the risk of heart disease, only a third of this group meet Australian physical activity guidelines.

Since their launch, the Personal Walking Plans have inspired thousands of Australians to engage with the physical, emotional and social benefits of regular exercise, with 115,101 people downloading a personal plan. A survey of more than 2,300 participants found that 97 per cent of participants believed the program was important to their overall health, while 99 per cent of those who completed their walking plan said that they intended to continue regular walking or physical activity.

Coles Healthier Living Partnership

A new partnership between the Heart Foundation and Coles supermarkets brought heart-healthy recipes to shoppers across Australia. Called the Healthier Living program, this Coles-led initiative was designed to make healthy habits easier and more affordable for all Australians. The Heart Foundation created a series of blog posts on how to eat for optimal heart health, and also contributed a series of exclusive, low-cost, heart-healthy recipes with a focus on fruit, vegetables, whole grains and healthy sources of protein. These recipes were published in free Healthier Living booklets available in Coles supermarkets, as well as on the Healthier Living online portal.





Active Australia Innovation Challenge

Nineteen winners were announced in this year's Active Australia Innovation Challenge, a grassroots initiative that provides \$10,000 grants for programs designed to get local communities up and moving. Applicants must consult with their communities to build an understanding of local barriers to increased physical activity and submit an application that describes their proposed solution, along with details of their program's expected impact and a plan to make it accessible to the broader community. This year, we received 619 applications, more than double last year's total and almost five times as many as 2018 when the program was first launched. Our 19 winning innovations come from every state and territory in Australia and include a boxing and wellbeing program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and an inclusive dance program for children with disability.

Heart Stories: Supporting Indigenous Communities

Heart Stories are a collection of personal stories highlighting everyday people who have been impacted by heart disease. They remind our audiences that anybody can experience a heart event and emphasise the importance of prevention and of recognising and responding to the signs of a heart attack. This year, we produced a Heart Story about Warrawatja Bell, a fit and healthy Wiradjuri/Wonnarua man who survived a heart attack at the age of 48. Producing resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is part of our commitment to supporting people at elevated risk of heart disease.

Warrawatja listened to his heart and trusted his instinct – he called Triple Zero (000) and was immediately taken by paramedics to hospital to receive two stents. In sharing his story with the Heart Foundation, Warrawatja has helped support heart health messaging among Indigenous communities. His story was picked up by news bulletins on more than 90 TV stations across the nation and featured in many newspapers and radio shows.

Heart Week

Every year, the Heart Foundation's Heart Week initiative shines a national spotlight on critical issues impacting Australia's heart health and encourages health professionals to start a conversation with their patients about their heart disease risk. This year, we focused on raising awareness among health professionals of the importance of Heart Health Checks by promoting the use of the Heart Health Check Toolkit and the Heart Age Calculator in the general practice setting. Media coverage of Heart Week spanned more than 700 syndicated stories across outlets, including Channel 7, Channel 10 and SBS evening news bulletins and Sunrise, Channel 7's national breakfast show. The coverage, which also included a digital campaign, reached a total cumulative audience of 7.8 million people across Australia.



Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Support & Care

Improving the quality of life for people living with heart disease.

Summary

Supporting people who live with heart disease and those who care for them is key to the mission of the Heart Foundation. The Support and Care pillar is focused on helping individuals better understand and manage their heart health, with a particular emphasis on those from communities/demographics at elevated risk of cardiovascular disease. These include women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Our work in this pillar is grouped into the following themes:

- **Patient support:** expanding our support for people living with heart disease.
- **Health professionals:** developing best practice medical guidelines and supporting the clinical workforce to apply them.
- **Advocacy to government:** advocating for policy and funding investment at all levels of government for people living with heart disease.

By delivering a multi-intervention patient support program, funding world class research and advocating to the government, we seek to improve the quality of life and health outcomes of Australians living with heart disease.

The following pages capture some of our key Support and Care achievements in 2021.



My Heart, My Life

Over 57,000 people are hospitalised for a heart attack in Australia every year.² My Heart, My Life is a Heart Foundation support program designed to help people manage their heart health following a heart event. The program responds to shock findings that more than 25 per cent of heart attack survivors receive no information to understand and manage their condition after being discharged from hospital.

After a successful pilot in 2019/2020, we launched My Heart, My Life nationally in 2021. Designed for patients who have recently experienced a cardiovascular event, as well as their families and friends, this six-month program provides free print and digital resources, to support people during their recovery. These include fact sheets, videos, walking plans and recipes, and email and text journeys. An easy-to-read, illustrated booklet introduces readers to how the heart works, what to expect during and after a hospital stay for a heart event, the recovery process, available services and support after discharge, and advice on taking action to maximise heart health and identify the warning signs of another heart event.



More than 5,000 people have signed up since the program launch, with a survey of 200 participants who completed the initial pilot program showing very promising results. Among these survey participants, the vast majority had established and maintained significant health and lifestyle changes, including reducing smoking (80 per cent), having regular blood pressure checks (84 per cent) and cholesterol checks (67 per cent), increasing physical activity levels (73 per cent) and reducing alcohol intake (69 per cent).

Adapting our Community Help Services

In response to reduced demand and evolving telehealth services across primary and tertiary care, the Heart Foundation Helpline telephone service closed on Friday 22 October 2021. This was a milestone moment in our organisation's history: for more than 20 years, the Helpline has been a crucial source of heart information and cardiac support within the Australian community, responding to thousands of calls yearly and providing practical advice and emotional support to people with or at risk of heart disease.

The closure is a reflection of the changing health care landscape, including the increasing popularity of telehealth and the creation of numerous 24/7 health direct and nurse-on-call helplines funded by governments and private health insurers. Calls to the Heart Foundation Helpline number will now be referred on to other health care services, with additional information and resources available on the Heart Foundation website.

Supporting Young Hearts Podcast Launch

The Supporting Young Hearts program continued this year. This peer support initiative helps people aged 18–45 to connect and share their stories of being diagnosed with heart disease or having a heart event at a younger-than-average age. This year, we launched the Heart-to-Heart podcast series, which tells the stories of young heart patients like Winter Olympian Sami Kennedy-Sim. Over six episodes, clinical psychologist Carlye Weiner chats with a variety of Supporting Young Hearts members about the physical and emotional impacts of living with a heart condition. The podcast has been downloaded more than 2500 times.

Advocating for Heart Health

The Heart Foundation is dedicated to making a real difference to the heart health of all Australians and breaking down disparities. We continue to advocate for healthy hearts throughout Australia, by working with both Federal and State Governments.

This year we want to shine a spotlight on the advocacy work in Tasmania. In March, members of the Heart Foundation's Heart Health and Advocacy team visited Tasmania seeking a commitment from the Tasmanian Government to fund cardiac rehabilitation services for patients who have been hospitalised for a heart attack or angina. The trip, which occurred two months before the Tasmanian state election, saw key staff members from the Heart Foundation Victoria/Tasmania and our national office meet with staff from the Premier's office and state ministries for health, transport and infrastructure, and health and wellbeing. They put forward a case for continued investment in cardiac rehabilitation and the Heart Foundation's My Heart, My Life program, which provides free resources to support people after a cardiac event. On 5 April, health minister The Hon Sarah Courtney announced an election commitment of \$600,000 for the Heart Foundation, part of a \$52 million plan to strengthen palliative and community health care in Tasmania. In May, the Liberal Party was elected for its third successive term.

University of Technology Sydney Partnership

On 3 May 2021, we launched a five-year strategic partnership with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). The first step of the partnership will be a review of existing Heart Foundation programs that provide support and care for people living with a heart condition. The review aims to identify opportunities for innovation within these programs, ensuring that they can continue serving the increasing number of Australians being diagnosed with heart disease. The partnership builds on previous engagements between the Heart Foundation and the UTS that have been running since 2017. These include collaborations with the Centre for Business and Social Innovation and the Design Innovation Research Centre.





Pilbara Aboriginal Heart Health Program

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are almost twice as likely to die from cardiovascular disease than non-Indigenous Australians.³ Initiatives like the Pilbara Heart Health Program are essential to addressing the gap in Indigenous health outcomes. 2021 marked the seventh and final year of this program, which is designed for people in Roebourne, Onslow and Karratha, three predominantly Aboriginal communities in the remote Pilbara region of Western Australia. Delivered by the Heart Foundation with support from Chevron Australia, it engages local Aboriginal communities in the development, planning and implementation of a range of culturally safe heart health resources.

The Heart Health Check explainer animation, launched in early 2021, was a particularly successful initiative. The explainer is distributed via a tablet screen inside a book and has received considerable positive feedback. Towards the end of 2021, we built on this success by developing Warning Signs of a Heart Attack, another animation that used the same culturally relevant style and characters as its predecessor. This new animation was added to the existing tablet books and distributed around key communities.



Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Research

Continue our work as Australia's largest non-government funder of high-impact cardiovascular disease research.

Summary

As Australia's largest non-government funder of cardiovascular research, we are committed to advancing knowledge to better prevent, treat and manage diseases like heart disease, stroke and blood vessel disease. The Research pillar encompasses in-house funding schemes, as well as strategic and collaborative partnerships with our government and industry peers.

Through our work in this pillar, we will:

- **fund high impact research** by investing \$50 million into research grants over three years
- **increase our strategic research investment** to 20% and establish external partnerships for funding and co-design
- **showcase and leverage research** by sharing stories that shape and influence cardiovascular research and that build connections with researchers and strategic partners
- **evaluate our research programs** to ensure the delivery of best practice outputs that contribute to the evidence base.

The following pages capture some of our key research achievements in 2021.

2021 Research Awards

This year, the Heart Foundation awarded \$13.9 million to 74 research projects in our flagship funding schemes.

The funds will support:

- 16 Future Leader Fellowships
- 31 Vanguard Grants
- 8 Postdoctoral Fellowships
- 9 PhD Scholarships
- 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards
- 8 Collaboration and Exchange Awards

In addition, we invested \$2 million in two Strategic Grants in the areas of mental health and heart disease, and behaviour change.

Shirley E Freeman Innovation Award

Named in honour of Shirley E Freeman AM (1924–2014), the first woman to receive research funding from the Heart Foundation, this award recognises the most innovative successful application to the Heart Foundation's Postdoctoral Fellowship program. In addition to a Heart Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship, the successful recipient receives \$20,000.

This year, Dr Adam Nelson (Monash University) received the award for a project called the DA VINCI trial. Over the next two years, Dr Nelson will examine whether statins favourably modify atherosclerotic plaque in patients with different levels of polygenic cardiovascular risk.

The Heart Foundation Excellence Award

This award was given to the highest-ranked Heart Foundation PhD Scholar in 2021. It is generously funded by Ms Rebecca Davies AO FAICD, a Heart Foundation Board Director and Chair of the Research Strategy Committee. In addition to a Heart Foundation PhD Scholarship, the successful recipient receives \$30,000.

Dr Yara-Natalie Abo (Murdoch Children's Research Institute) received this award for her work on advancing the development of a vaccine for Strep A, a common bacterial infection that can cause rheumatic heart disease. This condition, which causes permanent damage to the heart valves, disproportionately impacts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in Australia and affects more than 30 million people around the world.





Ross Hohnen Award for Research Excellence Vanguard Grants

Ross Hohnen AM OBE played an instrumental role in founding the Heart Foundation. This award, which recognises the most outstanding and innovative research project among awardees of the Heart Foundation Vanguard Grant, has been established in his memory. In addition to the grant funding, the successful recipient receives \$10,000 in project support.

This year’s awardee is Professor Corneel Vandelanotte (Central Queensland University). Professor Vandelanotte will develop a machine-learning-based chatbot capable of providing personalised physical activity counselling. The project aims to provide greater insights into behaviour change interventions that have the power to prevent heart disease.

Heart Foundation Paul Korner Innovation Award

Professor Paul Korner was a pioneer of cardiac physiology in Australia who passed away in 2012. This award, which is given to the most innovative successful Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellowship applicant, was established to honour his remarkable achievements in the field. In addition to the fellowship funding, successful recipients receive \$20,000 in project support.

This year's awardees are:

- Dr Li Jiawen (University of Adelaide), who will use a series of novel fibre optic probes, including the world's smallest 3D-printed endoscope, to investigate how the plaques that cause arterial blockages evolve, cause heart attacks and respond to different treatments
- Associate Professor Yugeesh Lankadeva (Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health), who will develop a new Vitamin C treatment to improve the cardiovascular management of septic shock.





Strategic Grants Program

2020 Strategic Grant Awardees

In 2020, we announced the launch of our Strategic Grants funding scheme with a \$4 million investment. The Federal Government generously agreed to match this funding through their Medical Research Future Fund – Cardiovascular Health mission, resulting in a combined total of \$8 million. The successful recipients were announced in July 2021 with eight researchers receiving up to \$1 million each for project in the high-priority areas of women and heart disease, predictive modelling, secondary prevention, and cardio-oncology.

Women and Heart Disease. Awarded to:

- Associate Professor Sarah Zaman (University of Sydney), who aims to reduce the risk of heart attacks and stroke in women with pregnancy-related conditions.
- Associate Professor Lisa Moran (Monash University), who will study risk factors during pregnancy to identify women at highest risk of heart disease later in life and develop strategies for screening and follow-up of these women.

Predictive Modelling. Awarded to:

- Professor Peter Meikle (Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute), who will develop a predictive model to enable the early diagnosis of heart disease and the delivery of more targeted preventative treatments.
- Professor Diane Fatkin (University of New South Wales), who will investigate whether genetic factors influence the development of atrial fibrillation, a heart rhythm disorder.

Secondary Prevention. Awarded to:

- Professor Jonathan Golledge (James Cook University), who will assess rehabilitation programs for people with peripheral artery disease and calculate the disease's economic cost.
- Professor Tom Briffa (University of Western Australia), who will compare the outcomes of personalised cardiac rehabilitation programs with standard, group-based programs.

Cardio-oncology. Awarded to:

- Associate Professor Rachel Conyers (Murdoch Children's Research Institute), who will establish national cardio-oncology hubs to investigate how chemotherapy and other cardio-toxic cancer treatments damage the heart and arteries and cause strokes.
- Professor Gail Garvey (Menzies School of Health Research), who will research the prevalence of heart disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cancer survivors.

2021 Strategic Grant Program

The 2021 Strategic Grants Program continued to target high-priority research areas identified in consultation with researchers, health professionals and people living with heart disease, among others. Researchers were invited to apply for funding for research projects addressing:

Mental Health and Heart Disease

This grant supports multidisciplinary research collaborations focused on the prevention and/or management of mental illness in people with cardiovascular disease.

Behaviour Change (Dietary or Physical Activity)

This grant supports the development of practical, scalable and clinically impactful interventions that improve diet or physical activity with the aim of reducing cardiovascular disease.

The outcome of the 2021 Strategic Grant round will be announced in early 2022.

3 Minute Research Competition

The 3 Minute Research Competition invites Heart Foundation alumni to showcase their research via short, sharp and highly compelling videos. This year, we were delighted to award three presenters with \$1,000 each towards their professional development:

- Ms Laura Yeates, 2019 Health Professional Scholarship, *Caring for families affected by sudden cardiac death of a young relative.*
- Dr Elizabeth Paratz, 2018 Health Professional Scholarship, *Investigating sudden cardiac arrest in young people.*
- Dr Stephanie Partridge, 2018 Postdoctoral Fellowship, *Promoting healthy lifestyles for young people in a digital world.*

Attendees of the 3 Minute Research webinar selected Dr Stephanie Partridge as the People's Choice winner.





Cardiovascular Research Network

The Heart Foundation Research Program continues to maintain strong ties with cardiovascular research networks around Australia. These include the nationally focused Australian Cardiovascular Research Alliance and individual state-focused networks, including the New South Wales Cardiovascular Research Network, the Western Australia Cardiovascular Research Alliance and the Queensland Cardiovascular Research Network. Together we work to improve the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease for all Australians by supporting a vibrant, world-class cardiovascular research community. We do this by fostering strong collaborative networks, building research capacity, addressing key issues in the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease, and advocating for increased investment in cardiovascular research.

In the Spotlight This Year: NSW Cardiovascular Research Network

Hosted by the Heart Foundation, the NSW Cardiovascular Research Network (NSW CVRN) brings together researchers with expertise across the spectrum of cardiovascular disease, from basic science/biomedical to clinical, health services and population health research. Network members are encouraged to establish and leverage important research collaborations that can achieve enhanced funding, scale and impact outcomes.

This year's first NSW CVRN event, held in March, was a hybrid workshop and seminar to support researchers applying for NSW Health's Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program, which will distribute \$150 million in funding over 10 years. This increased activity resulted in significant growth of NSW CVRN membership numbers. Today, the network is comprised of 390 members who are associated with the 14 leading cardiovascular research organisations in NSW, including affiliated research institutes and local health districts.



Growth

Our People

Financials

Financial Sustainability & Growth

Increase our focus on financial sustainability and growth to further scale our community impact.

Summary

Delivering on our vision, mission and goals requires long-term financial sustainability. This organisational enabler sets out how we will secure and grow our revenue to create new opportunities for innovation in our research, programs and partnerships. We are committed to operating with a commercial mindset that leads to better economic and health outcomes, and to building a culture of philanthropy inside our organisation that strengthens the connections between our staff, our valued donors and our fundraising efforts. Our financial activities will focus on the following activities:

- **Growing existing revenue**, including major gifts, bequests, philanthropic trusts and foundations, individual giving and community fundraising, and grants.
- **Growing and diversifying new revenue**, including corporate partnerships and our commercialisation strategy and framework.
- **Achieving organisational sustainability** through effective financial management and the responsible and ethical use of donor funds.

Increasing Connections to our Campaigns

Increasing supporters' connection to the Heart Foundation by highlighting the human impacts of heart disease and showing donors how their funds make a difference was a priority activity this year. We created frequent opportunities for supporters to engage with our research funding beneficiaries, including via webinars, digital Q&A sessions and case studies.

On a more technical level, we increased our use of AI technology, which resulted in both cost savings and increased efficiencies in our day-to-day work. This technology helped us to more accurately identify the supporters most likely to engage with each of our campaigns.

Individual and Regular Giving

Donations from our individual and regular givers are the lifeblood of our work. Without their generosity, we would be unable to fund the research, education and programs that make a lasting difference to Australia's heart health.

As we moved into the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we experienced a drop in the previous year's giving totals – unsurprising, given the ongoing financial precarity that many people faced. However, despite these challenges, we were gratified to see that nearly 70,000 donors raised more than \$10 million for our work this year:

- 33,783 donors contributed \$4,899,996 to the Heart Foundation's major fundraising initiatives, including Give with Heart Day and seasonal campaigns like our Christmas and tax appeals.
- 19,298 donors gave \$4,897,000 through our regular giving program, which is comprised of donors who commit to weekly, fortnightly or monthly donations.
- 18,650 people purchased tickets in one of our seven raffles, raising \$975,000.





Fundraising Programs

Our community fundraising programs provide opportunities for everyday people to make a lifechanging contribution to Australia's heart health.

Jump Rope for Heart

The Heart Foundation's flagship fundraising program, Jump Rope for Heart has been running for almost 40 years. This year, more than 214,000 students at 946 schools raised an incredible \$2,406,488 to support the Heart Foundation's research and programs. With more than \$37,050 in donations, Camden Public School was our top fundraiser.

Our individual champion was Harry Palmer, a 12-year-old student from Sunrise Christian College in Marion, South Australia. Harry, who was born with a hole in his heart and a damaged heart valve, skipped for a total of 10 hours and raised an incredible \$10,236.

We're always looking for opportunities to continue adding value to the Jump Rope for Heart experience. This year, we partnered with education experts Cool Australia to create 24 lesson plans for teachers at participating Jump Rope for Heart schools. Covering physical education, maths, science, english and the humanities, these resources span Foundation to Year 6 learning levels and have been reviewed by Heart Foundation experts across the domains of Active Living, Food and Nutrition, and Heart Health.

MyMarathon

MyMarathon continues to be a major fundraising initiative here at the Heart Foundation. Participants run or walk the equivalent of a marathon (42.2 km) over a month while raising funds to help support heart research and programs. This year, 6,508 individual, team, and workplace participants, including a record 122 workplace teams, raised \$1,247,784 for the Heart Foundation.

A social team led by Sarah Price, the face of MyMarathon 2020, were this year's champions, raising \$25,156. Financial services company Perpetual triumphed in the workplace team category, taking out both the fitness and fundraising honours for the second time running. Perpetual's ongoing commitment to MyMarathon honours the memory of their colleague and friend Josh Avvenevole, who passed away unexpectedly from a sudden cardiac arrest in 2019. Together with Josh's family and friends, the team at Perpetual ran/walked more than 26,000 km and raised \$40,323, which was dollar-matched by Perpetual for a grand total of \$80,646.

Give with Heart Day

Give with Heart Day remains one of the biggest events on the Heart Foundation's annual calendar. This 24-hour fundraiser connects with current, lapsed and new donors, asking them to give generously to the Heart Foundation's cause. This year's event focused on the heartache caused by heart disease and the role of the Heart Foundation in keeping families together by funding lifesaving research and programs.

Some of Australia's most famous landmarks – including the Sydney Opera House (Sydney), AAMI Park Stadium (Melbourne), Old Parliament House (Canberra) and Adelaide Oval (Adelaide) – lit up red the night before the appeal, raising awareness of the event in cities across Australia. Our Give with Heart Day ambassador John Aloisi, an Australian soccer icon and father to four children, shared his story of undergoing shock heart surgery after being diagnosed with a torn mitral valve. John's experience served as an important reminder of the devastation that heart disease can wreak on families, and it clearly resonated with our Give with Heart Day audiences: we received an incredible \$1,096,708 in donations, which was dollar-matched up to \$635,000 by our wonderful partners and major donors.



Saving Hearts

Saving Hearts was our 2021 brand campaign, designed to drive awareness of the Heart Foundation and increase our prospective donor base by emphasising the emotional cost of heart disease. Campaign content was built around a hero piece depicting a man being treated for a heart attack and imagining his daughter's future life milestones – birthdays, graduations and other significant moments – without him by her side. The campaign captures both the lifelong physical and emotional impacts of heart disease on individuals and their families and demonstrates the vital role of medical research in keeping more families together. The video was viewed more than 17.5 million times across the country.

Bequests

Over 50 per cent of our funding comes from supporters who leave a gift to the Heart Foundation in their will. By choosing to leave a percentage of their estate to us, supporters help enhance the medium-to long-term certainty of our income. In 2021, more than 365 remarkable people were inspired to bequeath \$22 million to the Heart Foundation. Their generosity will support our vital work for years to come.

Philanthropy

A philanthropic investment is more than a gift. Significant investments in the form of grants, one-off gifts or multi-year pledges can be directed towards specific projects to help researchers and health professionals deliver long-lasting and large-scale change for our community. Long-term, high-level support from our philanthropic partners has helped us develop, scale and expand many research and health programs for the benefit of all Australians. In 2021, significant gifts from generous individuals, trusts and foundations enabled 26 projects that will improve the heart health of our community.

Workplace Giving

Our workplace giving partners and their passionate employees have played an integral part in collectively helping to fund ground-breaking cardiovascular disease research. Workplace giving is a simple, tax-effective and powerful way for corporations, and their employees to help Australians to live healthier and longer lives. We thank the 95 corporations who established workplace giving programs in our name this year.



Growth

Our People

Financials

Our People

Summary

Continued investment in our people is key to the Heart Foundation's ongoing success. Through our Connecting Hearts Strategy, we seek to become Australia's leading for-purpose organisation, inspiring and empowering our people to deliver impactful community outcomes.

Our activities in this area span the following themes:

- **Supporting our people** which requires us to invest heavily in high-performing employees from the point of recruitment through to their ongoing retention.
- **Living our values** which enable us to create stronger connections to our purpose, our performance management framework and our people.
- **Connecting our volunteers** by developing a refreshed volunteer strategy to grow our volunteer numbers, drive consistency and connect volunteers with our strategic priorities.



Supporting Our People

2021 remained a challenging year for our teams across the country with many continuing to work from home. We continued to invest in our people, adapting our strategy to reflect the changed professional landscape that resulted from COVID-19.

Staff and Volunteer Recognition

At the Heart Foundation, we believe in highlighting and acknowledging the achievements of all our staff and volunteers via the Recognising, Engaging and Acknowledging our Connecting Hearts (REACH) Program. Love Your Work — through our peer-to-peer Love Your Work nominations, staff members nominate a colleague or volunteer who has demonstrated exceptional behaviour in line with our values, achieved great outcomes for their team or delivered on our organisational goals. Recognition of Service — our Recognition of Service program acknowledges long-term employees and volunteers and the achievements that result from longevity and tenure.





THRIVE Wellbeing Program

Never has wellbeing at work been more important than over the last 12 months. THRIVE is our staff wellness program, which aims to support employees in the areas of healthy lifestyles, mental health, men's and women's health, and ergonomics. This year we re-launched the program to offer even more opportunities for personal and physical growth at work and additional avenues to keep staff connected during another year of remote working.

Developing our Future Leaders

The key to successful organisational and personal growth comes from the development of future leaders. At the Heart Foundation we want to continue to provide current and emerging leaders with opportunities to enhance their leadership skills. In 2021, more than 60 staff members across all business units participated in a tailored leadership program to further develop their resilience, communication and interpersonal skills, and strategic thinking capabilities.



Diversity at the Heart Foundation

At the Heart Foundation, we believe our workforce should reflect the diversity of the Australian community. This year, we hosted a focus group, seeking feedback from 31 staff and volunteers about the key benefits of a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Discussions revealed that our people value diversity and that they support activities that build a culture of respect, diversity, inclusion and safety. Participants agreed that diversity leads to better performance outcomes that benefit the people and communities that we serve.

Elsewhere, discussions on work-life balance in the face of COVID-19 revealed the increasing importance of workplace flexibility to our teams.

Defining our Values

This year we launched a series of new organisational values that represent what is important to our people and to the Heart Foundation as an organisation. These values will underpin the way we work together to deliver our Connecting Hearts Strategy.

- **Stronger together** – we believe in the power of unity, as we are stronger when we work together. We support each other so we all feel appreciated, by showing respect, leveraging diverse backgrounds, talents, perspectives, and resources.
- **Make a difference** – we are proud of our history and our achievements; we use our past success to guide the future. We work with evidence to be a trusted voice on heart health – when the evidence changes, we change with it.
- **Change the future** – we are courageous and think big, but we don't ignore the details. We promote creativity and innovation in our thinking and actions to continually increase our reach and impact.
- **Build connections** – we build connections with our community, stakeholders, partners, and customers. We strongly believe that what we do every day is for the benefit of others.
- **Act with integrity** – we are honest and take responsibility for our actions. We value the opinions of others and always assume positive intent. We enhance our trusted reputation through the responsible and transparent use of donor funds.





Volunteering

Face-to-face volunteering opportunities remained limited in 2021, with many of our volunteers and offices impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Despite the challenges, we maintained strong connections with the passionate and generous people who continued to give up their time to help us to achieve our goals.

We celebrated National Volunteer Week in May in collaboration with our friends at the Stroke Foundation. A 'fireside chat' event gave volunteers and staff a rare opportunity to hear from two of our leaders and two of our dedicated volunteers about the mutual benefits that volunteering brings to both our work and to the volunteers themselves.

The Heart Foundation is incredibly fortunate to benefit from the time, skills, and energy of over 2000 volunteers. We thank each and every one of them for the value that they bring to our organisation.

Board of Directors

Chair

Mr Chris Leptos AM

Chris Leptos AM was elected Chairman of the National Heart Foundation of Australia in May 2018. He is an advisor to a range of commercial and not-for-profit organisations, and most recently was elected to Chair the Summer Foundation. In 2020 Chris was appointed by the Federal Government to conduct a statutory review of the National Housing and Investment Corporation Act reporting to Parliament in 2021. In 2021 Chris was appointed the Independent Reviewer of the Food and Grocery Code under the Competition and Consumer Act. He is also a Non-Executive Director of IDP Education Ltd, Senior Advisor to Flagstaff Partners, a member of the Advisory Board of The University of Melbourne Faculty of Business & Economics, and the Advisory Council of Asialink. He was previously a Senior Partner with KPMG and Managing Partner Government at Ernst & Young where he had national responsibility for leading the public sector practice, and earlier he was General Manager of Corporate Development for Western Mining Corporation. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and a Fellow of the AICD.

Board Directors

Associate Professor David Colquhoun

Associate Professor David Colquhoun is a cardiologist in private practice. He is also actively involved in research and preventative cardiology; these activities are reflected in his role on the Heart Foundation's Heart Health and Research Committees. His specific interests include preventative cardiology, nutrition and psychosocial factors for heart disease. David has been a member of the Scientific Committee of the National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM), a member of the Scientific Committee of the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation, and the Co-President of the Clinical and Preventive Cardiology Council of the Cardiac Society of Australian and New Zealand (CSANZ). He holds an MBBS from the University of New South Wales.

Ms Rebecca Davies AO

Chair, Research Strategy Committee
(Appointed October 31, 2021)

Rebecca Davies is a former lawyer and now holds a range of director and committee positions, mostly in health and related areas. She has been a consumer advocate for medical research for many years and a consumer representative in this area both in Australia and overseas, including for the NHMRC, MIRFF and British Heart Foundation.

Clinical Professor Jenny Deague

Chair, Heart Health Committee
(Retired September 17, 2021)

Clinical Professor Jenny Deague is Chair of the Heart Health Committee for the Heart Foundation Board. Originally trained at the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Hospital, she holds a MBBS and PhD from Melbourne University, a Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand, and an Imaging Fellowship from Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard University, Boston, USA. Jenny has been Director of Cardiology and Member of the Head of Department Medical Advisory Committee at Joondalup Health Campus in Perth, Western Australia since 2012 and was a Clinical Professor of Health Sciences at Curtin University, Western Australia.

Ms Isabelle Demir

Chair, Investment Committee
(Appointed May 17, 2021)

Isabelle Demir has more than 20 years' experience in infrastructure investments and advisory across Australasia, Europe and the Middle East. She is Chair of the Heart Foundation's Investment Committee. Isabelle is currently an Executive Director of Infrastructure Capital Group (ICG), an Australian-based specialist infrastructure investment manager with over A\$2.8 billion of equity funds under management.





Professor Gemma A Figtree

Chair, Heart Health Committee
(Appointed October 31, 2021)

Gemma is a Professor in Medicine at the University of Sydney and an Interventional Cardiologist at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. She is the Chair of the University of Sydney's multi-disciplinary Cardiovascular Initiative. Discoveries in her laboratory have been published in leading journals, including the Lancet, Circulation, JACC and European Heart Journal, with > 215 publications. She was awarded a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Excellence Award for Top Ranked Practitioner Fellow (Australia, 2018) and a NSW Ministerial Award for Cardiovascular Research Excellence (2019). Gemma serves as a member of the Editorial Board of leading international journals, including Circulation and Cardiovascular Research and an Associate Editor for Heart, Lung and Circulation. She is a strong advocate for cardiovascular research, working as President of the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance with a national team to secure \$220 million in federal funding for the Mission for Cardiovascular Health. She chairs the MRFF Mission (CV) Expert Advisory Panel.



Professor Len Kritharides

Chair, Research Strategy Committee (until August 13, 2021)

Professor Kritharides is a Consultant and Interventional Cardiologist. He is Senior Staff Specialist and Head of the Department of Cardiology at Concord Repatriation General Hospital (CRGH) in Sydney, conjoint Professor in Medicine at the University of Sydney, Head of the Atherosclerosis Research Laboratory at the ANZAC Research Institute, Clinical Director of the Cardiovascular Stream of the Sydney Local Health District, and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Heart Research Institute Sydney. Len is the immediate past-President of the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand.



Mrs Cynthia Payne

(Retired February 15, 2021)

Cynthia Payne is a Director of the Heart Foundation, a position she has held since 2017. She is also a board advisor to Total Constructions (2018) and Managing Director of Anchor Excellence, her executive and management consulting firm. Cynthia is the past Chair of Arts Health Institute (2011–2015) and The Australian Organisational Excellence Foundation (2015–2016). Originally educated as a registered nurse, she holds a Bachelor of Applied Science (Nursing) from the University of Sydney and an MBA from the University of New England, with majors in Human Resource Management and Association Management. She holds professional memberships, including Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia, Member of the Australian Organisation for Quality, Member of the Australian College of Nursing and Member of Business Excellence Australia.

Mr Todd Roberts

Chair, Investment Committee
(Retired May 17, 2021)

Todd Roberts joined Credit Union SA in June 2020 as the Chief Executive Officer after more than 13 years as an Executive at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. With over 25 years working in finance and professional services across Australia and the UK, Todd has developed a strong understanding of a wide range of financial and commercial disciplines from accountancy, audit and insolvency to institutional corporate, commercial and retail banking. Todd holds a Bachelor of Arts in Accountancy from the University of South Australia and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand, Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Governor's Leadership Foundation. Todd has held a significant number of Chair and Director roles with various not-for-profit organisations and charities throughout his career, including the National Heart Foundation of Australia as a Director and Chair/Member of the Investment Committee.

Ms Alice Tay

Chair, Risk Audit & Governance Committee

Alice Tay was a corporate and commercial lawyer for over 30 years. Since leaving legal practice, Alice has concentrated on her board and committee positions. For the Heart Foundation of Australia, she is the Chair of the Risk Audit and Governance Committee and a member of the Investment Committee. Alice is a Director of Molonglo Financial Services Ltd, which operates four branches of the Bendigo Community Bank in the Canberra Region, as well as a Director of Community Housing Canberra Limited. In 2020, she was appointed by the ACT Chief Minister to the University of Canberra Council where she also chairs the Audit and Risk Management Committee and is a member of the Finance Committee. Alice is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia.

Ms Jennifer Tucker

Chair, Revenue Committee

Jennifer Tucker has more than 20 years of experience across a range of senior marketing, sales and business leadership roles in the consumer products sector. She is the Chair of the Revenue Committee on the Heart Foundation Board. Jennifer has degrees in Commerce and Law, is a graduate of the Harvard Business School AMP and Australian Institute of Company Directors course and is a member of the Mission for Cardiovascular Research Expert Advisory Panel and Chief Executive Women. Jennifer's career covers developing consumer centric marketing, innovation and organisational change programs. She is the Executive Merchandise Director at Bunnings Group Limited.

Patrons

National

**His Excellency General the Honourable
David Hurley AC DSC (retd)**

The Governor-General of the Commonwealth
of Australia

New South Wales

**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley
AC QC**

Governor of New South Wales

Northern Territory

Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO

Administrator of the Northern Territory

Queensland

Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young PSM

Governor of Queensland

South Australia

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC

Governor of South Australia

Tasmania

Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC

(since 16 June 2021) Governor of Tasmania

Victoria

The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP

Premier of Victoria

Victoria

Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC

Governor of Victoria

Western Australia

The Honourable Kim Beazley AC

Governor of Western Australia



Local Advisory Boards



New South Wales

Chair: Mr Jim L'Estrange

New South Wales LAB members appreciated the opportunity to add value to the Heart Foundation's work this year through a series of presentations and 'deep dive' sessions that helped shape key business strategies for fundraising and nutrition.

Our notable achievements this year included:

- partnering with the Aboriginal Chronic Conditions Network to host a webinar for Aboriginal health workers called Heart Lines: a journey through heart attack and out the other side. Our special thanks go to Associate Professor Raj Puranik and Kiel Hennessy for making the webinar possible
- providing professional mentoring opportunities for senior leaders within the Heart Foundation that draw upon LAB members' experience and diverse professional skills
- providing input and guidance into the Heart Foundation's Community Engagement Strategy, which will build stronger connections with volunteers and community members
- actively supporting the Heart Foundation's community fundraising events
- contributing to the recruitment process for senior roles at the Heart Foundation.



Australian Capital Territory

Chair: Mr Mark North

A significant highlight for the Australian Capital Territory LAB was hosting the Heart Foundation's Research Seminar in July. More than 50 attendees, including cardiac and public health professionals (doctors, nurses, pharmacists and allied health workers) and research academics, attended the Saving Australian Hearts Seminar: the journey so far and what is next.

The Seminar was a great example of the strength and value of our ACT LAB collaborations and their capacity to build our engagement within the community. This event highlighted the strong community connections that have emerged from the LAB, as well as the diversity of expertise that exists among our members.

LAB member Professor Walter Abhayaratna, Director of Clinical Services at Canberra Hospital, was a keynote speaker, alongside Professor Emily Banks from the Australian National University. LAB member Louise Maher, a former ABC broadcaster, facilitated the event. This event reinforced how we connect with and work alongside our local experts and health professionals to make saving hearts a reality.

The ACT Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith opened the seminar. The presence of the Health Minister had been strategically timed to reinforce our pre-budget submission to the ACT Government, which sought additional funding for research and boosting the walking program. These advocacy asks were identified and supported by the ACT LAB.



Victoria

Chair: A/Prof Nicholas Cox

As with all states and territories, engagement with stakeholders was challenging during COVID restrictions.

However, in an effort to continue driving the Heart Foundation forward, the LAB championed key pillars in the 2021–2023 Connecting Hearts Strategy, providing key assistance to staff and management by:

- acting as Heart Foundation ambassadors by supporting and sharing strategic goals, programs, and messages related to heart health (Risk Reduction/Support and Care/Research).
- acting in an advisory capacity to support the state manager to deliver strong engagement with Victorian key stakeholders.
- advising and supporting the State Manager on fundraising & revenue opportunities.
- supporting the delivery of corporate boardroom sessions/philanthropy events to generate financial support, corporate partnerships and/or participation in our workplace giving program.
- connecting and facilitating relevant stakeholder introductions with the State Manager to build stronger political and government relationships.

Dr. Ralph Audehm, a member of the Heart Health Checks Toolkit working group, also played a key leadership role across the country by supporting the Risk Reduction team to drive the awareness and uptake of Heart Health Checks and providing expert advice on the GP recall program. All LAB members provided strategic insights into the Victorian pre-budget submission that led into the budget submission in April 2021.



Northern Territory

Chair: Dr Marcus Iltou

The Northern Territory LAB continue to support Heart Foundation management through networking and awareness campaigns. The LAB and Northern Territory management continue to advocate for increased cardiac rehab services, as well as the continued sponsorship of anti-tobacco campaigns in response to the high prevalence of smoking in the NT. The LAB and management also continue building relationships with local governments in order to focus on the benefits of the healthy built environment and walkability around Darwin. We also supported the development of risk reduction tools for GPs and raised awareness in the community for the importance of Heart Health Checks.



Queensland

Chair: Mr Ian Humphreys

The Queensland LAB had a productive year of networking and fundraising. We hosted a number of networking events, research engagements and research information forums that featured presentations from prominent Queensland cardiologists and public health professionals.

The LAB also coordinated several corporate organisations to take part in the MyMarathon fundraising challenge. Corporate teams from PwC, Grant Thornton, McGrath Nicol and Ashurst raised more than \$40,000 for heart health research.

We welcomed a new LAB member, Laurence Lancini, who is enthusiastic about helping the Queensland LAB with networking and fundraising opportunities.

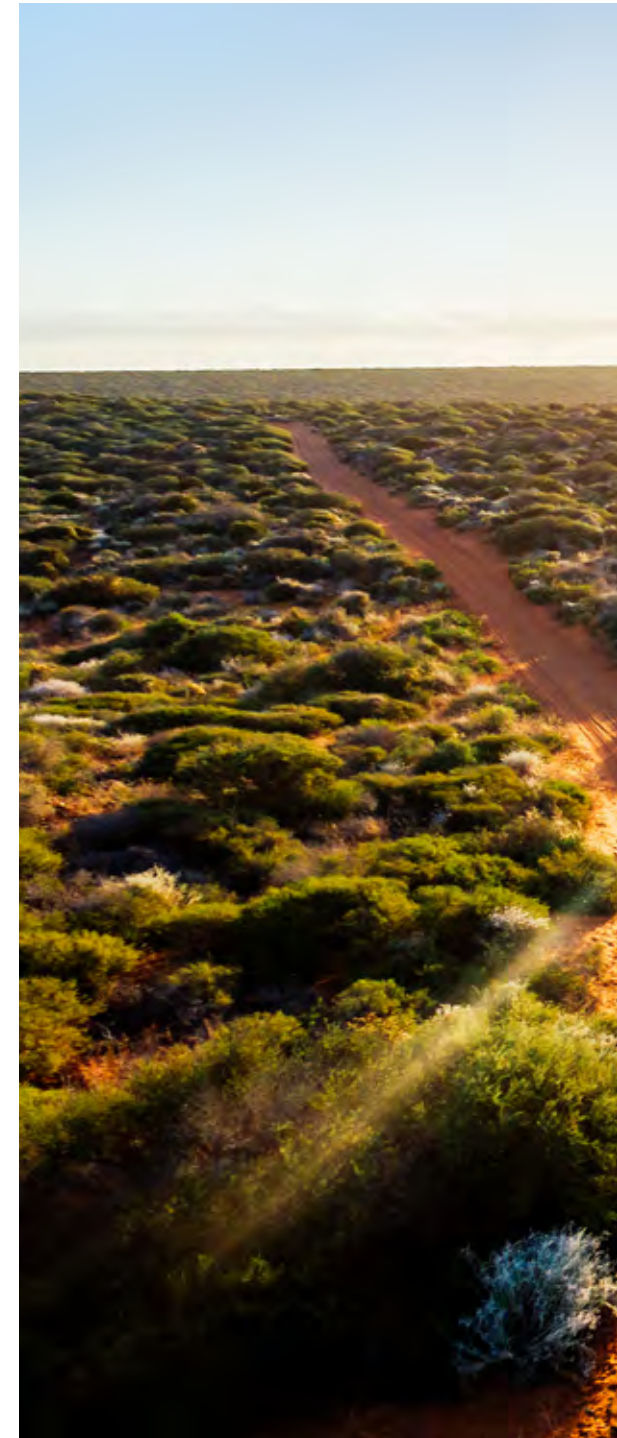
We would also like to thank Chris Miers, interim CEO for the Heart Foundation Queensland, for coordinating these networking events and keeping the LAB regularly informed of the Heart Foundation’s strategy and operational activities.



Western Australia

Chair: Mr Mario D’Orazio

The Western Australian LAB was active during 2021 despite ongoing disruptions caused by COVID-19. We assisted with the engagement of Optus Stadium, which was lit up red for Heart Foundation’s annual Give with Heart Day campaign. Mike McKenna, CEO Optus Stadium, was invited to join the LAB, an appointment that will further strengthen consumer engagement. After an unpredictable year, the Heart Foundation is well positioned for a successful, rewarding, and purposeful year in 2022. The Western Australian LAB looks forward to continuing to develop our relationships with the community and corporates alike.





Tasmania

Chair: Mr Harvey Lennon

The Tasmanian LAB was re-established in August 2021 after a short recess due to COVID-19 and a realignment of staff in the Tasmanian office. After re-forming, Prof Paul McIntyre opted to step down as Chair, with Harvey Lennon appointed in his place. Prof McIntyre will remain a member of the LAB moving forward.

Our key business activities this year included presentations on the Connecting Hearts Strategy 2021–2023 and the Heart Foundation Research Program, reviewing local engagement opportunities and developing an action plan for Tasmania. Two new members also joined the LAB this year: Local Hobart businessman Will Priestley, who has lived experience of heart disease, and Ms Jane Bennett, who has over 30 years of experience working in agrifood businesses across Tasmania and the UK. Their appointments further diversify the expertise within the LAB, an important step in maintaining its effectiveness.

In December 2021, Dr Kate White was appointed into the new role of Manager – Tasmania as a result of changes to the national organisation structure. Kate's appointment will significantly enhance stakeholder engagement activities and the local pursuit of Heart Foundation objectives.



South Australia

Chair: Mr Stephen Halliday

Despite the challenges of COVID 19 the Heart Foundation's South Australian LAB remained focused and active on promoting the cause of heart health in the state. With a state election due in early 2022, we maintained a focus on pre-budget and pre-election submissions to the political parties. These submissions argued for the next SA government to fund the implementation of the Walking Strategy Action Plan and the expansion of the Heart Foundation Walking Program, for SA Health to partner with the Heart Foundation to boost cardiovascular research in South Australia, and for a program to empower South Australian Aboriginal women to improve their heart health. We met with the Health Minister to discuss co-funding proposals for critical health and medical research while working to broaden the reach of MyMarathon and Give with a Heart Day.

Beyond our advocacy efforts, we worked to look at securing local funding for our popular Cardiac Cough Pillows distributed to SA cardiac surgery patients. We also farewelled our local CEO Imelda Lynch after her years of outstanding service to the Heart Foundation and welcomed Dr Marie Ludlow in the local leadership role.

As COVID-19 restrictions recede, we look forward to a busier year in 2022 with a major parliamentary event among our priorities.

Board Committees



Heart Health Committee

Chair: Prof Gemma Figtree

Dr Jenny Deague (retired as Member September 2021)

The 2021 year was active for the Heart Health Committee, which continued to advise the Board on health, clinical and scientific matters. Our particular focus this year was on the impacts of COVID-19 on heart health and the outlying complications resulting from infection.

The Committee continued to review heart health guidelines and consider position statements for both internal and external stakeholders. We also worked closely with cardiologists, GPs and other health experts to develop clinical messaging and scientific consensus statements.



Research Strategy Committee

Chair: Ms Rebecca Davies AO

Prof Len Kritharides (retired as Chair August 2021)

Despite the challenges of 2021, the Research Strategy Committee continued to address the questions of how to best utilise donated funds to support research that can help realise the Heart Foundation vision of ending heart disease.

We continued work on our strategic grants program, taking feedback from the community to identify key areas of research focus. This year the focus was in the following areas:

- Behaviour change – interventions to improve diet or physical activity that are practical, scalable and will have clinical impact
- Mental health and heart disease – innovative, collaborative research to improve mental health for those with heart disease.

We were overwhelmed by the quality of applications and the peer review process that identified appropriate grants to be funded.

Another major project was to review the impact of our research funding on recipients' careers, the effect of their work on practice and health, and how our funds have been leveraged to create even more support for research. After funding research for many decades, the Heart Foundation could not have achieved as much as it has in Australia without the generous support of our donors.

An expression of thanks must also be given to our dedicated staff, and our volunteer Committee members who have brought their time, talents and enthusiasm to our work.





Investment Committee

Chair: Ms Isabelle Demir

This year the Investment Committee undertook a market review of our investment management partners and advisors. After a robust tender process, Morgan Stanley were appointed as the Heart Foundation's Investment Management partner. The Committee worked closely with Morgan Stanley during the year to review and analyse the Heart Foundation's investment portfolio and investment management strategy to ensure our corpus is preserved and placed for growth in the current inflationary and rising interest rate environment.

Committee members were also busy evaluating the internal investment policy and its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) parameters; this policy guides and provides oversight of the investment strategy.



Revenue Committee

Chair: Ms Jennifer Tucker

During 2021, the Revenue Committee facilitated a series of collaborative workshops with our external commercial partners with the goal of further developing and enhancing our commercialisation framework. The Committee worked very closely with the managers of the Finance and Revenue teams to ensure a transparent approach.

The Committee also evaluated its skills, capabilities and experiences to identify gaps in expertise. As a result, Matthew Wilson, an experienced strategy and finance professional, was appointed to further diversify the existing skills within the Committee.



Risk Audit and Governance Committee

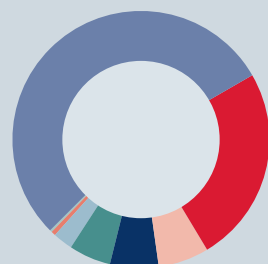
Chair: Ms Alice Tay

During 2021, the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee (RAGC) continued to advise the Board on all manner of governance and compliance matters, including meeting with external auditors to analyse, review and recommend to the Board the Heart Foundation group financial statements.

The RAGC also continued to ensure that the Heart Foundation had a robust program of internal and external audit activities in place. This work provided reassurance to the Board and management teams that the organisation's operations were compliant with regulations and policy, and in line with best market practice. Accordingly, to ensure the continuation of independent audit scrutiny, the RAGC oversaw the appointment of new auditors in 2021: Deloitte (external auditors) and Pitcher Partners (internal auditors).

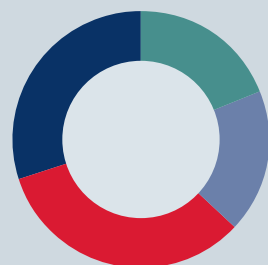
The challenging year also saw the Committee ensure that appropriate risk frameworks, including robust governance policies, internal frameworks and insurances, were established throughout all parts of the organisation.





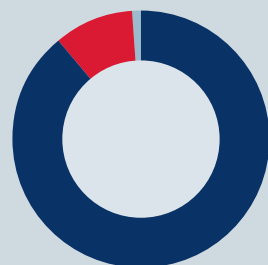
How You've Helped Us in 2021

Bequests & Memorial Giving	54.23%
Regular Givers & Appeals	24.79%
Major Gifts	6.27%
Jump Rope for Heart	6.12%
Community Fundraising Events	5.53%
Raffles	2.47%
Trusts & Grants	0.44%
Corporate Partnerships	0.16%



What Your Donations Supported in 2021

Health Programs	33%
Research	30%
Communications, Health Campaigns & Administration	19%
Fundraising	18%



Sources of Income

Public Support	89%
Grants for Health Programs & Research	10%
Other Income	1%

Financials

The Heart Foundation reports a deficit of \$5,437,000 in 2021 due to the impact of lower bequest revenue received during the year.

Despite recording a deficit, the result was ahead of planned expectations, noting that in 2021 we:

- maintained our non-bequest revenues in a challenging fundraising environment
- maintained our committed level of expenditure on research commitments over the 2021 to 2023 strategy period
- managed our overall expenditure within the limits of our June reforecast, which was based on an unexpected drop in bequest revenue
- undertook a budget, strategy and resource review in order to deliver a balanced budget for 2022
- undertook a review of all activities, program and staffing to efficiently deliver the strategy in line with the Heart Foundation's core purpose.

Although the fundraising environment is very competitive, our Board remain satisfied with our cost-to-income ratio for fundraising activities. They continue to challenge management to rigorously and strategically manage our resources to produce sustainable outcomes.

Overall, the Heart Foundation performed below the Boards, expectations in 2021 as a result of the significant decline in bequest income. Our commitment to research expenditure and the delivery of significant health programs was maintained. A realignment of activities and resources took place in the second half of 2021, which is expected to bring the Heart Foundation back into a financially sustainable capacity for 2022 and beyond.

The Heart Foundation has a solid platform to support an increased commitment to health programs and research into the future, underpinned by our new Connecting Hearts Strategy for 2021-2023.



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2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020, National Hospital Morbidity Database (NHMD)
3. Heart, stroke and vascular disease 2021, accessed 30 May 2022, <<https://www.aihw.gov.au>>



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