

# SSI Integrated Report 2022-23

Building an impact legacy

Note: This has been created as an accessible document. Where possible, figures and tables from the original report have been replaced with text.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Settlement Services International Limited and its subsidiaries (the SSI Group) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land. We pay respect to Elders past and present and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We will use our understanding of and commitment to cultural responsiveness as we welcome new cultures to Australia, deliver our programs and services and create impact for the clients and communities we serve.

The theme of this year's SSI Integrated Annual Report is 'Building an impact legacy'. It reflects our efforts to make a positive, enduring difference in the lives of others and in shaping society. This approach was woven into key initiatives and events across the year, including our all-staff roadshow in July and the development of our Impact Strategy, plus the FY2023 AGM. In working to create an impact legacy we're seeking to improve the wellbeing of future generations. We're making a commitment to shape a better, more compassionate and inclusive world, where the echoes of our actions resonate long after we have gone. We hope to leave a legacy of hope, inspiration and progress.

## Our Vision

To achieve a society that values the diversity of its people and actively provides support to ensure meaningful social and economic participation and to assist individuals and families to reach their potential.

## Our Purpose

To create a more inclusive society in which everyone can meaningfully contribute to social, cultural, civic and economic life.

## Our Values

- Respect
- Accountability
- Inclusion

# Explanation of the report

## How we report our social value

The purpose of this Integrated Report (IR) is to explain the key achievements of SSI in FY2023 and to outline our plans for the future.

The way we report on our achievements and goals is guided by the concept of integrated reporting - a holistic approach that aims to explain how our organisation adds value over time.

As well as detailing our achievements to stakeholders and potential funders, this approach is also intended to encourage evaluation within our organisation of how each of our activities adds to the whole.

With the support of the Board and executive, we began our transition to an integrated approach in FY2020, with FY2023 marking the fourth step on our journey. This year, we have built on the work of previous years. We have expanded our approach to our materiality - and how we determine which factors are likely to impact on SSI's strategy, governance, performance and future prospects. This is now captured in a table that shows connectivity between each material topic, the inputs impacted, and the impact on value creation.

We have connected with our key stakeholders to understand what they expect from us and how our decision-making affects them, as well as considering how they impact on our ability to create value. To help demonstrate this, we have introduced new Stakeholder Spotlight pages that bring to life the needs and drivers of this important group. We have also captured their interests and concerns in relation to key material topics in a detailed table. We have, additionally, expanded our External Environment review to include our risk appetite statement with a view to being transparent about our approach to risk management, a key attribute of integrated reporting.

## Connecting internal metrics with integrated reporting

The move towards integrated reporting in recent annual reports has helped motivate SSI Group as an organisation towards accelerating the collection and interpretation of data about our activities.

Our fundamental value lies in our ability to deliver client-centred, culturally appropriate and efficient social services. The social value this creates has been grouped into six categories, which we call outcome domains. They are:

1. Safety and stability
2. Learning and growth
3. Social inclusion
4. Economic participation
5. Health and wellbeing
6. Society and systems capacity

In this report, as well as through our strategic focus, we have made efforts to connect how each of these six outcome domains correspond to the six capitals of integrated reporting which we have named as 'inputs', and here we have included titles that better reflect our sector and the work we do as a not-for-profit. At the end of the domains section all our programs are listed within a table to provide deeper insight on each program's purpose, its funding source, where it operates, and the outcome domains it impacts.

## Addressing materiality

The External Environment section of this year's report provides details of our work developing a Strategic Risk Register and identifying the 17 material issues determined to have the greatest impact on our ability to create value for stakeholders, the organisation and the broader communities that we serve.

The Strategy section details our efforts to set goals not just for the coming year but for the medium term via a new Impact Strategy for the period up until 2026. And in the Stakeholder section of the report via the addition of Stakeholder Spotlights and the stakeholder analysis

table, we aim to better understand what each of our key stakeholder groups expects of SSI as an organisation.

## More reliable data

Accurate data that can be compared year on year is a key aspect of integrated reporting. A dedicated data team was used to collate and analyse the data used in this report, with a view to eliminating duplication and standardising how each part of SSI reports its achievements. This work involves a degree of cultural change, as the different silos within the organisation learn to work in harmony with the IR approach and support our move to greater impact led by our Impact Strategy. Education and support in this area will continue in FY2024. As we continue on our IR journey, we will also seek to improve data transparency and connectivity.

## Commitment to improvement

We want to excel in our communications to our stakeholders. Our Annual Reports have received Bronze recognition from the Australasian Reporting Awards (ARA) since FY2018, which means we cover most of the ARA's requirements for effective reporting.

Our original hope that integrated reporting would encourage internal stakeholders to take a wider view of the organisation has been borne out. Our Board, executive and staff support the journey towards clearer reporting, and we are determined to make further improvements over coming years. We worked with an external consultant in FY2023 to ensure our reporting moves even closer to the IR model. This year we introduced the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals to frame our long-term planning on our journey to creating impact for our clients and communities.

A final note. We are aware of the requirements of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). Where possible we have included information required by the GRI disclosure standards, most directly in the Our People section, but we have not used the GRI reporting format.

In this integrated report, SSI refers to the SSI Group including Settlement Services International Limited and its subsidiaries, unless otherwise specified. This report, produced by SSI's management team, and reviewed by our Executive team, has been signed off by Violet Roumeliotis, our Chief Executive Officer, and the Board as a true and accurate picture of our value creation during this year.

The directors are pleased to present this Integrated Report of SSI for the period ended 30 June 2023.

## About SSI

SSI is a national not-for-profit organisation whose purpose is to help create a more inclusive society in which everyone can meaningfully contribute to social, cultural, civic and economic life. We work towards this goal by delivering life-changing human and social services on behalf of governments and other non-profits and also using our own funding channels.

The organisation started life in Sydney in 2000 when Settlement Services International was founded by migrant resource centres and multicultural services who wanted to safeguard local, place-based service delivery. At the time, the tendering environment was increasingly requiring economies of scale in order to support newly arrived refugees to settle in Australia. Over time, our expertise working with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds enabled us to expand into delivering other social services and into other geographical areas.

## Expanding into Queensland

In 2018, we merged with Queensland-based Access Community Services and also opened in Victoria, establishing a footprint across the east coast of Australia. We now have offices and co-location sites in the metropolitan areas of Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle and Logan, and in regional areas such as Armidale, Coffs Harbour and Townsville. Our operations have also extended internationally.

## New brand new purpose

FY2023 was a notable year for the organisation as we drew on our history to develop a new brand and logo, enabling us to present a common face in all the markets we operate. The logo features the name 'SSI' with dots above and below the 'i' to symbolise equality. A tagline reads, For equality of life. The rebrand and registration of the business name, SSI, also means that we can officially refer to ourselves as simply SSI - a moniker by which we have been informally known for more than 23 years.

## Strength in collaboration

Right from the start, our approach to our work and to achieving social change has been firmly anchored in the belief that strength comes from collaboration. We partner with federal and state government departments and agencies, community-minded businesses and individuals. And we build relationships with domestic and global human-service-led organisations and NFPs.

By accessing federal and state funding as well as private philanthropy, we're able to provide pathways to employment and education as well as health and support services for our clients. Our own social enterprise operations complement our social service delivery areas and ensure that we remain a client-centred organisation.

## Community at the heart

While we have maintained our initial focus on assisting those on humanitarian visas, we today work with a wider group of people experiencing vulnerability. Communities and groups within which we help build capacity include, refugees, people seeking asylum, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people living with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, women, youth, families and children and LGBTIQ+ communities.

In FY2023, SSI supported more than 56,000 clients across nearly 60 programs and community-based services.

SSI employs more than 1,200 staff. Our workforce reflects the communities with whom we work. More than half of our workforce are born outside Australia.

Some 55 per cent of our workforce's first language is a language other than English, deepening our understanding and ability to support the communities and clients with whom we work.

SSI is a member-based organisation and our members comprise 13 migrant resource centres, multicultural services and specialist human-service agencies that work together on program delivery, advocacy and sector development. SSI also leads the NSW Settlement Partnership, a consortium of 21 entities comprised of member organisations and nine community organisations located around the state. Together, we deliver settlement services in agreed areas of NSW under an Australian government contract.

## Key metrics

56,000+ people accessed SSI services (up 16% from FY2022)

59 programs and initiatives were provided by SSI (up 20% on FY2022)

28,000+ people accessed initiatives including workshops, information sessions and consultations on topics such as health, disability and employment (up 55% from FY2022)

## Our impact

10,000+ Clients accessed employment services

50+ Organisations agreed to change after our Billion Dollar Benefit report

515 Refugee Education Support Program participants secured employment

145 Young people supported via Youth Employment Passport Program

\$164.75 million in revenue raised

3,985 People assisted via the Humanitarian Settlement Program

19% Increase in children helped via our Multicultural Foster Care program

66% Increase in people seeking asylum assisted via our Status Resolution Support Services

12,182 People supported with Settlement Engagement and Transition Support services

34 Scholarships awarded

157 Women supported with prenatal and/or postnatal care

2,595 People attended Health Impact Program events

17% Increase in people supported via Local Area Coordination program

202 Peer facilitators trained by Multicultural Peer Network program

3,296 Families supported by Community Hubs

50% Rise in artists supported by BEMAC

## How we create impact

### Figure 1: Our theory of change

Inputs > What we do > Outputs > Outcomes and impact

## Inputs

### Our financing

Pool of necessary funds (equity, debt and grant funding) provided by banks, funders, investors, philanthropy, or generated through diversified and sustainable mix of revenue streams, including government, corporate and community partnerships to deliver the most social impact.

- \$164.75m revenue base
- \$157.5m total program funding
- Funders

- Investors
- Partners

## **Our talent**

Team of engaged, responsive employees, our greatest asset, with the expertise, competency, experience and potential to add real value, and the motivation and capacity to create positive impact for our clients.

- 1,200+ employees
- 175 volunteers
- Skills training and development
- Capacity building

## **Our expertise**

Our intellectual property, brand and reputation, which are key elements in optimising our ability to deliver life-changing human and social services to full potential, ensuring our point of difference and competitive advantage.

- 50+programs, services and initiatives
- Outcomes Framework
- Outcome Measurement Roadmap
- Policy, Advocacy, Thought Leadership

## **Our infrastructure and technology**

Tangible infrastructure owned, leased or controlled by SSI, including technology and systems that are resilient and contribute to the delivery of our client-driven services, programs and initiatives now and into the future.

- Offices
- Impact Infrastructure, IT and digital technology
- Business enabling technology, systems and processes
- Migrant resource centres

## **Our relationships**

Relationships within SSI, and between SSI and its external stakeholders (suppliers, partners, funders), which are essential to optimising our ability to collaborate, build capacity, and work together to optimise our positive social impact.

- Member organisations
- Supplier relationships
- Partner relationships
- Funder relationships
- Domestic and human service- led organisations

## **Our natural resources**

Stock of natural resources or environmental assets (water, atmosphere, land, materials) that are fundamental to our ability to sustain and grow our positive social impact, including our commitments as a signatory to the Climate Change Charter for Humanitarian Organisations.

- Office consumables
- Energy, fuel consumables

- Carbon (air and ground travel)
- Climate Change Charter

## What we do

### Services and supports

SSI supports individuals, children and families via a range of vital human services, from settlement support of newcomers and refugees, through to programs in employment and education, and health, wellbeing and social supports for all Australians, new and old.

### Community and sector engagement and capacity building

We engage and empower communities, foster collaboration and promote positive change to drive improved outcomes for people from diverse backgrounds and identities.

### Advocacy, research and thought leadership

We speak up for equality through evidence-based advocacy, public awareness campaigns and - importantly - by amplifying the voices of people with lived experience to influence policymakers and decisionmakers.

### Who we support

SSI works with all people who have experienced vulnerability, including refugees, people seeking asylum, people with disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, to build capacity and enable them to overcome inequality.

### Our values

- Respect
- Accountability
- Inclusion

### Outputs

- 56,000+ People helped via our services
- 59 Programs and initiatives delivered
- \$157.5m Entrusted to us by governments to deliver programs

### Outcomes and impact

#### Safety and stability

A sense of safety and dignity; safe and supportive family relationships for children and young people; stable caregiver relationships for children and young people.

#### Social inclusion

Increased access to services and supports; increased sense of belonging; increased connection to culture and identity.

## Health and wellbeing

Increased access to health and wellbeing services.

## Learning and growth

Increased knowledge and skills; increased participation in education and training.

## Economic participation

Better navigation and access to employment support; increased access to employment and self-employment opportunities; increased experience of good quality, secure employment.

## Society and systems capacity

Improved community and sector capacity, improved visibility of inequality, and improved collaboration across sector and government.

(end of Figure 1)

# From the Chair and CEO

Shaping impact and nurturing communities

With another transformative year over, SSI Chair Voula Messimeri and CEO Violet Roumeliotis highlight some of our key achievements and challenges around social impact, resilience and innovation.

The prevailing theme underpinning FY2023 at SSI was impact. Right across the non-profit sector, there has been a pressing imperative to find practical, quantifiable ways to measure and demonstrate our effectiveness. This has partly been driven by the rise in outcome-based financing tools.

However, NFPs also face increasing service delivery costs and higher expectations from the public, making it critical that we focus our efforts on where they will have the greatest impact.

## Our Impact Strategy

We have replaced our traditional business strategy with an impact strategy, which began taking shape in August 2022.

Throughout the year, our team - from leaders to staff - actively participated in workshops dedicated to translating our values, focus areas and priorities into actionable strategies.

The Board's endorsement of the 2023-2026 Impact Strategy in March set the stage for the next evolution of SSI as an impact-driven organisation, including the development of an Impact Measurement Roadmap. The focus for FY2024 will be designing and commencing impact measurement for SSI's core programs, advocacy, thought leadership and capacity building.

## For equality of life

We have also reframed what we stand for - our overarching purpose - to be centered on equality of life. This was reinforced with a pivotal brand refresh in February 2023 that unified the SSI organisation under a single identity. This shift was not simply cosmetic. It symbolised our unity and coherence as an organisation, better reflecting the breadth and depth of the work we do to support new arrivals, local communities, individuals, families and children.

Expansion and collaboration



FY2023 was also marked by expansion and collaboration. We were named as one of two national providers of Status Resolution Support Services, strategically increasing our services across multiple states and reinforcing our commitment to supporting people seeking asylum.

Other areas of growth included our Ignite Small Business Start-Ups initiative, which secured funding for specialist support for First Nations and female entrepreneurs.

We also launched a new three-year project to advance the careers of culturally and racially marginalised women, run in partnership with the Diversity Council of Australia and Chief Executive Women.

## Ensuring clients are at the centre of our work

During the year, we began piloting MySSI - a self-service app that, in this initial iteration, packages up orientation information for newly arrived refugees to complement traditional face-to-face services.

Clients using the app are able to access trusted information at a time that suits them and in a format that, for many, is often preferable to face-to-face interactions. The feedback from the pilot phase has been promising. We now look forward to its broader implementation, which will allow us to scale our programs efficiently. We are exploring the feasibility of using this tool pre-arrival to ease the transition into the community and prepare refugees for life in Australia.

SSI also worked through research and design aspects of the Client First Model (CFM) in FY2023, key to ensuring our systems, processes and practice enable an optimal client experience and maximise impact. The Settlement Client Strategy, with key priorities for the CFM, was developed during this reporting period. So, too, was a draft of an integrated Client Pathway Model for improving service access and the experience of clients right from the beginning of their time with SSI. Over the coming year, we will continue to work on design and development and will test key components of the Client Pathways Model via research pilots.

## Working as agents of change

Our dedication to advocacy and thought leadership found expression during the year through groundbreaking research and policy initiatives, including the launch of the Billion Dollar Benefit report, a practical roadmap for unlocking the potential of skilled refugees and migrants. We have received significant support from key organisations and are poised to launch a coalition advocacy campaign to drive change.

Something that we are quite personally proud of is the strong 'Yes' stance SSI took on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament. This reflects our commitment to reconciliation and the rights of First Nations communities. We focused our efforts on education and raising awareness in the lead-up to the referendum. The outcome of the vote is disappointing and signals the need for greater reflection about what we as a nation value and stand for.

Across the course of the year, we made 18 policy submissions, contributing to reviews and inquiries and amplifying the voices of our communities on critical issues such as migration, disability, gender equality and the rights of migrant and refugee women. At the end of the FY2023 reporting period, we started to see movement on a critical area of advocacy. And in July, the Australian Government announced new funding for settlement organisations. This will help ease pressures caused by factors such as the inadequate historic indexation of funding, higher wages, and rising costs due to inflation. We commend the Australian government for the additional support to this vital sector.

## Supporting our people

In February, the implementation of SSIPeople marked a significant leap forward in our operational efficiency. While the transition to a single platform for HR systems had its challenges, it has now become a seamless experience for our staff.

Just after the end of the financial year, we also launched the new SSI Values. Through consultation and focus- group discussions with over 150 staff, we determined our new values of Respect, Accountability and Inclusion, which will serve as guiding principles that reflect the heart and soul of SSI.

In closing, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to every member of the SSI community, and to our invaluable partners, for their unwavering support throughout the financial year. We particularly acknowledge the contributions of our Board, executive team and staff, whose passion and dedication drive our daily efforts. Guided by our new values of respect, accountability and inclusion, we look forward to another year of growth, change and creating a positive impact for the people and communities we support.

Voula Messimeri, SSI Chair

and

Violet Roumeliotis, SSI CEO

## Our strategy

The development of our 2023- 2026 Impact Strategy signifies our commitment to creating, measuring, and achieving meaningful impact.

It lays the foundations that will enable us to improve the quality of the experience and outcomes for our communities and demonstrate the social impact of SSI and our partners' services.

Our Impact Strategy differs from typical strategic and business planning by defining success as the outcomes we create for the people and communities we serve, rather than our intended operational activity and outputs. Our Impact Strategy clearly defines our long-term impact and 15 priority outcomes (our outcome priorities), across six outcome domains, that we will focus on measuring and achieving to optimise the value we create over the next three years.

Our strategy also defines a range of organisational priorities that will enable us to achieve our priority outcomes and deliver greater impact over time. These organisational priorities have been used to define strategic goals, which specify time- bound targets and action plans to ensure the sustainability of our service delivery and business through to the end of FY2026.

The strategic goals include:

- To improve our organisational systems, processes and governance that are informed by best practice, through technology-enhanced improvements for staff and client experience, strengthening corporate governance tools, and continuing to build our capability to measure and report on impact
- To enable our people, culture and capability to remain client-centred and impact driven by maintaining our high employment engagement levels, further enhancing our leadership capabilities, and strengthening client pathways and client-centric design and operating models

- To influence change through our sector leadership, advocacy and policy contributions with a focus on shifting the dial to unleash the economic potential of refugees and migrants
- To strengthen our financial sustainability through diversifying our revenue sources and further enhancing our robust financial governance

Defining and embedding impact within our strategy and business-planning processes means that it can drive decision making over the coming three years. This will enable us to:

- Create greater impact for the individuals and families we support
- Better demonstrate the value we create for funders and partners
- Build resilience to overcome potential challenges from the environments in which we operate.

## Measuring impact

Our Impact Strategy includes a commitment to measure our 15 priority outcomes, and to use the data and insights to learn and improve. Over the next three years we will be developing and building systematic and sustainable outcome measurement and reporting capacities across our core programs and client focus areas. This will mean we will have better data on client outcomes to support learning and inform our decision making.

As our capacity to embed impact measurement and reporting improves, we will be able to strengthen our understanding of the change we contribute to and continually adjust our strategies to amplify our impact going forward.

## Supporting local and global frameworks

SSI's priority outcomes were developed to support our intended long-term impact and contribute towards local and global frameworks, including the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (UN SDGs). By aligning our strategy with the UN SDGs, SSI has demonstrated a commitment to sustainable development and ensuring that its programs contribute to the achievement of the global goals.

SSI has made meaningful progress in connecting existing programs and organisational values to the priority UN SDGs of 1 (No Poverty), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). These contributions demonstrate SSI's commitment to reducing poverty; improving health and well-being, education, and economic growth; reducing inequalities for people from diverse backgrounds; and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development.

See <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

### Figure 2: Our 2023-2026 Impact Strategy

Our outcome domains + Our organisational priorities > Impact > Outcome priorities

#### Our outcome domains

- Safety and stability
- Learning and growth
- Social inclusion
- Economic participation
- Health and wellbeing

- Society and systems capacity

### **Our organisational priorities**

- Systems, processes and governance to support improved client outcomes
- Our people, culture and capability are impact driven
- Sector leadership, advocacy & policy contributions to influence change
- Strengthened financial sustainability

### **Impact**

An equitable, resilient, enriched and inclusive Australia where our clients fully participate in the economic, social, civic and diverse cultural life.

### **Our outcome priorities**

#### Safety and stability

- A sense of safety and dignity
- Safe and supportive family relationships for children and young people
- Stable caregiver relationships for children and young people

#### Learning and growth

- Increased knowledge and skills
- Increased participation in education and training

#### Social inclusion

- Increased access to services and supports
- Increased sense of belonging
- Increased connection to culture and identity

#### Economic participation

- Better navigation and access to employment support
- Increased access to employment and self-employment opportunities
- Increased experience of good quality, secure employment

#### Health and wellbeing

- Increased access to health and wellbeing services

#### Society and systems capacity

- Improved community and sector capacity to support people from diverse backgrounds and identities
- Improved visibility of inequality experienced by people from diverse backgrounds and identities
- Improved collaboration across sectors and government on policy and funding reforms

(end of Figure 2)

## **Our external environment**

### Risks and material issues

## Our context

The endorsement of SSI's Impact Strategy 2023-2026 signifies our ongoing commitment to creating social value and to developing the skills and tools to demonstrate the value created.

Of critical importance to success is our ability to understand both the issues and opportunities material to the strategy, and to manage any of the uncertainties arising from these. To build this understanding, SSI has drawn on our social and relationship capital, represented by the knowledge and experience of stakeholders from across the human services sector, including our member organisations, our consortium partners, our staff and our service users, as well as government, funding bodies and regulators. This knowledge has assisted us to scope the Impact Strategy in terms of outcome domains and client focus areas as well as the internal mechanisms necessary to support this important and future- focused work.

While embarking on this initiative, our primary challenge is to remain sustainable within an increasingly dynamic and competitive human services sector, which is subject to significant regulation and oversight. Our service users rely on our ability to continue to deliver consistently high-quality services, across a range of areas, while protecting the safety and wellbeing of all involved.

## Our risk appetite

In June this year, the SSI Board adopted a risk appetite statement to support the implementation of our Impact Strategy 2023-2026.

"Our Impact Strategy sets out a range of client outcomes, goals, initiatives, and focus areas that we believe will progress our organisation, meet the future and current needs of our communities, and ensure we fulfil our vision and purpose.

We have an appetite for risk taking to seek impact and rewards, and this is underpinned by our commitment to evidence-based decision making. At SSI Group, risk taking must be both adequately informed and justified.

We do not have an appetite for activities that may result in breaches of legislation, regulations or that compromise the safety or personal information of our clients, participants, and workers.

We do not have an appetite for seeking opportunities that are inconsistent with our vision, purpose, values, or that are not aligned to our Strategy.

We have limited appetite for seeking opportunities for which we do not have (or cannot readily build) relevant foundations of evidence, workforce, and delivery capabilities."

## Our strategic risk portfolio

Our strategic risk portfolio (Figure 3) reflects the challenges we face to remain sustainable. Risks are monitored across six areas: external environment, internal performance, compliance, financial sustainability, structure and safety. Within the internal performance area, we have called out a specific risk related to our capacity to implement the Impact Strategy.

### External risks

Staying abreast of changes that may impact our funding sources, our current or potential stakeholders and beneficiaries, or which may reveal opportunities to strengthen our sector is key to remaining competitive and sustainable.

Through active participation in the sector and by building strong collaborative relationships, ranging from peak bodies to community representatives, we have gathered and maintained a

deep understanding of issues material to the execution of our purpose. This knowledge assists us to remain agile and responsive to a dynamic environment. A recent example is our response to the needs of people displaced by the war in Ukraine. We assisted individuals to access humanitarian visas and we worked with the existing Ukrainian community and local organisations to build a network of support.

As noted in the ACOSS Choice report on Competition Policy and Human Services (Smith and Merriett, 2018), the human services sector is subject to increasing competition: "For-profit providers face particular incentives to cherry pick, both on the basis of geography as well as customer segments". As a large non-profit, we have a responsibility to safeguard the role of smaller community-based organisations in our sector through, for example, forming collaborative consortium arrangements such as the NSP.

SSI's advocacy for our communities has the potential to highlight gaps in service delivery that may be seen by commercial interests as opportunities. We are assessing the impact of competition on markets within the human services sector to understand more about the specific risks, with collaboration and partnership remaining our north star.

### Figure 3: SSI Strategic Risks 2023-26

#### External

- Political and/or economic policy changes
- Competitive advantage

#### Structure

- Membership

#### Internal performance

- Capacity
- Capable staff
- Internal capability to deliver Impact Strategy

#### Compliance

- Significant breach
- Major regulatory, legal, or contractual breach

#### Financial sustainability

- Strategic contract
- Financial sustainability
- Humanitarian Settlement Program

#### Safety

- Safety incidents
- Safeguarding

(end of Figure 3)

## Structure

SSI was founded in Sydney in 2000 by migrant resource centres and multicultural services to safeguard local, place-based service delivery. At the time, the tendering environment was increasingly requiring economies of scale in order to support newly arrived refugees to settle in Australia. Since then, partnerships and collaboration has been part of our DNA. Working

together to pool skills, access complementary resources and extend into new areas is both smart and necessary. As the nature of the Australian community changes and new challenges emerge, a risk that we face is that our membership does not reflect the diversity of the client cohorts and communities we seek to serve. We actively monitor this risk by maintaining effective networks and seeking opportunities to expand our member base where appropriate.

## Internal performance

Contracts for the delivery of human services are released under competitive tender.

We closely monitor internal performance, prioritising fiscally responsible, efficient service delivery that does not compromise on quality. This is a balancing act as lower indirect costs are not always indicative of efficiency, and can instead represent a lack of investment in critical infrastructure that supports and enables effective service delivery. As noted by the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, "it costs money to run a charity, and large charities with complex structures and extensive programs will have higher operating or administrative costs than smaller, volunteer- run charities. This is not necessarily a reflection on their effectiveness or impact." (Commonwealth of Australia, 2018).

## Compliance

Compliance is material to our sustainability, given our financial reliance on securing and delivering services funded by government that are subject to a diverse range of requirements and close oversight. The threat of a significant contractual breach is a risk that we monitor closely.

Commercial pressures have pushed us to transform our ways of working and to invest in a future-focused digital environment, designed to strengthen internal processes.

From a compliance perspective, these innovations also assist us to ensure that sensitive information remains secure.

A threat to compliance is SSI's need to diversify funding sources and develop a broader base from which to deliver services and derive income. As diversity in operations increases administrative complexity, it also increases the likelihood of a contractual or legislative breach.

## Financial sustainability

While we are actively enhancing our internal structure to remain well prepared for future opportunities, we acknowledge the potential for fluctuations in our contract portfolio that may affect our income and client offerings. To mitigate this, we are exploring avenues to diversify our funding sources - such as untied funding - to begin to reduce our dependence on major contracts. However, it's important to note that diversification also introduces its own set of risks.

## Safety

SSI is committed to safety. Working in partnership with communities who are or have experienced vulnerability raises challenges for all stakeholders. Assisting staff to identify safety risks for service users and for themselves and taking appropriate preventative action, is key to reducing the risk of harm. In this, our staff are supported by the Practice Management Unit.

SSI provides a number of channels through which service users can raise concerns including our Net Promoter Score initiative and our Feedback and Complaints mechanism available at [ssi.org.au](http://ssi.org.au).

## Risk mitigations

SSI's Strategic Risks map to our four Strategic Goals and in turn, the Strategic Goals and the associated activities signpost the work to mitigate the Strategic Risks (Figure 4):

- Strategic Goal 1 - Governance, systems and processes
- Strategic Goal 2 - Sector leadership, advocacy and policy
- Strategic Goal 3 - Safe, connected and engaged people
- Strategic Goal 4 - Financial sustainability

### Figure 4: Mapping strategic goals and risks 2023-26

Strategic Goal 1 - Governance, systems and processes

Risks:

- Capable staff (*sufficient resources*)
- Internal capability to deliver Impact Strategy (*systems and processes*)
- Significant breach
- Major regulatory, legal, or contractual breach
- Strategic contract
- Financial sustainability (*cost and efficiencies*)
- Humanitarian Settlement Program

Strategic Goal 2 - Sector leadership, advocacy and policy

Risks:

- Political and/or economic policy changes
- Competitive advantage
- Membership

Strategic Goal 3 - Safe, connected and engaged people

Risks:

- Capable staff
- Internal capability to deliver Impact Strategy (*people*)
- Safety incidents
- Safeguarding

Strategic Goal 4 - Financial sustainability

Risks:

- Political and/or economic policy changes
- Competitive advantage
- Capacity
- Strategic contract
- Financial sustainability (*revenue streams*)

(end of Figure 4)

## Our approach to risk management

SSI Group's risk management objectives are to:

- Create and protect value by contributing to the achievement of objectives and improved performance



- Be an integral part of organisational processes and contribute to strategic and operational decisions
- Explicitly address 'uncertainty'
- Address the concerns of stakeholders
- Be dynamic and responsive to change and improve as the organisation matures

Our approach to risk management is maturing.

SSI's current risk profile is of greater breadth, but also greater specificity, than previous years. Our work to define key risk indicators assists us to focus on the issues that offer the greatest leverage for change. To protect our financial, intellectual, human, social and relationship capitals, we have developed an approach to risk management that outlines the roles and responsibilities of all staff.

Over the next year we will continue the maturation of our risk management by engaging and educating our leaders, ensuring a more transparent approach to business continuity planning, refining our crisis management plan, and will conduct a materiality assessment which we will cover in our FY2024 integrated report.

## Materiality and stakeholders

In FY2023, our materiality determination process has been defined on the basis of a combination of the internal and external strategic risks described earlier, and the outcomes that we strive to achieve through our Impact Strategy. This enables us to identify key areas of both risk and opportunity in relation to our ability to create value. On this basis, we have identified 17 material topic areas.

Our material issues are defined as having the most impact on our ability to create value for our clients, the organisation and the broader community. Under this definition we acknowledge that there are some trade-offs between material issues.

A material issue may negatively impact value creation for the organisation but create value for our clients. Self-funding social enterprises, for example, have an impact on financial capital for the organisation but create value for clients in terms of increasing the capacity of programs and teams delivering positive social outcomes.

In looking at our material issues, consideration is given to defining the topic, the capitals that are most likely to be impacted, the horizon over which it will impact value creation, and the level of control we have over the issue. This is detailed in the table, building on the commentary provided in the previous risk section.

Going forward, we will commission an independent stakeholder engagement and materiality process to enable us to gather insights more formally from a range of internal and external stakeholders and help us to prioritise our material topics and focus. We expect this will inform our focus and prioritisation of material issues in the future.

## Our stakeholders

The figure below reflects our key stakeholder groups. Here, we distinguish between those stakeholders that provide input into our theory of change our strategy and those who are in our external environment who impact on our ability to create value.

## Stakeholder spotlight

"The Australian National Maritime Museum and SSI have had a long- standing working relationship engaging our workforce, volunteers and community. In August 2020, we cemented our relationship and entered into a memorandum of understanding to elevate engagement and leverage joint opportunities.

"The Museum's partnership with SSI has enabled the development of shared programs such as the New Beginnings Festival held at the Australian National Maritime Museum as part of the Sydney Festival. And the partnership enables a diverse workforce with cross-cultural capability through volunteering and employment pathways and enables cultural diversity to be reflected in the national story."

Tina Koutsogiannis,  
Head of Corporate Partnerships Australian National Maritime Museum

## Stakeholder spotlight

"SSI is the main industry partner on a three-year research project which is building the evidence base for what works to identify - and prevent - domestic violence among refugee and migrant women when they access on-arrival settlement support. I have seen first-hand the capabilities of SSI's Multicultural Support Officers in carrying out research with refugee and migrant women on domestic violence which is a highly sensitive topic in communities. Their skill in having these conversations is critical to the research."

Professor Jo Spangaro,  
Faculty of the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, School of Health and Society, University of Wollongong.

## Our outcome domains

Our work contributes to outcomes across six domains:

- Safety and stability
- Learning and growth
- Social inclusion
- Economic participation
- Health and wellbeing
- Society and system capacity

Our results over the next 18 pages provide highlights for each outcome domain, demonstrating how our work contributes to change in these areas for the people and communities we serve.

A range of our programs have been included in the outcome domain highlights, and a full list of our programs can be found at the end of this section. This table provides information on the program's purpose, region, funder, and outcome domains that they contribute to.

## Safety and stability

A sense of being free from danger and upheaval is crucial to an individual's ability to adjust to life in a new community. Programs within our Safety and Stability domain aim to help newcomers and their families, people from CALD backgrounds and other people experiencing a period of vulnerability to live in safe, stable and affordable environments. We work to ensure they have access to services that support secure lives.

Our ongoing goals are to continue to grow the number of individuals we support while maintaining a high level of life-changing, meaningful care. You can read descriptions of each program in this domain on the Program Listing pages of this report

## Focus on humanitarian arrivals

In FY2023, we continued to deliver the Australian government's Humanitarian Settlement Program in NSW. We provided 3,985 newly arrived individuals with support around orientation and transitioning to settlement. On average, the program supported 5,900 clients per month. The HSP client experience survey found that 99 per cent reported they have been made to feel welcome, 90 per cent reported they feel part of the Australian community, and 84 per cent reported they have become more connected to community.

Meanwhile, our Status Resolution Support Services assisted 336 people seeking asylum in areas such as healthcare and employment - a 52 per cent increase on the numbers helped in FY2022.

Via our emergency relief for people seeking asylum, we provided emergency payments and case management support to 847 people seeking asylum in NSW (up 46 per cent) and 1,400 individuals in Queensland.

## Support for all types of families

Our Multicultural Child and Family Program (MCFP) in NSW and Multicultural Foster Care Program (MFCP) in Victoria connect children and young people from CALD backgrounds with foster carers who provide a safe and caring environment and help them maintain their cultural identity. In FY2023, 270 children in NSW were cared for - a 19 per cent increase from FY2022. Our family preservation and restoration team in NSW assisted seven families and 24 children by supporting families to create a safe and nurturing home environment to keep children safely at home.

Almost 80 per cent of children shared faith, language and ethnic background with their carers, a rise on the previous year. The year also saw the continued establishment of the program in Victoria.

Our Building Stronger Families program successfully worked with 30 men from Arabic-speaking communities. And our successful parenting program, Raising Children in a New Country, received funding from NSW Health to develop a formal course that can be delivered by community and settlement workers.

## Growing communities

We helped strengthen local communities through a range of initiatives. The SSI Gateway continued to provide a safe and welcoming place for CALD and newcomer communities to come together. Local services outreach from the centre and collaborate on strategies around local community issues. Through the Strong and Resilient Communities program, we fostered increased support for vulnerable communities by facilitating four Community Connect leader forums, as well as several topic-specific forums.

## Responding to domestic and family violence

We continued to work in the domestic and family violence area through a number of programs. Our Domestic Family Violence (DFV) Practice Unit received referrals for 94 clients who had been subjected to DFV, 45 adults and 49 children. Services provided included comprehensive risk assessment, safety planning, exit planning and support and psychosocial education.

Meanwhile, the NSW Settlement Partnership Domestic and Family Violence project delivered 4,916 thematic group sessions (up from 2,684 in FY2022) reaching 1,125 newcomer clients, and the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support Program supported women via the delivery of 36 DVF group sessions involving 225 Queensland-based clients.

99 Steps is a specialised service that supported 80 women with individual risk assessments and safety plans, down from 154 women in FY2022. 99 Steps supports women to navigate legal systems, apply for domestic violence orders and find refuge accommodation.

## Case study

### Successful kidney transplant for refugee

The physical and emotional scars humanitarian entrants to Australia carry can run very deep. Forty-year-old Dylan\* came to Sydney about five years ago on a special humanitarian visa. In the country he was fleeing, he had experienced torture and been imprisoned for an extended period. As a result, he suffered from kidney failure prior to his arrival and required significant support. Due to language and cultural barriers and a lack of family support, Dylan faced challenges in accessing care. SSI's Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) case workers supported Dylan by providing background information to doctors, advocating for him, and insisting on having interpreters present for interactions with medical staff. Eventually we were able to establish strong communication between Dylan and the hospital. Testing confirmed Dylan was suitable for a transplant and he has since undergone kidney transplant surgery and is doing well. We were also able to work with the Land and Housing Corporation and Mission Australia in finding Dylan suitable accommodation.

\* Not his real name.

## Learning and growth

Education and self-development empower an individual to participate in and contribute to society. Programs within our Learning and Growth domain aim to provide individuals with the skills needed to join the workforce, to grow as a person, and to gain confidence, self-esteem and agency.

Our ongoing goals are to continue to grow the number of individuals we support to meet demand within the community, while maintaining a high level of life-changing, meaningful care. You can read descriptions of each program in this domain on the Program Listing pages of this.

### Services for newcomers

Helping humanitarian entrants to Australia and migrants to develop in their new communities is a key focus of our work. Our SETS programs in NSW and Queensland focus on support for these groups over their first five years in Australia. In FY2023, some 12,182 people were supported in NSW and 1,188 in Queensland, up from 11,975 and down from 1,865 in FY2022, respectively. This work involved more than 47,000 casework and group sessions, up from 40,000 of last year. In NSW over 5,000 education and training sessions were delivered (up 50% from the previous year) and over 1,400 English learning pathway sessions (up 66% from the previous year). In Queensland there were over 760 education sessions.

Our Community Hubs services in NSW and Queensland, meanwhile, supported newcomer parents and children as they navigated the education system. In FY2023, we supported 3,296 families through the scheme, up from 3,193 the previous year.

## Training for diverse Australia

We also deliver training for a wide range of other parts of Australian society. The Youth Employment Planning Passport (YEPP) program in NSW, Victoria, and Queensland ran from June 2022 until May 2023. There were 145 young people in Years 11 and 12 at risk of disengaging from education and to provide career guidance and support.

Through the delivery of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work scheme for jobseekers, we assisted 102 clients, up from 81 clients the previous year. Some 74 per cent of clients completed a course to upskill, up from 58 per cent the previous year. Some 65 per cent of clients gained employment on exit. Meanwhile, our registered training organisation (RTO) in Queensland provided training to 120 students from diverse backgrounds, down from 137 the previous year.

Since 2016, the SSI Allianz Scholarship Program has worked to make navigating the education system easier for people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds.

Some 34 scholarships were awarded in FY2023 across four streams, down from 37 the previous year.

## Support for the aged-care sector

Our Home Care Workforce Support Program in NSW and the ACT aims to grow, upskill, train and support an aged care workforce that delivers safe, high-quality care that puts seniors first. This was a new program in FY2022 and year-on-year data is not yet available. In FY2023, we were able to generate over 8,400 leads from social media campaigns, job fairs and community engagement initiatives. We converted these into over 2,500 participants in activities,

a conversion rate of 30 per cent. Over 1,000 people were successfully referred to Home Care Providers or RTOs to help them develop skills to work in the care sector.

## Case study

### A safety net for two young mums

The challenges families experience during settlement can be exacerbated when relationships break down.

In FY2023, our SETS team in Queensland worked with two young migrant mothers who were in the country on partner visas.

Both had children under six years old and both found themselves in a financial crisis when support from their families in Australia was cut off. The two mums had also experienced domestic and family violence (DFV), including financial abuse, and had struggled to find work. They were not yet eligible for Centrelink benefits.

Our SETS team in Queensland worked tirelessly to improve the situation for the mothers and their children. We advocated to Services Australia, DFV assistance providers, and providers of housing and legal services. We also referred the two to Community Hubs to reduce social isolation and we supported them with finding employment, education on financial literacy, and in putting a safety plan in place. One very successful outcome was a waiving of the four-year waiting period for Centrelink payments, greatly increasing their ability to pay rent.

## Social inclusion

It's all too easy for people from diverse backgrounds to become socially isolated during times of crisis. Programs within our Social Inclusion domain aim to provide participants with the skills,

relationships and support they need to connect with others, access the services they need, and to thrive in the community. We work with individuals living with disability, those with humanitarian entrant and migrant backgrounds, First Nations people, and more.

Our ongoing goals are to continue to grow the number of individuals we support while maintaining a high level of life-changing, meaningful support. You can read descriptions of each program in this domain on the Program Listing pages of this report.

## Increased access to the NDIS

In FY2023, we continued to deliver Local Area Coordination services within two Sydney regions, helping eligible people with disability to understand and access the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The number of people to whom we provided support rose 17 per cent from the previous year to 20,905. Participants were supported in pursuing employment and social-participation goals, with some 1,850 first plans completed as well as 12,097 reassessments and 9,819 implementation meetings. Through 125 community capacity building engagements, we reached an audience base of over 6,000 people - an increase of 30 per cent on the previous year.

## Greater connection through the arts

Arts initiatives provide a powerful and proven means for increasing social engagement.

In FY2023, our BEMAC arts centre program delivered 55 culturally diverse projects and supported 440 artists and arts workers - a 50 per cent increase in the number of artists from 292 in FY2022. Events either funded by, or supported by, the program attracted an audience of 60,493, representing an increase of 220 per cent from FY2022. This was partly due to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and an invitation to officially partner internationally renowned World of Music Ipswich (WOMI) on 10 July 2022 attracting audiences of 27,500 people.

Meanwhile, our Arts and Culture program in NSW continued to enable creative pathways for newly arrived artists and cultural practitioners, and deliver community arts and cultural engagement activities, festivals, and cultural events. More than 20 activities and projects were delivered through its program framework pillars. The program supported 137 artists and engaged an audience of almost 11,979. This was an increase of 70 per cent from FY2022 (7058) due to the success of SSI's signature arts and culture event, New Beginnings.

A celebration of dance, art and musical diversity, New Beginnings forms part of the trailblazing Sydney Festival and is hosted by our corporate partner, the Australian National Maritime Museum.

In Coffs Harbour, our Stories of Welcome project, part of our Refugee Week line-up of events, saw eight newcomers supported to tell their stories of settlement through different mediums including film, photography, and mix medium.

Tapping into the volunteer community Volunteers who freely give their time to assist others are critical for the delivery of many of our programs. In FY2023, the volunteer programs had an active base of 175 people including some 25 students and interns.

The average number of active volunteers per month is 136, which represents a strong retention rate of 77 per cent. In FY23, 65 volunteers were recruited and onboarded. A key area in which volunteers assisted was in the delivery of the The Welcome Program, a low-cost, socially inclusive, fun day out for individuals, families and groups which in FY2023 engaged 621 newcomers.

## Giving voice to diverse cultures

In FY2023, the Client and Community Voice framework was used to explore the needs and wants of 51 people over 10 sessions, with participants coming from backgrounds including Urdu, Cantonese, Syrian, Vietnamese, Iraqi, Arabic-speaking and African.

And with help from a grant from the Coca-Cola Foundation we held two intercultural exchange 'CommuniTea' events between newcomers and First Nations communities. These were aimed at building greater knowledge and awareness of First Nations within SSI's newcomer clients.

## Case Study

### Helping a newcomer artist to spread her wings

Shiva Dadvar had both talent and a passion for painting when she arrived in Australia in 2019. But she lacked the connections required to establish herself on the local arts scene. That changed when she came into contact with the SSI Arts and Culture program, which provided her with opportunities to grow and develop. Over the past few years, she has been an active participant in a number of projects organised and facilitated by SSI, including visual arts workshops, exhibitions, and market stalls. These showcase opportunities have played an instrumental role in Shiva's development as an established artist settled in Australia. In FY2023, Shiva was successful in her application to Waverley Council's 'United to End Racism' mural competition on the Bondi Beach Sea wall. This has led to further employment opportunities, including another mural in the community garden, an arts workshop for local community, and working with Our Race to address power imbalances that occur through unethical story-telling practices.

## Economic participation

Being able to participate in the workforce provides individuals with more than a source of income.

It helps build identity and self-esteem and deepens ties within the community. Programs within this domain aim to help people get equal access to job opportunities, to gain paid work and to understand how to access employment support.

Our ongoing goals are to continue to grow the number of individuals we support to meet demand within the community, while maintaining a high level of life-changing, meaningful care. You can read descriptions of each program in this domain on the Program Listing pages of this report.

## A hand-up for newcomers

A key focus of our work is helping newcomers to Australia find work. In FY2023, some 1,212 clients were supported via the Refugee Employment Support Program (RESP) in two NSW regions, up from 1,000 the previous year. Of these, 515 secured work, with 191 securing a job placement of more than six months. Some 212 participants received mentoring across the year.

Our Work + Stay social enterprise aims to connect newcomers and other jobseekers with regional employers. In FY2023, the program placed and settled 34 candidates in 17 regional local government areas, with a 100 per cent retention rate. Some 41 regional employers are engaged in the program.

Meanwhile, our Ignite® Small Business Start-Ups program aims to facilitate small business creation - or help expand an existing business - for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. In FY2023, 28 individuals were supported in the creation of a new start-up and 13 were supported in strengthening an existing business. Some 60 per cent of clients were female.

## Removing barriers for those with disability

One of our focuses is on removing the barriers that may stop a person with a disability, injury or health condition from participating in the workforce. In FY2023, we delivered services under the Disability Employment Services Program in NSW and Queensland. Across both states, we assisted some 611 people, down from 1,201 in the previous financial year. Some 22 per cent (133) of clients secured work across both states, up from 13 per cent (155) the previous year.

Our IgniteAbility business start-up program for people living with disability assisted five clients in starting a business and five with expanding their business. In total, the program assisted 46 businesses across the year and 252 people.

## Assisting the marginalised

We work to increase employment opportunities for people experiencing periods of disadvantage and vulnerability.

Developed in collaboration with Diversity Council Australia and Chief Executive Women, our Recognise, Inspire, Support, Energise (RISE) program targets culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women. The program began in 2022 and will run until mid-2026 and aims to address barriers for CARM women to access leadership positions. It will provide tailored support for 375 female participants.

Meanwhile, our Yarrabilba Exchange ran seven joint initiatives between local job agencies and industry to support job seekers to enter or retain employment. In FY2023, some 328 clients were assisted, with 95 (29 per cent) of those securing employment. And our Local Jobs Program ran a range of initiatives aimed at securing employment for the people experiencing periods of vulnerability in NSW and Queensland.

In Victoria, our delivery of the Jobs Victoria Advocates program saw 4,317 clients supported, with 12,951 engagements with jobseekers, compared to 2,197 engagements in FY2022.

## Diverse work services

The services we provide through the ParentsNext scheme help parents of school-aged children join - or re-join - the workforce. In FY2023, a total of 3,786 people were supported to achieve their employment and education goals in NSW and Queensland. This compared with 3,350

for the two regions the previous year. Some nine per cent of clients in NSW and 12 per cent in Queensland secured employment.

In Victoria, some 367 eligible job seekers were supported with intensive case management through our Jobs Victoria Employment Services program, a 34 per cent increase on the previous year.

## Case study

### Olga finds her feet in a new country

Ukrainian woman Olga's life changed for ever when Russian troops poured over the border into her homeland in February 2022. She was lucky enough to flee the country with her two daughters and take refuge in Sydney in March that year. With help from friends in Australia and from SSI, she has spent the past 18 months getting to know her adopted country and trying to make a contribution to society.



Olga's SSI Humanitarian Settlement Program case manager has supported her efforts, by helping the family to register for Medicare, translating documents, organising medical support, and providing technology.

"I did not imagine that this could happen," Olga says. "Our case manager was organised at such a level and so professional; I did not have time to come to my senses. I burst into tears of happiness." With a 20-year career in Ukraine as an accountant, Olga has quickly found part-time employment as a finance administrator. She is working towards acquiring the English- language skills needed to get her overseas qualification and experience recognised.

## Health and wellbeing

Good health plays a key role in an individual's ability to participate in society, to work and to achieve satisfaction and happiness. Programs within our Health and Wellbeing domain aim to empower newcomers and their families, people from CALD backgrounds and other people experiencing vulnerability through improved health, wellbeing and life satisfaction. The focus is on both mental and physical health.

Our ongoing goals are to continue to grow the number of individuals we support to meet demand within the community, while maintaining a high level of life-changing, meaningful care. You can read descriptions of each program in this domain on the Program Listing pages of this report.

### Better health for children and families

Many of our programs recognise that achieving good health in childhood helps an individual throughout their life. Our Health Impact Project aims to improve the health and wellbeing of children under five and their parents through Community Hubs. In FY2023, 386 caregivers and children (381 in FY2022) attended health promotion workshops and information days. In surveys, more than 95 per cent of service users reported improvement in child behaviour and parental knowledge in areas such as child health.

The Child Health Pathways Pilot Project, meanwhile, supports families of children with developmental delays in accessing health services, with a focus on CALD families. In FY2023, we referred 23 people to the project - up from 12 the previous year - with outcomes including NDIS plans and practical support.

Maternity Hubs provides comprehensive care and support for expectant and new mothers who are culturally and linguistically diverse or are from a refugee background and are planning to birth at Logan Hospital in Queensland. Some 157 women were supported by the hub in FY2023 with prenatal and/or postnatal care.

### Mental health with a focus on women

As part of our delivery of the Humanitarian Settlement Program, we hold women's groups for newly arrived refugee women. The aim is to raise awareness around their rights, the nature of domestic and family violence, and the support and services available in Australia. With the right support, they can enjoy better mental health outcomes. During FY2023, five such groups were run for 75 participants. A feedback survey of 41 respondents showed 98 per cent of respondents learned something about their rights in Australia and would know who to contact in case they or someone they knew needed help.

## Clinical Expertise

SSI's Practice Management Unit (PMU) supports our frontline programs and Multicultural Child and Family Programs with clinicians who provide mental health assessment and treatment, and wellbeing support to people of all ages. Many clients have experienced trauma and stress due to forced migration and/or visa uncertainty.

In FY2023, excluding domestic, family and sexual violence, which is reported, the PMU delivered 1,921 sessions (up from 1,599 in FY2022) to 196 clients (down from 280 in FY2022). The unit also supports case workers across programs, helping them find appropriate services to address clients' specialised needs.

## Gambling

SSI's Multicultural Gambling Harm Prevention Service in Victoria is available to all, but designed especially for migrants and their communities, family, and friends who are experiencing or are affected by gambling harm. Services include 1:1 in-language counselling, referral support, online, mobile and in-person group and family therapy and a range of other supports. In FY2023, the program collaborated with 14 community organisations/universities to raise awareness about gambling harm.

## Case study

### Early support for a boy in need

Health and behavioural problems in children can often go untreated when families are in flux and routines are disrupted. In FY2023, case workers with our Health Impact Program in Queensland came into contact with a three-year-old boy experiencing difficulties. The boy's family had moved to Australia from abroad and the father had only recently been reunited with his wife and child. The boy was experiencing speech delays, difficulty with eating and toilet training and violent behaviours when upset.

The SSI team was able to undertake initial screening and refer the family to a range of support and diagnostic services. As a result, the boy is now accessing the NDIS and has regular appointments with private occupational therapy and speech language pathologist supports. The family is working to send the boy to Queensland's Early Childhood Development Program, which supports children with disability from birth to five years.

## Society and systems capacity

One of the biggest challenges for vulnerable members of society is the unfair and stubborn perception that they are somehow of less value. Programs within our Society and Systems Capacity domain advocate for - and together with - disadvantaged individuals for change to the status quo.

We work both within Australia and internationally to influence policymakers, program designers and the wider community so that the needs of people experiencing periods of vulnerability can be better met. You can read descriptions of each program in this domain on the Program Listing pages of this report.

## Stakeholder relations, research and policy

Launched in FY2023, our Billion Dollar Benefit advocacy report identified some of the key challenges stopping skilled refugees and migrants from reaching their potential and made five recommendations to improve the situation. The report, which was launched at our inaugural

World Refugee Day Fair on the lawns of Parliament House in June 2023, drew support from more than 50 organisations.

The creation of the report stemmed from another inaugural event, the Refugee and Migrant Skills and Job Summit, which we co-hosted in March. It was attended by the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, as well as industry and sector experts, government officials, corporates, unions, and community members.

Meanwhile, we worked on over 18 significant policy submissions, reviews and inquiries on topics ranging from disability, employment, migration and refugee settlement. We also progressed our research agenda with the publication of five research reports including Foundations for Belonging 2022, which explored family separation among refugees during/after the pandemic.

### Women and Girls Strategic Plan (21-23)

FY2023 marked the final year of our three- year Women and Girls Strategic Plan, focused on the advancement and protection of the rights of women and girls associated with SSI. Over its life, the plan enabled the acquisition of funding for projects such as the RISE project for CARM women across Queensland, NSW, WA and Victoria, the Connecting Women to Trades program, and the Return to Work program for CALD women in NSW. A focus in FY2023 was our International Women's Day events, including discussion sessions, online webinars and campaigns.

### Diversity training

Our Diversity Training program aims to help businesses and organisation harness the immense potential of a diverse Australia. In FY2023, we continued to deliver training via workshops and also created two e-modules. One module aimed to provide organisations with an understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity and inclusion, while the other was designed to help workers in the aged in-home care support sector provide culturally responsive support.

### International engagement

As well as improving conditions for communities within Australia, we seek to influence discourse and decision making at an international level. In FY2023, our International Unit was actively engaged in 15 working groups within Australia, across Asia and the Pacific region and at a global level. The unit engaged with five new stakeholders on climate change, including community members, universities and international organisations. It represented SSI at seven global events, including UNHCR meetings, showcasing our thought leadership.

### Multicultural Peer Network

The Multicultural Peer Network (MPN) facilitates free, in-language, peer-led support networks that aim to support CALD communities and people with disability and their families and carers across NSW.

### Domestic Violence Advocacy

During FY2023, we created a Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Framework with a vision that clients and staff can live free of violence and abuse in safe and inclusive communities. The Framework identifies key principles, the underpinning philosophy and our goals. Meanwhile, three roundtables across NSW, Queensland and Victoria discussed the impact domestic and family violence has on children from CALD backgrounds. Available on [ssi.org.au](http://ssi.org.au) we plan to advocate on the report's outcomes and asks.

## Case study

### Working to tap into newcomer talent

Despite having a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering, Iranian-born refugee Mohsen struggled to find work in Australia. With limited proficiency in English, he received 37 rejection letters from potential employers. Undeterred, he began studying English, participated in work-readiness programs via SSI, and started a Bachelor of Business degree. Today, he runs his own successful mortgage broking business and contributes to his new homeland.

While Mohsen ultimately triumphed, his plight underscores the high cost to Australia's economy of newcomers working below their skill levels. In FY2023, the SSI report Billion Dollar Benefit highlighted the \$1.25 billion in wages that employers and the economy lose as a result of people not working to their potential. The report was released on World Refugee Day and outlined key barriers that limit the workforce potential of migrants and refugees and recommended five solutions to unleash their talent by 2025.

Billion Dollar Benefit drew on consultation with more than 50 experts across five sectors and has been endorsed by more than 50 major organisations, including The Australian Council of Social Services, IKEA Australia, the Diversity Council of Australia, and the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA).

## SSI Programs in 2022-23

Table 12:

This table provides an overview of programs, key funding sources, and the outcome domains which each program creates impact and value.

Table key for outcome domains:

SE = Safety and stability

LG = Learning and growth

SI = Social inclusion

EP = Economic participation

HW = Health and wellbeing

SSC = Society and system capacity

## Community Programs

### 1 Arts & Culture Program

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

SSI's self-funded Arts & Culture program encourages cultural engagement and nurtures artists and cultural practitioners from refugee and migrant backgrounds. It develops pathways for artists, organises festivals and events, and ignites broader discussion about cultural expression. The program's flagship New Beginnings Festival is held at Darling Harbour once a year.

Outcome domains: SI, EP

### 2 BEMAC

QLD, Funding agency – Arts Qld

Located in Brisbane, BEMAC is a registered charity operated by SSI's Arts & Culture program. It produces and stages multicultural artists from diverse cultural backgrounds, providing a platform for innovative multicultural arts in Queensland. It also champions diverse artists and builds skills through free artistic development programs.

Outcome domains: SI, EP

### **3 Community Action for a Multicultural Society**

QLD, Funding agency – Multicultural Affairs Queensland

The Queensland government's Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) program aims to improve social and economic outcomes for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. SSI delivers CAMS services in the Logan and the Redlands areas of Southern Queensland, including forums for CALD communities and external training to develop mentors.

Outcome domains: SI

### **4 CALD Women's Advisory Group**

QLD, Funding agency – Logan Together

Women often have a deep understanding of the issues facing children and families in their communities. But cultural and economic barriers can stand in the way of them being heard. SSI's CALD Women's Advisory Group in Logan provides a forum for women from diverse backgrounds to come together to discuss issues and look for solutions.

Outcome domains: SI

### **5 Multicultural Sports Club**

QLD, Funding agency – DTIS, DSS

Sports and recreation are good for health and wellbeing and bring people together. SSI's Multicultural Sports Club in Logan Queensland provides activities for people from as young as 12 from different cultures, backgrounds and age groups. Program activities include family football, women's hub, taekwondo and youth night.

Outcome domains: SI

### **6 Multicultural Youth Queensland (MyQ)**

QLD, Funding agency – MYAN

MyQ is the Queensland arm of MYAN Australia, the national youth peak body for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. Its goals include strengthening youth leadership, providing platforms for youth-led decision making and influencing the policy impacting young people.

Outcome domains: SI

### **7 Strong and Resilient Communities**

QLD, Funding agency – DSS

Funded by the Australian government's Department of Social Services, the Strong and Resilient Communities program aims to build robust, cohesive and harmonious communities where individuals and families can thrive. Under the program, SSI organises forums where the issues facing disadvantaged communities can be discussed and then shares its learnings.

Outcome domains: SS, SI, HW

## **8 The Welcome Program**

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

This program supports new arrivals from humanitarian backgrounds by connecting them with locals to make them feel welcome. Welcome Ambassadors recruited from SSI volunteers meet with local newcomers to enjoy a group activity based on common interests. Started in Sydney, the program has expanded into regional areas including Coffs Harbour.

Outcome domains: SI

## **9 Thriving Afghan Women**

QLD, Funding agency – SSI, TAWP

Supported by SSI, this support group program provides newly arrived Afghan women with the information and community connections they need to settle in Australia and thrive. The project is led by the Thriving Afghan Women group and connects participants with services as well as providing advice on upskilling and healthy relationships.

Outcome domains: SI

## **10 Volunteer Program**

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

Over 175 volunteers with a broad range of skills, experience and interests assist in more than 45 unique roles across SSI. Volunteers undertake a range of activities, including helping newly arrived refugees and people seeking asylum, hosting workshops, assisting on excursions, and supporting SSI's signature festivals and events.

Outcome domains: SI

## **11 Volunteer Voices**

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

Coordinated with the NSW Centre of Volunteering, this initiative aims to develop an online training program for organisations who use volunteers. The resulting e-module will focus on the experiences of people who have volunteered, attempted to volunteer, or are thinking about volunteering, with a view to promoting more inclusive volunteering practices.

Outcome domains: SI

# **Disability Services**

## **12 NDIS Coordination of Supports**

QLD, Funding agency – NDIA

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides funding to support people with permanent and significant disability to lead a normal life. SSI delivered Core Support services in the south-east Brisbane area that helped people with their everyday activities. In December 2022, this program was transferred to Fortify Health Group (see Harmony Place).

Outcome domains: HW

## **13 Harmony Place**

QLD, Funding agency – SSI

Harmony Place provided culturally sensitive services to connect people living with disability with the support they were entitled to under the Mental Health Clinical Care Coordination and

Psychosocial Supports. To avoid a potential conflict of interest with our funded disability programs, in December 2022, Harmony Place programs and staff exited the SSI Group and transferred to Fortify Health Group.

Outcome domains: HW

## **14 Local Area Coordination**

NSW, Funding agency – NDIA

The National Disability Insurance Scheme provides funding to eligible people with disability to gain greater independence, new skills, and an improved quality of life. SSI partners with the National Disability Insurance Agency to deliver Local Area Coordination services within two Sydney regions. We support people to access the NDIS and other services.

Outcome domains: SI, EP, HW

## **15 Multicultural Peer Network**

NSW, Funding agency – NDIA

SSI facilitated the formation of peer-to-peer support groups as a way of connecting people with disability to information that can improve their lives. We provided the tools needed for individuals with lived experience of disability to connect, access advice and become more independent. The program completed its contract in June 2023.

Outcome domains: SI, SSC

## **16 The Rights Path Project**

NSW, QLD, VIC, Funding agency – NDIA

Funded by the NDIA, this program aims to improve quality in NDIS services and supports. Working with providers and participants, the program delivers robust choice and control-focused outcomes for CALD people living with disability. This program commenced outside this reporting period in August 2023.

Outcome domains: HW

# **Domestic and Family Violence**

## **17 99 Steps**

QLD, Funding agency – DJAG, DHA

Supported by the Queensland government, 99 Steps provides free and confidential support for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are affected by domestic and family violence. The program in Queensland's Logan and Beenleigh areas welcomes women from refugee and seeking asylum backgrounds, including new arrivals.

Outcome domains: SS, HW, SSC

## **18 In My Voice**

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

The In My Voice initiative leveraged the insights of CALD women leaders trained through the Supporting U program that concluded in March 2022. A series of vignettes tell the stories of DFV in different migrant communities amplifying voices and experiences of women leaders and victim-survivors. Such tools inspire change and empower women.

Outcome domains: SSC

## Education & Training

### 19 SSI Diversity Training

National and international, Funding agency – SSI

Based on more than 20 years' experience as a leading provider of services to multicultural communities, SSI's Diversity Training social enterprise transforms how people and organisations respond to diversity. The service uses approaches that are thought provoking, inspire curiosity, and that empower people to engage more effectively with people around them.

Outcome domains: SSC

### 20 SSI Allianz Scholarship Program

NSW, QLD, VIC, Funding agency – Allianz and private

Supported by financial services company Allianz and SSI, this program aims to make navigating the education system easier for people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. It provides one-off scholarships of up to \$5000 to students preparing to undertake study or have their existing skills recognised in NSW, Queensland or Victoria.

Outcome domains: LG, SI

### 21 Skilling Queenslanders for Work

QLD, Funding agency – DYJESBT

Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) is a suite of targeted skills and training programs that help Queensland jobseekers to enter and succeed in the workforce. Funded by the Queensland government, SSI delivers multiple SQW programs that equip participants with knowledge, skills, connections, and transitional support to unlock fulfilling career opportunities.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### 22 SSI Education and Training

QLD, NSW, Funding agency – SAS, DYJESBT, Smart and Skilled, DoE

SSI's Education and Training is a registered training organisation (RTO), approved by the Australian Skills Quality Authority, that helps people from mainstream and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to upskill to gain work. The program offers nine different courses in Queensland and is preparing to enter the NSW market.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## Employment Services

### 23 Asylum Seeker Employment Skills Support

NSW, Funding agency – DoE

The Asylum Seeker Employment Skills Support (ASESS) provides support for people seeking asylum to join the workforce. Funded by the NSW Department of Education, SSI delivers ASESS across several locations in Sydney. We help participants to develop their career paths and provide them with tools to gain skilled employment.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### 24 Connecting Women to Trades

NSW, Funding agency – DET



This program helps build female participants' confidence, skills and support networks in trades where women are under represented, and where skills gaps exist. Funded by Training Services NSW, SSI delivers the Connecting Women to Trades program in the epicentre of infrastructure growth in south and south-western Sydney.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **25 Disability Employment Services**

NSW, QLD, Funding agency – DSS

The Disability Employment Services (DES) program is an Australian government initiative to remove the barriers that may stop a person with a disability, injury or health condition from participating in the workforce. SSI deliver DES services across NSW and in Queensland assisting those who require both occasional and regular, ongoing support.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **26 Diversi-Ready**

VIC, Funding agency – DSS

Funded by the DSS's Information, Linkages and Capacity Building program, Diversi-Ready supports inclusion and accommodation of people with disabilities at the workplace. SSI provides training and support to employers in the retail, hospitality and aged-care industries to build their confidence and capability to recruit and retain people with disability.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **27 Jobs Victoria Advocates**

VIC, Funding agency – DJPR

Jobs Advocates helped Victorians navigate employment and training services and to find the information, advice and support they needed through proactive outreach in local communities. This program ran for two years and concluded in June 2023.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **28 Jobs Victoria Employment Services**

VIC , Funding agency – DJPR

Funded by the Victorian government, Jobs Victoria connected the unemployed with employers looking for staff. SSI caseworkers or 'advocates' delivered Jobs Victoria services to CALD communities in Melbourne's Western and Southern regions. Clients included migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum. The program concluded in June 2023.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **29 Local Jobs Program**

NSW, QLD, Funding agency – DEWR

The Australian government's Workforce Australia Local Jobs program aims to develop employment pathways that assist people to move back into jobs as the economy recovers following the COVID-19 pandemic. SSI provides employment facilitator services in parts of NSW and Queensland. We connect employers and training providers with job seekers.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **30 ParentsNext**

NSW, QLD, Funding agency – DEWR

The Australian government's ParentsNext scheme helps parents of school-aged children join - or rejoin - the workforce. During FY2023, SSI provided ParentsNext services in Sydney and Queensland, helping parents to create goals around employment, gain new skills and secure work. We work with voluntary participants and those referred by the Department of Human Services.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### **31 Refugee Employment Support Program**

NSW, Funding agency – DoE

The NSW government's Refugee Employment Support Program (RESP) support refugees in joining the workforce and finding skilled, long-term employment. SSI delivers RESP services in two NSW regions. We help participants plan a pathway to employment, assess those who need additional support to be job ready, and link them to resources.

Outcome domains:

### **32 Return to Work's 'Women with Purpose'**

NSW, Funding agency – WNSW

Part of the Return to Work program, SSI's Women with Purpose initiative provides targeted support to women aged 25-44 from CALD backgrounds in south-west Sydney. Funded by the NSW government, the program connects participants with local resources, training programs, employers, job opportunities, and in-language support, empowering them to return to the workforce.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### **33 RISE**

NSW, Funding agency – DCA

Diversity Council Australia, Chief Executive Women (CEW) and SSI launched the RISE project "Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise" in March 2023 to build pathways to leadership for women from culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to address the barriers that restrict women's progress into leadership roles.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### **34 Ignite Ability**

NSW, VIC, Funding agency – DSS

IgniteAbility provides education and mentoring to individuals to explore their business idea and supports them towards business creation. IgniteAbility supports individuals with disability, their families and carers to understand the opportunity of entrepreneurship, and to help them build skills and knowledge that assists with economic and social participation.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### **35 Ignite® Small Business Start-ups**

NSW, VIC, Funding agency – DISR, DJSIR, EGSC, Eden Foundation, Lend Lease

Ignite® is an SSI social enterprise that enables individuals to learn, be mentored and connect, helping them to grow through the power of their own business ideas. Ignite supports individuals with an idea for self-employment from new migrant, CALD, refugee, disability and First Nations communities, with a focus on women's entrepreneurship.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### **36 Work + Stay**

NSW, QLD, VIC, Funding agency – SSI

Australia's regions need workers, while many people in the cities are looking for employment. SSI business Work + Stay brings the two together to solve challenges for regional employers and to build stronger communities. The program has a focus on right-fit employment and lifestyle solutions for newcomers and the right workforce for employers.

Outcome domains: SI, EP

### **37 Yarrabilba Exchange**

QLD, Funding agency – Lend Lease

The Yarrabilba Exchange provided a link between residents of Yarrabilba near Logan, Queensland, and local jobs. In FY2023, SSI provided pre-screening, referred appropriate candidates to employers, and provided jobseekers with information, advice and guidance to help them attain a job. The contract was transitioned to Y-Care in January 2023.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

### **38 Youth Employment Planning Passport (YEPP)**

NSW, QLD, VIC, Funding agency – DISR

YEPP is a career counselling and advice program tailored to the ambitions and talents of young people aged 15 to 20. SSI was contracted in January 2023 to provide individual guidance and support to youth as they explore career options and navigate the job market.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## **Family, Children & Youth**

### **39 Building Stronger Families**

NSW, Funding agency – WNSW

The Building Stronger Families program helps Arabic-speaking newcomers to build healthy relationships and address issues such as domestic and family violence. Funded by Women NSW and provided in partnership with Relationships Australia, the program includes discussions for Arabic-speaking men and women - with separate groups for each language and gender.

Outcome domains: SS, SSC

### **40 Child Health Pathways**

QLD, Funding agency – PHN, Salvation Army

This project aims to support children experiencing periods of vulnerability by empowering their families to navigate the health system. Funded through the Brisbane South Primary Health Network and delivered in partnership with The Salvation Army, it supports families who attend the Logan Community Hubs. A key focus is on families from CALD backgrounds or with communication difficulties.

Outcome domains: HW

### **41 Community Hubs Program**

NSW, QLD, Funding agency – Community Hubs Australia

The Community Hubs Program is a national scheme funded by the DHA and Scanlon Foundation that supports migrant and refugee parents and children in navigating the education

system and building family capacity. SSI serves as a support agency, operating 10 hubs in Queensland and 23 in NSW, often through primary schools and community centres.

Outcome domains: LG

## **42 Health Impact Project**

QLD, Funding agency – Queensland Health

Part of SSI's Family and Early Years Program run out of Logan, Queensland, this project aims to improve the health and wellbeing of children under eight and their caregivers. It identifies potential issues facing children and connects families to services including paediatric first aid, clinical psychology, parenting information and speech pathology.

Outcome domains: HW

## **43 Maternity Hubs**

QLD, Funding agency – Queensland Health

This community-based antenatal service providing wrap-around support for newly arrived, refugee, and migrant women in Logan, Queensland. Midwives offer personalised care, and the program links families with housing, employment, health, and financial assistance. The service is delivered in partnership with Metro South Health and is facilitated from The SSI Gateway.

Outcome domains: SS, HW

## **44 Multicultural Child and Family Program**

NSW, VIC, Funding agency – DCJ, DFFH

When a child's own family is temporarily or permanently unable to care for them, foster care can help. This program connects children from CALD backgrounds with foster carers who help them maintain their cultural identity and sense of belonging. In Victoria, the program, known as the Multicultural Foster Care Program, has been in operation since 2020.

Outcome domains: SS, SI

## **45 Raising Children in a New Country Parenting Program**

NSW, Funding agency – NSW Health

Funded by NSW Health, this program aims to help parents from CALD backgrounds build parenting skills, strengthen relationships and increase confidence when raising children. SSI will also conduct train trainers for the program, enabling settlement workers to deliver it to newly arrived migrants and refugees. This program will be reported in our FY2024 report.

Outcome domains: SS, LG

## **46 Youth Collective**

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

The Youth Collective program aims to create a platform for migrant and refugee youth to have a say in how services and programs for them are delivered. The program coordinates cross-regional efforts of youth workers within the multicultural youth space and includes the SSI-led NSW Settlement Partnership Youth Workers Network.

Outcome domains: LG

## Health & Wellbeing

### 47 Multicultural Gambling Harm Prevention Service

VIC, Funding agency – VRGF

This service supports individuals from migrant, refugee and multicultural backgrounds to overcome the negative effects of gambling. Counselling services focus on behaviour change and use culturally sensitive planning to meet the person's unique situation and needs, including culture, religion, language, and community. The program is funded by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

Outcome domains: HW

## Home Care

### 48 Home Care Workforce Support Program

ACT, NSW, Funding agency – DOHAC

SSI has been delivering the Home Care Workforce Support Program in NSW and the ACT since 2021 to help Australia's seniors enjoy a safe and independent life at home. The program aims to grow, upskill, train and support an aged care workforce that delivers safe, high-quality care that puts seniors first.

Outcome domains: LG, EP

## Settlement

### 49 Community Support Program

NSW, Funding agency – DHA

The Australian government's Community Support Program helps people applying for humanitarian visas to settle in Australian communities. Local businesses, families and individuals can offer employment through the scheme. As an Approved Proposing Organisation, SSI links potential humanitarian applicants with employers providing meaning, stable work.

Outcome domains: EP

### 50 Emergency Relief

NSW, QLD, Funding agency – DSS

This program provides emergency relief services to people in NSW and in the Logan and Ipswich areas of Queensland who were experiencing financial distress. Support included food and fuel vouchers, part payment of bills, food parcels and clothing, budgeting assistance, and referrals to support services. This program concluded in NSW in FY2023, but continues in Queensland.

Outcome domains: SS

### 51 Humanitarian Settlement Program

NSW, Funding agency – DHA

The Australian government funds the Humanitarian Services Program (HSP) to provide structured support to refugees and humanitarian entrants settling into Australian communities. SSI delivers HSP services in NSW areas including Coffs Harbour, Newcastle and Armidale, providing newcomers with assistance in areas including on-arrival pick-up, finding

accommodation, linking to the community, learning English and securing work.  
Outcome domains: SS, LG, SI, HW

## **52 Regional Settlement**

QLD, Funding agency – PHN

Funded by Darling Downs and West Moreton Primary Health Network, our Refugee Health Nurse Outreach Program provides refugees and migrants in the Ipswich region with support in accessing and navigating health services. The service aims to improve health literacy and reduce barriers to ongoing health care, with major benefits for participants.

Outcome domains: HW

## **53 Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)**

NSW, QLD, Funding agency – DHA

The NSP is a consortium of 21 community organisations, led by SSI, that delivers Settlement Engagement and Transition Support services (see below) in areas of NSW. These services complement those of the Humanitarian Settlement Program in the post-arrival period for eligible individuals. We also deliver SETS services in Logan and Ipswich in Queensland.

Outcome domains: SS, LG, SI, EP

## **54 Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS)**

ACT, NSW, NT, QLD, TAS, VIC, Funding agency – DHA

The Australian government's Status Resolution Support Services program assists eligible people seeking asylum with help accessing financial support, accommodation, healthcare, employment and education. SSI delivers the program to those living in the community on bridging visas in NSW, the ACT, Queensland, the Northern Territory, Victoria and Tasmania.

Outcome domains: SS, SI, EP

## **55 Women at the Wheel**

QLD, Funding agency – Transurban

Funded by road operator Transurban, the Women at the Wheel scheme aims to support newcomer women in training for - and passing - their licence tests. SSI staff deliver a program teaching road rules and driving techniques and we cover the cost of the driving test and a two-year driving licence.

Outcome domains: SS, LG

## **56 Youth Transition Support Program**

QLD, Funding agency – DHA

The Australian government's Youth Transition Support (YTS) scheme helps young humanitarian entrants and migrants to connect with their new communities. SSI delivers YTS services, including educational, employment and vocational support, within Logan, Queensland for newcomers aged up to 24 years. Connections are built via sports and recreational activities.

Outcome domains: LG, SI, EP

## **In-house client support functions**

### **57 Clinical Practice Unit**

NSW, Funding agency – SSI

SSI's Clinical Practice Unit provides mental health assessment and treatment as well as wellbeing support to humanitarian entrants of all ages. Staff take a culturally responsive, multisystemic approach to supporting clients and finding appropriate care. We also provide support to carers and young people in the Multicultural Child and Family Program.  
Outcome domains: HW

## **58 Community Engagement**

NSW, VIC, Funding agency – SSI

SSI's Community Engagement aims to make it easier for humanitarian refugees and people living with disability to settle into communities and feel a sense of welcome. A key asset is the Client and Community Voice consultation framework which helps develop an understanding of client and community needs.  
Outcome domains: SI

## **59 Domestic and Family Violence Practice Unit**

NSW, VIC, Funding agency – SSI

The unit is responsible for promoting and monitoring best case practice in managing DFV across the SSI Group. IT has a central focus on maintaining the safety and dignity of victim survivors including children.  
Outcome domains: SS, HW, SSC

## **Case study**

### **A whole new ballgame for regional communities**

FY2023 marked the fifth anniversary of New South Wales' City of Armidale being established as the nation's first regional refugee resettlement hub.

From the outset, the University of New England with SSI conducted research measuring community attitudes towards the newcomers. Findings released in April 2023 show residents' concern about refugees decreased over time, while positive attitudes towards, and contact with, their newest neighbours generally increased. There are currently 650 members of the Ezidi community living and working - and scoring goals - in Armidale. See [ssi.org.au/ssi-insight](https://ssi.org.au/ssi-insight).

## **Our people**

More than most organisations, SSI's core business revolves around human interactions.

The compassion, talent and professionalism of the individuals who work with us empower us to help communities and take steps towards a more inclusive society.

Our People and Culture division is tasked with hiring, training and retaining employees, promoting diversity and inclusion, and meeting employee needs. It also works to develop leadership, promote wellbeing and streamline processes.

FY2023 saw considerable growth within SSI, with staff numbers increasing more than 15 per cent over the previous year to a record 1,212 people. Much of this growth corresponded to us filling positions related to contracts for new work, including delivering the Australian government's Home Care Workforce program in NSW, the ACT and Victoria, and expanding the delivery of our Status Resolution Support Services into Victoria. Our key focus for FY2023 was recruiting and training, as well as meeting long-term goals related to redefining staff values, reconciliation and technology roll-out.

## Talent acquisition push

Like most employers globally, we continued to face an extremely competitive talent market in FY2023. To address the talent shortages and help meet the diverse recruitment needs of our programs, we strengthened outreach for talent and expanded our presence across a number of recruitment channels. One initiative was creating A day in the life of, a campaign to engage with candidates and provide information on case manager roles in our Multicultural Foster Care program. We also participated in social services and community welfare career expo days at universities and TAFEs across NSW. An example of a successful outcome was recruiting eight social work students from Western Sydney University into HSP case management roles. Meanwhile, we strengthened our project management and impact assessment capabilities by hiring skilled professional in those fields.

## Compliance training

A key role of the People and Culture team is ensuring both new and existing staff are oriented with our culture, values and programs. In FY2023, our Learning and Development team facilitated this by welcoming staff to a diverse range of courses in areas including child protection, whistleblowing, IT security awareness, and culturally responsive practice. In doing so, this helps ensure that we meet all contractual, regulatory and legal obligations, keeping our clients and participants safe whilst ensuring we can confidently retender and renew business for the future.

## Launch of Lead@SSI

During FY2022, a new set of organisational guidelines, known as the SSI Leadership Behaviours, were developed to provide clarity and consistency around the expectations we have of current and future leaders. In FY2023 we launched the Lead@SSI leadership program, which included four modules focusing on creating and developing skills and performance conversations. Some 130 participants across the business have attended the courses, resulting in an increase in overall competencies and fostering a leadership culture. Further leadership courses are in development for FY2024 covering financial literacy and recruitment for leaders.

## Redefining our values

In 2022, our employee engagement survey Your Voice told us staff felt our values were outdated, unclear, too numerous and didn't reflect who we were. In response, we ran 15 workshops with staff to co-design our new SSI Group values.

Staff insights resulted in the development of our three new core values, representing the vibrant, diverse and dynamic organisation that we are:

- **Respect**  
I accept people for who they are and treat everyone fairly and empathetically.
- **Accountability**  
I take responsibility for my actions and act with integrity and honour my commitments.
- **Inclusion**  
I foster belonging and value the diversity of people's lived experiences, identity, knowledge and talents.

Meanwhile, we continued to check in on employee sentiment across the year via our Pulse survey. A key focus was placed on five employee engagement questions, to ensure that our staff feel connected to the organisation and the work that they do. Overall, it was pleasing to see that



our high engagement levels have been maintained, sitting at 76 per cent in FY2023 and 75 per cent in FY2022.

## Forging reconciliation pathways

SSI has been working on the implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) since 2021. In FY2023, this work gained momentum as we aligned our RAP activities with our position supporting the Yes campaign for the Voice to Parliament referendum. The discussion around the referendum provided us with an additional platform to elevate First Nations conversations and education, both internally, with our staff, and externally with clients, member organisations and community groups. Internally, we engaged our First Nations staff and asked them where they believe SSI should focus and what our role is where the Voice to Parliament referendum was concerned. Externally, our Humanitarian Settlement Program and Community Engagement teams ran multiple cultural exchange programs for newcomers in regional areas and inner Sydney. These immersive programs were run in collaboration with local First Nations communities. In FY2024 we will deliver our next two-year RAP.

We also sought feedback on progress on those key areas where the organisation was taking action in response to the 2022 survey, such as managing change, as well as understanding what supports staff need to be successful in their roles.

## A safe and healthy workplace

With the changes to COVID-19 health orders across all states, our offices returned to the 'new normal' in FY2023, with employees enjoying hybrid work arrangements.

Thanks in part to a new online reporting mechanism that makes reporting easier and covers all programs and work types, we saw an increase in the number of safety incidents reported which provides valuable information to help mitigate risk. There was a significant downturn in workers compensation claims and the business was able to recoup some of its premium through initiatives and investigations. We are now in the process of focusing on our lead indicators rather than lag indicators and addressing key risks across all of SSI.

## Improving our processes

FY2023 saw the launch our new human resources solution, SSIPeople. The system is intended to manage key aspects of the employee life cycle - from recruitment and onboarding to performance management, compensation and payroll. Launched in March 2023, it will help future-proofing the organisation and provide data-driven workforce insights to support strategic decisions. A change management program was put in place to help managers and employees adjust to the new approach.

# Our volunteers

Volunteers, students and interns allow our programs and business areas to foster greater social connection and belonging and increase awareness of our values and goals throughout the community.

Involvement in volunteering can help support individuals transitioning from study to working in a new career. Led by our Community Engagement team, our work is informed by the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. During FY2023, we had 175 active volunteers.

## Case study

### Meet a volunteer

SSI volunteer Adrian knows just what it's like to start life afresh in a new country. Ten years ago, he arrived in Australia as a refugee from Romania and set about learning all about his new community and country. Today, he helps others do the same through his volunteering with SSI programs, including the Welcome Program.

"I like volunteering because I can connect with refugees and participate in creating an enjoyable, welcoming experience for them," he says. "I wanted to volunteer with SSI because of the programs they provide to assist refugees."

Adrian has a strong commitment to social justice due to his experience in Romania as a Romani. Being gay, it was also difficult to be open in Romania. "Volunteering allows me to be engaged in my passion for social justice, develop my skills, and meet new people," he says.

## A Child Safe Organisation

SSI is committed to ensuring children and young people are supported, respected, and feel safe and empowered when participating in our services.

In FY2022, we established a child safety working group to specifically review all aspects of ensuring that SSI is a child safe organisation. This review led to us developing an action plan to ensure that the organisation responded strategically and practically to the requirements of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. One of the key strategies of the plan was the appointment of a Child Safety Specialist to lead and guide the organisation through the process of continued implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Specialist is also responsible for managing change and embedding child safety and wellbeing as core elements of all our activities.

The key deliverable of SSI's Child Safe Project is ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the over 11,390 children involved in four key programs (Humanitarian Settlement Program, Status Resolution Support Services, Local Area Coordination and Multicultural Child and Family Program) as well as children and young people either directly or indirectly supported across the programs and services delivered in NSW, Victoria, and Queensland.

## Our members

Partnerships and collaborations with other organisations are crucial to SSI's operations. We realise no one organisation can achieve social change in isolation.

Our organisation began 23 years ago as the umbrella organisation for migrant resource centres and multicultural services in NSW. Our expansion began in 2020 with the recognition that the membership needed to better reflect the communities with which SSI works, as well as our geographical reach and service delivery portfolio.

As half of the SSI Board were Member Directors when we established ourselves, diversification was essential to ensure that SSI remains governed by local organisations embedded in the communities SSI supports.

SSI member organisations:

- Accessible Diversity Services Initiative Ltd
- Advance Diversity Services
- Community Migrant Resource Centre Inc.

- CORE Community Services
- Eastern Community Legal Centre
- Illawarra Multicultural Services Inc.
- Metro Assist
- Migrant Resource Centre (Northern Tasmania) Inc.
- Mosaic Multicultural Connections
- Sydney Multicultural Community Services
- SydWest Multicultural Services
- Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd
- Yumba-Meta Ltd

## NSW Settlement Partnership

Working collaboratively with other community organisations enables SSI to extend its reach further and to impact on the lives of greater numbers of individuals.

A key example of this is our work with the NSW Settlement Partnership (NSP), a consortium of 21 organisations that delivers settlement services in NSW under the Department of Home Affairs' Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program.

The NSP is led by SSI and its members and includes the 11-member Migrant Resource Centres that came together to establish SSI. The remaining nine NPS members are community organisations based across NSW.

Benefiting from our combined strength, the NSP's delivery of SETS fills an important gap in the post-arrival period for clients who have no family or other community support on which to rely. It helps humanitarian entrants and other eligible permanent migrants to address their settlement needs, with the goal of improving social participation, economic wellbeing, independence, personal wellbeing and community connectedness.

The SETS client services that the NSP delivers provide individuals with settlement-related information, advice, advocacy, and assistance to access mainstream and other relevant services.

Meanwhile, our SETS community capacity building services help new and emerging community groups and organisations support their specific communities towards collectively increasing social participation and economic and personal well-being.

NSP Consortium members:

- Accessible Diversity Services Initiative Ltd
- Advance Diversity Services
- Cambodian Australian Welfare Council of NSW Inc.
- Community Migrant Resource Centre Inc.
- Community Northern Beaches Inc.
- Connecting Community Services
- CORE Community Services
- Focus Connect
- Gymea Community Aid and Information Services Inc.
- Illawarra Multicultural Services Inc.
- Lebanese Community Council of NSW
- Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services Inc.
- Melkite Catholic Welfare Association Inc.
- Mosaic Multicultural Connections

- Metro Assist
- Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency Inc.
- Nepean Multicultural Access Inc.
- Sydney Multicultural Community Services
- SydWest Multicultural Services
- Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd

## Finance

SSI Group achieved a record-high revenue figure of \$164.75 million in FY2023 and delivered an operating surplus of \$97,000. The increase in revenue on FY2022 was \$24 million or 17 per cent.

The operating results represent a further consolidation and expansion of our operations and the delivery of core services to a larger client base. Funding for SSI's largest program, the Australian government funded Humanitarian Settlement Program, exceeded pre-COVID level, as did funding for the Australian government's Status Resolution Support Services program and the NSW government's Multicultural Child and Family Program. Our delivery of the Australian government's Home Care Workforce Support Program became fully operational during FY2023, contributing to the consolidation and expansion of services. Across FY2023, all programs experienced normal operating conditions with minimal disruptions, contributing to the 17 per cent growth in revenue.

A notable success in FY2023 was SSI becoming one of two national providers for the Status Resolution Support Services program. We were chosen by the Department of Home Affairs to provide program services in Victoria, while at the same time we retained contracts to deliver services in NSW and Queensland. This recognition of our capabilities as a national provider forms a platform - and an opportunity - for us to bid for other upcoming national tenders, such as the Local Area Coordination Program that provides services in NSW.

Across FY2023, SSI benefitted from having a cohesive and streamlined organisation throughout all the states in which we operate. The elimination of duplicated roles and functions has delivered efficiencies, lowering the operating cost base. SSI continues to grow with a lower marginal cost base, creating a platform to deliver quality services and value for money for both our funders and the ultimate beneficiaries of our services. This delivery of efficiencies has been supported by investments made in various finance systems in previous years. In FY2023, the implementation of a Human Resources Management Software system that includes a payroll module further enhanced system capabilities and drove operational efficiencies.

The net assets of SSI Group at the end of FY2023 stood at \$47.28 million, an increase of \$3.04 million from FY2022. This improvement in our net assets was assisted by factors including a \$1.88 million increase in the market value of our properties, a \$1.06 million improvement in the market value of our investments - reversing the impact of the global investment market in FY2022 - and the operating surplus that we recorded. The strengthening of our net assets position over the last three years reflects SSI's commitment to remain financial healthy in the midst of challenging circumstances.

Total assets exceeded \$100 million for the first time, with the increase in value of investments, properties and current assets all helping to facilitate SSI's growth.

The 17 per cent increase in revenue in FY2023 reflects a continuing trend of sustainable growth. While levels of government funding continue to be high at 96 per cent, we are continuing to diversify our sources of income thanks to increased funding from state governments and a

diverse range of federally funded programs, such as the Home Care Workforce Support Program.

In line with the historical trend, staff costs and client-support costs continued to comprise a high proportion of the cost base. In FY2023, these components made up 85 per cent of total expenditure, compared to 87 per cent in FY2022.

The below graph (Figure 12) shows outcomes by funding source, reflecting how both the Australian government and various state governments make an impact through programs delivered by SSI.

The pie chart below shows the expenditure mapped to program outcomes during FY2023. The outcomes reflect the measurable results achieved in improving the lives of both recently arrived clients and other cohorts in our broader communities. Expenditure in the Safety and Stability domain represents a high proportion of our work in core programs to support clients.

For the fourth consecutive year, an external audit of SSI Group finances was completed without audit adjustments.

This reflects SSI's strong commitment to ensuring that appropriate financial governance processes are in place to both meet all compliance requirements and the expectations of funders. See [ssi.org.au/ssi-annual-reports](http://ssi.org.au/ssi-annual-reports) for Auditor's Declaration.

**Table 15:**  
**2022-23 Annual Report Financial Summary**

	2022-23 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000
<b>Revenue</b>			
Operating Revenue	164,753	140,819	115,120
Covid -19 Support	-	-	14,455
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>164,753</b>	<b>140,819</b>	<b>129,574</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Client Support Costs	44,990	42,351	25,500
Employee Benefits	94,360	79,553	78,942
Rents & Utilities	3,637	3,211	3,285
IT Expenses	6,113	1,205	1,975
Professional Fees	3,316	2,506	2,671
Depreciation Expenses	6,992	6,501	5,234
Finance costs	377	292	433
Loss on Sale of Fixed Assets	0	0	17
Other expenses	4,870	3,632	2,986
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>164,655</b>	<b>139,251</b>	<b>121,044</b>

	2022-23 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000
<b>Net Operating Surplus</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1,568</b>	<b>8,530</b>
Revaluation of Property, Plant & Equipment	1,878	-	732
Market Movement in Financial Assists	1,064	(2,397)	2,153
<b>Other Compressive Income</b>	<b>2,942</b>	<b>(2,397)</b>	<b>2,886</b>
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>3,039</b>	<b>(829)</b>	<b>11,416</b>

**Table 16:**  
**2022-23 Annual Report Statement of Financial Position**

	2022-23 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000
<b>Assets</b>			
Current	55,997	44,019	35,038
Non-current	21,549	18,025	17,830
Financial Assets	34,082	31,428	28,175
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>111,628</b>	<b>93,472</b>	<b>81,043</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Current	56,959	43,693	29,930
Non-current	7,386	5,537	6,041
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>64,345</b>	<b>49,229</b>	<b>35,971</b>
Net Assets	47,282	44,243	45,072

## Leadership team

SSI has long understood that true strength comes from diversity.

Our organisation is led by talented individuals from different backgrounds, genders, cultures and age groups, united by a vision to shape a fair society for all.

### Violet Roumeliotis AM, CEO

Violet brings to her role more than 35 years' experience in leading for-purpose organisations. She has served as CEO of SSI for 11 years, and is a former Telstra Businesswoman of the Year.

### **Yamamah Agha, General Manager Newcomers, Settlement and Integration**

Yamamah brings to her role more than 20 years' experience assisting new arrivals to settle into Australia. She heads all of SSI's settlement programs including the Humanitarian Settlement Program.

### **Sandy Fitter, Group Head Stakeholder Relations, Research and Policy**

Sandy brings to her role more than 12 years' experience in government, policy and law across government and corporate settings. She is an experienced lawyer and former government adviser.

### **Rob Hoitink, General Manager Client Connection, Health and Wellbeing and State Director Queensland**

Rob is an experienced leader who has worked across several Australian government portfolios. He brings to his role extensive experience in policy, program delivery and regulatory management.

### **Katia Kullengren, Chief of Staff**

Katia has more than a decade's experience leading and building high-performance teams. She also brings a passion for the arts and founded a small NFP bringing ballet to disadvantaged children.

### **Sharon Lanyon, Group Head**

Strategic Communications and Engagement Sharon brings 25 years of strategic communication and brand experience working across major global brands. She created the new SSI brand strategy and protects and enhances SSI's professional image.

### **Ram Neupane, General Manager Corporate Services**

Ram brings experience from having worked in more than 70 countries and has a proven track record in strategic thinking, innovation and change management. He has worked widely across the NFP sector.

### **Steve O'Neill, Acting General Manager Service Delivery Community**

Steve brings more than 45 years' experience in the community care and disability sectors across NSW. He is a past Chief Operations Officer of SSI with expertise in service and strategic planning and organisational management.

### **Caroline Reid, General Manager People and Culture**

Caroline brings extensive experience as a human resources professional in industries such as construction, professional services, banking and the community sector. She excels at building stakeholder relationships and engaging employees.

### **Sonia Vignjevic, General Manager Client Partnerships and Business Growth and State Director Victoria**

Sonia brings over 25 years' experience in NGO roles in the human services sector. She has strong strategic leadership and stakeholder engagement skills developing partnerships with government, international institutions, academia and civil society.

## SSI Board

The SSI Board underwent change in FY2023. It welcomed Janet Matton as a new Director and farewelled Directors, Nathan Hagarty and Greg Hywood.

### **Voula Messimeri AM, Chair**

Appointed: January 2021

Appointed Chair: December 2021

Voula brings an immense depth of knowledge about the community and multicultural sector to the Board. She has held roles including Chair of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, Deputy Chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, Chair of Women's Health in the North, and Chair of InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence.

As well as appointments on various ministerial state and federal advisory structures, she has been recognised under the Order of Australia for her contribution to refugees, migrants and women.

### **Tharani Jegatheeswaran**

Appointed: November 2021

Tharani brings to the Board a passion for social impact, profit with purpose, corporate and social sector collaboration, and diversity and inclusion. She is a partner at Deloitte Australia and leads Deloitte's Social Impact Consulting Practice. Tharani has served on a number of boards, including as a Director of UNICEF Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Business degree from the University of Technology, Sydney and is a certified Chartered Accountant.

### **Scott Machin**

Appointed: April 2020

Scott brings to the Board a deep understanding of the key role that finances play in managing not-for-profits. He is Chair of Metro Assist Limited, an SSI member organisation, and has extensive experience in the financial services industry. He is Chief Operating Officer at Deadly Science. Scott holds a Bachelor of Economics, Master of Business Administration, and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment.

### **Alex McCauley**

Appointed: January 2021

Alex brings a knowledge of entrepreneurship and international affairs to the Board. He is CEO and Executive Director of Australia's peak advocacy group for tech start-ups, StartupAUS. He is Chair of the Startup Advisory Panel for the Department of Home Affairs' Global Talent Scheme, and he has advised policymakers at all levels of government. He represented Australia as a diplomat in Israel from 2012 to 2015.

### **Frank Zheng**

Appointed: December 2018

Frank brings extensive knowledge of leading organisational change with proven positive outcomes to the Board. He is the CEO of Auburn Diversity Services, an SSI member organisation. He holds a Master of Applied Finance from Macquarie University Applied Finance



Centre, along with significant experience in service delivery, case management, finance, HR, IT and operations at an organisational level.

### **Janet Matton**

Appointed: December 2022

Janet brings a deep understanding of the IT industry and business management to the Board. She spent 34 years with IBM, including as Vice President of Operations, and 12 years holding key roles in multiple regions. She is Chair of the Australian Centre of the Moving Image (ACMI) and the Eastern Community Legal Centre. She is on the Board of engineering firm pitt&sherry and was awarded an Order of Australia (AM) in January 2020.

### **Nathan Hagarty**

Appointed: April 2020

Term ended: March 2023

Nathan Hagarty brought passionate advocacy for Western Sydney to the Board. He is a Director of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, an SSI member organisation. He is a Councillor of Liverpool City Council and a Director of Active Super and Local Government NSW. Nathan has a Bachelor of International Studies from Western Sydney University.

### **Greg Hywood**

Appointed: August 2022

Term ended: March 2023

Greg brought an understanding of media and communication to the Board. He is a Walkley award-winning reporter who went on to become the CEO and Managing Director of Fairfax Media in 2010. Greg is currently a non-executive Chair of FreeTV, an industry group representing all Australian free-to-air networks.

## **Governance**

SSI recognises that a commitment to strong corporate governance, to transparency and to accountability is essential to our long-term performance and sustainability.

We achieve the best outcomes for our members, for clients and other stakeholders when the actions of our people are subject to suitably high levels of scrutiny.

With this in mind, we regularly review our governance arrangements in line with the ACNC Governance Standards, community expectations and regulation.

### **Board of Directors**

SSI's operations are overseen by a Board comprising up to four Independent Directors and up to four Member Directors. The Board has adopted a charter that details its role and responsibilities. Board appointments are made in accordance with our Constitution available at [ssi.org.au](http://ssi.org.au). A total of six Board meetings were held during FY2023.

Member Directors are currently drawn from the boards and senior executive of SSI's Member organisations and, like our Independent Directors, are recruited based on merit. To that end, the Board actively seeks to ensure that it has a diverse directorship to effectively discharge its responsibilities and equip SSI for good governance.

To assist in identifying areas of focus and maintaining an appropriate experience mix, the Board has developed a Board Skills Matrix that is regularly reviewed. All Directors are recruited based on this matrix, and it was recently updated and approved by the Board in light of changes to SSI's impact strategy, operating environment and risk profile.

The Board plays an active role in setting the culture and strategy of the organisation in line with SSI's vision, values and code of conduct. The CEO reports directly to the Board, and the Board, in turn, is accountable to SSI's member organisations. The Board holds itself, and in turn management, to high ethical standards, ensuring that SSI acts ethically and with integrity in all business relationships.

Innovation is also an important part of how SSI responds to community needs. As a consequence, the Board endorsed an Impact Strategy for 2023-2026 in March 2023. The strategy spells out how SSI will measure and achieve impact for the communities in which it operates. In addition, any innovation requiring significant investment comes to the Board.

## Board Committees

The work of the Board is supplemented by the meetings of the following committees of the Board: Finance and Audit; Risk and Compliance; Governance, Nominations and Remuneration; and Member Relations. The Board Committees meet four times a year and hold out of session meetings as required.

Each Board Committee performs 'deep dives' into particular areas of focus and concern, to enable the Board to meet its full obligations in an efficient way. While the Governance, Nominations and Remuneration committee examines governance, the whole Board is required to be familiar with all aspects of governance and to be satisfied that members are informed and making the best possible decisions.

Our Board Committee structure also plays an important role in allowing the Board to monitor operational, financial and risks across the organisation. Meanwhile, complaints and compliments are routinely recorded and presented in a report to the Risk and Compliance committee and also to the Board.

The Governance, Nominations and Remuneration Committee completes the ACNC's self-evaluation tool on an annual basis to ensure continued compliance with the ACNC Governance Standards as well as a charity's other obligations.

One of the tasks of the Committee for Member Relations is to examine how SSI connects with its membership and how the membership model may be enhanced. Due to recent growth of the SSI membership, the Board is now able to draw Member Directors from an even wider pool, expanding the depth of experience on the Board and further enhancing our governance structure. The Board also actively seeks to ensure that it has a diverse membership to effectively discharge its responsibilities and equip SSI for good governance.

Following the requirements of the ACNC Governance Standards, Corporations Act and our Constitution, Directors must declare any conflict of interest and abide by the Conflict of Interests Policy, including, in certain circumstances, abstaining from participating in discussions or votes.

The performance of the Board, associated committees, Directors and Chair is constantly reviewed, and the findings and recommendations of this review are provided to the Board. The Board and its committees have each adopted a Charter that sets the purpose, scope, key duties and membership in line with our Constitution.

These Charters are supported by related governance policies that are approved and reviewed by the Board. The Board and committees are made aware of new or changing compliance

requirements which may have a significant impact on business operations, service delivery or staff or client welfare.

## Our stakeholders

The following table outlines key stakeholder interests and concerns in relation to key material topics. It considers how we engage, the quality of our relationships and how we are responding to the material topics identified. This builds on the overview of material topics provided in Table 1 - Material Issues.

**Table 17:**  
**Stakeholder interests and concerns**

(table not included in this version)

## Abbreviations list

ACOSS	The Australian Council of Social Service
Allianz	Allianz Australia
Arts Qld	Arts Queensland
ARA	Australasian Reporting Awards
ASESS	Asylum Seeker Employment Skills Support
BEMAC	Brisbane Multicultural Arts Centre
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CAMS	Community Action for a Multicultural Society
CARM	Culturally and racially marginalised
CEW	Chief Executive Women
CFM	Client First Model
DCA	Diversity Council Australia
DCCD	Queensland government Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
DCJ	NSW Department of Communities and Justice
DES	Disability Employment Services
DET	Department of Education and Training
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DFV	Domestic family violence
DHA	Federal government Department of Home Affairs
DISR	Department of Industry, Science and Resources
DJPR	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney General
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
DoE	NSW Department of Education
DOHAC	Federal government Department of Health and Aged Care
DSS	Federal government Department of Social Services
DTIS	Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport
DYJESBT	Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training
EGSC	East Gippsland Shire Council
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
HSP	Humanitarian Settlement Program
LAC	Local Area Coordination
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/ questioning, asexual
MCFP	Multicultural Child and Family Program
MFCP	Multicultural Foster Care Program
MyQ	Multicultural Youth Queensland
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NSP	NSW Settlement Partnership program
NSW	Health New South Wales Ministry of Health
PHN	Primary Health Network
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia
RESP	Refugee Employment Support Program
RISE	Recognise, Inspire, Support, Energise
RTO	Registered training organisation
SAS	Skill Assure Supplier
SETS	Settlement Engagement and Transition Support
SQW	Skilling Queenslanders for Work
TAWP	Thriving Afghan Women Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
VRGF	Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation
WNSW	Women NSW
WOMI	World of Music Ipswich

YEPP	The Youth Employment Planning Passport
YTS	Australian Government's Youth Transition Support

## Table and figures

Table 1	Material issues
Table 2	Who was helped by the DFV Practice Unit
Table 3	SETS participants outcomes
Table 4	YEPP participants outcomes
Table 5	SSI Allianz Scholarship recipients outcomes p36
Table 6	People we supported via the Local Area Coordination program
Table 7	Events funded and supported by BEMAC
Table 8	Most common Ignite-Æ business areas
Table 9	Health Impact Project parents who reported improvements
Table 10	Diversity training workshops
Table 11	MPN Achievements
Table 12	SSI Programs in 2022-23
Table 13	SSI people at a glance 2022/23
Table 14	Engagement questions
Table 15	2022-23 Annual Report Financial Summary
Table 16	2022-23 Annual Report Statement of Financial Position
Table 17	Stakeholder interests and concerns
Figure 1	Our theory of change
Figure 2	Our 2023-2026 Impact Strategy
Figure 3	SSI Strategic Risks 2023-26
Figure 4	Mapping strategic goals and risks 2023-26
Figure 5	SSI's risk management responsibilities
Figure 6	Our internal and external stakeholders
Figure 7	Employee distribution
Figure 8	Change in revenue profile 2021-2023
Figure 9	Revenue trend
Figure 10	Revenue
Figure 11	Expenditure
Figure 12	Program outcome by funding source

Figure 13	Program outcome expenditure
-----------	-----------------------------

We welcome feedback and questions on this report, and encourage you to send these to:  
[info@ssi.org.au](mailto:info@ssi.org.au)

How can you help? get in touch with SSI to volunteer, donate, fundraise or collaborate.

SSI Head Office

Level 2, 158 Liverpool Road, Ashfield NSW 2131

t: (02) 8799 6700

e: [info@ssi.org.au](mailto:info@ssi.org.au)

Volunteer:

e: [volunteer@ssi.org.au](mailto:volunteer@ssi.org.au)

We're SSI.

We stand for a world in which everyone has access to equal opportunity.

We are driven by equality, empathy, and celebration of every individual.

**[ssi.org.au](http://ssi.org.au)**