

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023



# EDUCATE. CREATE. ADVOCATE.

# CHAIR'S REPORT

Peter Tonagh



Image Description: Bus Stop Films Board Chair, Peter Tonagh, smiles. He is wearing an open collared white shirt and black jacket, The photo has been edited to black and white.

Each year I am more and more proud of the achievements of the Bus Stop Films team and 2023 is no different. In a year where so many forces worked to divide our society, Bus Stop Films played our part in seeking to unite. I have gained so much from our community, through their passion for inclusion, kindness and creativity. This year again I am delighted to see the amazing achievements of our staff and our students and I am so very proud of the profound life changing impact of our programs.

Year on year, the reach and capacity of our Accessible Film Studies Program has grown with over 170 students in 2023 with the addition of two new locations, Launceston and Perth. I am grateful for the support of TasTAFE and Edith Cowan University in partnering with us to deliver our program in these new locations. It has been great to further grow our innovative and creative partnerships. It was a highlight of my year to meet our students and their families at the Bus Stop Films showcase events where I joined with our audiences to hear first-hand the rapturous reaction to our films and observed the pride of our students in the content that they helped to create. Our national showcase events attracted over 1250 people and were supported by the generosity of our corporate sponsors Woolworths Group and Netflix together with Screen Queensland and Screen NSW.

Throughout the year we celebrated many milestones including winning Breakthrough Business of Year at the Screen Producers awards, holding our first screening in the Northern Territory, seeing our students Charlie and Lewis Smith appointed as International Day of People with Disability ambassadors and celebrating as our leading partner AFTRS turned 50. These memorable moments celebrate our students, our films and our community, each a key and critical aspect of the pillars of our organisation.

As chair I lead a wonderful board of dedicated people who give their time and expertise to guide the fiscal, operational and strategic governance of this impactful organisation. This year we are fortunate to have appointed three new members to the Board. I am delighted to welcome Trent Blacket, Joanna Aguius OAM and Fiona Stuart to our governance team. Bus Stop Films has an incredible, dedicated and growing team of staff ably led by Tracey Corbin-Matchett. It was a highlight for all of us when Tracey received her OAM in the King's Birthday Honours.

In 2023 we worked together to map out new programs and partnerships to grow the footprint of our organisation and ensure that the life changing experiences offered to people with disabilities through creativity, social connections and employment, can reach more people, can open more minds and, critically, to change more lives. As we roll into 2024, I thank all of our community across all sectors for their continued support. I know when we all work together, good things and great impact will come.

# CEO'S MESSAGE

Tracey Corbin-Matchett OAM



Image Description: Bus Stop Films CEO, Tracey Corbin-Matchett, stands with casually folded arms and a smile on her face. She is wearing a black t-shirt with a logo that says 'Bus Stop Films'. The photo has been edited to black and white.

As I sit here today to write my CEO's message, my heart swells and I get a bit teary when I think about all we did as a community across 2023. So many amazing moments of kindness and positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

This is not due to the efforts of just one person, but a strong team of our 70 staff, our amazing board and advisory board, and of course our wonderful 200 plus participants across our programs and their families, and the hundreds of cast and crews who bring our productions to life and our network of generous supporters. Well over 1000 people and their own communities contribute to the Bus. Thank you to each of you.

The year started with our first ever film production in the Northern Rivers of NSW with the award-winning *#childboss* documentary, a project that went from idea to production in just 5 days and ended with a spectacular and special opportunity to view the New Year's Eve fireworks on Sydney Harbour.

In between there were amazing highs, with new locations for our Accessible Film Studies Program in Perth and Launceston and so much love from the awesome Laura Daley and Coffs Coast Autism to set up the Program in 2024.

We also won Breakthrough Business of the Year at the Screen Producers Awards. A wonderful reflection of our growth as a production company and Bus Stop Employment continued to gain new members and productions connecting with us for consultancy and employment support.

Sadness hit our hearts, as we mourned the loss of Linda O'Connell, one of our cherished Canberra students. We hold memories in our minds and hearts for Linda and her family.

Personally I loved bringing my work home and opening up my house and lending my kids to be part of our very first TV commercial shoot. It was brilliant to have our students and our awesome Ambassador Miguel Maestre take part in the shoot. My husband Greg also lent his talents to the project as well. Bus Stop Films is a huge part of my life and wrapped around my love for the Bus is my family's support too.

Lastly, this year was a very special achievement for me to receive an Order of Australia medal in the King's Birthday Honours. Awarded for services to people with disability and the arts. It was a wonderful surprise to be nominated by Wollongong student Ricky Gamble. I am so full of heart to receive this recognition.

There are many unpaid hours from all of us and loads of kindness, skill and talent that goes into keeping the bus on the road. It's the joy of making a difference and helping to make the world a more fair and just world that keeps me so firmly secure as the driver of the Bus.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

# COO'S REPORT

Dianna La Grassa



Image Description: Bus Stop Films COO, Dianna La Grassa, stands with her hands playfully on her hips and her head tilted with a smile on her face. She is wearing a black t-shirt with a logo that says 'Bus Stop Films'. The photo has been edited to black and white.

The Bus went around the sun one more time in 2023 and with it delivered incredible impact fueling real change in the screen industry. Led by Tracey Corbin-Matchett OAM the strategic vision for the organisation was in full swing with milestone after milestone being achieved.

It was an honour to see the growth in both our core team and our national team across the country with new faces, opportunities, participants and partnerships all furthering the incredible work that the Bus delivers on.

The Bus produced 18 short films across the country covering themes from migration, mental health through to kung fu and rock and roll wrestling good times. Our participants and their tutors have such incredible stories and voices that it keeps our slate interesting, fresh and unlike any others.

I am incredibly grateful for the on the ground talent that we have supporting our classes and bringing true filmmaking experiences to the forefront for our participants. Cheers to our tutors and support workers, the unsung heroes of what we do.

It was our first year delivering, in partnership with all of the screen agencies across the country, the 'Inclusive Producers Attachments', which enabled 10 emerging producers to build their skills and future proof their practice in inclusive filmmaking. It allowed us to have people on the ground and further grow our network of talented filmmakers across the country. We continued to employ these individuals and have supported their careers since the conclusion of the mentoring program.

From a personal perspective I've loved seeing our Employment and Consultancy services grow and a greater embrace from the screen industry. The momentum for true inclusion is well underway and after 15 years of advocacy it is heartwarming to see the industry come to the table and want to make a change, not because they have to but because they want to. Becoming the Inclusion Partner on *This is Gonna Be Big* was a huge moment for the Bus and inclusion. I truly want to thank the advocates and champions across the industry who are wanting to stand by and support inclusion. Our work continues to be pivotal in changing hearts and minds in the industry and heading into 2024 there is no stopping us.

The Bus is not only here to stay but continues to forge new opportunities, pathways and reshape the content and stories we see and engage with on our screens.

I couldn't be more honoured to see the Bus head into its next chapter of growth and our wonderful community continuing to achieve, grow and be embraced by the screen industry.

Here's to 2024 beep beep.



Image Description: A collection of five photos that celebrate the Bus Stop Films community and events throughout the past year including Tracey Corbin Matchett, Peter Tonagh, Miguel Maestre, Ben Franklin MP, and Dianna La Grassa.

# BSF BOARD

Our board is a collection of advocates, talented creatives, business minds and hearts who keep the Bus on track with good governance, strategic direction and impact. We are extremely grateful for their time, expertise and kindness.



## BSF BOARD 2023:

- Peter Tonagh – Chair
- Brian Maguire – Treasurer
- Jacqui Attard – Board Member
- Emily Dash – Board Member
- Kate Aitken – Board Member
- Genevieve Clay-Smith – Board Member
- Dianna La Grassa – Board Member
- Jennifer Collins – Board Member
- Fiona Stuart – Board Member
- Trent Blackett – Board Member
- Joanna Agius OAM – Board Member
- Samuel Sentongo – Board Observer

Jacqui Attard resigned from the board in July 2023. We are so grateful for Jacqui’s amazing contribution to the Bus over the years, helping grow our business and our organisation.

Three new board members joined the Bus in 2023, Joanna Agius OAM, founder of Deaf Aboriginal Services, Trent Blackett Co-Founder EMT Lawyers and Fiona Stuart, General Counsel at Hoyts. Fiona moved from Company Secretary to board member role. We are grateful to Joanna, Trent and Fiona for their amazing wealth of skills and experience which they bring to the board.

The Board is supported by the dedication and fantastic skills of Kalistene Vihas.

This year we again took part in the Board Observership Program, which supports emerging leaders to gain an understanding of the machinery of boards whilst contributing their time and experience to an organisation. We were delighted to have Samuel Sentongo join us across 2023.



Image Description: A collection of four photographs that celebrate the Bus Stop Films board members including Tracey Corbin Matchett, Dianna La Grassa, Trent Blackett, Fiona Stuart, Joanna Agius OAM and Jacqui Attard.

# OUR PATRONS

Bus Stop Films continued to be supported by His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley.

Their patronage amplifies our work, taking our message of inclusion and kindness to the Australian people.

It was a delightful experience for our student ambassadors and our staff and supporters to be welcomed by Their Excellencies to Admiralty House. On the occasion, our dedicated team member, Support and Engagement Manager Monica Power, received a medal of recognition from the Governor General for her tireless contributions to our students and their support.



Image Description: A collection of three photographs that celebrate the patrons including His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley along with the Bus Stop Films community and team member,

# OUR AMBASSADOR

## CELEBRITY CHEF MIGUEL MAESTRE JUMPS ON BOARD THE BUS

We welcomed on board the energetic and abundantly kind Miguel Maestre. The famed celebrity chef was a natural fit for our ethos and we love having his infectious enthusiasm for life helping us to elevate our message, he even starred in our first TV commercial. Bienvenido a bordo Miguel.



Image Description: Bus Stop Films Ambassador, Miguel Maestre, is dressed casually and smiles with his arms around a group of five Bus Stop Films students.



Image Description: Bus Stop Films Ambassador, Miguel Maestre, laughs as he shakes hands with Bus Stop Films CEO, Tracey Corbin-Matchett.

## BSF ADVISORY BOARD

Bus Stop Films is grateful for the wealth of advice and support from our Advisory Board. They provide a great sounding board for ideas and strategy to connect our projects and programs into the disability and screen industry. They offer much respected insight, information and ideas that help shape how we do what we do. The Advisory board consists of Paralympian, aerial artist and disability advocate Paul Nunnari together with screen and media executive Courtney Gibson and our CEO Tracey Corbin-Matchett OAM.

# STUDENT AMBASSADORS



Across 2023 our student ambassadors—Breanna Swan (Brisbane); Daniel Hodgson (Canberra); Gerard O’Dwyer, Nathan Basha, Joni Campbell, Audrey O’Connor and Ronan Soussa (Sydney); and Liam Vosu (Parramatta)—contributed much to advocate for their community. At the 2023 showcase events we also announced four new ambassadors Brandon Fairley and Heather Ridge from Wollongong and Mikhael Crossfield and Darby Thompson from Adelaide. The BSF team worked with the ambassadors to support them in presenting their personal brand, including a session with dynamic producer Maz Farrelly.



Image Description: A collection of thirteen headshots of the current Bus Stop Films ambassadors as detailed in the text above. They are all smiling and looking directly ahead.

# ALL ABOARD THE BUS

The team that supports our programs and processes is truly an amazing bunch of people. They are not only great at what they do, they are kind as well. The only way to work at Bus Stop Films. As we continue to grow our programs and scope, new team members help to bring new expertise and skills into the organisation.

Donal Brady  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Hugues de Robillard  
MEDIA & DIGITAL MARKETING MANAGER

Michelle Griffiths  
ADMINISTRATION COORDINATOR

Matthew Bing  
SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT LEAD

Ivria Dubs  
FILM DISTRIBUTION & DEVELOPMENT  
MANAGER

Heather Webb  
PHILANTHROPY & SPONSORSHIP LEAD



With the addition of philanthropic support we were able to grow our employment team. Across 2023 this included:

Diana Fisk  
ACTING GENERAL MANAGEMENT OF BUS STOP EMPLOYMENT (Parenting leave back fill to the wonderful Sarah Jane Johnson)

Seema Dudley  
EMPLOYMENT TRAINER & ASSESSOR

Jessica Sherlock  
EMPLOYMENT TRAINER & ASSESSOR

Eleni Modinos  
EMPLOYMENT TRAINER & ASSESSOR

Elise Mather  
EMPLOYMENT COORDINATOR



Image Description: A collection of three images that celebrate the Bus Stop Films team, along with members of the broader Bus Stop Films community.

# ALL ABOARD THE BUS



Image Description: Two women pose together smiling and making peace signals with their hands.

Our team tutors not only provide quality learning experiences for our participants, they share their passion for the art of filmmaking with our students both in the classroom and on set. A huge thanks to our 2023 tutors:

Angela Blake	Julian Neuhaus	Marcus Mackenzie	Ben Mair
Timothy Grubisic	Veronica Wain	Andrew Kavanagh	Joanna Joy
Grace Anderson	Justice Jones	Liv Saffieri	Tom Fiander
Martha Goddard	Alex Hancock	Ellen Britton	Joe Wilkie
Rebecca Kirwan	Duncan Ragg		

Our support workers provide the students guidance in the classroom and on set. In 2023, we had a huge team of disability support workers, providing our students with an encouraging and supportive learning environment. Our team of support workers include:

Monica Power	Matthew Bing	Krittika Puhakka	Kameron Scott-Mckenzie
Jessica Sherlock	Jennifer Price	Eloise Cleary	Brendan Kearns
Michelle Sutton	Kate Bobis	Marc Wilson	Anna Summerhayes
Katherine Munro	Daisy Alexis	Jewels Bowering	Gabby Brackenbury
Myles Prangnel	Karen Bryant	Bijay Eren Sapkota	Lauren Neal
Melanie Conelius	Karina White	Adi O'Hara	Rose Blackthorn
Suzanne Dunne	Emmylou Hocking	Cat Morgan	Karlene Weldon
Hannah Dent	Carly Hawkins	Ebony Richardson	Louissa (Ntum) Shwiri
Nathan Mewett	Jane Bartram	Lucky Chan	Sarah McCarthy
Afolashade Sandra Nwaobi			

# EDUCATE

## ACCESSIBLE FILM STUDIES PROGRAM

GROWING OUR REACH AND COMMUNITY

In 2023 we added two stops for the Bus with Perth, in partnership with Edith Cowan University and supported by Mineral Resource, and Launceston in partnership with TasTAFE supported by Knight Frank. We had 170 participants in the Accessible Film Studies Program. We now have classes in Sydney, Wollongong, Canberra, Parramatta, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide, Blue Mountains, Perth and Launceston. New locations meant getting to know new students and their families and welcoming them on board the Bus.

Across the year we also prepared for new locations to be added in 2024 with Coffs Harbour in partnership with TAFE NSW, Southern Sydney in partnership with Shopfront Arts funded with a grant from Georges River Council and the new Gold Coast program extending our partnership with Griffith Film School getting ready to board the Bus.

The Coffs Harbour set up needs special mention as it was driven by the energy and commitment of Laura Daley from Coffs Coast Autism. Laura and the group hosted a ball to raise the funds to bring the Bus to Coffs. That level of community support is all kinds of magic.

Our students are the heart and soul of our community. Across the year the students got to take part in an amazing collection of experiences including excursion and visits from amazing industry professionals including an exclusive workshop at Panavision Cameras. In 2023, Adelaide twins Charlie and Lewis Smith were appointed International Day of People with Disability ambassadors, you can hear about their journey [HERE](#).

Sadly in 2023 we lost a much-loved member of our community. Linda O'Connell, a Canberra student, passed away. We hold Linda and her family forever in our hearts and thoughts.



Image Description: A woman with dark hair and dark clothes smiles as she engages with a group of people in the distance. She is sitting in a wheelchair.



Image Description: A collection of eight images that celebrate the Bus Stop Films community and the screening events that have taken place throughout the country. The community is smiling and posing for photos on the red carpets.



# PROGRAM PARTNERS KEEPING THE BUS ON THE ROAD

We couldn't do what we do without the amazing support of our program partners hosting our programs and our students. In 2023 we continued to deliver our Accessible Film Studies Program in partnerships with:



A special mention to our longest partner, Australian Film TV and Radio School, AFTRS, who turned 50 this year. We are so grateful to AFTRS CEO, Dr Nell Greenwood and her team for opening up Australia's national film school to Bus Stop Films. Happy 50th Birthday AFTRS.

Image Description: A collection of logos that recognise Bus Stop Films partners including University of Wollongong, University of South Australia, Film Plus, Western Sydney University, Screen Canberra, Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, Griffith University Film School, RMIT University, Edith Cowan University, Tas Tafe and AFTRS.

## AFTRS



Image Description: A collection of two images that celebrate the Bus Stop Films team and students across the country.

# ACCESSIBLE ACTING PROGRAM

After the smashing success of the Accessible Acting Program in partnership with Actors Centre Australia, the program returned to ACA. The Program offered participants creative and social connections via opening access to one of Australia's premiere acting schools to people living with disability. Through the program participants from Bus Stop Films and the general community gained new skills in acting, improvisation and performance. The showcase nights celebrated everything awesome about creativity and community.



Image Description: A collection of three images that celebrate the Accessible Acting Program and those who participated. This includes a group shot of participants holding their certificates in the air.

# CREATE

## CREATIVITY... WE HAVE IT BY THE BUS LOAD

2023 saw our Accessible Film Studies Program deliver a suite of entertaining and impactful productions, each centered around the creative concepts from our students' imaginations. The collection of films were a brilliant catalogue of 18 inclusively made productions covering a wide range of themes and genres. They included the kung fu antics of *Smoke and Mirrors* shot on location at Scenic World Blue Mountains, internet woes in *Ron's Creek*, a puppetry exploration of the refugee experience in *Olan, Earthbound* and our first ever film on a tram with *The Bystander Effect*.

### Our 2023 class film projects included:

*Swell* - Directed by Marcus Mckenzie  
*Ripple* - Directed by Grace Anderson  
*The Bystander Effect* - Directed by Julian Neuhaus  
*Sensory Overload* - Directed by Rebecca Kirwan  
*Fighting Feelings* - Directed by Joanna Joy  
*Smoke and Mirrors* - Directed By Ben Mair  
*Song for Skylar* - Directed by Martha Goddard  
*Muzak* - Directed by Veronica Wain  
*Let Me Go* - Directed by Ellen Britton  
*Healing Heroes* - Directed by Tom Fiander  
*I Got You* - Directed by Andrew Kavanagh  
*Helicopter* - Directed by Liv Staffieri  
*Dinner Expectations* - Directed by Anglea Blake  
*Olan, Earthbound* - Directed by Tim Grubisic  
*I Got You* - Directed by Duncan Ragg  
*Sports Fan* - Directed by Justice Jones  
*Middle Management* - Directed by Joe Wilkie  
*Ron's Creek* - Directed by Alex Hancock



Image Description: Actor David Collins in character alongside a puppet for the film *Olan, Earthbound*.

Additional films were made during the year including *#childboss* directed by Angela Blake which was made through the Create NSW Holiday Break Program, our first ever film in the Northern Rivers. Our partnership with the Arts Council of Mongolia delivered a second film *Dancer*, made with deaf and hard of hearing young people. The stunning film, funded with an Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, was shot in Ulaanbaatar and produced in Australia, with BSF co-founder Genevieve Clay-Smith producing the film all the way from her home in the Blue Mountains.



Image Description: A collection of nine images taken of cast, crew and film sets from the Bus Stop Films Accessible Film Studies Program.



# WE WERE THE STAR OF OUR OWN FILM... OUR FIRST EVER TVC!

2023 saw us create our first ever TVC, "It Began With Shadow and Light". The inclusively made production was a truly family affair, with Archer the son of our team member Elise starring as the younger version of lead actor, our lovable student ambassador Ronan Soussa. Our CEO Tracey, not only loaned her children Sage and Zahn and husband Greg to the on-screen talent, she also opened up her home for the shoot, with her cousin, acclaimed actor Di Smith providing voice over for the ad. Also on-screen was our amazing Ambassador Miguel Maestre and a number of our students and Bus Stop Employment participants who also worked on the production.



Image Description: A collection of four images featuring the cast and crew on set for the Bus Stop Films TVC filmed this year.



The project was produced by our team members Dianna and Hugues and created by the team at Elastic Studios. Working with Director Kevin Lim and many of our favourite crew members Mikey Hamer (DOP both on- and off-screen), Michael Santos (AD), Hair and Make Up artist Rose Borg and many more much-loved crew. The TVC premiered on Nine during the Australian Open and was screened at a number of Hoyts cinemas across Australia.

You can view the TVC together with testimonials from our participants and their families [HERE](#).

# INCLUSIVE PRODUCERS ATTACHMENT PROGRAM



Image Description: Bus Stop Films COO Dianna La Grassa stands arm in arm with Inclusive Producer Attachment Sarah Williams.

As part of supporting building capacity in the industry, we launched the Inclusive Producers Attachment Program to increase capacity of emerging producers nationally, around their understanding of inclusive filmmaking. The nationwide call out attracted over 140 applicants. The selected team of 10 producers worked under our in-house producer Dianna La Grassa.

The group attended our Inclusion in Action workshop and were mentored by our team. The group was an intersectionally diverse team of people from the disability, First Nations, CALD, LGBTQI+ and neurodiverse communities. The program was funded through partnerships with Screen NSW, Screen Queensland, Screen Canberra, Screen Tasmania, VICScreen, Screenwest and South Australian Film Corporation.



Image Description: Logos including Screen NSW, Screen Queensland, Screen Canberra, Screen Tasmania, VICScreen, Screenwest and South Australian Film Corporation.

## OUR FILM PROJECTS MAKE AN IMPACT

This year our film stats show a diverse community of cast and crew who helped to bring our 2023 film projects life. Over 530 people were involved in the production of 18 films, across 7 states in 6 weeks, produced by our awesome in-house producer Dianna La Grassa with co-producer Cyna Strachan. The productions added over \$350,000 to the national economy. Every film was of course inclusively made.

We surveyed the cast, crew and staff of Bus Stop Films who were involved in our 2023 film projects. The survey was completed by 402 people and found that:

- 43% live with a disability
- 48% were female identifying
- 3% identified as non-binary
- 1% identified as trans
- 20% were from the LGBTQI+ community
- 23% were from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background
- 33% were aged 18-24 years old
- 3% were from the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community
- 19% of the cast and crew were parents or carers
- 18% live in a regional or remote area

# OUR BIGGEST SHOWCASE ON TOUR

This year we took the bus on our biggest tour ever. Our amazing Marketing and Event Coordinator Serena, created a collection of fun and inclusive events for our end of year student showcases. These events are a way to celebrate the work of our students with their families and say thank you to the cast, crews and supporters who work to bring our films to life. Over 1200 people came to our showcase events across 7 states, with our Sydney showcase attracting a whopping audience of over 600 people and a show stopping speech from our amazing ambassador Miguel Maestre.



Image Description: A collection of four images that celebrate Bus Stop Films Showcases. The images include the Bus Stop Films team, students, ambassadors and supporters, including Kyas Hepworth and Danielle McCarthy (Screen NSW) celebrating at various events.



Thank you to Woolworths Group and Netflix for their support as 2023 showcase sponsors and to Screen NSW and Screen Queensland for supporting our Sydney and Brisbane events. Each of our events included Auslan interpretation by Sign Hear.

The event is a huge team effort to bring to life, especially from our guru of all things film files, Julian Neuhaus who created the amazing showcase packages for each of the seven events.



Take a look at the magic and fun from the showcase tour [HERE](#).

# OUR FILMS TRAVEL THE GLOBE



*Mise en Place* was nominated for Best Screenplay at CinefestOZ, *#childboss* and *Career Fight* won Best Documentary and Best Professional Short Film at Cinephone International Smartphone Film Festival in Spain, *Arcade* won Best Original Music and Best Supporting Actor at Made in the West Film Festival, *Filters* won Best Diversity & Inclusion Film at Port Adelaide Diversity and Inclusion Film Festival.

ABC licensed *Head Over Wheels*, *Stairs* and *Hopeful Romantic* for broadcast and ABC iView taking our films to audiences across Australia.

For International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD), Medibank, Qantas and the National Museum of Australia came on board as Screening Partners showing our films to their employees, stakeholders and the public.

Our growing catalogue of films saw us engage a skilled film distribution leader to manage the festival entries and distribution of our films, with Ivria Dubs jumping on board to help set up our films for festival success. In 2023, our films screened in 98 screenings across Australia, USA, UK, Spain, France, Turkey and Belgium and won 15 awards.

Key festival screenings included Sydney Film Festival, Flickerfest, Brisbane International Film Festival, Heart of Gold, CinefestOz, Chicago International Children's Film Festival, ReelAbilities Pittsburgh, Aesthetica Short Film Festival and our first ever Northern Territory screening at Darwin International Film Festival.

*Hopeful Romantic* won five awards at the Australian Women's Film Festival, including Best Film and Best Screenplay.



Image Description: A collection of two images celebrating Bus Stop Films team, tutors and students celebrating at film premieres in various locations.

# ADVOCATE

RESOURCING THE INDUSTRY AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

## SET SIGNS LAUNCHED

In 2023 we continued our commitment to resourcing the industry to be more inclusive. During the year we added Set Signs to our Inclusive Filmmaking Toolkit. The project was a partnership with SignHow and included consultation with the sector on common filmmaking signs ahead of production of the clips, signed by Sharon Xabregas from Sign Hear. Learn more about Set Signs [HERE](#).



Image Description: Two stills taken from the Set Signs filming. These include a man and a woman standing in front of a purple backdrop holding a film slate, and the same woman standing separately in front of a camera on set.

## SHARING THE MESSAGE OF INCLUSION

Our staff spoke at a number of events across the year sharing our work and message of inclusion. This included our CEO Tracey presenting our work at Let's Rock NSW - Rethink Disability at Luna Park for the NSW Government, as well as a panel with leaders in advocacy Hannah Diviney and Lisa Cox, exploring the perceived "uncomfortable conversations" around inclusion at Ad Week as part of our role as an ally to the Australian chapter of the Unstereotype Alliance.

Our awesome GM of Employment Sarah Jane spoke about inclusion on-screen at the first ever SXSW Sydney, alongside leading disability advocate Dylan Alcott AM. We also celebrated women in the media by Turning the Bus Pink. A wonderful celebration of the amazing contribution of women to the sector, hosted by Canva and delivered in partnership with Nine.



Image Description: A collection of five images celebrating the inclusion and advocacy work done on panels and events this year. These images feature CEO Tracey Corbin-Matchett, Tahyna MacManus, Britt Warburton and Michelle Escobar along with Bus Stop Films ambassadors and broader community.

# FACILITATE



## BUS STOP EMPLOYMENT

2023 was the first full year of Bus Stop Employment (BSE), our dedicated business arm focussing on the employment of people with disabilities across film, TV and commercial production. The year was an exciting time for BSE with the team expanding from one full-time role to a team of five amazing employment advocates. The team ended the year led by Diana Fisk as General Manager covering for our awesome Sarah Jane Johnson who took maternity leave. Supporting the unit is Elise Mather, Employment Coordinator, and Seema Dudley, Eleni Modinos and Jessica Sherlock, Employment Trainers and Assessors. The team services the BSE members across the country, working to support them into employment while supporting production companies to build their confidence in inclusion.

In 2023 we matched our 72 members with 134 jobs Australia wide. Some highlights were creating opportunities on productions such as the groundbreaking Mastercard *Touch* project, Ludo Studio's *Thou Shalt Not Steal*, *Neighbours 2.0* and the award-winning feature documentary *This Is Going To Be Big* for Fremantle and Truce Films. The team also supported a number of commercial projects, notably including the [Shift 20](#) campaign led by Dylan Alcott AM and centering brands including Bonds, Kia, nib and AAMI. Our role as Inclusion Partner to a number of leading projects is testament to our demonstrated commitment to and understanding of inclusive production practices.

We are grateful to the continued assistance of a Westpac Inclusive Employment grant and The Snow Foundation and other philanthropic support for our employment programs.



Image Description: A collection of two images taken from Bus Stop Employment film sets. They feature member Rhys Ballis holding a film slate and in a separate image CEO Tracey Corbin Matchett poses arm in arm with three members of a crew on a film set.

# OPERATE



We thank our amazing supporters and donors who provide funding, resources and expertise to our programs and projects. Each of you helps us to continue to change lives and minds through film.

Our supporters include our community giving their time in fundraising, individual donors, and companies and foundations including Panavision, Paige-Harrison, Westpac Foundation, Ashurst, The Snow Foundation, PwC, Faye Fuller Foundation, KnightFrank, Netflix, Woolworths Group, Mineral Resources and many more. We're so grateful for their continued support and assistance to help us to continue to change lives and minds through film. The NDIS continues to support our students to attend the Program with resourcing from the plans.



Image Description: A collection of four images celebrating the various fundraising events including a screening and sausage sizzles that involve the Bus Stop Films community.



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY



With good governance and a commitment to excellence, we continued with a strong financial position. In 2023, our revenue increased by 31% from \$1,366,663 in 2022 to \$1,971,616 in 2023. Against this our costs to run the Programs and organisation also grew, increasing from \$1,386,161 in 2022 to \$1,909,371. This new set of figures saw us finish the year out with a modest surplus of \$65,364. This strong growth was due in part to good business leadership to grow our consultancy services and license our content to improve the sustainability of the services we provide, as well as as key philanthropic support.

Thank you to our always kind Treasurer Brian Maguire for his committed and skilled management of our finances and to Gregory Richards and his team at Page, Harrison & Co for their ongoing management of our audit requirements and assisting us through any tax related issues in 2023. We are so lucky to have such considerate experts supporting us.

In 2023 we farewelled our long-term bookkeeper, Johnny Gebrael, who paid the bills and the staff with utmost kindness and professionalism for over 10 years. Just prior to Johnny's departure we welcomed Donal Brady, as Chief Financial Officer to lead the fiscal management of our organisation's administration.

A copy of our full financial report can be found on the ACNC website.



Image Description: A collection of three images that include and celebrate the students, ambassadors and community that support Bus Stop Films.



Image Description: A collection of nine images that include and celebrate the Bus Stop Films team, students, ambassadors and community.

