

THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR FLEXIBLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Annual Report 2020/21





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Australian Association for Flexible and Inclusive Education acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways of Australia. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the stories, the culture and the hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the Country. We acknowledge that your Sovereignty has never been ceded.

AAFIE also acknowledges the strength and vibrancy that young people bring to flexible and inclusive education programs, and to the Australian community as a whole.



AAFIE BACKGROUND

AAFIE is the home for all educators, researchers, and policy makers with a shared commitment to providing successful educational opportunities and pathways for young people who have experienced barriers to completing school education.

AAFIE supports the Flexible and Inclusive Education sector who support young people to learn and succeed!

AAFIE ASPIRATION STATEMENT

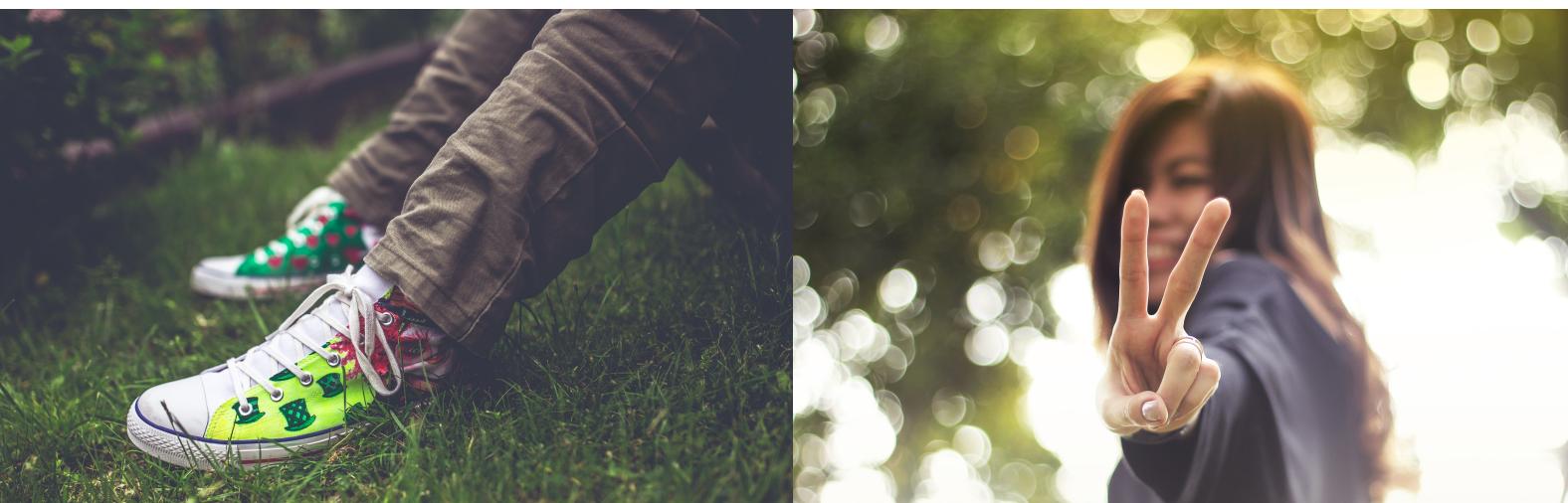
At AAFIE, our fundamental belief is all young people, regardless of postcode, should have equal access to an inclusive, positive, future-focused educational opportunities, specific to their needs.

AAFIE understands that flexible and inclusive learning programs come in many shapes and forms, but they have in common a desire to change the way schooling is provided to better suit young people for whom traditional schooling approaches have not worked well.

We understand that a young person's access to educational opportunities does not exist in isolation, in fact, education is a central part of the ecology of a young person's life. This eco-system is unique and relies on the support of a broad range of providers to function successfully.

For this reason, AAFIE recognises that all young people have the right to:

- A home. Safe, affordable and suitable accommodation
- Relationships that are safe and supportive
- Health care that is tailored and specific to developmental need
- Mental, physical and spiritual support services
- To be treated fairly by all systems who are charged with responsibility to provide care including youth justice and child protection



WELCOME, CO-CHAIRS AAFIE

“Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.

We are delighted to present the AAFIE 2020/21 annual report, on behalf of the AAFIE Board. The past year has been challenging for many, and our hearts go out to young people and to all those who support education for our nation's young people.

Like many organisations, AAFIE has adapted and come up with innovative ways of providing voice and support for the amazing work and inspirational ideas of our members.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to build AAFIE as the peak body for the inclusive and flexible education sector.

Professor Kitty te Riele



Mr. Dale Murray



AAFIE BOARD

AAFIE acknowledges the important role that our Board Directors play in the operation of the organisation to progress its goals. Building and growing AAFIE relies on the dedication, knowledge and connection of the Directors to progress our commitment to rising the profile of and supporting the important work of the Flexible and Inclusive Education sector who support young people to learn and succeed.

Thank you AAFIE's Directors, for what has been a challenging yet positive year for the organisation.

AAFIE Board Directors 2020/21

Co-Chair - Prof. Kitty te Riele, Tasmania
Co-Chair - Dale Murray, Queensland
Director - Dr. Peter Reynolds, Western Australia
Director - Prof. Julian Sefton-Green Victoria
Director - Simon Vaughan, ACT
Director - Dr. Glenda McGregor, Queensland
Executive Officer - Megan Hall, Queensland.

During the 2020/21 financial year, AAFIE welcomed Sue French from NSW to the AAFIE Board. We were honoured to have Sue with us, albeit for a short time! Sadly for us, due to competing commitments Sue had to resign her position. Thank you, Sue. You will always be part of the AAFIE family.



DOING SCHOOL DIFFERENTLY



We were saddened to postpone Doing School Differently again in 2021. The health and wellbeing of our community was and continues to be our highest priority. With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to add uncertainty and complexity to our lives, we made the difficult, but we think right, decision to wait until we are able to be together again in person.

After the success of the 2016 and 2018 Doing School Differently conferences, we are hopeful that we will be back in 2022 to give you another opportunity to advance the national conversation on practice and research in flexible and inclusive education.

AAFIE is extremely proud of our Doing School Differently Conference, as the pre-eminent Australian conference for all educators, youth workers, researchers, policy makers and young people who are committed to developing and sustaining successful educational opportunities and pathways for young people who have experienced barriers to education.

We hope that you will join us in Adelaide on 30 June - 01 July 2022 to reconnect with your colleagues and add your voice to this important conversation. Watch this space as we re-launch DSD2022 in late 2021, with a new fresh look!

AAFIE IN CONVERSATION

As events continued to be cancelled worldwide we found ourselves at a cross-road seeking our place in the ever growing virtual landscape. We were determined to continue to reach and engage our Membership and thus, the introduction of AAFIE In Conversation a Podcast Series was born; specific for AAFIE Members! The podcast series was our response to delivering quality opportunities for our members to connect with a diverse group of professionals who have made it their business to understand and advocate for young people to be seen, heard and achieve in education settings that meet their needs.

AAFIE has recorded 3 podcasts in 2021 and each of these episodes takes an informal conversation style approach to discussing topics that we can all share, learn and grow from. As a member benefit, each episode is available for secure download for AAFIE members.

AAFIE also hosts a live Q & A with each guest post release of each episode. This is an opportunity to connect and discuss the content of the episode and extend the learning opportunity.

Episode 1 – Research + Practice=MAGIC ft. Prof. Kitty te Riele and Dale Murray, AAFIE.

Episode 2 – Language, Language: Connection to Culture, Identity & Country: Reclaiming the truth to healing ft. Dr John Davis, Stronger Smarter Institute

Episode 3 – Mentoring Matters, ft. Taryn Marks, AIME Mentoring.

AAFIE extends a warm thanks to our guests, Dr John Davis from the Stronger Smarter Institute and Taryn Marks from AIME Mentoring for yarning with us. We look forward to welcoming guests including Dr. Tom Brunzell and Prof. Karen Acton to future episodes.



RESEARCH



In 2020/21 AAFIE has been privileged to support two research projects with various partners, with a focus on Flexible and Inclusive Education.

Supporting teachers and teaching in flexible and non-traditional schools

AAFIE is a partner organisation on this Australian Research Council funded project, led by Dr Glenda McGregor and Dr Aspa Baroutsis from Griffith University, and Professor Martin Mills from the Queensland University of Technology to undertake this important research into the Australian workforce that teaches and supports learning in this sector. The project hopes to capture the unique contextual and professional challenges and learning innovations of those who teach in flexible or non-traditional schools; a field which, to date, has not been investigated. Through this project, we hope to identify ways to better support the workforce in this sector.

The survey for this Project is currently open and AAFIE encourages anyone who is currently working in and supporting the learning of young people in any type of flexible or non-traditional school in Australia should consider completing the short survey which is available at the Project [webpage](#).

We look forward to including and keeping AAFIE Members and friends abreast of these projects as they progress. Thank you to these Lead Organisations for including AAFIE in these important projects for the Flexible and Inclusive Education space.

Grandschools Project – intergenerational Learning and Living Communities

This Australian project is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and undertaken by Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Australian Catholic University (ACU), Deakin University and Fulton Trotter Architects, in collaboration with several industry partners, including AAFIE.

The project acts upon recommendations from the Inquiry into the Quality of Care and Residential Aged Care in Australia (QCRAC, 2018) and will investigate the concept of an intergenerational model for senior living within school campuses. The project will establish an economic, policy driven 'shared campus facilities and services' approach, which is person centred, health focussed and socially inclusive.

More information is available at the [webpage](#)

MEMBERSHIP

AAFIE would not exist without its Membership, and we continue to be overwhelmed by the support of our members.

AAFIE members are as diverse as the flexible and inclusive education sector itself, joining from a range of spaces including: those working in or supporting a Flexible Education Program, those wanting to build connections with like-minded professionals in the Flexible Education space, those seeking to be part of an innovative hub of excellence in Flexible and Inclusive Learning.

THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NON-FOR PROFIT COMMISSION

AAFIE is compliant to the Australian Charities and Non-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). Part of this accountability requires meeting ACNC governance standards.

The Governance Standards are a set of core minimum standards that deal with how charities are run (including their processes, activities and relationships) – their governance. They help charities remain trusted by the public and continue to do their charitable work.

For AAFIE our focus is:

- Accountability to Members
- Maintaining our charity status
- Ensuring Suitability of responsible persons

To date AAFIE has 312 members, a mix of students, individual and organisational members. Given the difficult current context, AAFIE extended the duration of membership for existing members to August 2022. We welcome new members and are grateful for your support in letting colleagues know about AAFIE.



AAFIE reports our activities annually to the ACNC.

In 2020/21, AAFIE undertook a ‘governance health check’ a governance framework which we prioritized and implemented throughout the year guiding the development of much needed policy, procedures.

AAFIE maintains its Registered Charity Tick. The Tick is recognition from the ACNC that gives reassurance to the public that the Charity is transparent and accountable and listed on the ACNC Charity Register.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

AAFIE is focused on building our reputation and presence, to ensure that this significant sector in the education landscape has a national voice. AAFIE aims to lead with courage and innovation as we advocate and highlight the strengths and needs of the flexible learning sector.

Moving forward, our focus will be on:

- Delivering a successful DSD2022
- Supporting the formation of Special Interest Groups to give space and voice to young people and professionals in the flexible and inclusive education sector

- Embedding the AAFIE in Conversation Podcast into AAFIE's operational plan – thus ensuring that research and theory to practice is amplified as ongoing business of the organisation
- Forging policy platforms -supporting the development of policy positions to provide an advocacy voice for key topics impacting our important sector
- Support further avenues to engage with AAFIE membership, including Town Halls
- Continue to build our member base

