

A SOUND LIFE

ANNUAL REPORT

2021



It has been another challenging year in our world. We were excited to resume in person programs in 2021, and again had to continue to operate our programs, trainings and events virtually. I would like to acknowledge our incredible core team and volunteers for being so adaptable and for your ability to deliver such meaningful impact under such volatile and trying circumstances. Our programs have continued to offer solace, respite, resilience and joy to those whose already difficult circumstances have been further compounded by the pandemic. To our amazing partners and funders thank you for helping us continue to be a positive force for goodness.

Thanks to KPMG's generous pro-bono in depth SROI analysis, for the 2016-2020 period, ASL generated an estimated \$8.5M benefit to our community from a total spend of \$875,000 which is a 965% social return on every \$1 donated. As you will see in this annual report, KPMG's program analysis also shows the tangible effects of our programs on social inclusion, equality of access, connection, improved mental health and reduced levels of anxiety, loneliness and pain, amongst other positive factors for participants and our volunteers.

The year has been marked by many highlights with our expansion to QLD, servicing new facilities in NSW and launching our unique Youth Sound Mentoring program. The upgrade to our digital volunteer onboarding, management and training systems, ASL rebrand, new website and program impact analysis are just some of the things we are delighted to have achieved.

On behalf of ASL we thank you for generously sharing your hearts, time, talents and resources.

With gratitude and love,
Edo
ASL Co-Founder



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The problem.

In Australia:

- 11 million people are hospitalised each year
- 7 million people experience mental health issues
- 4.4 million people live with a disability
- 1 in 10 people over the age of 15 report lacking social support
- 1 in 4 people report they are experiencing an episode of loneliness

This Year:

- 20% Australians experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress
- 30% younger Australians (aged 18 to 34 years) experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress
- 29% people with disability experienced high very high levels of psychological distress

With the impact of COVID on our lives, it has been the most vulnerable Australians who have suffered the most. Social isolation has meant a decline in mental health and wellbeing.



The solution.

a
sound
life 



We help people in need harness the healing power of the heart and mind.

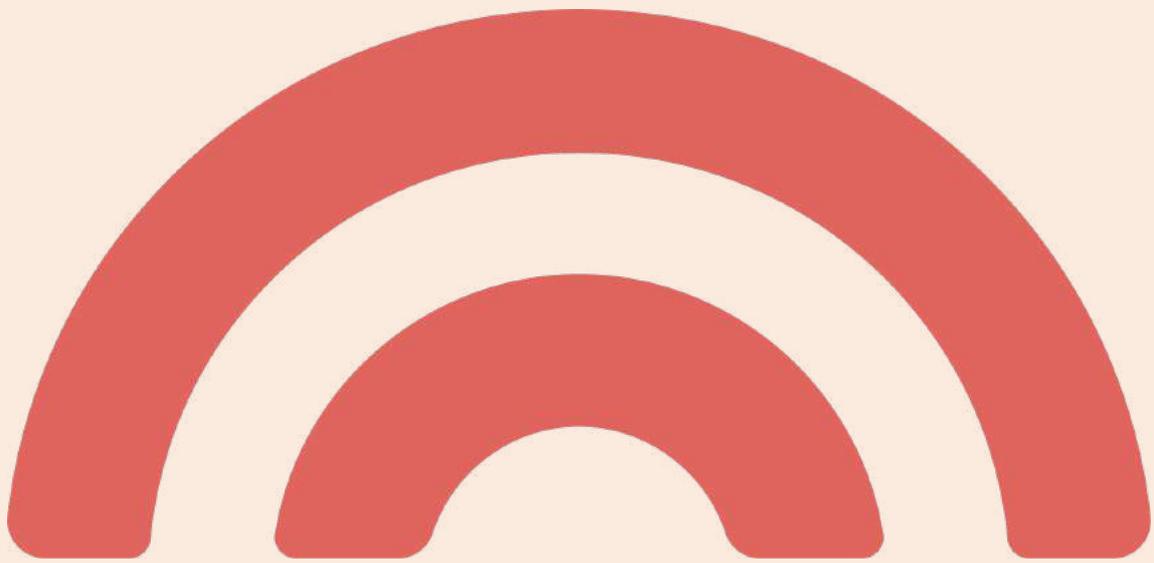
When heart and mind are in harmony, a person can experience transformation, physical regeneration, inner peace and develop a resilience that can help them through any adversity.

We believe that with the right attention, instruction, compassion, love and care, every person in the world can achieve this harmony and enjoy that sense of improved wellbeing and optimised potential.

We help people to achieve this through our music, meditation and yoga programs - all delivered with love and kindness.

"Let music, meditation and yoga create harmony in your mind, body and heart. Let it empower you to become your happiest, most fulfilled self and enjoy a sound life".





Our Impact

ASL Impact

We help people in need build resilience.

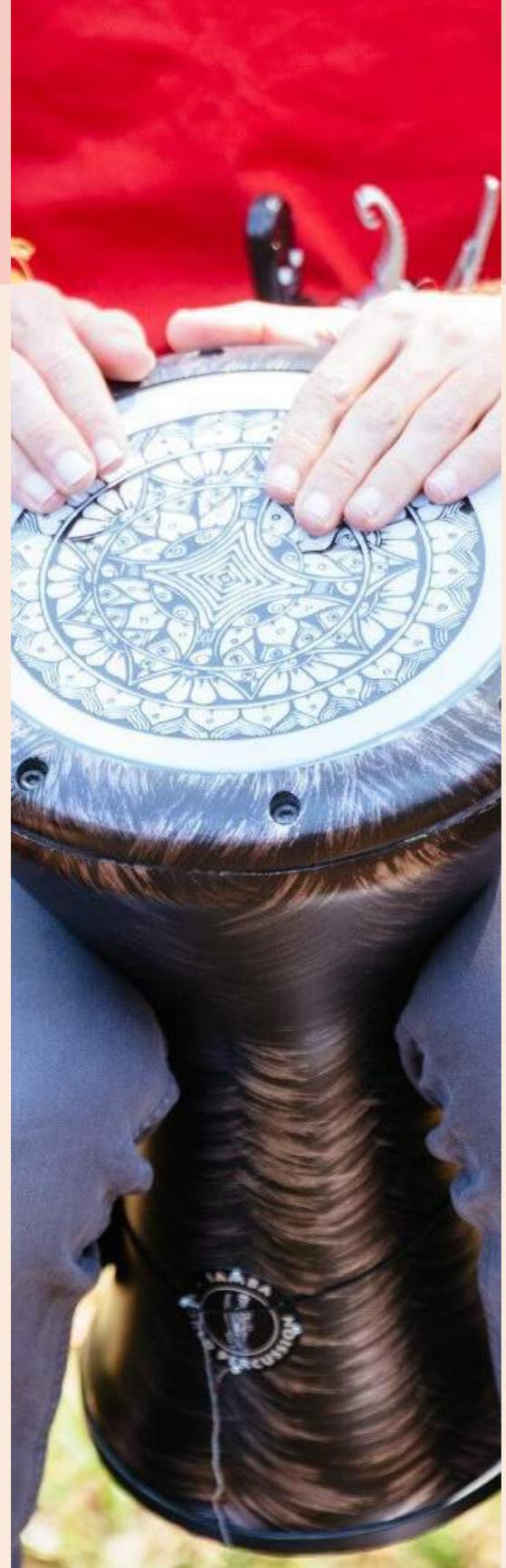
The most vulnerable people in our communities often have the least access to the tools for transformation, resilience, connection and empowerment. We are committed to changing that and to helping them confidently surf the waves of life and realise they can experience complete joy within their lives.

Leading the way in the not-for-profit wellness space since 2014, we've serviced over 60 facilities, positively impacting over 33,834 people in our community who need it the most. We have over 380 committed ASL volunteers who have delivered over 2,948 free music, yoga and meditation sessions to date.

These numbers are a testament to who we are as an organisation, the culture we have created, our ambition and dedication, what we've achieved and the way we serve.

Our compassionate and committed team of skilled volunteers include musicians, yoga and meditation teachers. These volunteers deliver regular programs to people in health care facilities such as hospitals and disability centres, while also delivering programs to underserved communities such as youth at risk and women's shelters.

We've witnessed the joy and resilience our tools can deliver time and time again, which is why we are so sure they can make a difference to all lives and why we're energised to do just that.



The benefits.

We gently, lovingly and energetically restore perspective and build resilience in our participants, by showing them how to use the tools of meditation, yoga and music to express, release and reset themselves.



Yoga.

- ASL yoga reduces loneliness by 40%
- 1 session reduces pain by 9%
- Reduces anxiousness and sadness by 60%

Music.

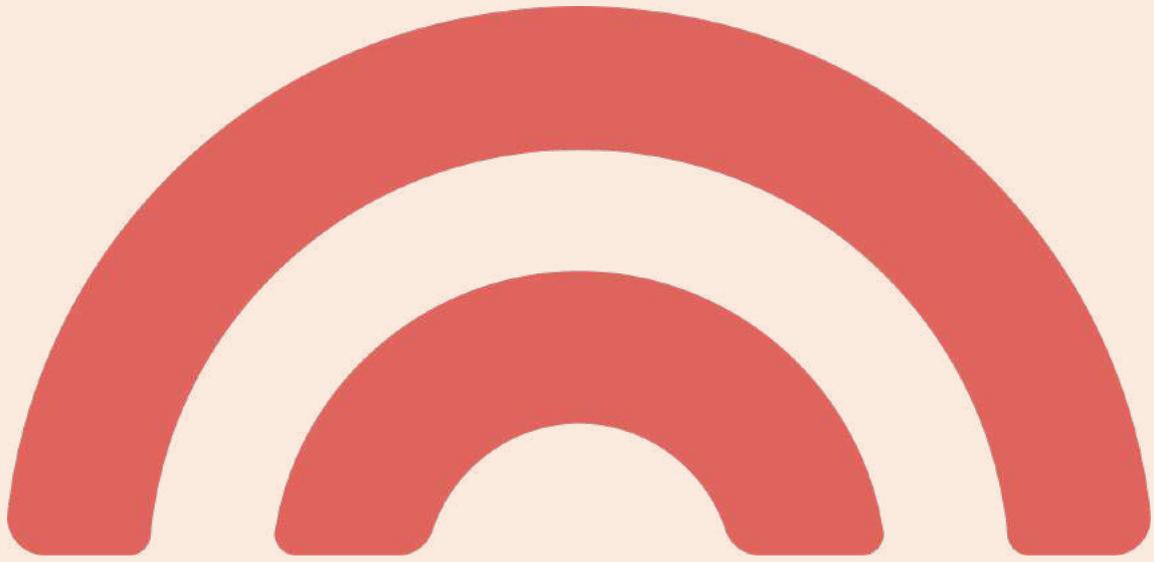
- ASL bedside music reduces loneliness by 30%
- 1 session reduces pain by 9%
- Reduces anxiousness and sadness by 28%



Meditation.

- Reduces anxiousness and sadness
- Provides emotional regulation techniques, stress relief, and relaxation





O u r
C o n t r i b u t i o n

Wellness programs 2021 update.



Through community, philanthropy and corporate support we are making a difference.



Yoga & Meditation

4 New Facilities /
14 Total
31 New Sessions /
264 Total
125 New Participants /
1,779 Total

Music

4 New Facilities /
10 Total
24 Sessions /
184 Total
275 Participants /
2,055 Total



Music update.

Covid-19 did not hold us back from continuing to build resilience and wellbeing for vulnerable Australians in need through our music programs.

Overview:

ASL ran 3 virtual music trainings and brought on some very special new volunteers including international musicians such as Kaiya who is a rising star in Canada. Thanks to our amazing committed 28 music volunteers we continue to serve our community delivering close to 200 music as therapy sessions to 10 interstate facilities, with approximately 2,000 participant interactions.

New Facilities:

Gold Coast Hospital, Newcastle's John Hunter Hospital, Down Syndrome NSW, Sydney Adventist Hospital's Cancer Support Centre.

With a list of great facilities and hospitals now onboarded in NSW, QLD and Victoria and with increased capacity to onboard, train and roster volunteers from anywhere around Australia we are in a great position to onboard more volunteers and increase our impact.

Next Steps:

In 2022, our main aim will be to ramp up our volunteer recruitment. With more attention placed on marketing and recruiting new volunteers, we can dramatically increase the impact of our music programs.



"The interactive music has been the highlight of the week, with a great mix of different types of music, and opportunity for the participants to sing and make music themselves, which they have really relished."

- Down Syndrome NSW Director of Engagement, Nicola Hayburst



Virtual programs.

Due to Covid our live Music by Bedside program now provides a virtual link between patients and musicians, enabling us to continue serving patients.



Option 1

A laptop on a trolley wheeled to patients by bedside



Option 2

Group setting one screen to many participants



Option 3

Over Hospital TV Network on Hospital Channel



Yoga update.

Due to the pressures on Sydney Children's Hospital's staff as a result of Covid-19, ASL has been running a weekly yoga class for their well-being.

Overview:

In June, ASL ran a yoga training course and onboarded 12 new volunteers, adding to the amazing group of our dedicated yoga teacher volunteers. 10 facilities were regularly serviced, with 229 sessions delivered in this challenging year.

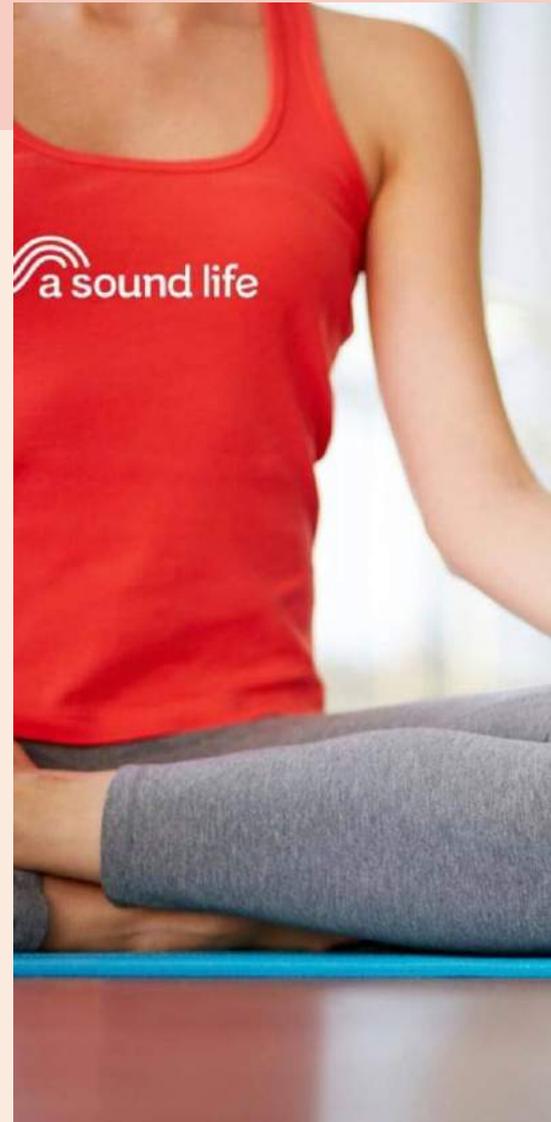
A Youth Crisis accommodation centre was onboarded during Covid. During this time, disaster struck with a confirmed Covid case at the centre resulting with all youth entering hotel isolation and quarantine. ASL worked with this facility to bring yoga classes via zoom to 7 teenagers to help them through the long days in quarantine. ASL branched out to a drug and alcohol facility in Wollongong where we have been successfully running weekly yoga classes.

New Facilities:

- Sydney Children's Hospital
- Taldumande - Youth crisis accommodation
- Kedesh Wollongong
- Cancer support Centre
- Down Syndrome NSW

Next Steps:

Planning and developing a new ASL specialised in-house Yoga Volunteer Training Program, with new modules to support our expansion into different modalities.



“It helped relax me, it was also very soothing” - Yoga Participant



Volunteer update.

12 Connect Sessions

5 Training Days

32 New Volunteers

105 Active Volunteers

448 Sessions Held

3,674 People Impacted

A Sound Life's incredible volunteers again gave so much this year in serving people in need, especially during trying and testing times.

We were fortunate to have several veteran volunteers continue to deliver regular programs and help the many we serve. Most sessions were delivered online and building on last years' experience, the process became more efficient and effective.

Some programs were paused due to restrictions around COVID and others had limited participant numbers. This had an impact on overall delivery, however our commitment to showing up week after week, and the special connections made were deeply appreciated.

There have been many beautiful relationships formed between the volunteers and facilities over the year and the feedback has been wonderful.

ASL's volunteers accessed between 2 to 3 training sessions during their time with ASL, which contributed to building on their existing skills and knowledge.

“ASL has made me a very happy and much more grateful person, I believe. I feel more open to making connections with new people... I leave every session with boundless joy and endorphins running through my body!” - Volunteer



Sound Mentoring update.

"Our youth should also be educated with music and physical education" Aristotle

Overview:

This year A Sound Life was proud to bring onboard the Sound Mentoring program - a unique personal development mentoring program that connects professional musicians with young people at risk, mentoring them to achieve their artistic and human potential. The program was launched at Auburn Youth Centre and Collarenebri Central High School, in rural North Western NSW. Sound mentoring offers mentees the opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities, pathways for future employment, Improves confidence and positive social connections. These protective factors combine to help prevent alcohol and other drug harms, reduce youth crime and improve youth mental health.

Results:

20 new volunteer music mentors were trained in best practices in music mentorship and have gone on to mentor 20 mentees. Approximately 100 mentoring sessions have now taken place with positive feedback and results. 5 mentees presented their finished tracks on 2RRR radio

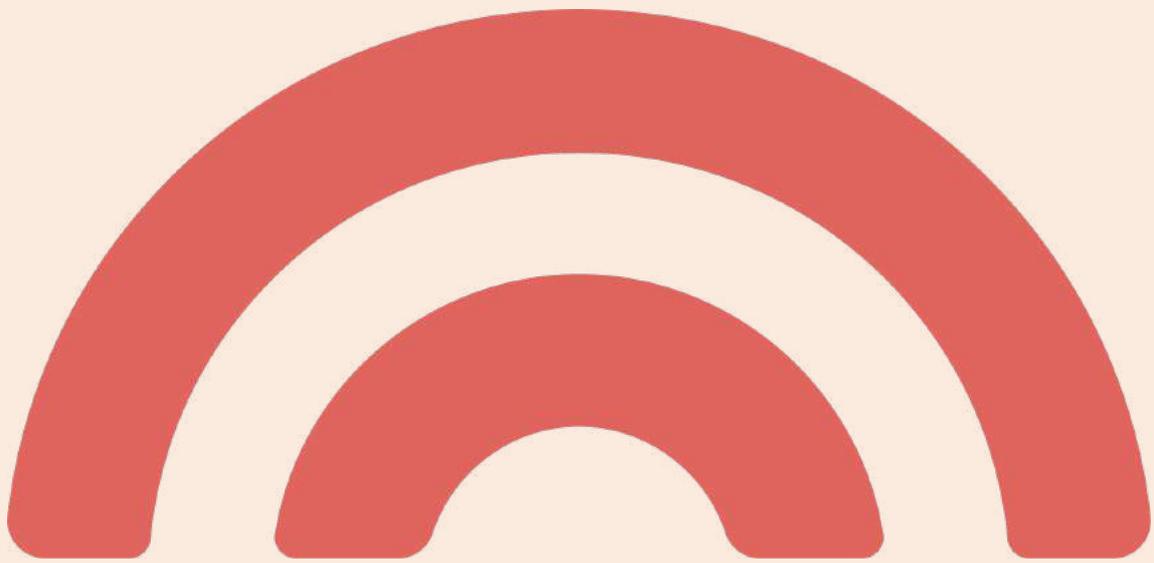
Next Steps:

In 2022, we are seeking funding to continue running mentoring programs for our two existing centres as well as expanding the program to a further 3 new centres over a two-year period. Further, our aim is to improve program efficiency, efficacy and scalability as we continue to refine program processes as well as build provide powerful case studies to share the incredible stories of the young people who have had transformative life experiences through this program.



“As our session progressed, his mood lifted as we planned a rough plan of attack to get his single out by the end of the year. Throughout the session, he was incredibly thankful to have someone to work through his vision and said that the session had made his week. He said he felt energised and was keen to get into the studio as soon as he could”. - Mentor





Our Projects

2021 was the year of change.

Even during the limitations of the year, ASL was still able to extend our reach and be of service. We are so grateful for this opportunity to reinvigorate our brand, implement new systems and new processes, all which allow us to help and support even more people.



ASL rebrand.

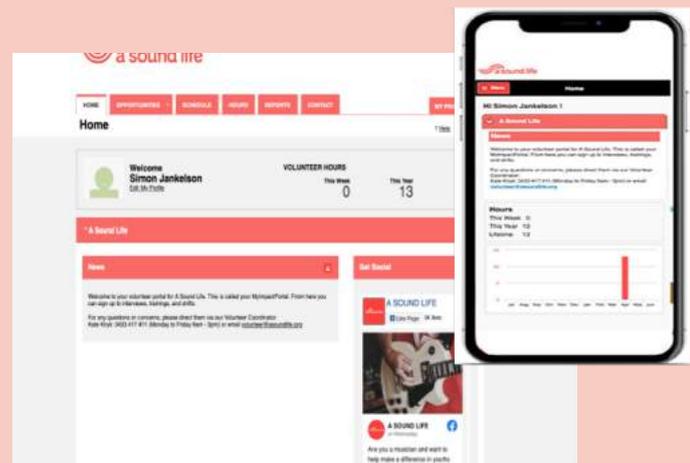
ASL worked with the branding agency Toben to reinvigorate the ASL brand and messaging.

-A Sound Life Charity is focussed on providing stress relief. Our purpose is to empower people in need, to become more resilient.

Service redesign.

Redesigning our Volunteer Service via Better Impact.

- Improved volunteer engagement
- Simplified digital onboarding experience
- 380% increase in Volunteer engagement



Website rebuild.

Bringing the ASL brand to life with a brand-new website, geared towards donations and consumer advocacy.



SROI reporting - by KPMG.

For every dollar spent on ASL's Yoga and Music Programs, there is a \$9.65 benefit measured in the community.

ASL's Yoga and Music Programs provide our participants and volunteers with a 965% social return on investment (with an estimated \$8.5 million of benefit being generated from an overall spend of \$0.875 million).



On average, each participant in ASL's programs received **\$436** in benefits programs. With a total of **\$6.4 million** in benefits for program participants.



Achieved a **\$9.65** social return on investment for every **\$1** invested into ASL programs.



Delivered yoga and music programs to over **3,700** people who had never experienced live music or yoga before.



88 percent of participants found ASL's programs to be beneficial - either **extremely beneficial (32 percent)**, **very beneficial (37 percent)** or **somewhat beneficial (19 percent)**



Participant loneliness decreased by **33 percent** following ASL's programs



The percentage of participants who were experiencing pain decreased by **9 percent** following participation in the program.



Prior to participating in ASL's programs, **76 percent** of participants were at risk of requiring mental health treatment. Following the sessions this reduced to **33 percent**.



Anxiousness and sadness was reduced in Music and Yoga participants. The percentage of participants requiring mental health treatment following the program reduced by **43 percent**.



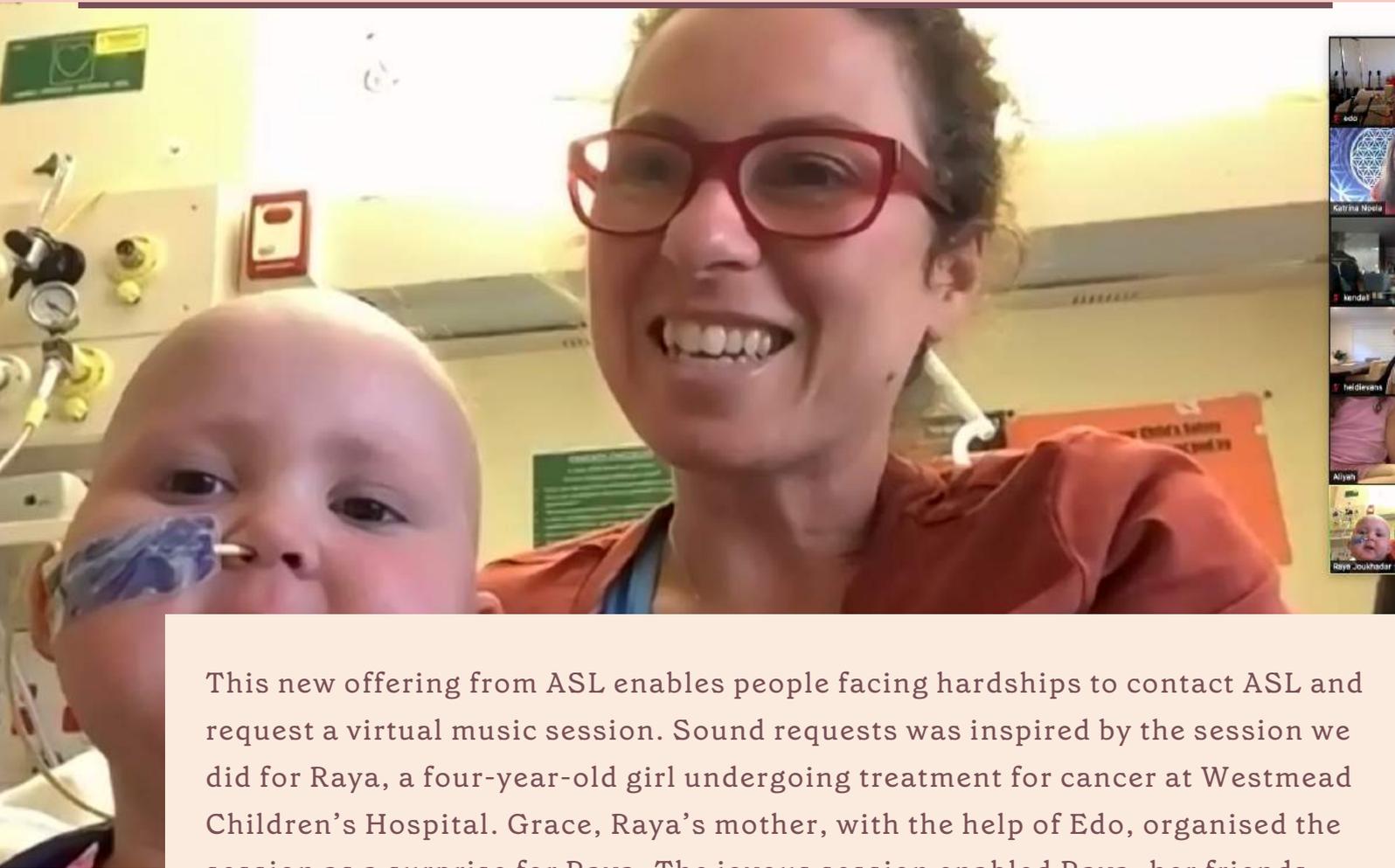
ASL's volunteers accessed between **2 to 3** training sessions during their time with ASL, with an estimated benefit of **\$182 thousand**.



The **244** volunteers who participated in at least one ASL session received approximately **\$1.9 million** in benefits from the activity of volunteering.



New Services - Sound Requests.



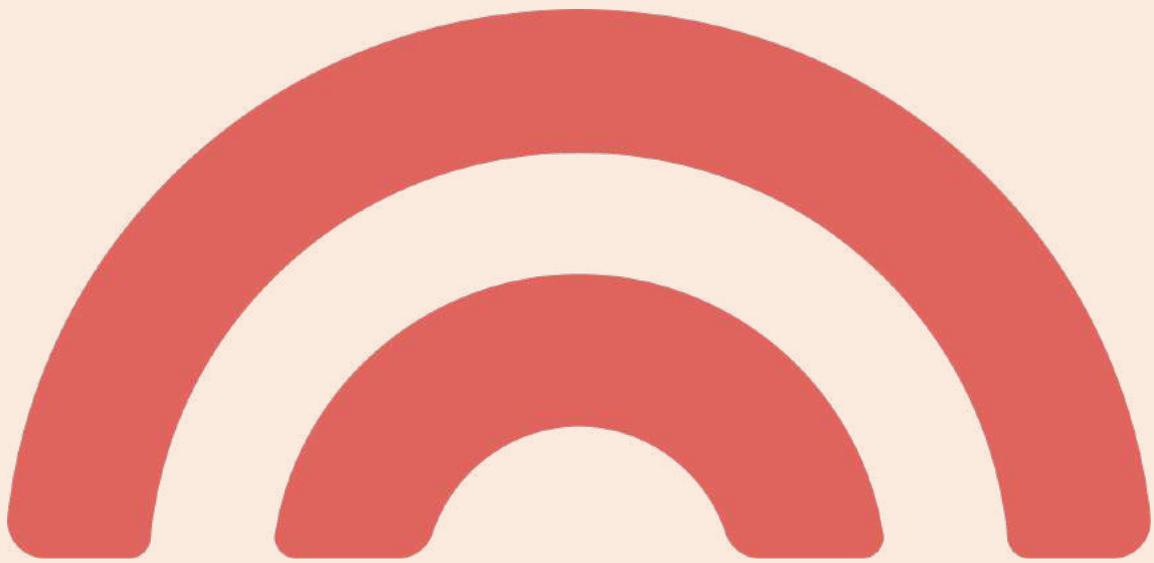
This new offering from ASL enables people facing hardships to contact ASL and request a virtual music session. Sound requests was inspired by the session we did for Raya, a four-year-old girl undergoing treatment for cancer at Westmead Children's Hospital. Grace, Raya's mother, with the help of Edo, organised the session as a surprise for Raya. The joyous session enabled Raya, her friends and family to all connect in song as Katrina, our ASL volunteer performed Raya's favourite music.

The restrictions in healthcare facilities due to Covid-19 have meant that people undergoing health challenges are feeling even more isolated. Throughout the pandemic, only one family member has been able to visit a patient at any one time. At the height of Covid-19 restrictions, this meant that the patients in Children's hospitals were unable to have siblings or any extended family visit them during their stay.

ASL has created this program to make it easy for people to directly request a session, with their preferred music style. This enables ASL to match the participants with the most appropriate volunteer musician and fulfil requests to spread joy and help people cope with adversity.

This offering will help minimise the onboarding process for new facilities and allow people anywhere in the world, to engage with ASL and receive our services.





Our Family

Our core team.



CO-FOUNDER & CREATIVE
DIRECTOR

Edo Kahn



CEO

Natasha Curry



MUSIC PROGRAM MANAGER

Simon Jankelson



VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Kate Kiryk



YOGA PROGRAM MANAGER

Rachael Moore



YOGA PROGRAM MANAGER

Catriona Byrne



HEAD OF MARKETING

Siobhan Hodgson



SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Malinda Hayward



Our board.



CO-FOUNDER & CREATIVE
DIRECTOR

Edo Kahn



CEO

Natasha Curry



FOUNDER YML GROUP

Yoav Mark Lewis



ECPAM DIRECTOR

Jared Pohl



STRATEGIC BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT LEAD AT APPLE

Jemma Parsons



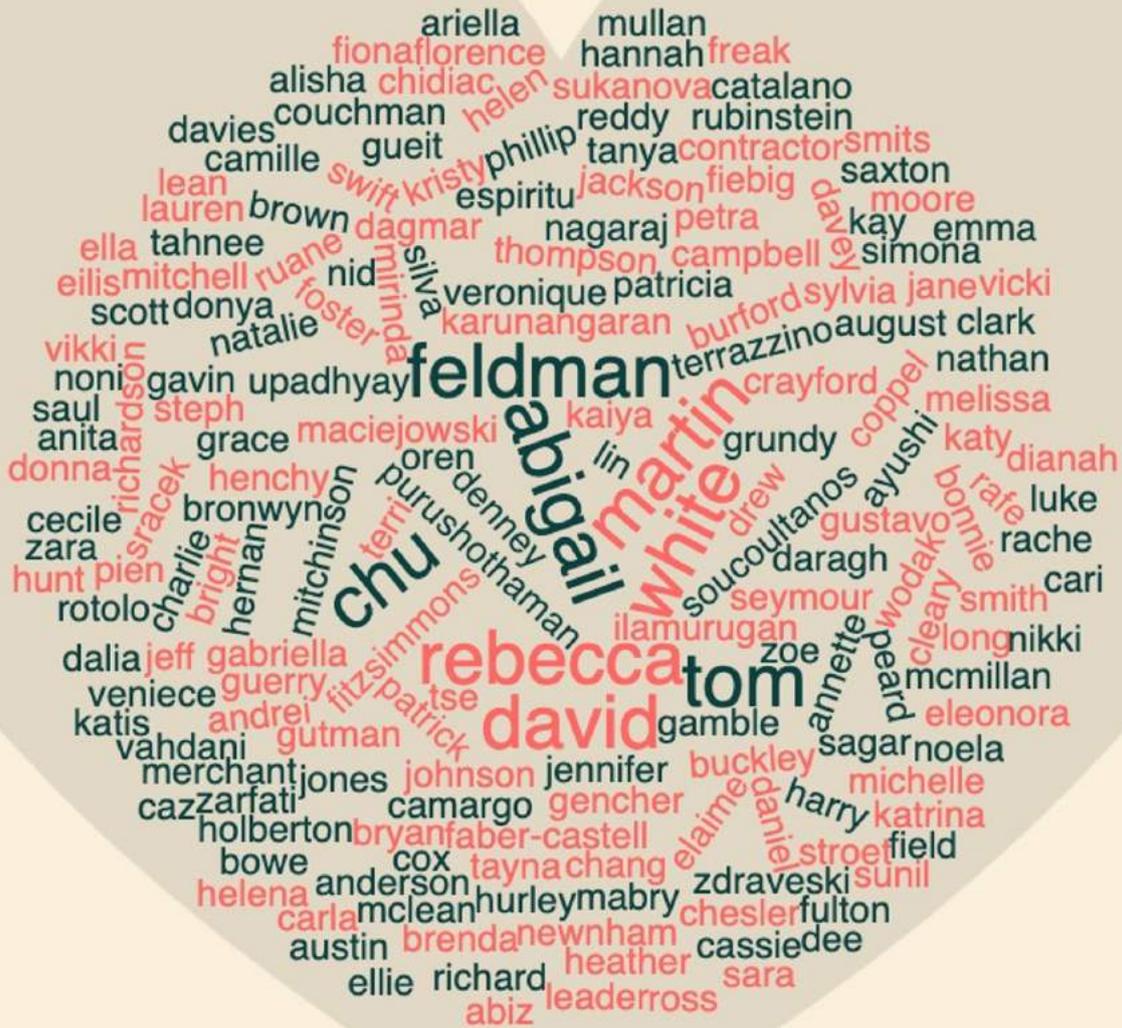
BOARD MEMBER

Will Halliday



Our volunteers.

Our Volunteers are the heart and soul of A Sound Life. Day after day, they show up and selflessly to give a piece of themselves to others. Words cannot describe how grateful we are for their contribution.



Testimonials - from our Volunteers.

volunteer
asoundlife.org
*Sharing the healing power
of music and yoga*

It's not just our participants who benefit from a session, our volunteers also have their lives changed for the better.

“Quite simply, they loved it.”

“The participants are so focused and dedicated to this practice.”

“The girls are loving the breathwork and meditation.”

“It just feels so good.”

“It is the highlight of my week.”

“It is such a great feeling to see them enjoying themselves.”

“We wrote a poem and a song together.”

“It was absolutely beautiful.”

“We supported one lady as she prepared for her 9th round of chemo.”

“Both participants absolutely loved it as they said they were struggling during lockdown.”

“I watched as her breath and body seemed to settle.”

“The Grandma filmed me and said she'd make me famous!”

“Apparently there was a standing ovation.”

“Mum loved it and cried during ‘Ave Maria’.”

“She said, ‘I just feel so relaxed, thank you’.”

“One participant smiled and said ‘see you next time doll’.”

“They are such a bunch of amazing women.”

“They all managed to settle themselves by focusing on their breathwork that some fell asleep.”

“They just loved the music.”

“These sessions mean everything to me.”

“It's better than therapy.”

“He just smiled and kept saying ‘thank you’.”



Our key funders & supporters.

Without our funders & supporters we wouldn't be here. You have all believed in us and supported us to become this incredible offering that touches and changes thousands of lives. We cannot thank you enough.



Toben

Designit®



Alberts



On behalf of all of us at A Sound Life and all the special people we serve, we thank you.



Marks story.

In 2021, ASL commenced a new program called 'Sound Connections' for patients in palliative care. During the daunting and often painful process of dying, music and human connection can offer solace, joy, emotional release, connection and peace. This program is designed to be a nurturing support for people on their end of life journey.

ASL started sessions via telehealth between Edo and one of St Vincent's Hospital patient Mark in palliative care. Mark, who was formerly in a band as a drummer instantly connected with Edo on a personal level and also through music. The connection between the two was something that Hussen, the Diversional Therapist at the hospital hadn't witnessed before. "At times throughout sessions it was almost as if Edo and Mark were destined to cross paths. Edo would strum, Mark would bang out a beat and the two would sing along together. The sessions were full of reminiscence, lots of laughter, sometimes tears and always gratitude" St Vincent's Hospital.

On a couple of occasions Edo cleared his own personal schedule in order to play for Mark in our scheduled time slots. These acts of selflessness are a reflection of the great work that ASL do. Today was likely to be the last session that Edo would play for Mark due to a deterioration in his condition. Edo played some of Mark's favourites, even with Mark mostly being unresponsive he managed to show through his body language that he could hear the music. Edo finished with some touching words before the session was wrapped up. I have nothing but praise for Edo, his kind-heartedness, gentle nature and compassion are all characteristics that tie in with our values at SVH. It's really hard to sum up in a brief paragraph what exactly went on in the sessions between Edo and Mark, in my opinion it goes beyond words, words wouldn't do justice, it's something that one could only really understand and appreciate by being physically present. Music is such a powerful tool". - Hussen Hijazi, Diversional Therapist, St Vincent's Hospital.





THANK YOU

SEE YOU IN 2022



A SOUND LIFE

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