



# SensesWA

Your trusted partner in disability



Image Description [ID]: Hand touching a colourful, flower mosaic artwork in a garden.

**130**  
1895 - 2025  
**YEARS**

# Annual Report

2024 - 2025



# Board Chair's Message



**I am honoured to present this year's report for SensesWA, in my first year as Board Chair. This has been a year of both celebration and reflection as we commemorated another milestone in our history of service to Western Australians, navigated ongoing sector challenges and launched our new strategic plan.**

In 2025, SensesWA proudly reached 130 years of unwavering commitment to supporting people with disability across Western Australia. From our humble beginnings in 1895, we have grown and evolved, always remaining true to our purpose: to deliver maximum community impact by enabling enduring quality of life. Our history is testament to the dedication of our employees, volunteers, supporters, and, most importantly of all, to the people we serve. Together, we have built a community where everyone is valued and can participate fully.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) continues to transform the landscape of disability services in Australia. While the NDIS has unlocked greater choice and control for participants, it has also presented significant challenges for service providers such as SensesWA. The complexities of funding arrangements, administrative requirements and changes to pricing structures have required us to adapt rapidly. We have worked tirelessly to ensure continuity and quality of services for our clients, advocating for their needs and supporting them through the evolving system.

Despite these hurdles, SensesWA remains committed to continuous improvement, innovation and excellence.

We have invested in learning and development for our people, along with improvements in technology and process to optimise our operations.

Our team, led by our CEO Duncan Guy, continues to engage with government, sector partners, and the broader community to help shape a more responsive and sustainable NDIS for all Australians living with disability.

This year we launched our strategic plan for 2026-2029, establishing a clear direction for SensesWA over the next four years. The plan reaffirms our overarching purpose and sets clear priorities across four key pillars:

- Engaged employees driving strategic outcomes
- Lead the way in Deafblind services
- Grow our community impact
- Achieve financial sustainability

While this plan provides a framework for service delivery and ongoing improvement, we are mindful that the path ahead will require flexibility and ongoing adaptation as we respond to sector changes and emerging challenges.

# BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

**I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank my fellow Board members, who have provided unwavering support and a shared commitment to our purpose throughout the year.**

Their dedication, professionalism and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in guiding SensesWA through a period of significant change and achievement. I am grateful for their ongoing contributions and look forward to continuing our important work together in the coming year.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our CEO, Duncan Guy, the executive leadership team, and the entire team at SensesWA. Their dedication, expertise and response to change have been fundamental to our achievements this year. It is through their commitment and hard work that we continue to deliver exceptional services and drive meaningful change in the lives of people with disability across Western Australia.

As we celebrate our proud history and navigate the current environment, we remain inspired by the resilience and achievements of our clients, families, and employees. Together, we are building on a legacy of inclusion and support, ready to embrace the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our entire SensesWA community for your trust, passion, and partnership.

**Julie Keene**  
Board Chair  
SensesWA

# CEO's Message



**This year has been one of celebration and progress for SensesWA. It is a privilege to lead an organisation with a proud 130-year history of supporting Western Australians with disability. SensesWA continues to stand tall as a trusted and compassionate provider, delivering high-quality services that make a real difference in people's lives.**

Transformation remained a key focus in 2024-2025, with major milestones achieved through the rollout of our new Customer Relationship Management and Human Resources Information systems. These investments are strengthening our foundations and improving integration across the organisation.

We have also seen leadership renewal with the appointment of new executives across Operations, Finance, Human Resources and Transformation. I acknowledge the valuable contribution of our former Chief Operating Officer, Emma Davidson, and wish her every success in the future.

Our commitment to quality and governance remains strong. SensesWA achieved seamless reaccreditation with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, reinforcing our confidence in the strength of our systems and the quality of our services.

Supporting people who are Deafblind continues to be central to our purpose. This year saw further growth in specialist services and national advocacy, including SensesWA's contribution to the "ICF Core Sets for Deafblindness", a World Health Organization (WHO) initiative that defines how Deafblindness is described and addressed globally.

The broader disability sector remains challenging, but we are focused on building a robust and sustainable future. I extend sincere thanks to our partners, donors and bequestors for their continued generosity and support.

Finally, my gratitude to our Board Chair, Julie Keene, the Board and every member of the SensesWA team. Your dedication and belief in our purpose make all the difference. As I complete my second year as CEO, I am proud of all we've achieved and confident about the opportunities ahead.

**Duncan Guy**  
Chief Executive Officer  
SensesWA

# 130 years proudly supporting Western Australians living with sensory loss and disability

**This year marks a remarkable milestone in our history: 130 years of service, innovation and advocacy for people with sensory loss in Western Australia.**

From humble beginnings in 1895 as The West Australian Home Teaching Society for the Blind, to becoming The Royal West Australian Institute for the Blind, then Senses Foundation, Senses Australia and now SensesWA, our story is one of resilience, community spirit and enduring commitment to inclusion.

Across the decades, we have evolved in step with the changing needs of the people we support. What began as a small volunteer-driven effort to provide education and independence for people who were blind has grown into a leading not-for-profit organisation providing a full range of disability and therapy services across Western Australia.

Today, SensesWA is proudly recognised as a national leader in Deafblind services, while continuing to deliver essential supports to thousands of individuals and families living with disability.

Our 130-year journey reflects the strength of the Western Australian community; of donors, volunteers, staff and advocates who have shared in our purpose. Each chapter has been shaped by those who believed that every person deserves the opportunity to explore their world and reach their potential, regardless of sensory or physical barriers.

As we celebrate our 130-year milestone, we honour our history and look forward with optimism. The spirit that defined our beginnings – compassion, innovation and inclusion – continues to guide us as we prepare for our next chapter of growth and impact. With gratitude for those who built our foundation and pride in those who carry it forward, we reaffirm our purpose: **To deliver maximum community impact by enabling enduring quality of life.**

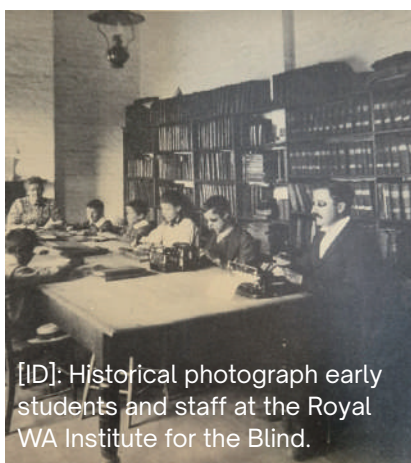
Image Description [ID]: Historical photograph of the Royal W.A Institute for the Blind.





# Celebrating 130 years

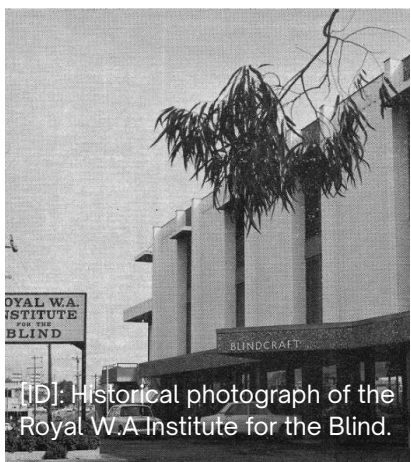
For 130 years, SensesWA has proudly supported Western Australians living with/who have sensory loss and disability, building inclusion, independence and connection across the generations so they can explore a world of opportunity. Together, we celebrate the people, partnerships and purpose that have shaped our story and continue to inspire our future.



[ID]: Historical photograph early students and staff at the Royal WA Institute for the Blind.



[ID]: Historical photograph workshop training at the Royal WA Institute for the Blind.



[ID]: Historical photograph of the Royal W.A. Institute for the Blind.

## 1895

Originally known as The Western Australian Home Teaching Society for the Blind, its charter was to provide education and employment to Blind citizens. Photographed is the school room and library.

## 1897 - 2001

The Royal West Australian Institute for the Blind was founded in **1897** as the Victoria Institute and Industrial School for the Blind to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Opened in **1900**, it was WA's only purpose-built centre for the Blind, offering training and furniture production.

Redeveloped in **1937** in the Inter-War Stripped Classical style, it supported blinded servicemen, produced goods for WWII and hosted Helen Keller in **1948**, inspiring education reforms. Granted a Royal Charter in **1967**, it became the Royal W.A. Institute for the Blind.

Its retail arm, Cane City, operated until 1989. In 2001, the Royal Institute for the Blind merged with W.A. Deafblind Association to form the Senses Foundation, supporting people who are Blind, Deafblind or Multisensory impaired.

After closing in 2004, the site was restored as the home of the West Australian Ballet, a heritage landmark and creative hub.

## 2013

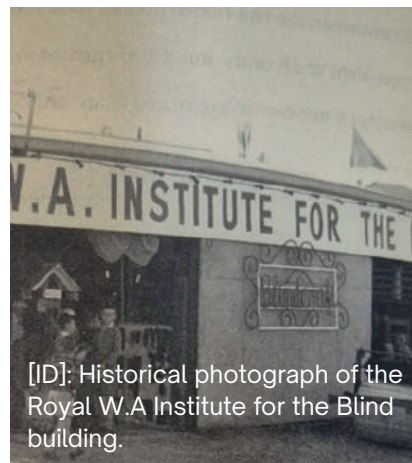
On July 1, 2013, Senses Foundation became Senses Australia, a national not-for-profit offering disability services across Australia.

## 2021

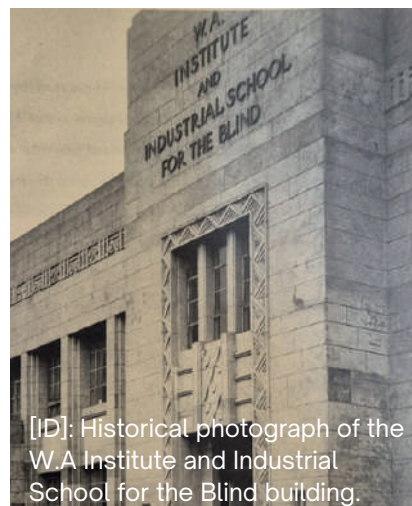
Senses Australia rebranded as SensesWA in September 2021, to reflect its broader support for Australians with disabilities.

## 2024

The Lionel Miller Centre opened, providing integrated services that support customers and the wider community.



[ID]: Historical photograph of the Royal W.A. Institute for the Blind building.



[ID]: Historical photograph of the W.A. Institute and Industrial School for the Blind building.



[ID]: SensesWA's Lionel Miller Centre today.

# Our Purpose

Our organisational purpose is to deliver maximum community impact by enabling enduring quality of life.

SensesWA is a leading not for profit organisation with 130 years of excellence in disability services. We help children and adults with various disabilities achieve their full potential. Our team are integral to what we do and are highly skilled in delivering Allied Health Services, Positive Behaviour Support, Deafblind Services, and Homes and Living Services.

## Our Values

To empower individuals to realise lives filled with possibilities.



### Authentic

In our relationships, honest in our conduct



### Inclusive

In how we listen, collaborate, value choice, embrace diversity and break down barriers to opportunity



### Courageous

In speaking up; in being determined in facing challenges



### Curious

In our search for the best, we explore with fresh thinking and a human touch

Image Description [ID]: The SensesWA Executive Team (Mitchell Johnston, Sarah Van Gent, Ophelia Reid and Duncan Guy) standing in the SensesWA office.



# Services Delivered

Our team of professionals provide services that promote health, independence and wellbeing for all stages of life, from early childhood to adulthood, working in partnership with customers, their families and the people who support them in their daily lives.

- Community Access Services
- Deafblind Consultancy Services, also incorporating Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Low Vision, Blind and Dual Sensory Loss
- Dietetics
- Early Childhood Intervention
- Occupational Therapy
- Orientation and Mobility
- Orthoptics
- Positive Behaviour Support
- Physiotherapy
- Social Work
- Speech Pathology
- Supported Independent Living

“

I have worked for SensesWA for 2 years now as a Physiotherapist. I feel blessed and very fortunate to work in a workplace that treasures their employees and looks out for them on an individual basis. Over the last two years I have gained the opportunity to grow in my craft while also working in an environment with other like-minded therapists providing optimal holistic care to our amazing clients

**Matt Loh, Physiotherapist**

Image Description [ID]: A male SensesWA employee blowing bubbles outside for two children to enjoy.



# Year in Review

## Telethon New Buds Program

In 2025, SensesWA was honoured to again be a major Telethon beneficiary for the New Buds Program, a vital initiative helping children aged 0-11 years across Western Australia who have, or who are at risk of, a vision and/or hearing impairment.

The program provides early childhood intervention and allied health therapy services tailored to each child's developmental needs and goals. Families who are not already eligible for other government funded services, such as the NDIS, are welcomed into this program.

Our multidisciplinary team delivers a range of services including Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Physiotherapy, Positive Behaviour Support, Orthoptics, Orientation and Mobility, Social Work and Education.

These services are provided in the home, early learning settings, schools and via Telehealth for children living across Western Australia.

The Telethon New Buds Program reflects SensesWA's enduring commitment to enabling children with sensory loss to be supported as early on their journey as possible, helping them reach their full potential. The program is made possible through the generosity of Telethon, and the Western Australian community.

A notable thanks also to the joint collaboration and support from Perth Children's Hospital, Kiind (formerly Kalparrin), and Department of Communities – Communities Inclusion Connection Team.

Image Description [ID]: A female SensesWA employee educating a young girl on iPad.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

## Communication Guide Training

Thanks to the continued generosity of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, our Communication Guide Training workshops continued throughout 2024-2025. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive, with a shared greater understanding of the communication and access issues experienced by those living with a degree of vision and/or hearing impairment, and the learning of a range of practical strategies we can enact to support them. Our customers and their interpreters also joined the training sessions to share their story and enrich the learning experience.

Our Communication Guide Training is useful for anyone supporting the sensory loss community, including support workers, allied health therapists and students, Auslan interpreters and interpreters in training, workplaces, family members, educators and interested community members. Enrolments and expressions of interest for 2025-2026 are open here: [senseswa.com.au/communication-guide-training](https://senseswa.com.au/communication-guide-training).

“ —

The practical exercises helped my senses of awareness and I enjoyed that. The knowledge was empowering.

“ —

This will be especially helpful to relay this information to the staff that connect with our deafblind clients.

“ —

I learnt a lot about Deafblind. I feel like I have a greater understanding. I really liked the hands on activities. I really liked the guest speakers. Well structured course.

“ —

Thank you so much to the trainers. I learnt so much. I can definitely apply this information practically.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

## Deafblind Information Australia (DBIA) Project

In 2024-2025, we continued as Consortium Lead for the delivery of the Deafblind Information Australia (DBIA) Project, partnering with Deafblind Australia and Able Australia, funded by a competitively won National Disability Insurance Agency Information Linkages and Capacity Building Grant. The project delivered Deafblind education and training across all states and major territories of Australia, the incredible “Ask a Deafblind Consultant” service, and the in-depth information repository at [www.deafblindinformation.org.au](http://www.deafblindinformation.org.au)

## Upgrading Our Systems

In October 2024, we successfully launched Maica, our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform built on Salesforce. This milestone represents a significant step in our digital transformation journey, enabling more streamlined processes, improved data visibility, and enhanced coordination of customer and service delivery outcomes. Building on this success, in February 2025 we implemented Employment Hero (EH) as our new Human Resources Information System (HRIS), providing greater integration across people, payroll, and workforce management. Together, these systems are strengthening our organisational capability, improving efficiency, and ensuring we remain agile and responsive in an evolving NDIS environment.

Image Description [ID]: A female SensesWA employee working with female client reading.



Image Description [ID]: The SensesWA Deafblind Services Team (Melanie Robertson, Theresa Kirwan, Paul Garwood, Rachel Williams and Rayan Hijazi) standing outside on a sunny day.



# Our People

Our people are at the heart of everything we do. Their passion, skill and commitment bring our vision to life every day — empowering individuals to realise lives filled with possibilities.

Across every role, from front-line support workers to specialist practitioners and corporate teams, our people drive the building of trusted relationships with the individuals and families we support, and they ensure our services reflect dignity, respect and choice.

We know that our success as an organisation depends on the wellbeing and growth of our people. It's why we invest continually in making our workplace a safe, inclusive and supportive workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered to make a difference.

In 2024-2025, we were proud to achieve several “people” milestones, including:

- Successful completion of our full cycle NDIS Certification Audit — a significant milestone that confirms our ongoing commitment to quality.
- The expansion of our leadership development program to include a broader cohort of leaders within our organisation, building the next generation of leaders.
- Establishment of a performance review process that links directly with our values and strategic plan, and allows each employee to understand their role in driving strategic outcomes.



**319**

Employees



**496**

Leadership  
Development Hours



**616.5**

External Training  
Hours



**32%**

Employees who  
have worked with us  
for 4+ years



# Highlights

## WA Disability Support Awards

In May 2025, we were recognised at the WA Disability Support Awards for excellence in disability support work. It is fantastic to celebrate the achievements of those who demonstrate excellence, passion, vision and commitment in supporting people with disability.

## SensesWA Strategic Plan

In 2025, we launched our new FY26 to F29 strategic plan. This anchors the next phase of our evolution to lead the way in Deafblind services while growing our community impact through financially sustainable, purpose-driven work. We are proud to carry on an incredible, 130-year legacy of support to the WA community.

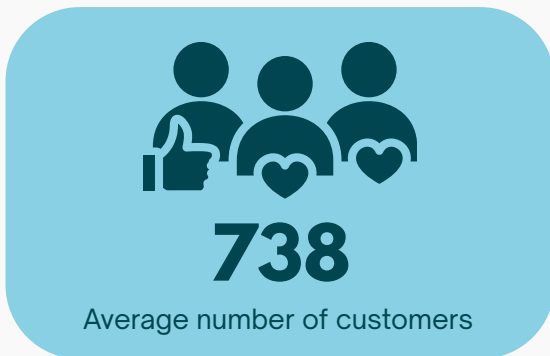
Image Description [ID]: Two SensesWA female employees interacting and smiling at each other.



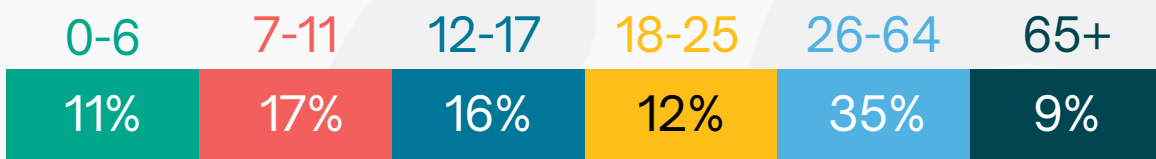
# Our Customers

We continue to work in close partnership with our customers, their families and networks to support each person in achieving their individual goals.

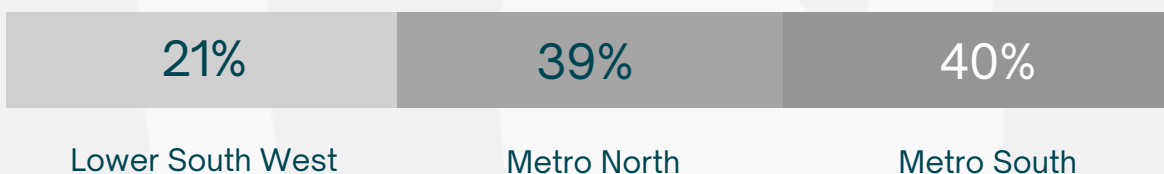
In 2024-2025, we continued to seek feedback through our everyday interactions, conversations and service reviews.



## Age group



## Geographic location





# Our Partners and Donors

**With support from a range of generous partners, SensesWA continues to provide high-quality disability services to the community.**

We thank the following organisations for their support throughout the year:

- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Department of Communities
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Deafblind West Australians (DBWA)
- Stan Perron Charitable Foundation
- Telethon

We also thank our key partners and networks for the ongoing support they give our customers including:

- Able Australia
- Deafblind Australia
- Deafblind International
- Vision Australia

# Our Leadership Team

## Our Board of Directors

Our Board is responsible for SensesWA's overall performance, working closely with the Executive Team to guide our strategic direction and provide leadership.



**Julie Keene**  
Board Chair



**Chris Yates**  
Board Deputy Chair



**Dr Paul Bailey**  
Board Member



**Carla Chatzopoulos**  
Board Member



**Lawson Dixon**  
Board Member



**Anthony Sciorilli**  
Board Member



**Laura Bengier**  
Board Member



**Julie McKay-Warner**  
Board Member



# OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

## Our Executive Team

Our Executive Team provides strong leadership and dedicated support to our Board of Directors in executing our strategic vision.



**Duncan Guy**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Mitchell Johnston**  
Chief People and  
Transformation Officer



**Ophelia Reid**  
Chief Operating Officer



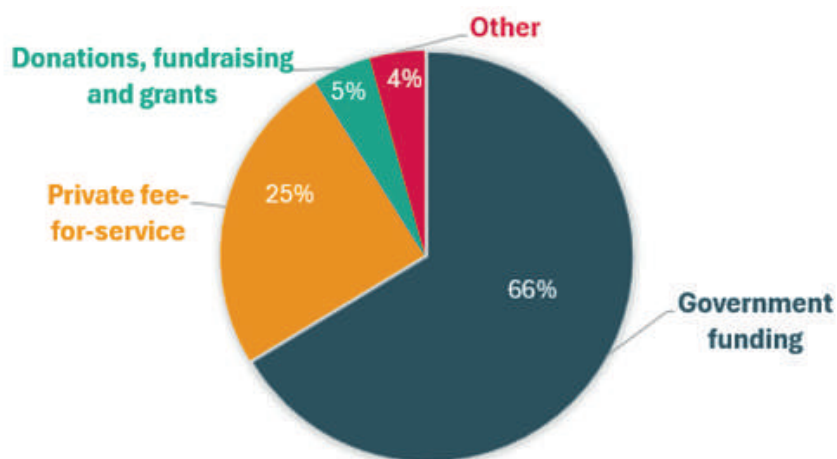
**Sarah Van Gent**  
Chief Financial Officer &  
Company Secretary

# Financial Summary

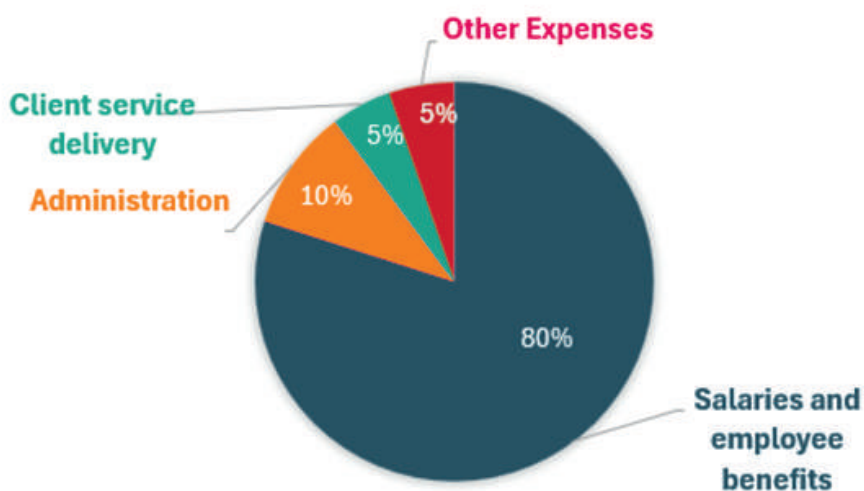
## Financial Performance

For the year ending 30 June 2025, we recognised a loss of \$1.56 million.

Our total income recognised was \$29.88 million, including NDIS funding and other government grants of \$19.75 million.



Our total expenses were \$31.21 million, with our major costs related to staff, insurance and property.



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Financial Position

At 30 June 2025 our net assets were \$8.06 million.

Assets	\$'000	Liabilities	\$'000
Cash	2,185	Trade and other payables	4,490
Trade and other receivables	2,290	Contract liabilities	382
Other current assets	343	Lease liabilities	619
Financial assets	5,451	Provisions	3,314
PPE and lease assets	4,779		
Intangible assets	1,814		
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>16,862</b>	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>8,805</b>

The audited financial statements are available on our website or on request.





**SensesWA**

**1300 111 881**

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

**@SensesWA**