

IMPACT
STRATEGY



2025 – 2030

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

ACON acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands we operate on across Australia and their continuing connection to lands, waters, skies and communities.

ACON pays respect to Elders past and present, and we acknowledge Brotherboys, Sistergirls, trans mob and First Nations LGBTQ+ people for their support and guidance in our work. We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their experiences, cultures, languages and practices, and the importance of their contributions to the places where we live, work, and play.

Always was, always will be,
Aboriginal land.



ACON gratefully acknowledges the support of its primary funder, NSW Health.

FOREWORD

Celebrating 40 years of ensuring the voices of our communities are heard, and their health needs are represented in our work.

ACON was formed by gay men in 1985 to make an impact on the HIV crisis through education, care and action. Over the past 40 years, we have grown to address more of the health and social priorities of our communities. Today, ACON is a respected, community-controlled health organisation supporting all people living with HIV, as well as people of diverse sexualities and genders. We deliver high-quality health campaigns, provide trusted direct services, and build strong, connected communities. Employers and other organisations turn to us for support to become more inclusive, and governments rely on our advice to create the greatest impact for our communities.

ACON's Impact Strategy 2025–2030 is the next step in our organisation's story.

This Plan outlines our ambition to create healthier and more connected communities by measuring our impact, scaling effective programs, and improving quality across all areas of our work. Achieving this requires a skilled and engaged workforce, sustainable resources, and contemporary systems and infrastructure.

Five Impact Priorities will guide our work. We will adapt and evolve our HIV programs to respond to a complex epidemic as we strive to achieve virtual elimination of transmission. We aim to continue strong growth in psychosocial health services and expect to scale up high-quality preventive health education and campaigns. We aim to secure dedicated and sustainable resources for community development, and advance our inclusion programs and advocacy, building on past success.

We will continue our role as a trusted advisor to governments and a leader in organisational inclusive practice. We will expand access to prevention tools and testing and screening services.

To support this, we will invest in the development of our people and leadership, upgrade our technology and infrastructure, and grow our financial resources, including fundraised income. We will strengthen our quality frameworks, improve the use of data, and deepen our partnerships with communities and allies.

Together, these efforts will position ACON to lead nationally and grow our influence as a global leader in health, inclusion, and HIV responses for all people in our communities.

None of this is possible without the shared commitment of our staff, volunteers, Board, partners, and the communities we serve. Together, we will develop new ideas, work towards lasting change, and build a future where people of diverse genders and sexualities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, and people living with HIV are supported to live healthy and connected lives.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin Koonin'.

Justin Koonin
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Woodhouse'.

Michael Woodhouse
Chief Executive Officer

ACON IMPACT STRATEGY 2025-2030

OUR VISION

We strive to be a global leader in health, inclusion and HIV responses for all people in our communities

OUR PURPOSE

We create opportunities for people in our communities to live healthier, more connected lives

OUR ENABLERS

Our people

Our infrastructure

Our financial resources

Our performance, quality and impact

Our communities and partners

OUR WAYS OF WORKING

Information and campaigns

Direct peer-led and client services

Peer education and community connection

Testing and screening

Distribution of HIV and STI prevention material

Policy, research, and advocacy

LGBTQ+ inclusion

OUR IMPACTS

Our communities achieve virtual elimination of HIV transmission, and people living with HIV have a high quality of life

The psychosocial health and wellbeing of ACON's peers and clients are improved

The health and wellbeing of our communities are improved through preventive measures

People in our communities build new and meaningful social connections and have a stronger sense of belonging

Our communities can participate in safe, inclusive spaces across Australia

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Over the next five years, ACON will create healthier and more connected communities by focusing on impact measurement, improving quality and increasing the scale of our programs and services.

To succeed, we will need a skilled, engaged workforce, adequate and sustainable resources and contemporary systems and processes.

OUR PURPOSE

We create opportunities for people in our communities to live healthier, more connected lives.

OUR VISION

We strive to be a global leader in health, inclusion and HIV responses for all people in our communities.

OUR COMMUNITIES

We work for people of diverse sexualities, trans and gender diverse people, and people who are living with HIV.

Our beginnings are deeply embedded in NSW, including inner Sydney, Greater Western Sydney, and rural and regional NSW. We deliver some programs and services nationally, often in partnership. Digitally, our work is seen around the world.

We believe that the diverse experiences and backgrounds of people are vital to the strength and wellbeing of our communities. We know that health is influenced by the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, and shape their access to power, money, and resources. These social determinants of health drive the inequities we seek to address.

Our services strive to honour the many intersecting identities and circumstances that shape our communities, be it HIV status, sexuality, gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, age, culture, disability, migration status, job, income or variations of sex characteristics.

OUR VALUES

COMMUNITY

We are made for and by our communities. Lived experience is at the heart of what we do and guides our decision-making.

COLLABORATION

We work meaningfully with, and value the expertise of, our communities, colleagues, partners, and allies.

COMPASSION

We acknowledge the stigma, discrimination and inequality our communities face. We hold these experiences with care and compassion as we conduct our work.

COURAGE

We strive to be courageous in who we are and the ways we work, constantly evolving, and working with integrity to ensure the best possible outcomes for our communities.

EQUITY

We recognise that improving health outcomes requires varying levels of investment to help rectify structural inequities. We strive to work with an intersectional lens to champion the needs of our communities, recognising the systems that compound diverse and overlapping circumstances.



OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

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**Our
communities
achieve virtual
elimination
of HIV
transmission,
and people
living with HIV
have a high
quality of life**

1

Over the next five years, we will adapt and evolve our HIV programs to meet the needs of a complex epidemic.

We will succeed if:

People in our communities at risk of HIV, including priority populations, consistently use at least one HIV prevention method, and test often.

People living with HIV in our communities report a high quality of life and an undetectable viral load.

HIV-related stigma is reduced.

OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

The psychosocial health and wellbeing of ACON's peers and clients are improved

2

Over the next five years, we will sustain the strong growth of our psychosocial services, and enhance the capacity and quality of our mental health services.

We will succeed if:

ACON's peers and clients find our services effective and LGBTQ+ culturally competent.

ACON's peers and clients engage in meaningful recovery and manage their wellbeing over the long term.

ACON's clients facing complex challenges (such as HIV, disability, substance use and minority stress), experience reduced psychological distress and an enhanced quality of life.

ACON's peers and clients experiencing suicidal ideation are equipped to manage their suicidality.

ACON's clients experiencing sexual, domestic and family violence have access to inclusive support and increased pathways to safety.

OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

The health and wellbeing of our communities are improved through preventive measures

3

Over the next five years, we will reach more people in our communities with high-quality preventive health programs.

We will succeed if:

Our communities are empowered to manage their health and wellbeing as they age.

Our communities are willing to take up cancer screening and preventive action more frequently.

Our communities are informed on how to reduce the harms of alcohol and other drugs.

Our communities are confident in managing their sexual and reproductive health.

Our communities are empowered to have healthy relationships.

OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

People in our communities build new and meaningful social connections and have a stronger sense of belonging

4

Over the next five years, we will secure long-term investment for ACON and partners in tailored community development programs.

We will succeed if:

Our communities build meaningful social connections across NSW for people of all ages and genders.

Older people in our communities have access to community connection and support.

Trans and gender diverse people are affirmed in their identities and have access to community connection and support.

LGBTQSB+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to culturally safe and community-controlled spaces where they feel secure in identity and connection.

Culturally and racially marginalised LGBTQ+ people have access to culturally safe, welcoming and empowering spaces.

Women in our communities, both cis and trans, have access to empowering spaces and opportunities for meaningful community connections.

OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

Our communities can participate in safe, inclusive spaces across Australia

5

Over the next five years, we will evolve our inclusion services and maintain our strong voice in community advocacy.

We will succeed if:

Workplaces, health, community and sporting sectors are safer and more inclusive for our communities.

People in our communities feel empowered to protect each other's safety.

Health research includes our communities, is conducted ethically and leads to better outcomes.

Laws, policies and government strategies recognise and protect the rights of our communities.

OUR WAYS OF WORKING

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We have impact by offering services across our ways of working.

Over the next five years, we will:

Leverage strong partnerships to be a leader in delivering LGBTQ+ health promotion **information** and **campaigns**.

Demonstrate quality and consumer focus in our **direct peer-led** and **client services**.

Offer targeted **peer education** and **community connection** programs.

Facilitate easy access to **testing** and **screening**.

Widely **distribute HIV** and **STI prevention material**.

Develop and support trusted, evidence-based **policy, research** and **advocacy**.

Lead in **LGBTQ+ inclusion** through provision of consulting, knowledge and expertise.



OUR ENABLERS

OUR ENABLERS

Our people

1

Confident, supported and capable staff, leaders, and volunteers are essential to the success of our work.

Over the next five years, we will:

Continue to build a diverse workforce that reflects our clients and communities.

Strengthen internal collaboration.

Strengthen leadership capability and pathways.

Use clear capability frameworks to develop our skills.

**OUR
ENABLERS**

**Our
infrastructure**

2

Responsive, secure and accessible digital and physical environments are key to achieving our goals.

Over the next five years, we will:

Modernise our technology to support contemporary services and programs, and impact measurement.

Upgrade our properties to support current ways of working.

**OUR
ENABLERS**

**Our
financial
resources**

3

Sustainable and efficient use of our resources is a prerequisite to our overall success.

Over the next five years, we will:

Significantly grow fundraising revenue.

Strategically secure long-term funding agreements.

OUR ENABLERS

Our performance, quality and impact

4

Our impact depends on ensuring our work is of high quality and is continuously improving.

Over the next five years, we will:

Substantially strengthen our data management and governance to drive data-led decision-making.

Enhance our quality frameworks to drive outcomes and continuous improvement.

Embed reflective practice and performance reporting across our work.

OUR ENABLERS

Our communities and partners

5

Meaningful relationships with our communities and partners drive our success.

Over the next five years, we will:

Improve our ability to design services and programs around the needs and experiences of our communities.

Strengthen our partnerships and foster collaboration.

Ensure that Kaleido Health Centre continues to be a pivotal partner in achieving our shared purpose.

Improve our communication strategies to deepen our connection with community.



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