



Centre for Universal Design Australia Ltd
Annual Report 2022-2023

"Some people think design means how it looks.
But of course, if you dig deeper, it's really how it works."

Steve Jobs, former CEO, Apple

CUDA Universal Design Position Statement

Plain English Version

What do we want?

We want everyone to take a universal design approach to their projects, policies, services and communications. We want everyone to feel included.

What is universal design?

Everything should be designed so that as many people as possible can use it. It means the design is inclusive, healthy and safe for everyone.

Designers have to carefully think about all the different people in our communities when they are designing. Involving lots of different people to help with the design is a good way of getting it right.

Universal design isn't always perfect but it's the best that can be done at the time. It builds on the learning of past designs and improves on future designs.

How did it begin?

Universal design began as barrier-free design in the 1960s. Some wheelchair users wanted the freedom to get out and about like everyone else. They got together and lobbied the government to change things for the better.

They soon realised that designs for wheelchair users are good for everyone – it's universal. That is how the term "universal design" was born.

Today, universal design is about including people from all walks of life, not just people with disability. Universal design is a design thinking process involving users in the design process. It is a way of ensuring that everyone can participate in everyday life.

Other names for universal design

Universal design is known by other names: inclusive design, co-design, human-centred design and user-centred design. It is about designing for all people no matter where they come from or what they do.

What universal design is not

Universal design is not the same thing as access standards. It is not a special design for a few people. It is not "disabled design" or one-size fits all. It is not ugly design.

What does it cover?

All projects, services, policies, websites and communications. It's called taking a universal design approach. It is best done at the beginning of any project when users can be involved in the design process.

Government policies and laws

Each state and territory has policies that include universal design. They also have laws about discrimination. This can be age, disability, gender, race or religion. A universal design approach makes sure designs don't discriminate against anyone.

[Download a copy of this statement](#) from the CUDA website to use as a template or model statement

Background to CUDA

Centre for Universal Design Australia Ltd (CUDA) was founded early 2016 and established itself as a virtual hub and clearinghouse for research and practice in the areas of universal design, inclusion and accessibility across a diverse range of disciplines. In January 2018 CUDA became a registered charity and in 2022 attained Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. Board members and volunteers carry out the activities of CUDA.

Our focus in 2023 was on positioning CUDA for the future. As more people begin to understand the benefits of universal design, we need to stay at the forefront of universal design thinking so that we can continue to be leaders in the field. We are achieving this aim and ventured into paid consulting roles providing advice and guidance on inclusive thinking, planning and implementation.

Report from the Chair

Activities 2022-2023

We are pleased that board member Dr Emily Steel completed her Fulbright Scholarship in the United States this year.

Online Learning

Due to the Open Learning platform changing its business model, other low-cost or free platforms were investigated and trialled. We trialled the WordPress platform which integrates with the CUDA website and launched it again in July 2022. However, this platform did not integrate well. As an interim measure the course was transferred to a standard PowerPoint slide deck. With the professional help of Lizzie Davis, we now have a new platform and a new look. [Introduction to Universal Design](#) was again relaunched in June 2023. We will launch our new course, Livable Housing Design, in the last quarter of 2023.



Papers, conference and workshop presentations by CUDA directors

The list of activities below shows the diverse fields of endeavour we reached this year.

- Paper published in *Societies*. [“Assistive Technology Is a Resource for Building Capabilities, but Is It Just Addressing the Symptoms of Inequality?”](#)

- Presenter and panellist at the Transport Planners and Managers (AITPM) annual conference.
- Presenter at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference
- Two papers presented at the Universal Design Conference 2022 (UD2022) in Italy.
- Prepared and presented an online session for Korea’s Universal Design Seminar.
- Presented a session for second year architecture students on universal design at The University of Sydney.
- Presented a webinar session for UK based organisation Housing LIN, on older people and housing.
- Conducted a workshop for Caroma on ageing and bathroom design using an “age suit”.
- Presented an online session for Injury Matters in Western Australia on safe streets for older people and injury prevention.
- Presented at the Smart Energy Conference on smart transport and inclusion followed by a discussion with NRMA staff members.
- Participated in a podcast for the Institute of Interior Impact based in the Netherlands.
- Presented a webinar session for Engineers Australia on gender inclusive transport.
- Guest lectures for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Colorado, University of New Hampshire, and Georgia Tech.
- Speaker on the M-Enabling Summit panel on Digital Inclusion Strategies for Older Persons



A Caroma staff member wearing electronically operated gloves that mimic the effects of Parkinson's attempts to pour water into cups. A fellow staff member stands nearby. She is controlling the gloves.

Magazine articles

Two articles were published this financial year:

- Sanctuary Magazine titled, [A Plus for Everyone: Universal design and why it should be in your brief](#). Issue 61, page 62.
- [Law Society Journal](#) Masterclass article on universal design and the workplace, published in the March 2023 edition.

Working with others

- We continued to support the Australian Network for Universal Housing Design's ongoing campaign for the implementation of the Livable Housing Design Standard. This standard is now part of the National Construction Code, but some states are yet to adopt it into their regulations.
- Participated in the workshops to expand the Everyone Can Play guide to include water play, adventure play and connection to Country.
- Participated in the scientific committee for the 6th International Conference on Universal Design held in Italy in September 2022.
- Attended a workshop on universal access by Mirvac for their Sydney Harbourside development.

We want universal design to be part of everyday language across society.

Universal design is evolving, and we will continue to lead the work of universal design in the context of the 21st century.

Consulting work

CUDA was approached to consult on three projects this year, which provided additional income:

- Provided expert advice to the Integrated Accessible Transport Network in the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) in the development of Universal Design Guidelines for staff.
- Engaged by PJA to partner with them on two projects. The first to update the Austroads guide for signalised pedestrian crossings, and the second, to update the Austroads guide for pedestrian planning.

Other activities:

Directors participated in various community consultations, committees, roundtables and specialist workshops. This includes responding to media requests.

- Member, Independent Design Advisory Panel (IDAP), Brisbane City Council.
- Member, City of Sydney Inclusion Advisory Panel.
- Member, Queensland Accessible Transport Advisory Council (QATAC).
- Attended the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Legacy Forum
- Nominated expert representing Standards Australia, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Technical Committee 173, Working Group 10 (Cognitive Accessibility).
- Member, Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Association of North America (RESNA) Standards Committee on Cognitive Accessibility.
- Member Port Stephens Council Place and Vision Strategic Planning consultations.

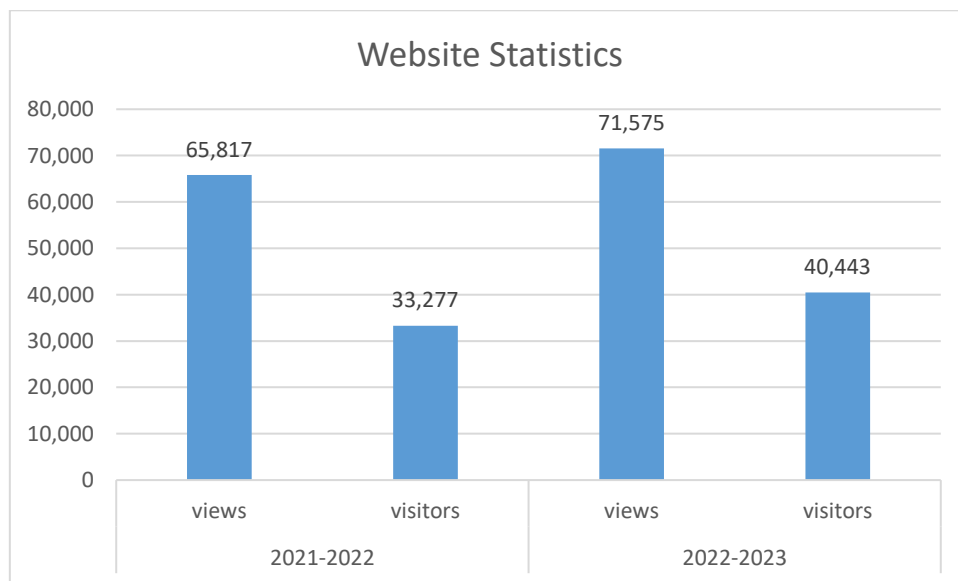
- Board member for the Centre for Aging and Work, Boston College.
- Chair, Gippsland Employment Skills Training.
- Social Ventures Australia, Synergis Specialist Disability Accommodation Fund Advisory Committee
- Co-Chair Age and Ageing Clinical Academic Group (Sydney Partnership for Health, Education, Research and Enterprise)

Website and social media

Website statistics for July 2022 to June 2023

The CUDA website is the core of our operations. It contains more than 1100 articles and research papers on universal design and inclusive practice across all disciplines. The site is regularly groomed for outdated material to keep the content relevant and to maintain search engine optimisation (SEO).

Total number of visitors to the website for the year was 40,443 with 71,575 page views. The graph below shows an upward trend in website visitors and views.



Website statistics showing views and visitors

The weekly newsletter maintained a subscriber base of 550+ throughout the year. The weekly posts were also circulated on social media for additional leverage.

The 7 Principles of Universal Design and the 8 Goals of Universal Design remain our top-ranking posts throughout the year. The post on Differentiated Instruction and UDL was the third most viewed page followed by Guide to gender neutral bathrooms. Searches using Google were the most common means of finding the website.

CUDA's posts have gained further global reach as shown in the world map below. Apart from Australia, the top six countries by ranking were, United States, Canada, United Kingdom, India, New Zealand and Ireland.



Global reach of the website since 2015

Social Media

Weekly newsletter content is posted on Linked In, and to a lesser extent on Facebook and Twitter. The Linked In page has more than 2500 followers, which is a good way of keeping universal design topics top of mind. The most popular posts are usually related to guidelines, our online learning, and conference information.

Membership

The option of the perpetual Lifetime Membership continues to be popular for individuals who want the convenience of signing up once only. All members are eligible to use the CUDA logo on condition that it is used responsibly. And of course, members are entitled to a discount for events.

Looking to the Future

The goodwill of members and social media followers keep universal design and inclusive practice front of mind in the wider world. Thank you for your persistence. Also, my sincere thanks fellow board members for the hard work and continuous dedication throughout the year. My thanks also to the volunteers who work on our committees. Your passion and interest are the lifeblood of the organisation. I look forward to working with you all for yet another productive year.

Dr Jane Bringolf

Board of Directors 2022-2023

CUDA is governed by a board of eight directors who meet monthly to run the affairs of the charity.



Jane Bringolf: BSSc, MBA, PhD, Churchill Fellow (Chair).

Jane has worked in community services for more than thirty years and has a broad understanding of the sector, particularly ageing and disability. A recipient of a Churchill Fellowship in 2004, Jane travelled overseas to investigate organisations pursuing universal design, accessible environments and assistive technology. She later completed a PhD in urban studies focusing on universal design in housing. Jane gained her grounding in universal design as Executive Director with the Independent Living Centre NSW, and she put this knowledge to use as Liveable Communities Project Manager with Council on the Ageing NSW (COTA NSW). She now commits her time to CUDA. Jane attended 10 out of 11 meetings.



Emily Steel BOccThy, MSc(Hons), PhD, Fulbright Scholar (Deputy Chair)

Emily is an Occupational Therapist who has worked as a clinician, manager and researcher in Australia, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Her research has investigated policies and practices for implementing disability rights and providing assistive technology in Europe and Australia. Emily is involved in the drafting of new international standards for cognitive accessibility, promoting universal design strategies to make products and systems easier to understand and use. She was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship for postdoctoral research to be carried out in the USA in 2022-2023. Emily attended 9 out of 11 meetings.



Phillippa Carnemolla: BIndDes, MDes, PhD

Phillippa is Associate Professor and Industrial Designer with extensive experience in design practice, research and education. Phillipa has a Bachelor of Industrial Design and Masters of Design (Research) from University of Technology, Sydney, and a PhD from UNSW, Sydney. Her PhD, completed in 2016, investigated the impact of home modifications on caregiving and health-related quality of life. Phillipa's research interests are focused on human-centred and inclusive design of housing, urban infrastructure and new technologies for older people and people living with disability. Phillipa attended 5 out of 11 meetings.



Phillip Taylor: BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD

Philip has over 30 years of experience as an expert researcher, policy writer and governmental and NGO advisor on workforce ageing and the aged care workforce. His interests include individual orientations to work and retirement, employer behaviour towards older workers, and international developments in public policy aimed at extending working life and the leadership and management of aged care. He holds professorial positions with Federation University Australia and the University of Warwick. Phil attended 9 out of 11 meetings.



Penny Galbraith: FAIB, FRICS, PhD

Penny is a built environment professional with a career long interest in accessibility and universal design. Consultancy roles have covered a range of clients and built environment forms including, Underwater World, State Library of Queensland, Princes Pier, master planning senior living villages, NW Rail Link, and more recently helping the City for Greater Geelong determine 'what accessible looks like'. Strategy, research and futures thinking underpin Penny's work. Penny was granted extended leave from the Board and attended 8 out of 11 meetings.



Sarah Davidson

Sarah has a strong background in education and training, particularly in the community sector, relating to health and ageing. Working for peak bodies she has extensive experience in working with volunteers, leading teams, and peer education. Sarah has worked in senior management roles and business development. She is particularly interested in consumer and stakeholder engagement and capacity building within an education framework. Sarah attended 10 out of 11 meetings.



John Evernden: BSc (Tech) Civil Eng; BAppSc Ecotourism

Over many years John has used his civil engineering background at local government level to help create public domains that consider all aspects of equitable and dignified access for people of all ages, capabilities and backgrounds. His skills also include ecotourism and the sustainability of the natural environment as well as the built environment. John is also an accredited access consultant. John attended 8 out of 11 meetings.



Nikki Jackson: MRICS, BSc (Hons), QM

Nikki is an Accredited Access Consultant, LHA Assessor, NDIS SDA Assessor, Accredited Changing Places Assessor and Chartered Building Surveyor. She has a diverse range of experience relating to compliance across all sectors of the built environment both in the UK and Australia. Some of her more notable project experience includes London Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games Gold Coast and major Australian city transport upgrades. More recently Nikki has been working with the City of Gold Coast Council where she has been responsible for advising on inclusive design strategies to help achieve Gold Coast's aim to create '*a city where everyone's included*'. Nikki attended 11 out of 11 meetings.

Centre for Universal Design Australia Ltd

Income and Expenditure Statement

for year ended 30 June 2023

	2022-2023		2021-2022
INCOME	\$		\$
Bal b/fwd	20,159.84		6,982.07
Membership fees	1,402.69		2,844.32
Donations	3,452.64		2,807.47
Consulting fees	40,708.67		11,418.00
Miscellaneous	440.00		822.00
Education fees	0.00		0.00
Bank Interest	2.90		1.02
TOTAL INCOME	66,166.74		24,878.88
EXPENSES			
Meeting Expenses	216.16		148.94
Web hosting fees	808.45		552.22
E-Learning Fees	231.08		133.00
Travel	0.00		902.90
Membership Fees	108.90		108.90
Contractor fees	13,024.00		1,320.00
ATO GST	845.00		130.00
Insurances	1733.95		1,392.63
Domain Names renewals	113.90		26.45
Misc Expense	2.00		0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	24,942.39		4,715.04
Income less expenses	\$41,224.35		\$20,159.84

Cash at bank as at 30 June 2023 was \$41,224.35.

Total Income was \$46,006.90 and Total Expenditure was \$24,942.39 leaving a net profit of \$21,064.51. Increased income was largely due to consulting work for PJA Holdings projects with Austroads. Increased expenses were for contractor fees for Austroads work and updating and re-publishing the online course.

GST owed by us to ATO is currently \$1,986.00.

Related third-party transactions: Accessible Public Domain (John Evernden) received \$10,524.00 as a contractor for PJA Holdings Austroads project.