

Annual Report 2015



limbs4life

Limbs 4 Life Incorporated

limbs4life.org.au

Supporting Amputees

2015

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Limbs 4 Life delivered many positive outcomes for its members, and the wider Australian amputee and people with limb differences community. In October 2014, **Limbs 4 Life** celebrated its ten year anniversary, allowing us the opportunity to celebrate the considerable work and service we have provided to the Australian amputee community and people with limb difference. Reflecting on this significant milestone enabled us to review what had been achieved over the past decade and focus on planning for the organisation's sustainable growth into the future, and as such in 2015 the Committee reviewed our direction and put in place a 2015 - 2018 Strategic Plan.



The need for **Limbs 4 Life** continues to grow. The number of individuals and families affected by amputation continues to increase; with the main causes being diabetes, vascular disease, cancer, traumatic accidents, infection and congenital birth defects. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) data from 2012/13 revealed that the total number of amputation procedures were 10,235; an increase of 325 on the previous year, equating to an average of 28 amputations per day across Australia. Worryingly, this data indicates that Australia has the second highest rate of diabetic/vascular related amputations in the developed world.

This year saw **Limbs 4 Life** continue to offer support to the Australian amputee community through the provision of a mix of information, peer support and advocacy. During the year we saw a substantial increase in the number of general enquiries, request for peer support visits, dissemination of communication materials and traffic on our website and social media platforms.

Limbs 4 Life continued to publish up-to-date health-literacy materials for use by amputees and healthcare professionals. In addition, we published four editions of the quarterly 'Amplified' magazine which is disseminated to thousands of amputees and healthcare professionals across Australia.

At the beginning of 2015, **Limbs 4 Life** launched a new program which provides specific support to children and young people with congenital or acquired limb differences and their families. The new 'Limbs 4 Kids' program is the first of its kind in Australia and commenced operation in 2015. The program provides comprehensive information

Chair and Chief Executive Office's Foreword

and resources for parents and healthcare professionals caring for children and young people with congenital and acquired limb deficiencies.

While **Limbs 4 Life** continues to research, develop and produce health resources there is still more to be done to improve the physical, psychological and social wellbeing of Australian amputees and their families. It is our role to enable all Australians to understand the impact of limb loss and reduce stigmas that still exist. It is also our goal to work in partnership with healthcare providers to ensure that amputees reduce the chance of further related medical interventions or amputations. Further, we seek to assist amputees to self-advocate for the support, resources and equipment that will facilitate independence and positive wellbeing; skills that will be vital as the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) commences.

Put simply, with assistance from our wonderful partners and the outstanding generosity of volunteers, during the year we were able to continue to fulfil our vision that 'no one goes through the trauma of limb loss alone' via:

- Development of vital health literacy resources for new and existing amputees
- Delivery of critical and timely information to members of the amputee community
- Support of positive long-term health and wellbeing of Australian amputees and their families
- Establishment of a program for parents of children with limb deficiencies and create an all-inclusive community
- Building strong partnerships which solidify the impact of our work.

We would like to thank our Committee of Management members, our staff, our volunteers and supporters. Everyone has played an important role in Limbs 4 Life's achievements over the past twelve months and the organisation looks forward to building on those foundations to have an even greater impact during 2016.

Roberto Colanzi
CHAIRMAN



Melissa Noonan
CEO



Strategy 1 & 2:



Reporting
against our
Strategic Plan

The following overview highlights our strategic objectives and key outcomes achieved between 2014 - 2015.

Update organisational and governance structures

The **Limbs 4 Life** Committee of Management held a Strategic Planning Day during the year, and developed a revised one for the period of 2015 - 2018. The purpose of the Strategic Planning Day was to reaffirm the objectives of **Limbs 4 Life** and ensure that our energies are focused on areas which will deliver the most productive outcomes that are in line with the organisation's mission and will have the greatest impact for the members of the community that we serve. The outcomes of the Strategic Planning Day identified key strategies which will direct Limbs Life's governance and operations over the next three years.

During the year **Limbs 4 Life** conducted a recruitment drive for new Committee of Management members with specific skill-sets in marketing, human resources, research and medical expertise. The purpose of this was to increase expertise amongst our Committee of Management, and ensure that Limbs 4 Life continues to be steered by members with expertise of relevance to the organisation and our members. The Committee of Management oversees the organisation at a strategic and governance level. Collectively the Committee of Management provide

the organisation with financial and legal compliance, risk mitigation and strategic direction oversight.

This year saw **Limbs 4 Life** continue to deliver and promote our services, resources and programs nationally. To streamline our operations staff are now more closely aligned to the areas for which they are responsible. The 'Communications and Media Manager' has a responsibility for our social media strategy and 'Amplified' magazine coordination and management. The 'National Manager for Children, Youth and Family Services' is responsible for management of the **Limbs 4 Kids** program. The 'Chief Executive Officer' has overarching responsibility for the operational management of the organisation but, in addition, manages the Peer Support Program.

As a small organisation, it is critical that each member delivers outcomes that align with funding and organisational mission objectives and we were further assisted in ensuring this through the introduction of a cloud-based intranet during the year.

Strategy 3:

Build sustainability and diversify revenue

During the past twelve months **Limbs 4 Life** has been financially supported by a number of key partners, many of whom we have been in partnership with over many years.

BankVic (formally Police Credit) has provided financial support to Limbs 4 Life over the past four years.

In addition to providing monetary support, BankVic has also actively promoted Limbs 4 Life through local branch advertising and promotion on their website. During the year, this enduring partnership allowed **Limbs 4 Life** to expand the Victorian arm of the Peer Support Program, train additional Peer Support Volunteers, and contribute to Amplified magazine publishing.

Our partnership with the nib foundation also reached the four year mark. This year saw the conclusion of the nib foundation funding of the Victorian 'Carers, Children and Youth Program' and commencement of the new national 'Limbs 4 Kids' program.

nib foundation support has enabled **Limbs 4 Life** to reach Australian families of children with limb difference and provide them with the unique information and peer support this cohort require. Funding is also facilitating independent Monash University program evaluation and research into the needs of families.

Limbs 4 Life continues to be supported by our publishing and event partners, without whom the delivery of these would not be possible. Our quarterly 'Amplified' magazine's development, publication and dissemination is funded by a number of advertising partners.

Our National Amputee Conference, Limb-iless, was held again in 2014. Limb-iless was made possible through an ongoing partnership with Ottobock which allowed us to offer an information-driven event targeted at both the amputee and healthcare communities.

This year saw Limbs 4 Life continue to source sustainable funding and support. During the year, a targeted Prospectus was developed to attract external corporate, philanthropic and government funding that would facilitate national expansion of our best practice Peer Support Program.



In addition, Limbs 4 Life also developed state-specific government Briefing Papers outlining the social and economic value of investment in offering peer support and amputee-specific self-advocacy training in their jurisdictions. In addition to advocating that peer support should be offered as a matter of course to 'new' amputees in acute and sub-acute settings, these papers also highlighted the need to assist amputees to transition into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Straggey 4:

Service delivery

This year saw continued demand on our Peer Support Program as well as the introduction of our new Limbs 4 Kids program.

Peer Support Program

During the 2014/15 year **Limbs 4 Life** invested significant time and resources developing a sustainable model for our flagship adult Peer Support Program. The demand on our peer support services, due to the increase in amputation rates in Australia, continue to rise. For this reason **Limbs 4 Life**, delivered additional Peer Support Volunteer training in Victoria and South Australia as well as assisting in the development of more Local Support Groups in those states.

The Peer Support Program, which provides individuals and their families with access to a trained 'experienced amputee' Peer Support Volunteer, saw an 8.7 per cent increase in requests for volunteer visits during the year. The Peer Support Program uses a matching process whereby people facing amputation are matched to a volunteer based on the basis of site of amputation, cause of amputation, gender and age. The vast majority of visits are conducted as face-to-face visits in hospitals and rehabilitation centres. The Program which physically operates in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania has seen significant growth over the past three years. In the past twelve months Limbs 4 Life recruited and trained an additional 34 volunteers across metropolitan and regional parts of South Australia and Victoria.

Demand for peer support in other states and territories also continued to increase throughout the year. However, due to a lack of funding to train volunteers in those areas, we have been unable to provide face-to-face visits but offer alternative methods of support such as telephone or virtual (AMP-LINK Forum and Facebook) volunteer support instead.

In order to better support amputees across Australia, and particularly in regional and remote areas, Limbs 4 Life has developed a model whereby volunteers are assisted by the organisation to establish Local Support Groups. With this in mind, Limbs 4 Life developed and published 'The Practical Guide for Setting up a Peer Support Group' during the year. This publication has been made available for



download on our website or via hard copy upon request, and has led to the establishment of five Local Support Groups during the past financial year. The establishment of such groups enables Limbs 4 Life to be able to refer individuals pre or post amputation into locally based groups and enables amputees to receive direct support from people who live in their community.

“Shortly after my amputation I was introduced to a Peer Support Volunteer. This person was probably the single most important factor in my recovery. It was encouraging to hear his story of recovery and I felt that I could trust him more than any other health worker because of this own lived experience.”

(Jack, 27 years, lower limb amputee)

“As an amputee I know the despair a person feels when they lose a limb because not only do they lose a limb but they also lose their independence and mobility. Every amputee I have visited through the Peer Support Program has shown relief and positivity from the visit. The Program makes a huge difference in helping new amputees in their recovery and rehabilitation.”

(Ren, 66 years, lower limb Peer Support Volunteer)

Limbs 4 Kids Program

Following the successful delivery of the nib foundation funded Victorian piloted 'Carers, Children and Youth Program', Limbs 4 Life was granted an additional two and a half years of funding to make a slightly modified version of this program available nationally.

The **Limbs 4 Kids** program facilitates connections between parents, offers peer support, provides 'on demand' information and resources and is increasing knowledge about limb difference in the wider Australian community.

In Australia it is estimated that over 2,500 children and young people have a limb difference. A limb difference may be caused by a congenital condition identified during pregnancy or soon after birth, or as a result of a limb amputation due to trauma, infection or cancer.

The new 'Limbs 4 Kids' program is the first of its kind in Australia and commenced operation in 2015. The program provides comprehensive information and resources for parents and healthcare professionals caring for children and young people with congenital and acquired limb deficiencies.

During 2015 the **Limbs 4 Kids** program launched a stand-alone website, has facilitated parent -to-parent peer support connections, developed an online Kids-Link Forum, published two editions of its quarterly 'Thrive' magazine and published 12 Fact Sheets. Notably, one of the key features of the **Limbs 4 Kids** website is its Learning Centre.

The Learning Centre is the first online library of its kind in Australia, containing information about the key physical, social and educational milestones experienced by children and young people with limb difference.

Monash University will conduct independent evaluation of the Limbs 4 Kids program, as well as investigate the needs of Australian families caring for children with limb differences throughout the funding period.

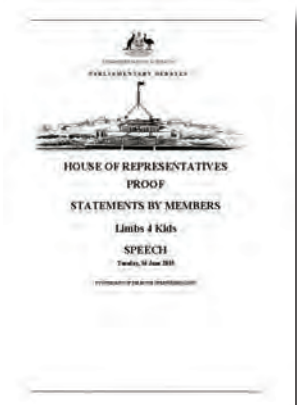


"Job well done on the Limbs 4 Kids website and program. Having a centralised location where everything relevant to us, rather than searching all over the internet, is so valuable."

(Sally, parent)

"I applaud all your hard work and commitment to helping us all through Limbs 4 Kids. It's such good news that families now have their own special program across Australia and we thank you."

(Jenny, parent)



limbs 4 kids

Strategy 5:

Educate our stakeholders

Limbs 4 Life works to ensure that its members are well informed, that information provided is effective and correct and that we are meeting our stakeholders' needs. It is also vital that members of the amputee community are kept up to date with changes in the health care system that impact on their lifestyles, wellbeing and choices.

Stakeholder Consultations

Limbs 4 Life works to educate and inform our primary and secondary stakeholders via a variety of different mechanisms. During the year we conducted three national consultations to ensure that we are meeting the information and education needs of our stakeholders, and used the analysis of these to develop new resources and enhance existing ones.

The first consultation sought feedback from our primary stakeholders, the amputee community. This consultation was in relation to amputees' understanding of amputee-specific health issues and their ability to self-manage their health care. The second consultation was conducted with healthcare practitioners, our secondary stakeholders. This consultation related to the timely delivery of health literacy, the role of the practitioner providing the information and gaps in health literacy that they deemed to be valuable for their patient/client base.

The final consultation was conducted with primary stakeholders and sought feedback about how people like to receive information. This consultation interrogated the preferred ways in which stakeholders receive **Limbs 4 Life** information and resources; be that hard copy format, online or during events. The response was equally divided and lead to a partnership between **Limbs 4 Life** and prosthetic manufacturer Ottobock to deliver a National Amputee Conferences.

Health Literacy Resources

Limbs 4 Life's on-going commitment to ensure that amputees lead healthy lives saw us develop and distribute new health-literacy information cards and posters. Feedback garnered as part of our consultation with amputees identified that hygiene-related complications and on-going issues with skin care were of the most pressing concern. Consequently two information cards pertaining to these matters were developed, in consultation with healthcare professionals, during the year. These

Skincare tips for amputees

CHECK your stump daily for marks or skin breakdowns using a hand mirror

STOP wearing your prosthesis if you have pain or discomfort

WEAR safe and comfortable footwear at all times

SEEK advice from your healthcare professional if you notice any changes to your skin



cards are made available online and as hard-copy ones to amputees in hospitals, rehabilitation centres, prosthetic facilities and other community settings.

Hygiene and skin care is of critical importance to all amputees, but particularly those who use a prosthesis. Lower limb amputees can experience on-going skin problems and breakdowns if a strict hygiene routine isn't practiced on a daily basis. Similarly, ill-fitting prostheses and suspension systems can lead to problems in skin care management.

During this year, **Limbs 4 Life** has sought additional funding to develop additional health literacy resources that are desired and required by the Australian amputee community.

National Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee

During this year Limbs 4 Life established a 'National Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee (NHWAC)' comprised of a range of medical, allied health, psycho-social experts and amputee community members.

The purpose of the NHWAC is to provide feedback and recommendations relating to the health and wellbeing of amputees, children living with limb deficiencies, and their families and primary care-givers.

The NHWAC review, discuss and provide feedback on various areas such as: health literacy materials; research; policy, current state-based issues; and, strategic partnerships. Members of the NHWAC meet on a regular basis with an objective to provide advice and feedback that ensures Limbs 4 Life is meeting the needs of its stakeholders, influencing policy and develop resources which will improve outcomes for amputees and persons with limb difference across Australia.

Currently the Committee has representatives from Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales and **Limbs 4 Life** will seek representation from other states and territories during the next financial year.

Limb-iless Expo

In October 2014 **Limbs 4 Life**, in conjunction with Ottobock, hosted the National Amputee Conference 'Limb-iless' in Sydney. The successful conference attracted amputee delegates from around Australia and New Zealand.

The conference theme was 'Be involved, Be informed and Be inspired' and speakers at the conference shared messages and information across all three categories. Amputee delegates heard from Limbs 4 Kids Ambassador Para-athlete Sarah Walsh, Orthopaedic Surgeon Associate Professor Munjed Al Muderis and representatives from NSW Health Department (Enable NSW). International guest speaker Dries Glorieux, Project Manager from Ottobock Belgium, informed the delegates about the benefits of new technology and how it can impact and support human bio-dynamics. This educational conference provided amputee delegates with access to prosthetic, healthcare information and allows for networking and informal peer support. Pleasingly, Ottobock is partnering again with **Limbs 4 Life** to offer Limb-iless in 2016.



"The Limb-iless Conference was the first time that I'd had the opportunity to meet other amputees. I loved learning about things I knew nothing about and making some new life-long friends."
(Roger, 46 years, lower limb amputee)

Strategic National Representation

To enable **Limbs 4 Life** to effectively inform and represent its stakeholders the organisation is represented on a number of committees and takes part in regular consultations. During the year these included:

- Holds a position on the 'One Step Beyond - Clinicians Leading Care - Amputee Treatment Pathways South Australia Review Panel'
- Holds a position on 'NSW Amputee Care Standards Review, NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation Review Panel'
- Holds a position on the 'Victorian Disability Ministerial Advisory Council (VDAC)'
- Actively provides feedback and submissions to The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) papers and inquiries

Strategy 6:

Build profile and create awareness

As the peak body for Australian amputees, **Limbs 4 Life** sees a key part of its role to create awareness of the incidence of amputation to the wider community. Currently Australia has the second highest rate of diabetic related amputations in the developed world. Throughout 2014/15 **Limbs 4 Life** issued media releases and created social media traffic to help inform all Australians of the impact of limb loss.

National Amputee Awareness Week



National Amputee Awareness Week takes place between 4 - 11 October each year. **Limbs 4 Life** utilises this week to inform the general community and government about the cause and effect of amputation and limb difference on individuals, their families and primary carers.

In 2014, **Limbs 4 Life** supported locally based amputee groups, healthcare providers and medical facilities around the country to hold a variety of activities which ranged from celebratory events to information displays and education sessions. Significant events were held in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria. **Limbs 4 Life** developed and disseminated National Amputee Awareness Week resources and promotional materials for use in the community. In addition, Limbs 4 Life issued media releases resulting in some radio interview coverage.

Celebrating 10 years of service and support

Limbs 4 Life proudly celebrated its ten year anniversary in October 2014. The event highlighted the key organisational achievements and the support provided to thousands of amputees over that time. Limbs 4 Life formally incorporated in 2004 with the mission to provide information, resources and access to support for the amputee community with an underpinning philosophy that no individual should go through the trauma of limb loss alone.

During the first ten years of service, some of **Limbs 4 Life's** key achievements included:

- 2,589 peer support visits delivered
- 164 trained peer support volunteers
- 9,573 hours of volunteer support
- 6,901 telephone enquiries responded to



At a celebratory event held in Melbourne over 100 attendees from the amputee and healthcare community, as well as organisational sponsors, were provided with an opportunity to network and reflect on a decade of organisational successes. The Hon. Senator Mitch Fifield, at the time Assistant Minister for Social Services, delivered a congratulatory speech about the positive impact that Limbs 4 Life has had on the Australian amputee community, acknowledging the staff, volunteers and Committee Members for their incredible achievements and long-term contributions.

"Ten years of service and support for Australian amputees is no small achievement... I offer my very sincere congratulations for your ceaseless dedication to the cause. Your work over these past ten years to improve the lives of amputees has left its mark on the community."

Senator Mitch Fifield Assistant Minister for Social Services

Staff & Volunteers:

Limbs 4 Life is comprised of staff and volunteers who are each committed to ensuring that all Australian amputees and people with limb difference receive the support they deserve.

In 2014 / 2015 our people included:

Committee of Management

Chair

Roberto Colanzi

Deputy Chair

Lily Liu

Treasurer

Anne Richardson

Members

Karen Borg
Darren Collins (resigned March 2015)
Helen Connor
Alicia Salvo
Natalie Sullivan (appointed February 2015)
Fiona Waugh (resigned January 2015)

The Committee of Management meets on a six-weekly basis and to maximise its effectiveness and efficiency the Committee also operates the following sub-committees:

- Finance and Fundraising
- Remuneration and Nominations
- Project Specific (short-term projects)

Staff

Melissa Noonan
(Chief Executive Officer)

Jacinta Dyson
(Communications and Media Manager)

Fiona Waugh
(National Manager - Children, Youth and Family Services)

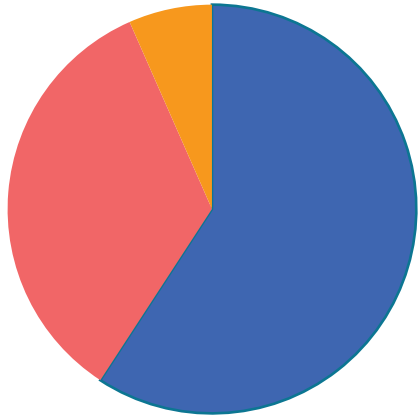
Our People

Peer Support Volunteers

Limbs 4 Life could not carry out its valuable work without the generosity of our volunteers who donate their time to support the vision of the organisation. We acknowledge and thank them for their continued commitment and support. Indeed, Limbs 4 Life firmly believes that ***“we would be nothing without our volunteers”***.

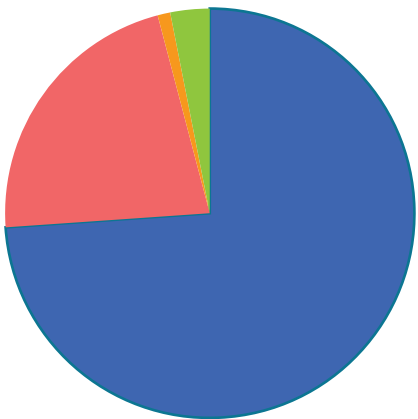
Financial Overview 2014 / 2015

Limbs 4 Life continued to demonstrate sound financial management during the 2014/15 financial year. Total income for the year was \$165,000 and was primarily derived from our corporate partnerships, philanthropic grants and community donations.



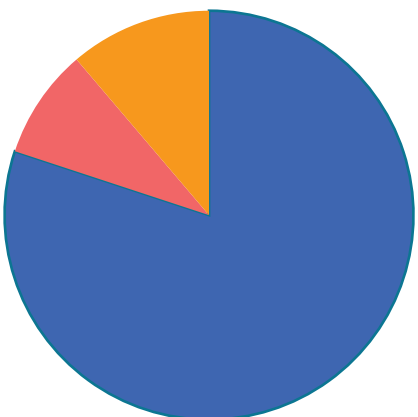
2015 Income

- Grants - 59.2%
- Donations & Fundraising - 34.2%
- Interest - 6.6%



2014 Income

- Grants - 73.9%
- Donations & Fundraising - 22.0%
- Activities - 1.0%
- Activities - 3.1%



2015 Expenditure

- Programs & Services - 79.9%
- Research & Evaluation - 8.7%
- Activities - 11.3%

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF LIMBS 4 LIFE INCORPORATED

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Limbs 4 Life Incorporated, which comprises the committee's report, the balance sheet as at 30 June 2015, the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the committee.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of Limbs 4 Life Incorporated is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (Vic) and the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Limbs 4 Life Incorporated as at 30 June 2015 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (Vic).

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Limbs 4 Life Incorporated to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (Vic). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

JTP Assurance
JTP ASSURANCE
Chartered Accountants

Sam Claringbold
SAM CLARINGBOLD
Partner

Signed at Melbourne this *11* day of *November* 2015.

Our Partners

Organisational Partner



Major Program Partner



Project Supporters



Corporate Supporters

Fella Hamilton
Booze Brothers Fund

Community Supporters

Giving Hope
Nelson Park Primary School
Probus Surrey Hills
Seton Catholic College

Team Supporters

Team Limbs – Prosthetic and Orthotics
students LaTrobe University

Publishing and Event Partners

Ascent Footwear
Oapl
OPC
Ossur
OttoBock

Individual donors

Amanda Naismith
Andrew Powell
Chen Shi
Deb McIntyre
Elizabeth Campbell
Heather Ellett
Henry Matthews
Hermena Wood
Kevin Flinchan
LA Johnson
Margaret Moloney
May Mittern
Mike Tilyard
Morag Dean
Richard Large
Shelley Kerr
Simone Orr
Uveti Liveti
Vatchay Sarafian

Limbs 4 Life's mission is to provide access to information and support for amputees and their families while promoting an inclusive community

We sincerely thank all our sponsors and corporate partners for their support in 2014 and look forward to a long and mutually beneficial partnership in years to come.



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