



AGECS

ANNUAL PLAN 2025

The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies would like to acknowledge both the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung, and Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Custodians of the Lands on which we are located in Melbourne. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge the Aboriginal language groups across all of Victoria, whose lands we provide funding for specific projects around Early Childhood Education. We acknowledge their history, their people, and their stories. As an Association we will work together for reconciliation, a process that starts with the acknowledgement of true Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures of Australia, and will always value the contribution to our community and culture, the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families, communities and their stories.

Introduction

The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies (AGECS) presents its first annual plan setting out specific projects and activities that the organisation will undertake in 2025 to achieve its Strategic Objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan 2022–2027.

AGECS was established over 100 years ago, starting out as the Past Students Association of the Kindergarten Training College.

Its purposes and activities have, over these years, necessarily adapted to the times in which members lived and worked.

Over the past 5 years, AGECS has again reconsidered its mission and operations, whilst remaining consistent with the “Purpose and Objects” in its Constitution.

In 2020, AGECS began updating its organisational procedures, developing systems to move the organisation into the online environment in an increasingly compliant, accessible and professional way, and creating appropriate policies to guide the organisation in a modern context.

In 2021, AGECS undertook a rebranding process, ensuring its visual presence was an up-to-date reflection of its professional members.

In 2022, AGECS celebrated 100 years as a charitable organisation with the disbursement of “100 Years of Excellence” awards and grants totalling almost \$75K in support of small projects by members that embedded high quality practices in early childhood settings, a special edition of *Audax*, and an anniversary luncheon to thank volunteers.

Alongside the celebration of the anniversary, and following reflection motivated by the global Covid-19 pandemic, the AGECS Council recognised a need to revisit the organisational structure and output of AGECS. Council acknowledged that for continued relevance to the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector, AGECS needed to be responsive to the wants and needs of teachers and educators, particularly given the extreme workforce pressures the ECEC sector is currently, and has been for the recent past, experiencing. As a result, Council engaged a consultant to guide it through the development of a strategic plan. The 2022 – 2027 Strategic plan was adopted in 2023.

In 2023, as an outcome of the Strategic Planning process, Council undertook a Community Engagement, firstly to determine its member profile, then to undertake a community consultation.

Throughout these years and 2024, Council continued to provide professional learning opportunities and to develop its library of professional learning resources.

Because AGECS, over the past 5 years, has been set up to operate and present itself professionally, and has developed a clear understanding of its current purpose, members and its strategic direction, the organisation is therefore **well positioned in 2025 to promote itself to the wider ECEC community.**

About us

AGECS is a Victorian-focussed, membership-based, not-for-profit charity providing professional learning resources and opportunities for its members and staff working in early childhood services.

It is an Australian public company limited by guarantee registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). It was incorporated in 1949 under the name of The Graduates Association of the Kindergarten Training College Melbourne and in 1996 changed its name to The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies (AGECS). AGECS is also registered with the ACNC as the Operator of a PBI (Public Benevolent Institution) and has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status with the Australian Taxation Office. This means that donations to AGECS over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

Its vision, as adopted in the Strategic Plan, is that AGECS is a leader in advancing, empowering, and resourcing early childhood professionals because of our commitment to being engaged, connected and responsive to education and care in the early years.

Our members

AGECS currently has over 1,200 members.

Membership, according to our Constitution (2011), is open to any person who:

- has completed an Early Childhood Course at any institution in Australia or elsewhere which is accredited for employment in early childhood services in Victoria; and
- is or has worked in Early Childhood Education; or
- is a teacher and/or researcher in Early Childhood Undergraduate and Graduate Programs and has made a contribution to Early Childhood Education;
- who has been recommended by the Council as a person who has rendered notable services to the community in Early Childhood Education and has been elected by the members to be an Honorary Member.

Our operating context

AGECS is run by an elected Council of AGECS members who serve voluntarily. The 2024/2025 Council comprises 12 members. The Council is supported by three paid contractors who are engaged on a part-time basis: Program Manager, Engagement Coordinator and Bookkeeper. The Council is also supported by a number of standing Committees whose members also serve

voluntarily: Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Finance, and Fellowship Advisory. Other committees are formed from time to time as the needs arises.

Financial sustainability

AGECS's income is derived primarily from investment income, supplemented by membership fees, donations, bequests, and grants from the Foundation of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies. The Finance Committee meets quarterly to review financial management reports, presenting quarterly reports to Council to ensure financial transparency, accountability and sustainability. An annual budget is prepared, and reviewed by the Finance Committee and Council prior to adoption, to ensure that operations are achievable and financially responsible. Finances are guided by AGECS's Finance policy and Investment policy.

Reporting to our members

AGECS provides annual externally audited reports to members and to the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) by publishing reports on the AGECS and ACNC websites, with notifications to members via electronic messaging.

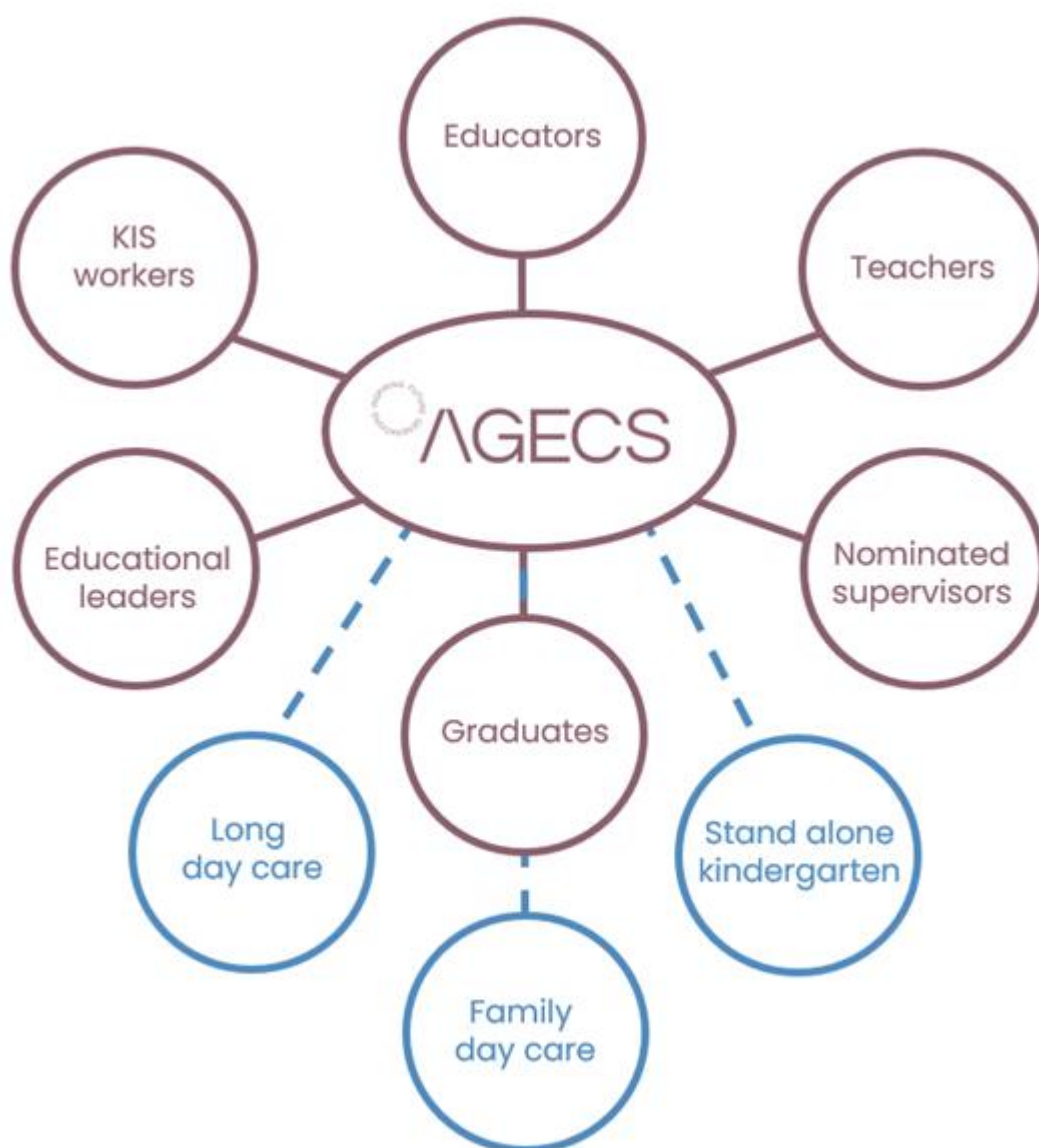
How we do our work

We deliver our services by providing professional learning opportunities, resources and grants

Our...	Provide...	This means we are...	Outcomes we want to see...
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing our members Servicing our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher numbers of visits to the website
inForm e-newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Links to resources and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing our members Servicing our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher percentage of engagement by subscribers
Online events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Professional learning hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing our members Servicing our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent and growing numbers of attendees
Academic Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memberships Financial support via resource vouchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting AGECS and supporting academic excellence Servicing our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate ongoing partnerships with institutions Higher conversion of award recipients to members

Fellowship Grants for Leadership and Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support and mentoring for professional leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting ECEC with leadership development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing applications particularly from teachers and educators
Special grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support for the ECEC community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing our members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual special grants

Groups within ECEC community



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2027

Our Statement

- We believe early childhood professionals change lives.
- We believe that investing in early childhood education and care changes the life trajectories of children, families, and communities.
- Our mission is to **Advance Empower Resource** so that early childhood professionals can thrive.

Our strategic themes and values

Serving our community

Strategic goal – to be an outstanding early childhood association that understands and responds to the needs of its members.

Strategic Plan	How we have actioned this	We expect to deliver the following in 2025	Who will action	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continually strive to engage with our members, seeking their views, thoughts, needs, expectations, and experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2024 Community Engagement and Consultation survey and report• Active social media profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continue to refer to the results of the 2024 survey to inform our professional learning topics• To canvass AGECS Council members about pertinent topics as seen in their professional experience• Professional learning event feedback surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional learning topics that attract event attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To have a general membership that represents the diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a RAP, encouraging the involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To promote AGECS to ECEC professionals and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement Coordinator, Program Manager, Council members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in membership applications from teachers and educators

of early childhood professionals.	of Aboriginal Ambassadors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of wide range of news and resources in publications accessible to a broad range of qualification types 	with a view to increasing memberships from the wide spectrum of ECEC groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of AGECS through Academic Awards program 		working in long day care centres
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gather and use member experiences and voices to plan and guide our work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Community Engagement and Consultation survey and report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to seek post fellowship reports from Fellowship grant recipients Invite members to submit articles for AUDAX 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing inclusion of Fellowship reports in inForm, social media and on website AUDAX articles submitted by members

Advancing professional knowledge and practice

Strategic goal – to advance knowledge and practice of early childhood professionals

Strategic Plan	How we have actioned this	We expect to deliver the following in 2025	Who will action	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide accessible and relevant opportunities for members to explore, challenge and expand their knowledge and practice. 	Professional learning events, online resources, links in inForm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 online professional learning events 1 online professional learning event as a keynote at the AGM Resources developed from 5 online events to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steady or increasing attendance numbers at Professional Learning events Regular updates to website resources

		<p>available on the website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly posts on social media – Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn • Share relevant external opportunities and resources via inForm 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to explore and provide new and innovative approaches to advance knowledge and practice for members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Learning events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Learning events • Council professional practice discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members, Engagement Coordinator, Program Manager 	Online professional learning event topics that are evidence-informed and of interest to ECEC professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide opportunities for members to practice and embed their knowledge in a way that meets their needs and context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 years grant allocations to allow members to practice and embed their knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Special Grants program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant application engagement from members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To collaborate with key partners to share the knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed relationships with other ECEC organisations such as The Front Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate a list of potential key partners, such as Early Childhood Improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement Coordinator • Council members • Program Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations from key partners / ECIB to AGECS for speakers/presenters at network meetings

and experience of others.	and Community Child Care Association (CCC)	Branch (ECIB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact key partners • Request information about AGECS be shared at network meetings • Request AGECS presentation spot at 1 network meeting per year per Local Government Area (LGA) ECIB		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure our approaches, opportunities, services and resources reflect and respect the diversity, needs and expectations of our members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Reflect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander perspectives and input into AGECS activities • At least one event held by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander presenter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Chair • RAP Committee • Council • Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional learning events and resources to support ECEC services in cultural knowledge building

Empowering early childhood professional through a focus on professional wellbeing

Strategic goal – to be an outstanding early childhood association that understands and responds to the needs of its members

Strategic Plan	How we have actioned this	We expect to deliver the following in 2025	Who will action	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer initiatives that strengthen professional wellbeing for members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah O'Donnell's 'Tapping – inspired by the Emotional Freedom Technique' event Melissa Adams' 'Arts and Professional Wellbeing' event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online professional learning event to cover professional wellbeing topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of online learning event and resources for the website on topic of professional wellbeing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote and support members' resilience and morale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to external professional wellbeing resources in AUDAX and inForm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles or resources about resilience and morale building to feature in issues of inForm and/or AUDAX 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least three articles or resources about resilience and morale building to feature in issues of inForm and/or AUDAX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inspire members in their professional growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change 100 Years of Excellence grants Special edition of AUDAX 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including articles from members in AUDAX Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change 2025 Special Grants program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator Fellowship Advisory Committee Special grants committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilised Special Grants program and Fellowship Program for leadership and change. Articles generated by

				ECEC professionals
--	--	--	--	--------------------

Accessible and innovative resources for early childhood professionals

Strategic goal – to provide accessible and innovative resources to support ongoing advancement as a professional

Strategic Plan	How we have actioned this	We expect to deliver the following in 2025	Who will action	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide an accessible and utilised Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased advertising of Fellowship Program Supporting re-submission of applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One round of grants, of up to \$10,000 per grant, with a total pool of \$50,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fellowship Advisory Committee Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased applications from teachers and educators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer responsive, accessible, innovative, and utilised grants or programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Years of Excellence grants Academic Awards program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 Special Grants program with a total pool of \$20,000 Provision of \$200 Magabala vouchers to academic awards winners who activate membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator Council Sub-committee Program Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilised Special Grants program. Higher conversation rate of academic award recipients to memberships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide accessible and engaging information that supports high quality practice and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 x issues of inForm annually 2 x issues of AUDAX annually Updated website Active social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 x issues of electronic newsletter inForm 2 x issues of journal AUDAX Regular updates of resources on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement with inForm against previous year

meets the needs of members.		the AGECS website		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support and initiate projects which assist early childhood education and care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 years of Excellence grants and awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 Special Grants program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator Council Program Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilised Special Grants program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To share outcomes and stories that result from our resourcing to promote and encourage membership and applications for grants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing post-Fellowship reports to ECEC community via AUDAX and the website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2026 to include post-2025 Special Grants stories in AUDAX Autumn and Spring editions Reports uploaded to website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilised grants programs. Increased membership application numbers

Identifying topics for resources

We develop topics for potential professional learning resources from a range of sources including:

- Council members' professional experiences with and of ECEC communities
- Surveying attendees of AGECS professional learning events
- Monitoring of, and engagement with, online ECEC communities (e.g. Facebook groups)

2025 Focus – promotion of AGECS

Alongside operating our ongoing projects, AGECS in 2025 will focus particularly on promotion of the organisation to Early Childhood Professionals (ECPs) and the ECEC community. As an organisation run by volunteers with the support of three part-time contractors, AGECS's goals will be reasonable, achievable and cost effective.

How we will do this	Who will action	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate a list of potential key partners, such as Early Childhood Improvement Branch (ECIB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Manager Engagement Coordinator Council members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitations from key partners / ECIB branches to AGECS for

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact key partners • Request information about AGECS be shared at network meetings • Request AGECS presentation spot at 1 network meeting per year per Local Government Area (LGA) ECIB 		speakers/presenters at network meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact educational institutions regarding AGECS Academic awards and presence at Awards ceremonies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in award winner activation of memberships • Increase in the numbers of educational institutions participating in the awards program • Council member attendance at every awards ceremony
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members speaking about AGECS whenever they visit ECEC organisations, formally or informally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in membership numbers

Reports

Available on: www.agecs.org.au

Name of report	What we examined	Why was this important
Constitution (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation's purpose & objects, structure, membership, operational processes, powers, proceedings and requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory requirement
Annual report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial report • Organisation structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with ACNC requirements • Reporting to members • Reporting to the wider ECEC community
Strategic Plan (2022 – 2027)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who we are, what resources we have, what we can do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To focus organisational services in the current ECEC context
2023 ECP and AGECS Member Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics, current working conditions, qualifications, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To connect with the membership base and broader early childhood

	<p>experience of ECPs in CBC and FDC settings, nationally and in Victoria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGECS member profile 	<p>education community, so that the Council could tailor activities of AGECS to meet the needs of early childhood professionals (ECPs).</p>
2024 Community Engagement and Consultation Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics, current working arrangements, experience and qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fill the gaps between the national data and member profile data from 2023 ECP and AGECS Member profile report • To inform the AGECS Council of the composition of AGECS members, in comparison with the national statistics of early childhood teachers and educators
100 Year Anniversary Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 Year projects • Costings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating the contribution of members to AGECS • Reporting on how we marked the centenary
Reflect RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGECS's reconciliation journey to date • RAP Reflect action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To begin a journey of reconciliation with Aboriginal early childhood communities
<p>Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement of Country • Committees • Code of conduct, virtual meeting guidelines and working together agreement • Complaints handling • Conflict of interest • Council grievance and dispute resolution • Council recognition • Cyber security • Engagement of contractors and ambassadors • Finance • Investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of operations needing guidelines to function smoothly and with continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide AGECS with operational guidelines

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Procurement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses • Social media • Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies and services 		
---	--	--

INSPIRING FUTURE GENERATIONS