



Queensland Independent
Disability Advocacy Network

Charter

Of the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy
Network (QIDAN)

2026

Working together to achieve positive change for people with disability

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Acknowledgement

The Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the place we now call Queensland. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise that sovereignty has never been ceded and honor the enduring connection, cultures, traditions, knowledge and community leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability as leaders, advocates and knowledge holders, whose lived experience, cultural authority and resistance continue to shape disability advocacy. Their guidance strengthens our work and our shared commitment to self-determination, healing and justice.

QIDAN recognises that people's identities and experiences are interconnected. Many people with disability are also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+SB, living in regional, rural or closed environments.

We honor the resilience, strength, and expertise of people with disability, their families and supporters who navigate layered systems of discrimination and exclusion. Their lived and living experience is central to everything we do, and we commit to continuing to work in ways that are culturally safe, intersectional and grounded in human rights.

Language

QIDAN believes language is a powerful tool for building inclusion.

We use person-first language by using the term 'people with disability' but also recognise that many people with disability prefer identity-first language (i.e. 'disabled person').

Background

The Queensland disability advocacy sector has a long and proud history grounded in the activism, leadership and lived experience of people with disability. Advocacy organisations grew from individuals, families and communities speaking out against discrimination, exclusion and abuses of rights, and calling for recognition, inclusion and systemic change. In 1992, the Combined Advocacy Groups of Queensland (CAGQ) was established to strengthen collaboration across the sector and advocate for the needs of both advocacy organisations and people with disability.

Following the introduction of the restructured Queensland Disability Advocacy Program (QDAP) in 2022, the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) was established as a statewide Network of independent advocacy organisations working together to strengthen collaboration, share knowledge and advance the rights, voices and leadership of people with disability throughout Queensland.

Our Vision

A Queensland where people with disability live with dignity, safety, inclusion and full enjoyment of their human rights.

Purpose

QIDAN exists to protect and promote independent advocacy and to uphold the rights, needs and wellbeing of people with disability.

QIDAN works collectively to influence systems, policy and practice to create a more inclusive and socially just community.

Aims

QIDAN has three aims:

1. **Systemic advocacy:** to take coordinated action to address systemic issues experienced by people with disability.
2. **Member support:** to provide a collaborative space for the exchange of information, knowledge and practice.
3. **Sector advocacy:** to promote the importance and value of independent disability advocacy.

Principles

QIDAN's is guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

QIDAN's work is:

- Led by people with disability
- Independent
- Grounded in human rights
- Respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures
- Committed to equity and intersectionality
- Collaborative and collective
- Accountable and transparent

QIDAN recognises and actively responds to the additional barriers experienced by First Nations people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQIA+SB people, those in regional, rural, remote communities and closed settings.

What is Independent Disability Advocacy?

Independent disability advocacy works alongside people with disability who are experiencing disadvantage to promote, protect, and defend human rights, interests, and wellbeing. Independent advocates do this by:

- Being person led and supporting a person's will and preference
- Assisting people to participate in processes and systems and in decision making that impact them.
- Remaining partisan, loyal and accountable to the person
- Acting professionally, culturally safe, and vigorous in pursuit of fundamental needs, and
- Avoiding conflicts of interest.

Membership

Core members

Core membership is comprised of organisations funded under the Queensland Disability Advocacy Program (QDAP). These organisations are:

- Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia
- AMPARO Advocacy Inc.
- Capricorn Citizen Advocacy
- Mackay Advocacy Inc.
- People with Disability Australia
- Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion
- Rights in Action
- Speaking Up for You
- TASC

Core members have full participation in decision-making.

Associate members

QIDAN may include associate members who align with QIDAN's purpose and principles.

Associate members:

- contribute to discussions and collaboration
- do not participate in formal decision-making

Core members determine associate membership.

Membership expectations

All members are expected to:

- act in alignment with QIDAN's purpose and principles
- contribute to collective work where possible
- respect the independence of member organisations
- engage constructively and collaboratively.

Governance and Structure

QIDAN is a collaborative Network and is not a separate legal entity. QIDAN operates through shared leadership and collective decision-making.

Leadership

QIDAN will have:

- a Chair
- a Deputy Chair

These roles:

- are selected from core member organisations
- rotate on a regular basis (e.g. annually)
- support coordination and facilitation of the Network

A small coordination group may be established as required to support QIDAN's work.

The role of the Chair is to

- chair the monthly Network meetings
- work with the host organisation to develop the agendas for these meetings

Role of the host organisation

QAI is currently funded as the coordinating host organisation to support QIDAN with coordination and administration. Its role is to:

- facilitate, not direct, the work of QIDAN
- support communication and coordination
- act in accordance with decisions of the Network

The host organisation will maintain clear separation between its role as an independent advocacy service and its role in supporting QIDAN.

Decision-making

QIDAN aims to operate through consensus wherever possible. Where consensus cannot be reached:

- decisions may be made by majority of core members
- members may opt out of specific actions or positions
- differing views may be recorded

Timeframes for decision-making will be agreed based on the urgency of the issue.

Representation and advocacy positions

QIDAN represents the collective voice of its members where agreement has been reached.

Where QIDAN takes a collective position:

- members will be consulted
- members may choose whether to be signatories to specific advocacy actions

Individual organisations retain the right to advocate independently.

How We Work Together

QIDAN is a collaborative Network built on trust, shared purpose and mutual respect.

While member organisations operate independently, the effectiveness of QIDAN relies on active participation and a commitment to working together in good faith.

1. Commitment to collaboration

QIDAN members commit to:

- working constructively with one another to advance shared goals
- contributing knowledge, insights and experience to collective work
- supporting a unified voice on agreed priority issues
- recognising and valuing the diversity of perspectives across the Network
- acting in a way that strengthens trust and relationships within the Network

2. Participation and engagement

QIDAN is a participatory Network. Members are expected to:

- actively engage in meetings, discussions and agreed activities where possible
- nominate appropriate representatives who can contribute to discussions and decision-making
- respond to requests for input within agreed timeframes
- participate in working groups or collective activities, where relevant and feasible

QIDAN recognises that organisations have differing capacity and competing priorities, and expectations should be applied reasonably and flexibly.

3. Working across difference

QIDAN brings together organisations with different roles, expertise, priorities and perspectives. Members commit to:

- engaging respectfully in discussions, including where views differ
- acknowledging that not all members will agree on all issues
- supporting processes that allow for different positions to be expressed
- maintaining a focus on shared outcomes for people with disability
- avoiding actions that undermine trust, relationships or the integrity of the Network

Where differences arise, QIDAN will prioritise open communication and good faith engagement to resolve issues constructively.

4. Grievances

QIDAN members are expected to act respectfully, collaboratively and in good faith. Where a dispute or grievance arises, members should first make reasonable attempts to resolve the matter directly between themselves through respectful discussion and problem-solving.

Where a matter cannot be resolved informally, a written grievance may be lodged with either the Chair or the host organisation.

Upon receipt of a formal grievance, the Chair or host organisation will convene a Grievance Committee consisting of at least three people, usually including:

- The Chair
- A representative of the host organisation
- One other Core Member representative

Any person directly involved in the grievance, or who has a conflict of interest, must not participate in the Grievance Committee.

The Grievance Committee will hear from all relevant parties, consider the information provided, and seek to support fair, practical and respectful resolution of the matter. The Committee may make recommendations including:

- Facilitated discussions between parties
- Agreed actions or behavioural expectations
- Changes to communication or working arrangements
- Mediation or other restorative approaches

Members are expected to participate in the process in good faith and to work towards maintaining constructive working relationships across the Network.

Note: Complaints relating to the services or operations of individual advocacy organisations must be addressed through that organisation's own complaints processes and are outside the scope of this grievance process.

5. Maintaining independence

QIDAN respects the independence of each member organisation. Participation in QIDAN does not limit the ability of individual organisations to:

- undertake their own advocacy
- express independent views
- determine their own priorities

Conflicts of Interest

QIDAN is a collaborative Network of independent disability advocacy organisations.

Representatives participate in QIDAN on behalf of their organisations and are expected to act in ways that support both the interests of their organisation and the shared purpose, integrity and independence of the Network.

QIDAN members must remain independent from government decision-making and from the delivery of NDIS-funded services and supports.

A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and may arise where a personal, professional, financial or organisational interest could improperly influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, a person's participation in QIDAN discussions, decisions or activities.

This includes situations where a representative:

- Holds a governance, employment or advisory role with an NDIS service provider
- Has a financial or personal interest connected to a matter being considered
- Has competing duties or loyalties that may affect independent advocacy positions or decision-making

All conflicts of interest must be declared as soon as practicable.

Where a conflict of interest exists, QIDAN may determine appropriate strategies to manage the conflict, including requiring the person to:

- participate in discussion but not decision-making
- observe discussions without participating

- leave the meeting for part of the discussion
- nominate an alternative representative from their organisation
- implement another agreed conflict management strategy

Where a conflict is significant, ongoing, or unable to be appropriately managed, QIDAN may request that another representative be nominated by the member organisation.

QIDAN will seek to manage conflicts of interest in a practical, fair and transparent manner that protects the integrity, independence and reputation of the Network and the disability advocacy sector.

Review

This Charter will be reviewed at least every two years to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects the needs and direction of QIDAN.