



### Vision

**A NSW free from poverty and disadvantage**

### Our purpose

**We are an independent, public voice connecting the NSW social services sector with government, so that people living with poverty or disadvantage are not left behind.**

### Values

**Courage Integrity Fairness Inclusion**

### Our stakeholders

**NGO/Not for Profits delivering human services and/or involved in community development, policy or advocacy**  
**Other Peaks and Councils of Social Service**  
**Our funding government agencies**  
**philanthropists and researchers**



**We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the country on which we work. We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging**

## Strategy 2022-2025

### 3 goals - what

**Amplify the experience of people affected by poverty or disadvantage to improve policy and decision making**

**Identify and advocate for the systemic elements of a sustainable, connected, strong and diverse sector**

**Focus NCOSS on core areas for impact and sustainability**

### how

- **Consulting members and people with lived experience**
- **Strategic research and sharing findings**
- **Building skills to create change**

- **Focussed work in key areas**
- **Connecting and informing members**
- **Complementing other peaks**

- **Maintaining and growing targeted partnerships**
- **Attracting and retaining skilled people**

## An introduction to NCOSS's draft strategic plan – 2022-25

Early in 2022, the NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) started the development of a new strategic plan. Working with consultants, Ask-Insight, we have used a staged process including a member survey, discussions with the Forum of Non-Government Agencies (FONGA) and the NCOSS Board, and other stakeholders, to review and refresh our role, priorities and future directions.

We face challenges as a sector. Systemic, deep-rooted problems need to be addressed such as affordable housing and homelessness; gender equity and domestic violence; the rising cost of living; and sector workforce, capacity and capability development.

NCOSS is a small and agile organisation. We currently employ 12.8 FTE staff, with three are funded under short term grants ceasing in 2022.

NCOSS has the lowest COSS revenue per head of population in Australia and receives the lowest proportion of its revenues from government (72% or around \$2M of a total \$2.8M). In comparison, VCOSS – the COSS in Victoria, the state nearest NSW in terms of population and the size of its economy – receives 88% or \$4.8M of its \$5.3M in revenues from the Victorian Government.

Of NCOSS revenues, almost half (44%) of current revenue is project-specific as part of a short-term grant.

**COSS DATA source ACNC viewed 2 June 2022**

| 2021 AIS     | Total revenue          | Population '000 | COSS Revenue per head pop | Expenses               | % revenue from Govt |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| VCOSS        | \$ 5,394,295.00        | 6643.1          | 0.81                      | \$ 5,216,381.00        | 88                  |
| WACOSS       | \$ 3,606,643.00        | 2685.2          | 1.34                      | \$ 3,328,886.00        | 77                  |
| QCOSS        | \$ 3,544,862.00        | 5240.5          | 0.68                      | \$ 3,525,135.00        | 79                  |
| <b>NCOSS</b> | <b>\$ 2,799,096.00</b> | <b>8186.8</b>   | <b>0.34</b>               | <b>\$ 2,473,511.00</b> | <b>72</b>           |
| SACOSS       | \$ 1,917,378.00        | 1772.8          | 1.08                      | \$ 1,837,343.00        | 79                  |
| TASCOSS      | \$ 1,859,770.00        | 540.8           | 3.44                      | \$ 1,836,867.00        | 80                  |
| ACTCOSS      | \$ 1,605,782.00        | 430.5           | 3.73                      | \$ 1,410,288.00        | 87                  |
| NTCOSS       | \$ 1,458,761.00        | 245.9           | 5.93                      | \$ 1,423,614.00        | 96                  |

Population data from ABS viewed 2 June 2022  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/latest-release>  
 estimates at 30 Sept 2021

While significant cost savings and efficiencies have already be achieved, it is important that the new plan addresses fundamental questions of priorities and how to maintain NCOSS's impact.

NCOSS needs to:

- Prioritise sustainability and living within NCOSS' means
- Focus on the areas where NCOSS can have most impact and has the skills and networks to add value (ie: addressing systemic issues)
- Recognise those areas which cannot continue to be resourced without funding

One of NCOSS' key roles is as the intermediary between government and social sector service providers, especially those that are small to medium sized and/or in regional areas. This role allows the amplification of the organisations' experiences, and that of the people who rely on the services provided by the sector.

Government benefits from having a credible and evidence-based source of 'truth' on issues. When Government listens to NCOSS, significant, system-wide changes can be achieved that reduce poverty and disadvantage. Targeted partnership building and sector linkages is an important skill in the NCOSS' strategic 'toolkit.' This includes with philanthropists where NCOSS can assist them to achieve their goals and peer organisations/peaks.

For sustainability, NCOSS needs to:

- Focus on a 'back to basics' approach
- Say no to short term or one-off projects which don't adequately cover costs and unfunded consultation/advice
- Communicate, loudly and clearly, about NCOSS' impact and achievements.

## New strategy

The new strategy maintains the vision and values of our previous strategic plan.

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| <b>Our purpose</b>  | We are an independent, public voice connecting the NSW social services sector with government, so that people living with poverty and disadvantage are not left behind   |  |
| <b>Our values</b>   | Courage, integrity, fairness, inclusion  |  |
| <b>Our stakeholders</b>   | NGO/Not for Profits delivering human services and/or involved in community development, policy or advocacy<br><br>Other Peaks and Councils of Social Service<br><br>Our funding government agencies; philanthropists and researchers |  |
| <b>We have three new goals. We want to:</b>   |  | <b>We will do this by:</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amplify the experience of people affected by poverty and disadvantage to improve policy and decision making</li> </ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting members and people with lived experience</li> <li>• Strategic research and sharing findings</li> <li>• Building skills to create change</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and advocate for the systemic ingredients of a sustainable, connected, strong and diverse sector</li> </ul>   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focussed work in key areas</li> <li>• Connecting and informing members</li> <li>• Complementing other peaks</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus NCOSS on core areas for impact and sustainability</li> </ul>   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining and growing targeted partnerships</li> <li>• Attracting and retaining skilled people</li> </ul>   |