



**Positive Leadership
Development Institute™**
Australia and New Zealand

ANNUAL REPORT

2016

2017

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Who we are

The Positive Leadership Development Leadership (PLDI) Australia and New Zealand is a unique community service partnership that aims to build the resilience and leadership capacities of people living with HIV in Australia and New Zealand. As a collaborative endeavour that places people living with HIV as central to our work, PLDI Australia and New Zealand welcomes the following statement of support from the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia and would like to thank the agencies and community organisations from across Australia and New Zealand who committed to the partnership this year.

The National Association of People With HIV (NAPWHA) has a vision that people with HIV live our lives to our full potential, in good health and free from stigma, discrimination and criminalisation, fully exercising our central role in ending the HIV epidemic. The resilience engendered by the PLDI experience and the leadership traits enabled speak directly to this vision. The fact that this initiative is created by people living with HIV, for people living with HIV, speaks volumes about its value both now and into the future.

The National Association of People With HIV Australia

2016/17 COLLABORATING PARTNERS



2016/17 COOPERATING PARTNERS



Workshop Highlights 2016-17

Reaching more of Australia and New Zealand

Positive Leadership Development Institute (PLDI) Australia and New Zealand workshops were offered in more states and territories than ever before in 2016-17, with five workshops in total.

This growth is thanks to the continued support of collaborating partners providing the capital, expertise and resources to ensure that the project continues to operate. In particular, an increased investment from the Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) and South Australia Mobilisation + Empowerment for Sexual Health (SAMESH) this year saw PLDI deliver its first workshop in South Australia.



Our commitment to diversity

Our engagement with a diverse group of participants is a key strength of the PLDI workshop experience, enabling meaningful exchanges of culture and heritages between participants and establishing greater awareness of the positive community.

We are proud to say a facilitation team made up of volunteers living with HIV deliver all PLDI workshops. And as PLDI continues to reach more of our community, our facilitation team has grown to reflect its diversity and strengths and represents individuals diverse in age, gender, sexuality and cultural backgrounds.

In addition, our cooperating and collaborating partners supported a scholarship program worth \$26,314 to go towards covering the course fees, travel and accommodation of workshop participants, minimising barriers to participation and ensuring that PLDI benefits the breadth and diversity of the body positive across Australia and New Zealand.



14 WOMEN



45 MEN

4 ASTI OR MAORI BACKGROUNDS

TOTAL 59 GRADUATES

\$26,314

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



“I was a participant of PLDI back in 2015, not long after my husband passed. Fast forwarding, that course helped me grieve, heal and re-light the fire in my belly to get back into advocacy.

Becoming a facilitator was one of the steps along this journey and I am extremely proud to be able to support others, particularly those from South Australia, to use PLDI as a tool to grow and nurture their lives and strengthen their path along their respective journeys.”

*Andrew Birtwistle-Smith,
PLDI Facilitator*

Inspiring new leaders in our community

Our facilitation team is key to the success of our workshops and is committed to making a difference in the lives of workshop participants and inspiring the leaders of tomorrow. This year, we welcomed two additions to the team, Sarah Feagan and Andrew Birtwistle-Smith.

Improving our processes

As part of our commitment to maintaining a high quality, peer-led workshop experience, the Positive Leadership Development Leadership (PLDI) Australia and New Zealand has established an ongoing training and development weekend for our workshop facilitators and alumni coordinators to review and discuss workshop practice and content as a peer group.

A major outcome of our first in-service day was realised in 2016-17 with the establishment of a workshop coordinator position. Based in Living Positive Victoria's offices, the workshop coordinator supports the planning, administration and delivery of workshops, and has streamlined the delivery of workshops and strengthened our processes for workshop evaluation and review.

“After completing my PLDI workshop one of my goals was to become a facilitator. And I did it!

Joining the team means that I can bring diversity with my gender and lived experience and hopefully give all participants the same amazing outcome I had from the workshop.

The inclusive and powerful space that is PLDI is so sacred, and I look forward to many more workshops.”

*Sarah Feagan,
PLDI Facilitator*

PLDI Graduates 2016-17

A cohort of 59 graduates joined the alumni community in 2016-17, bringing the total of Positive Leadership Development Leadership Australia and New Zealand (PLDI) graduates to 190.

This year we asked graduates to reflect on the influence that their workshop experience has had in their lives and the wider community. These responses are grouped into three themes: *In My Workshop*, *In My Life* and *In My Community*.

These reflections show that the core training offered by PLDI, *Who Am I as a Leader?* continues to be a rewarding and enriching experience for participants. Graduates highly value the opportunity to connect with like-minded people living with HIV committed to self-development, and view their workshop experiences as the beginning of meaningful change in their lives and fuller engagement in their communities.

In my workshop

"I was exposed to all of the other participants and their similarities, differences and intricate in-betweens. The PLDI group was very diverse in age, gender, race, sexual orientation and socioeconomic background. I revelled in experiencing the others' backgrounds, and sharing my own."

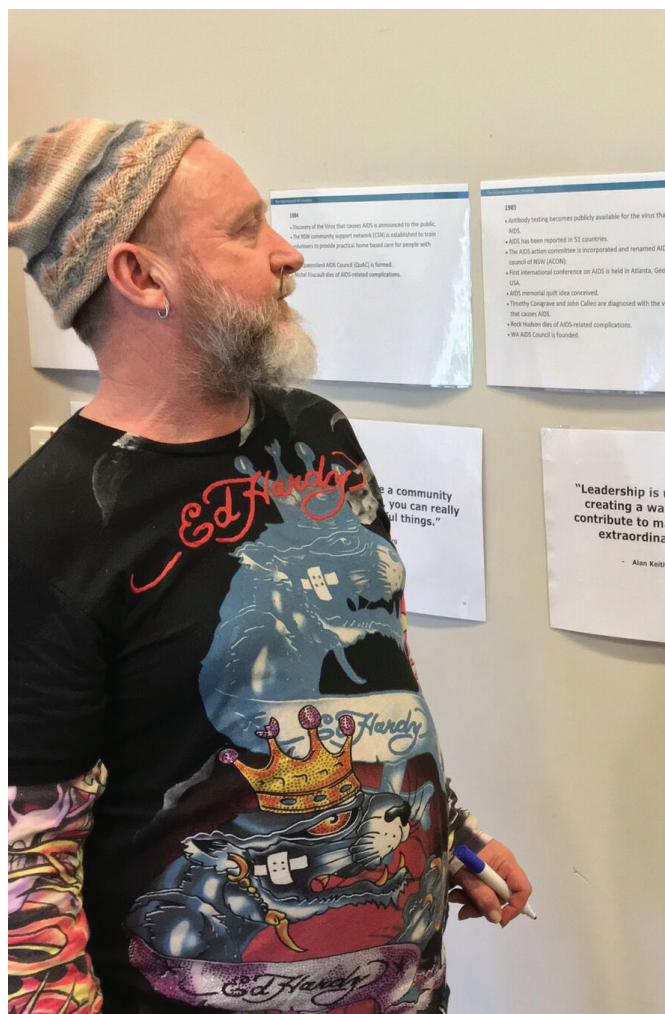
*Jared Stern,
Victoria*

"I love how intimate the workshop was. A weekend away is a great idea. It allows time for us to get to know one another. I had a chance to listen to those inspiring stories - and for that I am forever grateful."

*Adrian Banks,
New South Wales*

"The people I met at the workshop are truly inspirational and have given me the chance to share their journeys and experiences. I feel truly blessed to have shared this experience with them and to have their support and strengths to draw on."

*Francis Carter,
Queensland.*

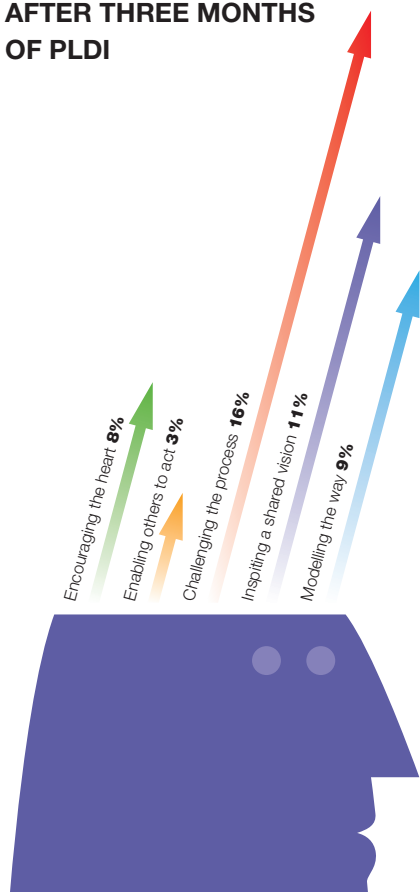


This year we have extended our robust evaluation structure to measure the awareness and reflection of leadership practices of workshop participants.

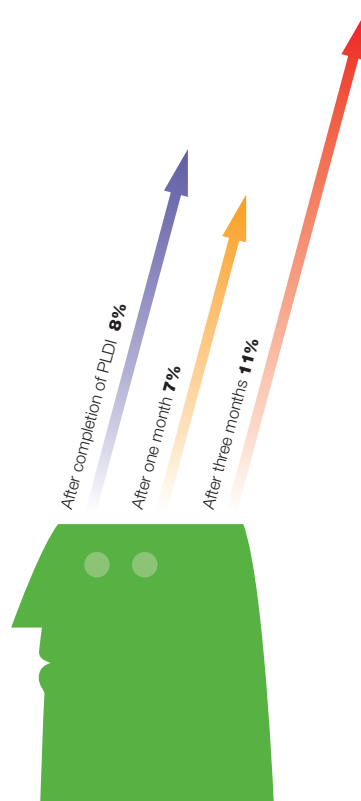
We did this because we believe that developing people living with HIV to be leaders in their own lives not only builds resilience to many challenges, including those posed by health and HIV stigma, but also empowers the Positive Leadership Development Leadership Australia and New Zealand (PLDI) alumni to be advocates, teachers and full participants in their communities.

The responses from our follow-up surveys show that our workshops and alumni initiatives have a significant and sustained impact on the psychological resilience of graduates, and their awareness and ability to reflect on their leadership practices.

INCREASED AWARENESS AND LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AFTER THREE MONTHS OF PLDI



INCREASED PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE FOR THE DURATION OF PLDI



In my life



“PLDI came at a time of change for me. I was beginning a campaign to return from disability to work and questioning the stigma of being outspoken as a mental health advocate. The workshop was reaffirming, placing individual leadership in the big picture of the epidemic. From this historic view, I felt a sense of privilege in being able to advocate with such support in a space like mental health where there are so few voices. I was inspired to continue to bring my success story to the public.”

Eric Glare, Victoria

“How amazing the workshop was! It opened my mind as a positive leader and helped me to rethink how I could work for our community. And mostly it was a great opportunity to meet other leaders and exchange our positive energy and passions.”

Dai Aoki, New South Wales

“Before the workshop, I had fears and challenges facing stigma in my own community and wished to know more about it. Listening to the topic on values, learning where stigma comes from and working together with a team that looked for ways to overcome it in the community, was very helpful to me.”

Rachel, South Australia

Strengthening the Community

This year also saw the development of alumni communities across Australia and New Zealand. By the end of 2017 there were over 130 alumni engaged through informal community networks on social media, with state-based alumni coordinators also connecting alumni through newsletters and regular events in Victoria and New South Wales.

These alumni groups have maintained momentum after the course, strengthened relationships between alumni and kept individuals active in their communities.

Social media posts made by members show that the alumni groups are places where alumni choose to share personal reflections, life achievements and employment and volunteer and leadership opportunities across Australia. The alumni community has also established itself as a significant point of reference for peers working within the HIV and community services sector, seeking input towards program and policy development as well as participation for research projects lead by a number of agencies, including the Australasian Society for HIV Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM), AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON), Living Positive Victoria and ViiV Healthcare.

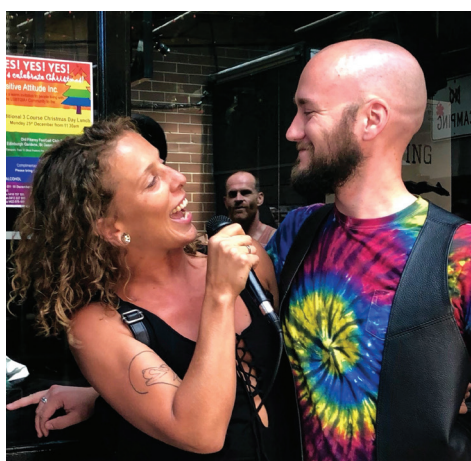
"I feel privileged to be the coordinator of the NSW PLDI Alumni group. New South Wales has nearly 40 members representing the geographic and demographic diversity of the body positive. How we continue to develop as a group to maximise the benefits of the PLDI workshop for participants and the body positive more generally is a truly exciting possibility."

Bill Patterson, New South Wales PLDI Coordinator



"I see the role of the PLDI alumni coordinator as critical to continuing to engage and motivate a diverse range of graduates post-course. By helping plan events and creating initiatives, we're acting as a bridge between an incredible workshop experience and a community of alumni."

Adam Ehm, Victorian PLDI Alumni Coordinator



“My experience at PLDI inspired me to take a more active leadership role in my local leather community.

A part of my role as Laird Leatherman is to be an ambassador for our community and to raise money for a cause close to my heart.

This year at the Planet Positive Summer Social I had the absolute pleasure of announcing that we’ll be raising money for Positive Women Victoria. PLDI had no small part in that, as the positive women I met during that weekend challenged and inspired me.”

James Addinsall, Victoria

In my community

A core belief of PLDI is that building stronger leaders builds stronger communities. The powerful reflections we received from graduates this year highlight their achievements and the positive impact they have made in their communities since their workshops.

“I had the privilege of attending the Positive Leadership Development Institute (PLDI) training on the weekend of 24-26 February 2017. I will say it is worth so much. I attended with strangers, left with people who we now call each other family. This workshop gave me the confidence to take my involvement in the community to a new level and am now on the board of NAPWHA. I can’t recommend this experience enough!”

Danny Ryding, Australian Capital Territory

“Under the guidance of the amazing facilitators and my fellow 11 workshop participants (including three women), I was inspired to embrace the next stage in my journey as an HIV advocate, especially for women. The PLDI workshop equipped me with a higher level of skill as I continue to use my voice to break down stigma. I was both inspired and emotionally moved learning all that came before us; learning about all those who fought and died for us.”

Heather Ellis, Victoria

PLDI Team 2016-17

Workshop Facilitators

Andrew Birtwistle-Smith
Brent Clifton
Vic Perri
Sarah Feagan
Tawhanga Nopera
Nic Holas
Richard Keane
Charlie Tredway
Steve McVey
Sharon Vaughn
Paula

Alumni Coordinators

Bill Patterson (NSW)
Adam Ehm (VIC)
Matt Hall (QLD)
Hannamoa Drew (WA)
Ryan Oliver (WA)

Workshop Coordinator

Timothy Krulic

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