

Co.As.It.

Annual Report 2025



Acknowledgment of Country

Co.As.It. pays respect to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters across which we operate. We acknowledge their continued connection to Country and Community.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and their commitment to their people and cultures.



Co.As.It. Italian Association of Assistance was established in 1968 to promote and assist the growing number of migrants arriving in Australia.

Co.As.It. has grown to offer language classes to adults and children as well as care services. Co.As.It. also runs an independent primary school, the Italian Bilingual School in Italian and English.



Our Mission

lifelong learning & support

Our Italian heritage enables us to meet the diverse and evolving needs of the community by enhancing quality of life and providing opportunities for lifelong learning.

Our Values

Loyalty

Aspiring to reach our organisational objectives by being faithful to and proud of, our pioneers, our heritage and our history.

Dignity

Maintaining a culture and working environment in which there is equal opportunity, profound respect, where staff, clients, learners and supporters are understood and appreciated.

Integrity

Acting with integrity in exercising Leadership and Governance while being responsible and accountable for our behaviour; ensuring our decisions are transparent and ethical.

Wellbeing

Promoting initiatives and providing support that achieve physical, social and emotional well-being for our clients, staff, learners and volunteers.

Responsiveness

Meeting our clients' changing needs by challenging the status quo, being innovative, adaptive, supportive and responsive.

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President’s Message

It is with great pleasure that I present the Co.As.It. Annual Report for 2025 and reflect on a year of significant achievement, growth, and impact across our organisation.

Since 1968, Co.As.It. has stood as a pillar of the Italian Australian community, preserving our rich cultural heritage while fostering meaningful connections within the broader community. In 2025, we continued to uphold this mission with dedication and purpose, delivering programs and initiatives that strengthened community engagement, education, and support services.

Our calendar of events, including concerts, cultural tours, festivals, and community initiatives, brought people together and celebrated the vibrancy of Italian culture. A highlight of the year was the Italian National Ball, held on 31 May in celebration of Festa della Repubblica, which once again proved to be a memorable and successful occasion for our community.

Within Community Services, we successfully navigated a period of sector reform with the introduction of the new Aged Care Act and the transition to the Support at Home program. Despite these changes, we achieved strong growth and expanded our reach, delivering essential services that support older clients to live independently, while continuing to invest in programs that promote wellbeing, social connection, and early intervention for young people.

Our Education Services continued to thrive, reinforcing Co.As.It.’s position as a leader in Italian language education in NSW. Through strengthened partnerships with Italian institutions, innovative teaching programs, and global recognition of our initiatives, we supported thousands of students across all age groups. From school-based programs to adult learning and professional

development for teachers, our commitment to excellence in education remains unwavering.

The Italian Bilingual School remains a cornerstone of our educational offering, delivering outstanding bilingual education enriched by strong international connections and cultural immersion. Students continued to excel academically while benefiting from a holistic learning environment that fosters cultural identity, global awareness, and personal growth.

These achievements are a testament to the dedication, professionalism, and passion of our staff, volunteers and partners. I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who contributes to the success of Co.As.It., and to our community for its ongoing support and trust. To our partners, government agencies, sponsors, schools, and stakeholders, we value your collaboration and unwavering support and belief in our mission.

A heartfelt acknowledgment goes to Thomas Camporeale for his exceptional contributions throughout the year. His commitment and dedication have not gone unnoticed, and we are deeply grateful for his tireless efforts.

Last but certainly not least, I extend my deepest appreciation to the Co.As.It. Board: Frank Chiment (Vice President), Paul Dovico (Treasurer), Lou Bacchiella (Secretary), Maria Pirrello, Ben Sonogo, Linda Restuccia, Romano Di Donato, Lina Di Donato and Rose Megale. Their leadership, wisdom, and dedication have steered the organisation through both challenges and successes, ensuring that Co.As.It. continues to thrive and make a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve.

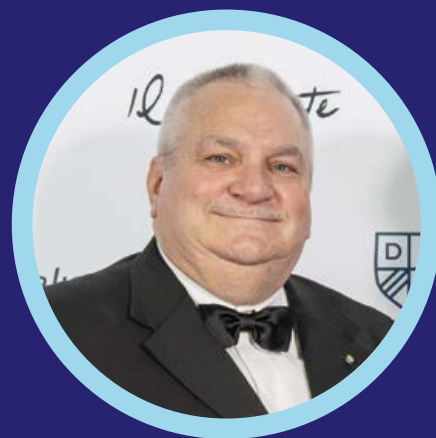
As we look ahead, we do so with optimism, ambition, and a renewed sense of purpose. Together, we will continue

to innovate while staying true to our values, compassion, connection, and community.

I commend to you the 2025 Co.As.It. Annual Report and I look forward to your continued support of our organisation.



Comm. **Lorenzo Fazzini**
President



General Manager’s Message

2025 has been a year of delivery, adaptation, and continued growth for Co.As.It., as we responded to evolving community needs while strengthening the way we operate across all service areas.

Within Community Services, the introduction of the new Aged Care Act and transition to the Support at Home program marked a significant shift in the sector. Our focus this year has been on ensuring a smooth and compliant transition, strengthening our internal frameworks, and maintaining continuity of care for our clients. Our Home Care Packages (HCP) and Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) underwent their 3 yearly Quality Review in April 2025. The audit was a great success and not only were we deemed to be compliant in all of the Aged Care Quality Standards, but we were also acknowledged by the ACQSC as a Quality Provider with no further recommendations for improvement. Through the dedication of our team, we have not only maintained service quality but expanded our reach, supporting more individuals with tailored, person-centred care.

Across our Education portfolio, we have continued to invest in innovation, quality teaching, and accessibility. Our programs have evolved to better support learners at every stage, from early education through to adult learning, supported by improved digital platforms, contemporary resources, and strong engagement from both students and educators. Our work in professional development has also ensured that teachers are equipped with the tools and knowledge to deliver high-quality language education in an increasingly dynamic environment.

The Italian Bilingual School continues to demonstrate the strength of a dynamic and future-focused

education model. With a strong emphasis on both academic achievement and student wellbeing, the school nurtures confident and curious global citizens, grounded in a strong sense of cultural identity.

In cultural engagement, we proudly delivered a calendar of events that brought people together in celebration. Cultural initiatives remained a cornerstone of our work, with flagship events like the Italian National Ball and the Norton Street Italian Festa drawing record attendance and reinforcing our shared identity. Our collaborations with Italian institutions, local councils and community groups have enriched these events and expanded their reach.

None of this would be possible without our incredible team, partners, supporters, and the community we proudly serve. Thank you for your continued trust, support and collaboration. I look forward to another year of connection, care, and cultural pride.

I would like to particularly acknowledge the leadership and support of our Management Team - Sara Villella, Anita Bonanno, Luana Campione, Helen Hafda, Maria Angelatos and Vivien Zhong, whose commitment and professionalism underpin the success of our organisation.

I thank the Board of Directors for their constant guidance, support and for the trust they have placed in me. The Board provides the vision that drives the organisation and works tirelessly to ensure it is delivered.

To our President, Lorenzo Fazzini, your passion for this community is inspiring. Thank you for your continued support this year and for your leadership in guiding the organisation forward, particularly in navigating

challenges with integrity and determination. As we look to the future, we remain committed to strengthening our services, expanding our reach, and continuing to celebrate and promote Italian language and culture across New South Wales with pride and purpose.



Cav. **Thomas Camporeale**
General Manager



A History Of Co.As.It.



1968

Co.As.It. (Comitato Assistenza Italiani) was established in Sydney by the Italian Consul General of the time, Dott. Guido Natali, during a meeting held on 28 May 1968 at the premises of the Scalabrinian Fathers in Surry Hills.



1971

The Italian Government committed itself to contribute funding towards the preservation of the Italian language and culture among the children of migrants.



1983

Co.As.It. becomes a registered charity and incorporated under the NSW Companies.



1998

Italian President Scalfaro officially opens Casa d'Italia building at 67 Norton Street Leichhardt.



2002

The Italian Bilingual School (IBS) is established as the first school in Australia to provide a bilingual education in English and Italian.

2014

Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, visits the Italian Bilingual School on his inaugural visit of Australia.



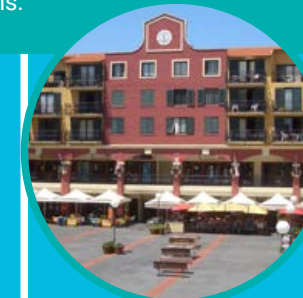
2013

Following growth and demand for our education services, the Italian Bilingual School moves to a larger campus in Meadowbank.



2015

Co.As.It. acquires the Italian Forum Cultural Centre, the heart of Sydney's Little Italy, to promote and preserve Italian language and culture through performance and community programs.



2018

Co.As.It. celebrates 50 years of service to the Italian-Australian community in NSW. 650 people attend the 50th Anniversary of the Italian National Ball at the Overseas Passenger Terminal, an iconic venue in the history of Italian migration to Sydney.



Future

With over 1080 service clients and over 9000 students across NSW, we're excited to continue the growth and promotion of Italian culture while providing meaningful support for the community.



2026

As Co.As.It. heads into 2026, it brings its continued care and commitment to the community. We bring with us our dedicated staff who ensure that services, education, and cultural connection are our top priorities.



2021

Co.As.It., with Andrea De Felip, Consul General of Italy in Sydney, celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Italian Republic with the projection of the Italian flag onto the sails of the iconic Opera House.

2025 At A Glance

Education Highlights



	Number of Adult class enrolments	609
	Number of Insertion courses	385
	Number of Language Assistant hours	15,222

	Number of students in Insertion program	8,340
	Number of OSH centres	14
	Number of CELI certificates	48

Community Services Highlights

	Total number of clients receiving a service	1,084
	Total Counselling Hours	913
	Total Home Care Hours	78,667
	Total CHSP (in-home hours)	13,060
	Total Social Support Group Hours	54,222
	Total client growth percentage	24.5%



Community Services

Teresa and Adamo

The story of Teresa and Adamo is as finely interwoven into the history of Leichhardt as one of their hand-crafted suits. Married for over 60 years, 46 of which were spent as tailors on Norton Street, Co.As.It. now supports them in their later years at home together.

Teresa has been receiving Personal Care, Nursing, Remedial Massage, and Meal Prep through Support At Home (SAH) for over 4 years. This support helps her remain at home, maintain her dignity, and enjoy her time together with family. The help they receive at home has been a welcome reprieve for both Teresa and her husband, especially after a lifetime of hard work. "I want to see that they are better off than me. And I can join them... the kids give you satisfaction. The grandchildren give you satisfaction."

Teresa was first diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in the 1990s, something many did not believe she would overcome. However, given her lifelong resilience, it wasn't until it more recently developed into lymphedema that she needed extra support to prevent her from falls. Given her complicated medical history, it was initially difficult to find carers and resources that could accommodate her needs. "It was more about connecting with your audience... thank God there's people [at Co.As.It.] who understand. The nurses that come... and the lymphedema specialist... recommended through you [Co.As.It.]... Fantastic."

While the decline in her mobility has made her daily tasks a little more difficult, the support from her Co.As. It. Care Partners and service staff has made all the difference in ensuring she receives the care she needs without having to give up her independence.

Adamo has been receiving Domestic Assistance and Socialisation Support through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) for about six months. As a doting husband to his wife's care needs, and a renowned tailor in his day, having someone to help around the house has been a change that has taken some getting used to.

Now 90 years old, though not something you could easily tell by his vitality, Teresa attributes his good health to a lifelong commitment to his work and family. "[He'd] always watch what he ate and what he drank for the simple reason that he said, how can I tell the client now I'm not feeling well?"

Learning his trade at 12 years old in Torino, it became a passion he continued with his wife when they settled in Australia. It's understandable that he finds it difficult to give up when managing your care needs becomes a larger part of your lifestyle. The socialisation support programs Adamo receives through Co.As.It. provide a welcome outlet for his continued energy. "He would never go for a walk along the beach. But, give him 100 people [and] he'd go in there and say hello to everybody."

Since connecting with Co.As.It.'s services, Teresa and Adamo have had more time to spend with each other, their family, and their friends without having to worry too much about managing their allied health and domestic service needs. Their stories are the stories of many of their generation, unique in their own way but deserving of being shared. Co.As.It. is proud to assist clients like Teresa and Adamo maintain their independence and carry on their legacy in comfort.



Support at Home

The Support at Home (SAH) Program commenced on 1 November 2025, replacing the former Home Care Packages (HCP) Program. The SAH program was introduced in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care and was one of the driving forces for the implementation of the New Aged Care Act. The program is similar in nature to the former Home Care Packages Program whereby the scope of the program is to provide in home support to older Australians to continue living independently in their own home.

They key difference between the SAH and HCP program is that under the new SAH program, participants are issued a quarterly budget, and are no longer able to accumulate unspent funds indefinitely. Participants can also only access services that they have been approved to access in accordance with their My Aged Care Support Plan.

Former HCP participants have been granted "grandfathering rights", in which a no worse off principle was applied for access to care and service. Despite the challenges of implementing a new aged care support service, we achieved a growth of 24% and were able to provide more support to more older Australians requiring support.

Throughout 2025, our dedicated team of staff provided:

22,717 hours
of Personal Care

13,801 hours
of Domestic Assistance

23,478 hours
of Community Engagement

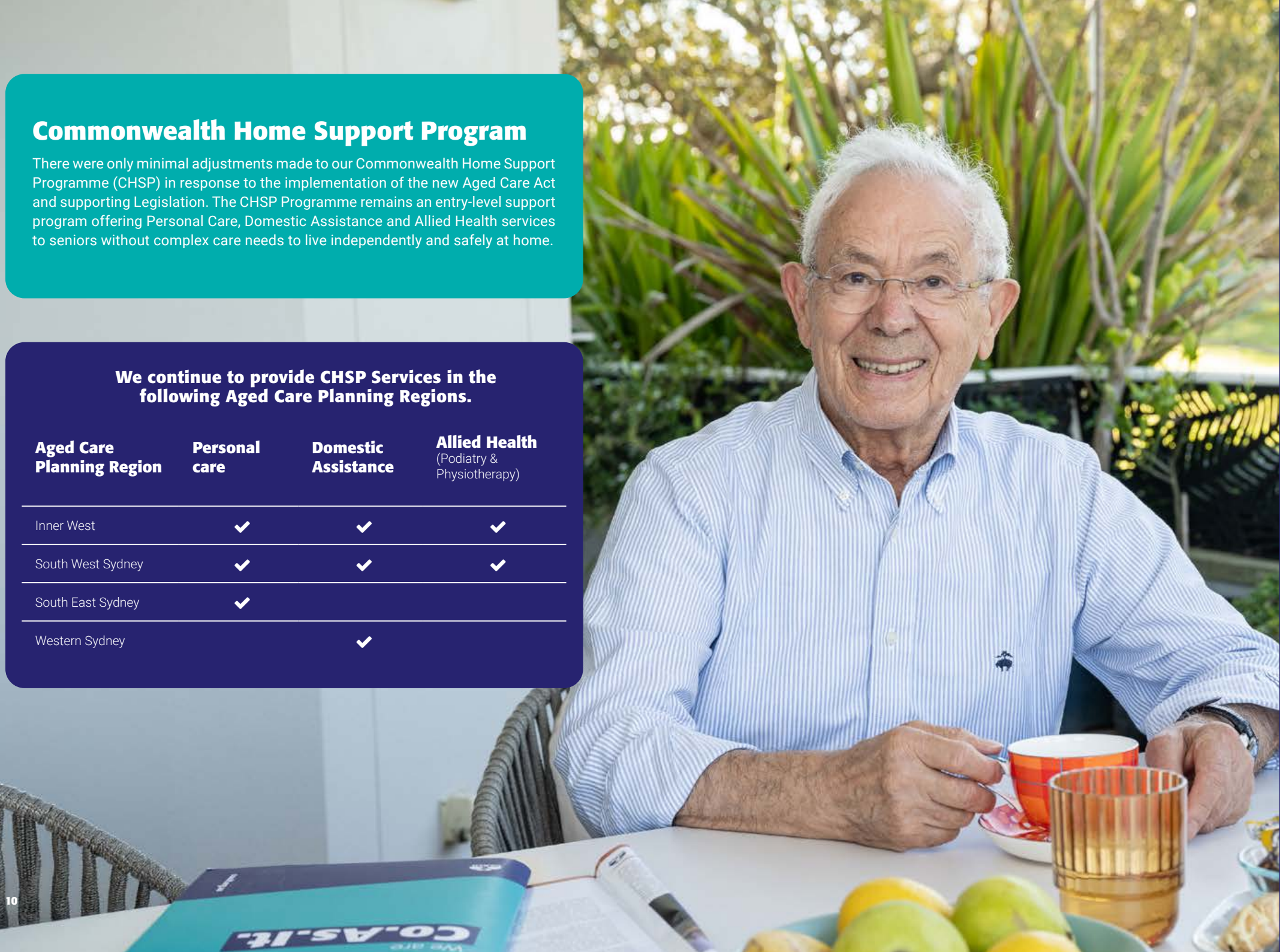
10,745 hours
of Allied Health Services

5,670 hours
of Respite

3,240 hours
of Meal Preparation

2,991 hours
of Gardening

1,048 hours
of Clinical Care Services



Commonwealth Home Support Program

There were only minimal adjustments made to our Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) in response to the implementation of the new Aged Care Act and supporting Legislation. The CHSP Programme remains an entry-level support program offering Personal Care, Domestic Assistance and Allied Health services to seniors without complex care needs to live independently and safely at home.

We continue to provide CHSP Services in the following Aged Care Planning Regions.

Aged Care Planning Region	Personal care	Domestic Assistance	Allied Health (Podiatry & Physiotherapy)
Inner West	✓	✓	✓
South West Sydney	✓	✓	✓
South East Sydney	✓		
Western Sydney		✓	

Paola

Since she first settled here in 1956, Paola has called Lidcombe home. Now at 99 years old, it has been a place where she built a community of friends and family. From the growing of fresh produce at home to making her own soap, pickled vegetables, and pasta sauce, she has used tradition as the social glue of her life. Even though many of her friends have passed, she maintains an enviable vigour for life, especially when joined by her daughter and her Co.As.It. ACVVS volunteer, Maria.

While she receives regular support from her family and through Co.As.It. home care services, the visits from Maria connect her to a time that, as she has gotten older, is not always easy to find. From conversation shared across dialects, to coffee, and even home-baking, it is an opportunity for her to reminisce in a tangible way. “At my age, I don’t see too many people at home but when there’s a bit of company, I don’t feel old.”

Despite her age, Paola’s mind remains as sharp as ever, especially when it comes to preparing biscotti di mandorle. Even with the recipe written down, she still relies on her own judgement, making adjustments to her taste, and in the end, making something better than those you buy in the shop. “I like to mix with these people because there’s a story there” says Maria, “There’s a lot to learn from them, the way they do things.” It’s this sharing of knowledge that highlights the importance of these visits, not just for Paola, but for Maria too.

Like many women of her generation, a sense of belonging through action, whether through cooking, conversation, or connecting with the community is what really brings them joy in life. That she can connect with someone in her own dialect has created a special bond that she and her family appreciate most about the program. “Everyone is learning Italian now, but I still speak dialect... sometimes people don’t understand. I’ve been writing all these [Calabrese] sayings, so they know them.”

With the Aged Care Volunteers Visitors Scheme, relationships like Paola and Maria’s keep cherished Italian traditions alive while reducing the loneliness that can occur as we age, one biscotti at a time.

“At my age, I don’t see too many people at home but when there’s a bit of company, I don’t feel old.”

Aged Care Volunteer Visitor Scheme (ACVVS)

Our Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme has continued to attract new volunteers and recipients, and we have welcomed many new volunteers to our team. We have provided over 760 hours of companionship to more than 80 socially isolated seniors residing in a Residential Aged Care Facility or in their own homes.



Francesca

Francesca, 93, has maintained a vigour for life that many can admire. Now a great grandmother, she can attribute her continued good health to a positive attitude and an enjoyment for life's simple pleasures – something she experience during her Group Based Activities. "I enjoy the group. I'm always happy, always funny. Laughing's very good medicine."

Francesca has been coming to Co.As.It's groups for over five years, joining many other Sutherland based Italian's at specially vetted seniors' centres where they can enjoy a coffee, lunch, and activities like bingo, cards, or light exercises. "Very rarely do I miss a group, I like it, I like to socialise and it's a day I can enjoy. I think it's important."

Her group recently moved to St. Nicholas Senior Centre in Punchbowl which, though a bit far, is a venue she appreciates given the quality of the food, the amenities, and that the Co.As.It. bus can pick her up from home. It something she finds reflects the commitment of the Co.As.It. staff and care workers. "[They're] very nice. [They] do a lot of organisation...and it's good that they've been able to get us here, where it's better."

The only thing she hasn't enjoyed about the group is that she's yet to win a game of bingo...

With her early life marked by displacement from her homes in Libya and Italy, having a grounding network of friends provides her with comfort in her later years. Co.As.It's

groups have offered her a chance to connect to her roots and feel a sense of belonging in a relaxed environment, where she can enjoy the contentment that comes from community. "Everyday is a bonus, [you] have to make fun sometimes. That's why they call me cheeky. I'm the cheeky one!"



"Very rarely do I miss a group, I like it, I like to socialise and it's a day I can enjoy. I think it's important."



Group Based Activities

In 2025, we welcomed a new approach to our Group Based Activities program following a comprehensive consultation process in 2024 in preparation for the new Aged Care Act and supporting legislations.

We implemented additional Active Ageing Groups, where participants play a crucial role in determining the weekly outings and activities. The focus of our Active Ageing Groups is healthy ageing, and our participants engage in outings that focus and foster physical activity such as walks, visits to museums etc. These groups differ from our more traditional models of meeting at a community centre or hall.

We also strengthened our Centre Based Respite Groups, which cater for carers who require a break from their caring roles. We have partnered with a new Residential Care Facility and deliver these groups from a venue that is secure whilst providing unlimited access to indoor and outdoor areas throughout the day. These groups provide carers with the peace of mind that their loved ones are being cared for in an environment that meets their unique care needs.

Our Group Based Activities remain one of our most sought-after services and we provided 38,740 hours of group-based activities in 2025.

Mariella

Mariella first heard about Co.As.It's Youth & Family Program when our Project Officer introduced the Transition to High School program to her school. The Transition to High School program was developed out of the Department of Communities and Justices' Targeted Early Intervention program (TEI) with the goal of equipping young students as they enter their next stage of learning. "School sometimes takes a lot of effort; I found it difficult to enjoy time with friends when there was pressure about the next test or big school thing." These kinds of concerns, sometimes leading to early burnout, can lead to serious issues down the track as students take on more responsibility and become more independent.

At first, Mariella was hesitant to take part in the program as she didn't feel comfortable expressing these concerns out loud. "My friends and I talk about what's bothering us all the time, I'm not going to go through personal things with some stranger..." Paired with a common sentiment that she was too young to have 'real' problems, she did not think the program would be for her.

By creating more digestible workshops, focused on building healthy relationships and boundaries, preparing for high school, and discussing concerns about their challenges ahead, Mariella felt the program was more approachable. It no longer seemed like classwork but an open dialogue that valued their perspectives. "I felt seen and understood for once. The facilitator helped me through my worries, and it was awesome having someone to talk to."

Now nearing the end of her secondary education, Mariella no longer needs the Transition to High School program, but she still engages with the Youth & Family Program. Working collaboratively with other community organisations, such as the Peer Bridge Program and Headspace, Co.As.It. has continued to provide outlets for young adults navigating the difficulties of modern life.

Youth and Family Program

Following the positive impact our Youth and Family Program has had on the community, we were able to secure another 5.5-year contract with the Department of Community and Justice. We have continued to work in partnership with Metro Assist, Stepping Stone, and Headspace Ashfield including to deliver much needed programs within the Targeted Early Intervention Framework. This framework seeks to deliver flexible support to young people to identify and address the challenges they face early on, fostering resilience and preventing more serious issues later in life. Our activities include a series of workshops, playgroups, one-on-one support for job seekers and participation at community events such as NAIDOC week.

Counselling Programs

Our community was once again impacted by another tragic event at Bondi. We worked closely with the Italian Consulate to assist the Italian-Australian Community that were impacted by the acts of terror that unfolded at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025.

The team continued to be active in community engagement activities, and we held a Mental Health Week event in October 2025. The team maintained a regular presence on the weekly radio program Spazio Giovani on Rete Italia, to raise awareness for mental health, domestic violence, drug and alcohol awareness issues.

Education Services

In 2025, Co.As.It. taught Italian to over 8300 children in State and Catholic schools, 300 children in Out of School Hour centres and over 600 adults in evening classes studied Italian in Co.As.It. programs. Through Co.As.It.'s support, Italian continued to be one of the most widely taught languages in NSW primary and secondary schools.

The ongoing success of Co.As.It.'s Education Programs can be attributed to the longstanding partnership with the Italian Government, through the Italian Consulate Sydney and the Embassy of Italy, our partnering NSW schools, and our dedicated teaching staff.



National Teacher's Conference

For *Settimana della lingua italiana*, Co.As.It. hosted the tenth National Italian Teachers' Conference in Sydney at the Italian Forum, with a number of teachers in attendance. *Settimana della lingua italiana* is an Italian government initiative dedicated to the promotion and celebration of the Italian language in the world. The theme for 2025 was "*Italofoonia: lingua oltre i confini*". The conference was organised by Co.As.It. to better assist teachers in the teaching of Italian in Australian primary and high schools.

With Ambassador Paolo Crudele and Console Gianluca Rubagotti in attendance, we were delighted to welcome distinguished keynote speakers:

- Professor Silvia Gilardoni, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan
- Professor Antonia Rubino, The University of Sydney
- Professor John Kinder, Emeritus Professor of Italian Studies at the University of Western Australia

The conference was a truly valuable experience for the professional development and exchange for all Italian language teachers working in Australia.



Partnerships with Italian Schools and Universities

In 2025, Co.As.It. continued to develop and expand its network of partnerships with schools and universities in Italy to support and enhance our work in the promotion of the study of Italian language and culture in NSW.

Two new Italian partner universities joined the Italian Language Assistant Program: Università degli Studi di Udine and Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara. These agreements will ensure Co.As.It. continues to be at the forefront of Italian language education in NSW, shaping the future of language learning by providing innovative learning programs and timely support to those wishing to learn Italian: from preschool children through to adult learners.

Painting With Stone – The Melocco Walking Tours

Co.As.It. collaborated with the Melocco family to lead guided walking tours of the key historical works across Sydney to celebrate the launch of Painting with Stone: The Story of the Melocco Brothers, a book highlighting the contribution of the brothers to the artistic development of Sydney's landscape. The work of Melocco brothers is embedded in the architecture of Australia in mosaic, terrazzo, sgraffito, scagliola and many derivations of this ancient art. Tours started in June 2025 and, due to their popularity, are ongoing.



Co.As.It. Annual Awards Night

Each year, we celebrate the achievements in the study of the Italian language of all Co.As.It. students. The Italian Consul General Dott. Gianluca Rubagotti, Prof. Antonia Rubino, and the Director of the Italian Institute of Culture, Sydney Marco Gioacchini, were special guests, and presented prizes and certificates to the students.

Awards were given for the successful achievement and accomplishment of our students in the following categories:

- Co.As.It. Competition
- Premio in Classe
- The Minister's Awards for Excellence
- CELI Adolescenti
- CELI Adults
- CILS Bambini/Ragazzi
- The University of Siena scholarship
- IBS Year 6 Graduation
- CONI (Italian Olympic Committee)

Premio In Classe

Premio In Classe is the first national Italian language competition that seeks to promote the Italian language and culture to secondary school students through the engaging medium of film.

A total of 7 Co.As.It./IBS students won the 2025 Premio in Classe Competition. Five OSH Leichhardt Secondary students received State Winner and National Winner prizes, two Italian Bilingual School students received the State Winner prizes for Prep to Year 2 and Year 3 to Year 6.



NSW Department of Education Minister's Awards 2025

The NSW Education Minister's Awards for Excellence honour the achievements of outstanding students from community languages schools. This year our students were awarded Commended and Merit certificates.

Professional Development Program

Co.As.It. works closely with its teachers and educators to ensure they meet the expectations of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Our support of Italian teachers ensures they obtain and maintain accreditation by providing access to teacher-identified and NESA registered professional development programs.

The professional development program collaborates with key organisations and international and national practitioners through the application of language competency courses to maintain Co.As.It.'s high education standards. Teachers were also provided access to contemporary teaching and learning resources via an online learning management system designed to support the teaching of Italian in NSW.

In 2025, the Professional Learning Program focused on developing teachers' skills in engaging students in language learning and included the following:

- Co.As.It. teacher induction and training program
- First Aid and Child Safety training
- SICLE Courses in Community Language Teaching for teachers
- The National Italian Teachers Conference held in Sydney during the *Settimana della Lingua Italiana*.



Programs for Children

Alessia

Italian has always been a central part of Alessia Savi's life, with the language and culture shaping her journey across both Italy and Australia. After beginning preschool in Italy at just 18 months old, Alessia later moved to Australia with her family, navigating the school system while maintaining strong ties to her Italian heritage through Co.As.It.'s Out of School Hours program and her studies of Italian in high school.

Alessia credits her knowledge of dialect with helping her learn Italian more deeply, saying it "helps you connect a lot more". Her family's migration story has also strongly influenced her identity. Her grandfather migrated from Le Marche to Australia in 1950 at the age of 18, later returning to Italy to marry before settling permanently in Australia. Reflecting on this experience, Alessia's mother

Diane speaks of the challenges many migrants faced in staying connected to their culture and language.

With the support of a bilingual household and a strong commitment to preserving both Australian and Italian identities, Alessia developed a deep appreciation for the language and culture. Her mother explains, "When we travel to Italy, if there's no communication, you're not going to enjoy it. So therefore, we had to ensure that she learned the language well."

Alessia's dedication led to exceptional academic success, achieving First in State for both Italian Continuers and Italian Extension while still in Year 11. Her confidence in the language has inspired ambitions to study medicine in Rome, combining her passion for science with her desire to help others. "I love biology, chemistry, I love the

sciences, but I also want to make people feel the most confident versions of themselves and make them happy," she says.

Alessia's story highlights the many benefits of bilingualism. Through the support of Co.As.It.'s programs, dedicated teachers and her bilingual upbringing, she not only mastered Italian but also developed skills in French and Spanish. Most importantly, her journey reflects a deep appreciation for Italian language and culture, and a commitment to preserving this heritage for future generations.



Out of School Hours (OSH)

Co.As.It.'s Out of School Hours Program (OSH), one of our oldest organisational initiatives, has enabled generations of primary and secondary aged students to learn Italian language and culture across NSW.

Through a combination of digital teaching tools and learning resources, we ensure students develop their knowledge of the Italian language, as well as developing an appreciation of Italian culture through cultural activities and literary competitions. Over 300 students were enrolled in the OSH Program across 14 centres in Sydney.

Language Assistant Program

Each year, Italy's Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, (*Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale*) funds education programs for the promotion of Italian language and culture. In 2025, Co.As.It. received funding for the Language Assistant Program and Extracurricular Courses and Activities. This funding enabled over 8300 students to continue learning Italian in NSW schools and ensuring over 300 students access Italian language programs in after school centres.

Co.As.It. also welcomed 12 language assistants from universities across Italy who were employed to work across 36 NSW primary and secondary schools, providing valuable support to teachers and students. They also worked on the development of language teaching and learning materials, which were distributed to all Insertion schools via the Co.As.It. Learning Portal.



Insertion Program

Co.As.It.'s Insertion program follows the NSW K-10 Italian Syllabus and provides quality instruction to thousands of students in State, Catholic and Independent schools. In 2025, three new contribution schools joined the program, taking the total to 36 schools, providing support to 99 teachers across schools in NSW. Insertion classes are conducted by qualified teachers of Italian with recognised teaching qualifications and accreditation to teach by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Students are also guided towards the certification of their language level through the support of Italian language assistants and the provision of additional lessons.



Programs for Adults

George

George's story with Co.As.It's adult Italian classes is almost as long as his family history. A mix of the Mediterranean, with ties to Greece, Italy, and Turkey, he grew up with Italian being one of the main languages he would hear at home. "My mother and all her siblings, all spoke Italian, because they went to an Italian school in Greece... [and] we used to live up in Darlinghurst, during the 60s, and I remember my mother speaking to the Italian tradesmen that would work for my father and being enchanted by the smell of the local Italian deli."

He made his first trip to Italy in 1977 and immediately fell in love with the culture and the people. These trips would become a frequent occurrence for him, "I've got this thing called extreme Italianism ...you first go to a place, and you feel like it's home." It has been a love affair for him ever since with the language, food, and music, especially opera, being key motivations in a well-travelled life.

He started his first class at Co.As.It. in 2011 and, given his passion for learning, has been continuing to join classes, on-and-off, ever since. "I've been here going on to 15 years and I've yet to see a bad teacher. You have very good teachers. They're all very high standard. It's a case [where] you don't mind making mistakes because you'll learn from

your mistake and they'll support you on that journey. There's that culture in these classes where everybody contributes, everybody [can] make mistakes, but everybody learns."

Starting at A1.2, his goal was never really to meet any certain skill level in Italian. In fact, he recalls feeling intimidated when first meeting a B2.2 speaker, thinking he'd never make it to that level.

George can now boast that he's C2 level speaker.

What kept him coming back was the authentic Italian experience at Co.As.It., something that he could gain through our language courses, culture classes, and conversation courses. "With the Italian class[es] at Co.As.It., I'm continuously learning. It's great! And it's also a social thing, you tend to mix with the people [in the different classes], it's a good feeling."

What's next on the agenda for George? Well, after all these years he might try for his CELI certification, to have "something nice to hang on the wall".

"Even when I do get it," he promised, "I'll still come!"

"I've been here going on to 15 years and I've yet to see a bad teacher. You have very good teachers"

Certification

Co.As.It. is an official Exam Centre for CELI (*Certificazione Lingua Italiana*), DILS (*Didattica in Lingua Straniera*) and CILS (*Certificazione di Italiano come Lingua Straniera*) and delivers quality preparatory courses for all learners of Italian wishing to sit official exams to obtain these internationally recognised certifications. The Università per Stranieri di Perugia issues CELI and DILS while CILS is issued by the Università per Stranieri di Siena.

These certifications are all recognised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and the Italian Ministry of Education, and are a necessary requirement all applicants seeking Italian Citizenship.

Co.As.It. is the only exam centre in Australia for CELI, DILS and CILS.

Italian Classes

In 2025, 609 adults enrolled in Italian classes for adults. Co.As.It.'s Italian Program for adults is based on the internationally recognised Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The program includes lessons, self-access materials and a tutoring service via a Learning Management System (LMS), to ensure participants have all the necessary tools to develop the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as developing their understanding of Italian culture.

The Italian Adult Course Program also offers opportunities for students to continue their study of Italian language and culture in Italy. The innovative structure of the program provides students with the freedom to choose learning materials most relevant to them.

Conversation classes and cultural events are also offered to further extend learning opportunities. The online conversation classes are designed to support students in improving their communication skills in a natural, fun and engaging environment with the aim of developing fluency in a practical capacity.

(02) 9564 0

Italian Bilingual School

In 2025, the Italian Bilingual School (IBS) continued its ethos of Excellence through Bilingualism through its academic, community, and cultural programs. This year our students accomplished their goals both locally and abroad as our international partnerships provided an opportunity to explore and connect within a multicultural environment.

NAPLAN

The 2025 NAPLAN results for both Year 3 and Year 5 were excellent with students performing well above the National and State average in all areas tested.

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	401	448	421	412	406
Year 5	532	560	548	555	551

- Well above selected school's average when compared to all Australian students
- Above selected school's average when compared to all Australian students

CLI-IBS Test – Competenza in lingua italiana

The CLI-IBS Test is a school-based competence test in Italian that allows us to keep track of the students’ progress in reading, writing and grammar in Italian. Students in Year 3 and Year 5 completed the tests with outstanding results.

International Competitions and Assessments of Schools (ICAS)

ICAS is a comprehensive skill-based educational assessment that is administered independently and is based on academic competencies with an added competitive element. Several students from the Italian Bilingual School took part in a range of ICAS competitions and achieved good results.

Jen

Mother of two sons, aged 8 and 10, Jen has an extraordinary passion for Italian language and culture. That’s why, despite not having an Italian background, she decided to enrol her boys into the Italian Bilingual School (IBS). “Rather than just dreaming about moving to Italy one day, I thought ‘let’s start the steps here while we can’. So, I started Googling all sorts of stuff on Italy and the language... and the Italian Bilingual School popped up.”

Despite their initial hesitation about signing up for an Italian school without an Italian background, Jen found the school’s staff and the welcoming culture quickly put those worries to rest. “I spoke to the principal, and she was just lovely, [she] gave me so much time. [When] I attended the open day and met the students, met the teachers, the staff, and we were just really impressed with the school.”

Her sons have also expressed how they have been welcomed into the culture at IBS, from the moment they step through the gates until it’s time for pick they note that, “everyone’s so happy and welcoming and says hello every morning”, and while this was similar at their old school, at IBS “it’s a different feeling”.

Even with a schedule where the school curriculum is split into Italian and English, she has found that her sons have not only adjusted but thrived in this new environment. “We call [the teachers] with any concerns to do with homework. They then invite us in for meetings. We sit with a collaborative approach between the parents and the school, and we work out ways to help them.” This level of attention is one of the unique advantages of a school like IBS, as the variety of teachers on staff and the smaller class sizes provide an opportunity for more supported learning.

She also notes that this support doesn’t just come from the staff, but from fellow students, as Jen recalls a story from one of her sons’ teachers: “A note was being passed to her son and [the teacher] thought they were just mucking around. But it was because [his friend] knew he would probably not understand what was being discussed. So, he wrote down the translation for him. And I thought, that’s so lovely.”

Academically, there are studies that support the benefits of bilingual education, identifying it as a way to activate neural pathways in a child’s mind when they’re most receptive of new concepts. Jen has noticed this benefit already. “I feel like they’re grasping English more effectively, since being here at the bilingual school. They’re also more confident... more empathetic... Their brain is waking up!”

While the family has only been with school for one term, Jen notes how well her sons are integrating already. Whether it be speaking Italian at home or singing Italian songs they learned at school, she notes that “their curiosity [in bilingualism] has been sparked” and their interest in learning has extended beyond the classroom. She hopes that eventually, through school and beyond, her sons will become fully bilingual.

“[Their] opportunities beyond just school will open up in terms of employment, travel, and relating to other cultures. Your whole world opens up when you’re bilingual.”

Sports Highlights

ASISSA

The Italian Bilingual School is a member of the All-Suburbs Independent School Sports Association (ASISSA). As part of this association, students compete in athletics, cross-country, swimming, and tennis. This association provides a representative pathway for elite athletes to progress to Combined Independent Schools (CIS) events.

ASISSA Cross Country

On Thursday 22 May, students from Year 2 to Year 6 travelled to Queen's Park at Bondi Junction to compete in the ASISSA cross country. All students involved pushed themselves to finish a very long run through the wet weather. Carter Carulli performed very well and was able to qualify for the CIS cross country held on the 12 June.

Bilingual School
excellence throughlingualism

ASISSA Swimming Carnival

The ASISSA Swimming carnival took place on Tuesday 18 March at the Waringah Aquatic Centre. Eight students made the trip to represent IBS, and all of the students gave their best effort. Jacob Yang was able to win four of the five events he was entered in and was rewarded with the age champion award for his age group. Jacob was selected to swim at the CIS carnival on March 26 and performed very well.

The other participants included:

- 50m Freestyle: Luca Scaltrito, Bianca Danieleto, Han Tofani, Isla Davies, Jacob Yang
- 50m Backstroke: Anna Yang, Jacob Yang, Ariel Ogilvie
- 50m Breaststroke: Han Tofani, Jacob Yang; 50m Butterfly: Jacob Yang
- 100m Freestyle: Jacob Yang

ASISSA Tennis Trials

On 14 February 2025, five IBS students Marc Gelao, Luca Lazzarin, Alessandro Fontana, Riccardo Arba, and Ariel Ogilvie participated in the ASISSA tennis trials. Marc Gelao and Luca Lazzarin were selected to represent ASISSA at the CIS tennis competition. All students were acknowledged for their efforts and dedication.

Jump Rope for Heart

In 2025, IBS students participated once again in Jump Rope for Heart. For more than 40 years, Jump Rope for Heart has helped to fund ground-breaking research that helps to fight heart disease.

Jump Rope for Heart helps to:

- Get kids moving, helping them to meet the Physical Activity and Exercise Guidelines for all Australians.
- Get kids excited about exercise, healthy eating and heart health.
- Transform kids into Heart Heroes, inspiring them to skip and raise funds that have the power to save Aussie hearts — including their own.

School Activities

IBS P&F

The IBS P & F Committee annually extends a warm welcome to parents, students, teachers, and friends to join the Committee and attend meetings as participants, increasing their involvement in the school community. P & F initiatives in 2025 included a Mother's Day stall, Father's Day stall, a Hot Cross Bun and Colomba di Pasqua sale, school disco and Crazy Hair Day. We're proud to have such an engaged P&F Committee at IBS to share in their children's academic and cultural education.

Anzac Day and Festa della Liberazione

On Thursday 1 May, IBS held a special assembly to commemorate both ANZAC Day and *La Festa della Liberazione*. For Italians, April 25 marks a celebratory date denoting the end of fascist occupation during World War 2. Given the overlap of ANZAC Day and *Festa della Liberazione*, this date becomes an experience in multicultural engagement as students not only learn about the significance of Italy's democratic journey but also a moment of respectful contemplation as they commemorate the cost of our freedoms.



Visiting Professors from Napoli

Italian Bilingual School students were fortunate to have the opportunity to receive a visit from three professors from Italy – Prof.ssa Federica De Rosa, Prof. Luigi Barletta and Prof. Fabio Dell'Aversana from L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Napoli. The purpose of their visit was to present a lesson on Paesaggio, Arte e Memoria: l'Italia raccontata dalle sue città'.

The Consul General Dott. Gianluca Rubagotti was also in attendance, organising this event from one of the most prestigious universities in Italy. The lesson focused on how Italian landscapes and art have shaped and influenced art through history, as well as the importance of protecting art as a gift from our forebears to be passed on to future generations. The children enjoyed seeing how different the landscape is in Italy from the north to the south.

Year 5 & 6 Camp

On Wednesday 2 April, the Year 5 and 6 students set off for their 2025 camp at the Greenhill Camp Centre near Canberra. While at the centre, students were able to enjoy the beautiful scenery, see the local wildlife and engage in exciting team building and leadership activities. They also visited the National Museum of Australia, where they were able to experience the immersive exhibition on Pompeii, including artefacts and interactive activities.





Kadul Performance

On Tuesday 29 July, IBS experienced a performance of Kadul with Ryka Ali exploring their heritage within the Yidinji clans of Cairns, the Kuku Yalinji clans of Mossman & the Torres Strait Islands. A winner in the Young, Black & Deadly Talent Quest (2003), he is a proud ambassador for Australia's Indigenous youth. The show was also a participatory experience with students exploring the use of various instruments, artefacts and costumes specific to the Islands. Ryka also taught the students dances and art significant to his Aboriginal culture, explaining its importance and the significance of the designs.

Science Week – “Decoding the Universe: Exploring the Unknown”

This year, National Science Week ran from Monday 11 to Friday 15 August with the theme for 2025 being ‘*Decoding the Universe – Exploring the unknown with nature’s hidden language.*’ “*Decoding the Universe*” empowers educators to inspire and engage students by exploring the mathematics and quantum science that underpin both the natural world and the modern technologies we use every day, from photosynthesis to satellite navigation. This theme served as a bridge between basic science education and the exploration of specialised topics. It allowed our students a chance to explore the idea that bilingualism isn’t just about words and letters.



Exhibition: Beyond Form - Voices, Visions and Innovations In Italian Design

On Friday 9 May, Year 6 students visited an exhibition “Beyond Form – Voices, Vision and Innovation in Italian Design” at the *Istituto Italiano Di Cultura*. The students viewed the exhibition and met the Italian Consul General, Dott. Gianluca Rubagotti. This was a unique opportunity for our students to learn about the intricacies and processes of Italian design.





CONI – Italian Olympic Committee Games

The CONI (Comitato Nazionale Italiano) Italian Olympic Committee Games is a multi-sport event for children under 13 in Italy. The event is organised in collaboration with CONI Sports organisations. The Games aim to encourage participation and 'healthy competitiveness' in sport, encompassing victory, as well as defeat, as essential components of individual growth. Every year, thousands of young athletes compete in the various regional competitions representing their Region at the Italian Olympic Games, socialising with other young people and getting to know new places and customs. The 10th edition of the Trofeo CONI summer edition was held from 28 to 30 September 2025 in Lignano Sabbiadoro, Friuli.

Australia was represented by a team comprised of IBS current students and IBS alumni with Italian heritage, who competed in soccer.

The project was linked to an initiative by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation 'Turismo di ritorno', a wonderful way to trace back to the roots of the voyage of people who left Italy many years ago in search of a future filled with big dreams.

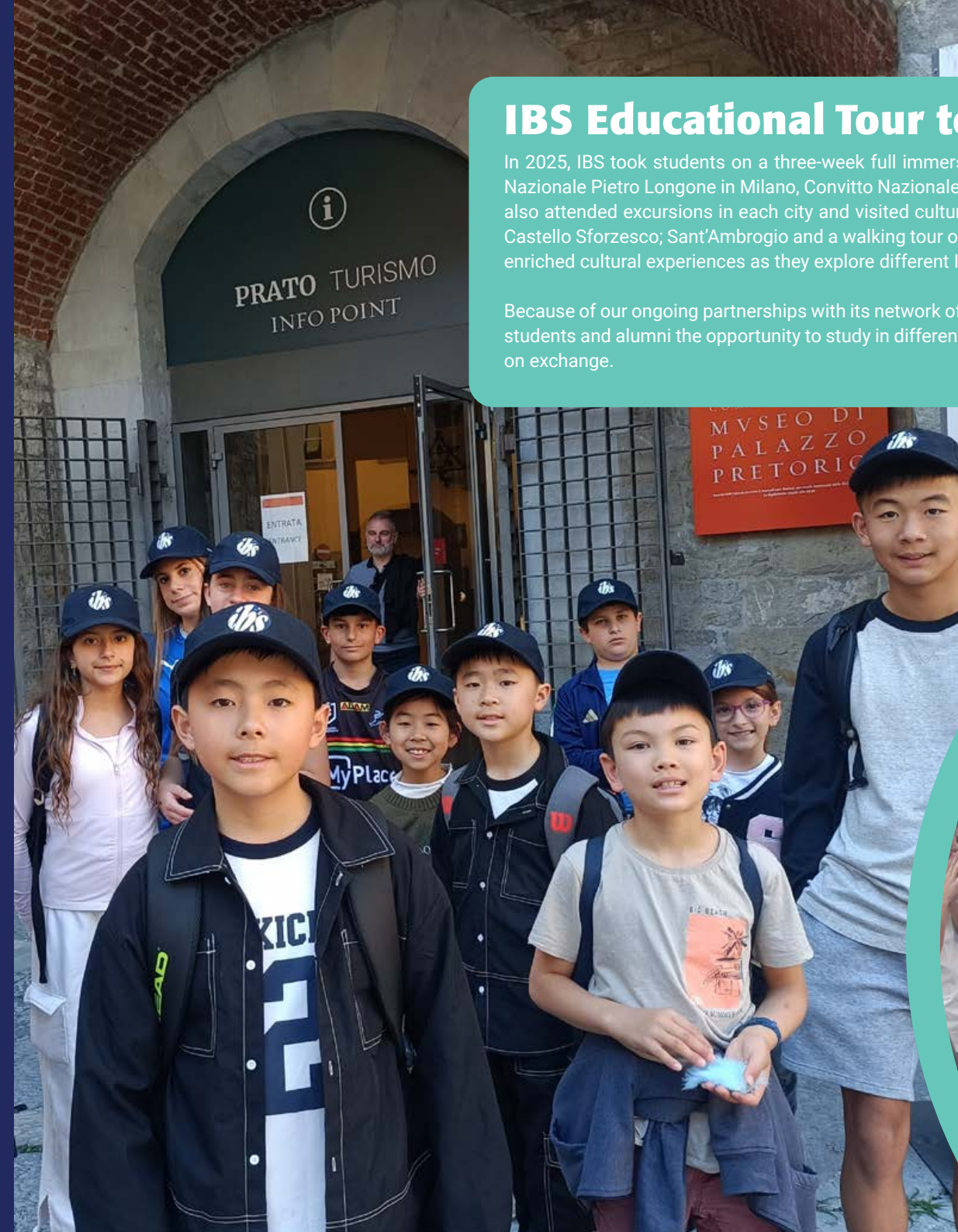
From playing soccer to meeting Italian and international students and visiting amazing places, students had the privilege of visiting the hometowns of many people who left Italy to go to other countries in the world.

Congratulations to the following students who represented Australia in the U13 CONI games – B. Danieleto, M. Danieleto, S. Facibeni, S. Facibeni, A. Formica, D. Frontini, M. Scamporlino, and A. Tesoro.

IBS Educational Tour to Italy

In 2025, IBS took students on a three-week full immersion study tour to Italy. Students visited our three Italian sister schools – Convitto Nazionale Pietro Longone in Milano, Convitto Nazionale Paolo Diacono in Cividale Del Friuli and Convitto Nazionale Cicognini in Prato. They also attended excursions in each city and visited cultural places such as the Museo della scienza e delle tecnologia; Pinacoteca di Brera, Castello Sforzesco; Sant'Ambrogio and a walking tour of the city of Cividale. Our partnerships with Italian schools provide our students with enriched cultural experiences as they explore different Italian regions.

Because of our ongoing partnerships with its network of sister schools, the Italian Bilingual School exchange program provides both current students and alumni the opportunity to study in different Italian regions, as well as giving Italian students the opportunity to come to Sydney on exchange.



Governance

Robust governance and a strong commitment to compliance underpin the work of Co.As.It., ensuring the delivery of trusted, high-quality services that respond to the evolving needs of our community. The Board provides strategic oversight of the organisation, maintaining effective systems that promote accountability and transparency while supporting long-term sustainability and future growth.

The Board's governance and compliance responsibilities are supported by input from a range of organisational committees, including:

- Risk Committee
- Finance Committee
- Clinical Governance Committee
- Quality Care Advisory Committee (Aged Care)
- Consumer Advisory Committee (Aged Care)

In 2025, Co.As.It. achieved strong outcomes, with three programs undergoing Departmental audits. The results were highly positive, confirming full compliance across all relevant departments, as outlined below.

- Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission - Quality Audit (April 2025) for the programs of:
 - Home Care Packages, and
 - Commonwealth Home Support Program
- NSW Education Standards Authority – Italian Bilingual School Registration (April 2025)
- Italian Bilingual School – Out of School Hours Care Program (September 2025).



Our Leadership Team

Board of Directors

Lorenzo Fazzini – President
Frank Chiment – Vice President
Paul Dovico – Treasurer
Lou Bacchiella – Secretary
Maria Pirrello – Director
Ben Sonogo – Director
Linda Restuccia – Director
Lina Di Donato – Director
Romano Di Donato – Director
Rose Megale – Director

Senior Management Team

Thomas Camporeale – General Manager
Sara Vilella – Head of Education & IBS Executive Principal
Anita Bonanno – Head of Community Services
Luana Campione – Human Resources Manager
Maria Angelatos – Governance and Compliance Manager
Helen Hafda – Marketing, Events, and Communication Manager
Vivien Zhong – Finance Manager

Christina Pasquariello – Business Services Manager until October 2025

Financial Summary

Thanks to the ongoing support of our community networks, Co.As.It. has been able to continue its programs that empower people and encourage communities to thrive.

Co.As.It. measures its performance through a range of qualitative and quantitative criteria. These include overall monitoring of financial performance and specific qualitative and quantitative outcomes as required by the various funding and monitoring bodies.

The company's overall objective is to improve the quality of life of the community; and promote the Italian language and culture in NSW by providing a range of culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

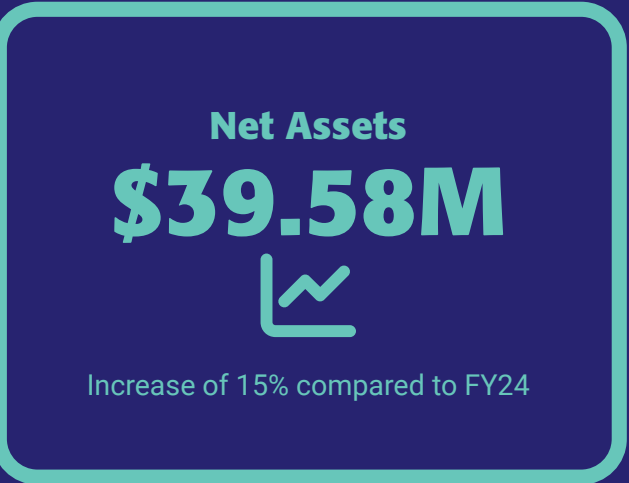
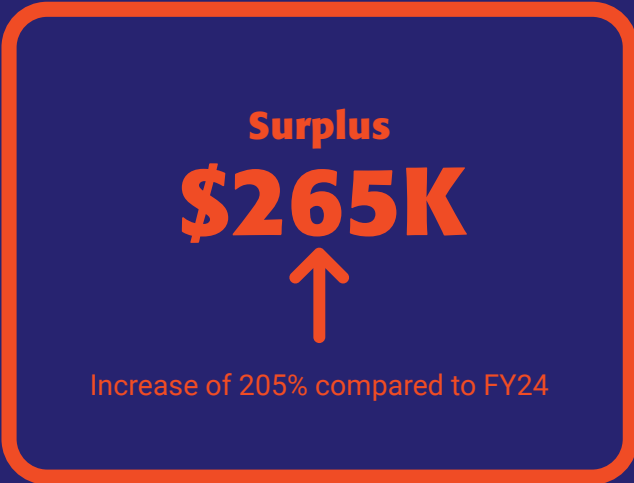
Co.As.It. maintained a strong financial position for FY25, and we are confident in our ability to continue this position and our life-changing work throughout 2026.



Revenue	2025	2024
Government Grants	21,045,885	19,263,305
Other Grants and Levies	1,073,763	1,207,674
Services and Other Revenue	4,233,783	5,173,854
Total Revenue	26,353,431	25,644,833

Expenses		
Employee Benefits	13,135,144	13,777,561
Homecare Packages	7,996,893	6,794,083
Advertising	416,069	419,747
Cleaning and rubbish removal	150,463	157,516
Computers	145,613	352,561
Day care	236,542	241,122
Depreciation and Amortisation	416,240	428,187
Finance Costs	192,194	118,055
Insurance	731,474	572,659
Legal and Professional Fees	212,155	169,128
Motor Vehicle, Bus, and Hire	142,444	120,271
Printing and Stationery	81,108	58,105
Building Outgoings	35,651	346,559
Repairs and Maintenance	165,172	222,865
Telephone and Internet	124,651	145,338
Employee Travel Reimbursement/ Other Travel	656,000	707,334
Other Expenses	1,250,017	926,703

Surplus	2025	2024
Other Comprehensive Income for the Year, Net of Tax	5,149,193	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year	5,414,794	87,039



Our Major Funding Bodies Include:

Community Services

- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- NSW Department of Health – Sydney Local Health District
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Education Services

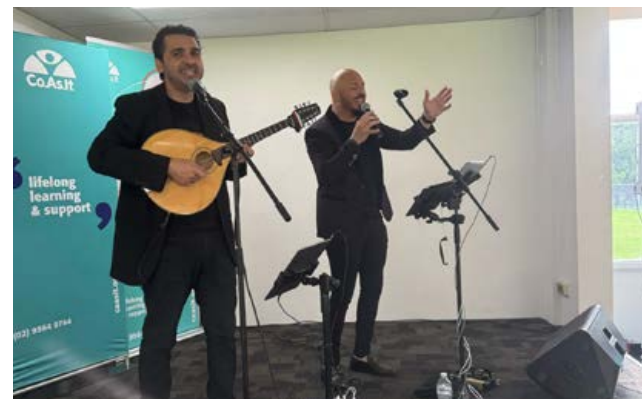
- NSW Department of Education
- Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale

Italian Bilingual School

- Commonwealth Department of Education
- NSW Department of Education



2025 Photo Gallery ➡







Lombardia Cultural Tour



Le Seconde Book Launch



Italian Teachers' Conference









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