

CASE STUDY

AUSTRALIA'S GROUP SUPPORTING COMMUNITY INCLUSION (AGOSCI) BIENNIAL CONFERENCE 2025

THE AGOSCI CONFERENCE 2025 DEMONSTRATED ADELAIDE'S CAPABILITIES AS AN INCLUSIVE HOST DESTINATION FOR COMPLEX, VALUES-DRIVEN EVENTS THAT DELIVER LEGACY OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH THE SECTOR AND THE CITY.

OVERVIEW OF THE EVENT

Established in 1981 by Speech Pathology Australia, Australia's Group Supporting Community Inclusion (AGOSCI) is dedicated to educating, connecting and advocating for communication inclusion across the country.

AGOSCI's Biennial Conference is the peak national gathering for all those involved in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), bringing together people with complex communication needs, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, assistive technology professionals, support workers, rehabilitation engineers, medical professionals and educators.

The 2025 conference was held at the Adelaide Convention Centre from 12–15 March, marking the first time South Australia had hosted the event since 2011. With 454 delegates in attendance and exhibitor booth numbers reflecting growing industry engagement, it was one of the largest and most significant gatherings in the conference's history.

The program featured international keynote speakers – including Jordyn Zimmerman (USA) and Kathy Look Howery (Canada) – elevating the event beyond a domestic conference and reinforcing Adelaide's ability to attract international experts and thought leaders.

Scope was engaged as the official communication access partner for the conference. This included accessible maps for wayfinding, custom communication boards and delivering introductory communication access training for all conference volunteers. Scope also offered an education program for venues and suppliers seeking accreditation in communication access, ensuring the entire event ecosystem reflected the values of the AGOSCI community. Additional support was provided by specialist supplier Homecare Equipment, ensuring the event met the accessibility needs of all attendees.

BUSINESS EVENTS ADELAIDE'S ROLE IN BRINGING THE EVENT TO LIFE

BUSINESS EVENTS ADELAIDE SECURED THE AGOSCI BIENNIAL CONFERENCE IN 2021, PLAYING A KEY ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE THROUGH STRATEGIC ADVICE, DESTINATION EXPERTISE AND COORDINATED TEAM ADELAIDE SUPPORT.

WHY ADELAIDE WAS CHOSEN

Adelaide's central location made travel accessible for delegates from all states, contributing directly to the record attendance figures achieved. The timing of the conference in March also allowed delegates to take advantage of the world-renowned Adelaide Fringe Festival, adding a unique cultural dimension to the delegate experience.

The Adelaide Convention Centre's strong commitment to accessibility and inclusion made it the ideal fit for a community that places these values at the core of everything it does.



TEAM ADELAIDE SUPPORT

Adelaide Convention Centre served as the primary venue, hosting the conference, welcome reception and gala dinner. Professional Conference Organising services were provided by Arinex, and Adelaide Expo Hire managed the exhibition infrastructure.

A Welcome to Country by Petiola Wilson opened the conference, which reflected the event's commitment to cultural respect. Mr Wilson's personal connection to AAC added further meaningful nuance, as his daughter uses AAC.

The opening ceremony included an official welcome from the Honourable Emily Bourke MLC, demonstrating South Australian government endorsement of the event.

Delegates were accommodated across a selection of hotels, including the InterContinental Adelaide, Crowne Plaza Adelaide and Ibis Adelaide.

OUTCOME OF THE PROGRAM

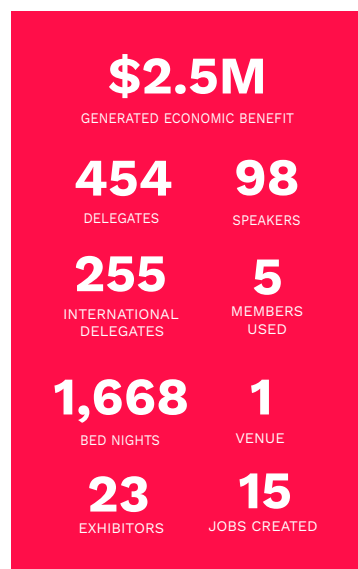
The AGOSCI Conference 2025 delivered outstanding outcomes. The program covered mental health, literacy, disability inclusion, telehealth, First Nations communities, employment, and international AAC practice. The breadth of topics positioned the conference as exceptionally intersectional across multiple sectors and industries.

The event led to key initiatives, including the launch of the national AAC Mentoring Project to support emerging leaders and practitioners, and the early development of an online professional learning platform for AAC.

IMPACT ON ADELAIDE

The AGOSCI Conference 2025 generated meaningful economic and social impact for South Australia. Commercially, sponsors and exhibitors reported that the conference helped them form new business connections. One company confirmed they are actively looking to establish a presence in South Australia as a direct result of attending the event, while another indicated they are considering future opportunities in the state.

The event also had a strong social and cultural impact, actively championing South Australian talent and makers. Keynote speakers received gifts sourced from local artisans, including Haigh's Chocolates and glassware created by glass artist Emma Young. The conference also spotlighted local Aboriginal and disability communities; the logo was designed by artist Oliver Mills, who lives with cerebral palsy and a vision impairment. The conference also provided South Australia with a lasting platform to strengthen its local AAC community, uniting practitioners, researchers and educators with a shared focus on improving outcomes for people with complex communication needs.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Record attendance: The event achieved its highest delegate numbers to date.
- Adelaide Fringe integration: Hosting the conference in March allowed delegates to participate in Adelaide Fringe events, including a specially organised social outing for AAC users who attended a Fringe venue together.
- Local artist celebration: South Australian artist Oliver Mills designed the conference logo and was given a booth to sell his creative work, earning over \$1,200 across the event.
- National AAC Mentoring Project launch: The conference marked the official launch of a new national initiative supporting emerging AAC leaders.
- New business connections: At least one company committed to explore establishing a presence in South Australia as a result of their participation.
- Karen Bloomberg Award: This award was given to Meredith Allan, who was recognised for her advocacy for low-tech and unaided AAC.

“OUR NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN ADELAIDE EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS ON EVERY LEVEL. FEEDBACK FROM DELEGATES WAS OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE. THEY SPOKE HIGHLY OF ADELAIDE AS A SAFE AND WELCOMING LOCATION.”

AGOSCI CONFERENCE ORGANISER

