



CATSINaM

THE CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
NURSES & MIDWIVES

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 – 2018

Founding Members



The Founding Members of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses (CATSIN) pictured at the first National Forum of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives, August 1997. These women and men were the 'trail-blazers' and had the vision and courage to challenge a system that had excluded them.

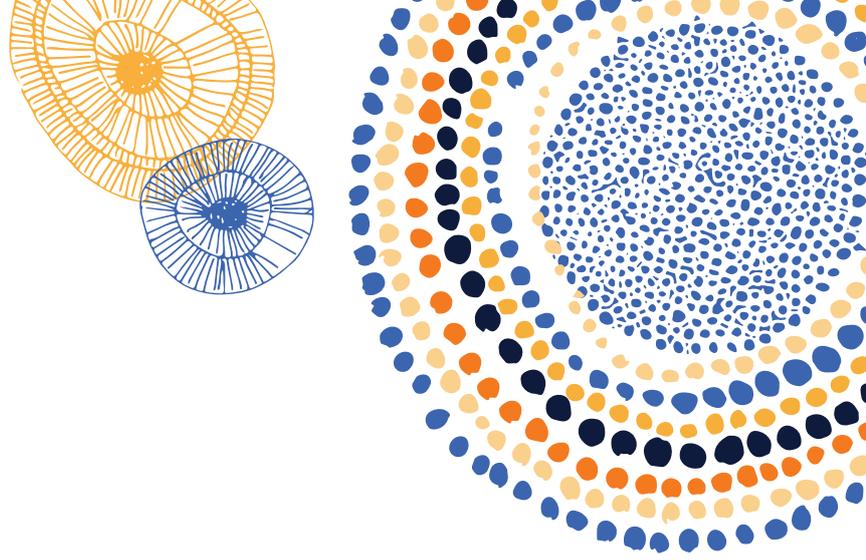
VISION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives play a pivotal and respected role in achieving health equality across the Australian health system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

PURPOSE

CATSINaM honours a holistic and culturally safe approach to achieving optimal health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We develop and promote strategies to ensure that this holistic and culturally safe approach is understood and applied by nurses and midwives working in Australia





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Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware that this document contains images and names of people who have since passed away.

About CATSINaM

The Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses (CATSIN) was founded in 1997 to formally represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives at a national level. It began as a response to this question: 'Why are there so few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses?'

The Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH), Australian Government Department of Health, provided a grant to the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) to host the first national meeting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses in August 1997. The outcome of this three-day meeting in Sydney was a series of recommendations for strategies and initiatives to advance the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into nursing.

As a result, CATSIN was incorporated in 1998 and led by its founding Executive Director, Dr Sally Goold OAM, until July 2012. The organisation's name was amended in 2013 to the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) to formally acknowledge midwives as members.

CATSINaM is the national peak body that represents, advocates and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives at a national level. We believe that nurses and midwives are the backbone of the Australian health system, and play a pivotal role in providing culturally safe health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

CATSINaM promotes, supports and advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives in many ways. For example, we:

- develop strategies to increase the number of practicing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives
- develop strategies to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives throughout their nursing career to keep them in the profession
- encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to consider and select nursing and midwifery as a career
- work with governments and universities on workforce planning and ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can become nurses and midwives
- ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing and midwifery students have targeted support and assistance to give everyone the opportunity to realise their potential
- promote greater understanding of the nature and value of cultural safety within the nursing and midwifery professions as an essential ingredient for improving health service experiences and outcomes
- help universities and educational institutions that teach nursing and midwifery to understand the issues that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- ensure that *all* nurses and midwives learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, history and culture, including cultural safety, in all courses leading to enrolment, registration or endorsement as a nurse or midwife
- work with other health organisations to make sure our peoples stand alongside doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists and other allied health professionals to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes
- explain and advocate against racism
- listen to our members' aspirations and concerns and advocate on their behalf.



Strategic directions

Respect *Fairness* **IDENTITY** **CULTURE**
CONFIDENTIALITY **ACCOUNTABILITY**
RESILIENCE **HONESTY** *Proud* **NURSE**
MIDWIFE **UNIQUENESS**

1

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

Elevate the profile of CATSINaM as the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives

HOW?

- Improve recruitment and retention of our Members
- Increase our Member communication, support and engagement
- increase external stakeholder awareness of CATSINaM

2

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

Strengthen our effectiveness in advocating on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives

HOW?

- Increase capacity of CATSINaM Directors and Members to represent CATSINaM
- strengthen existing and establish new partnerships that enable CATSINaM to advocate on priorities

VISION

Pivotal and respected role in achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives

3

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

Strengthen our effectiveness in supporting recruitment/retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives

HOW?

- Expand our influence in recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in nursing and midwifery
- increase access to PD and cultural safety support strategies

PURPOSE

Develop and promote holistic and culturally safe approaches for nurses and midwives

4

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4

Increase our active involvement in research and workforce development projects that realise the CATSINaM vision

HOW?

- Increase our influence on research in nursing and midwifery and/or Aboriginal health
- Increase our involvement with workforce development projects

President's Report

The 2017-2018 Annual Report closes a very significant chapter in CATSINaM's life as an organisation, as the last year of our 2013-2018 Strategic Plan.

First, 2018 marks our 20th year anniversary as an organisation—a fact we will celebrate at our upcoming 2018 CATSINaM Conference.

Second, since mid-2013 we have strengthened the professionalisation of our organisation and increased the membership almost eight times over.

Third, over the last five years we have continued to establish ourselves as a strong and respected voice in the wider nursing and midwifery profession, and the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health sector.

Fourth, we have worked consistently and tirelessly to embed cultural safety in the education accreditation standards for nursing and midwifery, nursing and midwifery professional registration requirements, and accreditation standards for health services. We have collaborated with other health professions to push for cultural safety to be embedded in the health profession legislation.

Fifth, we have expanded the variety of ways in which we support and honour Members—Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives. This is evident in our mentoring program, support of students in our signature events, Member-focused training programs, and recognition of the significant contributions of our members through the CATSINaM Hall of Fame and Fellow of CATSINaM Awards.

In fact, we have done much more. This includes providing guidance on effective recruitment and retention strategies, and the delivery of high quality curriculum on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health, history, culture and cultural safety. This report shares the highlights from 2017-2018.

We are very pleased to enter 2018-2019 knowing that for the first time in our history, we have a four year and expanded funding contract that will allow us to build on the solid foundations we have laid. There is still much to do to support far higher representation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives in the registered and employed workforce, and our student cohort. We remain committed to assisting organisations to understand and implement strategies that ensure our Members study, work and undertake research in culturally safe work environments.

Ultimately, this is all about providing the best quality and culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians across this vast country. I want to thank all Board Members, the CEO and the CATSINaM staff in their sustained efforts to work towards change that enhances the health and wellbeing of our families and communities. Our achievements are due to their unflagging commitment, combined with the strength, resilience and hard work of you, our Members.

Ben Gorrie
PRESIDENT



Board Report

CATSINaM is a company limited by guarantee and operates within the Corporations Act 2001 (Commonwealth). The CATSINaM Constitution is registered with the Australian Charities and Not for profits Commissions (ACNC).

CATSINaM has an eight-member Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Board of Directors who represent each state and territory, and must be currently registered as a nurse or midwife. They undertake a three year tenure and have the option to be elected for a further three year term to a maximum of nine consecutive years.

The Board elects CATSINaM's President for a three year term and he/she may serve up to three terms. Given the changes and workload, the Board chose to elect a Vice-President to assist the Board and support the President. The Audit, Finance and Risk Committee assists the Board and CATSINaM with its financial responsibilities.

It is the responsibility of the Board to set the vision, mission and strategic direction of CATSINaM, and oversee the implementation of work through the Chief Executive Officer.

There were several changes in Board membership during 2017-2018.

The Deputy President, Ben Gorrie, stepped into the President role after Shane Mohor stood down in October 2017 and was subsequently appointed President at the February 2018 Board meeting. At the 2017 AGM, a vacancy for the Northern Territory was filled by Norman Dulvarie and a vacancy for Tasmania was filled by Joshua Pierce. They will both serve a full term until 2020. The South Australian vacancy was filled by Jason Coombes on a temporary basis until the 2018 AGM. In addition, there were two Board appointed Directors, Renee Blackman and Leeona West, who will serve on the Board until the 2018 AGM.

Four well attended Board meetings were held in the months of August and September 2017, and March and May 2018.

Board of Directors

Victoria:

Ben Gorrie, President

Ben was born in Melbourne and has lived there his whole life. His family originates from the Kurnai/Gunai people of East Gippsland. Ben is a Registered Nurse with experience in education, critical care, mental health, pre-hospital and primary health care. Ben is proud to be a director of CATSINaM, an organisation that has given so much to him and his fellow nurses and midwives.

New South Wales:

Marni Tuala, Deputy President

Marni is a proud Bundjalung and Wonnarua woman who grew up on Bundjalung country in far northern NSW. A mother of five jarjums, Marni changed career paths from Law to Midwifery in 2013. She works clinically as the Aboriginal Liaison Midwife at the Tweed Hospital and has been an active member of CATSINaM since 2013. Marni also sits on multiple committees and advisory groups, including the Australian College of Midwives, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee and the Commonwealth Breastfeeding Expert Reference Group. Marni is extremely passionate about the provision of culturally safe, holistic midwifery care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and improvement of maternal infant health disparities.

Australian Capital Territory:

Jennie Gordon

Jennie is a Ngunnawal woman, born in rural NSW and took her nursing career into health administration. Beginning at age 17, she completed psychiatric and general nursing qualifications under the hospital training system. She went on to develop a breadth of knowledge in general nursing, rehabilitation and palliative care, mental health, disability services, corrective services and occupational health nursing, while also completing a degree in Adult Education and a Master's degree in Management. Later in her career she was the Director of Nursing and Aged Care Manager at a combined Nursing Home and Retirement Village, and the Director, Workforce Policy and Planning in ACT Health. She has represented the ACT since 2012 on multiple national committees and subcommittees, and also undertake representation roles for CATSINaM.

Queensland:

Venessa Curnow

Venessa is Ait Keodal, Sumu Torres Strait Islander who also has family lines to Keith, South Australia. Venessa is currently the Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Management Unit at Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service. She has over 21 years of extensive experience in metropolitan, rural and remote areas throughout Australia, working in: national and Queensland state-wide industry development, management, service delivery, sustainable community development, and clinical practice. She specialises in adapting Western management systems and sector development to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges and practices. Venessa is also a current Board Member with the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples and Committee Member on the Queensland Premier's Social Cohesion Committee. She has a passion for national and local sustainable holistic development in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander countries.

Western Australia:

Melanie Robinson

Melanie was born in Derby, Western Australia and grew up on the Gibb River Road in the Ngallagunda community. She completed her nursing degree at Curtin University in 1993, then moved back to Derby for 18 months working in paediatrics, general medical and emergency at Derby Hospital, at Fitzroy Crossing Hospital and Numbla Nunga, the aged care facility in Derby. Since then, she lived and worked overseas on two occasions (London and Dublin), and in Perth. This included at the Royal Perth Hospital in aged care, acute medical and intensive care, and the Princess Margaret Hospital in oncology, haematology and intensive care. Melanie became a nurse educator at Marr Mooditj Training in 2008, teaching in the Enrolled Nurse and Aboriginal Health Worker Programs, before becoming a Senior Policy Officer in the Western Australian Department of Health in 2013. She currently has a Senior Development Officer role and is studying a Master's in Nursing Research at the University of Notre Dame.



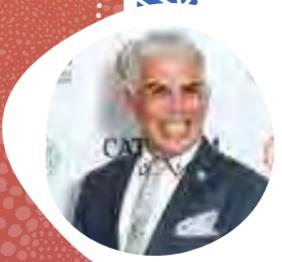


Tasmania:
Joshua Pierce

Joshua is a Torres Strait Islander man and has been a member of CATSINaM since he was a student. He is also the recipient of the inaugural Sally Goold Award. Josh has always wanted to contribute to his people’s health and assist in building our nursing workforce. This has led Josh to be a lecturer, tutor and mentor to other aspiring nurses. His career as a nurse started at St Vincent’s Private Hospital where he gained experience working in cardiac care. He has worked as a nurse with RAHC in remote Indigenous communities including Mutijulu, Areyonga and Tennant Creek. Joshua also worked with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation as the course coordinator for the Aboriginal Health Worker qualifications. Josh is also completing my Masters of Public Health at Australian Catholic University, where he is also working in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine.

South Australia:
Jason Coombes

Jason is a proud Kurnai man from Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust, Victoria. He was one of the first Aboriginal QANTAS Long Haul Flight attendants in a career of 15 years that took him all over the world. He entered nursing as a second career so he could give back to his community, studying at RMIT Melbourne. He did the pilot cadetship program at St Vincent’s Hospital, winning the Cadet of the Year award, and continued his graduate year there in emergency and the endocrine ward. After two years as an RN with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, he worked in Aurukun, far north Queensland, as a CNC for two years. Currently Jason is working as an RN in the Oak Valley/Maralinga Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service, far north west South Australia. In Jason’s words, “I love being on the front line working remotely with my people”.



Northern Territory:
Norman Dulvarie

Norman Dulvarie, whose Aboriginal name is Milika Dhamarandji, is from Boigu Island, the most northerly inhabited island of Queensland and Australia, part of the top-western group of the Torres Strait Islands. He also has cultural ties to North East Arnhem land. Norman has spent many years working in the NT, initially as an Aboriginal Health Worker in 1995, then as a Registered Aboriginal Health Practitioner before completing his nursing degree in 2010. His current position is as a RN/Registered Aboriginal Health Practitioner for the Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service and is also part of the Remote Area Health Corps. The reason he loves his job: “I really love helping my people.”

Special appointment:
Renee Blackman

Renee Blackman is a Gubbi Woman from the Sunshine Coast. She began her career as an Aboriginal Health Worker, which sparked her passion for Aboriginal health and led her into nursing. She has over 20 years of experience as an Aboriginal Health Worker and Registered Nurse. Her goal is continual improvement in the health system in order to provide better access for her mob to much needed health care. Renee is currently the Director for Health Services at the Brisbane Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service based in Woolloongabba, and is responsible for the oversight of seven Aboriginal medical clinics and a 74 bed Residential Aged Care facility. She is also researching the cultural capability of the health workforce and governance systems responsible for the delivery of quality health care to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



Special appointment:
Leeona West

Leeona West is a descendant of the Kalkadoon and Djaku-nde Peoples. In 2001, she completed her nursing degree through a community-based nursing program in Mount Isa, in partnership with Deakin University, together with her twin sister and younger brother. The majority of her nursing work has been in the Aboriginal and Community Controlled Health (ACCH) sector, including supporting services to attain National AGPAL accreditation. Leeona is passionate about supporting our ACCHSs to deliver the true definition of comprehensive Primary Health Care, as promoted by NACCHO.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S Report



In my fifth and final year as CEO, I am so very proud to reflect on our journey together and what we have achieved. As I began my role in mid-2013, my aspiration for CATSINaM was for our Members to grow in numbers by reconnecting with older Members and gaining new Members, feel connected to each other, and identify with CATSINaM with a strong sense of pride and ownership. Arriving at our 20th year as an organisation, I believe that all of those aspirations have begun to be realised. In fact, so much has been achieved in the past five years.

The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan had many ambitious elements. Our assessment is that we have accomplished many of them and been very connected to Members in implementing strategies, despite limited resources. This was acknowledged in a Department of Health external review of CATSINaM that occurred over 2017-2018. Due to wonderful feedback from Members and partners about what we do and its value to them, we were recognised as providing an important and effective role in supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing and midwifery workforce, advising the nursing and midwifery profession, and providing direction on national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policy. This was affirmed in myself being honoured as the Chair of the National Health Leadership Forum and in that role Co-Chairing the Commonwealth Government's Implementation Plan Advisory Group.

In the 2017-2018 year, even more people joined the CATSINaM family. We received requests for, and gave more national and jurisdictional presentations than ever before. We produced many high quality resources. We further developed and began offering a broader range of relevant professional development workshops for both Members and stakeholders.

CATSINaM has become a recognised force in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing and midwifery for non-Indigenous organisations, many of whom have become critical allies to us.

"CATSINaM has become a recognised force in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing and midwifery for non-Indigenous organisations"



This was evident early this year when key national nursing and midwifery organisations stood together to support the importance of including cultural safety in the nursing and midwifery codes of conduct.

I want to acknowledge our incredible staff for their dedication and the role they have played in bringing us to this point. The core of our Secretariat has remained consistent over the past five years due to staff commitment, satisfaction with their role and enjoyment of their work at CATSINaM. We have a fantastic and focused Board, with whom it is a pleasure to work with and for.

As CATSINaM steps into our next phase we have a very sound foundation and a positive outlook, and are better resourced to serve our members. This is evident in the focus of the new Strategic Plan for 2018-2023.

I hope you are as proud of CATSINaM as we are in the Secretariat. Together, we are CATSINaM and together in Unity, through Caring for our Peoples and each other, we will continue to go from strength to strength. In my closing it's been my personal honour to represent this great organisation.

Yours in Unity and Pride
Janine Mohamed



A BRIEF Snapshot OF 2017/18 ACTIVITY

48
STRATEGIC MEETINGS
& FORMAL EVENTS ATTENDED



14
NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS
OR PROJECTS

14
SUBMISSIONS

27
MEDIA ARTICLES,
INTERVIEWS &
PRESS RELEASES

10
CATSINaM-LED
EVENTS

9
TOPICS
COVERED

776
PARTICIPANTS

35%
INCREASE IN
MEMBERSHIP

1366
TOTAL MEMBERS

43
INVITED
PRESENTATIONS

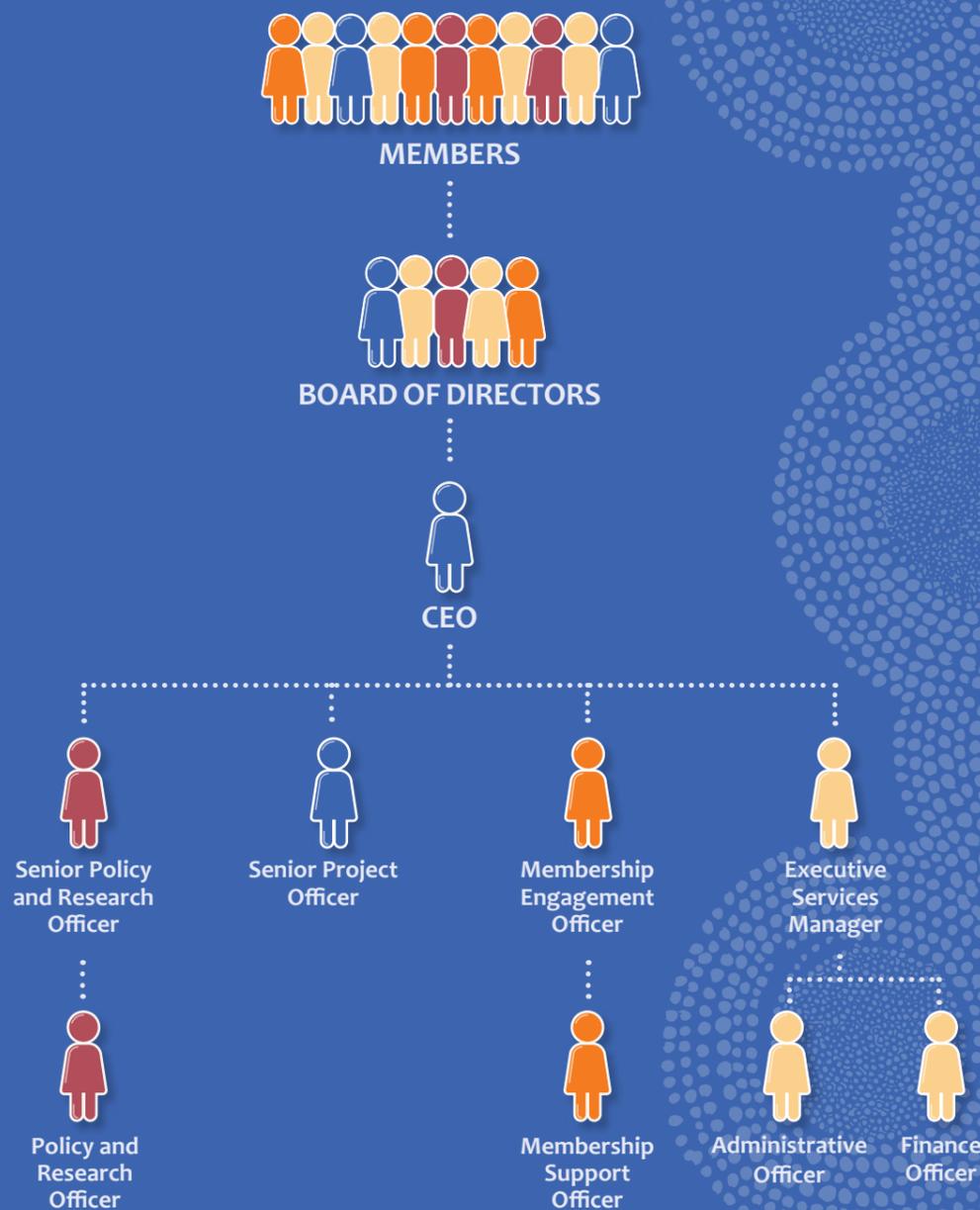


5,427
PEOPLE REACHED



35%
MORE THAN
LAST YEAR

Organisational Chart



Staff

Our continuing team members from last year were Janine Mohamed, Chloe Peters, Colleen Gibbs, Leonie Williamson, Irene Peachy and Taylor Boldrini. Phoebe Dent joined us in October 2017 as the Senior Project Officer. The Administrative Officer role has been shared by Alicia Mohamed-Engelhardt and Ashlee Ramsey. Maya Mokak spent several months with us in 2018, assisting with Membership Support.



Janine Mohamed
Chief Executive Officer



Colleen Gibbs
Senior Policy and Research Officer



Leonie Williamson
Senior Policy Officer
(finished in March 2018)



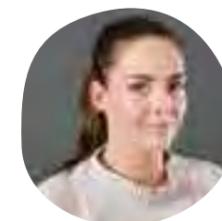
Phoebe Dent
Senior Project Officer and LINMEN Coordinator
(commenced October 2017)



Irene Peachy
Membership Engagement Officer
(finished in May 2018)



Maya Mokak
Membership Support Officer
(April 2018 – September 2018)



Chloe Peters
Executive Services Officer



Taylor Boldrini
Finance Officer



Alicia Engelhardt
Administration Officer

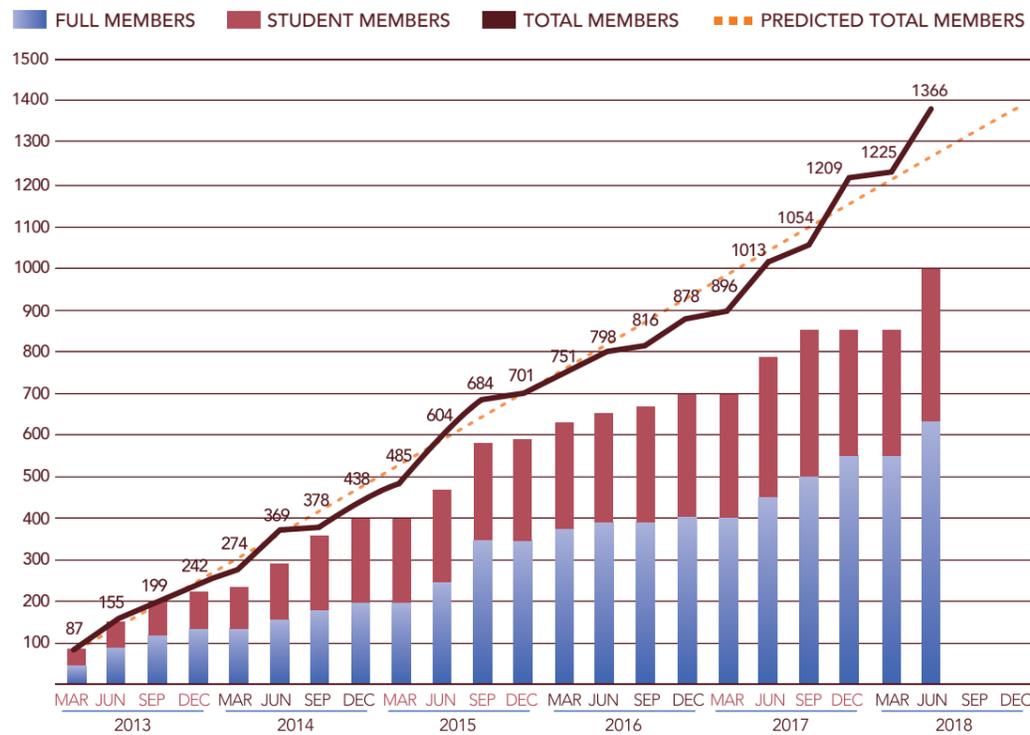


Ashlee Ramsey
Administration Officer
(finished in June 2018)

Membership

Our membership grew strongly throughout 2017-2018, resulting in us exceeding our target of having 1,200 Members by 2018. We hit 1,366 Members at the end of June 2018. This represents 35% growth over the past year.

CATSINaM National Membership



MEMBERSHIP BY JURISDICTION

