

A large crowd of people is gathered outdoors, likely at a protest or public demonstration. In the background, several police officers in blue uniforms and high-visibility vests stand behind a metal crowd control barrier. The crowd consists of people of various ages and ethnicities. Several signs are visible: a white sign on the left reads "SELF DETERMINATION NOT CARCEERATION", a green banner in the center reads "LIL SAVES", and a sign on the right says "HOM". A white graphic of a building with a dome is positioned in the center of the image, partially overlapping the text "FLAT OUT".

# FLAT OUT

## CEO CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

# CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR.....	3
STRATEGIC OVERVIEW.....	4
FLAT OUT'S HERSTORY.....	5
POSITION DESCRIPTION.....	7
KEY SELECTION CRITERIA.....	11
ORGANISATIONAL CHART.....	12
BOARD MEMBERS.....	13
FINANCIAL STATEMENT.....	14



# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

*Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer at Flat Out.*

*This is not an ordinary leadership role. Flat Out has a long and proud history of standing alongside criminalised women and gender-diverse people in Victoria, often in the most difficult of circumstances, and often when few others would. For more than three decades, the organisation has undertaken staunch, principled work at the intersection of gendered violence, incarceration, poverty and systemic injustice, work that is grounded in an unwavering commitment to abolitionist and feminist values.*

*At the heart of Flat Out is an extraordinary group of staff. They are deeply committed, highly skilled, and carry this work with care, integrity and courage. Many bring lived experience, all bring a strong sense of responsibility to the people Flat Out exists to support. The organisation's culture is shaped by non-punitive practice, trauma-informed ways of working, and a belief that relationships, trust and collective care are central to achieving change.*

*Leading Flat Out requires respect for this culture and a willingness to lead alongside staff rather than above them.*

*The incoming CEO will be joining Flat Out at a critical moment. Demand for our support continues to grow in the context of increasingly punitive criminal justice context, constrained funding environments, and heightened pressure on community organisations. This role therefore calls for leadership that combines moral clarity with strategic discipline: the ability to hold firm to Flat Out's values while stewarding the organisation through complexity, uncertainty and change.*

*The Flat Out Board is deeply engaged in the life of the organisation and understands its role as one of stewardship and support. We are committed to a constructive, respectful partnership with the CEO, grounded in transparency, accountability and shared responsibility for Flat Out's sustainability and impact. We recognise the weight of this role and we are committed to ensuring the CEO is supported to lead with confidence and care.*

*This work is demanding. It involves sitting with grief, injustice and frustration, as well as hope, resilience and collective strength. It is also profoundly meaningful. To lead Flat Out is to be entrusted with a legacy of resistance and care, and with the responsibility to carry that legacy forward in ways that remain true to the people and principles at the centre of the organisation.*

*We encourage applications from people who are aligned with Flat Out's purpose and values, and who are ready to take on the responsibility and privilege of leading this organisation at this moment. We invite you to read the information in this pack carefully and to consider whether this role speaks to your experience, your commitments, and the kind of leadership you aspire to practice.*

*Yours sincerely,*



*Sheena Colquhoun  
Chair, Flat Out*

OUR PURPOSE:

*Support and advocate alongside women, trans and gender diverse people to get out and stay out of prison and live free from violence, including state violence.*

OUR  
PRIORITIES

1. SERVICE DELIVERY

Flat Out delivers anti-carceral support and advocacy to help women, trans and gender diverse people get out and stay out of prison, with services grounded in care, connection, and cultural safety.

2. SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM

Flat Out leads and supports systemic change through public advocacy and activism that challenges criminalisation and state violence, amplifying the voices of lived experience and resisting carceral expansion.

3. ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY & LIVED EXPERIENCE LEADERSHIP

Flat Out invests in its long-term sustainability by strengthening internal systems, securing independent funding, and building pathways for people with lived experience into leadership roles.

4. PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY

Flat Out builds strong, values-aligned partnerships to advance shared goals, expand anti-carceral practices, and grow a state-wide abolitionist movement.

OUR  
ETHICS

SOLIDARITY  
INDEPENDENCE  
ACCOUNTABILITY

OUR  
PRINCIPLES

DECOLONISATION  
DECRIMINALISATION  
INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM  
SELF-DETERMINATION  
DECARCERATION  
ANTI-RACISM  
MARGIN TO CENTRE

# FLAT OUT'S HERSTORY

*Shortened from Mary Cotter's "Flat Out Inc: A brief herstory"*

Flat Out was founded in a context where women were historically marginalised within criminal justice systems designed "for (and by) men," with women constituting "around 6%" of the prison population and their needs routinely ignored.

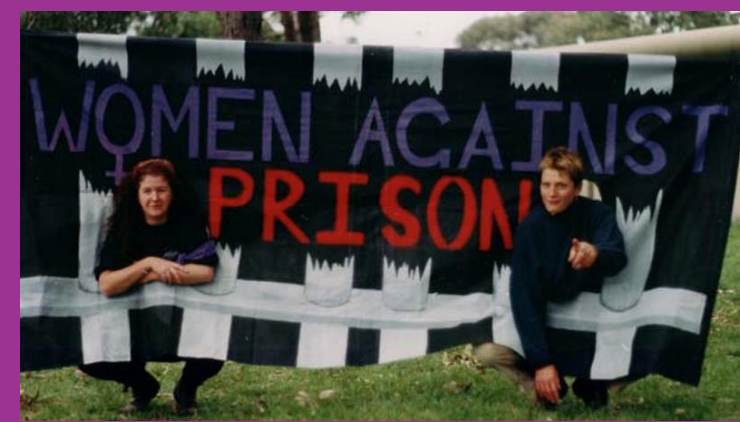
By the late 1970s and early 1980s, women working inside Fairlea Women's Prison, as educators, lawyers, and community advocates, had become increasingly alarmed by prison conditions, deaths in custody, and the absence of post-release support. After "trying for many years to effect change from within the system to little or no avail," they concluded that reformist engagement alone was insufficient.

In 1981, the Fairlea Research Group (FRG) lodged a landmark submission to the Equal Opportunity Commission, arguing that women prisoners were systematically discriminated against in accommodation, health care, education, training, and visitation. The resulting report, *Prisoner and Female: The Double Negative* (1982), drew directly on women prisoners' testimonies.

This period was marked by tragedy. In February 1982, a fire at Fairlea Women's Prison killed three women on remand, a disaster advocates had warned was likely. The aftermath saw women transferred to the men's maximum-security Jika Jika unit at Pentridge, where women were subjected to constant surveillance and strip-searching by male officers.

In 1983–1985, further deaths of women at B Annexe, Pentridge intensified organising efforts. In response, Women Against Prison (WAP) was formed in the mid-1980s, bringing together formerly imprisoned women, feminist lawyers, educators, and service providers. WAP was explicit in its aims: "The overall aim of working towards ending the imprisonment of women," alongside improving conditions and services "both pre and post-release."

By 1986, WAP members had identified housing as the critical missing link: "Being able to move into stable medium to long term housing was a basic necessity for women leaving prison in order for them to have any hope of getting the rest of their lives in order," and for women with children, "a prerequisite for regaining custody."



# FLAT OUT'S HERSTORY

*Shortened from Mary Cotter's "Flat Out Inc: A brief herstory"*

In October 1987, WAP's funding submission was unexpectedly approved. After nearly a year of planning, Flat Out was formally registered on 7 October 1988. From the outset, it was structured as: "A non-hierarchical model of management, in which all Members collectively assume responsibility for organisational management and accountability."

The organisation's name captured both urgency and reality: "We thought women might be working flat out on their backs paying the rent... we might find women flat out on the floor overdosed... and we were certain that our workers would be flat out meeting the demand."

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, Flat Out combined service delivery with sustained campaigning. In 1988–1990, the organisation played a central role in public actions such as Wring Out Fairlea, mass protests against strip-searching, deaths in custody, and the imprisonment of women for welfare-related offences.

Legal and advocacy work during this period explicitly named state practices as violent: "Strip-searches: sexual assault by the state." Following the election of the Kennett Government in 1992, Flat Out confronted the privatisation of prisons and the proposed closure of Fairlea. In 1993, it helped establish the Save Fairlea Women's Prison Coalition and maintained a 24-hour vigil for five months, ultimately forcing the Government to retreat from plans to move women and children into the men's maximum-security prison.

During the same decade, many community organisations were defunded, merged, or dismantled. Flat Out survived by refusing to compromise its principles: "The Flat Out collective decided that any merger would destroy its unique characteristics and eventually mainstream it. It was better to die with dignity than succumb to the voiceless mediocrity of the mainstream."



# POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Title</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Employment type</b>	0.8 EFT
<b>Remuneration</b>	Remuneration: Salary of \$150,000 plus superannuation, salary packaging and five weeks' annual leave pro rata
<b>Location</b>	Queen Victoria Women's Centre, Wurundjeri Country, Level 2, 210 Lonsdale Street Melbourne
<b>Reports to</b>	Flat Out Board of Management

## ABOUT FLAT OUT

Flat Out is an intersectional feminist abolitionist state-wide advocacy and support service for women, trans and gender diverse people and their children who have been criminalised. We are an independent, not-for-profit, community-based organisation that aims to prevent women, trans and gender diverse people from entering and returning to prison. Flat Out provides outreach support to the Victorian women's prisons and works with women, trans and gender diverse people who have experienced incarceration, homelessness, family violence, mental health, and alcohol and other drug use.

Flat Out receives government funding and project funds from various sources to provide high quality, innovative and effective services and advocacy. We are committed to providing support at the highest professional standard, using feminist, decarceral and advocacy frameworks. Flat Out leads and participates in research, education and strategic advocacy to the broader community about people's right to live free from trauma, injustice and violence, including state violence.

Flat Out seeks to be accessible and accountable to women, trans and gender diverse people with lived experience of criminalisation. A volunteer Board provides

strategic oversight and governance. We maintain a strong voice in the prison abolition movement in Australia and are positioned as a socially and economically viable alternative to prison. More information about Flat Out can be found at: [www.flatout.org.au](http://www.flatout.org.au) and [www.homesnotprisons.org.au](http://www.homesnotprisons.org.au)

## POSITION PURPOSE

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provides decisive leadership and strategic oversight of Flat Out's management, governance and organisational performance. Working in partnership with the Board of Management, the CEO is responsible for delivering Flat Out's Strategic Plan and proactively identifying and advancing emerging areas of strategic advocacy. Success in the role requires balancing Flat Out's systemic advocacy leadership with the ongoing sustainability of the organisation, particularly within a high-risk and rapidly shifting funding environment.

The CEO will cultivate and maintain strong, influential relationships across government departments, funding bodies, philanthropic partners, and other key stakeholders to enhance the organisation's reputation and secure sustainable funding that supports organisational growth and impact. A core element of this role is the continued development and stewardship of a strong, collaborative, and supportive team culture grounded in feminist, abolition

## POSITION OVERVIEW

The CEO is responsible for Flat Out's day-to-day operations, financial stewardship, and organisational sustainability. The role requires balancing strategic leadership with hands-on operational responsibilities typical of a small organisation, while fostering a positive, trauma-informed team culture and ensuring high standards of governance, compliance and service delivery.

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Governance and management*

- Participate in Board and Finance and Risk Sub-Committee meetings, providing timely and accurate written and verbal reports on financial, governance and operational performance, including key risks, opportunities and strategic recommendations.
- Support the Board with accurate and timely documentation, maintain governance and risk registers, and resource the Chair and additional Board working groups as required.
- Oversee the development and implementation of the strategic plan in partnership with the Board.
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities that strengthen organisational growth and advance strategic priorities via budget bids, fundraising, and government and philanthropic grants.
- Identify and enact opportunities to enhance service delivery and systemic advocacy, centring the lived experiences and voices of criminalised women, trans and gender diverse people.

### *People, culture and organisational development*

- Lead and model a positive, inclusive and accountable organisational culture that reflects the organisation's values and strategic priorities.
- Drive organisational development and change initiatives, ensuring structures, systems and processes promote innovation, continuous improvement and effective service delivery.
- Foster staff engagement, collaboration and professional growth by creating meaningful opportunities for input, training and development across all levels of the organisation.

- Lead and maintain non-punitive, trauma-informed performance and accountability systems that promote learning, safety and growth.
- Provide appropriate workplace adjustments, support and wellbeing frameworks for lived-experience staff, including reflective practice opportunities.
- Ensure all supervision is reflective, relational and abolitionist-informed, grounded in care rather than compliance, and aligned with trauma-informed principles.
- Provide leadership and supervision to senior and other staff, and oversee the engagement, support and performance of paid and voluntary staff and members, while supporting the Board through timely information, induction and effective governance processes.
- Work collaboratively with senior staff to ensure regular staff meetings and inclusive processes that allow staff to contribute to operational decisions.
- Lead people management strategies that support the recruitment, development and retention of high-quality personnel, including onboarding and ongoing support for Board members and staff.
- Develop, monitor and audit personnel practices to ensure alignment with best practice, industrial requirements and professional standards.
- Oversee the effective management of physical resources, information technology, communication systems and human resources.

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## ***Systemic advocacy and stakeholder engagement***

- Act as a visible and principled activist leader for Flat Out, engaging in advocacy, media engagement, campaigning and public action in alignment with the organisation's feminist and abolitionist values.
- Identify and respond to key systemic advocacy issues in alignment with the strategic plan and the direction of the Board of Management.
- Lead and contribute to systemic advocacy initiatives, policy and law reform, campaigns and inquiries that elevate the experiences and rights of criminalised women, trans and gender diverse people, grounded in an intersectional feminist and abolitionist framework.
- Build and maintain the organisation's public profile by representing the organisation in high-level inquiries, rallies, committees, forums, meetings and working groups.
- Develop and sustain strong stakeholder relationships and collaborative partnerships with government, research and philanthropic bodies, advocacy organisations, the two Victorian women's prisons, and community agencies including housing, family violence, alcohol and other drug, primary health, mental health and prison services.
- Build the capacity of staff to lead and contribute to systemic advocacy, policy reform and public campaigns, including through mentoring, skill development and shared leadership.

## ***Financial management***

- Oversee and manage the annual budget, ensuring transparent, responsible and effective expenditure, and keep the Board of Management informed of the organisation's financial position.
- Ensure all expenditure aligns with approved budgets and support accurate, timely year-end financial reporting.

- Provide clear and comprehensive financial reports to the Board, identifying emerging risks and opportunities.
- Oversee timely and accurate grant reporting, financial compliance, and acquittals to funders, government bodies, and other organisations, ensuring all obligations are met to a high standard and within required timeframes.
- Lead the preparation for annual financial audits, ensuring timely provision of documentation, coordination with auditors and implementation of audit recommendations.
- Work with the Board to maintain financial reserves and long-term sustainability, including scenario planning and timely responses to budget shocks and funding changes.

## ***Risk and compliance management***

- Maintain and update the organisation's risk register, providing timely analysis and advice to the Board and staff.
- Oversee risk management processes across all programs, promoting continuous improvement and effective mitigation strategies.
- Oversee and lead organisational compliance with Victorian Social Services Regulation and ensure an effective, ongoing system of continuous quality improvement.
- Act promptly and appropriately on identified risks and concerns, and escalate to the board where appropriate
- Support a culture of accountability, learning and safety by ensuring staff are supported to identify, raise and respond to risks and concerns without fear of reprisal.

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## *Occupational health and safety*

- Maintain a safe work environment for all staff, with particular attention to identifying and mitigating psychological risk.
- Identify, assess and mitigate occupational health and safety risks across the organisation, including risks associated with vicarious trauma, work-related violence, and safety considerations arising from prison-based outreach and community work.
- Oversee the implementation, delivery and evaluation of high-quality employee assistance and wellbeing initiatives that respond to staff needs.
- Ensure appropriate systems are in place for incident reporting, response and review in relation to health and safety matters, and that learnings are incorporated into continuous improvement processes.

## *Other organisational accountabilities*

- Ensure organisational compliance with the constitution, legislation, regulations, service agreements, practice manuals and policies and procedures.
- Undertake additional duties as requested by the Flat Out Board



Above: Tree memorial outside Fairlea Prison gates., Circa 1983  
Source: Catherine Gow's archives.

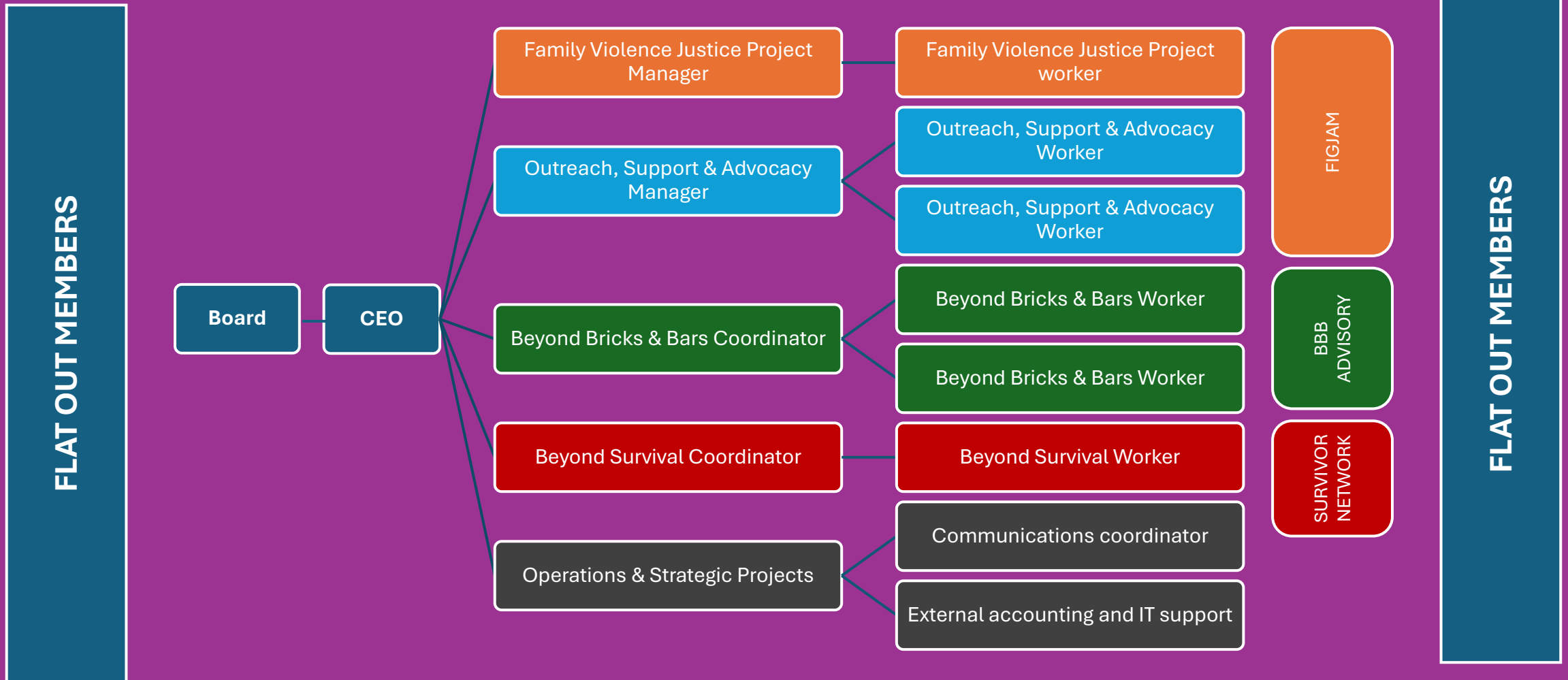
# KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Strong commitment to abolitionist and intersectional feminist principles, with demonstrated knowledge of the drivers of women, trans and gender diverse people's incarceration and the challenges experienced post-release.
2. Senior leadership experience within a relevant sector, including demonstrated ability to lead and maintain inclusive, positive and trauma-informed work environments.
3. Sound knowledge of not-for-profit organisation governance practices and capacity to work effectively with a Board of Management, including understanding of strategic oversight, financial stewardship, and risk management.
4. Demonstrated success in leading government relations, advocacy and campaigning efforts in an area of social justice.
5. Proven ability to manage complex stakeholder relationships and build collaborative partnerships with funders, agencies, community organisations and people with lived experience of incarceration.
6. Demonstrated experience overseeing operational budgets and sound financial management in a not-for-profit organisation.
7. Proven track record in generating income and diversifying revenue streams, including securing grants, preparing budget submissions, overseeing community fundraising initiatives, and/or cultivating philanthropic relationships.
8. Highly developed written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare reports and funding applications, and undertake high-level advocacy with government departments, prison services, community leaders and community organisations.
9. Strong organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to prioritise effectively and meet deadlines.
10. Commitment to innovation grounded in abolitionist practice, including developing and advancing non-carceral, community-based and relational approaches to safety, accountability and support.

## **Desirable**

- Lived experience of criminalisation, incarceration, community corrections, or close connection to people with lived experience, and/or demonstrated experience working in roles that centre, support and elevate lived-experience leadership.

# ORGANISATIONAL CHART



FLAT OUT INC  
ABN 68 037 026 364  
DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grant income	1,277,469	955,860
Interest received	18,532	15,060
Donations and Fundraising Income	170,512	251,004
Fees for service and Disbursements	94,457	10,390
Merchandise sale income	14,515	9,149
Other income	-	1,810
Profit on disposal of fixed assets	-	(61)
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>1,575,485</u></b>	<b><u>1,243,212</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Administration Expenses</b>		
Accreditation	-	6,804
Accounting and Audit Fees	42,660	44,584
Advertising and Marketing	443	573
AGM Expenses	686	617
Bank Charges and Merchant Fees	4,640	1,786
Committee & Stakeholder	50,825	10,387
Conferences	4,387	18,631
Merchandise Expenses	6,255	10,840
Meeting Expenses	14,509	8,076
Motor Vehicle Expenses	21,170	15,198
Postage	107	546
Printing & Stationery	7,820	3,212
Repairs & Maintenance	150	-
Resources	490	112
Subscription & Memberships	12,509	8,245
Sundry Expenses	7,105	18,725
Travel & Accommodation	6,595	6,387
Website Expenses	463	408
	<b><u>180,814</u></b>	<b><u>155,131</u></b>
<b>Client Expenses</b>	<b>86,624</b>	<b>36,941</b>
<b>Communications Expenses</b>		
Telephone & Internet	3,670	4,361
Website, IT & Communications Expenses	1,396	1,246
	<b><u>5,066</u></b>	<b><u>5,607</u></b>

FLAT OUT INC  
ABN 68 037 026 364  
DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>EXPENDITURE (continued)</b>		
Depreciation and Amortisation	11,840	9,016
Insurance	2,023	1,739
<b>Premises Expenses</b>		
Rent and Outgoings	47,447	48,352
Cleaning	3,693	3,958
Utilities costs	135	105
	<b><u>51,275</u></b>	<b><u>52,415</u></b>
<b>Staff Salaries, Wages and Related Expenses</b>		
Salaries and wages	1,045,792	817,089
Superannuation contributions	119,916	88,914
Employee entitlements - annual leave	34,181	2,482
Employee expenses	2,114	2,144
Portable Long Service Benefits Scheme levies	16,878	13,095
Staff Amenities & Welfare	25,335	26,775
Staff Training & Planning	21,632	16,811
Staff Selection/Appointments	1,323	1,767
WorkCover Insurance	28,171	19,122
	<b><u>1,315,680</u></b>	<b><u>988,199</u></b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b><u>1,653,322</u></b>	<b><u>1,249,048</u></b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE ASSOCIATION</b>	<b><u>(77,837)</u></b>	<b><u>(5,836)</u></b>