

Data. Careers. Impact.

Australian Spatial Analytics

Social Impact Report

2023/2024



Message from the CEO

Geoffrey Smith,
Chief Executive Officer



At the same time, we also solve another issue for Australia: data sovereignty. As a country, we rely heavily on sending our critical infrastructure data work overseas. This can create vulnerabilities, making us susceptible to disruptions. At ASA, our neurodivergent analysts play a vital role in addressing this challenge.

One of the most exciting aspects of our work is our Employment Transition Program. We strategically place our highly skilled analysts with partners like Acciona. This not only provides invaluable support to our clients, but also fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation for neurodiversity within the broader workforce.

The success stories are numerous. Take Blake, for example. While he had an accounting degree, he struggled for years to find supportive and stable employment. Now, he's working long-term as a Spatial Analyst at the University of New England, where his essential work is contributing to vital agricultural initiatives.

In this inaugural social impact report for FY2023/2024, you'll see that we've already made an enormous impact. But our journey is far from over. The demand for big data expertise is only growing, and ASA is committed to bridging the gap by empowering even more young neurodivergent adults. We are expanding our reach across Australia, creating new training programs, and forging stronger partnerships with industry leaders.

At ASA, we know that neurodiversity isn't a challenge; it's a competitive advantage. By nurturing these unique talents, we're not just building careers, we're building a more inclusive, prosperous and data-driven future for Australia.

For the past four years, Australian Spatial Analytics (ASA) hasn't just been building a business; we've been building a bridge. A bridge between the untapped potential of young neurodivergent adults and the ever-growing need for spatial and engineering data expertise in Australia.

It all started with a simple belief: neurodiversity isn't a limitation, but a strength. As a data analyst myself, I knew the meticulous attention to detail, the exceptional focus, and the unique problem-solving skills that neurodivergent individuals possess. These are precisely the qualities that the geospatial and digital engineering sectors desperately need.

The challenge? Creating a space where these skills could flourish. So, in 2020, ASA was born. Our mission is to empower young neurodivergent adults by providing them with the training and support they need to thrive in these high-demand careers.

The results have been nothing short of inspiring. We've helped over 150 young minds launch their big data careers. Witnessing their transformation, growing confidence, and contributions to critical projects across Australia has been the most rewarding aspect of this journey.

But the impact goes far beyond individual success stories. We've partnered with over 40 clients, including government agencies and multiple industries. Together, we're tackling a critical national issue: the 34% autistic unemployment rate.

2023/2024 *highlights*

Australian Spatial Analytics



**154
employees**

41 internal promotions

41 Mentor Program graduates

6 Employment Transitions



**166,000
hours worked**

\$1.03m invested in on-the-job training

> 950 hours of personal and professional support

Presented to over **5,200** people across **46** events



**\$6.9m
wages paid**

7 neurodiversity training sessions delivered to **181** people

Opened Adelaide office



Australian Spatial Analytics

Who we are

ASA is a work-integrated social enterprise focused on training and employing young neurodivergent adults who experience severe barriers to employment.

34% of autistic Australians are currently unemployed.

ASA bridges this gap by providing meaningful careers in forward-looking geospatial and digital engineering professions, also helping solve critical skills shortages. Autistic people and others with neurodivergent conditions such as dyslexia and ADHD face challenges securing employment: often because of result of stigma or failures by employers to provide reasonable accommodations.

We want to break the cycle early, with an average employee age of **27** and over **80%** of our staff identifying as having a disability or long-term condition.

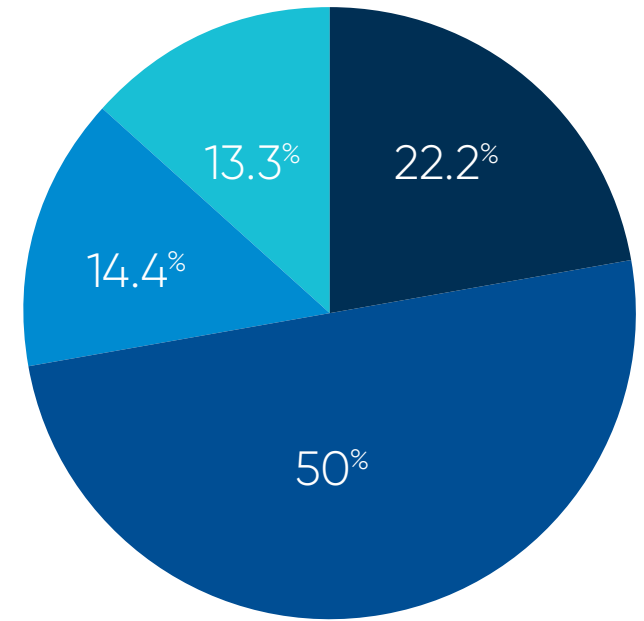
When it comes to gender, ASA stands out in the STEM field, which is traditionally male-dominated. We have a strong female presence, with **49%** of our management and support teams being women. This is significantly higher than the industry average in engineering drafting and spatial science, where female representation sits around 13% and 15% respectively.

Locations



Age Groups

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39



Analyst Demographics



● Male ● Female ● Non-binary

Support Staff Demographics



Neurodiversity is a national asset



Our mission is to support young neurodivergent adults with stable employment and offer a clear employment pathway into roles experiencing critical skill shortages. We proudly employ 106 neurodivergent staff (80% of our workforce), including 58 as permanent staff.

We are particularly proud that **119** of our analysts have maintained employment with us for over 26 weeks, a key employment milestone that reflects the success of the supportive workplace environment we strive to create. In fact, **60%** of our staff were previously long-term unemployed. **Seven** have left their Disability Support Pensions.

ASA is committed to ensuring that neurodivergent staff are represented across the organisation. **41** of our team members who have demonstrated their technical and leadership capabilities were promoted in 2023-2024 as we focus on internal talent, rather than seeking external hires to fill these roles.

41

**Promoted
staff**

16

**Regional
staff**

119

**Employed
> 26 weeks**

58

**Permanent
staff**

If we... harness the cognitive capabilities of young people with neurodiverse disabilities by developing their core skills in a supportive professional environment and shift the culture of organisations we work with.

By... training and employing young autistic adults in digital technologies and supporting companies to become more inclusive.

And by... bringing processing and analytics of data on shore.

We can... decrease the unemployment rate of young people with neurodiverse disabilities, address emerging skills shortages for onshore data processing, and create regional jobs.

So that... neurodiverse young people have rewarding, sustainable careers in a secure and prosperous digital economy.

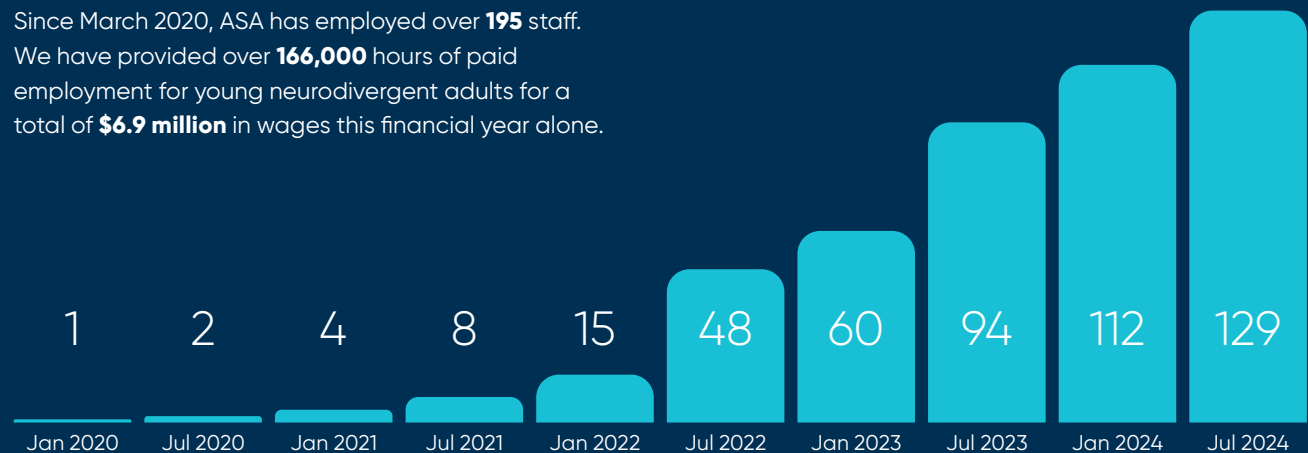
ASA's Theory of Change clearly explains how we will create a difference for young neurodivergent adults across Australia. It outlines the actions we must take to achieve our desired outcomes and, ultimately, the long-term impact we aim for.

This isn't just a hopeful guess: a strong Theory of Change is built on evidence and identifies the assumptions about why our approach will work. The importance of a Theory of Change is two-fold. It keeps our efforts focused and helps us measure success. By laying our path to creating social impact, we can track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ultimately demonstrate the real-world difference we're making.

Empowering young neurodivergent *adults*

We know that employment is more than just a job for our team of young adults - it's a stepping stone to a fulfilling life. We've witnessed firsthand the positive impact that work has on their mental and physical health, and how it fosters personal and professional growth. As part of working at ASA, our team members create Personal Development Plans with our People Success Officers (PSOs) that focus on three key areas: **Comfort, Community and Career.**

Since March 2020, ASA has employed over **195** staff. We have provided over **166,000** hours of paid employment for young neurodivergent adults for a total of **\$6.9 million** in wages this financial year alone.





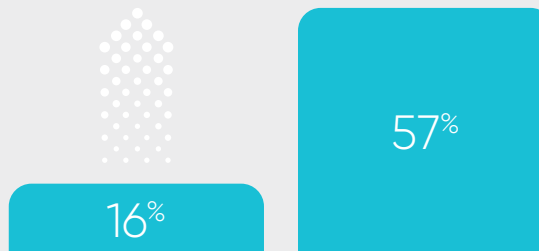
Confidence and Workplace Knowledge

Working at ASA, we want our team to grow not only technically, but on a personal level. This is why we measure overall confidence, including attending workplace social events as well as external experiences such as conferences, and even talking to the media!

We're so proud to see that our team have reported a significant change in their confidence and knowledge.

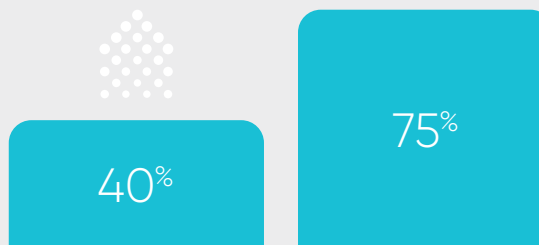
12 Month Confidence Change

Analysts with high confidence levels increased from 16% to 57%



12 Month Office Knowledge Change

Analysts with high knowledge of office behaviour increased from 40% to 75%



Mental Health

We understand the importance of mental health and providing comprehensive support to our employees.

This goes beyond our PSOs. We're committed to building a culture of well-being by having **21** of our leaders trained in Mental Health First Aid and **two** staff who have undergone Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training to help equip them to identify potential mental health concerns across our offices.



Our impact

IN 2023/2024



Pavani Manchanayake
Lead Data Analyst

I have never been in a more nurturing, supportive workplace environment than ASA. I love working at an organisation that supports its people and helps them develop and grow. The people that I work with are great. The senior management team has also made me feel extremely welcome. ASA has definitely helped me grow my confidence, my abilities and my leadership skills. I know what I am capable of achieving."



Confidence

(social events, general, social activities)



70% of our staff reported an increase in their overall levels of confidence



Conversely, low overall confidence rates dropped from **51%** to **14%**

Personal Network



Staff saying they have a good support network increased from **32%** to **48%**



Respondents mentioning they have a low support network decreased from **37%** to **32%**

Government payment reductions



We estimate we save Australian governments over \$450,000 in government support payments based on self-reported income increases

Income



Before joining ASA, 55% of our analysts earned less than the minimum wage: average annual income of only ~\$30,500



Our Junior Data Analysts are paid at full award rate: up to ~\$60,000 per annum



Stephen de Groot
Data Analyst

There was a very strong possibility that I could be homeless, living in a tent right now, if I didn't have stable employment with ASA. If I were unemployed, with my mother only working an average of three days a week, four hours a day for various reasons, it would have been highly unlikely we would have secured housing."



Chaos Proctor
Junior Data Analyst

Since I started here, ASA has provided me with stable employment. ASA is my first permanent role. I can rely on a steady stream of funds in my bank account. It's nice that I can rely on the bills being paid and budget! Everyone helps you personally and professionally, and I have been able to move towards the future the way I want to."



Harrison Mobbs
Program Coordinator, Digital Engineering

ASA has provided me with stable, secure, and supportive employment and takes full advantage of my psychological need for routine and structure. It makes balancing the many competing priorities of life so much easier. The working environment is so supportive and geared towards neurodiversity."



Amplifying our message



Presentations and Public Advocacy

Our presentations at various events have reached a wide audience, raising awareness and changing perceptions about neurodiversity in the workplace. ASA's impact extends far beyond the workplace, creating a ripple effect that empowers young neurodivergent adults and strengthens the community.

This year ASA attended and presented at over **46 events** all around Australia reaching over **5,200** professionals from a range of sectors including geospatial, engineering and more!

Training

We take pride in leading by example and upskilling our own team in neuroinclusive practices.

This year, our Learning and Development Manager, Brendon Eglinton, developed **four Neurodiversity Awareness Training workshops** to help upskill leaders in neuroinclusive practices.

We've conducted our internal neurodiversity training, ensuring **100%** of our team members have completed it. This program was co-designed with our analysts themselves, allowing them to share their lived experiences and preferred communication methods. The success of this training extends beyond ASA. We've delivered **seven** sessions to clients, reaching over **180 people**.



Work Experience

This year we kicked off a successful Work Experience Program for high school students, both neurotypical and neurodivergent, to spark their interest in a future STEM career.

This year we hosted **six** students who took part in a five-day work experience program in our Melbourne and Brisbane offices, learning about the applications of geospatial software and skills on environmental, urban planning and agricultural projects.

Mentoring

Our Industry Mentoring Program has seen many team members receive invaluable advice from industry leaders on both professional and personal skill development.

There were **41 mentor/mentee** matches this year across a range of backgrounds from engineering and geospatial science through to human resources, cybersecurity and marketing.

Most excitingly, one of our team found a new career directly resulting from conversations with their mentor!



ASA Lead Data Analyst Liam Watson and his mentor Ben Gan from Esri Australia

"It has brought me great joy to support and witness Liam's growth. He is now a team leader and has a number of staff reporting to him. What a triumph! To support his career aspirations, I've introduced him to my colleagues. I truly look forward to seeing him achieve even more in the coming years."

Ben Gan
Enterprise GIS Consultant, Esri Australia

Awards + Recognition

Last year was a big one for us. Our work was recognised both within Australia and internationally. We also gained invaluable media exposure highlighting how every organisation can embrace neurodiversity in the workplace.

We Won:

Social Enterprise of the Year at the 2023 University of Queensland Entrepreneurship and Innovation Awards

Impact Enterprise of the Year at the 2023 Australian Impact Investment Awards

Three awards from the Geospatial Council of Australia for Technical Excellence, Community Impact and Workforce Development and Inclusion

Highly Commended (Contribution to Diversity) in the Geovation Geospatial Innovation Awards 2024 (International)

We've also been shortlisted in the Social Impact Category of the 2024 World Sustainability Awards! →





Partners + Supporters

ASA wouldn't be where it is today without the support of our amazing partners and supporters. We'd like to thank them for their support.

Partners



Supporters





What's next for ASA?



We're moving forward to enable our ultimate goal of upskilling our neurodivergent team and providing career pathways via internal promotions or employment transitions to our inclusive partners. This year will focus heavily on our Employment Transition Program so we can backfill with new staff to bring even more people out of long-term unemployment. We're also planning on opening another office in a new state to expand our impact. Our Neurodiversity in the Workplace Training Program will also be rolled out to more organisations.

Our win:win:win approach (creating social impact, economic growth and solving severe skills shortages) has worked spectacularly to date, and our proven model means we will open more offices and reach 300 people by 2026.

Here's to next year's Social Impact Report!

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