



BELONG BLUE MOUNTAINS INC.
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
2020-2025





Belong Blue Mountains acknowledges and respects the traditional owners and custodians of the land in which we work and live. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future.

We will promote mutual respect and understanding, paying respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their cultures and their heritage.

We recognise the impacts of past and present injustice and the role we can all play in working together towards a better future. Belong Blue Mountains supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

We acknowledge that this land is, was and always will be Aboriginal land.



We are committed to raising awareness of the rich diversity of our community and support the inclusion of all people including our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex communities.

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PREFACE



In developing this most important organisational document – the first Belong Blue Mountains Strategic Directions 2020-2025, we had no knowledge that the world as we knew it would change when we embarked on this planning process over a year ago.

COVID-19 and the global pandemic continues to bring an added layer to the challenges faced by community sector organisations in a time of far-reaching reform. Belong Blue Mountains brings a strength-based and agile approach in facing these challenges and shaping our future, in knowing what we want to achieve, how we want to achieve our purpose and the impact of our work.

Our Strategic Directions have been developed using work contributed by our staff through the transition processes that led to the formation of Belong Blue Mountains Inc. from three local neighbourhood centres and community service organisations.

This work was further strengthened by a robust process of consultation with community members, our volunteers, participants of our programs, and service users. The results of these interactions were then used to inform the series of workshops held with Board members and the Belong Blue Mountains Executive Management Team in 2020.

Our process of strategic review highlighted a number of principles inherent in the organisation that is Belong Blue Mountains and reflected in our strategic platform:

- The **wellbeing** of the people of the Blue Mountains is our priority.
- As a local organisation we embrace **diversity**.
- We are framed by the principles of **social justice**, **human rights** and **ecological justice**.
- Our services, programs and projects are **evidence-based** and developed in response to community priorities.
- We strive to foster a community that is **connected, cohesive and resilient** where **social capital** is strong.

Our Strategic Directions for 2020-2025 are for our internal use, and for sharing with the people of our communities so that all our readers might have a greater understanding of the work that we do, and the commitment we all have in Belong Blue Mountains, to working with and for the people of the Blue Mountains.

On behalf of the Board of Belong Blue Mountains, we would like to thank all the people who contributed to developing our Strategic Directions for 2020-2025.

*Ruth Bennett, Chair
Kath Harrison, Chief Executive Officer
May 2021*

BELONG BLUE MOUNTAINS

Who we are and what we do

Belong Blue Mountains (Belong BM) is the identity of our new local and place-based community organisation with centres in Katoomba, the Mid Mountains (Lawson) and Lower Mountains (Blaxland).

On 8 November 2018, after more than 100 years of combined community service, three neighbourhood centres and community service organisations joined together to form a strong, innovative and responsive organisation that capitalises on the expertise and experience of all three. United, we provide a range of tailored services to our communities across the Blue Mountains.

We aim to be a sustainable, vibrant and agile local organisation, where the community is at the heart of all that we do.



At Belong BM, we will create opportunities for our community members to **BE HEARD**; we will ensure that we listen, understand and respond appropriately to their priorities and concerns; and we will facilitate a voice for communities, to identify the strengths and challenges facing our region.

We will create opportunities for communities to **BE CONNECTED** so that the people of the Blue Mountains know that they can **BE SUPPORTED** by a team of experienced professionals committed to their wellbeing during both everyday events and at times of crisis. A team who knows and understands the community and is well positioned to respond to their concerns.

We will work hard to ensure that people feel like they **BELONG**, that they have a place to go where they can access services and be involved in groups that meet their needs - especially our most vulnerable community members. We do this because the people are one of the greatest assets of our region.

It is this philosophy that will guide our approach to contributing to and shaping the future of communities in the Blue Mountains. We will work in collaboration with our community in the Blue Mountains, and with partners located outside of our region, and we will do this by developing active and dynamic partnerships with community groups, other organisations, Government and services and local business. We will do this to amplify the impact of our work. Together we can collectively build a stronger, thriving and more inclusive Blue Mountains community.

BE HEARD · BE CONNECTED · BE SUPPORTED · BELONG

OUR PURPOSE, WAY, IMPACT



Purpose

To collaboratively build a community across the Blue Mountains in which people feel enabled, connected and supported to live the best lives they can.



Way

- by providing accessible and responsive local services
- by offering opportunity for the community voice to be heard
- by listening and responding authentically to community aspirations and need
- by providing places and platforms for connection and high-quality person-centred support
- by working with our local communities to remove or reduce barriers to those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged
- by building an economically-sustainable organisation
- by staying true to the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and human rights.



Impact

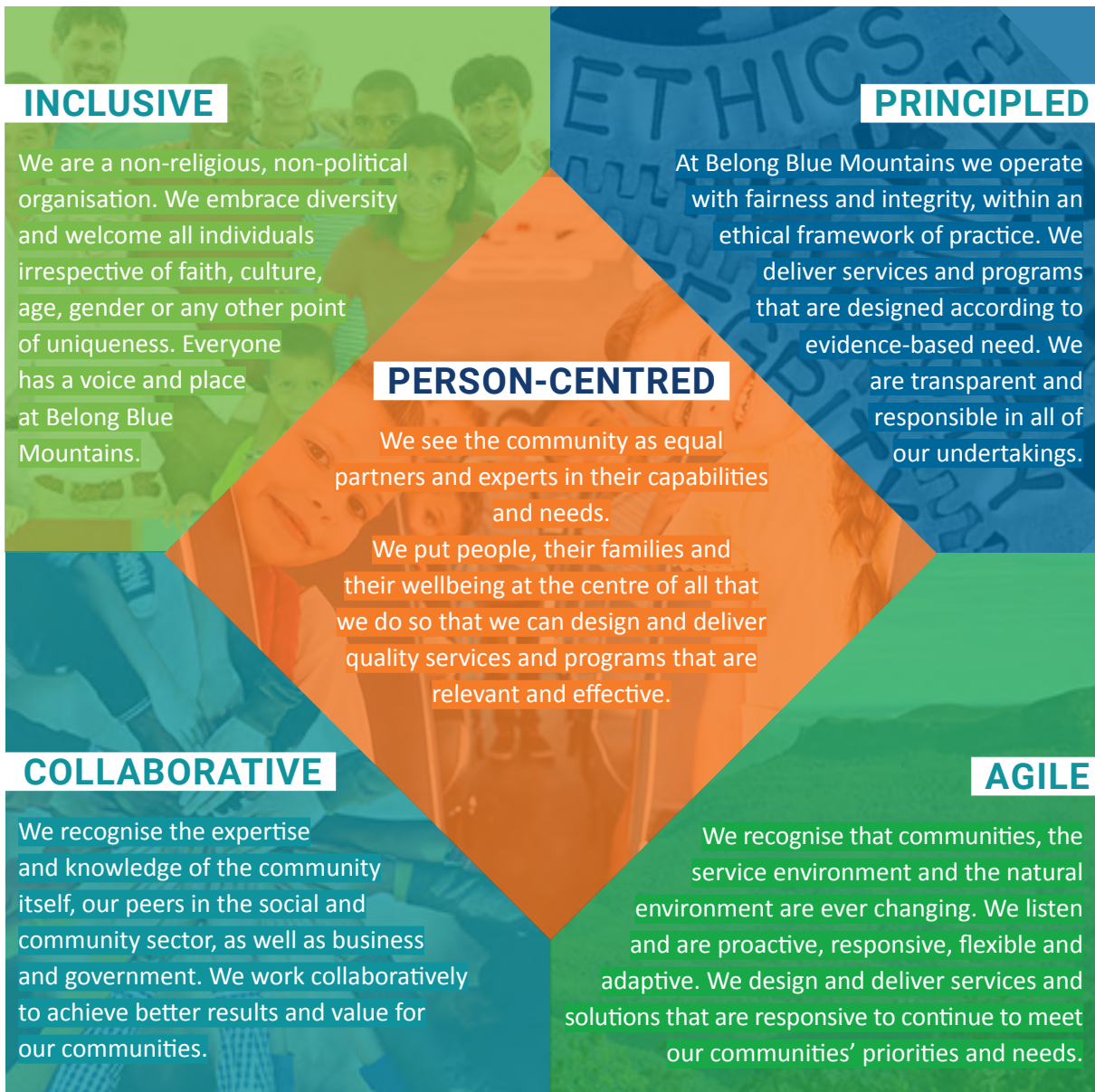
A stronger, safer, connected, more inclusive and resilient community where people are able to influence their own potential, health and wellbeing.

OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Values

The core values that Belong Blue Mountains holds are to be:

INCLUSIVE • COLLABORATIVE • AGILE • PRINCIPLED • PERSON-CENTRED



OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

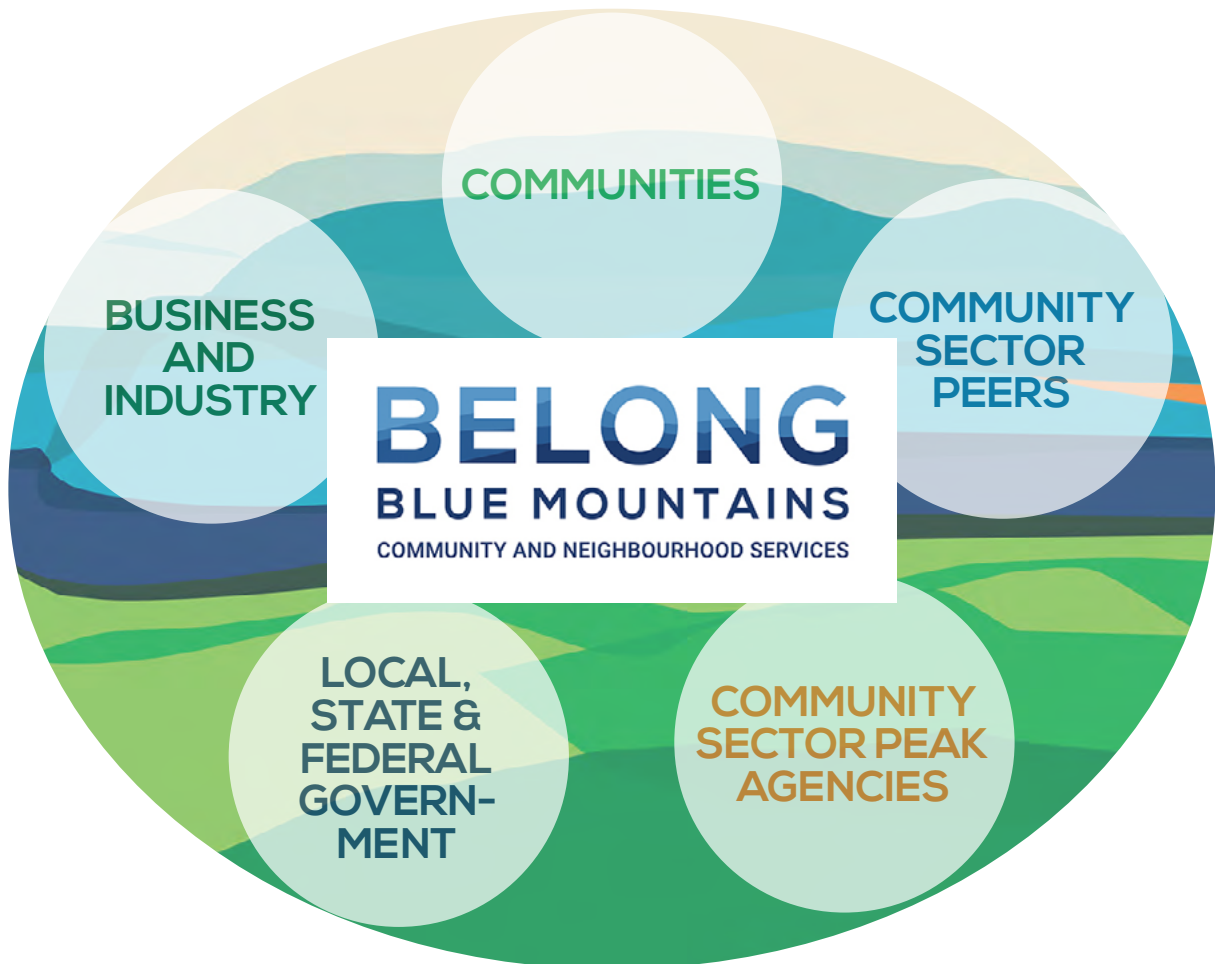
Principles

Our values and principles can be found in the following:

| B E L O N G | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| BELONGING | ENABLING | LOCAL | OPPORTUNITY | NURTURING | GOOD GOVERNANCE |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We foster belonging and connection. • We aim to be inclusive, supportive, collaborative, accepting, respectful, ethical and responsive. • We work with our communities to remove or reduce barriers and build a community that cares and supports the vulnerable and disadvantaged. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We enable people to reach their potential, to be the best version of themselves. • We enable people to be aspirational, and advocate on people's behalf. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place-based, locally managed, community governed. • Local, agile, vibrant. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organisation that works with community to actively seek opportunities for resilience and growth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be connected, be supported. Caring about and supporting the vulnerable in our community; respecting the rights of all people to live safely. • An organisation that is safe and welcoming that embraces diversity, and provides opportunities for the people of our communities. • An organisation that is committed to a healthy and sustainable environment and a culture that supports and nurtures our staff, volunteers and partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are evidence-based, people-centred and quality-focused, governing for rights and quality within a sustainable operational and financial framework of professionalism and integrity. |
| BE HEARD • BE CONNECTED • BE SUPPORTED • BELONG | | | | | |

OUR APPROACH

We believe the way to achieve the best outcomes for our Blue Mountains communities is through open and inclusive collaboration with our stakeholders.



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Summary

PRIORITY 1

A voice for the communities of the Blue Mountains

At Belong Blue Mountains we prioritise community consultation and participation for all – particularly those who are most vulnerable. We do this to ensure that we learn more about people's aspirations and priorities and with them work towards building a more resilient, safe and healthy community.

PRIORITY 2

A community organisation that is innovative, flexible and responsive to existing and emerging local need

Our services are embedded in the community, and we network across our community partners, enabling us to meet our community's diverse needs. We work towards social cohesion for wellbeing and increasing the community capacity to respond to crisis.

We work closely with relevant funding bodies to achieve this.

PRIORITY 3

An innovative and sustainable local organisation that practises within an ethical framework and demonstrates business excellence

Belong Blue Mountains strives to offer organisational resilience and excellence in service delivery; we recognise these as key markers of an organisation's likelihood of success. We wish to be a strong performing and people-focused organisation with a commitment to our people, our values and our culture.

PRIORITY 4

A preferred local service provider of choice for community members requiring care and support, a preferred organisation for neighbourhood services locally, and a preferred organisation for community development and engagement

Belong Blue Mountains strives to be a leader in community through our community development and engagement platforms, aged, chronic care and disability services, providing a diverse range of programs and services.

We also seek greater engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, and are committed to providing culturally-aware and sensitive services.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In detail

PRIORITY 1

A voice for the communities of the Blue Mountains

At Belong Blue Mountains (Belong BM) we prioritise community consultation and participation for all – particularly those who are most vulnerable. We do this to ensure that we learn more about people's aspirations and priorities and with them work towards building a more resilient, safe and healthy community.

1.1

Invite and generate meaningful conversations and actions with communities about their priorities and choices.

1.2.

Grow the capacity of Belong BM as a significant social influencer that is active in informing and shaping policy, planning and decisions that impact on communities

1.3.

Advocate for the maintenance and enhancement of services, policies, strategies and solutions that contribute to the wellbeing of Blue Mountains communities, and in particular, the needs of vulnerable people.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In detail

PRIORITY 2

A community organisation that is innovative, flexible and responsive to existing and emerging local need

Our services are embedded in the community, and we network across our community partners, enabling us to meet our community's diverse needs. We work towards social cohesion for wellbeing and increasing the community capacity to respond to crisis.

We work closely with relevant funding bodies to achieve this.

2.1.

Develop and provide accessible programs and services that directly benefit local communities and wherever there is an identified need, a gap, or changing circumstances. Further investigate the use of and implement virtual approaches to service delivery.

2.2

Embed community development as the Belong BM key framework of practice across the organisation and so that it informs all aspects of governance and operations

2.3.

Collaborate and partner with external organisations and bodies to benefit from collective impact, shared knowledge and resources.

2.4.

Provide information, advice and analysis of key public policy directions and contemporary practice as they impact the communities of the Blue Mountains.

2.5

Embed a culture of measurement and evaluation into the organisation to facilitate the ongoing assessment of the impact of programs and services in creating stronger, more resilient communities.

2.6

Be responsive to the shift to individualised funding and person-centred frameworks, realigning our operational and service delivery model accordingly.

2.7

Have resilience, preparedness and emergency and disaster responses and processes in place to assist people in their capacity to respond to a crisis and prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In detail

PRIORITY 3

An innovative and sustainable local organisation that practises within an ethical framework and demonstrates business excellence

Belong Blue Mountains strives to offer organisational resilience and excellence in service delivery; we recognise these as key markers of an organisation's likelihood of success. We wish to be a strong performing and people-focused organisation with a commitment to our people, our values and our culture.

3.1

A Governance approach that governs for rights and quality, including due diligence, promoting the rights of all and acknowledging all human rights conventions in our practice.

3.2

Strengthen our business operations by becoming a leader in 'for purpose' business practices, embracing digital technologies, diversifying our income sources, through raising public awareness of the Belong BM brand, and through strengthening service opportunities available to our local communities.

3.3

Be an employer of choice through acknowledgement of staff and volunteers and their professional development, wellbeing and welfare.

3.4

Undertake robust analysis around gaps and areas of community need for further development and growth, and review our potential and actual partners, in areas such as family and domestic violence, homelessness, mental health, and diverse sexualities.

3.5

Be an organisation that strives to work within a sustainable and environmentally-aware framework.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In detail

PRIORITY 4

A preferred local service provider of choice for community members requiring care and support, a preferred organisation for neighbourhood services locally, and a preferred organisation for community development and engagement

Belong Blue Mountains strives to be a leader in community through our community development and engagement platforms, aged, chronic care and disability services, providing a diverse range of programs and services.

We also seek greater engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, and are committed to providing culturally-aware and sensitive services.

4.1

Develop best practice models in service delivery to our target populations, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

4.2

Continue to develop and strengthen the Targeted Earlier Intervention approaches to support children, families and young people.

4.3

Strengthen and develop our range of disability support services to the NDIS participants.

4.4

Develop Belong Blue Mountains aged and chronic care services to the older population and those with chronic and complex needs as the provider of choice.

4.5

Ensure the delivery of evidence-based and person-centred services across the life-span.

4.6

Work collaboratively and partner with relevant organisations to connect the vulnerable members of our community with a range of diverse quality programs to meet their needs.

CONCLUSION



Guided by these Strategic Directions, Belong Blue Mountains will strive to achieve the priorities outlined in order to build a community across the Blue Mountains in which people feel enabled, connected and supported to live the best lives they can.

In pointing the way for Belong Blue Mountains to achieve the goals identified, these Strategic Directions represent the coming together of our purpose, way and impact and the imperative to push the boundaries in the development and delivery of services and programs that benefit our community.

Our Strategic Directions will guide and inform the subsequent Belong Blue Mountains Organisational Business Plan and Service Business planning processes.

The heart of our work remains the wellbeing of the people of our community, framed by the principles and values outlined in these Strategic Directions, including social justice, human rights, and ecological justice.

Our organisation is one that wants the people of our community to be heard, be connected, be supported, and belong.

We are Belong Blue Mountains.

BE HEARD • BE CONNECTED • BE SUPPORTED • BELONG

BE HEARD · BE CONNECTED · BE SUPPORTED · BELONG

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