

Information Session on QSA held on Thursday 11th July 2024 at 7:30pm

Therese Douglas (Chair of the QSA Board) and Cressida Hall (Executive Manager QSA)

This was a hybrid meeting in the Barcoo Room in Adelaide. There were around 70 people present in the room, and around another 30 online. We give thanks to the tech team (the “Ministry of wires”)

After an acknowledgement of country and of the elders of QSA, including the current supporters and the Adelaide Quaker Shop, an overview of the session was given.

1. Background: formation of QSA, its purpose and link to Quaker spirituality

2. Today:

- QSA staff and projects were introduced. Some projects are supported by Australian Government funding and others funded by the Aubrey bequest (refugee and asylum seeker projects). QSA encourages projects from Indigenous communities.
- The Aid and Development sector was outlined and its high level of respect for QSA.
- QSA’s structure as a company.

3. Future directions

- QSA is currently undergoing a change process with the engagement of a consultant, Ann Porchino. Progress to date was shared. This included aligning more with the concept of positive peace and emphasis on building peaceful societies and how this relates Quaker spirituality.
- Opportunities for working with other Quaker initiatives: Friends Peace Teams, QPLC worker and The Friends’ School were highlighted.
- So QSA’s work could be described as:
- *Quaker Service Australia (QSA) works with communities to build positive peace and social equity by addressing the root causes of conflict and inequity through community development, reconciliation, environmental stewardship and advocacy.*
- QSA’s aim could be described as:
- *To help build resilient, inclusive communities where peace is actively cultivated, social justice prevails and all people thrive.*
- The new focus for our projects, and for QSA, would be on:
 - *community empowerment and development*
 - *equity and fairness*
 - *peace building and reconciliation*
 - *environmental stewardship*
 - *advocacy*
- Some current partners may need to adjust their projects or QSA might exit in a timely way.
- A current project was reviewed using this lens.
- YM five yearly review, due in 2026, could assist with this. A working party of from QSA and QA could nominate the review’s terms of reference.

4. Ways to get involved:

- Use time by becoming a member of the QSA company.
- Use talents by submitting an expression of interest to become a director of the Board members.
- Use treasure through regular donations to help with cash flow and just wages for our workers.

5. Silence.