

Five-Year  
Strategy  
2023–27



*everyone's family*

# STRATEGY SNAPSHOT

2022–23 to 2026–27



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Smith Family pays respect to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country in the communities in which we work throughout Australia, and their connection to their lands, waters and communities. We pay respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, and to Elders past and present. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and Custodians of the Land. We acknowledge that the land on which our workplaces are located are the lands of the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country.



# INTRODUCING OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

The Smith Family's centenary year in 2022 has been a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our history, not only to look back on what we have achieved, but to learn from our past to guide our future directions.

**It is striking to see how courageously our organisation has adapted to the changing needs of the community over many years, reinventing ourselves in the process.**

One of the most remarkable examples of this was the reinvention of The Smith Family as an education-focused organisation in the late 1980s, when families told us their priority was the education of their children. What started as a small pilot project has since evolved into a fully developed wraparound approach, supporting children and young people to gain the skills they need to realise their true capabilities and potential.

With the ongoing and committed help of our supporters, we are proud that our *Learning for Life* program today supports more than 58,000 students across the country. In addition, we run programs that help thousands of young children to develop key skills to smooth their transition into school, as well as programs for parents to develop the confidence and skills they need to help their children thrive in their learning.

As we embark on our next 100 years, and with a new Five-Year Strategy from 2022, we must continue to adapt to meet the challenges of our time. We must also maintain an unflinching commitment to measuring outcomes. Truly understanding the impact of our work and knowing that we are making a life-changing difference is a key focus for us every working day.



**Doug Taylor**  
Chief Executive Officer

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'D' and 'T' connected together.



# OUR AMBITION

In our new Five-Year Strategy, we've set a bold ambition to deepen our impact and broaden our reach, to help thousands more young Australians successfully overcome educational inequality caused by poverty.

We've set the bar high – *because the need is great.*

We know this because the data tells us that poverty continues to be a persistent problem here in Australia. More than a million young Australians are living in income poverty today, and they face significant barriers to achieving at school and beyond.

We also know this because we listen to our community. By consulting with our students, families, partner schools, team members, volunteers and supporters to hear their insights and experiences, we are able to understand firsthand the key challenges facing Australian children and young people.

Not surprisingly, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the already significant challenges facing families living in disadvantage and caused unprecedented disruption to children's education. As a result, many young Australians have fallen further behind in their learning and will need long-term, targeted support to get back on track.

The pandemic also illuminated the deep digital divide in our country, that existed even before COVID-19 – however, the rapid switch to online learning means students need digital access and skills more than ever.

More Australians are struggling to make ends meet, with housing affordability and cost-of-living increases having direct and indirect flow-on effects on children's education. And the nature of work continues to change rapidly, requiring new skills to participate effectively in our future workplace.

We also recognise the challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and we will continue to improve our capacity to provide culturally safe services and supports by delivering our Reconciliation Action Plan commitments. With over 21% of children on our *Learning for Life* program identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, we are committed to working closely with communities to help close the gap in educational outcomes.



# OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

With these challenges in mind, our new Five-Year Strategy has eight key priorities: deepening our program focus to improve student outcomes; leveraging partnerships to digitise program delivery; expanding digital inclusion for all *Learning for Life* students; growing our reach; growing our influence; growing sustainable funding; empowering our people; and investing in digital, technology and data.

These priorities give us a framework for our overriding goal of strengthening our impact; supporting better educational and life outcomes of the children, young people and families we support; and growing our influence on the services and systems that affect the lives of Australian children and young people more broadly.

Our footprint is strengthened through place-based work, such as *Communities for Children*, and early years and parent-focused programs, including *Child and Parent Centres*, *Let's Read*, *Let's Count* and *Saver Plus*. We're maintaining our focus on continuous improvement of these programs and leveraging their integration into our communities.

Informed by the increasing level of need in our community, our Five-Year Strategy also aims to boost the number of students on our *Learning for Life* scholarships to 100,000 (an increase of 42,000 students from 2022). We're also aiming to grow our full suite of programs to reach 250,000 children and young people (an increase of 70,000) over the next five years.

Working hand in hand with children, families and our partner schools, I am confident we have the track record, expertise and passion to achieve this. But the vital support of, and closer connections to, our broader Smith Family community – our sponsors, donors, corporate partners, volunteers, VIEW Club members, peer not-for-profit organisations and governments – will be key.

While the COVID pandemic has presented many challenges, it has also shown us that when we come together as a community, we can tackle big social issues – and educational inequality in our country is one of the biggest of them all.

So, building on everything we've learned across the century of our existence, our next chapter begins now – as we work together to create a society that's more inclusive and prosperous for every young Australian.

**Doug Taylor**

Chief Executive Officer



# **THE SMITH FAMILY FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY FOR 2023–27\* IS FOCUSED ON DEEPENING OUR IMPACT AND BROADENING OUR REACH.**

In pursuit of our vision of a world where every child has the opportunity to change their future, we have set out an ambition to deepen our impact through increasingly personalised practice, enabled by data and digital, while growing our reach and influence.

\*2022–23 (FY23) to 2026–27 (FY27)

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In the development of our Five-Year Strategy process, we gathered input from a range of stakeholders, including the Board, students, families, school principals, supporters and team members. We also consulted key sector leaders and futurists.

A range of themes and insights emerged, including the following.

## OUR PURPOSE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

COVID has exacerbated the challenges facing Australians living in disadvantage, and as a result, many children and young people have fallen further behind in their learning and need support to catch up and keep up in their education.

## THE LIVES OF DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE ARE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX

COVID, as well as economic and social pressures, has increased complexity in the lives of students and families living in disadvantage. This creates greater challenges to students' wellbeing and mental health, and therefore schools are finding it harder to meet students' needs. Our service response must be integrated and focused on finding options for parents, carers, children and young people to navigate complex service system responses.

## THE FUTURE OF WORK IS CHANGING

The nature of work continues to rapidly change. Technological literacy, critical thinking, empathetic reasoning and the ability to adapt fast and adjust in response to feedback are increasingly in demand.

## THERE IS A WIDENING DIGITAL AND WEALTH DIVIDE

The digital divide is deepening, with COVID accelerating the need for affordable and reliable digital access. The wealth gap is also widening, with more Australians falling into disadvantage.<sup>1</sup> This is amplified by the criticality of digital learning to future education models. Recent, rapid rises in the costs of food, transport and housing, including annual rental increases of more than 8%, are particularly impacting low-income families.

## THE SMITH FAMILY IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO CREATE LONG-TERM IMPACT

Most Australian children's charities have significantly smaller reach and are focused on short-course programs or interventions than us. Our long-term model of support and proven effectiveness of our programs, combined with our scale, means we are uniquely positioned to create long-term impact.

To develop our Five-Year Strategy, we undertook in-depth analysis to better understand the population of children and young people facing disadvantage and where The Smith Family is best placed to help. We found the following:

- There are an estimated 1 million young people living in disadvantage today in Australia who face significant barriers when it comes to accessing education.<sup>2</sup>
- Within this group, around 590,000 students would most benefit from The Smith Family's model of early, long-term intervention. This number excludes children who are in crisis and require more intensive social support. It also focuses on families where our model of place-based social support means that we can be an effective partner with other support agencies.
- Within our existing *Learning for Life* communities, there are around 208,000 students we aren't reaching and who could benefit from the program.
- We will continue to explore our potential role in the early years, building on existing programs and working to strengthen service systems in our communities through place-based programs such as *Communities for Children*, *Child and Parent Centres* and through place-based partnerships and networks.

<sup>1</sup> *My Digital Life – Understanding the impact of digital poverty on children and young people* (Commissioner for Children and Young People, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> *My School, School Profile* 2020.



# OUR STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

Our strategic principles have been refined and updated to guide our strategy development and decision-making. The principles represent the essence of The Smith Family and our 'non-negotiables' in determining the 'what' and 'how' of our organisation.





# OUR STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

## CONTINUED

1.

We are **focused on our purpose**, supporting children and young people experiencing disadvantage to participate in education

2.

Our work is **evidence-informed** and **outcomes-focused**

3.

We **innovate** and **advocate** to support our purpose

4.

We do what we are **best placed to do** and **partner** with others for impact

5.

We inspire and enable our **team members** to make an impact

6.

We allocate resources to maximise our **effectiveness**

# OUR NEW FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

The Smith Family's vision, belief and purpose are strong foundations and remain relevant for this Five-Year Strategy. Several small changes have been made to the wording of the key statements to refresh and better reflect their intent. The revised statements are as follows.

<b>Vision</b>	A world where every child has the opportunity to change their future
<b>Belief</b>	Education is one of the most powerful change agents
<b>Purpose</b>	To overcome educational inequality caused by poverty
<b>Our 2027 Ambition</b>	<p>In light of anticipated opportunities and challenges over the next five years, we have defined the following ambition:</p> <p><b>Over the five years to 2027, we will deepen our impact and empower young Australians in need to create better futures for themselves, enabled by personalised, evidence-based practice, data and digital, and by <i>growing Learning for Life</i> scholarship recipients to 100,000 and program reach to 250,000 children and young people.</b></p>

Central to this strategy is strengthening the impact of our work with students and families. In summary, we're aiming to:

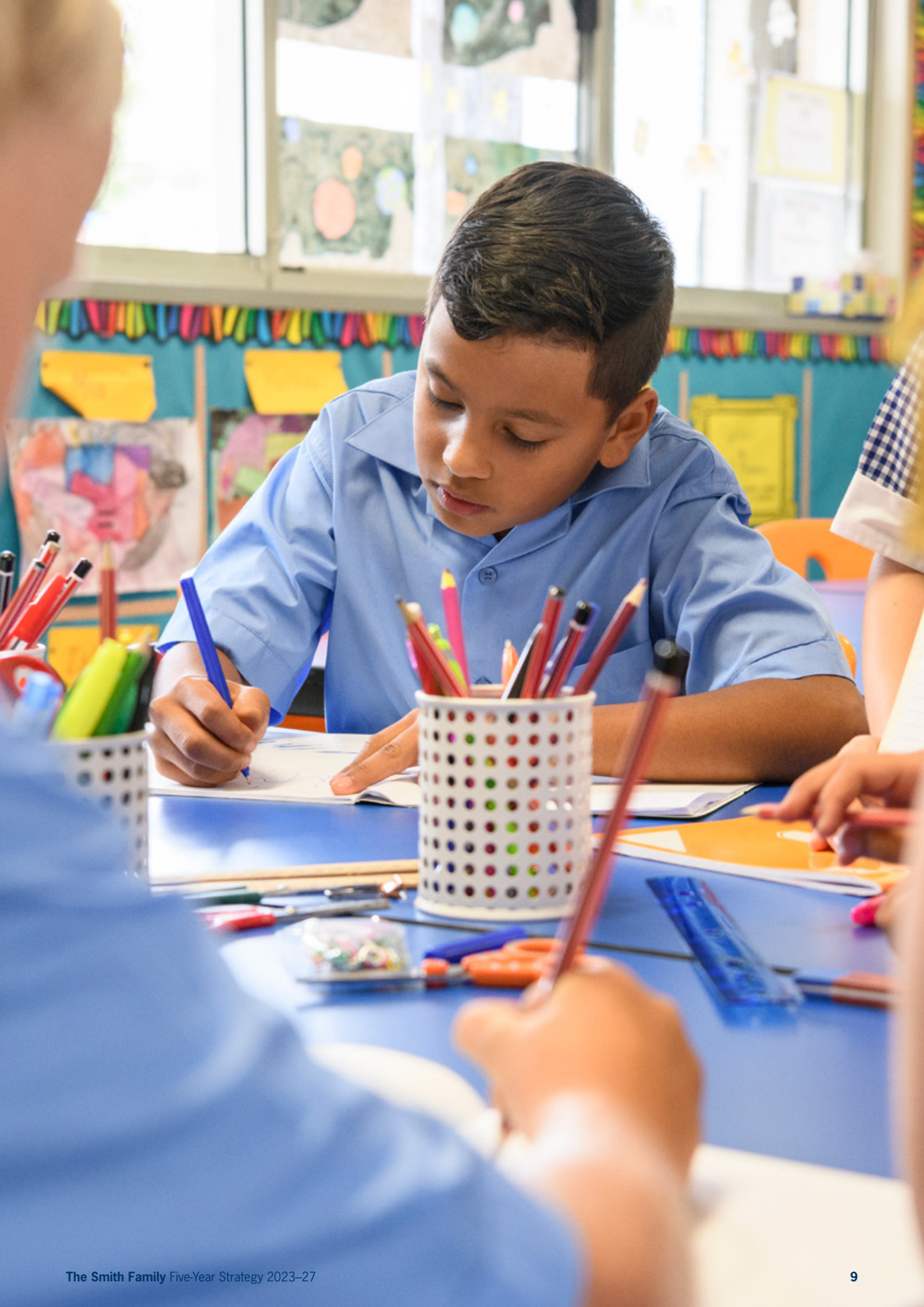
- **improve student outcomes**, including for school attendance and advancement and new measures of educational achievement
- **increase student participation in *Learning for Life* short-course programs by 50%** to improve educational outcomes
- **ensure all *Learning for Life* students are digitally included**, enabling them to fully participate in education
- **grow our sustainable funding base** to more than \$220 million per annum by FY27 to deliver on our ambition
- **ensure our work is informed by the voices of children, young people, parents and carers, school and community partners.**

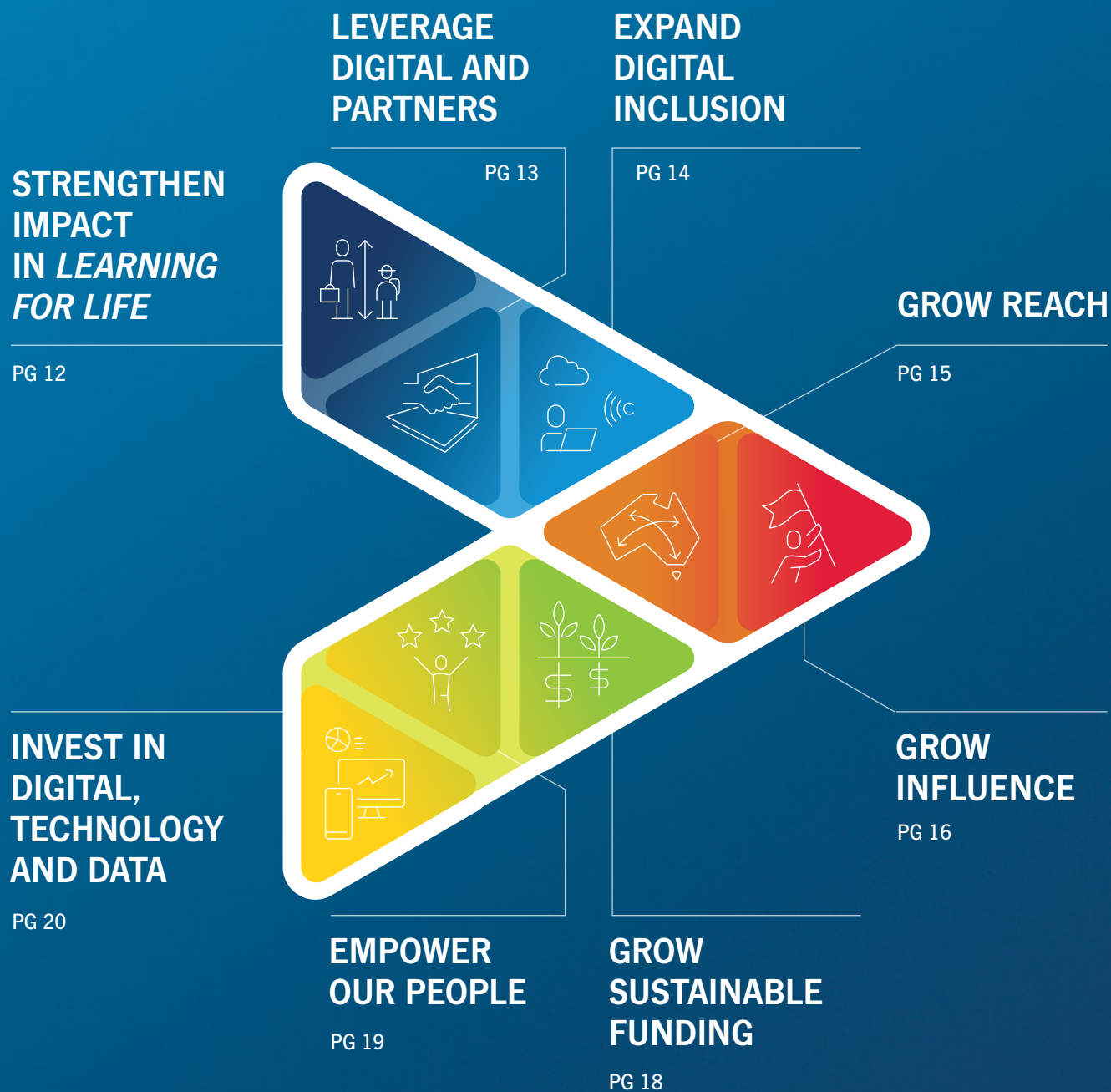
## OUR COMMITMENTS

In this strategy, we have elevated four organisational commitments that underpin all our work, inform our actions, and are embedded in our culture. These commitments are to:

- be a child safe organisation
- strive for reconciliation and cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- enhance diversity and inclusion
- improve our environmental sustainability.

















# STRATEGY ON A PAGE

Ambition by 2027	Over the five years to 2027, we will deepen our impact and empower young Australians in need to create better futures for themselves, enabled by personalised, evidence-based practice, data and digital, and by growing <i>Learning for Life</i> scholarship recipients to 100,000 and program reach to 250,000 children and young people				
Our goals	IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES MEASURED BY:				
	Attendance	Advancement	Engagement	Educational Achievement	
	OTHER KEY FEATURES:				
	100,000 <i>Learning for Life</i> scholarships (~+42,000)	250,000 program reach (~+70,000)	50% <i>Learning for Life</i> students participating in programs (~+20% points)	100% <i>Learning for Life</i> students digitally included	
Our strategic priorities and foundations	DEEPER IMPACT, THROUGH STRENGTHENED PRACTICE ENABLED BY DATA AND DIGITAL				
		Strengthen impact in <i>Learning for Life</i>	Deepen long-term, evidence-based personalised practice for <i>Learning for Life</i> recipients to improve student outcomes, including through programs, enabled by data		
		Leverage digital and partners	Leverage a greater range of partnerships for delivery of short-course programs Increase digital delivery of short-course programs, with a consistent approach to digitisation		
		Expand digital inclusion	Ensure all <i>Learning for Life</i> students are digitally included		
	BROADER REACH				
		Grow reach		Grow influence	
	Grow <i>Learning for Life</i> scholarships and program reach, focusing on existing <i>Learning for Life</i> communities		Grow influence through advocacy in our priority domains to improve the lives of children living in disadvantage		
	STRATEGIC FOUNDATIONS TO ENABLE DEEPER IMPACT AND BROADER REACH				
	Grow sustainable funding		Empower our people		Invest in digital, technology and data
Our commitment	Be a child-safe organisation	Strive for reconciliation and cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Embrace diversity and inclusion	Improve our environmental sustainability	

## 1.

STRENGTHEN IMPACT  
IN *LEARNING FOR LIFE*

## Context

A key component of our ambition is to deepen our impact. We measure this impact by tracking *Learning for Life* students:

- regular attendance at school
- completion of Year 12 or equivalent
- participation in further study or work after they complete the program.

We have intensified efforts to improve student outcomes, by introducing a Practice Framework to better identify and respond to student needs. As part of the strategy, we will augment our outcome measures to improve our tracking of student progress and enable more timely responses to what the data is telling us.

To build on the Practice Framework introduced in 2019, a comprehensive review was undertaken in 2022 of the current operating model underpinning *Learning for Life*. Based on the outcomes of this review, we have developed a strategy that enables us to give *Learning for Life* families and students more holistic support that is tailored to their needs and ultimately drives better education and life outcomes.

*Learning for Life* student participation in our short-course programs and other activities could also improve student outcomes. Our programs cover a range of topics, education levels and delivery methods. Increasing the participation rate of *Learning for Life* students in these programs has the potential to increase our impact and support students in a more holistic way.

**VISION**

To use long-term, evidence-based, personalised and culturally safe and relevant practice to empower *Learning for Life* students to succeed in their education.

## Strategic Objectives

## 1. DEEPEN LONG-TERM, PERSONALISED PRACTICE

- Offer more personalised, integrated long-term support to *Learning for Life* students and families to improve student outcomes
- Operationalise a tiered service model, supported by greater use of data to drive personalisation, and automation of routine tasks
- Adapt practice to address changing educational needs, including those associated with the ongoing impact of COVID-19

2. BOOST *LEARNING FOR LIFE* STUDENT PARTICIPATION ON SHORT-COURSE PROGRAMS

- Increase participation of *Learning for Life* students in our programs by leveraging partnerships and digital delivery
- Ensures careers-based programs, including those within our Growing Careers Project, are a large proportion of our program mix

## 3. DEVELOP ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES MEASURES

- Augment our outcomes measures to monitor *Learning for Life* students' progress towards our highest-level educational outcomes
- Continue to strengthen our outcomes-based approach

## 4. EMBED THE SCHOOLS PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

- Embed the approach in our Schools Practice Framework with our new and existing partner schools to ensure a strategic approach to program planning

## 5. CONTINUE TO GROW OUR CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY IN EARLY YEARS, PLACE-BASED AND PARENT-FOCUSED PROGRAMS

- Ensure that work across all our programs is integrated with place, focused on continuous improvement and improves outcomes for children, young people, parents and carers

# 2.

## LEVERAGE DIGITAL AND PARTNERS

### Context

Children and young people's educational outcomes are influenced by a range of factors and an ecosystem of relationships, including family, school and community. Aligned with our principle of 'doing what we are best placed to do and partnering with others for impact', The Smith Family works with others to achieve our purpose. Our ambition is to increase:

- delivery of *Learning for Life* programs with national and local partners from ~10% in FY20 to ~30% in FY27
- digital delivery of programs from ~30% digital in FY20 to ~40% in FY27, where there are benefits such as greater impact, lower costs and increased ability to reach *Learning for Life* students (this is aligned with our Program Digitisation Roadmap and our other digital inclusion initiatives).

Partnering with other organisations to deliver programs will enable us to broaden our program offering without taking on the building and maintenance of associated program infrastructure. Increasing the ratio of programs delivered through digital interfaces will enable us to target and implement programs for students outside of school settings. We will use the learnings from our current programs with significant digital delivery, such as *Saver Plus* and *Let's Count*.



### Strategic Objectives

#### 1. ADOPT A CONSISTENT APPROACH TO PARTNERING AND REFERRALS, AND INCREASE OUR USE OF PARTNERS

- Determine our approach to partnering for program content, design and delivery, as well as our approach to referrals for *Learning for Life* students to drive consistency and effectiveness
- Increase the number of short-course programs developed or delivered with partners, focusing on partners that drive reach, increase 'speed to market' and/or fill internal capability gaps
- Learn from programs with significant expertise in partnering, such as *Communities for Children*. Explore opportunities to collaborate across programs in C4C communities

#### 2. ADOPT A STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED APPROACH TO DIGITISATION IN PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ENGAGEMENT

- Complete the Program Digitisation Roadmap Project to support greater, more consistent digital use in program delivery, communications and processes
- Enhance the content on the My Smith Family portal to support 99% of *Learning for Life* family and student engagement

#### 3. ENHANCE INTERNAL CAPABILITIES (PARTNERS, DIGITAL)

- Develop stronger internal capabilities (resources, technology and systems) to plug partners into The Smith Family's Practice Framework
- Leverage real-time data and encourage ongoing digital innovation
- Strengthen existing digital capabilities and incorporate learnings from digitising programs, including *Saver Plus* and *Let's Count*

### VISION

- Leverage a greater range of partnerships for delivery of our short-course programs to access greater reach, innovative content, and platforms that best meet student needs and avoid unnecessary duplication
- Increase consistent digital delivery of short-course programs by enhancing internal capabilities and partnerships to support reach and innovation.

# 3. EXPAND DIGITAL INCLUSION

## Context

The 'digital divide' has been a critical issue for disadvantaged communities over the past five to 10 years. This challenge was exacerbated by the pandemic, with extended periods of remote schooling causing many students to fall further behind in their learning.

The Smith Family has provided forms of digital inclusion support to students and families for over 12 years. During the pandemic, we expanded our digital inclusion efforts. As part of this, we provided more than 5,200 laptops to *Learning for Life* families. We have also advocated to close the digital divide.

We estimate that around 15% of *Learning for Life* families do not have a device and/or reliable internet access at home. It is likely that an even higher number of students do not have an adequate device or have to share a device, and do not have access to the internet and/or digital skills. A key shift in this Five-Year Strategy is for digital inclusion to be a core element of our *Learning for Life* support, rather than an adjunct to other programs. It is essential for all *Learning for Life* students to be digitally included so that they can fully participate in an education system that is increasingly reliant on digital learning. Digital skills will also better equip them for the world of work.



## VISION

For all *Learning for Life* students to be digitally included.

## Strategic Objectives

### 1. PROVIDE DIGITAL INCLUSION SUPPORT TO ENSURE ALL *LEARNING FOR LIFE* STUDENTS ARE DIGITALLY INCLUDED

- Create a sustainable roadmap for ongoing digital support
- Identify and track *Learning for Life* students' digital inclusion needs, offering support to all students with unmet needs
- Tailor our digital offering to support *Learning for Life* students as needed

### 2. DEVELOP CLEAR PROCESSES AND RESOURCES TO ENABLE TEAMS TO SUPPORT DIGITAL INCLUSION

- Develop clear processes and policies to guide our Family Partnership Coordinators (FPC) and support teams
- Build assessment of digital inclusion needs into family recruitment process and practice
- Put in place resources to support digital inclusion, including a funding stream

### 3. COLLABORATE WITH PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

- Collaborate with partners, suppliers, advocates and other stakeholders to develop a sustainable and scalable model for digital inclusion
- Proactively contribute to sector-wide efforts to close the digital divide

### 4. ADVOCATE TO CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

- Use our knowledge from research and practice to influence key stakeholders and ensure more young Australians in need are digitally included



# 4. GROW REACH

## Context

Our Five-Year Strategy has an ambitious growth agenda, with an increase in *Learning for Life* scholarships from 58,000 students in FY22 to 100,000 students in FY27 – an increase of 72% over five years. We will also increase the number of children and young people participating in short-course programs, from 180,000 today to ~250,000<sup>1</sup> by FY27. Given the extent of the need, we see a strong case to attempt to reach more students through our programs. We will do this by growing in communities where we already have a presence, enabling us to increase our impact in these local communities.

To achieve this growth, we will look to phase *Learning for Life* student recruitment across the planning period, drawing on learnings from a four-year project to significantly grow the numbers of students on scholarship (2020 *Learning for Life* Growth project). We will also allow time for the changes to the *Learning for Life* Operating Model review to be embedded. We will increase our team member base to support growth, in particular in our FPC roles, at the same time as we increase the personalisation of our support for students.

As part of our focus on growing reach, we will also explore opportunities to expand formal *Learning for Life* recruitment and offering into the early years, building on the *Small Steps, Big Futures* report we published in 2021; and review our approach to tertiary education, focusing on the best role The Smith Family can play in this space

### VISION

To grow our *Learning for Life* scholarships to 100,000 students and program reach to ~250,000 over the next five years, focusing on growth within our existing communities, while maintaining the effectiveness of our support.

## Strategic Objectives

### 1. GROW THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING LEARNING FOR LIFE SCHOLARSHIPS FROM 58,000 TO 100,000

- Increase *Learning for Life* participant numbers to 100,000 by FY27 (from 58,000 in FY22), while maintaining effectiveness
- Explore opportunities to expand our *Learning for Life* offering into the early years (e.g., referrals from early years providers and engagement with *Learning for Life* student siblings).
- Review our approach to scholarships and programs in tertiary education

### 2. GROW PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS TO 250,000

- Grow short-course programs to reach ~250,000 children and young people (~180,000 today)

### 3. FOCUS EXPANSION ON HIGH-NEEDS COMMUNITIES

- Target recruitment and program delivery to students in existing *Learning for Life* communities, deepening school partnerships and digital program delivery
- Continue to explore opportunities to develop or improve current services for those in or approaching crisis (e.g., *On PAR* pilot)

### 4. EXPAND OUR TEAMS

- Increase the number of team members supporting *Learning for Life* and delivering programs
- Ensure effective recruitment, onboarding, training, tools and support

<sup>1</sup> Children and young people participating in short-course programs per annum, including *Learning for Life* students.

# 5. GROW INFLUENCE

## 5.1 ADVOCACY

### Context

Children's educational and life outcomes are influenced by a range of factors, including government policies and processes, and community attitudes. Advocacy is a key priority to both maximise The Smith Family's impact on those who participate in our programs and to magnify our impact beyond the lives of the children and families we directly support. Our advocacy is underpinned by research, practice and innovation.

In the previous Five-Year Strategy, our aim was to move our advocacy from a focus on securing funding for our programs to a broader agenda of influence in the public policy arena. This we have achieved. Over the next five years, our advocacy will be focused on four priority domains:

- impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes: system change to combat the enduring impacts of poverty and COVID
- digital inclusion: system change to reflect the centrality of digital access and capability for education, employment and 21st century life
- careers and transition support programs: for children and young people experiencing disadvantage as they move from school to work, training or to further study
- data for purpose: act as an exemplar for use of data to generate positive social change.

### VISION

That the lives of children and young people experiencing disadvantage are improved through our advocacy

### Strategic Objectives

#### 1. GROW OUR INFLUENCE IN PRIORITY DOMAINS

- Build strategies with targeted outcomes to address the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes
- Undertake nationally significant research, innovate and harness the experience of our students and families, and share our learnings with those who influence the lives of children and young people
- Equip team members to communicate key advocacy messages in priority areas

#### 2. GROW OUR POSITION AS AN EFFECTIVE NOT-FOR-PROFIT AND SYSTEM CITIZEN

- Strengthen our role as an effective not-for-profit (NFP) and system citizen
- Play a leadership and supportive role in positively influencing and partnering in the various systems in which we operate

## 5.2 BRAND



### Context

Over the Five-Year Strategy period, our brand will play a key role in helping to grow our influence and impact.

The Smith Family has a very strong brand today, with growing awareness among the Australian public of our purpose. Our out-performing brand has served us well, including through times of crisis. In 2020 and 2021, the public's preference for quality, trusted Australian NFP brands to give to, the relevancy of our mission, and our timely and relevant asks through COVID, positively impacted our fundraising.

But with such a long-standing brand as ours, it is important to keep challenging ourselves and to evolve with the market and opportunities. The brand review program aims to ensure we have the brand positioning, framework and identity to support our organisational goals. These are to help grow awareness of the impact of poverty on children's educational outcomes; to highlight this as an issue that requires support; to show The Smith Family as a provider of proven and effective solutions; and to increase positive engagement among our key stakeholders, including sponsors, donors, corporate partners, volunteers, families and team members.

With a refreshed brand platform, we will look to further our sector leadership and engagement at the community level, using our extended team as ambassadors for our brand.

### VISION

A refreshed brand that influences how Australians think about and understand poverty; differentiates The Smith Family; provides clarity of our purpose for all stakeholders; signals what we stand for as an organisation; and is motivating and engaging for our families, supporters and team members.

### Strategic Objectives

#### 1. REFRESH OUR BRAND TO ENSURE MORE AUSTRALIANS UNDERSTAND OUR VALUE PROPOSITION AND TO SUPPORT STRONG ENGAGEMENT WITH KEY AUDIENCES

- Use our centenary to communicate a reinvigorated brand and ambition – with refreshed positioning, look and feel, and a focus on our purpose, the way we work, and the outcomes we achieve for children in need
- Develop brand assets and materials to keep influencing how Australians see us and hear about key components of our work

#### 2. REFRAME OUR BRAND MESSAGING TO STRENGTHEN OUR VALUE PROPOSITION TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Refresh storytelling about our families, with new narratives to help build awareness of poverty and demonstrate the case for support while strengthening our brand expression

#### 3. ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY OF VOICES TO STRENGTHEN OUR BRAND AND GROW OUR INFLUENCE

- Drive our brand, advocacy and thought leadership through our community of voices, including sector experts, ambassadors, champions, team members and volunteers
- Use our extended team as ambassadors for the brand, providing support to promote consistent and effective communications

# 6.

## GROW SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

### Context

Our ambition requires us to significantly grow our income over the next five years. With income from fundraising representing 70–80% of our total funding base, increasing fundraising income will be critical in achieving our growth ambition. We start from a position of strength, with our fundraising consistently outperforming the market over the past five years.

The Smith Family's success in fundraising has been driven by a range of factors, including strong growth in sponsorships, improved quality of our funding mix (e.g., increased regular giving); growth in philanthropy; improved use of data and digital for supporter engagement; the resonance of our purpose with the public; and our agile and adaptive fundraising response.

The Five-Year Strategy assumes there will be a portion of our funding base from government. However, in light of expected ongoing government fiscal constraints, we have taken a conservative view. Our five-year forecast assumes continuation of our long-term government-funded programs (e.g., *Communities for Children*), and we will continue to submit proposals to the federal and state governments in areas where there is a clear need that The Smith Family can cost-effectively help to address.

### VISION

Increase our funding base by growing the support of generous Australians, deepening our partnerships with corporate and philanthropic supporters, and ensuring the successful delivery of major government contracts while renewing or replacing expiring funding agreements.



### Strategic Objectives

#### 1. GROW SPONSORSHIPS

- Continue to grow sponsorships in alignment with the growth in the number of students we support
- Develop opportunities for sponsorship product extension, penetration and optimisation

#### 2. EVOLVE AND EXPAND FUNDRAISING PRODUCT SUITE

- Explore options for alternative products (e.g., digital inclusion) and channel diversification (e.g., crowdfunding) to grow funding
- Investigate or evolve targeted areas or markets for fundraising growth (e.g., high net worth, endowment, need campaigns)
- Explore localisation opportunities to build engagement, funding and impact at a community level

#### 3. ENHANCE SUPPORTERS' EXPERIENCE THROUGH DIGITAL AND DATA

- Increase our digitisation, online personalisation and digital functionality to improve the connection between supporters and the students and families we serve
- Enhance engagement with corporate and philanthropic supporters to grow funding and develop deeper, multi-year partnerships
- Enhance use of data to acquire, retain and engage with supporters



# 7.

## EMPOWER OUR PEOPLE

### Context

Over the past five years, there has been significant change within our employee base, capabilities, ways of working and culture. The changes have occurred in line with our last Five-Year Strategy as we increased the scale of our operations, embedded our innovation capability, upskilled our leaders and introduced more agile ways of working. Our culture and employee engagement were enhanced with an increased focus and investment in leadership development, career learning opportunities and innovation.

As part of our response to COVID, we increased our focus on team member wellbeing and safety. We also significantly boosted our organisational capability in online collaboration.

Over the past two years, there have been growing risks and challenges to our capacity and ability to attract and retain necessary skills. This has been due to the economy-wide labour shortages created by COVID, and competitive pressure on remuneration. While mitigating initiatives have been implemented, our ability to attract and retain critical skills remains a key risk. We will need to significantly scale and grow the number of team members in our organisation and develop new capabilities.



### Strategic Objectives

#### 1. REFINE OUR OPERATING MODEL TO SUPPORT OUR STRATEGY

- Improve our organisational design to align with our strategy and support the delivery of our ambition
- Progress our ways of working to further increase our capacity, agility, innovation and speed to deliver value for our customers, for example the families we work with and our supporters

#### 2. IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CHANGE AND PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

- Improve portfolio management with a particular focus on capacity (workforce) planning and change impact assessment
- Embed the Developing Change Capability Blueprint to improve the effectiveness of change management and change capability

#### 3. BUILD KEY PEOPLE CAPABILITIES

- Build capabilities of team members in digital skills, data literacy and analysis and invest in new partnerships to add to our skills base
- Develop initiatives to grow our internal talent pool with a focus on upskilling to anticipate future capability and growth requirements

#### 4. EVOLVE OUR CULTURE

- Build a vision and roadmap for desired culture
- Continue our Strengthening our Safety Culture roadmap with continued emphasis on mental health and wellbeing
- Implement or adapt key policies and practices to enhance our diversity and inclusion commitment

#### 5. STRENGTHEN OUR EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION

- Strengthen our employee value proposition (EVP) for the attraction and retention of team members and volunteers, including continuing our work on inclusion
- Incorporate environmental sustainability in our EVP

### VISION

For our people to thrive in a resilient, adaptive and contemporary culture, where team members and volunteers are enabled, feel empowered, and have the skills and mindsets to deliver our vision and purpose

# 8. INVEST IN DIGITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND DATA

## Context

Digital functionality, technology and data have become increasingly central to the operations of The Smith Family as the objectives of our last Five-Year Strategy have been pursued. Significant progress has been made against each of the objectives of the last strategy through the ground-breaking Data Exchange Project with the South Australian Department for Education, and the digitisation of our programs and support for families and students.

To enable us to achieve these objectives, considerable investment and effort was required to enhance our technology architecture. We partnered with Microsoft for cloud-based solutions and a major upgrade of our core system, the Customer Relationship Management platform known as CONNECT (Microsoft Dynamics). By FY22, the majority of our technology architecture had been upgraded and/or moved to the cloud.

Achieving the goals of our FY27 Five-Year Strategy will rely on an effective digital strategy, incorporating fit-for-purpose technology and proactive use of data. The Smith Family's digital and data strategies will be reviewed and refreshed to ensure the necessary platforms, resources and roadmaps are in place.

## Strategic Objectives

### 1. DEVELOP NEW DIGITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND DATA STRATEGIES TO ENABLE OUR AMBITION

- Review and refresh our digital (including technology) and data strategies. The digital strategy review will focus on enhancing our operating model and capabilities.
- Develop a roadmap for implementation of the strategy, and enhancement of our digital and data capacity and capabilities
- Implement a dedicated functional team and executive head to oversee and drive our digital, data and technology needs
- Identify and implement a fit-for-purpose resourcing model to ensure access to appropriate digital, technology and data skills and capacity to support our team members and key stakeholders

### 2. INVEST IN IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS TO ENABLE SCALABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

- Continue implementation of the roadmap to 'future-proof' our technology platforms and systems (transition to the cloud, evergreen)
- Explore opportunities in new and emerging technology and data initiatives, including the role of predictive models and emerging technologies (e.g., AI) in enhancing our speed, precision and effectiveness, and maximising customer experience



## VISION

To enable the achievement of our ambition, and to amplify and accelerate our purpose.

This vision will be refined and refreshed as part of the digital and data strategy reviews.

# IMPLEMENTATION

This Five-Year Strategy defines our strategic direction. However, in recognition of the challenges brought by COVID, its implementation will have two broad phases.



## Years 1–2

Continue to strengthen student outcomes and respond to student needs created by COVID and lay foundations for growth (e.g. refinement of our organisational design and refresh of digital and data strategies)



## Years 3–5

Scale refreshed models and frameworks to deliver on strategic objectives

The approach to implementation of this strategy is two-pronged:

- The strategic priorities, objectives and initiatives will be captured and monitored as part of our existing planning and governance frameworks, in particular our business planning, budgeting and major projects frameworks. Across every aspect of our strategy, we will continue to measure the effectiveness of our work.
- Given the rapidly changing nature of our environment, in consultation with the Board we will review the strategy on a regular basis and adapt it as needed in response to external dynamics.



Five-Year  
Strategy  
2023–27

