



2023 ESSA Highlights

ESSA
EXERCISE & SPORTS SCIENCE AUSTRALIA

Helping you thrive



ESSA partnered with several specialist providers to support members through complimentary 1:1 consultation, free educational presentations, and a variety of downloadable resources, including:

- + Employment Support with Strawberry Seed Consulting: ESSA's Official HR Partner
- + Legal support from Australia's leading social justice law firm: Maurice Blackburn
- + Insurance support and exclusive member pricing delivering substantial savings on professional indemnity and public liability premiums with Guild Insurance
- + Business Support from Clinic Mastery

ESSA Members were able to access a range of professional support services in 2023, to foster business success, and will continue to have access to these incredible resources in 2024.

Members attended a range of professional development and learning activities including:

- + Free online learning activities
- + Bi-monthly AEP case conferences
- + AES C.A.S.E. (Collaborative Approach to the Science of Exercise)
- + Q&A sessions
- + Sports Science Meetups
- + Sports Science Research in Focus
- + Accessing research from EBSCO, and the Journal of Clinical Exercise Physiology (JCEP)

Members also utilised a range of [member benefits](#), with discounts of up to 40%, enabling them to save extra money on products they use daily.

We look forward to introducing you to the 2024 Member Benefits as we continue to create events and partnerships that will assist you in driving your professional growth.

Making it easier for you to learn

ESSA implemented a new Learning Management System, housing over 150 online professional development options and even more learning activities that can be completed at your own time and pace.

The new platform, TopClass, allows members to seamlessly transition from their ESSA account to TopClass, which has some new and improved features including:

- » Personalised dashboards highlighting featured learning and news, recently added activities, learning updates, discussion forums and quick links to ESSA social media
- » Improved search fields and categorisation
- » The opportunity to leave star ratings and reviews after completing activities



Innovation & Practice Forum

In May 2023 ESSA delivered the ESSA Innovation & Practice Forum at the Sunshine Coast. We were thrilled to see 362 ESSA members come together for this learning opportunity and to network face-to-face again.

The Professional Development team are looking forward to delivering ESSA's first hybrid conference, Research to Practice, on 2-4 May 2024 at the Sydney ICC and online.



Supporting member investment

The primary goal for ESSA, in our capacity as a member organisation, is to improve the experience of our members and ensure that their investment in the organisation is being utilised and highly valued.

To better support you, we introduced two new positions in 2023:

- » Volunteer Coordinator to better recruit, onboard, offboard, support and reward our valuable volunteer contributors.
- » Data Analyst to help us understand our members, their behaviour, patterns, feedback, and the work they're doing, to make the best possible decisions to support them as they grow their careers and advocate for our profession.

To improve your online experience, ESSA implemented multiple software upgrades to improve data security and the user experience and introduced upgraded secure payment gateways for online payments.

The leadership team was engaged in an internal leadership program for key personnel, to improve management and leadership skills within the ESSA staff. This will enable us to lead the organisation and create improvements that will benefit you efficiently and purposefully.

Accreditation achievements



2023 was a major year for the self-regulation of the ESSA professions.

In addition to processing accreditation applications for individuals and university courses, managing ethics and disciplinary matters and annual audit, the Regulations team delivered several important projects:

- » Developed a course accreditation framework for sports science courses.
- » Launched an online accreditation application system for individuals and university courses, which will streamline the user experience, strengthen security and reduce paper use.
- » Developed a set of Allied Health Rural Generalist Standards. This is the first step in developing an educational pathway for AEPs.
- » Undertook a project to inform a strategic approach to scopes of practice for the next 5-10 years. We look forward to sharing the outcomes of this with you.
- » Undertook a major review of the course accreditation system to ensure it is fit for purpose for the next 5-10 years.
- » Commenced the major review of the AES Professional Standards.
- » Undertook audits of AES professionals providing services under BUPA.
- » Launched a free professional development course for writing case notes and reports.



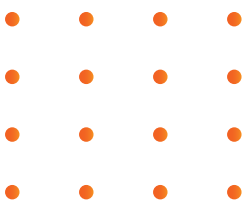
Advocating for what matters to you

In 2023, the ESSA Policy and Advocacy team lodged almost 50 submissions across a range of focus areas for our profession, including workforce, aged care, NDIS, workers compensation, rural and remote health, mental health, and chronic conditions such as diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

The team gained full support for ESSA's priorities from The Greens and several other candidates in the NSW Election Campaign, while the Coalition Government expressed support for increased engagement of public health exercise physiologists in areas of diabetes and mental health. Following the election, the ESSA team was able to meet with the office of the Minister for Work, Health & Safety and the office of the NSW Minister for Finance and Natural Resources, which was a fantastic achievement.

ESSA has engaged with many federal policy and decision makers in 2023 and has been able to make positive policy changes relating to the Motor Accident Insurance Board (TAS), Workcover Queensland, Transport Health, Policy Health and the IHACPA.

In March 2021, the Board of Treasurers endorsed a proposal for a revised, principles-based approach to health services exemption from GST and this would enable exercise physiology health services to be free of this tax. The mechanism for change to the GST now requires a supporting vote by all Treasurers at Council of Federal Financial Relations (CFFR).





In 2023, ESSA has been advocating to move this from an endorsed proposal to being included on the agenda of the CFFR. The policy & advocacy team recently went to Canberra and had several meetings with Members of Parliament, Senators, and advisors where the GST issue was highlighted. ESSA was also acknowledged in Government documentation, namely Hansard – Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into diabetes.

Representation of ESSA in 2023 has included, but is not limited to advocacy at the:

- » Mental Health Equity and Access Forum
- » Victorian Allied Health Reference Group, re mental health workforce
- » Digital Health Agency Forum
- » National Sport Research Agenda
- » SIRA Lower Back Pain Model of Care
- » Whiplash Guidelines for National Health & Medical Research Council endorsement
- » Worksafe Victoria Allied Health Workgroup
- » National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP)
- » Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA)
- » National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA)
- » National Aged Care Alliance (NACA)
- » Service for Australian Rural Remote Allied Health (SARRAH).

The ESSA Policy & Advocacy team also worked with other NGOs in 2023, including the Consumers Health Forum, Heart Foundation, Lung Foundation, Mates4Mates and Active Aging Australia, with the goal of advocating for ESSA professionals and working with key stakeholders to create opportunities.

There has been a large amount of engagement with ESSA Members through our Policy & Advocacy Network, State Chapter meetings, Public Health Exercise Physiology meetings, Mental Health Exercise Physiology meetings, the Rural and Remote Advisory Group and the Pain Special Interest Group. We will continue to engage with these valued networks throughout 2024, to further promote the needs and success of our community.

ESSA has released a National Workforce Profile Report in 2023, as well as one for each State and Territory. The Policy & Advocacy team has also endorsed a policy document launched by the QLD Walking Alliance, and released multiple position statements, including:

- » Guideline for the Assessment and Management of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)
- » A Clinical Guide for Assessment and Prescription of Exercise and Physical Activity in Cardiac Rehabilitation
- » Exercise in the Management of Metabolic Associated Fatty Liver Disease (MAFLD)

As we look towards next steps for ESSA advocacy in 2024, we will continue to follow the Policy and Advocacy Strategic Priorities 2023-2025, which will carry us through the next two years and identified 10 priorities for action. We look forward to sharing further news of our advocacy with our members in the coming year.

ESSA Medal Winner

The ESSA Medal was awarded to Dr. Grace McKeon for her work, 'Using Digital Technology to Promote Physical Activity in Trauma Exposed Populations'.



HEAL™

The HEAL™ (Healthy Eating Activity and Lifestyle) program is a lifestyle modification program that enables participants to develop lifelong healthy eating and physical activity behaviours.

Through a grant of over **\$196,000** from Sport Australia in 2022, the Mental Health version of the HEAL™ program has proven successful in improving quality of life for those individuals living with mental health concerns in rural and remote Australian communities.

ESSA's research partners at Edith Cowan University are currently publishing results from the 2022 HEAL™-ing Mental Health Program, which we look forward to sharing with you.



Congratulations to 2023 ESSA Fellows

ESSA was delighted to acknowledge 3 new fellows for their substantial accomplishments and contributions within the field of exercise and sports science:

- » Deborah Pascoe
- » Marc Brown
- » Katie Lyndon

Promoting the work of AEPs through Exercise Right

The primary goal of Exercise Right is to promote the profession to the general public and raise the profile of exercise and sports science professionals with referrers, such as GPs.

After an excellent Exercise Right Week in 2023 with the theme “The Right Advice”, ESSA is looking forward to an even bigger and better Exercise Right Week 2024. We are also excited to be celebrating 10 years of Exercise Right in 2024.

Exercise Right Week in 2023 had fantastic results, with over **64,500** website visits, **2,300** visits to the Find an Accredited Exercise Professional search function, a social media reach of over **1,000,000** and **60** successful Exercise Right Week events.

+64,500

WEBSITE VISITS

+2,300

VISITS TO THE FIND AN AEP SEARCH FUNCTION

+1m

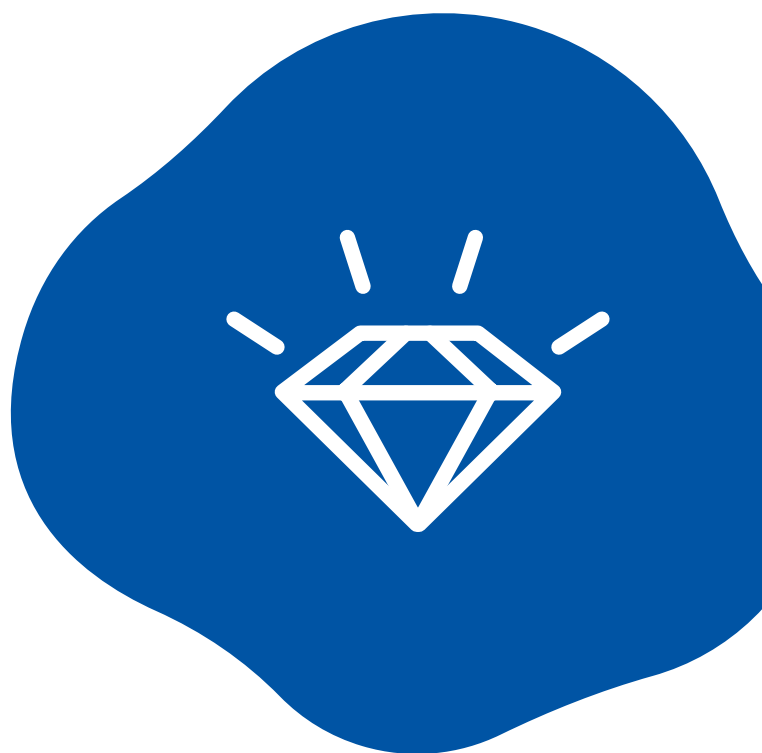
SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

60

EXERCISE RIGHT WEEK EVENTS

A new brand strategy for ESSA underway

In 2023, ESSA commenced a brand identity project, through which we intend to establish and define a stronger, more identifiable brand. ESSA has sought input from key stakeholders including members, staff and partners to ensure the outcome is relevant and purposeful. We look forward to sharing more with you as we finalise the project in 2024, and along with it a website redesign to improve functionality for our members.



Strategic Action

In 2023 ESSA recruited both a Partnerships Manager, to identify, develop, nurture, and grow relationships aligned with our strategic direction, and a Brand Strategy Manager, to raise our brand profile and awareness, particularly in the lead up to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic Games.

ESSA has acted this year to develop a strategic plan for 2024-2026 and create a 10-year vision for the organisation, to ensure all our activities align with the needs and priorities of our members and stakeholders. In 2023 strategic action has included governance projects and policy updates, presenting and exhibiting at the Melbourne General Practice Conference & Exhibition and the Sports Dietitians Australia Conference, and development of a primary healthcare engagement strategy in order to raise the profile of our profession.

