

executive summary

2023 was a gargantuan year. We marked a milestone in turning 10, rebranded to better reflect our work and role in the missing persons ecosystem, developed a world-first resource and solidified our position as a globally recognised organisation.

I was invited to present at and participate in events including the US National Missing and Unidentified Persons Conference, Purdue University's Cold Case Symposium, Florida's Missing Persons Day, Missing People UK's Innovation Day and the International Missing Persons Conference in Cardiff, Wales. The response to our work in each of these forums was phenomenal in demonstrating our value to key stakeholders, and the connections made with individuals and organisations enthusiastic about the prospect of collaborating are a bonus.

The reception has been both a personal and professional highlight. We are putting Australia on the map for the cause of missing persons.

Our world-first therapeutic tool, The Hope Narratives, won two Good Design Awards (Social Impact and Communication Design). They're also being used by missing persons organisations, authorities, academics, psychologists and families in over 10 countries, in an increasingly broad variety of contexts, and have been translated into four (soon to be five) languages. We have plans to adapt them further by licensing them to newfound friends and connections abroad and establishing expansion packs for specific types of disappearance.

After years of facilitating Ambiguous Loss Training with Assoc. Professor Sarah Wayland, we produced a training series that scales the program and makes it globally accessible. Our Ambiguous Loss Masterclass launched for National Missing Persons Week with significant media coverage. It has already been used by over 1,000 people, including a Turkish group supporting families impacted by the devastating February 2023 earthquake.

Our foundation project (missingpersonsguide.com) still provides invaluable direction for over 50 users a day, with sustained praise and appreciation. Through 2023, we also gave specific, individual, specialised support to 72 family members in our network, across multiple platforms, over many cups of coffee and homemade meals.

We continue to be a core source of support for all of our stakeholders and a common line of praise we receive is around the simple fact that – despite the challenges – we're still here.

We are sought after for specialist commentary. Weekly we receive enquiries for media commentary, involvement with podcasts, books, events, academic and artistic projects in Australia and abroad. Our professionalism still misleads people both in and outside the sector to assume we are a fully funded, abundantly staffed organisation, frequently demonstrated by requests and referrals from authorities and medical professionals.

Feedback for our rebrand couldn't have been more overwhelmingly positive, evidenced by the perspective and language shift vehemently adopted by families and praise from some of the country's most creative and strategic minds. The new name can unequivocally be credited with opening the doors to new and exciting opportunities, such as a month-long fundraising initiative with the iconic Hotel Windsor and their top-tier restaurants.

In 2023, we proved our capabilities and capacity to scale.

Looking forward, there's much to come. Encouraged by a federal politician, we made our very first pre-budget submission for the 2024 budget and will hopefully get the funding most presume we already have, enabling us to make even more impact. And, having just welcomed the formidable Lili Greer to our board, I feel 2024 will be our best year yet.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our cause, our charity and our families.

Onwards and upwards,



Loren O'Keeffe (she/her)
Founder and CEO

rebrand reinforcing our innovation

Our original name served its original purpose (to register a charity to support this community), but after a decade of consistently innovative, game-changing work, we'd outgrown it. Between the strategy, design, admin and legal components, there was a tremendous amount of work involved with developing, executing and promoting the new name, but it was the right move, made at the right time.

And we couldn't be prouder of the fact that families love it as much as our contacts in the NFP, creative, communications and advertising industries do.



[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to watch the announcement that sparked a remarkable response and/or [read the rationale](#).



the missed found ation

*The work you've done over the past 10 years is **simply immeasurable**. Congratulations on this milestone and on the meaningful rebrand.*

SUPPORTER

*Absolutely beautiful rebrand, **so well thought out and beautifully executed**. My sister is missed every day and we are so grateful to have you in our corner as we continue to seek answers.*

SISTER

*When you said "**not everyone knows what it feels like to have someone go missing but everyone knows what it's like to miss someone**" it got me in the depths of my heart.*

WIFE

*Congratulations on a decade of supporting people at the worst time of their lives, and beyond. **The new name says it all.***

DONOR

the hope narratives scaling our world-first tool

It's been a thrill to realise how widely our tangible therapeutic tool is recognised by a growing number of people in the missing persons sector around the world, and developments throughout 2023 ensured the reach will only continue.

Plans to create themed versions of the cards in collaboration with cohorts of the community, including war, natural disaster, First Nations and unsolved homicide, and with specific organisations, like Project: Cold Case (which co-hosted Purdue University's Cold Case Symposium we presented at) are in their infancy. In addition, we continue to find that once support providers know about The Hope Narratives, they want them and we aim to approach international peak bodies and more organisations to keep scaling in 2024.

44

family participant perspectives

183

sets in use

10+

countries

5

languages

(and counting)

The cards are wonderful – I'm so proud of you. Congratulations on their success and what you have achieved, and thank you for all the work you are doing.

PROFESSOR EMERITUS, DR PAULINE BOSS

PRINCIPAL THEORIST AND AUTHOR OF AMBIGUOUS LOSS



the hope narratives scaling our world-first tool

Highlights:

- Won two Good Design Awards – one for Social Impact, the other for Communication Design
- Provided demonstrations to Scandinavian missing persons academics, volunteers and Missing People Sweden charity, staff at Missing People UK, and academics and law enforcement across the US and UK
- Coordinated the language and graphic design for translations into four languages (including bilingual lived experience proofing for each language)
- Established a Licensing Agreement (first used internationally in October) with pro bono support from MinterEllison
- Used as a case study for impactful design in VCE Design textbook

Sets of The Hope Narratives are now owned by almost 200 families and psychologists, as well as the following organisations:



Black & Missing Foundation's Beth Celestini appreciating our Unmissable cups and The Hope Narratives at Missing Persons Day in Florida



Australia



USA



Canada



UK



Scotland



USA



USA



Australia



Ireland



USA



Scotland



USA



Sweden



USA



Australia



Clockwise from top left:

Missed's exhibition at the National Missing and Unidentified Persons Conference in Orlando in May

Our Good Design Award win for The Hope Narratives at the awards night in September

Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland and Loren with The Hope Narratives for a media shoot in August

Loren with Missed family representative Promise after a catch-up lunch in Sydney in February

Every year, you find new and incredibly powerful ways to create a voice and increase inclusion and opportunities for this community to feel heard, understood and supported. This year, you've done it again with all the heart and tenacity that you show each and every time you speak and the actions prior and post. Thank you.

– Brother

ambiguous loss masterclass providing universal training

After three years of coordinating and delivering Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland's ambiguous loss training for professionals and volunteers in Australia and abroad, thanks to our donors, we were able to fund the production of what Hon. Ged Kearney MP described as a 'vital resource'. Better yet, we've made the first component (Ambiguous Loss 101) free to remove barriers to access for police, media, search and rescue volunteers, mental health professionals and anyone supporting families of missing people to better understand the experience of ambiguous loss. The second component, Advanced Skills Training, is aimed specifically at those studying to become, or practising as, mental health practitioners. It continues to gain traction and praise across the globe.

21

media interviews on launch

>1000

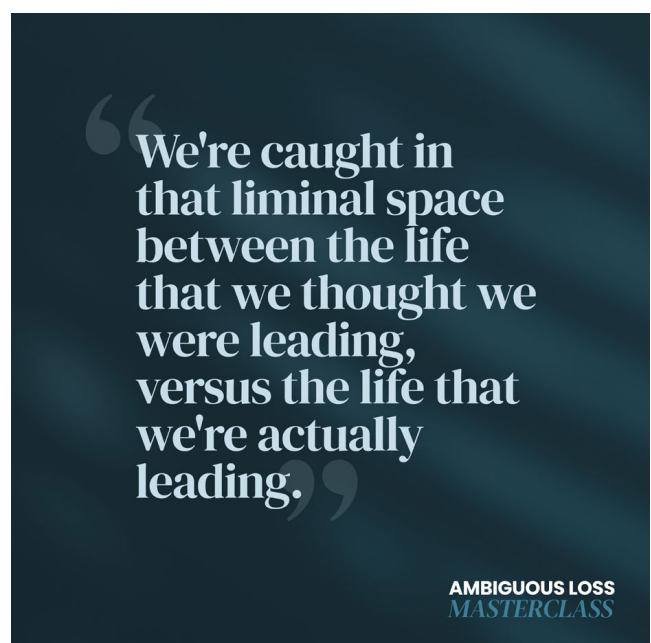
views

72%

of views outside Australia

Highlights:

- Shared and recognised by international leaders from Missing Children Europe to the International Commission on Missing Persons
- Invited to present the Masterclass to the Australian Association of Psychologists
- Inclusion in curriculum at Queensland University of Technology, Purdue University, Arizona State University
- Added to the Mental Health Academy catalogue (over 200,000 health professional members)





Clockwise from top left:

Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland presenting our Ambiguous Loss Masterclass


ABC News Breakfast interviewing Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland and Milled board member Lili Greer for the launch of the Masterclass

10 News interviewing Milled family representative Lisa Hayez and Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland about the importance of specialised support for families of missing people

Nine's Today Show interviewing Milled board member Jill Calder for National Missing Persons Week

A still from the Advanced Skills Training component of the Masterclass where Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland simulates a counselling session





Loren spoke in terms of a person who is so dearly missed. The focus is all the reasons that this person was impactful, important and missed. Generally, I am stoic and strong when it comes to fighting for my missing mother. Loren O'Keeffe's words, tone and connection busted through my towers of strength and embraced the wounded little girl who lost her mom at just 5 years old. I have NEVER had that experience – ever! Words cannot describe how grateful I am for her loving connection.

– Purdue University symposium attendee

core work

australia's specialist missing persons organisation

Fundamentally, Missed exists to humanise missing loved ones, alleviate the practical and emotional impact on their families and friends, and to transform the way society responds to this issue. We achieve this by holistic case management with the 80+ families we support, as well as managing a range of initiatives, offers of everything from pro bono legal support and search dog assistance, through to actions and contributions to families and loved ones, as per the following examples of our work in 2023.

465

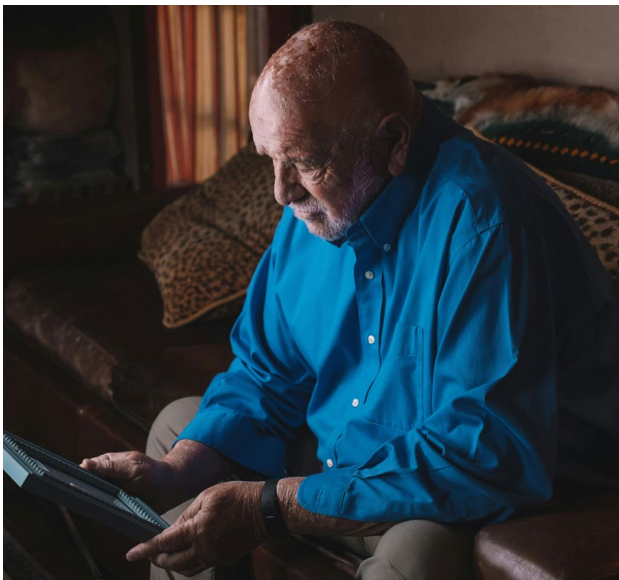
hours of direct family liaison

>15,000

website visits

800%

increase in search for the term *ambiguous loss*



FOR FAMILIES

In 2023, Missed worked closely with dozens of families, spanning a huge range of support, including:

- Creating and supporting media opportunities to raise awareness of cases and the nuances involved
- Developing and refining awareness-building strategies
- Advising on fundraising initiatives
- Providing emotional and logistical support for loved ones in highly emotional, distressing stages
- Advocating for loved ones' rights and respect via written correspondence to media, peak bodies, vigilantes and other unwelcome individuals
- Maintaining an active peer-peer support group
- Homemade meals in family homes
- Referring loved ones to specialised counselling
- Commiserating over coffee
- Advising on a variety of practical processes
- Designing and coordinating billboards
- Urgently writing statements upon discovery of long term missing remains

core work

australia's specialist missing persons organisation

FOR THE CAUSE / FOUNDATION

The Missed Foundation also contributed to the cause through the following activities (and more):

- Providing expert commentary in the media on high-profile, nuanced, and long-term missing cases
- Creating an animated timeline to showcase our first decade
- Producing countless print and digital assets to reflect our new identity
- Delivering a presentation at Purdue University
- Speaking at Florida's Missing Persons Day event
- Undertaking a fundraising review
- Conducting research into lived experiences
- Monitoring traditional media and popular culture trends on the issue
- Commencing website upgrade, including rewriting and redeveloping all content, briefing developers, and coordinating the entire process
- Attending networking and fundraising events
- Preparing and sending a **federal government pre-budget submission**



Click or scan QR code to read our bid for government funding

As well as fortifying invaluable relationships with families, support professionals, pro bono partners, authorities, journalists, academics, volunteers and key collaborators, a lot of energy also went into building and maintaining relationships with industry leaders including the following (and more):



Project: Cold Case Founder and Cold Case Symposium co-host Ryan Backmann with Loren in Tampa





Clockwise from top left:

Dr Karen Shalev (Director of the Centre for the Study of Missing Persons) and Loren at the 5th International Missing Persons Conference in Cardiff in July

Loren at Missing People UK's fundraising and communications team Innovation Day in London in June

Cold Case Symposium presentation at Purdue University in Indiana in October

Frankie magazine feature in April

Animated timeline video marking 10 years (click image or scan QR code to watch)



The support of Loren and Missed has been an unbelievable gift. This depth of understanding just wasn't around in 2008. That so much is so thoughtfully articulated all these years later is a true blessing for families and professionals dealing with ambiguous loss.

– Wife

funds

a community effort

After a decade of hustling, and consistently proving how far we stretch each dollar, we're proud to say our albeit humble income streams have further diversified from sporadic donations and an annual fun run fundraiser.

We now have a trusty handful of major annual donors, a growing group of monthly donors and individual fundraisers, and this year we learned of our first – and substantial – bequest (which we're due to gratefully receive in 2024). We were also thrilled to receive two grants; one from the Association of Financial Advisers and one from Australia Post.

And last, but certainly not least, the unexpected news that beloved Melbourne institution The Hotel Windsor, and their award-winning restaurants would be fundraising for the entire month of December was a highlight, more for what it represents than for the funds. Having such prestigious, deeply respected businesses offer to put their name and time to this cause and our charity shows not only those directly impacted but potential funders that our society understands the merit and importance of this work. It was the first time the hospitality giant has initiated fundraising of this kind and we are thrilled to have been the chosen cause.

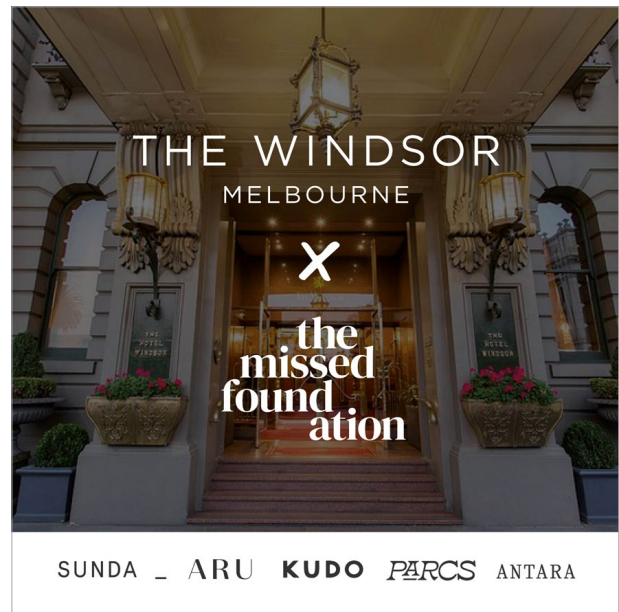
\$229,000
donations

16
monthly donors

\$8,500
grants (calendar year)

106
sales (merch and resources)

\$83,036
leveraged funds (in-kind office space, pro bono legal, comms and graphic design support, accommodation, etc)



Profit and loss report

Cash mode

01 Jul 2022 - 30 Jun 2023

	Total
4-0000 Income	
4-1100 Grants - Other	1,000.00
4-2010 Donations received	132,426.78
4-4010 Sales of Goods	4,653.52
4-4011 Ambiguous Loss Training	2,455.00
4-4012 Podcasts Donations	96,906.07
Total Income	237,441.37
Gross Profit	237,441.37
6-0000 Expense	
5-0210 Purchases of T-shirts	2,801.17
6-0010 Accounting fees	294.95
6-0020 Advertising	100.00
6-0040 Assets Purchased incl computers less than 5000	95.38
6-0070 Bank charges	100.11
6-0085 Catering for Meetings	1,093.77
6-0400 Insurance	1,027.03
6-0480 Meeting expenses	83.44
6-0510 Postage & courier	1,743.04
6-0520 Printing & stationery	370.50
6-0600 Wages & salaries	30,000.04
6-0607 Superannuation expense	3,150.00
6-0610 Wages Reimbursement	76,873.10
6-0680 Telephone	1,708.90
6-0700 Training and development	724.53
6-0711 Travel & Accommodation Domestic	4,831.51
6-0712 Travel & Accommodation International	11,184.92
6-6401 Fundraising	414.41
6-6402 IT	3,172.02
6-6403 Website	706.06
6-6405 Sundries	200.50
6-6406 Transport	1,898.88
6-6407 Ambiguous Loss Training	4,692.91
6-6408 Counselling	126.40
6-6409 Graphic design	5,840.00
6-6410 The Hope Narratives	9,683.96
6-6411 Payroll	2,269.32
Total Expense	165,186.85
Operating Profit	72,254.52
Net Profit	72,254.52

Balance sheet report

Cash mode

30 Jun 2023

	Total
1-0000 Asset	
1-0001 Banking	
1-1120 Operating Acct no447888368	190,772.92
Total Banking	190,772.92
Total Asset	190,772.92
2-0000 Liability	
2-0002 Current Liabilities	
2-1180 PAYG withholdings payable	5,356.00
2-1190 Superannuation payable	2,362.50
Total Current Liabilities	7,718.50
Total Liability	7,718.50
Net Assets	183,054.42
3-0000 Equity	
3-0001 Current Earnings	
3-2000 Current year Surplus or Deficit	72,254.52
Total Current Earnings	72,254.52
3-0002 Retained Earnings	
3-1000 Retained surplus or Accumulated losses	114,576.86
Total Retained Earnings	114,576.86
3-9999 Historical balancing	(3,776.96)
Total Equity	183,054.42



Clockwise from top left:

Australian of the Year Awards night for Victorian nominees at the National Gallery of Victoria in November

Showing Matthew Leveson's parents a tribute we coordinated with artist Amy Blue for a City of Sydney mural in February

Assoc. Prof. Sarah Wayland and Loren at AMP Foundation's Tomorrow Makers Gala at the Art Gallery of NSW in April

Loren making the most of a chance meeting with former Victorian Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Police, Hon. Lisa Neville in September

Jo Youle OBE, CEO of Missing People UK, with her set of The Hope Narratives during Loren's June visit

Loren welcomed new board member Lili Greer to Missed HQ in Melbourne in December



ways you can help

Spare a thought

When you see a missing person storyline, imagine the reality many families live with daily

Spare some change

Consider a **tax-deductible donation**



Help us make the change

Consider us for a **fundraising event**

Connect us to specialists

In 2024 we need volunteer **web developers**

Hear our stories

Listen to our **What's Missing** podcast



Equip yourself

Watch our **Ambiguous Loss Masterclass** (missed.org.au/alm)

Show your support

Buy and wear our **merch**



Be moved

Watch our ep of ABC's critically acclaimed **You Can't Ask That**



Give us a thumbs up

Review us on Google or our podcast



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Share your feedback, wisdom and/or get in touch: hello@missed.org.au

missed.org.au

To say this is a network of brave, resilient individuals is a gross understatement. As the only charity of its kind, The Missed Foundation dedicates its time, resources and heart to an issue that is largely unseen and unappreciated in the community... That is, until it's needed.

Supporting Missed, I feel a personal satisfaction that there is hope, understanding and support for those families experiencing ambiguity. As a community, we are better for this.

– Supporter



A man is sitting on a concrete ledge, leaning against a white lattice fence. He is wearing a blue t-shirt, light-colored shorts, and sneakers. The scene is dimly lit, with purple flowers visible on the left side of the frame. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Because you
can't be a
missing person
without being
missed**

**the
missed
found
ation**