

Company: Staying Independent, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Company Description: One of Australia's fastest growing start ups in the disability sector. Founded by Kezia Kingston, Asia Pacific 2 x Gold Stevie Award Winner for Health Management and Innovation, she leads her team of 20 towards a more efficient and economical way of operating in the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Unlike any other provider across Australia, Staying Independent created a new model of care.

Nomination Category: Company/Organization Awards Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Startup of the Year - Business Services Industries

Nomination Title: From zero to six figures in 16 months.



1. Which will you submit for your nomination in this category, a video of up to five (5) minutes, explaining the achievements since July 1, 2023 of the nominated organization, OR written answers to the questions? (Choose one):

Written answers to the questions

2. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video. If you are submitting written answers to the questions for this category, provide them in the appropriate spaces below:

3. Briefly describe the nominated organization: history and past performance (up to 200 words):

Total 192 words used.

Staying Independent was founded in March 2024 by occupational therapist and entrepreneur Kezia Kingston, with no staff, no clients, and no financial backing. In just 16 months, the organisation has grown into one of Australia's fastest-growing disability service providers - achieving 1075% year-on-year growth, expanding to over 20 staff, and supporting 80+ clients across the country.

The business was born from a bold idea: to fix the broken, siloed care model of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Kezia developed the Integrated Outcomes Model, a proprietary framework that unites allied health professionals and support workers in real-time collaboration, dramatically improving functional outcomes for participants while reducing inefficiency across the system.

The organisation operates with 47% profit margins - a rare feat in an industry where average margins sit below 10%. It has maintained 100% staff retention, and earned national attention for its innovative approach, winning multiple Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards, including two Golds for Healthcare Innovation and Management, and People's Choice Favourite Healthcare Company 2025.

From a solo start-up to a multi-award-winning national provider, Staying Independent is setting a new benchmark in disability services and reshaping what effective, collaborative care can look like.

4. Outline the organization's achievements since July 1 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words):

Total 204 words used.

Since March, 2024, Staying Independent has emerged as a category disruptor in the disability services sector.

In just one year, the organisation recorded 1075% year-on-year growth, transitioning from a one-person startup to a high-performance team of 20+ professionals. Its retention rate remains at 100%, a testament to its empowering workplace culture and bold operational model.

At its core is the proprietary Integrated Outcomes Model - a care delivery system that unites clinicians and support workers for real-time, coordinated implementation. Unlike legacy providers focused on servicing hours, Staying Independent measures outcomes and functional gains. The model has now been implemented across the full client base, generating industry interest for national scaling.

The organisation also led a creative rebranding of disability care, launching the award-winning "Grow With Us" campaign at the 2025 Sydney Disability Expo. The immersive exhibit, crowned "Best Stand in 15 Years," challenged conventional perceptions of the sector and gained media attention for its fresh, hopeful narrative.

Operationally, Staying Independent is building out its Caretech suite, including LearnAble AI technologies - a platform designed to train and uplift support workers through AI-enabled content. With no external funding or financial backing, every result is bootstrapped, proving strong margins, scalable systems, and a compelling market advantage.

5. Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 92 words used.

Attachment information:

- Photograph of Kezia at the Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards - Gold Excellence in Healthcare Innovation, Gold Excellence in Healthcare Management, Winner of the People's Choice Award for Favourite Company in Healthcare.
- Photograph and videos of the Grow With Us campaign
- PDF of the abstract proposal for her research study, and presentation for Denver October 2025.
- Email copy of evidence of the AFR success to final round.
- Copy of financials of Y24 and Y25 demonstrating YoY growth.
- Links to company website, personal website, Instagram, and LinkedIn profile.

6. Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the organization's past performance (up to 250 words):

Total 244 words used.

The achievements of Staying Independent are extraordinary by every industry metric - and virtually unheard of in the Australian NDIS provider landscape or any sector more generally.

Most NDIS providers operate on slim margins (typically 2%–4%) due to fixed pricing, high compliance, and fragmented service delivery. In contrast, Staying Independent has achieved a 47% profit margin, while maintaining 100% staff retention and reinvesting heavily into innovation, training, and caretech.

In less than 16 months, the organisation has scaled from zero clients, no capital backing, and a sole trader structure to consistent six-figure monthly billings exceeding \$120,000, placing it among the fastest-growing startups in its category.

While the sector grapples with inefficiencies and reactive funding cuts, Staying Independent offers a proactive, evidence-based solution: its proprietary Integrated Outcomes Model. This care model breaks silos between clinicians and support workers, allowing participants to make faster, more measurable progress. It is not only clinically effective but also financially sustainable - an outlier in a scheme facing systemic cost overruns.

No other startup in this sector has combined clinical leadership, startup scalability, campaign creativity, and caretech innovation with such velocity. From launching the most successful disability expo installation in 15 years, to building a suite of scalable AI platforms - every achievement reflects a commitment to sector transformation, not just market share.

Staying Independent isn't just a business success - it's creating a blueprint for what the future of ethical, efficient, and empowering disability care can look like.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[From zero to six figures in 16 months.](#)



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