



# Our Community Matters



## Culture is key to healthy community organisations



Is your organisation's culture healthy enough to cope with a public airing of a problem?

BY DENIS MORIARTY, GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR, OUR COMMUNITY

Words, like people, have their good times and their bad times.

This is a very bad year for the word “culture”, largely because of the banking royal commission. Every media article on Mr Justice Hayne’s name-and-shame extravaganza uses the word at least twice: a “toxic culture” here, a “poisonous culture” there, a “culture of greed” all around.

The royal commission is lifting the lid off a number of organisations and letting the public peer in, and the public’s mood could be described in a terms of a spike in demand for pitchforks and torches.

It’s not just banks either. The RSL, the ABC, private schools and the Catholic Church have their own cultures, and all have been taking ►

their lumps over problem behaviour. The Liberal Party has continuing problems with its culture of bullying and secrecy.

But companies, charities and community organisations that haven't yet been hauled over the coals should consider the word "yet".

Consider for a moment what would happen if something major were to go wrong in your organisation, community group, sports club or school, and the public were to get a good look at your culture. How would that play?

Hopefully you have nothing to worry about. But it's worth thinking for a moment about organisational culture, and how you would go about fixing it.

It's not as simple as just obeying the law, even though inquiries do tend to concentrate on the times when people haven't complied. To obey the law, or to blow the whistle on other people when they don't, isn't enough.

You might even say that culture begins when the law stops. No law can go into the kind of detail that will distinguish between a toxic culture of greed and rivalry, and a respectful and accommodating culture you'd like to work in.

There is a lot of overlap between a destructive culture and a difficult workplace or organisation. People don't support each other, because they're set against each other. They're reluctant to share information, because trust is lacking. People want credit, but not responsibility. Good people leave, nasty people prosper. There's little sense of community, except where everybody's grumbling together about their idiot bosses.

You might assume that not-for-profits would have a major advantage in designing a humanist people-focused culture, where money isn't a primary goal, and people don't get bonuses for fleecing the vulnerable.

Yet while not-for-profits aren't driven solely by making money, they don't like losing it either. And cover-ups tend to be driven by fear that if the news (of whatever scandalous thing) got out, then donors would flee and the budget for all the good things the organisation did would collapse.

The more revered the institution, it would seem, the more need to bury scandals; and so people double down, avoiding washing their dirty linen in public.

Getting on top of this vicious circle and developing a healthier culture is a matter of trust, internal and external.

A sound organisation is one where a whistleblower can trust management not to punish them for blowing the whistle, and where management trusts stakeholders sufficiently to believe that it will cope with a public airing of a problem.

An organisation with a healthy culture has values that can't be shuffled to avoid embarrassment, and it has enough self-respect to apologise when necessary. It has rules and guidelines, and it has the flexibility to recognise where those rules and guidelines are providing misguided incentives.

Like so much else in business, and politics, and life, it comes down to common human decency. And like so much else, it involves continuous vigilance. ■

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# Great grant: Fostering migrant integration

*The aim of this grant program, funded by the federal Department of Home Affairs, is to help migrants to integrate into Australian life, and in turn to build social cohesion.*

The grants will fund services, activities and events that seek to work with:

- newly arrived migrants
- first and second generation migrants
- communities showing early signs of or potential for integration challenges and/or racial, religious or cultural intolerance.

## Overview

This program aims to:

- encourage the social and economic participation of migrants
- promote and encourage the uptake of Australian values and liberal democracy and amplify the value of Australian citizenship
- address issues within Australian communities that show potential for, or early signs of, low social integration
- promote a greater understanding and tolerance of racial, religious and cultural diversity.

## Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a grant, you must be a not-for-profit organisation that is one of the following entity types:

- Indigenous corporation
- Company
- Non-corporate state or territory entity
- Corporate state or territory entity
- Local Government entity
- Co-operative
- Incorporated association
- Statutory entity
- Trustee on behalf of a Trust.

Applications for \$10,000 to \$50,000 for up to 12 months will be considered.

## More information

For detailed information, visit <https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/G08688> (Funding Centre membership and log-in required). Applications close at 2pm on November 9. ■



Citizens' juries are about arriving at conclusions with other people, not winning arguments.

# Road test: citizens' juries

BY ALEX MCMILLAN, OUR COMMUNITY

Whether you're a member of a small community group or the Australian federal parliament, debating big issues effectively and reaching good decisions isn't easy. How do you ensure the loudest voices don't drown all others out? How do you stop the group from going off the rails and arguing over the minutiae, or dissolving into factions?

At the Communities in Control conference earlier this year, economist Nicholas Gruen outlined the benefits of citizens' juries as forums for policy making or decision making. (You can read a transcript of Gruen's address [here](#).) Citizens' juries are groups of people selected at random, like juries in the court system.

## **Citizens' juries: an alternative to democracy**

Citizens' juries offer a lot of advantages over the democratic system of electing people to represent us, Gruen said, because, "Our political system has been sucked more or less entirely into our entertainment system... You more or less can't get anywhere in a campaign if you're

not demonising your opponents and saying how great you are. That's the formula."

"You're not there to win an argument," he said. "You're there to arrive at a conclusion with other people, and that has tremendous power... We evolved to cooperate in groups. We're incredibly good at that. Better than pretty much any species."

## **My experience on a citizens' jury**

Last month I had the opportunity to put Nicholas Gruen's notions to the test when I was selected as one of 80 participants in a weekend-long citizens' jury convened by the Victorian Government to debate a draft Bill on gender equality, particularly the issue of quotas for women in public sector leadership positions.

## **How we learned**

Before the weekend began, the facilitators, **Mosaic Lab**, sent us a number of reports and articles to read. On day one, we also took in information presented to us by speakers with expertise on gender equality and quotes. At this ►



stage, we were encouraged to work through the facts and keep our opinions to ourselves.

### How we deliberated

Having gathered all this information, we got down to the discussion – not in a “town hall” style setting, but mainly in small groups of three or four people. Those small groups then presented opinions and summaries to the larger group. Once everyone had aired their thoughts, we grouped related ideas into individual recommendations.

### How we made decisions

Participants voted on each recommendation, and recommendations approved by at least 80% of people were put forward into the group’s report. Recommendations with less than 80% approval were reconsidered in light of individual comments, and then rewritten. These were put to the group again, and this time we voted in teams of four, which sped up the final deliberation.

### How we stayed focused

Facilitators were mindful of the need to keep participants focused on the task at hand, and not to allow us to drift into discussion of individual agendas. During whole-group sessions, if small groups began to chat, the facilitators reminded us, “Stay together,” and asked us to honour the group. Towards the end of the weekend, they suggested we might need to start letting go of certain views where it was obvious they weren’t held by the larger group.

### How we stayed respectful

The real art of the weekend was in making every person feel heard, and ensuring their opinions were respected – not easy given the diverse range of opinions represented, the number of people involved, and the size of the task at hand. This was achieved by setting norms during the meet-and-greet at the start of the weekend, and reinforcing them throughout the weekend.

Shouting and interrupting were not acceptable. Everybody was asked to make a concerted effort to listen more than to speak, which led to many



Alex McMillan was one of 80 Victorians who made up a citizens’ jury on gender quotas.

silent moments, an uncommon phenomenon in group settings. The weekend was task-focused, but designed to be inclusive. Everyone had their opinions heard more than once.

### Takeaways

I know none of the techniques I’ve mentioned seems particularly groundbreaking, but it’s easy to forget how easily group settings can spiral out of control. Confident, outspoken people tend to dominate, and unpopular opinions are often shouted down.

Group deliberations are a difficult but necessary part of any group, so it’s important to make them as easy and effective as possible. Make sure an agenda is sent out before each meeting. Make sure everyone gets a turn to speak, but not always to hold the mic. Remind individuals that they’re part of a greater whole and that one person can’t change the world alone.

### More information

[Read the report](#) of the Victorian Gender Equality Bill citizens’ jury

[Citizens’ juries address](#) delivered by Nicholas Gruen at Communities in Control 2018: read the transcript, watch the video or download the podcast. ■



*Special report*

# A new era for community directors

Not-for-profits face an unprecedented burden of increased regulation, decreased funding and low community trust, according to the former commissioner of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, Susan Pascoe.

Addressing the Community Directors Conference in Melbourne last month, Ms Pascoe mapped the terrain that not-for-profits must navigate, and issued a handy set of signposts.



# A new era for community directors



Susan Pascoe, former commissioner,  
Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

*Our Community Matters presents a full transcript of Susan Pascoe's landmark speech to last month's Community Directors Conference in Melbourne.*

My topic for today's introductory presentation is "A new era for community directors".

Nowadays, we tend to declare new eras at the release of every successive model of iPhone, but still... Things really are changing for community directors.

Let's look at some of these changes.

## **Regulation is increasing**

Regulation is increasing across the board, not just in the not-for-profit sector. In all sorts of areas – consumer protection, privacy, national security, tax law, OH&S, and anti-discrimination law – the government reacts to various scandals by placing extra responsibilities on citizens, on businesses, and on not-for-profits.

Despite government rhetoric about red tape reform, not-for-profits often complain about being hemmed in by increasing legislation.

Of course, governments don't want to oppress community groups, but they do respond to public complaints that something's gone wrong.

Regulations that demand commercial-level food production standards from church cake stalls came about because something went wrong and someone got sick and the public demanded reform. The public – that's us – is increasingly risk-averse, and increasingly litigious, and if governments don't act, insurance companies will. There's no going back to the old ways of muddling through and taking-the-rough-with-the-smooth and near-enough-is-good-enough. ►

Privacy is increasingly an issue. In not-for-profit offices across Australia, there's data piling up in every filing cabinet and computer, yet so many organisations have poor policies for protecting it, and little understanding of how to use it. Governments (and individuals) are growing impatient with not-for-profits that struggle to keep up with shifting standards and rules. We seem not to mind surrendering our privacy to international mega-corporations that would sell their own mothers to a glue factory, but we look suspiciously at every not-for-profit that wants us to fill out a form.

Partly, too, the new rules are put in place because not-for-profits need protection from themselves. The more trust there is in a sector, the fewer commercial protections are built in, and the easier it is to rip people off. The not-for-profit sector is the most trusted in Australia, and the most trusting, and it's very difficult to find the right balance between encouragement of easy cooperation and protection from camouflaged predators.

One of the objects I worked towards at the ACNC was to reduce red tape, to try to cut down on some of those rules that not-for-profits have to comply with. We made some progress. But there's still a long way to go.

As a director, it's your job to make sure your organisation is following the rules, whether you agree with them or not.

### **Cost pressures are increasing**

There are no restrictions on setting up a new not-for-profit group, and there is a constant stream of new entrants seeking funding – and a constant stream of organisations folding every year as well (and now for the first time taken off the list by the ACNC; they used to clog up the statistics eternally).

For those who survive, it's hard to get funding for normal operations. Donors are reluctant to fund basic administration. They prefer new projects.

The public has been encouraged by the tabloids to believe that administration is essentially waste, and some charities have buckled to the pressure and advertise unhelpful and



Many not-for-profits lack sturdy policies on data protection.

misleading messages such as “100% of your donations go directly to sick children”.

At the same time there are unsettling signs that donation levels are waning. The latest report on tax deductible donations from the Queensland University of Technology found that donations dropped from \$3.1 billion in 2014–15 to \$2.9 billion in 2015–16. The number of taxpayers making donations fell by about 600,000 people, and the average proportion of income donated fell too.

Free helpers are also becoming harder to find, and more demanding when you do find them. Today's volunteers need more personalisation. They want to do jobs that involve and interest them, not just the ones you've chosen for them. This means you can tap them for higher-level skills, but it can also mean that the “dull but worthy” work doesn't get done. And it can also mean that it's more work to administer a volunteer than to just do the job yourself.

So we have fewer and more demanding helpers, fewer and less generous donations, but (in many cases) increasing demand for the type of work not-for-profit organisations do – we have an ageing society with an increased care load, and fewer hands to share the load.

Part of the problem is that not-for-profits suffer from Baumol's cost disease, named after a twentieth-century economist, William Baumol. Over the economy as a whole, productivity goes up as technology improves, and fewer and fewer people are needed to do the work. As productivity ►



Cash is hard to come by. Does your organisation have the resources it needs to survive and thrive?

rises, salaries rise (even if more slowly).

But productivity only goes up in some sectors, and the not-for-profit sector isn't one of them. You'll always need four people in a string quartet, you'll always need a teacher for every class, and you'll always need about the same number of medical staff to a ward. The number of people remains more or less the same, but salaries have to go up to stop all the nurses going off to become app designers.

Australia is a rich nation – rich beyond the wildest fantasies of our grandparents. But our expectations have risen exponentially as well. How are we going to sort out which things are a right? The NDIS? World-standard adventure playgrounds in all the suburbs and towns? Gold medal-winning athletes? Subsidies for opera? How do we decide which activities the government should fund, and which things are an indulgence? That battle for cash is not going to end any time soon.

As a community director, it's your job to make sure your organisation has the resources it needs to survive and thrive. As competition increases, that task gets harder. It's not something you can close your eyes to, or shunt off to staff to handle. You must have a strategy in place.

### **Privatisation is shifting responsibilities**

Government has been shedding functions to the not-for-profit sector – partly because the government doesn't want to cop the blame when mistakes occur, partly because of “steer-don't-row” theories of management, partly because people understand that not-for-profit organisations often do a better job of community-level service delivery.

That's all very well, but when a government function is being privatised, how can a not-for-profit organisation establish that it should get the job over a for-profit? And how do we stop not-for-profits from taking on some of the undesirable traits of businesses in order to get the contract?

As a community director, it's your job to make sure you keep the organisation's eyes firmly on the prize. What is your organisation's purpose? You must keep that front and centre. You must fight hard against the urge to change shape or compromise your mission to suit current funding trends.

### **Greater accountability is demanded.**

Good intentions used to get the benefit of the doubt. That's breaking down. Royal commissions and inquiries into religious and other institutions ►

and the banks and the RSL show what happens when the large traditional organisations at the heart of Australian society are suddenly treated like anybody else and put under the microscope without the traditional deference.

It's not clear, either, whether the traditional institutions are losing followers because they're being shown up, or whether they're being shown up because they're losing followers (and are thus displaying weakness to the media pack). But nobody gets a free pass any more. Good intentions are no longer presumed.

If not-for-profits are treated the same way as for-profits – if they lose the benefit of the doubt – will they be able to retain the qualities that differentiate them from for-profits? What might they lose?

The problem is that Australians like volunteers but despise amateurs. It's difficult to be on the right side of both lines.

As a community director, you would know that trust is your organisation's most valuable asset. It can take a lifetime to build it but an instant to destroy it. You can't afford to be complacent. You have to act at all times as if the decisions you make today may one day be on the front page of the *Herald Sun* – or going viral on Facebook or Twitter. You owe it to your organisation, your staff and volunteers, to your organisation's client and funders and other stakeholders, and to the sector as a whole.

### **Greater diversity is expected**

Australian society has become explosively more diverse very quickly, and extraordinarily more accepting.

Australian not-for-profits (much like our political parties) are often behind this trend towards diversity, not through any opposition to diversity in and of itself but because the status quo can be slow to shift. Older people have more time to volunteer; people on boards tend to stay on; the outcome has to be that many groups are run by people who grew up in the 1960s, when Australia was very different. It's almost inevitable, too, that boards drift into recruiting from people much like themselves, even when the community is



Is your organisation's board gambling with its future by lacking diversity?

changing around them.

Most Australian not-for-profits welcome women and minorities in theory. The problem only starts if the new entrants start questioning how we've always done things. That's where change bites. Are we ready to tell the men to bring a plate?

We have to be conscious of our human tendency to resist change. And we have to resolve to do better. Australian not-for-profits must go further than letting under-represented groups join them; they must let those change them. The board must lead this change.

I know there are complications. Many of you are operating in communities where the population itself is not very diverse. You can't get blood from a stone. But we can all pledge to do better.

### **Evaluation is an increasing requirement**

The buzzword we're all coming to hear more and more is 'evidence-based'. And that's fair enough. You should be able to show you're doing good in the world; you should not expect people to just take your word for it.

Your grant funder may want reassurance that its money is going to the right place. The government may want to confirm that you're meeting the terms of your service contract. Your donors want to know that you're using their hard-earned to good effect. They have to make choices, too, about how to manage their own resources, which are not limitless. If they'd funded some other group – and there are always ►



### Evaluation: it's complicated

other groups ready to take over – would they have done better?

The problem is that evaluation easily slides into valuation. In dollars. A commercial organisation doesn't need evaluation, because everything it does is converted into a direct and easily comparable metric: money. With not-for-profits it's not quite so easy. By definition, not-for-profits have values that are not monetary and thus are not comparable.

While there are many thoughtful funders, there are some who want "objective" data about subjective experience, which is like asking which is the better cheese: feta or Wensleydale. Funders may also want outcomes data that can be compared with outcomes data from the other things they fund, which is like asking whether Wensleydale is a better cheese than Gary Ablett is a footballer.

But not all values are commensurable. Sometimes they even conflict. This is a debate we're still wrestling with. I know the good folk at ICDA are working hard on providing some tools to help you grapple with it as well.

#### **Where are we now?**

Those are just a few of the changes that are swirling around us, as community directors, every day.

We mustn't play down the importance of these changes, but we have to keep them in perspective. We're conditioned to notice and respond to things that change around us, not those that remain the same, even when those are the most important parts. Australia remains a democracy with a powerful and respected civil sector that can't be intimidated or overridden by government. What hasn't changed is more important than what has.

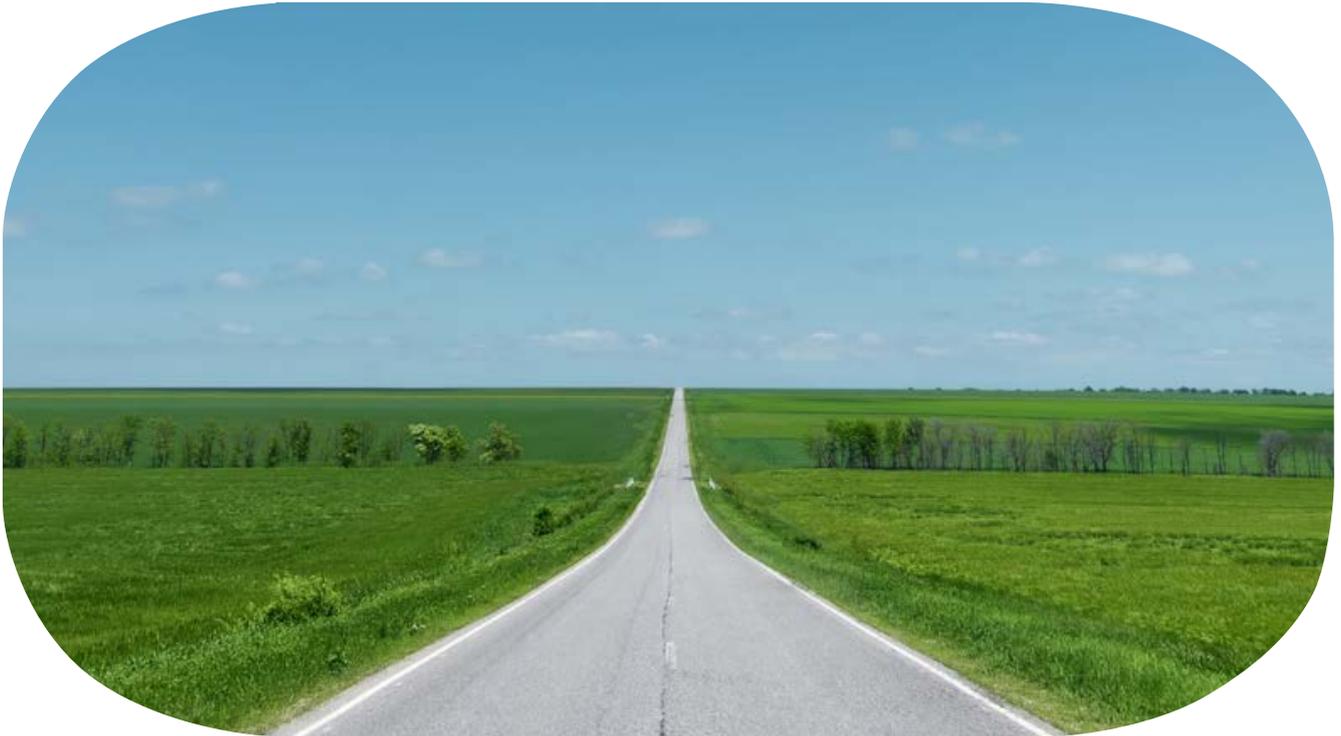
The sci-fi writer William Gibson has pointed out, "The future is already here – it's just not evenly distributed."

Has it reached you yet?

What's coming down the turnpike? How are you going to operate in a world where whole institutions – photography, newspapers, encyclopedias – have withered away to iPhone apps? How are you going to reach your clients, your donors, your stakeholders?

We have a governance problem at a national level. How about at the local level? Is your board up to the job? What skills are you short on? What perspectives are you short on? Do you know what you're for? As the English politician Tony Benn said, ask yourself five questions:

- What power do you have?
- Where did you get it? ►



- In whose interests do you exercise it?
- To whom are you accountable? and,
- How can we get rid of you?

I will add a few more.

- How often does your board self-assess? The unexamined board is not worth having.
- How would your organisation cope with a scandal? The test for governance is when a disaster hits. It's only when the tide goes out that you see who's been swimming naked.
- Do you have a risk management plan – not only for your finance, but for your goals? Risk management begins with three basic questions:
  - What can go wrong?
  - What will we do to prevent it?
  - What will we do if it happens?
- How do you assess your continuing relevance? It's easy to lose sight of the objective when fighting for survival, and eventually to rate

survival above the mission – your own, or the organisation's. Have you planned for growth? Would you accept a merger? Are you prepared to go gently into that good night? If not, can you tell the world why?

Our schools have to educate young people to deal with a rapidly changing world. You can't just order them to believe anything that's written on the blackboard; they'll have to be flexible, agile, and ready to discard anything that's stopped working.

They have a right to expect the same of you.

Volunteers – and that includes most community directors – work for nothing, because we know we're working for everything. What people really, really want is to know that their lives have meaning. That's what Australian not-for-profits have to offer.

*Susan Pascoe now chairs the Community Directors Council.*

*For a full wrap-up of the the Community Directors Conference, plus video of our interview with Susan Pascoe, see [page 22](#). ■*

# Now screening: tips from community projects



***A series of free videos about successful community projects in regional Australia is set to help other groups get their ideas up and running.***

Produced by the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) and Australia Post, the 13 short videos cover lessons learned from four projects: voluntary breath testing at music festivals in Byron Bay; art exhibitions in Lobethal, South Australia; a documentary on the ice epidemic in Smithton, Tasmania; and group fitness for seniors following the Black Saturday bushfires in Toolangi, Victoria.

The CEO of FRRR, Natalie Egleton, said the videos are full of practical tips from successful community organisations.

“We gathered tips on three important aspects of any community-led project: understanding community needs; fundraising; and measurement and evaluation. Hopefully hearing directly from local community leaders and volunteers will inspire other communities,” Ms Egleton said.

To watch the videos, go to <https://www.frrr.org.au/SuccessTips> ■

# Whistleblowing law shake-up “imminent”

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY



Moore's principal Skye Rose says not-for-profits should be prepared for whistleblowers.

*Blowing the whistle on trouble could be the best thing you ever do for your organisation.*

While some Australians may think “dobbing” means not sticking up for your mates, campaigns such as the #metoo movement, recent royal commissions into finances and institutional child abuse, and revelations about the treatment of asylum seekers held on offshore facilities such as Nauru have shown the value in speaking up for what’s right.

Our Community last year produced a free, detailed guide on how to encourage a healthy whistleblowing culture within your organisation:

**[Whistleblowing at your Not-for-profit: A Leader’s Guide](#)**

Jump on it now if you haven’t already, because whistleblowing laws are set for a major shakeup that will affect many not-for-profits.

## Whistleblowing laws face shakeup

Protections under the new laws – still being considered by the Federal Government – would simplify and extend the protections for individuals blowing the whistle on wrongdoing.

At a recent joint presentation to not-for-profits by Our Community’s legal partners Moores and global business advice firm Grant Thornton, Moore's principal Skye Rose described the introduction of the new laws as “imminent”.

Legalities aside, Ms Rose said there were other strong reasons for not-for-profits to revamp their processes, and they’re about simply doing the right thing. ►

“If we look at Nauru and some of the whistleblowing allegations that came out of that, we saw some psychologists and other medical health practitioners go public about some pretty concerning treatment [of asylum seekers].

“It’s not so much about encouraging a dobbing culture. I think that most people will be motivated by raising concerns in good faith. It’s more about encouraging a ‘speak-up’ culture, where people can feel safe to make those disclosures about really inappropriate behaviour.”

And as well as being “on the front foot” in legal terms, she said, organisations with an established whistleblowing program would be able to protect their interests too.

“Any organisation that’s got a whistleblowing program in place will be in a much better position to respond to fraud or misconduct as it arises.”

She said the Our Community guide should be an organisation’s starting point.

“That’s a good place to start, and then you need to make sure that all your staff are aware of it, so that they can understand that they can speak up, and that it is safe to do so. And then get your

managers on board as well, because they might be the ones that are receiving the disclosures.”

The **Treasury Laws Amendment (Enhancing Whistleblower Protections) Bill 2017** was supposed to be enacted in July, but remains held up by the political process.

### More information

**Whistleblowing at your Not-for-profit: A Leader’s Guide | Whistleblower policy and procedures templates (Policy Bank \*.doc download)**

Whistleblowing solutions: **Your Call | Grant Thornton’s anti-fraud service**

**ASIC information on whistleblowers and the current laws**

**Griffith University’s Whistling While They Work research study**

**Treasury Laws Amendment (Enhancing Whistleblower Protections) Bill 2017**

An **extended version** of this article, including detailed analysis of the implications of the new laws for not-for-profits, is available to **members** of the Institute of Community Directors Australia (**ICDA**), an Our Community enterprise. ■



WATCH NOW: Experts explain why whistleblowing is good for you

# Secrets of success examined in study of \$80 billion grants industry

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BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

***Australia's biggest ever study of the burgeoning grants industry has unearthed a series of grantseeking "archetypes" informed by data drawn from grantseekers from across the country.***

Our Community's *Grants in Australia: The Secrets of Success* charts what makes some grantseekers more successful than others.

Based on a survey of more than 2000 grantseekers from across the nation, the report is the most comprehensive since the series began in 2006.

Data scientists Paola Oliva-Altamirano and Joost van der Linden, from Our Community's Innovation Lab, spearheaded this year's analysis.

To help crack the secrets of grantseeking success, this year's study benchmarks a series of grantmaking archetypes that Our Community has dubbed "typical", "winners", "strugglers", "high volume", "big bucks" and the "super-successful 1%".

The study involved cross-checking data across organisations to compare performance by size, sector and funding sources.

The authors also produced a "sentiment analysis", comparing grantseekers' compliments and criticisms and distilling them into an overall view.

And they used the data from the survey to power a new interactive online tool, the Grants in Australia Benchmarker, which allows organisations to compare their own performance against that of similar organisations by application numbers, win-loss rates, grants experience, funding levels and funding sources.

The Benchmarker tool will be available soon to *Our Community Matters* readers who responded to the grants survey earlier this year (you'll receive an emailed link). It will be also be available to members of the **Funding Centre** in the coming months.

Grants in Australia 2018 aims to inform the work of grantmakers, grantseekers, academics and ►



social sector enablers, as well as the work of the AIGM, an Our Community enterprise.

Here are some of the top findings from *Grants in Australia: The Secrets of Success*.

### Key findings

#### **The grantseeking sector is large, diverse and often reliant on small grants.**

Respondents submitted more than 14,000 grant applications in the past year. Around 80% applied for grants worth less than \$5,000. And 40% of grantseekers rely on state and territory governments for their main grants income.

#### **A typical grantseeker is female, professional, and tech-savvy.**

She's a professional, uses references, applies online, prefers project money to operational support, and doesn't bother giving feedback to funders or using professional grantwriters.

#### **Size doesn't matter when it comes to winning.**

Our figures show the same win and loss rates across the board, regardless of organisation size.

#### **Experience counts when it comes to winning fresh funds.**

Those with more experience in the field routinely win more of the grants they apply for.

#### **Successful grantseeking appears in many guises.**

All our grantseeker archetypes – “typical”, “winner”, “struggler”, “high volume”, “big bucks” and “super-successful” – demonstrate a range of strengths and weaknesses affecting win rates, income, application numbers, and abandoned applications.

#### **Elite grantseekers lean on their own skills, high value grants, growth sectors.**

“Super-successful” grantseekers – those who boast an 80% hit rate, 10+ applications, and

\$100,000+ raised – lodge every application that they start writing, use references, back their own (considerable) experience, and use their large and well-established organisations to leverage larger funds.

#### **Grantseekers are relying heavily on a handful of grants.**

Most organisations win relatively few grants. Of the small organisations comprising half the participants in this study, most win an average of one grant per year, and earn less than \$10,000.

#### **Grantseeking performance reflects sector trends.**

There's a strong correlation between which sector a grantseekers operates in, their win rates, and the value of the grants they win.

#### **The battle for resources exists across the board.**

Organisations of all types say that “lack of resources” is their biggest challenge when it comes to winning grants, with nearly two-thirds facing pressure over increased reporting requirements.

#### **Philanthropic funding is the toughest to crack.**

Philanthropic foundations and trusts are the most difficult bodies to source cash from, whereas local councils are a much easier place to seek funds.

#### **Deadlines put grantseekers in a bad mood.**

Grantseekers despise deadlines, according to our sentiment analysis of words and phrases commonly used in applications.

### More information

[Download Grants in Australia 2018](#) | [Past Grants in Australia reports](#) ■



Conference MC Fiona Dempster said social media communication is a new focus for many grantseekers.

# Grantmakers look to future at sold-out conference

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

***The two-day ‘Prepare for Impact’ Grantmaking in Australia conference at Melbourne’s RACV Club last month sparked powerful and long-lasting insights for hundreds of leading grantmakers from around Australia and New Zealand.***

The sold-out conference, presented by the Australian Institute of Grants Management (an Our Community enterprise), tackled the big issues facing funding professionals from the government, philanthropic, not-for-profit, and corporate sectors.

They explored data, evaluation, change, technology, processes, grants promotion, grants design and review, feedback, and much more.

## **Highlights from the “Prepare for Impact” grantmaking conference**

Keynote speaker Dr Rory Gallagher of the Behavioural Insights Team Australia spelt out an assessment practice he summarised as “test, learn and adapt”.

He said good empirical data generates insights into human behaviour that will better direct funding, based on evidence.

He busted false assumptions that could lead to failure, such as the US-based “Scared Straight” program that sent ex-cons to speak with juvenile delinquents to put them on the right path, only to increase crime.

Appropriately, that was followed by a grants evaluation panel featuring Terri Eggleton of New Zealand’s Bay Trust, Mary Jane Warfield of Regional Arts Australia, and Natalie Eggleton of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), who spelt out the time and investment needed to undertake evaluation properly.

Each outlined the power of understanding your patch, whether it is knowing where to find and help the disadvantaged in the Bay of Plenty in New Zealand; finding the “gold” of artistic stories from outback and indigenous areas in regional arts; or discovering, as the FRRR did, that small grants – properly applied – could have a bigger effect than large funds. ►



Our Community's executive director, Kathy Richardson, gave a detailed tour of the technology-driven work of Our Community's Innovation Lab, where data scientists are working on such projects as automated grants classifications and shortlisting, and smart maps (now in use in the SmartyGrants grants management software), which are one component of a bigger "outcomes engine" that will help to analyse applications and funding patterns.

After a "brag, learn and steal" session in which grantmakers freely shared secrets, tech tips and dealing with the inevitable politics of the industry, grantmakers were treated to an extended "grants rage" panel session.

Drawing on the recently released Grants in Australia research study, Our Community's Matthew Schulz revealed the archetypes of grantseeking success, as well as trends across sectors, organisational sizes and funding sources.

Another presentation saw Kylie Cirak and Robert Palmaricciotta describe the life of a professional grantwriter, amusing and enlightening delegates in equal measure.

The City of Hume's Joel Kimber (formerly of the Victorian Grants Network) gave a presentation that was unforgettable, not least for the rewording of the Spice Girls hit Wannabe to illustrate the good, the bad and the ugly of grant practices.

Georgie Bailey, of the federal Department of Communications and the Arts, held sway over a session that tackled the tricky business of redesigning a grants program, through the lens of understanding "why", and had delegates paying close attention.

Ms Bailey explained the many political twists and staffing issues she faced – not least several portfolio changes – as well as the challenge of recasting "vintage technology", automating reports and encouraging staff to let go of "flawed" past processes.

That presentation segued into a panel discussion in which Ms Bailey was joined by Kate Cash of Unity Water and Ben Fitzpatrick from the

City of Perth to discuss the often painful process of transforming a grants program.

Mr Fitzpatrick told the tale of switching from six separate grants policies to two, comprising just six pages, and Ms Cash spelt out the power of using your grantees to spread the message of your successes on social media and other channels.

### **Conference a chance for professionals to refine skills**

Conference MC Fiona Dempster said the annual conference continues to build on the professionalism of a sector now charged with managing \$80 billion in grants.

"We've had over a dozen remarkably skilled, experienced and knowledgeable grantmakers – dare we say nerds? And there's something we can take from all of them."

And she said hearing from grantseekers was an important highlight.

"They told us – yet again – they really want to get feedback. They want to know whether their applications worked, where they don't work, and how they can improve. And, I think grantmakers need to keep hearing that message."

She also pointed to the cooperative and learning spirit of the event.

"I have found grantmakers to be some of the most generous people in the world. There's none of this 'secret squirrel' thing. If they've learnt something, they're happy to share it."

### **Become an AIGM member**

Membership of the Australian Institute of Grants Management starts at \$280 annually. Members receive

- a subscription to the quarterly Grants Management Intelligence (GMI)
- exclusive access to tools and resources on the AIGM website
- a 10% discount on the annual Grantmaking in Australia conference
- special offers and networking events.

### **More information ■**



Digital data specialist Lucy Bernholz. Picture: Matthew Schulz

# Why not-for-profits must do data better

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

*Dr Lucy Bernholz, a world-recognised thinker on digital and data trends, and a specialist in helping not-for-profits manage digital assets better, says groups must improve the way they handle data, in the interests of keeping our civil society strong.*

Australians have been among those affected by a global spate of big data and privacy breaches, exposed by new laws or scandals such as the leak of the data of 87 million Facebook users to political consultants Cambridge Analytica.

Dr Bernholz travels the world examining digital trends, and her latest interest is the shape of the emerging “digital civil society”.

She says one of the biggest changes she’s noticed in Australia in the past three years has been a spike in public concern about personal data and how it is managed.

The well-informed debate about the MyHealth database and the growing opposition to an automatic opt-in for the system is just one

example, Dr Bernholz says, of a shift in those attitudes.

She has a simple catch-phrase to sum up her views on what should be at the forefront of the minds of not-for-profit leaders: “If you can’t protect it, don’t collect it.”

## How much data do you really need?

She gives the example of an organisation seeking proof that a homelessness initiative is working.

“The trap we fall into is thinking we need everybody’s name, age, birth date, race, religion.

“Really? No, you don’t. You probably need some ►



basic numbers to make sure you're not double-counting or under-counting something, and you can track people over time. But you probably don't need that level of sensitivity."

Gathering and using that data is also often beyond the capability of not-for-profits without additional resources.

"Most not-for-profits are not going to wake up on Monday and suddenly have two data scientists and a really high-level technological security system on staff.

"So having all that information lying around waiting for the 'unicorn moment' when you have the ability to analyse that stuff is just making people vulnerable now."

Dr Bernholz says people need to "reflect on their own data practices" when looking at their organisations.

"If everybody in your organisation is constantly on their phone, is not using basic passwords, isn't using two-factor authentication, isn't taking care of their basic data, chances are that organisation's not doing even the first-line easy things.

"What's important when you step into the workplace is to remember that while what's on

your phone is yours, what's at your office is not yours. It comes from the people you're trying to serve, and you want to do better by them."

*ICDA member exclusive: Members of the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) can [click here](#) to read an extended version of this report (ICDA member access required).*

### More information

**Transforming the sector: The ethics of designing digital infrastructure** Lucy Bernholz in Stanford Social Innovation Review

**About Stanford PACS** The research of the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (Stanford PACS)

**Managing data: The digital impact toolkit** from Stanford PACS

**Philanthropy and Digital Civil Society: Blueprint 2018** An annual industry forecast from Stanford PACS

**Blueprints: Dr Bernholz's predictions and analysis of digital civil society trends** (PDF download)

*Dr Bernholz visited Australia as part of a partnership between Perpetual Ltd and Stanford PACS. ■*

## #Fixfundraising: Senate committee inquiry grinds on

Lobbying for streamlined fundraising regulation has continued since the Senate extended the deadline of a committee tasked with inquiring into the current framework. The Senate Select Committee on Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century now has until February 2019 to report.

In the meantime, the committee's chair, Labor senator Catryna Bilyk, and the Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-profits, Andrew Leigh, have penned **an opinion piece** for Melbourne's Herald Sun calling for cuts to charity red tape.

The Senate committee will be holding public hearings on the issue later this year. To track the inquiry, sign up for updates at **[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Charity\\_Fundraising/CharityFundraising](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Charity_Fundraising/CharityFundraising)**.



We asked speakers at the Community Directors Conference 2018 about the role of leaders in setting and maintaining an organisation's culture.

# Board members aiming higher after Community Directors Conference

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

Community directors are better equipped to crack the code when it comes to regulation, data, culture, media, finances, legal challenges, their internal politics and much more, following the Community Directors Conference presented in Melbourne last month by the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA).

Setting the tone was the chair of the Community Directors Council, Susan Pascoe, the immediate past chief of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), who delivered the keynote address on the state of the sector.

Ms Pascoe said that while organisations continue to be buffeted by rapidly evolving regulation, disruptions to traditional funding, rising expectations about accountability, and the continued need for strong advocacy, all have a great opportunity to set social standards. For a full transcript of Ms Pascoe's address, see page 6.

Ms Pascoe's former colleague David Locke, once ACNC deputy commissioner and now chief ombudsman of the new Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), also appeared on stage.

He helped close the conference with a compelling session headed "Board Doctors", teaming up with Our Community "chaos controller" Kathy Richardson and ICDA executive director Patrick Moriarty.

That group fielded some of the trickiest questions conference delegates could muster in a session dedicated to diagnosing ills related to recruiting, treasurers, strategic plans, performance reviews and keeping organisations fresh.

## More conference highlights

Impact measurement expert Jen Riley quizzed the leaders of Windana Drug and Alcohol Recovery and North Melbourne Football Club's ►



The team from Moores legal fielded questions from conference delegates during breaks in the program.

The Huddle about their data measurement methods, and the data “dash to do better”, giving delegates a better handle on the “how” of data and where to get help.

Greening Australia’s chief, Brendan Foran, and chair, Gordon Davis, in a no-holds-barred, bracingly honest presentation, revealed how they upended their organisational structure, transforming an organisation with nine boards, nine chairs, nine CEOs and more than 80 directors (mostly men) into a single board with one CEO and a fresh focus on diversity.

Moores principals Catherine Brooks and Skye Rose bounced ideas between each other as they traversed the tricky terrain of the “triple threat” of sexual harassment, wrongful termination and child protection failures, presenting practical advice and some challenging real-life examples.

Media experts Aileen Berry (of Murray Primary Health Network) and Brian Walsh (of Bastion Reputation Management) didn’t hold back either, offering up plenty of examples for their session on “reputation management”.

Mr Walsh got people’s attention with his tales of working at NAB, where he dealt with – among other things – “a murder, a kidnap and a couple of frauds”, while Ms Berry’s practical pointers on how to manage an inevitable crisis are sure to help keep ICDA members out of trouble.

Michael Parrant from Aon Insurance’s cyber risk section managed to “terrify” delegates into protecting their valuable data, highlighting a parade of disturbing facts about what could

go wrong in light of tougher privacy and data protection laws.

He covered password protection, software patches, cyber attacks, trusting third parties with your information, and having a good plan in place.

On a less terrifying note, Professor David Gilchrist declared his love for his own topic – “costing and pricing your services” – early on.

“There’s hardly anything better to be talking about than costing and pricing from my point of view”.

His good-humoured enthusiasm for his subject was infectious as he spelt out detailed methods and formulas for organisations needing to establish their value and boost their bottom line.

ICDA’s director of diversity and leadership, and the conference MC, Kylie Cirak, summed up the event as “fabulous”.

“The audience was so engaged, and represented an incredibly smart group of people. It gives me great hope for the governance of the not-for-profit sector,” she said.

*The Community Directors Conference is presented annually by **ICDA**, the best-practice network for members of Australian not-for-profit boards, committees and councils, and the senior staff who support them. ICDA membership starts at \$65 a year, and includes a subscription to the quarterly Community Directors Intelligence, as well as regular sector updates, access to networking events, and other benefits. **Join now.** ■*

# A nation full of winners: Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards 2018

BY JULIENNE PRICE, HEAD OF SCHOOLS AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR BANKING, COMMONWEALTH BANK



Award-winning treasurers, pictured with CommBank staff, Community Directors' Council chair Susan Pascoe, and Our Community MD Denis Moriarty.

***It was a tremendous privilege to meet some of the nominees and participants at last month's gala announcement of the four winners of the 2018 Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards.***

These annual awards provide an opportunity not only to recognise but also to celebrate the unsung heroes whose financial management and governance leads directly to positive and innovative outcomes for the communities and the community groups they represent.

Since the awards began in 2014, the job of selecting the annual winners has never been easy. Each year it is wonderful to learn about the amazing work being carried out by not-for-profit and community treasurers, and about the high esteem in which these individuals are held not only within their organisations, but also by the wider community.

Reading through this year's entries was an uplifting experience for the not-for-profit teams here at CommBank and at Our Community. While there can only be four outright winners, everyone who was nominated deserves to be celebrated and recognised. ►

I'd like to share a few of this year's entries with you – they represent only a handful of the 1,200-plus nominations we received:

- “Our honorary treasurer has volunteered in the role for the past seven years. She supervises our budget, liaises with government departments, supervises staff, completes grant applications and attends board meetings as well undertaking the general management of our accounting system.”
- “As with all small community groups, our treasurer constantly wears many hats: treasurer, coach, fundraiser and match day clean-up.”
- “Our treasurer has served for almost 10 years! From an initial “dire straits” position to stable and now to an adequate/enviable position, this has been accomplished without fanfare. He is one of many of Australia’s quiet achievers of whom we should all be proud.”
- “Our treasurer joined the management committee when we were struggling to survive. He spent the first few years in the role working non-stop checking accounts and encouraging us all. Because of him we are now secure.”
- “Our treasurer manages finances, insurances, annual fees, Fair Trading and auditing. All of her skills are given voluntarily and we would be lost without her expert, thoughtful, timely help.”
- “Our organisation is facing the future with strength thanks to our treasurer’s efforts and is now in a position to mentor, assist and support rural and remote children and families.”

A heartfelt congratulations to the four winners of this year’s awards: Suzana Vlahovic, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre; Jane Reilly, YWCA NSW;



Julienne Price, head of schools and not-for-profit sector banking, Commonwealth Bank

Tony McCartney, Ilbjeri Theatre Company; and Mark Thompson, Balmain Rowing Club.

And to all the community and not-for-profit treasurers across Australia, thank you for the work you do in helping to make our nation a stronger and fairer place for all.

*Commonwealth Bank is an Our Community partner.* ■



**Commonwealth**Bank

# Being treasurer is more than a numbers game

BY KERRY N BURGESS, EDITOR, OUR COMMUNITY

Award-winning not-for-profit treasurer Suzana Vlahovic says that although numbers and spreadsheets are important in her role with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC), they're not the full story.

"My role is to work in teams to challenge, problem-solve, and help create positive outcomes for our clients, communities and people."

Ms Vlahovic is one of four community treasurers awarded \$5000 each for their organisations in the 2018 Commonwealth Bank Not-for-profit Treasurers' Awards (see page 24).

She was nominated for her big-picture thinking in creating a "roadmap" of the finance function of the Melbourne-based ASRC.

"The roadmap will essentially lay the foundations to support building the maturity of the finance function, the capability and capacity of the finance team and finance committee, and the strengthening of financial governance," she said.

Ms Vlahovic described her role as treasurer and board member as an opportunity to "give back" to Australia.

"My parents were migrants to Australia from the former Yugoslavia in the early 1970s, and my husband was granted asylum in Australia after fleeing war-torn Bosnia in the early 1990s. Through the support of the Melbourne community and organisations like the ASRC, my family have been extremely fortunate to begin a new life in Australia, which has provided my sister and I with incredible opportunities."

An audit partner at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Ms Vlahovic says "keeping up" with the ASRC's fast-paced growth is one of the biggest challenges of her task as treasurer.



Suzana Vlahovic is one of four community treasurers awarded major prizes in the 2018 Commonwealth Bank Not-for-profit Treasurers' Awards.

"The ASRC has grown significantly from its inception as a grass roots organisation to today the largest independent human rights organisation for refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia."

And her advice to other community treasurers? Play to your strengths.

"Bring your skillset and use it to its maximum to ensure the organisation is compliant, sustainable and able to grow successfully. I have been able to share my skills as a chartered accountant and finance professional to assist and guide the ASRC from a finance perspective, as the organisation continues on its strong growth trajectory."

## More information

- All the winners from the 2018 Commonwealth Bank Not-for-profit Treasurers' Awards: see page 24.
- **Damn Good Advice for Treasurers**: a free guide packed with practical advice for treasurers of not-for-profit organisations.
- **Damn Good Advice for Board Members**: a similar guide but aimed at board members. ■

# Finalists announced in national community sector awards

## HESTA AWARDS community sector

***Australia's most outstanding community sector organisations and individuals have been recognised, with 11 finalists announced in the 2018 HESTA Community Sector Awards.***

The awards shine a spotlight on exceptional service provision, advocacy, innovation and leadership in social justice and community services in Australia, across the categories of Unsung Hero, Outstanding Organisation, and Social Impact.

HESTA CEO Debby Blakey said this year's finalists were selected from an outstanding field of nominations for their leadership in developing community programs and initiatives that address social inequality and disadvantage.

"Each year through the HESTA awards it's an honour to be able to showcase the amazing work of community organisations and individuals whose services significantly improve the lives of others," Ms Blakey said.

"By advocating for social change and giving a voice to those who otherwise may not be heard, this important work has a lasting impact across Australia. We're proud to acknowledge the amazing contribution of this year's finalists and help provide the recognition they deserve."

The winner of each award category will share in a \$30,000 prize pool, courtesy of awards sponsor ME Bank, and will be announced on Monday 29 October 2018 in Sydney.

The 2018 finalists are:

### **Unsung Hero Award**



### **Noelene Jorgensen**

One Tree Community Services, Laverton, WA

Noelene is recognised for helping women and children experiencing family and domestic violence by connecting them with local community services and educating and empowering women by running community support programs. ►



### **Sue Miers**

National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Normansville, SA

Sue is recognised for her voluntary work supporting families struggling to manage and understand Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and for her tireless efforts in increasing awareness and prevention of the disability.

### **Outstanding Organisation Award**

#### **Home-Start National Inc**

Home-Start Volunteer Home Visiting Program, New Lambton, NSW

Home-Start National Inc is recognised for its Volunteer Home Visiting Program. Volunteers from the program assist families whose young children are at risk of poor life outcomes because of psychosocial stressors and difficulties in their home environment.

#### **Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre**

North Melbourne, Vic

Recognised for its 40-plus years of work providing vital primary response services supporting women, youth and children experiencing family violence in their home, as well as its tireless advocacy work focused on preventing family violence.

#### **VisAbility**

ROAM Project Team, Victoria Park, WA

VisAbility's ROAM Project Team is recognised for using the latest technology to provide real-time orientation and mobility services via video link to people who are blind or vision-impaired and living in regional areas.

### **Women's Property Initiatives**

Melbourne, Vic

This community housing organisation is recognised for changing the futures of women facing homelessness by providing permanent and affordable homes, access to support networks and ongoing advocacy.

### **Youth Involvement Council**

South Hedland, WA

Recognised for its range of youth programs focused on improving education and life skills pathways and services for young people who are experiencing or vulnerable to homelessness.

### **Social Impact Award**

#### **Anglicare Victoria Rapid Response**

Collingwood, Vic

Recognised for delivering evidence-based early intervention programs that keep families together and kids safe when they would otherwise be placed in out-of-home care.

#### **Anglicare WA**

West Perth, WA

Recognised as a leading not-for-profit organisation committed to helping people and families across Western Australia rise above tough times through 86 services in 44 locations.

#### **End Rape on Campus Australia**

Sydney, NSW

Recognised for advocating to end sexual violence at universities and residential colleges by providing direct support to survivors and their advocates, and promoting prevention through education and policy reform on campus and at state and federal government levels.

#### **Jesuit Social Services**

Richmond, Vic

Recognised for its 40-plus years of strong advocacy for marginalised groups, particularly young people and adults involved in the justice system.

*HESTA is an Our Community partner. ■*

# Call to writers for Our Community Matters summer reading special



Are you a writer? Our Community wants to hear from you.

*Our Community Matters* is commissioning writers to produce works on the theme of “community” for its December issue.

We’re inviting pitches for fiction and non-fiction short stories, poems, essays and features on any aspect of community, including – but not limited to – your community, community groups, community events, community at Christmas, community and family, or what community means to you.

Authors of published contributions will be paid at the rate of 70 cents per published word.

## How to pitch

If you’ve got an idea for a piece you’d like to write

for the *Our Community Matters* summer reading special, send us a pitch by filling out **this form**. You *may* include your finished piece of writing at this stage, but it’s not necessary.

## If you’re successful

If your pitch is successful, we’ll contact you by Wednesday October 31, commissioning you to write for us. You must submit your finished work by 4pm on Sunday November 25.

## What we’re looking for

We’re looking for works that capture the essence of “community” – whatever that means to you – in a way that’s compelling and original. We prefer short stories, memoir and essays, but we’re ►



also open to poetry, sci-fi, romance, travelogues or any other genre – so long as your writing is concerned with community.

This isn't a competition. There's no upper or lower limit to the number of works we might commission for publication through this process. If we love your pitch, we'll commission you to write the piece.

We'll consider works of any length up to 3000 words. However, works of 500 to 2000 words are much more likely to get a run. Our budget is finite and we can't publish ten 3000-word essays.

### Deadlines

- Pitches due: 4pm, Monday October 29
- Writers of successful pitches notified: Wednesday October 31
- Deadline for submitting completed written work: 4pm, Sunday November 25
- Publication: Wednesday 12 December
- Payment made to published writers: Before Christmas

### The rules

Your writing must be entirely your own work, and must not have been published before.

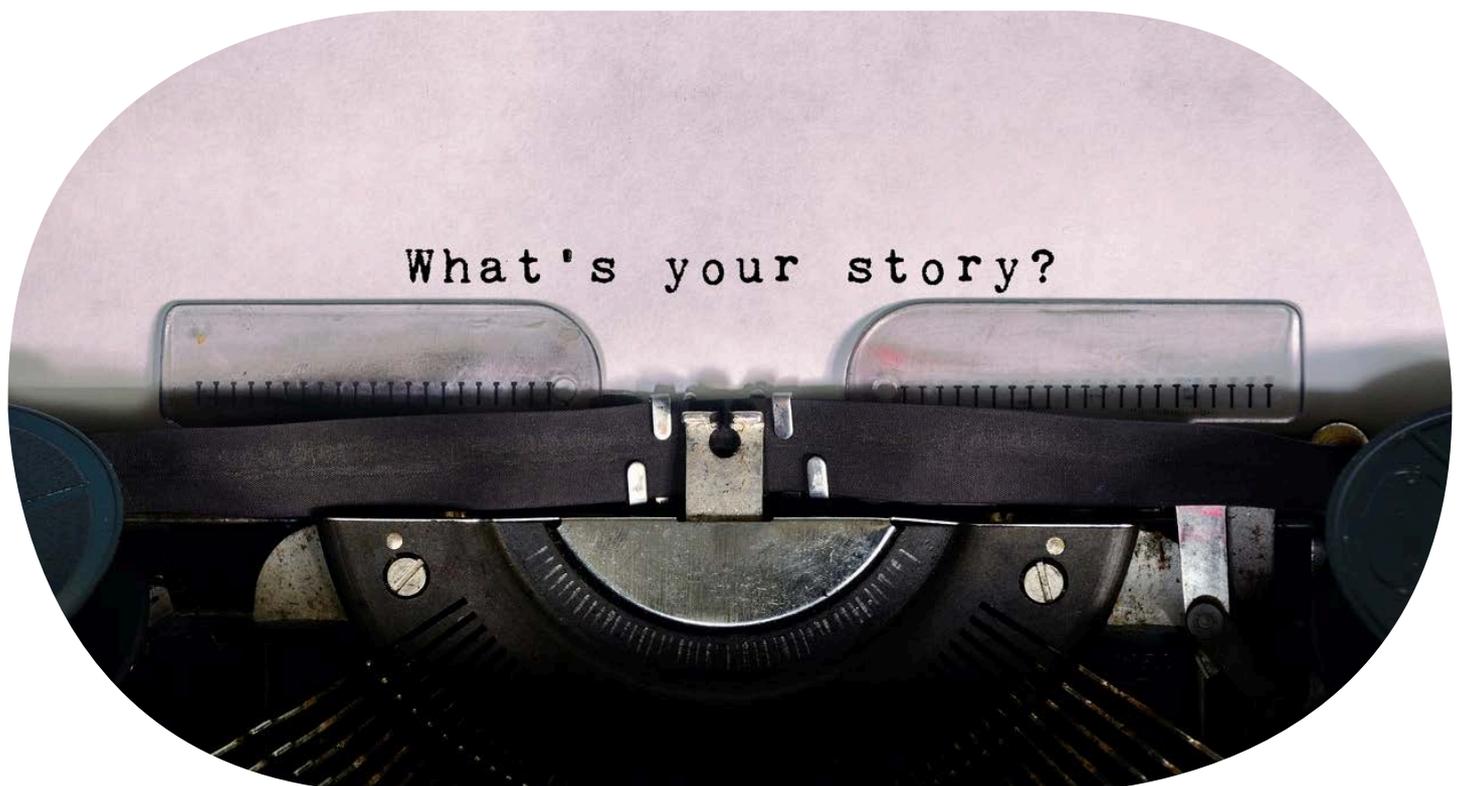
You may pitch as many ideas as you like, but you'll need to fill out a separate form for each pitch.

We will edit your work, and we will involve you in the editing process.

By pitching to Our Community, you agree to grant to us the non-exclusive right to publish any work we commission from you on any of our websites, in any of our newsletters, on any of our social media channels, and via any other medium, in whole or in part. Copyright remains with you.

### Pitch now

Go to [https://ourcommunity.formstack.com/forms/oc\\_matters\\_submissions](https://ourcommunity.formstack.com/forms/oc_matters_submissions). We can't wait to read your pitch! ■



# Your two-minute NFP news digest

## Millionaire misers

*“Perhaps we should stop knocking well-off Australians for not giving enough and focus more on encouraging those who don’t give at all to share some of what they have. It is the 43% of high income earners that don’t give at all who give wealthy Australians a bad name.”* – David Knowles & Chris Wilson, Koda Capital

A *Snapshot of Australian Giving*, a new report from Koda Capital, provides new insights from existing data about charitable donations, and warns of the dangers that accompany a narrow funding base: “If Australian charities do become more reliant on the largesse of wealthy Australians, we can expect the power imbalance between funders and doers to widen, and charities can look forward to working with a smaller group of donors, with more influence, higher expectations and more conditional support.” [Read the Koda Capital report](#) | [Read Our Community’s Who Gives? report](#)

## Less red tape for NSW charities

*“...They can spend more time and energy on delivering services and support to the people of New South Wales.”* – ACNC commissioner Dr Gary Johns

About 4000 NSW charities will benefit from a reduction in red tape thanks to a new data sharing arrangement between the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and NSW Fair Trading. The new arrangement, which takes effect this month, is in line with those that already exist in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT. [More information](#)

## Making funding partnerships work

*“You have to take time to discuss things – find out what interests potential partners. You need to have a conversation, not just rock up and present your biggest need. You need to understand what motivates them, understand their needs, and why they are doing it.”* – Stephen Brown, CEO, Launceston City Mission

A new report from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) and Philanthropy Australia highlights what makes for the most successful, most impactful partnerships between community groups and philanthropists. *Leading Practice in Community and Philanthropy Partnerships*, published last month, is packed with case studies, insights and lessons for both funders and grantees. [Read the report](#)

## Thumbs up for ACNC review

*“We believe the review panel has produced a good report that reflects careful consideration of the various issues”* – David Crosbie

The CEO of the Community Council for Australia joined other sector leaders in praising the 151-page review of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, released in September.

[Read our summary](#) | [Read the report](#) ►

## Social sector the workforce of the future

***“...We must see the social economy as the workforce of the future. We must stop talking about the sector as if it were only a welfare cost to the public purse, and we must start seeing it as being about industries, professions and careers”*** – David Hayward & Anthony Richardson, Future Social Service Institute

The federal government’s \$90 billion naval ship building program pales in comparison to the economic opportunities presented by the “social economy”, the more than one million jobs associated with health and social services Australia-wide. That’s according to the co-authors of *Victoria’s Social Economy*, a new report commissioned by the Victorian Council of Social Service but applicable nationally. [Read the report](#)

### Where did you grow up?

***“Our recent research with young people in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide shows children in disadvantaged communities are not only more likely to live in poverty, but are also less likely to have access to sports clubs, libraries and other recreational and arts facilities, which those in more affluent suburbs appear to take for granted... However, the implications for young people’s life chances of missing out on these activities stretch far beyond recreation.”***

– Jennifer Skattebol & Gerry Redmond

The authors of *Troubled Kids? Locational disadvantage, opportunity structures and social exclusion* have called for investment in recreational facilities and a focus on a culture of inclusion in those facilities as a way of reducing inequality more broadly. [Read about their research in The Conversation](#)

### SPI highlights power inequality in Australia

***Equality of political power by socioeconomic position, greenhouse gas emissions, biome protection, and access to quality education and healthcare are the main areas in which Australia is strongly “underperforming”, according to the 2018 Social Progress Index.***

The scorecard measures the strengths and weaknesses of every country relative to those of 15 other countries with similar GDP PPP (gross domestic product at purchasing power parity) per capita. For Australia, those 15 countries include the UK, the USA, France, Sweden and Germany. The only area in which Australia is strongly overperforming is perceived criminality.

[See Australia’s scorecard](#)

## Home stretch for foster children

***“This is a significant policy announcement that puts children and young people at the centre of government decision making, and it recognises that all young people need support in those vital transitioning years to independence”*** – Deb Tsorbaris, Victorian Home Stretch co-chair

The Victorian Government has announced it will extend the age of foster care from 18 years to 21. This makes Victoria the third state to change the age limit following advocacy efforts by Home Stretch, which wants to see vulnerable youth across the country protected until the age of 21. [Read the media release from Home Stretch](#) ■



Our Community staff got their first look inside Our Community House in Melbourne last month.

# Better than The Block: Our Community House

*Our Community has just been handed the keys to the social sector's hottest address:  
552 Victoria St, North Melbourne.*

***That's the location of Our Community House (OC House), our new headquarters and co-working space, and our staff wasted no time checking out the building last month, celebrating the handover with pizza and drinks.***

We'll be moving into the building early in 2019, fulfilling our vision of co-locating with innovative not-for-profit groups that are working to create social change.

In the meantime, a team of architects, designers and builders is working flat-out on the fit-out, creating a fun, light-filled, environmentally friendly interior that will enable staff to work at their best.

OC House has permanent spaces for whole teams of up to 40 people, as well as smaller groups and sole players, with lockable offices where required, and tonnes of shared facilities. These include small and large meeting and training rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, end-of-trip facilities for cyclists, and a large function space. ►



We'll be moving our 60 or so staff into the building as soon as it opens, and the building will eventually be occupied by around 400 people, probably by the end of 2019.

A defining feature of OC House will be its emphasis on an emerging but largely untapped aspect of not-for-profit practice: data science.

Tenants will get access to a team of motivated and skilled social sector data scientists (and a crack team of communicators) who will help identify and activate your social change agenda.

Want to move in with us? Register your interest here: [www.ourcommunity.com.au/ochoose](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/ochoose). ■

## Rabble-rousing women: who are they?

Up to 70% of Australian not-for-profit sector workers are women. We expect the workforce at Our Community House to reflect a similar ratio, and we want to ensure our building responds to the needs of women.

Woman-friendly features of Our Community House include carefully designed women-friendly bathrooms, a private, comfortable room for pumping and storing breast milk or breastfeeding, and more.

All the meeting rooms at Our Community House will be named after pioneering, rabble-rousing, community-building women – and we want to make sure we haven't overlooked any in making our selections.

### Who are the women who have positively changed the face of Australia?

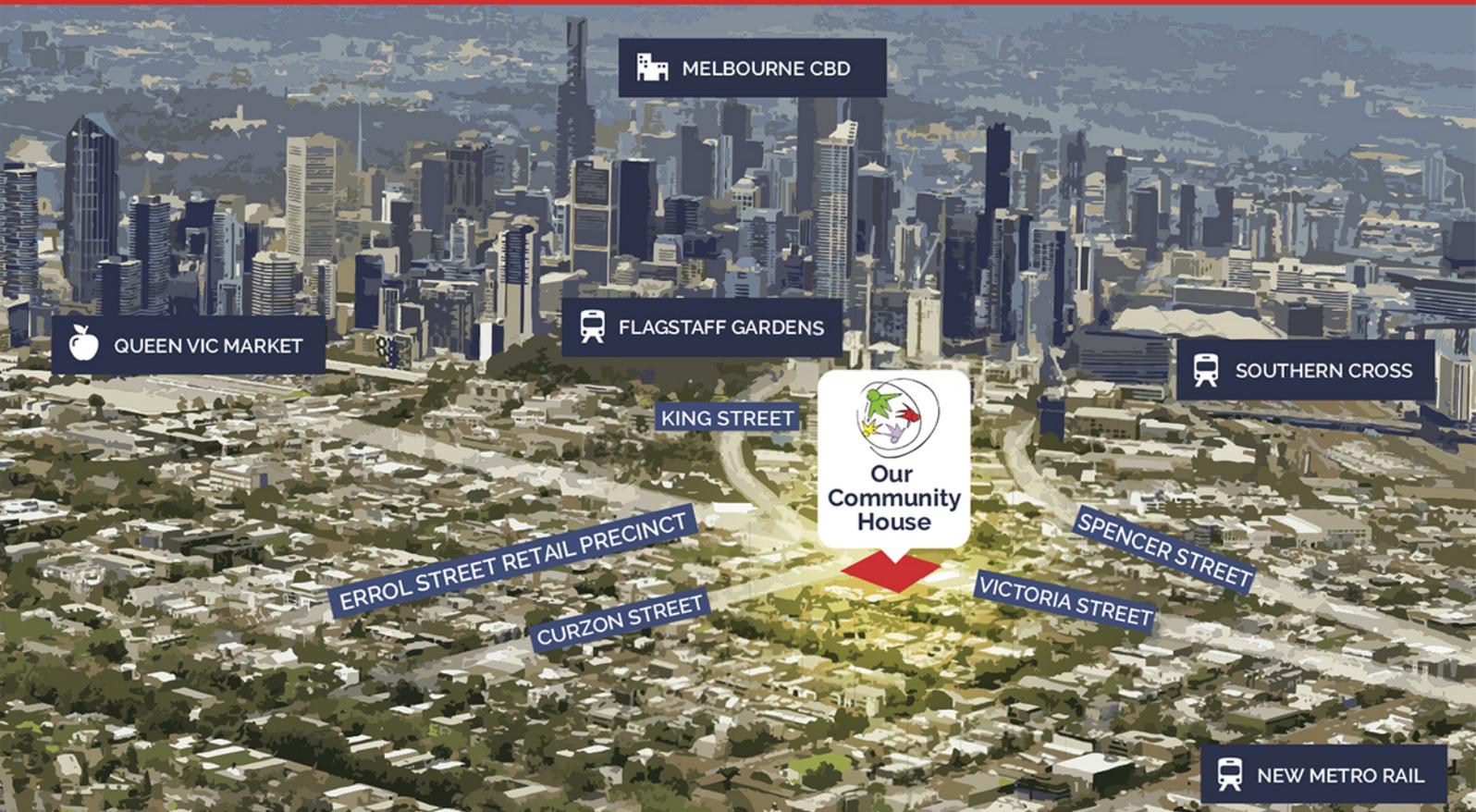
Email your suggestions to [kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au). You can make one suggestion or many. Please provide your name, your nominees' names, and information about why you think they would be worthy inclusions on our list of notable women.

The best entry will win a set of six Our Community books of your choice, valued at \$216.



WATCH: Mary Ann Bugg was one of the most notable rabble-rousers you've never heard of.

# Social innovation has a new address – And you're invited to move in.



## Introducing Our Community House

Our Community House will open at 552 Victoria St, North Melbourne, Victoria, in January 2019. Our Community will be the anchor tenant, and we'll be moving into the building as soon as it opens. Tenancy opportunities are now available to other innovative groups working to create social change.

### What's on offer

OC House has spaces for whole teams of up to 40 people, as well as smaller groups and solo flyers. Shared spaces include:

- > Meeting and function rooms
- > Kitchens and bathrooms
- > Car and bike parking
- > End-of-trip facilities for cyclists

### It's a data revolution

Excitingly, co-tenants will also have access to crack teams of social sector data scientists and communicators who can help you to identify and activate your agenda for social change.

### Come and join us

We'd love to work alongside you. For more information on this opportunity, go to [www.ourcommunity.com.au/OChouse](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/OChouse) or email Eden Rose: [edenr@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:edenr@ourcommunity.com.au).

# Dear Agony Uncle

*Our Community's thinker-in-residence, Chris Borthwick, answers readers' questions.*

**Q. How do we get rid of a board member who is not contributing and is pissing people off?**

A. The short answer is that as a board member, Mr or Ms Problem is an elected official with a perfect right to be there. If they haven't committed any actual crime, it's bloody difficult to remove them between elections. (You can't fire your local MP between elections either.) Because it's so bloody difficult, you only go to the formal removal procedures when absolutely everything else has failed.

The long answer is dependent on several other questions:

1) How long is it to the next election?

Getting them off the board formally is going to take months, so if you've only got months to go then it's best to wait and work on that election.

2) Have you tried soft soap?

If you can get them to lift their game, you'll have less of a problem. Can you take them aside and talk to them? If that's too confrontational, you might consider giving everybody on the board a catch-up course, telling all the others that only Mr or Ms Problem really needs it (that's unlikely to be true, of course).

The non-contributor may be drifting away from the organisation anyway and just need a small push. Try telling them you can use their talents better on the ad hoc committees – they just aren't being extended enough in the low-level day-to-day rubbish the board has to deal with.

3) Have you tried asking them to leave?

If they're involved but unhelpful, think twice: if they're causing problems now, things will



Chris Borthwick

probably become even worse if they know everybody else is against him anyhow.

4) Would tighter chairing help?

Some people don't mean to cause problems. They just do. If the trouble-maker has a tendency to ramble on endlessly, for example, a fixed time in the agenda for each item can help.

In the end, if you have to have them removed, then it's back to the constitution to see what powers you have. In Victoria, for example, the model rules say that a special resolution is required to removed a committee member from office. A special resolution is passed if at least 75 per cent of members voting at a general meeting vote in favour. This means a general meeting, of all members, not a committee meeting. It can be a special general meeting (and there are a lot of rules governing that). You'll have to wash this lot of dirty linen in public. And you should be very, very careful what you say – or write down – in these circumstances. The laws of slander, libel and defamation exist for just this purpose.

***Got a question for our thinker-in-residence?  
Email [chrisb@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:chrisb@ourcommunity.com.au). ■***

# Upskill

## Australia Council arts governance program – free webinar series

The Australia Council's arts governance webinar series will explore key arts governance topics in detail.

Each webinar will take the form of a 45-minute presentation followed by 15 minutes for questions. Participants will receive access to written responses to questions submitted during the webinar, as well as relevant follow-up materials.

Archived webinars will be available online as they become available.

The webinars are open to those who can influence governance in arts organisations of any size – managers, CEOs, artistic directors and board members. They will be hosted by the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA).

Check the dates and topics below, and then [register here](#).

### Getting your board from good to great

Monday October 8, 1pm (Melbourne time)

This webinar will enhance understanding of governance fundamentals, including legal responsibilities.

### Engaging the board in artistic discussion

Monday October 29, 1pm (Melbourne time)

This webinar will enhance understanding of the board's role in artistic discussions.

### Looking after your people

Friday November 23, 1pm (Melbourne time)

What is the board's role in preventing burnout and disputes involving key personnel? This webinar will provide information and strategies to help.

### Compliance: Not just ticking the box, but thinking outside it

Thursday December 13, 1pm (Melbourne time)

This webinar will enhance understanding of compliance as a fundamental part of the board's responsibilities.

### Expand your network – and gain a diploma

If you live in Brisbane, Perth or Sydney, it's not too late to make 2018 the year you upgrade your qualifications and expand your network by studying for a **Diploma of Business (Governance)**.

The Diploma of Business (Governance) is Australia's only diploma-level governance qualification designed specifically for social sector board or committee members and the CEOs and senior staff who work alongside them. Check out the course start dates below and then enrol [here](#).

<b>Brisbane</b>	October 15
<b>Melbourne</b>	November 12
<b>Perth</b>	October 15
<b>Sydney</b>	November 12 ■

**Finding funding for your group has never being easier**

[www.fundingcentre.com.au](http://www.fundingcentre.com.au)



# Good Jobs

*At [GoodJobs.com.au](http://GoodJobs.com.au), our mission is to connect purpose-driven people with organisations in the not-for-profit and community sectors. We want to help energetic, idealistic, and passionate people overcome obstacles and achieve their career ambitions and dreams.*

## Selected current vacancies

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### **Principal solicitor (maternity leave contract)**

#### **Cairns Community Legal Centre**

The Cairns Community Legal Centre is a not-for-profit government-funded community organisation committed to providing free legal and social justice services to a range of disadvantaged clients. The centre seeks a principal solicitor to join the team from late 2018 until mid-2019.

For more information [click here](#).

### **HIPPY Australia consultant**

#### **Brotherhood of St Laurence, Fitzroy, Vic**

HIPPY is a two-year structured home-based early childhood learning and parenting program that empowers parents and carers to be their child's first teacher. The program also offers some parents and carers supported pathway to employment and fosters local community leadership. HIPPY operates in 100 communities across Australia with 50 of these communities having an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus.

The HIPPY consultant position is responsible for the development of resources and training that support quality service delivery and for managing the relationship between HIPPY Australia and our network of HIPPY Providers across the country.

For more information [click here](#).

### **Team leader, emergency relief**

#### **Doncare, Melbourne**

Doncaster Community Care & Counselling Centre (Doncare) is a not-for-profit agency that provides counselling, social support, family services and practical assistance to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents of Manningham and surrounding suburbs of Melbourne.

The emergency relief team provides practical support and referral information to clients experiencing financial hardship.

For more information [click here](#).

### **Communications coordinator**

#### **Greening Australia, Sydney**

We are seeking an exceptional writer who is experienced at producing copy for a range of traditional, print and digital channels to join our marcomms team as the communications coordinator.

Your key responsibilities will include the development and implementation of communications plans, producing inspiring stories about our work for our website and newsletter, managing our social media channels and leading communications activities for some of our major corporate partners.

For more information [click here](#). ■



# Board Matching Service

*Here's a selection of the board vacancies currently advertised online at Good Jobs and the Institute of Community Directors Australia Board Matching Service.*

*To advertise your board vacancy (it's free!), go to [www.goodjobs.com.au/job/board/advertise.form](http://www.goodjobs.com.au/job/board/advertise.form).*

## **New South Wales**

### **Chair and treasurer, The Nature School Inc**

The Nature School Inc (TNS), based in Port Macquarie, seeks applications from creative, strategic and passionate individuals to co-create the future of our organisation as board members. TNS operates an Early Years program and a primary school, delivering innovative education via an experiential, learner-led approach with a green focus.

## **Victoria**

### **General board members, Balwyn Evergreen Centre**

Balwyn Evergreen Centre (BEC) is a not-for-profit community-based organisation committed to active ageing and providing older people with high quality programs in a friendly supportive environment. BEC seeks board members who have a contemporary view of ageing and aged care, along with experience and understanding of the requirements of organisations operating in the current aged care environment. BEC also seeks board members with skills in marketing, public relations and business development.

## **Western Australia**

### **Multiple board roles, Native Animal Rescue Inc**

Native Animal Rescue is a not-for-profit located in Malaga with a regional branch in Broome. We are seeking highly motivated individuals with skills in fundraising, marketing, communications, grantseeking, training, and business development. Interviews will be held during the period 29–31 October.

## **Queensland**

### **General board member, Angel Paws Inc**

Angel-Paws Inc is a Townsville-based not-for-profit run by volunteers who give animals that society rejects a second chance at life. We are seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced people for our management committee. Our organisation has recently gone through a period of tremendous growth, and we need to ensure we have strategies in place to continue to strengthen our capabilities into the future.

## **Tasmania**

### **Multiple board roles, Magnolia Place: Launceston Women's Shelter**

Magnolia Place seeks expressions of interest from women for the roles of chair, vice chair and treasurer. We are particularly looking for enthusiastic, committed women with skills in general management, human resources and financial management.

## **South Australia**

### **General board member, Swimming SA**

Established in 1898, Swimming SA Inc is the governing body for the sport of swimming in South Australia. It is affiliated with Swimming Australia and has 48 member clubs across South Australia and Broken Hill.

The board seeks to elect or appoint a director whose skills align with the strategic direction of the organisation and complement the current skill mix of the board. ■

*In this issue, we focus on awareness events related to health, wellness and disability.*



OCTOBER 4–11

### Amputee Awareness Week

Amputee Awareness Week aims to build community knowledge of limb loss, minimise the stigma that amputees can face, and encourage good quality of life for amputees. Use the hashtags #GetYourRibbonOn, #NAAW18 and #Amputees.



OCTOBER 6

### World Cerebral Palsy Day

Cerebral palsy (CP) is the most common physical disability in childhood, but it is widely misunderstood. A complex, lifelong disability, CP primarily affects movement, but people with CP may also have visual, learning, hearing, speech or intellectual impairments.



OCTOBER 10

### World Mental Health Day

One in five Australians are affected by mental illness, yet many don't seek help because of stigma. We can all do something to help shed a more positive light on mental health.



OCTOBER 12

### World Arthritis Day

In Australia, 3.9 million people live with arthritis. **Arthritis Australia** is dedicated to improving their quality-of-life through education, programs and advocacy.



OCTOBER 14–20

### National Nutrition Week

Eat your greens! The Tryfor5 campaign, powered by Nutrition Australia, encourages Australians to increase their vegetable consumption to the recommended five serves per day, and will be launched during National Nutrition Week.



OCTOBER 14–20

### National Carers Week

National Carers Week aims to raise community awareness about the diversity of the country's 2.7 million unpaid carers and their caring roles. If all carers decided to stop caring, Australia would need to spend \$60.3 billion per year to replace that support.

**Send details of your organisation's nationally significant event to [service@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:service@ourcommunity.com.au) and we'll publish it online or in *Our Community Matters*.**

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*Our Community Matters is your free community sector update, brought to you by **Our Community** – Australia’s centre for excellence for the nation’s 600,000 not-for-profits and schools, providing advice, tools, resources and training. It’s published on the first Wednesday of alternate months.*

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