



# GRANTMAKER OF THE YEAR 2014

Key Ideas and Findings from the Finalists



An enterprise of:



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The AIGM's Grantmaker of the Year Award is designed to unearth leaders in grantmaking in Australia, and draw out (and share) their vision.

**Congratulations to the  
AIGM 2014 Grantmaker of the Year:**



**Carley Commens  
Brisbane City Council**



We hope you will find inspiration in the following ideas from Carley and the other finalists.

**You can  
change the  
world with your  
grantmaking  
dollars.**

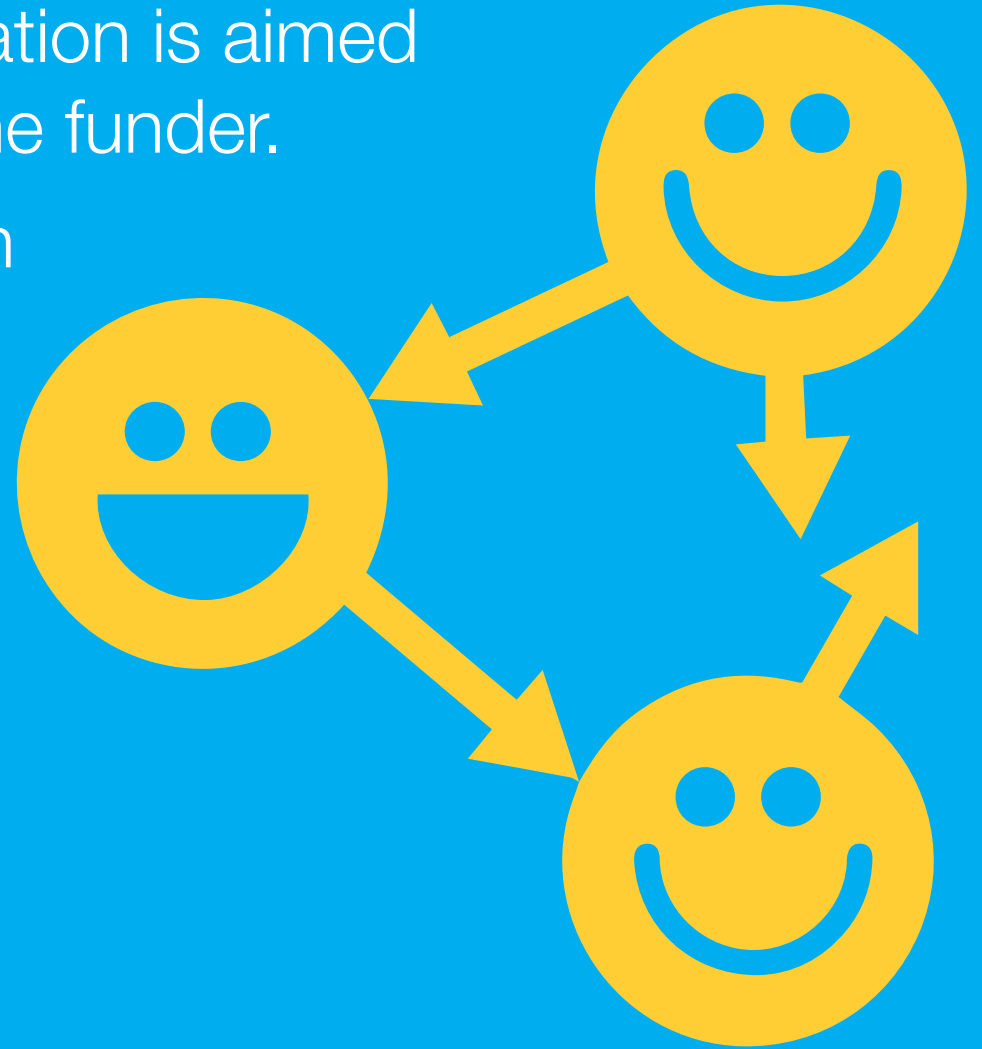
**Here's how...**



# THE IDEAL (1)

The traditional grant application is aimed at satisfying the needs of the funder.

Imagine what could happen if the process of applying for grants also benefited the applicant – beyond the potential to receive funding.



# THE PROBLEM

## For applicants

If a grant program has a success rate of one in 10 applications, then nine in 10 applicants spend a significant amount of time on creative thinking and administrative work which is never realised.

## For funders

Funders spend a considerable amount of time and money reading, assessing and administering unfunded applications.



# THE SOLUTION

Develop an evaluation tool to allow applicants to “tick and flick” responses to questions about their background and capacity to deliver. Assessors then receive data in a uniform format that makes comparisons easy.

## **Benefits:**

- Applicants’ time spent preparing, collating and uploading data is reduced.
- Funders’ time spent collecting, administering and assessing the data is reduced.



# THE IDEAL (2)

A grantmaking culture where risk-taking is encouraged, supported and fostered.



# THE PROBLEM

Many grantmakers fear taking risks.

This can stifle innovation and close off funding to those trying to break new ground and find new solutions to old problems.





# THE SOLUTION

Establish a prototyping grants process where innovative and early-stage projects can be considered for funding.

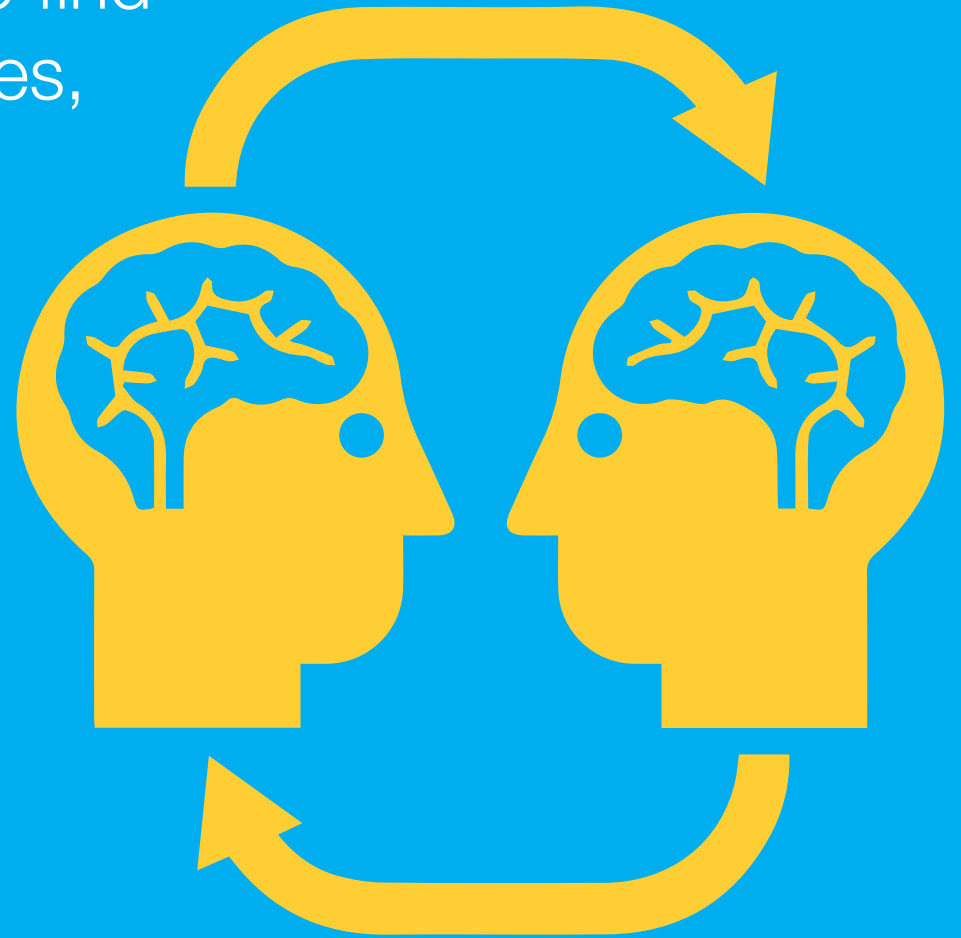
**Celebrate innovation in grantmaking:** this will build confidence in decision makers (eg politicians) and encourage them to allow grantmakers to take greater risks.



## THE IDEAL (3)

Grantmakers often struggle to find ways to share their experiences, knowledge, and what they've learned from their mistakes.

Imagine if there were accessible and supportive places where grantmakers could gather, share their stories and learn from the experiences of others.



# THE PROBLEM

Good grantmaking can be tough. Grantmakers find themselves isolated – not sharing their learnings and even hiding their mistakes for fear of ridicule or misunderstanding.



# THE SOLUTION

Encourage grantmakers to tell their stories – publicly, candidly, and in a way which encourages learning.

This could be done through the creation of a “safe place”, online or elsewhere, where these stories and experiences could be shared and discussed in a collegiate atmosphere with other grantmakers.



# THE IDEAL (4)

The process grantmakers use to assess funding applications is a mystery to many grantseekers.

Imagine if there was a way grantmakers could share what makes a grant application good, as well as provide meaningful information on the assessment process.



# THE PROBLEM

When grantseekers lack understanding of the process, the proportion of poor applications and the number of questions about the process tends to increase. This means more work for grantmakers and more stress for applicants.

Grantmakers usually can't share examples of successful grant applications as learning tools because they're confidential.



# THE SOLUTION

Hold workshops to guide grantseekers through the application and assessment process.

The workshops might feature mock assessments, where applicants themselves play the role of assessors, looking for strengths, weaknesses and common errors in applications.

This can be especially helpful for applicants who've applied unsuccessfully for grants in the past.



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