



Edition 3, 2012 – Issued April 26, 2012

Our Community Matters is your free community sector update, brought to you by Our Community – the premier destination for Australia's 600,000 community groups and schools. [Click here](#) to receive your free copy.



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1. The Last Waltz: Last chance to participate in Australia's most inspiring movement

The 10th and last Communities in Control Conference rolls out at the Moonee Valley Racecourse on May 28 and 29.

Those of you who have been to the previous ones will remember the parade of impressive speakers who have over the years kept our spirits up and our edges cutting, and this year we're rounding it off with a best-ever line-up ranging from comedian Judith Lucy to ex-premier Joan Kirner.

Joan has a 50-year history of fighting for rights for women, disability rights, and community rights through not-for-profits, local government, and state government, and this is the perfect occasion for presenting the first Joan Kirner Award for Social Justice (we called for nominations in this newsletter last month, you'll recollect – quick, they close on Friday).

Joan will be there to present the award, with Prime Minister Julia Gillard thrown in for good measure.

This is a must-attend session for anyone working on social justice, with Joan boiling down the wisdom of half a century into a ripper speech on social justice to go with it.

It's just a matter of looking at the evidence, she says.

Inequality makes you sick; social isolation kills; government support for community action, disability insurance, better school funding, and climate change action pay for themselves in the long run.

Social justice works.

Social justice is what we in the community sector do, and very well too – come along and feel your heart lift as you get the big picture from one of the best in the business.

There's a lot more, of course, ranging across every aspect of not-for-profit concerns, and including for the first time a fantastic Grants Bootcamp, where you can polish your grantmaking vibes one-on-one with a team of grantmakers.

The Communities in Control Conference is like a charging station for the community sector, and when this one is over your charge is going to have to last you for quite a while.

**JOAN
KIRNER
SOCIAL
JUSTICE
AWARD
2012.**
**CLOSING
TOMORROW!**



Natasha Cica,
Ethicist



Vika & Linda Bull,
Singers



Andrew Charlton,
Economist



Joan Kirner,
community campaigner



Judith Lucy,
Comedian



George Megalogenis,
Political commentator



Damian Ogden,
Campaign Action



Scott Riddle,
Google



Margaret Simons,
Media expert



Samantha Thomas,
Sociologist

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2. OurSay: Bringing people-powered democracy to Communities in Control

This year's Communities in Control Conference will feature an exciting experiment in people-powered democracy and a unique opportunity to influence the public policy agenda.

Conference organisers [Our Community](#) and [CatholicCare](#) have assembled a group of eminent former and departing politicians (i.e. those not constrained by current office) to conduct a live exploration of three burning questions determined by you, the community.

Voting for the most popular questions will be coordinated by [OurSay](#) in the lead-up to the conference, with further voting to take place during the conference and in the weeks immediately afterward.

Former Victorian Deputy Premier Professor John Thwaites and outgoing Manningham councillor Stephen Mayne will be part of the live panel at [Communities in Control](#) on May 29, with a third panellist to be announced soon. This session will be filmed and made available for viewing on the [OurSay](#) and [Our Community](#) websites.

Voting will remain open for two weeks beyond the Communities in Control Conference, with the three most popular questions then being forwarded to the relevant local, state and/or federal government minister or agency with a request for a formal response.

The Communities in Control OurSay session will be launched on May 15 – if you'd like the chance to have your question aired, go to www.oursay.org and get it posted.

We don't want to be too prescriptive about the sorts of questions posed (this is an exercise in people-powered democracy, after all), but we'd like to stay as close as possible to the Communities in Control theme:

For communities to survive and thrive, they must be in charge of their own destinies:

- **They must be given practical support to set their own priorities**
- **They must be permitted to design their own approaches**
- **They must own and create and implement their own solutions.**

All levels of government – local, state and federal – have a role to play in understanding, accepting and responding to the [Communities in Control principles](#).

Where and why are governments falling short? How can they do better?

Pose your questions at www.oursay.org

Key dates:

- **May 15:** Program opens – questions posed and voting begins on [OurSay](#) website
- **May 29:** Live panel at Communities in Control (Melbourne, Victoria)
- **May 29-June 14:** Voting continues
- **June 14:** Voting Closes & top three questions forwarded to relevant government departments/Ministers
- **August:** Government responses posted on [OurSay](#) and [Our Community](#) websites



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Community Groups at the Crossroads
A Festival of Thinking, Inspiration and Ideas

Melbourne, Australia:
Monday & Tuesday, May 28 & 29, 2012
PLUS Grants Bootcamp: Sunday May 27, 2012

Communities in Control Conference

It's the Grand Finale:
Our 10th anniversary and
LAST EVER Communities
in Control conference

BOOK NOW at:
www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2012
or call 03 9320 6800



Communities in Control
One of the 16 Knowledge Centres
of Our Community.



ourcommunity.com.au

3. Sport for All: 2012 Sports Without Borders conference program out now

Speakers from the media, politics, sport clubs and government will come together when Our Community and Sports Without Borders present the 2012 Sports Without Borders Conference: *Sport for all, from the ground up*, on June 15.

The second annual Sports Without Borders conference, which will be held in Moonee Ponds, Victoria, will discuss how we can create more inclusive, more successful modern sport clubs.

More than a dozen speakers will attend, helping participants:

- Learn the latest methods in **recruitment and retention** of players and volunteers
- Get tips on how to **make your club more welcoming** to women, people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and Indigenous Australians
- Learn how to **broker partnerships and linkages** that will help take your club from ordinary to extraordinary
- Learn the latest and greatest methods for **marketing** of your club
- Get the hottest tips on how to **get more grants** and more fundraising dollars through the door.

The conference will include a Q&A facilitated by *ABC News Breakfast* national sports presenter Paul Kennedy, during which world-renowned demographic forecaster Phil Ruthven will lead a discussion of the key demographic trends that are shaping our communities.

Another session will be dedicated to the specifics of best-practice inclusion, with a focus on indigenous, female and all-abilities participation. WA Indigenous Sport Program State Coordinator Clem Rodney will discuss indigenous participation, Melbourne Heart Football Club's General Community Manager Susan Crow will discuss female involvement, and Gold Coast Recreation and Sport Inc Service Manager Anna-Louise Kassulke will talk about all-abilities participation.

Concurrent sessions will allow participants to choose two of three options:

- **Show Me the Money: Getting more grants and money for your club** with Our Community Director of Training and Development Patrick Moriarty,
- **Get More Members: How to market yourself better to improve your image and appeal** with Hootville Founder and Mayor Brett De Hoedt, and
- **Linking Up: How to get and manage linkages and partnerships – a best practice case study for CALD communities** with Sports Without Borders Community and Sports Manager Athalia Zwartz.

The day will conclude with a pep-up session by *ABC Grandstand Breakfast* Host Francis Leach, who will discuss the role of sport in creating compassionate and vibrant communities, accompanied by a discussion facilitated by Brett de Hoedt on what our world could look like if all sport clubs opened their doors to embrace difference.

The conference will also include an appearance by didgeridoo soloist, cultural educator and storyteller Ron Murray, as well as Federal and Victorian Sports Ministers Kate Lundy and Hugh Delahunty.

Tickets cost \$278, with lunch and refreshments included. For more information or to book, go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/swb2012.



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4. HAZARD WARNINGS: Data danger, attack ads, crowd critiques & travel costs

The new electronic media scene offers community groups enormous new capabilities, but also generates new threats.

In just one example of such a nightmare, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) website was hacked and defaced by an “anti-abortion extremist”. The hacker threatened to reveal the personal details of women who had contacted BPAS seeking advice.

The hacker did not have access to any medical records, which were not stored on the website, but did get his hands on the details of people making enquiries through the website.

BPAS took the site offline, brought in the police and took out a court injunction preventing publication of the data. The hacker was tracked down – not so much through modern police work as because he boasted about it on Twitter – and got a three-year sentence, but user confidence will probably take longer than that to recover.

Data security, at all levels, is vital – but there are tradeoffs. How much are you willing to spend to ward off a threat that may never happen? You have locks on your home, but you don’t have a combination vault.

On the other hand, there are some stuff-ups that it would cost nothing to avoid. All it takes is a firm policy and thorough education programs.

Take the example of learning disability charity Enable Scotland, which has recently signed an undertaking promising to improve its data security after two memory sticks were stolen from an employee’s home. The unencrypted sticks contained the names, addresses and birthdays of around 100 individuals, along with some health-related data.

“The charity had breached the Data Protection Act by not deleting the records from the memory sticks once they had been transferred to the charity’s server,” *Civil Society UK* reported. “It also found the charity had no specific guidance for home workers on keeping personal data secure, and no policy for ensuring encryption of portable media devices carrying sensitive information.”

This week there have also been reports that a glitch in the London Marathon website resulted in the details of up to 38,000 runners being revealed. Organisers have apologised but could be liable for a fine of up to £50,000.

The takeaway

If you don’t have mega security on your home, don’t leave sensitive data lying around there. If your laptop has client data on it, make sure you don’t leave it on the train. And because nobody can guarantee they won’t have a mindblank moment and do just that, make sure any data that is taken out of the office on a portable device is encrypted. Oh, and check the security of your website.

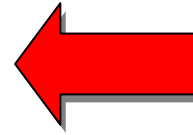
Not-for-profits aren’t all that accustomed to being rated on a one-to-five scale, and they’re not used to being reviewed by their users.

Other industries – hotels, whitegoods, books – have been grappling with these problems for years, but so far that killer app hasn’t turned up for the community sector. Unfortunately, we haven’t been using that time to get ready, and it’s just about too late.

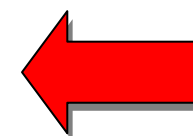
In England they’ve already got the Good Care Guide, a website whose mission is to “Give a voice to people using care. They can rate and review childcare and eldercare they have used. These shared experiences will also inform others choosing care.”

The site says it hopes the Good Care Guide will increase transparency in care and improve the quality of care.

The Hazard: Inadequate Data Security



The Hazard: Crowd-sourced critique



“The site has already attracted almost 50,000 visits and hundreds of reviews, with positive reviews outnumbering negative ones by more than five to one,” the website says.

That general ratio may not be much consolation to the company whose review goes, “Lies & dishonesty to cover up failings. No simple common sense in times of crisis, staff untrained and mismanaged, dishonestly advertised as trained in certain care. Illiteracy, poor/no English language skills, no common sense, no compassion, dishonesty shown by management, office and carers. Avoid if poss.”

And if that’s not enough, the government is getting in on the act, announcing plans to develop and publish online ratings for care and dignity standards for residential homes and home care providers, “similar to the way websites used for booking holidays do”.

“It would include the latest information from inspections, plus any record of mistreatment or abuse by staff, as well as feedback from care users and relatives,” the BBC reports.

“Ministers hope it will provide a ‘more qualitative assessment’ from the point of view of residents and their loved-ones of local care standards and would ‘empower people as never before’ to choose the right care.”

Care Services Minister Paul Burstow said the site had the potential to revolutionise the way people choose care.

“It can't be right that you can find out exactly what a hotel or restaurant is like, in just a short time searching the web, but people have so much trouble working out the standards of different care homes and home care providers – when that choice is so much more important,” he said.

The takeaway

The point is that it’s not good enough anymore to be OK, on average. You must always be aiming to please your worst critic in your weakest area on your worst day. Are any of your clients incredibly picky and never satisfied? Expect to hear from them. Are there any members with long-standing governance grievances? They’ve just got a new weapon against you.

Australia doesn’t have anything like the Good Care Guide, though we are moving in that direction with the emergence of websites such as [MySchool](#) (though you’re not able to add your own comments to that site ... yet)

And we certainly have enough young web designers looking for a killer app to make it quite probable that something like it is coming. What are you going to do – welcome the greater accountability, ask the members of your family to write in with rave reviews, or look around for a *pro bono* lawyer to sue them into bankruptcy? Start thinking about it now.

Not-for-profits haven’t in the past been targeted by attack ads, but perhaps now we ought to factor in this risk, if the state of play in America is anything to go by.

During the recent Oscar broadcast, American viewers were treated to a full-on attack on the American Humane Society, telling people that they didn’t in fact spend all their money on animal shelters.

Indeed they don’t: the Humane Society also spends its money on lobbying for less cruelty in the food production process, standing up for chickens, horses, dolphins, and cattle. This has attracted the attention of the food industry, and Big Meat thinks it’s worth throwing a proportion of its profits into muddying the water in this area.

Here in Australia we have seen not-for-profits issue commercials criticising industries, or even companies, but we’re not used to having the traffic go the other way.

The takeaway

If you’re working in a contentious area, bear in mind that this could happen. Make sure you know what to do in a media crisis. You can download our help sheet on that topic by [clicking here](#).



Do you want to know what really gets up people's noses? More than anything else that not-for-profits spend their money on? It's not phone bills. It's not even CEO salaries. It's travelling first class.

Research by British thinktank nfpSynergy asked members of the public 'Would knowing any of the following about a charity make you feel confident that they would spend a donation well?'

- No member of staff ever travelled first class on expenses (55%)
- Nobody in the organisation is paid more than £50,000 a year (46%)
- Nobody gets a bonus (43%)
- The charity is mostly run by volunteers (42%)
- Staff pay for their own Christmas party (21%)
- All photocopying was on recycled paper (18%)
- No offices in London (16%)
- No printing was on glossy paper (11%)
- All staff members work for free one day a month (8%)
- All new staff are unpaid for their first month (3%)

"Fifty-five per cent of public say best way to prove donations are well spent is a veto on first-class travel for charity staff," nfpSynergy concludes.



The takeaway

If you're like most Australian not-for-profits, you probably don't travel first class. But that's no reason not to pay heed to this study. What's lurking in your budget that you wouldn't want your donors to know about?

Don't, whatever you do, take the nfpSynergy listing a management handbook – stingy is not the same thing as efficient. But do be prepared to defend every element of your annual budget under the spotlight of public attention.

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5. How much is a Facebook "like" worth? New report adds up the sums

Ever wondered about the worth of attracting supporters via social media?

What value should you attach to a Facebook "like", for example – \$50? \$100? \$1000? Nothing?

Well, a new US study has, perhaps for the first time, put a dollar value on the worth of Facebook "likes", providing a measure against which not-for-profit groups can compare their supporter acquisition costs.

The *Nonprofit Social Network Benchmark Report 2012* is a US-based report co-ordinated by the Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN), Common Knowledge and Blackbaud. Its findings are drawn from answers to a survey which attracted more than 3500 respondents from not-for-profits of varying sizes earlier this year.

The survey found that the average value of a Facebook "like" was worth around \$US215 (that's about \$207 in Australian money) – those supporters who "liked" not-for-profits on Facebook donated an average of \$207 to them in the 12 months immediately after they clicked the thumbs up button.

The survey found the average cost of acquiring a Facebook "like" was around \$3.40, while a Twitter follower cost, on average, around \$2.

Non-fundraising goals were also important. According to *Nonprofit Social Network Benchmark Report 2012*, 66% of respondents used their Facebook presence to raise awareness, 53% to build a support base and 33% to issue calls to action to supporters.

Sector's social media presence grows

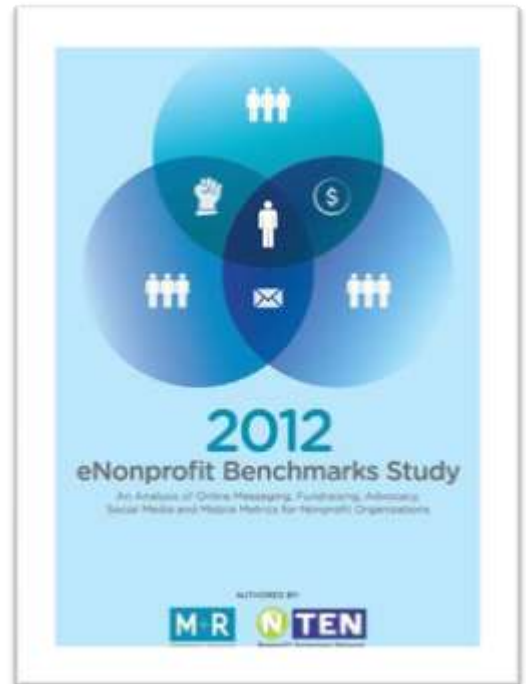
Both the *Nonprofit Social Network Benchmark Report 2012* and another survey – the *eNonprofit Benchmarks Study*, compiled by M+R Strategic Services and NTEN – uncovered growth in groups' social media presence, as well as supporters' responses.

The *eNonprofit Benchmarks Study* found the median growth rate for “likes” on Facebook pages was 70%.

Overall, for every 1000 email subscribers, not-for-profit groups in the study had:

- 103 Facebook fan page “likes”;
- 29 Twitter followers; and
- 12 people who subscribed via their mobile devices or smart phones.

The *Nonprofit Social Network Benchmark Report 2012* found, on average, that groups' Facebook and Twitter communities grew by 30% and 81% respectively between 2011 and 2012.



What does this mean for marketing and fundraising?

The figures cited in the *Nonprofit Social Network Benchmark Report* provide a great starting point for your organisation when it comes to measuring the worth of time spent on Facebook and Twitter.

However, it's important to remember that your approach to gaining donors through social network sites should mirror that taken in the offline world.

Simply asking people for donations is unlikely to meet with great success. Similarly, setting up a Facebook page or Twitter account just to solicit donations is not the best way to attract support online.

Social networking is just one more medium that you can use to pull people closer into your inner circle.

The *Nonprofit Social Network Benchmark Report 2012* can be downloaded here – www.nonprofitsocialnetworksurvey.com/download.php, while the *eNonprofit Benchmarks Study* is available here: www.e-benchmarksstudy.com.

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6. Get the Secret: How to get more grants, build a better board, be a better manager

Psst ... Heard about Our Community's grants training?

If you haven't attended one of our courses, you're missing out.

Here's what baseball and softball club president Chris Rainnie had to say about our Intensive Community Fundraising Workshop held in Ku-ring-gai Council, NSW, earlier this month:

“Thank you for the opportunity to be part of such an informative meeting on applying for and winning grants to support volunteer organisations.

“I was amazed at the variety of organisations there on Friday and found not only the 4+1 stages in planning a grant very constructive but also (the information) on how to use our mission and vision statements, the

sustainability of the project post-completion, and to work backwards from initially deciding what the impact is on what we want to achieve.



“Being a club of 450 members, approaching our 35th anniversary and looking to fund a second storey on our clubhouse to coincide with the council redevelopment of our baseball field during the next financial year, all I now need to start the process is a headline and to decide what the impact is.”

More Our Community Grants and Fundraising seminars will be taking place in a variety of locations over the next couple of months, along with other acclaimed Our Community training. Click the links below to make a booking.

Advanced Grant Writing Seminar ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Perth: 2 May
- Adelaide: 4 May
- Darwin: 4 May
- Canberra: 22 June

Certificate IV in Governance - for Community Boards (BSB40907) ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Melbourne: 15-18 May
- Sydney: 15-18 May
- Brisbane: 15-18 May
- Perth: 12-15 June
- Canberra: 18-21 June

Diploma of Management BSB51107 ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Sydney: 7-11 May
- Perth: 28 May - 1 June
- Melbourne: 18-22 June

Diploma of Project Management BSB51407 ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Melbourne: 21-25 May
- Sydney: 25-29 June

Introduction to Writing Winning Grant Applications ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Perth: 30 April
- Adelaide: 30 April
- Darwin: 30 April
- Canberra: 25 May
- Wollongong: 29 May
- Goulburn: 30 May
- Bathurst: 5 June
- Tamworth: 7 June
- Inverell: 24 September
- Byron Bay: 26 September

Secrets of Successful Boards Seminar ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Perth: 3 May
- Adelaide: 3 May
- Darwin: 3 May
- Melbourne: 14 May
- Sydney: 14 May
- Brisbane: 14 May

Strategies for Sustainable Funding Seminar ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Perth: 30 April
- Adelaide: 30 April
- Darwin: 30 April
- Canberra: 25 May
- Wollongong: 29 May
- Goulburn: 30 May
- Bathurst: 5 June
- Tamworth: 7 June
- Inverell: 24 September
- Byron Bay: 26 September

Women Achieving and Flourishing (introductory women's leadership course) ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Melbourne: 1 May
- Sydney: 12 June

Women Leaders - Taking the Next Steps (advanced women's leadership course) ([Click here for details/bookings...](#))

- Melbourne: 2 May
- Sydney: 13 June

Our Community can also provide tailored training on a topic of your choice in a location that suits you. Go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/training to find out more, or email alanm@ourcommunity.com.au

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7. The Name's Bond: Social Impact Bond

The Social Impact Bond has made landfall.

The New South Wales Government is launching its own [Social Benefit Bonds](#) – the second government in the world to do so. Its site explains

A social benefit bond (SBB) is a financial instrument that pays a return based on the achievement of agreed social outcomes. Under a SBB, investors fund the delivery of services targeted at improving a particular social outcome. Achievement of this outcome should reduce the need for, and therefore government spending on, acute services. Part of the resultant public sector savings are then used to repay investors' principal and make additional reward payments (the return on investment), the level of which is dependent on the degree of outcome improvement achieved.

The NSW Government is currently working on three tenders. Two have been announced – one on prison recidivism with Mission Australia and one on Out of Home Care with UnitingCare.

The parties are now working together on such details as what the outcome measures shall be and how much of the potential savings goes to the investors.

The Government believes that SBBs offer numerous potential benefits:

A focus on outcomes rather than outputs: Under traditional purchaser-provider arrangements, Government payments typically attach to units or blocks of service rather than the outcome the Government is seeking to



achieve. In contrast, SBBs provide a direct financial incentive to focus on and improve the outcome in question. This change benefits both the Government and providers: the Government gets better outcomes, while providers are relieved of burdensome reporting to Government about service inputs and outputs, and instead are free to focus on delivering the outcome in a way that best suits their own approach and preferences.

Additional resources towards early intervention: Releasing Government funds for prevention and early intervention can be difficult when resources are oriented towards acute and crisis services. SBBs allow an expansion of investment in early intervention through the use of upfront private funding. If successful, this reduces later demand for acute services and frees up Government funds, part of which can then be used to repay investors.

Innovation: Payment for results, rather than delivery of a prescribed service, frees service providers and investors to explore different ways of achieving better results. Providers have the flexibility to change service delivery approaches or experiment with a number of approaches at the same time ...

Improving the evidence base: SBBs will be more attractive to investors if they are backed by evidence that indicates that the proposed interventions will be successful. Further, the link between payments and results necessitates the robust measurement of outcomes. These features increase locally relevant evidence and data for future policy makers. By improving measurement in these areas, the Government believes that other social policy areas will benefit as well.

Accountability and transparency: The focus on clear outcomes measurement in SBBs ensures that there is clarity about what NSW Government funding is achieving, and when.

The savings are unquestionably real. A recent [study](#) on the costs of homelessness by Mission Australia found that one of its programs, designed to boost health, education and support services for 250 homeless men in Sydney, saved the government \$3600 in ambulances, emergency department care, court and police costs for every person that the project helped.

If that had been an SIB/SBB then private investors, not the government, would have funded the program, and private investors would pocket the savings – and taken the risk.

The idea is that the government shifts the risk to the private sector, or at least the quasi-private sector; so far investors have been moved as much by corporate benevolence (and its associated PR benefits) as by hard-headed lust for gain.

It is here, perhaps, that the limitations of the concept lie – commercial investors will need to devise a whole new set of financial assessment tools before not-for-profit risk can be reliably priced.

In the UK, for example, the latest example of the risks of social investment is a bidding consortium set up by about 40 charities in Bedfordshire that's just closed down.

ConsortiCo was set up in 2009 with a £60,000 loan from the Futurebuilders fund. Unfortunately, it was launched in the same week that the British Government declared a nine-month moratorium on new local government contracts. Unsurprisingly, it went bust.

However good an idea is itself, social objectives are hostage to movements in society, decisions by governments, and simple statistical variation.

The reason the government favours these schemes is that it sees, correctly, that risk is a negative form of money, and if they don't have to take on the risk that's the exact equivalent of paying over less money. (It's not absolutely clear that the not-for-profit sector fully appreciates the converse of that proposition.)

The hope, of course, is that this will be more than a zero-sum game, and that the emphasis on assessment of objectives and reward for innovation will spur new ideas and enable alternative models to be tested competitively.

Encouragingly, the NSW Social Investment Expert Advisory Group will be chaired by Professor Peter Shergold of the Centre for Social Impact, and we can expect that the new trial will do something to clarify these issues.

Oh, and [Prince Charles](#) is also getting into the act ...

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Showcase your cause/ services to 1500 community groups!

We are now taking bookings for display tables at the 10th annual Communities in Control Conference.

WHERE: Moonee Valley Racing Club, McPherson St, Moonee Ponds VIC

WHEN: May 28-29, 2012

WHO: Approx. 1500 delegates from all over Australia – people who work in, work for, work with or care about the community sector

Option 1: Display Table

Package includes display table (table provided) plus 10 two-day conference passes for staff, volunteers or members (value of 10 passes=\$3300).

Cost: \$2,600*

Option 2: Display Table + Delegates' Pack Insert

Package includes a display table (table provided) plus 10 two-day conference passes for staff, volunteers or members (value of 10 passes=\$3300), plus a brochure inserted in delegates' packs**

Cost: \$3,100*

Option 3: Delegate's Pack Insert

Package includes brochure inserted in delegates' packs**

Cost: \$1,600

Please note display space is limited and will be restricted to those whose values are in line with Our Community, CatholicCare and the Communities in Control ethos.

INQUIRIES & BOOKINGS:

Alan Matic

(03) 9320 6805

alanm@ourcommunity.com.au

*Price includes GST

** Inserts to be supplied 14 days before the event. Insert size/style to be approved by conference organisers.



8. Risky Business: Public liability claims head list of charity concerns

More than a quarter of charities surveyed in a [new UK report](#) felt the biggest area of risk they faced was public liability claims.

Twenty-seven percent of the more than 2000 charities questioned by UK charity insurer Ecclesiastical and research agency FWD said public liability was the main area of risk facing the charity sector.

By comparison, 17% said security of funding was the biggest concern and 8% said the current recession/economic downturn was the sector's biggest worry.

About 20% of groups said they were concerned that public liability risk would damage their reputation.

The report also detailed the rise of what it called "the claims culture", with the volume of public liability settlements jumping 18% between 2007 and 2011.

Central to this increase is the growth of firms (in the UK, "Claims Management Companies") offering "no win, no fee" arrangements to potential claimants, the report says.

The report identified five key risk factors:

1. Volunteers or part-time workers 'overstepping' their responsibilities, such as undertaking tasks or selling products on behalf of the charity without the charity having sanctioned them.
2. Staff being not fully aware of their responsibilities and risks.
3. Using third parties for running events and activities to raise funds.
4. Working with vulnerable groups.
5. A tough economy bringing the potential to increase litigious claims.

The report authors recommend a number of preventative measures to manage risk:

- **Risk assessments** – A thorough risk assessment can prevent the easily preventable and sometimes not so obvious risk which could lead to a liability claim in the future. The assessment should be overseen by your Occupational Health and Safety officer.
- **Training** – Ensure your key employees are properly trained and that such training is periodically refreshed.
- **Understand your responsibilities** – There might be times where you need to use outside parties or contractors. If this is the case, make sure you appreciate what your respective responsibilities are, to avoid the possibility of inadvertently assuming some of the contractors' obligations and potential liability.
- **Keep accurate records** – Ensure the organisation, in all its forms, has hard and fast evidence and records of any incidents. This means the validity of any potential claims can more easily be assessed. And should it get to legal proceedings, these records can more easily be called upon to provide evidence.

More information about risk management can be found in Our Community's Insurance and Risk Management Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/risk



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9. The Money or the Clock: 600,000 great reasons to give

The following is a Blogpost by Kylie Cirak, Executive Director of GiveNow.com.au, Our Community's giving arm, which appeared on openforum.com.au this month.

'Pity may represent little more than the impersonal concern which prompts the mailing of a cheque, but true sympathy is the personal concern which demands the giving of one's soul.'

- Martin Luther King, Jr

Far be it for me to argue with someone as esteemed as Martin Luther King, Jr, but I think in this instance the great man has only got it only half right.

There is a certain smug mindset that to give money is easier and therefore somehow less virtuous than giving your time.

But the cold, hard fact is that community groups and charities need cold, hard cash. There are bills and salaries to be paid, programs to be run, and dare I say the forbidden words, *administration costs* to be covered.

Community groups need donated goods and services, blood, bikes, corks and clothes and – it's true – they could not survive without the time and passion of volunteers. But they also need money.

GiveNow.com.au is Australia's only commission-free online donations service for community organisations, schools and sporting groups. It's an initiative of the Our Community Foundation, a not-for-profit program established through the financial support of social enterprise www.ourcommunity.com.au, and is supported by Westpac.

GiveNow's mission is to democratise giving in Australia – ensuring that even the tiniest community groups have the same access to safe, secure online donations technology as the largest groups.

It's our belief that it's often the smallest and most participatory community groups – the junior sports groups, amateur dramatic societies, book clubs, parents' groups and mutual support groups, to name just a handful of the 600,000 or so out there – that provide the glue that binds our society together. They're worthy of our support, and we want to do what we can to provide the tools to make supporting them easier.

The GiveNow.com.au online donations service is offered to any community group in Australia, regardless of size or purpose or tax status. We don't charge a commission, and we don't exclude groups that can't offer donors a tax deduction (around 96% of community groups can't).

GiveNow collects donations on behalf of more than 2000 causes, taking between 4000 and 5000 donations per month.

We've collected around \$23 million since we started about a decade ago, and that figure rises exponentially each year. That's not to say that people are giving exponentially more, necessarily, but rather that they are more and more inclined to give online (as [new research in the US confirms](#)), which is why it's so vitally important for community groups to have an online fundraising facility.

Our figures show that people are giving less money this year than last – we've recorded an average annual donation of \$90, down from \$99 last year. It's hard to pin down the exact reason for this (economic downturn? Giving fatigue? Community distrust caused by media attacks on "greedy" charities?), but I can't and won't attribute it to a slump in Australians' willingness to help. We're a good bunch most of the time. We do want to help, and as a general rule we are prepared to give.

I strongly encourage the "impersonal concern" which may prompt readers of this blog to get online at www.givenow.com.au and click a few buttons to transfer some money to a worthy cause. (Mailing a cheque is so yesterday, Martin).

Whatever you can give, there's a group on GiveNow that needs it.



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10. What's Wrong with Grants: Grantmaker of the Year entrants push reform agenda

As part of our quest to reform grantmaking in Australia, the Australian Institute of Grants Management (an Our Community arm) this year ran the inaugural Grantmaker of the Year Awards.

The award was designed to unearth the people leading the field of grantmaking in Australia, and draw out (and share) their vision for where we should go next.

Unlike most other awards, it aims to reward future potential as much as past glories, asking not just what grantmakers *have done*, but what they think *should be done* to forward the practice and profession of grantmaking.

The winner of the inaugural award was Ian Potter Foundation Senior Program Manager Caitriona Fay, whose grantmaking experience has straddled both government and philanthropic sectors.

Four other entrants were highly commended: YarraGrants team members Nina Collins and Denise Fox, Inner North Community Foundation team members Sharon Nathani and Genevieve Timmons, Jon King from the Community Broadcasting Foundation, and local government grantmaker Benjamin Jardine.

Caitriona's application put forth a range of practical ideas for breaking down the barriers between grantmaking silos, shifting power from grantmaker to grant applicant, and improving professionalism in the field of grantmaking.

She said cross-sector collaboration was one area that could do with some improvement.

"Grantmaking in Australia operates in silos," she said.

"Across and within the grantmaking sector there is very little collaboration or information sharing.

"Whether it be philanthropy, corporate or government grantmaking, grantmakers do not naturally work to support each other."

Collaboration was more likely to be serendipitous than planned, Caitriona said.

"When funders talk about collaborations, what they are actually talking about tends to be co-funding," she said.

"This means information sharing, streamlined reporting approaches and learnings are rarely shared the way they should or could be."

YarraGrants team members Nina Collins and Denise Fox said grantmakers were largely viewed as administrators rather than community development professionals, with relationship-building often less valued than smooth administration.

"A grantmaker's role is often weighed down with time and labour intensive administrative tasks, at the expense of community capacity building and relationship development work," they said.

"Grantmaking needs to be recognised for what it is – community development work using the tool of grants."

Relationship-building creates more enjoyable work for the grantmaker, greater trust between grantmaker and grant recipient, and reduced risk, Denise and Nina said.

"This can be best achieved when we're freed from our desks – to engage with the community, think creatively and develop the skills our profession demands."



2012 Grantmaker of the Year Award winner Caitriona Fay, left, is pictured with AIGM director Fiona Dempster and Our Community Group Managing Director Denis Moriarty

Sharon Nathani and Genevieve Timmons also believe that authentic relationships are key, advocating the use of a “high-trust, low documentation” approach to grantmaking.

Deficiencies in the application process were also identified as key problems in Australian grantmaking today.

Jon King from the Community Broadcasting Foundation said that grantmakers should do more to help disadvantaged grantseekers navigate the application process, while the Inner North Community Foundation team said more should be done to eliminate the hoops that grantseekers were forced to jump through for small amounts of funding.

Local government grantmaker Benjamin Jardine said the most pressing problem in grantmaking was the lack of appropriate metrics around social impact, a situation that was forcing grantmakers to zero in on the financial aspects of an application.

“In the absence of a transparent, accountable method of judging social value we are drawn back to assessment of financial risk and return,” he said.

“This results in cost cutting, under-budgeting, reduction in scope and other methods designed to convince the grantmaker that a group is ‘good with money’ and able to squeeze value out of every last dollar.”

The Inner North Foundation team said grantmakers needed to be prepared to take more risks and to forego “demonstrable, quantifiable and immediate proof that their support has been helpful”.

“Sometimes outcomes take longer than the identified timeframe for a project (and that shouldn't discount the value of the support),” they said.

Speaking at the Grantmaking in Australia Conference during the award presentation, Caitriona said she hoped to use the \$5000 prize money to help fund visits to leading philanthropic organisations in the UK and the US, and to offset her not-for-profit study costs at Queensland University of Technology.

“The great thing about getting an unrestricted cheque, as I think most of our grantseekers know as well, is just the ability to make a choice and do something outside the box,” she said.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity.”

It is anticipated that entries for the 2013 award will open in August 2012.

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11. Proving Your Worth: Pro bono economics

Economist J.M. Keynes did a lot of work pro bono. Specifically, he was the Bursar – the Treasurer – for King’s College, Cambridge, for 20 years.

Starting with \$30,000 in 1924, he built the College’s funds up to \$380,000 by the time of his death in 1946 – growth of 12% a year.

If that sounds unimpressive, bear in mind that the time period covers the Wall Street crash and the Second World War, that the College spent all the dividends, and the over those 22 years the UK stock market index actually went down 15%.

If every not-for-profit had a Keynes on board, our financial troubles would be much, much more manageable.

Jasmine Zhang, a PhD Student at the Australian National University, is proposing that Australia follow the example of the UK’s Pro Bono Economics, a charity that matches volunteer economists with charities wishing to address questions around measurements, results and impact.

“On the supply side, economists are unaware that their skill sets can be useful in evaluating the effectiveness of charities. On the demand side, charities often do not understand the value of economic analysis to their business and hence do not seek it,” she writes on *The Conversation* website.

The Pro Bono Economics webpage [says](#):

“There is growing pressure on charities to measure performance and results to quantify their wider impact on society. By helping charities to address these issues, economists can put their technical skills to use in the front line.”

Of course, this may not be the best time to try to market economists to not-for-profits.

In the wake of the global financial crisis, in which economists proved themselves fairly thoroughly incapable of foreseeing the crisis in advance, explaining the crisis when it occurred, or fixing the crisis after it had struck, respect for the expertise of the profession is at an all-time low.

Still, that doesn't mean they can't handle the task of impact assessment, and if they're available *pro bono* it might be worth asking them to pitch in.

An example is the work done by the volunteer economists for [Barnardo's](#),” Jasmine Zhang writes.

“Barnardo's work with those who have been sexually exploited is clear. However, using a rigorous research framework, the volunteer economists at Pro Bono Economics show that the benefits to the taxpayers of Barnardo's interventions for young people who have been sexually exploited far outweigh the costs.

“There is a potential saving of either £6 or £12 for every £1 spent, depending on the assumptions made. There is now tangible, economic evidence of the necessity for specialist help, highlighting its value to the society as a whole.”

The basic insight of economics – the money shot – is that anything, however nebulous, can be converted into financial terms.

Whatever good your organisation does can be recorded, and measured (or estimated) and costed (under various assumptions).

If you want those assumptions to be understanding and sympathetic, it's best if you do the costing in-house.

Unfortunately, there's as yet no equivalent to Pro Bono Economics in Australia – if you want to go down this path, you'll have to look around for an economist in your volunteer pool. If you come up short you'll just have to start thinking like an economist yourself. Though not so much like an economist that you refuse to work for nothing.



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12. Share the Knowledge: Disability Action Plan improves services & staff satisfaction

Melbourne-based homelessness, housing and support agency, HomeGround Services, recently launched its first disability action plan to improve its services to people with a disability and the accessibility of the organisation for staff.

Acting CEO Heather Holst says the plan sends a clear message that staff, facilities, services, programs and HomeGround as an organisation are open, welcoming and responsive to the needs of people with a disability.

Our Community Matters: What is a disability action plan?

Heather Holst: A disability action plan is a formal commitment and action plan put in place by an organisation to remove or reduce barriers that exclude people from accessing services, gaining employment or otherwise participating equally in an organisation's activities. They are coordinated by the Office of Disability within the

OC Matters: What will it achieve?

HH: Our plan will reduce barriers in access to services, facilities and employment. More specifically, it aims to:

- Increase the number of staff who have a disability through best practice recruitment and reasonable adjustment policies
- Increase the number of staff who speak Auslan
- Improve the accessibility of our service information and communication materials
- Increase awareness of disability issues amongst staff

OC Matters: Why did HomeGround develop a disability action plan?

HH: Nearly a quarter of those who accessed our services last year were receiving the Disability Support Pension. Despite this huge crossover between homelessness and disability, the accessibility of services and the funding and service coordination is still poor in many areas. This makes it even harder for those with a disability to escape from homelessness.

We are responding by looking at our own services and organisation to see what we can do to improve in this area. We already do a lot, but there is definitely room for improvement. This will translate into better housing outcomes for the people who use our services and an advantage for us in recruitment and retention of staff.

OC Matters: What was the process?

HH: Our three-year plan was produced through a 12-month consultation process. In order to achieve a plan that had the support of all staff and that reflected best practice in disability services, we involved accredited access consultants and took into account stakeholder feedback. The process was overseen by our own Disability Advisory Group, which includes staff and consumer participants.

Simon, a member of the Disability Action Group and someone who has experienced homelessness in the past, said: "I got involved in this process because I was impressed with the commitment I saw from HomeGround to improve services to people with the double whammy of being homeless and having a disability. The stronger the bridges we build between homelessness, housing and disability services the better we will be able to break down the additional barriers to housing that these people face."

OC Matters: What advice would you give other organisations wanting to develop their own plan?

HH: The key things we learned through this process are::

- Involve consumer representatives as early as possible in the process
- Involve your whole organisation, including senior management
- Form and resource a working group to develop the plan. Make sure the group includes representatives from every level of the organisation
- Find creative ways to engage staff
- Allow enough time to do the job properly, at least 12 months
- Include benchmarking in the first phase of your plan
- Celebrate your successes and the things that you were already doing well
- Take advantage of the support available from the Victorian Office of Disability

For more information visit the [HomeGround website](http://www.homeground.org.au). An extended version of this article will appear in the Board Builder newsletter – see www.ourcommunity.com.au/boardbuilder for more information or to subscribe.

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13. Kony Catchup: Slacktivists' no-show brings reality check to internet campaign

We reported last month on the Kony 2012 phenomenon – the almost instantaneous recruitment of a vast army of young activists to support the campaign by American not-for-profit group Invisible Children to track down and punish Ugandan war criminal Joseph Kony, leader of the brutal and murderous Lord's Resistance Army.

Invisible Children's promotional video reached 100 million people, and every not-for-profit in existence was moved to look again at what it could do with its online offerings.

There have been some setbacks for Invisible Children since then.

Its ubiquitous presence brought out other groups to correct its facts, criticise its assumptions, and contest its agenda.

The pressure of its unforeseen and unprecedented – almost unimaginable – success led to the organisation's founder (the star of the film) being hospitalised for “exhaustion, dehydration and malnutrition” after being detained by San Diego police while running through the streets naked.

Perhaps more seriously, though, as time passes we can see more clearly the limitations of Invisible Children's army as compared with the more traditional variety.

For one thing, online recruitment seems to be good only for online activism. On April 20 the campaign issued a call for volunteers to join the Cover the Night event to form into teams, volunteer for their community for a few hours by picking up rubbish or washing cars, and then spend the evening plastering walls, pavements and windows with “Stop Kony” posters (one of the Invisible Children's recurring problems is that it doesn't have much for its supporters to do other than show they support it).

In Sydney, 19,000 people on Facebook said they'd go, which is both a sharp drop from the half a million Sydneysiders who were enthused by the original campaign and four orders of magnitude higher than the approximately 25 people who actually turned up in Martin Place.

The turnout around the world was little better.

A Facebook friend, people have found out, won't lend you money.

A Facebook activist, it seems, isn't going to do the leg work.

This doesn't mean that internet activism has been discredited, but it does mean that we're still at the very early stages of figuring out what works and what we can do with it.

Every unplanned experiment like this gets us a little further along the way.

Of course, the Stop Kony teens are not the only army on the march. On March 23 the African Union announced its intentions to “send 5000 soldiers to join the hunt for rebel leader Joseph Kony” and to “neutralise” him. The search will last, they say, “until Kony is caught”.

The campaign may have pushed the politics of the situation to a tipping point. It may yet all end well.



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14. PwC Transparency Award winners announced

The Cancer Council NSW and Opportunity International have taken out the annual PricewaterhouseCoopers Transparency Awards.

The awards, now in their fifth year, are a collaboration between PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and the Centre for Social Impact. They aim to recognise and encourage improvement in the quality of reporting in the Australian not-for-profit sector.

The awards have taken on extra importance given the increased emphasis on transparency in reporting that is being ushered in through the establishment of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Cancer Council NSW first entered the awards four years ago; this year it took out the award for most transparent reporting for organisations with more than \$30 million in revenue.

The report was based around the theme of “Untold Stories” and showcased the range of ways the organisation tackles overlooked cancers and issues.

Opportunity International (www.opportunity.org.au), which was runner-up in 2011, took out the top award this year for groups with between \$5 million and \$30 million in revenue. The organisation aims to help people living in poverty by providing micro loans to help grow their small businesses.

Runners up in the two categories were Oxfam Australia (\$30 million+ revenue category) and Youth Off The Streets (\$5-30 million revenue category). Lifeline Australia was named most improved, while the inaugural award for best first year entrant went to Bridge Housing Limited.

Presenting one of the awards, Community Council of Australia CEO David Crosbie commended the winners.

“The winning organisations are those who clearly defined the function of their organisation, the impact they have had throughout the year, provided honest and balanced reporting, and a clear business strategy. The jury was impressed with the way many organisations are tackling this challenge,” he said.

Sally Chatterjey, Cancer Council NSW’s chief operating officer, said the organisation used its annual report to detail the impact supporters were having on those the council helped.

“We used our annual report to let our supporters know how the money and time they have so generously given to the cause have been used, how they have contributed to some significant achievements, and improved the quality of so many lives,” she said.

Opportunity CEO Robert Dunn said the organisation’s reporting was an important part of spreading the word about what the organisation did, as well as how microfinance could help shift people out of poverty.

“We put great emphasis on being honest and transparent in our communications,” he said.

“We want to be an effective bridge between donors here in Australia and families living in poverty in developing countries.”

Forty-five not-for-profit groups entered this year’s awards, 35% of them being new entrants. Eighteen percent of this year’s entrants had submitted an entry in all five years the awards have been running.

Since the awards began in 2007, 209 charities have entered with approximately 80% re-entering the awards.

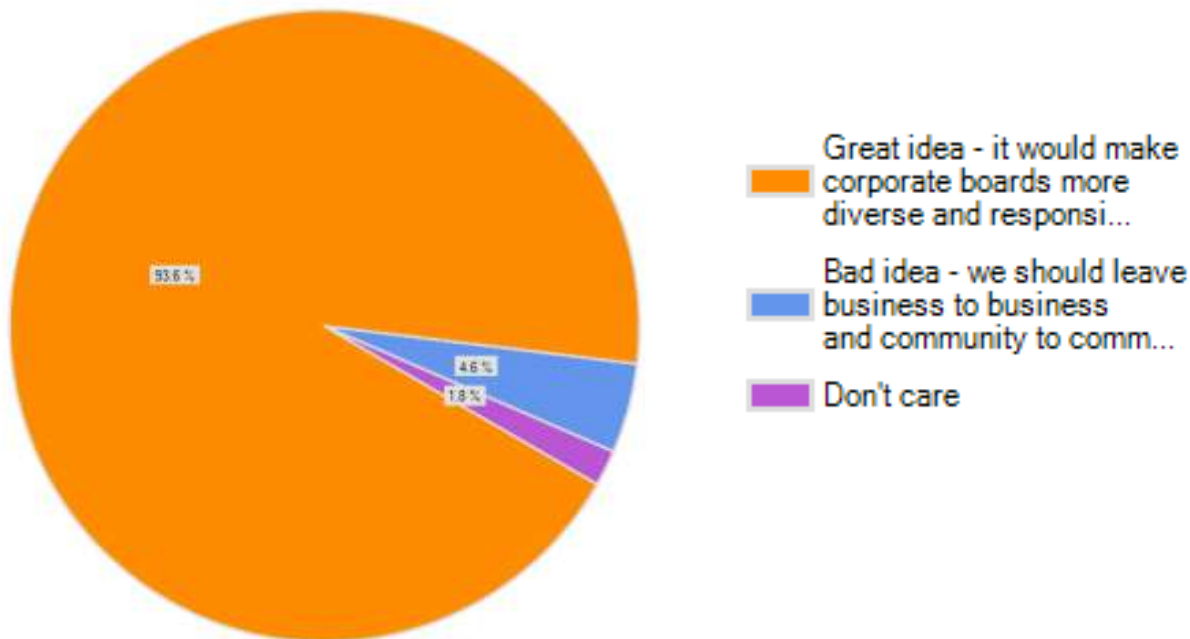
More information on the awards is available here on the [PricewaterhouseCoopers website](http://www.pwc.com/australia/transparency).



The Cancer Council NSW’s winning report

15. Two-second Poll: Help us take your pulse

Last month we asked you what you thought about the call in the UK for more not-for-profit representation on corporate boards. Here's what you answered:



This month we want to know more about your fundraising efforts. We're asking:

1. What's the climate for fundraising/donations like for your organisation, when compared with the same time last year?

- Much better
- A little better
- About the same
- Tougher
- Much tougher

Click above or go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/poll

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16. The Big Picture: Federal Government reform update

Federal not-for-profit reform continues apace, but there's not actually much to show for it.

We're at the stage, perhaps, where the caterpillar (*government commitment to the not-for-profit sector*) has spun its cocoon (*the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Taskforce*), hidden itself from the world, is busy developing new organs and new capabilities and is preparing to launch itself as a beautiful butterfly (*the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission*).

The Taskforce is hiring its senior staff (we'll give you a briefing when the full list is available), who are hiring its junior staff, who are going through the various submissions in response to the ACNC Implementation Design Discussion

Paper released on December 9 and writing the final report due for release in early May, after which we'll know more than we do now about the details of the new arrangements.

The states and the Commonwealth have agreed at COAG to a [long list](#) of things to do, or at least to think about doing at some point in the future if they feel like it at the time.

For example, when it comes to “Developing a nationally consistent approach to fundraising regulation which reduces the regulatory burden on the not-for-profit sector” the states have agreed only to “report to COAG on progress for developing options to advance a nationally consistent approach to fundraising regulation for the not-for-profit sector where appropriate” – which seems to qualify the objective with so many weasel words as to bury it completely.



What's wrong with agreeing to “advance a nationally consistent approach to fundraising regulation for the not-for-profit sector”?

The other goals are phrased with similar emergency exits. Except for the changes that involve taxation, where the Federal Government can act unilaterally, nothing has actually been nailed down.

Mark Butler, the new Minister for Social Inclusion, is currently beating the bushes to get partners to sign up for the [National Compact](#) (which, in case you've forgotten, is a “joint commitment by Government and the sector to make life better for all Australians”). Check out the current directory [here](#).

They're working on a Consultation and Policy Development Code of Best Practice “to guide government engagement with the sector when designing and implementing policy,” and there's a survey for you to fill out on what you think the main issues should be.

Those of you whose organisations were worried by the Commonwealth's proposals to rationalise funding for volunteering through a National Project Fund that could direct services into disadvantaged communities can relax – after consultation with the sector the government has [backed down](#) and isn't going to do it.

On the legal front, the Tax Office has now put out a [revised paper](#) on the changes it's planning to make to the tax law on charities with overseas connections.

It had been planning to make life very difficult indeed for such organisations by, for example, wiping their income tax exemptions if they didn't follow their constitution; most of the objectionable elements have been removed, but if you're thinking of funding any overseas activities in the next few years, you'd better check it out.

In another surprising development, the ATO has actually won a case for a change – [Commissioner of Taxation v. Bargwanna \[2012\] HCA 11](#), on appeal to the High Court. Bargwanna appears to be one of those unsatisfactory cases where the outcome seems fair enough but the legal reasoning unpalatable.

The court found that:

In 2004 the trustees, Mr and Mrs Bargwanna, applied for tax concession charity endorsement for the trust on the basis that it was a charitable fund. The Commissioner refused their application and also disallowed their subsequent objection.

The Commissioner contended that the fund was not entitled to endorsement as it was not applied for charitable purposes but was actually applied for the benefit of the trustees in several identified respects.

I think we can all agree that that's a no-no. However, the lower court did decide that “the ... Charitable Trust had been administered 'substantially' in accordance with its terms”. The High Court said that wasn't good enough.

[if a] fund is established in Australia for public charitable purposes.... the ITAA 1997 requires that the fund be 'applied' for those purposes, and does not require only that the fund be 'substantially' or 'on the whole' applied for those purposes.

Not-for-profit boards aren't infallible, and it would be a harsh world if every error automatically wiped your DGR status.

We don't imagine that the ATO is planning to go on a rampage here, and even if they do they won't have long before the ACNC comes in to look after Deductible Gift Recipient issues, but still we'd probably be better off with a more forgiving formulation.

The good news is that the Australian law of charities has now got substantially easier, because the QUT's Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies has produced an ever-so-useful Australian Nonprofit Sector Legal and Accounting Almanac, gathering together all the large number of legal cases and legislative changes in the sector through last year.

What would we do without the ACPNS? If it would update its title to Centre for Philanthropy and *Not-for-profit* Studies it would be practically perfect in every way.

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17. Community Calendar: What's on in the community sector

Our Community's online **Community Calendar** features all of the nationally significant events focussed around a major community or advocacy/awareness issue in Australia. Some events taking place in the next month include:



World Malaria Day: 25 April

World Malaria Day is an opportunity for malaria-free countries to learn about the devastating consequences of the disease and for new donors to join a global partnership against malaria. It provides a chance for countries in affected regions to learn from each other's experiences and back each other efforts. And it is an opportunity for international partners, companies and foundations to reflect together on how to scale up what has been proven to work.



International Guide Dog Day: 25 April

International Guide Dog Day is a day to celebrate the important role that guide dogs play in helping the blind and vision impaired enjoy safe and independent travel.



Australian Dance Week: 29 April – 5 May

Australian Dance week is a celebration of the cultural contributions of dance to the Australian community.



World Asthma Day: 1 May

World Asthma Day (WAD) takes place each year on the first Tuesday in May. Initiated by the Global Initiative for Asthma in 1998, the National Asthma Council Australia marks the occasion to highlight the need for ongoing care and vigilance in managing asthma.



National MND Week: 6 – 12 May

Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a progressive neurological disease that affects roughly 1400 Australians, and thousands more carers, family and friends who live with the impact of the disease. National MND week aims to raise awareness of the disease.

To see more events, go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/calendar

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18. Community Sector Briefs

Social media update

Still haven't joined us on Twitter and Facebook? What on earth is stopping you!

Here's what you've missed over the past month or so:

- [Info on the upcoming Communities in Control conference](#)
- [How to avoid becoming a dysfunctional board](#)
- [The latest GiveNow news](#)
- [A reminder to renew your Working with Children Check](#)
- [Our top 10 mistakes in recruiting a new board member](#)
- [Our advice on how to recycle/donate unwanted bikes](#)
- [Tips on what to do to make sure you're ready to receive donations](#)



Here's how to join our networks:

- [Click here](#) to follow us on Twitter
- [Click here](#) to like us on Facebook page

Sociability: Social media for people with a disability

Media Access Australia (MAA) has released *SociABILITY: Social Media for People with a Disability*, a review of how people with disabilities can best use social media tools.

The review offers guides for the use of major social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Skype and blogging.

For each platform, the guide provides a review of what it is, what accessibility issues it poses to people with a disability, and how best to overcome these issues.

The MAA is an independent not-for-profit organisation that focuses on improving media access for people with disabilities.

Not-for-profits "behind the curve" on technology and social media

The adoption of new technology and communication methods in the not-for-profits sector remains stifled due to the costs of updating software and hardware, according to a report from Connecting Up and Digital Business Insights (DBI).

The report is based on research from DBI which found that 25% of not-for-profit groups were and were having trouble keeping up with the technology and communications needs – including social media and networking.

A large number of groups could not afford to upgrade their technology due to prohibitive costs, and 56% said they lacked the skills and knowledge to put in place new technology because they had no capacity to train staff, or only did so as a reactive measure.

ABS releases latest social trends reports

A variety of social and societal issues – including homelessness, disability and work, households with low incomes and marriage, relationships and divorces – are the focus of new Australian Social Trends reports recently released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).



The reports draw on information from the ABS, and other sources, to present a picture of Australian society. The information ranges in age from quite recent to a few years old. The new reports are:

- **Life on 'Struggle Street': Australians in low economic resource households** – Examining the characteristics of people in households with both relatively low income and relatively low wealth.
- **Life after Homelessness** – A comparison of people who have been homeless in the last 10 years with those who have never been homeless.
- **Love Me Do** – Looking at the trends in marriage, de facto relationships and divorce over the last 20 years.
- **Disability and Work** – Examining the characteristics of working-age people with disability and their involvement in the labour force.

Each report contains invaluable statistical information which could prove especially useful for groups working in each sector.

The statistics also provide a ready reference for relevant grant and funding applications, especially when it comes to demonstrating need and illustrating the issues your organisation is looking to address.

The reports are available on the [ABS website](#), while a list of other statistical sources can be found on the Our Community website at www.ourcommunity.com.au/stats

WIRE training – new dates

Women's Information and Referral Exchange Inc (WIRE) is calling for women to attend training sessions to become volunteers for their telephone support service.

WIRE is a source of free generalist information and support, and a referral service for Victorian women, run by women for women.

Volunteers must be able to commit to one full day of training each week for a total of eight weeks, and then four hours (during business hours) each week for at least a year after they've finished their training.

The next **training program** will begin in June.

Ethi-call: Help with ethical dilemmas

The St James Ethics Centre is offering a free phone service to help people dealing with ethical dilemmas.

The Ethi-call service provides callers with a one-hour counselling session, with a trained volunteer guiding them through the circumstances, consequences and outcomes of any particular ethical impasse.

Ethi-call provides advice for any subject, from personal issues to business problems.

The service, 1800 672 303, is available during regular business hours on weekdays.

For more information visit the [St James Ethics Centre website](#).



Working with Children Check: Time for an update?

The Victorian Department of Justice is urging holders of a Working with Children Check to ensure they update any changes of personal information or risk committing an offence.

The department says that many card-holders are unaware of their responsibilities and legal obligations, particularly concerning the need to inform the department of any change of address, phone number or employer.

Card-holders can update their information on Working with Children website – <https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu>

From the Horse's Mouth: Tips for developing a client feedback system

A new guide from Victoria's Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (CFECFW) provides a useful roadmap for community groups keen to set up or revamp their client feedback system.

The Client Feedback Knowhow Sheet aims to help groups develop their own client feedback system by outlining steps towards planning, developing and implementing a program.

It draws on feedback and advice gained by CFECFW during a session in Melbourne last November involving more than 30 child, youth and family service organisations.

The guide recommends a systematic approach in order to demonstrate that you:

- Truly listen to clients.
- Have the organisational capability to respond and grow from the feedback.
- Have a way to imbed information gained through reviews into future strategic directions of the organisation.

When gathering information and feedback, CFECFW urges groups to use a variety of data collection methods, including surveys, video interviews, phone interviews, and requests for descriptive responses.

Technology can also be used – for example, social networks such as Twitter and Facebook can appeal to a different audience of clients and can attract quicker response times or almost-instant feedback.

The guide recommends that feedback methods be customised to best suit the audience, detailing a number of online tools and applications that can be used to gather and present data.

It also examines the ethics involved in collecting feedback. The full guide can be found on the [CFECFW website](#).



Indigenous arts leadership opportunity

Indigenous Australians working in the creative arts are being urged to enter *Accelerate 2012*, a leadership development program designed to advance their careers.

The fully funded program will work in two stages, as 15 successful applicants are invited to a three-day leadership intensive course, with five applicants then selected for a three-week visit to the UK.

In the UK, participants will receive further leadership development training as well as professional mentoring, meetings and placements specifically tailored to each individual's area of expertise.

Visit the British Council website here: <http://artsfrontier.britishcouncil.org.au/accelerate-apply/>

Adaptive leadership course

Social Leadership Australia (SLA) is preparing to host its residential Adaptive Leadership Intensive in August, a program where participants explore what it means to exercise effective leadership in challenging environments.

The four-day intensive course will bring together people from business, community and government sectors to develop their leadership skills.

SLA used the adaptive leadership approach, developed by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, to design the program.

The course will cost \$3800, including accommodation, meals and course material.

For more information, visit the [Social Leadership Australia website](#).

Competition aims to boost youth volunteers

Young filmmakers are invited to take part in a competition designed to boost the number of young people volunteering in their communities.

The Volunteering Video Competition for Young People asks entrants to create a 30 to 60-second video using the theme, "Your passion, our nation. Volunteer now!"

The competition was launched by Social Inclusion and Mental Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler, with the Member for Moreton, Graham Perrett. It's supported by said 2012 Australian of the Year and veteran actor Geoffrey Rush.

"Like the arts, volunteering can sometimes lack visibility and people aren't aware of the enormous opportunities it provides," Mr Rush said.

"I'd like to encourage our young film makers to get behind the camera and capture the true essence of volunteering and the benefits that young people can gain from it."

The competition is open to people aged between 15 and 25 and closes on Sunday, July 22.

More information is at <http://volunteering.notforprofit.gov.au>



RMIT student researchers

RMIT University is offering the use of its students to community organisations who want to undertake supporting research before an event, communication initiative or campaign.

The students will be available to help conduct focus groups and discussions and survey research, as well as intercept interviews.

The offer will be available for three months from mid-July.

For more details contact olivia.guntarik@rmit.edu.au

QLD/NT awards program rewards talented managers

The annual Management Excellence Awards are designed to throw the spotlight on individual managers whose vision, skill and integrity bring about a significant, broad ranging impact and inspire others to succeed.

Awards are given out in a range of categories, including one for the "Not for Profit Manager of the Year".

"The not-for-profit sector represents challenges for managers who work within it – in fact, many non profit associations balance highly commercial business operations with stakeholder demands unique to their industry," organisers say.

"This category is for senior managers, executives and leaders in the not-for-profit sector who have worked for their organisation in a professional management capacity for at least 12 months."

There are also categories for the "Professional Manager of the Year", the "Owner Management of the Year", the "Young Manager of the Year" and the "Rural/Regional Manager of the Year".

To find out more or get a nomination form, go to www.managementawards.com.au

**Management
Excellence
Awards 2012**

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19. Good Moves: Community Sector Jobs & Board Vacancies

JOB VACANCY LISTINGS (Paid Positions)

New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
Administration and Finance Officer - Put Something Back Into The Community	SURFAID	Details
Chief Executive Officer	Intereach	Details
Admin Assistant (temporary, part time)	ACWA	Details

Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
Team Leader - Northern (Townsville)	Carers Queensland Inc	Details

South Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
Manager (non executive)	Technical Aid to the Disabled SA	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
House Supervisor and Residential Support Workers	Statewide Autistic Services Inc	Details
BreaCan Programs Officer	Women's Health Victoria	Details
Marketing & Communications Officer	Ranges Community Health	Details
Choir Catalyst Internships	Creativity Australia	Details
Managing Partner	Water 4 a Purpose	Details

www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs

BOARD/COMMITTEE VACANCY LISTINGS (Volunteer Positions)

The following is a list of the most recent Board/Committee vacancies listed at Our Community. To view other board or Committee vacancies [please click here](#) (This matching service is free)

New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member	Australian Centre for Law	Details
Treasurer, General Board Member	Nepean Independent Living Committee	Details
Secretary, Treasurer	Mahboba's Promise Inc	Details
General Board Member	Healthy Cities Illawarra	Details

Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member	Moreton Bay College and Moreton Bay Boys' College	Details

South Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member, Treasurer	Girl Guides SA inc	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
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Chair, Treasurer, General Board Member	ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Australia (Vic,Tas,NT)	Details
General Board Member	Interchange Western	Details
General Board Member	The 100% Project	Details
General Board Member	Just Change	Details
Secretary	The Penguin Club of Australia Inc (Vic)	Details
Marketing & Fundraising Sub Committee	Kidsafe Victoria	Details
Assistant Treasurer	Morrison's	Details
Western Australia		
Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member	UnitingCare West	Details

www.ourcommunity.com.au/boardmatch

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20. Fast Forward

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send it on to your friends and fellow community groups in your area. People can sign up to receive their own copy at www.ourcommunity.com.au/signup.

If you would like to reproduce anything in this newsletter in your own newsletters or websites, you are free to do so. Please just add a small credit line, "courtesy of www.ourcommunity.com.au" and a direct link to the www.ourcommunity.com.au site if on a webpage.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email service@ourcommunity.com.au and put "Unsubscribe-OCM" in the subject line.

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21. About Our Community

Our Community is a world-leading social enterprise that provides advice and tools for Australia's 600,000 community groups and schools, and practical linkages between the community sector and the general public, business and government. Our major offerings include:

1. www.ourcommunity.com.au - Australia's most useful website (comprising the online Knowledge Centres) and publishing house - accelerating the impact of Australia's 600,000 community organisations and schools
2. GiveNow.com.au - Helping individuals and businesses give more, give smarter, give better, Give Now!
3. [Australian Institute for Community Practice and Governance](#) - practical and accessible certificated training delivered locally through our training Institute
4. [Australian Institute of Grants Management](#) - the unique suite of grants management services for government
5. [Australian Institute for Corporate Responsibility](#) - cutting edge corporate responsibility resources for large, medium and small business and community organisations

► Read more about us at www.ourcommunity.com.au/aboutus

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