



Edition 6/2003

Welcome to the latest edition of ***Our Community Matters***, our regular free community update. It is yet another benefit of membership of www.ourcommunity.com.au - the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and non-profit groups. ourcommunity.com.au provides community groups with the latest funding, scholarship and fundraising news as well as practical advice and the opportunity to list for free online donations and free online volunteers through the **National Community Giving Centre**.

We also provide discounted services and products, including the **banking services deal** with the National Australia Bank which provides transaction accounts specifically tailored for community groups.

A summary of our services is listed at the end of this newsletter. If you have trouble reading this newsletter or have any comments please let us know at brianw@ourcommunity.com.au.

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1. Welcome by Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of ourcommunity.com.au.

Welcome,

Over the past week we have seen quite a deal of debate over the community sector and the draft legislation which attempts to put into statute the laws relating to charitable status in Australia.

Much of the debate has been centred on the role of advocacy and lobby groups and whether groups will be punished by losing tax deductibility if they lobby too much (and how that is decided and by who) - a fear the Federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, has said is unfounded and that the legislation will ensure the situation remains as it is now.

The debate is an important one but - as we write in greater detail in the next article - it clouds the fact that the general thrust of the legislation is a vast improvement and a general broadening in the definition of what is a charity. Everyone agrees that the current common law definition is Dickensian and unfairly discriminates against many of the groups that are now so vital to strengthening our communities. The draft bill would at least bring the definition out of the dark ages and better reflect the current situation in this country.

The only problem is the area of advocacy and hopefully - given the concerns of groups - the final legislation will address those concerns and clarify any uncertainty.

While the draft bill is a huge step forward in reforming the area, hopefully it is just the first major step. Charity status is one thing but we need to continue to look at the recommendations of the seminal report of the Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations by David Gonski and his committee which suggested a loosening up of the old-fashioned, narrow charitable limitations to tax deductibility.

Over the past 25 years of thousands of groups all over Australia have campaigned for change to make DGR status more accessible to more groups. The campaign was initiated in the early eighties by a group of the board of Philanthropy Australia (then called the Australian Association of Philanthropy) working with the Victorian Council of Social Services and the Collective of Self-Help Groups.

True Diversity.

While the temperatures have made it harder than usual, I was bravely up early recently for a breakfast seminar on the topic of diversity in the workplace. The inimitable Australian leader Margaret Bell has organised a series of these breakfast meetings in Sydney and Melbourne in partnership with KPMG under the auspice of her organisation, the Chain Reaction Foundation. This meeting was addressed by Jock Noble, the head of Diversity at Work – he told us that while there are numbers of people committed to diversifying workplaces the overall results are disappointing.

The conversation was focused on private sector workplaces, but sadly as we know the same can be said about lack of diversity in non-profit organisations - workforce, volunteers and boards. The breakfast group decided that they would continue with this item for the next meeting to devise some action ideas and the non-profit sector will also be on the agenda.

It would be great to see some of our Victorian friends at the meeting - you too can get up early – (breakfast meetings are one of my pet hates)... but I'll be there and hopefully so will some of you. The date is 2nd September at KPMG, 161 Collins street - usually easy to park at 7.45am!! R.S.V.P. Margaret Bell margaret.bell@chainreaction.org.au – see you there.

Community Development

Friday afternoons are now taken up with the ABC's community development slot on [Lynne Haultain's program](#) and so far the programs have been lively and full of callers.

The topics to date have ranged from the practical, like mentoring, boards and committees, fundraising and volunteers, through to issues like reconciliation and it is great to have so many familiar names – with so many great community initiatives – calling in.

Let me know your suggestions for possible future topics.

Towards the end of the month I caught up with a very old friend Kay Mundine (not old in age – we are all ageless!!!) Kay was one of a group of advisers to me on indigenous issues and projects when I was head of the Myer Foundation in the early eighties. And now she has taken on the ultimate challenge - responsibility for

indigenous programs with South Sydney Council. This reminds me of how central local government is to almost every community issue and absolutely integral to indigenous programs and issues - it is at the local level in the communities (as well as national) that things need to change and with Kay's knowledge, passion, good sense and practical approaches, South Sydney will end up as a leader in this area.

If I could change.....

On about four occasions this month I have been confronted with the fact that in Australia great people with great and much needed new ideas for projects and new organisations have almost no hope of getting them supported. That is unless there is a lucky combination of a high profile leader with excellent connections.

An example that I am feeling particularly frustrated about is Yoland Wadsworth's quest to establish a significant, long-term, innovative and comprehensive action research program at a university - an integrated program of top level teaching/learning, peer support & network development, knowledge transfer and community research.

After setting up the Action Research Centre at Ross House and helping thousands of community groups do action research, Yoland has now developed a program to institutionalise action research - with a university. In going down the university path, she is in some ways following Len Syme's footsteps at Berkeley where people in community networks who may have never had the chance to study at a university will be trained in action research (for Len it was in health promotion) and so will gain status and credibility from a high quality program in a high quality university. The university positioning will also raise the status and understanding by academia of action research itself.

One problem with this project as far as potential funders go is that action research is challenging to traditional research. Traditional research, whether it is medical, social or economic, is largely static and focused on 'how things are or will be'. Action research is dynamic, constantly changing and focused on trailing practical changes searching for 'how things could instead be'. I would need four hands to count up the times I have heard traditional researchers denigrate action research as 'not real research' - I have even seen blood on the table at research granting meetings where action research has been labelled 'not real' research.

Results from action research are actually changing how things are done and more importantly put the tools to lead the change into the hands of community groups themselves. Action research is practical, leading to continuous learning, improvement and sustained change. Action research engages community members in their own research efforts as active participants developing systemic ways of re-knitting social fabric, re-building a sense of community capacity, co-operation and reciprocity through active involvement of members of various groups.

It is based on the realisation that many social changes and private and public actions, practices and programs are complex and have unintended consequences for individuals, communities, services, organisations and localities, and that the widespread involvement of people can build systemic intelligence that can reduce these unintended and often costly effects.

Individuals, groups, services, organisations and communities - such as families, children and schools - would be the primary beneficiaries from the widespread take-up of Yoland's action research approach.

The second group to benefit would be service-providers, community workers and volunteers. An accessible action research training program would equip them so that they could operate confidently and effectively, helping their organisations and agencies benefit by building their own capacity to research, develop, then again research and adjust - creating constantly improving, more meaningful, creative and effective solutions to the problems they face.

The community and economy would benefit because there would develop a higher correspondence between needs and responses and an increase in the rapidity with which a system-wide R&D intelligence can deal with newly-arising issues, challenges, conflicts and demands.

However, action research is not sexy, it isn't heroic research, it isn't charitable, it isn't marketable- it is just great for building communities to strengthen and develop.

Yoland Wadsworth is a community gem - she is an unsung Australian treasure working tirelessly, ethically and generally without recognition. I am like a dog with a bone with this proposal and I will not give up until Yoland is properly resourced so any potential donors come forward now to get me off your backs in the future.

And the most frustrating part of all is that there is no doubt that Yoland's project would have gained initial (for a couple of years) full support from philanthropy in North America and in most countries in Western Europe. So while I am a strong supporter of new philanthropy - we also need more progressive, innovative, longer term philanthropy so that great new ideas can get going for the development of Australian community.

Philanthropy and Leadership

On this note of new philanthropy, each week I receive calls from new or would be philanthropists wanting advice about how, where and what to do to establish new foundations and trusts. I usually see people once and then refer them on either to Philanthropy Australia or to specific trusts who have a track record of progressive innovative giving in their particular area of interest. On this occasion it was Jane Neville Smith, executive officer of the **F R Neville Smith Foundation**. Over the years the Neville Smith family has given steadily to a group of projects associated with people with disabilities and disadvantaged youth – with a rural emphasis. They have now formalised their giving into a foundation run by Jane and are deciding how to make the maximum impact with a relatively small, but growing, annual disbursement. We discussed the options and particularly the value of small grants to small community groups, or grants to individuals to enable them take part in community groups and programs, such as scholarships for people with disabilities to attend the numerous (more than forty) leadership programs in Victoria.

Very few of these leadership programs have selected people with disabilities (nor have many people with disabilities applied to participate). More recently, there has also been the awful suggestion of setting up a segregated leadership program for people with disabilities. This idea sends shudders down my spine for two reasons. First that the efforts to integrate people with disabilities would be set back a hundred years and second that existing leadership programs would be let off the hook - not having to attract applicants and award places to people with disabilities. The Neville Smith Foundation may well become a pioneer in helping to break down some of these barriers.

RHONDA GALBALLY AO
Chief Executive Officer

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2. What is a charity and why does it matter? Why all groups should examine and respond to the new draft Bill defining charity.

The Federal Government has just taken a significant step towards cleaning up the confusion that surrounds the whole area of what non-for-profit organisations are entitled to.

The Treasurer, Peter Costello, deserves significant recognition for taking this very important first step to reform an antiquated definition of charity which is still on the legislative books today (in fact a definition that in effect is over 400 years old). We feel this is a major breakthrough in formalising what is a 21st century charity and what are the current and future roles of community organisations. We also strongly believe that this initiative taken by the Treasurer, is the start of a longer journey facing Australia, in addressing the old fashioned and patronising notion of charity while at the same time, putting us on a pathway to finally address the enormous inequities, confusion and challenges in having tax deductibility recognised for the smaller and vast number of community groups who build our social capital.

So, what is a charity?

The word was last defined in legislation in 1601, when it covered 'the aid of persons decayed; the relief of the impotent, prisoners and captives; and the marriage of poor maids'. In the 400-odd years since, that definition has become out of date and encrusted over with case law to the point where any organisation seeking charitable status faces a daunting task getting an answer as to whether they qualify.

In 2000 the government set up an Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations. In announcing the Inquiry, the government spoke of 'the vital role such organisations play in our community and of the need to ensure that the legislative and administrative frameworks they operate in are appropriate to the modern social and economic environment'. They went on to note that 'the common law definition of a charity... has resulted in a number of legal definitions and often gives rise to legal disputes'

The Inquiry reported in 2001 and its findings were generally well-received by the community sector. In 2002 the Treasurer, Peter Costello announced that a Bill would be drawn up to give effect to the report, and now in 2003 a Draft Bill has been released, to come into effect in 2004.

One area where the current Bill has received wide media and community attention is over the issue of advocacy and the ability of groups to pursue campaigns or lobbying that maybe "attempting to change the law or Government policy"

The inquiry recommended that charities should be able to advocate on behalf of those they represent but a line in the proposed bill specifically lists "attempting to change the law or Government policy" as a "disqualifying purpose" if it is "more than ancillary to or incidental to the other purposes of the entity". This has raised fears in some quarters that if the legislation went through, the Australian Tax Office would be the judge of how much advocacy or lobbying is "too much" and disqualify groups who they determine have crossed the line.

The Federal Government and The Treasurer Peter Costello have been quick to point out that that is not the intention of the draft legislation and that all the draft bill is doing is codifying the situation – as it stands now – where those groups whose primary purpose is to lobby can not get charity status. And he maintains that those charities that advocate now will be able to do so in the future and nothing will change.

The fact that we are even debating the definition of a charity and trying to clarify the definition and how taxation laws can support the community on the front pages of newspapers and on current affairs radio and television is a victory in itself for the community sector. What the current debate has done is focus on the importance of community organisations, their roles, their place in the 21st century, their partnerships with business, government and the wider community – and most of all – improving the life of all Australians, without fear of losing charity status or being financially disadvantaged.

On the whole we have a very, very good piece of legislation. If further clarification or refinement is needed to ensure the Treasurer's intended aim that the freedom of groups to lobby and advocate on behalf of those they represent will remain unchanged by the new legislation (and is not open to different interpretation by either the courts or ATO), then the consultation period will have produced an even stronger Bill and addressed any concerns.

What else is in there?

The new definition, 'intended to provide clarity to entities within the charitable sector', does not, however, go back to first principles. Obviously the ideal would be simply to offer tax relief to all not-for-profit organisations working for the public benefit. In the new Bill an organisation that wants to be recognised as a charity still has to be for particular named aims -- the advancement of health, or education, or social and community welfare, or religion, or culture, or the environment, or 'any other purpose that is beneficial to the community' (and that last catch-all is subject to legal interpretation and is not as wide as it may sound).

Even after the new Bill passes there will still be many organisations which do work that is for the public benefit but that don't qualify as charities. Unions and associations don't qualify, lobby groups don't qualify, and sporting and recreation bodies don't qualify (some sports groups may still be able to find alternative routes to access charitable funding through sports foundations, but we would still be better off with the British proposal to make "the promotion of amateur sport" a charitable purpose). There is still quite a bit of scope for the definitions to 'give rise to legal disputes'.

It is important to remind people that the new Bill does extend the previous guidelines considerably. Specific provisions allow charitable status to self-help groups, contemplative religious orders, and not-for-profit child care centres, and this has been welcomed by representatives of those groups. Barbara Romeril, for example, executive director of the body representing Victoria's 350 not-for-profit childcare centres, said the announcement was recognition by the Government of the community building that childcare centres do. It's totally justified."

There has also been a reshuffle of the previous headings of 'relief of poverty', 'unemployment', 'disaster relief', 'aged persons', and 'indigenous persons' to produce a collective heading of 'social and community welfare' that opens up the possibility of some much less restrictive interpretations. The term 'charity' used to be restricted to groups in this area providing direct services, but this new super-heading seems to cover some things, such as the 'promotion of social cohesion', that would have taken a lot of argument to get through under the old rules (remember, though, that while virtually all not-for-profits do in fact promote social cohesion, charitable status goes only to those organisations that have this as their primary purpose).

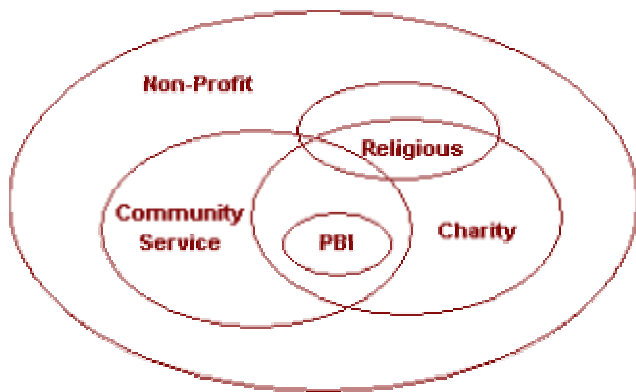
The fact that the definition is now written down may make it easier to understand, and that will certainly mean that many groups that had previously been too confused about the requirements or had simply seen the whole process as too difficult will realise that they come under the terms of the definition and will apply. It is up to the not-for-profit sector to seize these fundraising opportunities with both hands.

Again, the explanatory notes (which will be taken into consideration by the courts) have clarified some points that might have been disputed - that, for example, health includes health promotion, and 'other purposes beneficial to the community' includes the promotion of human rights – and these clarifications may embolden a number of organisations to seek charitable status.

Having said that the new definition of 'charity' is a significant improvement, it does need to be put into context

that it will do little “to provide clarity to entities within the charitable sector”. The problem is that the term ‘charity’ is only one of the terms used by the government and, in particular, by the tax office. (Remember there are 700,000 community or non-profit organisations in Australia but only 40,000 are charities and only 19,000 groups actually enjoy Deductible Gift Recipient status.)

Some concessions are available to charities, but others are available to ‘not-for-profit organisations’, ‘community service organisations’, or – and most importantly – ‘public benevolent institutions’. If you want gifts to your organisation to be tax deductible it profits you little to be a charity – what you must prove is that you are a public benevolent institution, and that is much harder. Not all charities, by any means, are PBIs.



The Inquiry proposed a redefinition of the term PBI that would have made it mean ‘those charities that service disadvantaged groups’ – still more restrictive than ‘charity’, but both wider and clearer than the present definition. Unfortunately, the government has not proposed any change to the definition of a PBI, and has as yet shown no intention of following this issue up in the future.

There are still further potential complications, in that State laws also refer to different kinds of not-for-profit organisations entitled to different concessions. The Inquiry proposed that the Commonwealth try and organise a national effort to standardise State rules. This, too, has not yet been tackled yet.

What, then, is the effect of the new Bill? Much will depend on the enthusiasm of tax office functionaries for the third sector and the ability of the final legislation to take into account the present uncertainty over the advocacy provision. But if that is addressed then nobody seems to be much worse off, some groups are better off, and the sector as a whole has seen a new freedom of movement opened up to allow not-for-profits to operate more confidently in the area of ‘social cohesion, inclusiveness, diversity, the productive functioning of groups within the broader community and the fostering of community capacity building’.

But, as I alluded to previously, I see this as a pathway, that hopefully will not be too long a journey – where we finally have the existing “NIGHTMARE” of tax deductibility addressed.

The Treasurer has requested the issue now be addressed by the Board of Taxation to seek consultation from the community and, in particular, from ‘organisations intended to fall within the new definition of a charity’.

Ourcommunity would recommend that **all** not-for profit organisations that now lack charitable status (**again there are 700,000 groups and only 40,000 odd charities so that’s a lot of you**) to look up the documents available on the Board of Taxation site (<http://www.taxboard.gov.au/content/charities.asp>) and send in their comments. Many, we hope, will be heartened to pursue charitable status immediately. Others will have some reservations, or suggestions, or comments, or requests, and they should push them strongly. Those who are now charities but are still not PBIs may also have some words to say.

Generally though any move that opens the way for more groups to win charity status and the tax benefits that entails, is a good thing. The not-for-profit sector as a whole, however, should give the Government due credit for introducing it, and seek that it takes the next step and make it easier for more groups to achieve DGR status.

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3. New report shows volunteers see their contribution as a "gift" but don't like being told how it should be presented.

Volunteers see their contribution to human services as a gift and resist being taken for granted and ordered about, a new report into NSW human services volunteers has found.

The Gift, which was launched at the University of NSW's Social Policy Conference on July 9, says volunteers want control over how they provide their services.

"If volunteering is looked at as a gift, it seems inappropriate for receivers or third parties to demand gifts of a certain type – and to be given them at certain times or in a certain way," the report says.

"They want a clear role so they know what to do, but choice in their tasks and the timing of their work were important. The volunteers and coordinators were equally aware of the possibility of volunteers being exploited or even burnt out."

The report says volunteers want organisations to provide support, opportunities for personal growth and the chance to make real connections with clients and other volunteers.

"Above all, making a difference was seen as central to the volunteering experience, so volunteers need to be able to see that their work is important."

The 91-page report on women volunteers in NSW human services was funded by an Australian Research Council grant and written by NSW academics Helen Hayward-Brown, Ros Bragg, Rosemary Leonard and Jenny Onyx.

Findings are based on the results of 10 focus groups with volunteers and 61 interviews with volunteers, clients and community organisation coordinators.

Among the findings is the observation that government regulations involving training and increasing amounts of paperwork can cause difficulties for volunteers, many of whom see the requirements as a criticism of their "gifts".

"Volunteers felt that regulations and paperwork made it almost impossible for them to continue giving," the report says.

A full version of The Gift is available at <http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/pdf/gift.pdf>.

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4. US charitable giving reaches an all-time high.

Increases in giving by companies and estates ensured total charitable giving in the United States reached an historic high of \$240.92 billion for 2002.

Although the result of the latest Giving USA report, released by the AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy, was up slightly on the previous year (one percent) it represented a slight drop of one half of one per cent when adjusted for inflation.

In releasing the report, Leo P. Arnoult, CFRE, chair of the AAFRC Trust said that given the economic difficulties and other uncertainties of 2002, "growth in giving is proof of our nation's philanthropic resilience."

The study found that the level of philanthropic donations of \$240.92 billion represented 2.3 per cent of United States gross domestic product, a slight drop on 2001 when it reached 2.4 percent of GDP.

In other results:

- Giving by individuals in 2002 is estimated to have increased 0.7 percent, to \$183.73 billion.
- Giving by individuals represents 76.3 percent of all giving estimated for 2002.
- Giving through bequests in 2002 is estimated to have increased 2 percent to \$18.1 billion. Gifts through bequests represent 7.5 percent of the 2002 total estimated giving.
- Giving by foundations in 2002 is reported by the Foundation Center to show an estimated decrease of 1.2 percent, at \$26.9 billion for grantmaking by independent, community, and operating foundations.
- Grantmaking by foundations represents 11.2 percent of all estimated giving in 2002.
- Giving by corporations in 2002 is estimated to have grown by 10.5 percent to \$12.19 billion

- The high rate of growth in corporate giving is attributed to continued fulfillment of pledges made in 2001; growth of in-kind giving by corporations; the Foundation Center's finding of an increase in corporate foundation grantmaking; and perhaps better reporting from corporations of deductible contributions in recent years. Giving by corporations is 5.1 percent of all estimated giving in 2002.
- The main areas to receive funding were:
 - Religion (35 per cent)
 - Education (13.1 per cent)
 - Unallocated giving (12.6 per cent)
 - Foundations (9.1 per cent)
 - Health (7.8 per cent)
 - Human services (7.7 per cent)
 - Arts, culture and humanities (5.1 per cent)

For more information or to download the release visit

http://aafc.org/press_releases/trustreleases/charityholds.html

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5. Tell the world how good you are.

Community organisations across the country should be aware of a number of awards that are open at the moment which offer a great chance to promote and market your group as well as providing a filip for volunteers and all involved.

Tell the World - Opportunity 1.

Communities throughout Australia have the opportunity to be recognised and celebrated for projects and showcase successful community building through the Can Do Community Awards.

The Awards, run by the Federal Department of Family and Community Services, highlight initiatives by local communities, businesses and local government that have contributed to community revitalisation, increased social participation and economic development.

The Awards promote a new culture in government programs that supports communities in building their capacity and confidence to produce their own solutions to local problems.

The Awards aim to:

- celebrate what communities are doing on their own initiative to address local issues, build community capacity and build stronger families;
- promote awareness of successful revitalisation projects in local communities;
- encourage people to get involved in their community;
- facilitate networking between those who have practical experience in community building and those attempting to take action in their own community;
- provide an incentive for communities to embrace and to showcase innovative and effective strategies that encourage social and economic participation; and
- generate consistent positive media exposure regarding community revitalisation and activities that demonstrate communities taking a 'Can Do' approach.

There are three categories of Awards — General, Early Intervention and Media, with the general category winners being sourced from each state and territory. One of those winners will also be chosen as the National Winner. The sole Early Intervention Winner will also be chosen from the nominees of the general category.

Each winner will be given \$10,000 to be used for community revitalisation projects. The National Winner will also receive a further \$10,000.

The sole Media Award Winner will be selected from a specific Media category and will be given up to \$10,000 to be used to further benefit local community organisations. Winners across all categories will also be given a trophy and the opportunity to showcase their initiatives on FaCS' website and in the 2003 Can Do Community Awards booklet.

Entries close on September 12, 2003 and application forms can be downloaded from

<http://www.facs.gov.au/cando/awards/community.pdf>. A phone hotline has also been set up to answer queries. Call the hotline on **1800 050 009** between 8.30am and 5.30pm AEST (a free call in Australia unless calling from mobile or pay phones).

Tell the World - Opportunity 2.

While on the subject of community building, nominations are also being called for the 2003 Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships.

The Awards are designed to recognise excellence in partnerships between business and the community and to be eligible, a partnership must involve at least one business and one community organisation. There are Awards in the three categories of small, medium and large business and special Awards for Longevity, Media Reporting and Impact on a Community.

Importantly, the partnerships must be mutually beneficial. With the majority of people readily recognising the benefits for this kind of partnership for the community partner, it is important to realise the business partner also receives huge benefits, from a lift in staff morale and learning of new skills, to a better bottom line as the business engages with the community and the community responds.

There has been an under-representation of partnerships involving small and medium business nominating in previous years compared to large business, so this year the Partnership is particularly encouraging nominations from these areas.

State and Territory winners will be announced in late October and National Award winners will be announced by the Prime Minister at a function in Sydney in December. Each Award winning partnership will win \$10,000 for the community partner.

The nominations do not need to be elaborate or professionally produced as the judges will not take this into account in shortlisting. The official nomination form just needs to be accompanied by a good explanation of the partnership, addressing the relevant selection criteria (in most cases there are just three criteria).

For a nomination form, visit the Partnership's site at <http://www.partnership.zip.com.au/2003nompak.html> or call the hotline on **1800 102 104** or email cbp.inbox@fac.gov.au.

And finally....

As we have said before, aside from the money, making the finals or winning one of these awards is a great way of receiving local, state and national recognition for your work - as well as the financial benefit of the prizemoney.

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6. Got a good idea that will boost philanthropy in this country? Then speak now.

More news from the re-constituted Prime Minister's Business Community Partnership with the latest call being for new ideas to encourage philanthropy in Australia.

While Australians are reasonably generous, both individual and business philanthropy falls a long way behind that of countries such as the United States. The Federal Government is now keen to investigate ways that it could be improved.

The Community Business Partnership is after any new ideas or fresh approaches that might increase giving and involvement, particularly in the area of corporate support for young entrepreneurs and volunteer work.

The partnership says: "There are many people and corporations already doing great things to help their communities but there are still many more ideas that could become a reality with a little help. It could be as simple as a catchy slogan or as complex as a fully developed taxation proposal – it doesn't matter – we just want people to let the Partnership know."

Anyone wanting to make a submission can obtain a copy of the guidelines by contacting the Partnership secretariat on **1800 636 431** or downloading it from www.partnerships.gov.au. Submissions close on 15 August 2003.

The Partnership advises the Prime Minister on how business and the community can be encouraged to work together and build a better Australia.

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7. Worth of the celebrity supporter continues to grow while the sponsorship market slowly improves for community groups.

Community organisations who win the support and active patronage of some of our biggest sporting stars are reaping marketing benefits that are now being valued in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

A new study, the 2003 Sponsorship Solutions Top 40, ranks, values and analyses Australia's 40 most valuable sport and athlete sponsorship opportunities. It found that the value of sponsorships at the top end of the market and for our major sports stars and events continues to grow.

While Ian Thorpe was rated as the most valuable sponsorship property (\$480,000) all athletes in the top 10 attracted a minimum of \$210,000 for each new commercial sponsorship opportunity.

Sponsorship Solutions Group Account Director Craig Dodson said there was no doubt that community organisations who could attract the active support of some of Australia's biggest sporting stars were reaping significant marketing and promotional benefits.

While he said it was difficult to put a straight dollar value of the benefit sporting personalities brought to an organisation, those groups who put the time and effort in - and were able to encourage the stars to put the time in for appearances and endorsements - derived an enormous benefit.

Dodson also said the benefits extended beyond the athlete themselves. "They (sporting stars) definitely have a flow on effect - and it is the people they bring in as well. If you look at someone like an Ian Thorpe - he is associated with a lot of blue-chip companies and when you tend to get him on board, there is that flow-on effect where you can attract the people who are associated with him. As with most athletes, the power of his name can draw people to events as well."

Dodson said most of the elite athletes and their management companies spent a great deal of time researching community causes before they put their name to them but said most still supported groups where they had an interest either from personal or family experience or the direct connection of family or friends.

While the value of celebrity endorsement continues to rise, it is still a tough market for community organisations seeking sponsorships. Another recent survey by Sponsorship Solutions found that the sponsorship market continued to grow steadily (up 3.2 per cent over the past six months) and support for both the arts and entertainment and causes (community) sector were both up by the same amount.

He said the arts and entertainment sector had shown great ingenuity in implementing mutually beneficial partnerships which had led to steady price growth while the jump in the causes sector demonstrated corporate Australia's continuing commitment to building a reservoir of goodwill amongst all internal and external stakeholders.

"There has been a general increase across the board although strongest at that top level. It is very much still a struggle at the lower or community levels. It is still a challenge to make sure your opportunity stands out from the rest. There are so many in the market it is the ones with the flair and the ones with a point of difference that are standing out and attracting the dollars."

He advised groups looking for sponsorships at all levels that the first thing they should do is the research to understand the targeted company.

"At a very basic level doing the research is so important. If you are going to target a company, research how you can fit them specifically rather than just having a generic one size fits all sponsorship approach. Companies all have different angles or different approaches so in the first instance it is just sitting down and looking at what your opportunity can offer them specifically," Dodson said.

"The basic principles are adaptable if you are the AFL or a community club. The issues are servicing the sponsors and delivering a valuable rights and benefits package - and that is definitely transferrable across the board. In many ways sport has set the benchmark in terms of professionalism and it's up to the arts and causes and even the small community groups to meet a certain level of expertise that is required now."

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8. Community Building takes national approach while acknowledging local solutions.

Good to see that there is consensus among Federal and State Governments over the need to support a national community strengthening strategy that incorporates all levels of Government.

While the success of community building lies in empowering local communities and providing them with the ability to both determine the priorities for attention and also the solutions that work best in their communities, the first meeting of the Ministerial Council of Local Government Ministers has endorsed the importance of community building and agreed to look at a national approach.

The move followed a recommendation from the Victorian Government and was agreed to by all State and Territory Government Ministers, the Federal Minister and also representatives from the Australian Local Government Association. A communiqué released by the new Council said the issue was community strengthening and the most effective way for Governments at all levels to do it would be considered by the Local Government Joint Officials Group, who would develop a common understanding of the concepts and benefits of community strengthening and effective approaches for achieving it. The Officials Group is to report back to the Council.

Members were advised that research indicates there is a role for governments in community strengthening; however the issue of the most effective ways for government involvement in strengthening communities is still problematic. The Council noted that one of the key 'success' features of community strengthening strategies is the focus on local areas or neighbourhoods and that in Australia, Local Government was best placed to lead community strengthening.

Members agreed, in principle, that community strengthening is a key role of modern governments and that local government has the capacity to provide a significant local leadership role.

Victorian Local Government Minister Candy Broad said that research showed that community strengthening initiatives work best when resources, from all tiers of government, are coordinated and integrated.

"The evidence also indicates that strong and resilient communities enjoy higher student retention rates at school, higher educational qualifications and higher levels of employment. On the flip side of that equation, those communities also experience a lower incidence of family dysfunction and violence, reduced demand for child protection, lower incidence of mental illness and fewer demands on the criminal justice system."

Ms Broad said international research showed that communities were more likely to be safe, healthy, secure and prosperous where the communities had a strong sense of identity, trust and belonging.

It will be interesting to see what the national approach will take given the greatest success is where the decisions on priorities and solutions really are made at a local level. It will also be interesting to see whether the continuing approach to community building projects will see the experience of "bottom up" approach make any change to the "top down" funding decisions.

The Council will meet again in December.

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9. Community briefs - bits and pieces from the community sector

Attention Easy Grants subscribers or people applying for Telstra Fund grants.

Since featuring the Telstra Community Development Fund in the last edition of Easy Grants, we have received advice from Fund Manager Fiona Moore about a re-focussing of the Fund's priorities.

The Telstra Foundation, whose mission is to enrich the lives of Australian children and young people, was launched in April, 2002 and a recent strategic planning day held by the Foundation's Board has agreed to concentrate their grantmaking into fewer areas at greater depth, for maximum and sustainable impact.

Based on previous granting experience and research, the Board has agreed that the priority of the Telstra Community Development Fund will be to address causal factors affecting the health, well-being and life chances of Australia's children and young people, through a focus on:

- Early intervention programs – research evidence shows that intervening in early childhood and at key points in developmental pathways can turn around a pattern of social disadvantage

- Childhood obesity – described as the next tidal wave in its potential for a lifetime of poor physical and mental health for the individual and massive impact on the health system
- Indigenous community development – community identified solutions for the serious health and social problems affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- Gifted and talented children and young people – opportunities for young Australians with exceptional intellectual and artistic abilities to achieve their full potential

These priorities come into place in the second half of 2003 and will be reviewed annually. Groups who were thinking of applying for funding should now re-examine the overview to see if their projects fit into these streams.

New resource for Arts organisations

We have many requests to promote services but one we are happy to promote is a series of subscription-based newsletters and member websites that are available to all people working in the arts and entertainment industry.

The newsletters, produced through <http://www.artshub.com.au> (for workers in the Australian arts industry) and www.screenhub.com.au (for workers in the Australian film and television industry), are published by The Dramatic Group P/L, an innovative online media business based in Melbourne, operating in Australia and the United Kingdom. The Company also produces a website and newsletter for the UK arts industry (www.artshub.co.uk).

Each publication provides timely and relevant employment opportunities, news, and other resources to cultural industry employees, managers and organisations. Access to the information provided by the publications is by annual subscription, with memberships available for both individuals and organisations.

Arts Hub Australia has become the acknowledged leader in arts industry information since its inception in October 2000 and comprises a comprehensive web site complemented by a series of emailed weekly information bulletins. It provides a broad coverage of the arts industry across five main pathways: Performing Arts; Visual Arts/Museums & Galleries; Writing & Publishing; Festivals; and Film/TV/Multi-Media.

Arts Hub is not a service for arts attendees or 'consumers'. It focuses strictly on the 'business' and administration of the arts industry. It does not publish, for example, show reviews, nor is it a publicity machine for arts performances and events. Typical Arts Hub members are either artists, or arts administrators and managers working in arts organisations, government agencies, performing arts companies, educational institutions, arts associations, etc.

There are also four regular columns, which attract the highest readership of all articles published on Arts Hub. They explore the areas of writing and publishing, art and technology; visual arts and "Cutler's Cut" written by Dr Terry Cutler. Dr Cutler is an industry consultant and strategy advisor in the information and communications technology sector. He is also President of the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, an innovative 21st century cultural institution for screen culture, a previous Chairman of the Australia Council, and the current chairman of The Dramatic Group.

Click [here](#) for more information on Arts Hub Australia or visit www.artshub.com.au or www.screenhub.com.au or by calling (03) 9682 9920.

New protection for country firefighters and all emergency service volunteers.

The Federal Government has announced that new laws protecting emergency services volunteers from dismissal would be in place well before the next summer fire season.

The new measures, which passed through Parliament late last month, will make it unlawful for employers to dismiss workers who are absent for emergency services duties during emergencies.

These new measures will supplement protections already in place in all States and Territories, except Victoria and Western Australia.

The Federal Government said that volunteers provided a great service to the community and the new job protection measures was one way in which the community can acknowledge their dedication and service and give something back in return.

Emergency service volunteers will now be able to carry out volunteer duties without having to worry about whether their absence will result in the loss of their employment.

And don't forget..... Communities in Control conference video now available.

After selling the first run of the Communities in Control conference video, we have now had more copies dubbed for anyone still wanting the two-video pack featuring the presentations of all the keynote speakers.

For those people who were not at the conference the speakers covered in the video pack are:

- **EMERITUS PROFESSOR LEN SYME**, School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley.
- **PROFESSOR LISA BERKMAN**, Professor of Public Policy and Epidemiology and Chair of the Department of Health and Social Behavior at Harvard School of Public Health.
- **Mr SAM LIPSKI AM**, Chief Executive Officer, The Pratt Foundation.
- **The Hon. AMANDA VANSTONE**, Federal Minister for Family and Community Services.
- **The Hon JOHN THWAITES**, Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Victorian Communities.
- **PROFESSOR FIONA STANLEY, AC**, the 2003 Australian of the Year and CEO, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.
- **SIR GUSTAV NOSSAL AC, CBE**, one of Australia's most eminent community leaders, a former Australian of the Year, and world-renowned authority on immunisation and health.
- **The Hon. BRONWYN PIKE**, Victorian Minister for Health
- **STEPHEN MAYNE**, Founder, crikey.com.au

The cost of the video is **\$62 plus \$6.50 for postage and handling (a total of \$68.50)**. There has also been an incredible response to the 500-word summaries that are now loaded on the site as well as the speeches and powerpoint presentations where they have been made available.

To order the Communities in Control video, access the summaries or to download or print out speeches, visit the Communities in Control home page or [click here](#).

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10. Fast Forward.

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send this newsletter onto your friends and fellow community groups in your area. We would also like your input into this newsletter.

If you have any thoughts or any issues you would like addressed we would appreciate hearing from you. You can send your comments to brianw@ourcommunity.com.au or call (03) 9320 6813.

If you have received a grant or scholarship found on our database or successfully adapted the Raising Funds newsletter, let us know.

We now have button logos for those groups who want to set up links to ourcommunity.com.au from their own websites. You can find them on the media Centre. Just visit http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/article/view_image_list.do and right click your mouse on the image you want and then click on SAVE to your own computer. If you have any problems just contact brianw@ourcommunity.com.au or call (03) 9320 6813.

We also have brochures for any associations who want to mail out to their member groups and let them know about our products and services. Just let us know and we will be happy to supply.

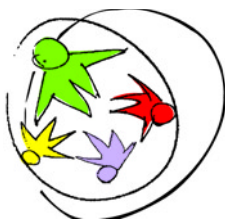
If you would like to reproduce anything in this newsletter in your own group/association newsletters or websites, you are free to do so. Please just add a small credit line, "courtesy of www.ourcommunity.com.au" and direct link to the ourcommunity.com.au site if on a web page.

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\$\$\$ FundingFinder Toolkit Resources

Do you have them all?

Funding Tool No.1 Raising Funds Newsletter



Raising Funds Newsletter

Your monthly guide to successful fundraising (\$45 per year)

This is Australia's best-value fundraising resource and is the essential tool for any community group or school wanting ideas on fundraising.

Raising Funds is jam-packed with ideas, advice, tips and practical stories every month and is the companion newsletter to Easy-Grants. Grants is one form of finding funds, but fundraising must also be a primary source to get that much-needed extra funding for your community group. No community group - no matter how small or big - can do without this newsletter. And it is still only \$45 a year - amazing value.

Articles that appeared in the June Edition of Raising Funds - What have you Missed?

'Reporting on your Grant. The first step in trying to achieve the next grant'

'Increase your bulk - 21 ways to pump up your membership'

'Interview with grantmaker & grant recipient - Helen Lomen from BHP & Carol Aylett from Melbourne Citymission'

'Volunteer Concessions: The bottom line on Police record Checks'

Plus Great ideas to make money, Top Tips, fundraising news from around the world and much more

Funding Tool No.3 Guidebook - How To: Find Money Fast



Looking for inspiration for your next fundraiser? Find Money Fast has 50 great ideas that have worked for community groups. A great resource packed with plenty of ideas, tips and advice to improve your next fundraising initiative.

**50 GREAT IDEAS TO RAISE
UP TO \$5000!**

Purchase Now ONLY \$36!

Funding Tool No.4 Guidebook - How To: Win a Philanthropic Grant



Easy Grants helps you to find the grants. This great guide takes you step-by-step through the grant-seeking process, helping you to prepare and research a winning funding application.

**STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO
WINNING GRANTS!!**

Purchase Now ONLY \$36!

Funding Tool No.5 Free Donations Service



Does your community organisation want donations for your latest fundraising appeal? How much easier would it be to point potential donors to a free donations service where the \$ goes straight to your project.

**COLLECT DONATIONS THROUGH
OUR NATIONAL GIVING CENTRE!!
Completely FREE!**

Funding Tool No.6 BusiGrants Newsletter



Each year Federal, State and Local Governments give away hundreds of millions of dollars to support thousands of commercial businesses across Australia. Is your enterprise one of them? Now you can stay up-to-date with all commercial funding opportunities by subscribing to BusiGrants, Australia's first monthly newsletter providing details on all the available business grants (money to grow your enterprise) as well as scholarships and professional

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COMMUNITY GROUPS!!
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