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Where not-for-profits go for help



Our Community Matters



Edition 1, 2020 • February

The future is now, and it's hot, dry and undeniably real



BY DENIS MORIARTY, GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR, OUR COMMUNITY

Burning off between bushfire seasons can help reduce bushfire intensity, but as climate change bites, the length of time between bushfire seasons is getting shorter every year.

This is a problem when it comes to discussion and debates about bushfires, too. While the fires are spreading, nobody wants to pull back and take a detached overview of the situation, because to do so would seem to be disregarding the anguish and terrible suffering of the people ►

directly affected. But that leaves us hardly any time between the fires to talk.

Even in normal times, if one can use that term any more, Australians are reluctant to consider making major changes to their institutions, however much they mistrust and despise them. Politicians have to take account of this reluctance. Reality doesn't.

When I say "major changes", I'm not talking about things like climate change or carbon taxes or squashing Adani. Yes, there are a lot of people blocking progress, and no, I'm not optimistic, but that's not what I'm talking about now. I'm talking about changes that have nothing to do with leaders, if one can use that term any more, or parliaments or policies or editorials or marketing. I'm talking about things that have already happened and can't be reversed. I'm talking about anvils dropping from the sky.

If we lived in a world where **anvils started dropping from the sky** without warning, as they do in Roadrunner cartoons, there'd be all kinds of arguments about what was causing it, but you'd have a hard time finding people who carried their anvil denial to the point of having sunroofs in their cars. There are some things that just undeniably are.

Country areas have historically had demographic problems. The number of jobs has been falling as agriculture has changed, only partially balanced by a rise in tourist services and tree-change migrants. These problems have now been made much, much worse by this season's bushfires. Farming, forestry and tourism have all been decimated, and unless we undertake titanic nation-building initiatives to reverse those impacts, they're going to stay decimated.

One of the few encouraging elements in a season of tragedies has been the unbelievable achievements of Australia's volunteer firefighters. I admire them, but I'm not one of them, because I live in the city, and the only people we expect to risk their lives for free are the 10% of Australians who are country folk – who, as we've just noticed, have now been given an anvil-shaped incentive to lay down their burden and come and join me.

The **anvil season is getting longer**, too: half the year now, at least. If you're on call 24/7 for anvil duty for six months, in what sense are you not a professional, other than that you're going broke doing your duty? Saving lives is not a lifestyle choice. Volunteerism is the core of our current model of anvil defence, and its flexibility and passion and local knowledge and freedom from bureaucratic hassles are treasures that must be preserved at all costs. But if things are going to stay the same, things have to change.

The government's proposing several billion dollars in rehabilitative measures, and that figure will rise. But it's not going to make the nation whole, and it's not going to stop it all happening again. It won't come anywhere near the amount of money that's going to drift now away from losses in the country to profits somewhere else. This is bigger than any deficit, outside the scope of any budget. What's been broken can't be fixed with just money.

Coming to terms with the new normal isn't just going to involve rebuilding what's been destroyed. We didn't know last May that anvils could fall from the sky. Now we do. All our established institutions have anvil-shaped holes in the roof and would be letting in the rain if it rained any more.

And we haven't yet counted the cost of days, months and years of life lost to smoke pollution in Australia's villages, towns and cities. Back in the fifties we used to draw the cities of the future as crystal skyscrapers under glass domes. Now we know what the domes were for. Soon we may know what they'll cost.

Australians may not be interested in change, but change is interested in us.

Our Community tackles more big issues

This is an edited version of Denis Moriarty's monthly Australian Community Media column, published in 160 rural and regional newspapers across Australia, including the Bendigo Advertiser, Illawarra Mercury, Goulburn Post, Cootamundra Herald and Jimboomba Times. Read more of Denis Moriarty's opinion pieces [here](#). ■

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Great Grants: Bushfire relief grants available now

If your community, sector or locality has been affected by bushfires – or if you personally have suffered – check out the range of bushfire-related grants now available. The Funding Centre (an our Community enterprise) has brought these grants out from behind its membership paywall to provide access to information for as many groups and individuals as possible

The bushfire grants shown here are just a small selection of those collated by the Funding Centre. To view all bushfire grants, [click here](#).

If you're aware of a bushfire-related grant that isn't displayed there, the Funding Centre would love to hear from you. Please email service@ourcommunity.com.au.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* has compiled a helpful explainer on the different types of financial assistance available in NSW. [Check it out here](#).

If you have questions about any particular grant, contact the grant provider.

Wildlife Heroes Bushfire Emergency Fund

Up to \$100,000 is available through the Wildlife Heroes Bushfire Emergency Fund 2019 grant program, with NSW licensed wildlife volunteer groups able to apply for up to \$10,000 and independent wildlife license holders \$1,000.

Volunteer Firefighter Payment

The Volunteer Firefighter Payment is for eligible volunteer firefighters who are self-employed or employed by small and medium businesses, and who have lost income as a result of being called out for more than 10 days since 1 July 2019.

OAKS Bushfire Support Offer

Selected Oaks hotels, resorts and suites properties nationwide will offer complimentary rooms for up to seven days for those who have lost their homes in the bushfires.

Bushfire Emergency Response Grant to Assist Indigenous Australians

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) has established an emergency response grant for any Indigenous corporation whose property has been directly affected by the recent bushfires.

Bushfire Impact Research Grant

Applications are now open for research that addresses a gap in evidence related to physiological impacts of prolonged bushfire smoke exposure and/or mental health impacts of bushfires on affected communities. A pool of \$5 million is available.

A Funding Centre subscription provides access to customised updates and alerts, regular newsletters and more, as well as access to Australia's best grants database, containing thousands of grants covering hundreds of areas of interest. [Trial the Funding Centre for free for 14 days](#), or [subscribe now](#) and experience ongoing benefits. ■



Funding Centre

Where not-for-profits go for money



Community groups, charities respond to fire crisis

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY, WITH CLARE HUSSEY AND MARK FITZPATRICK

SCORES of charities, not-for-profits and community organisations continue to do their bit to counter the effects of Australia's devastating 2019–20 bushfires.

From supporting specific communities, to helping animals, rebuilding shattered lives, and launching fundraisers, people across the country have galvanised their efforts to assist others.

As many community organisations who've been involved in disaster relief would know, this is just the beginning of a long recovery, and after the initial burst of much-needed donations, the longer-term sustainability of efforts will be tested.

The impact of bushfire appeals on fundraising

efforts by unrelated organisations may also present **challenges for community groups**.

Our Community's donations arm **GiveNow.com.au** was among many organisations helping shepherd funding and assistance at the height of the bushfire emergency, producing a dossier of information about charities, fundraisers and other kinds of help that continues to direct donors and volunteers to appropriate organisations.

A **help page** on the GiveNow site grew rapidly from a basic list to a directory of more than 100 organisations assisting in the relief effort.

Donations through the GiveNow platform spiked at quadruple their normal levels as donors funnelled millions of dollars to good causes.

Codes of conduct and sound platforms lend credibility to fundraisers

Fundraising Institute Australia (FIA) chief executive Katherine Raskob said the organisation was proud of the role played by its members – many of them listed on the GiveNow help page – in “supporting those impacted by the crisis to get back on their feet”.

“While there are too many members to name, we salute the work of the Australian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul Society, Anglicare, Foodbank Victoria, RSPCA and WWF.”

She said members’ efforts ranged from short-term help like providing food, clothing and emotional support for evacuated families, to longer-term financial and practical assistance to rebuild homes and lives.

That effort also extended to the “countless animals, including pets, wildlife and livestock, that had been affected”.

She said while it was natural that Australians wanted to give, they should look to established and well-known charities running credible

disaster appeals, including FIA members, whose code of conduct demands ethical, transparent and accountable behaviour.

She said any crowdfunding appeal should be hosted on a credible platform with “safety measures in place”.

More information

GiveNow: How to help the bushfire relief effort

Moore's: Lessons for charities from Celeste Barber's bushfires fundraising

Resources for disaster relief and recovery: a collection from the Commons social change library ■



The Hall fire service in the ACT is among those raising funds via GiveNow to help with its work.

How resilient is your not-for-profit in an emergency?

The bushfire crisis has offered valuable lessons to all not-for-profits, including those not directly involved in the emergency response, according to social change consultant Rod Brooks, general manager at Wendy Brooks & Partners.

Issues that not-for-profits commonly face when there is a spike in attention or giving include:

- Lack of crisis management planning, leading to uncoordinated responses and threats to organisational resilience
- Inability of websites to deal with increased traffic
- Out-of-date websites and social media
- Problems with the giving platform used (often caused by a sudden, unexpected spike in donations)
- Difficulties managing and coordinating volunteers
- Not being able to get goods and money to those who need them quickly enough
- Slowness in thanking donors, especially major donors, causing stewardship problems
- Difficulties keeping board members up to date with the situation on the ground
- Less than ideal public relations and



Rod Brooks

media relations because there is no designated media spokesperson.

Wendy Brooks & Partners has produced a detailed checklist to future-proof your organisation and avoid these pitfalls in future crises.

*For the full version of this report, and to read the Wendy Brooks & Partners futureproofing **checklist**, follow this link to the website of the Funding Centre, an Our Community enterprise: [fundingcentre.com.au/help/bushfire-fundraising](https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/help/bushfire-fundraising).*



More than half of all Australians have donated to the bushfire recovery, a study shows.

Facebook fundraising spikes after bushfires

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

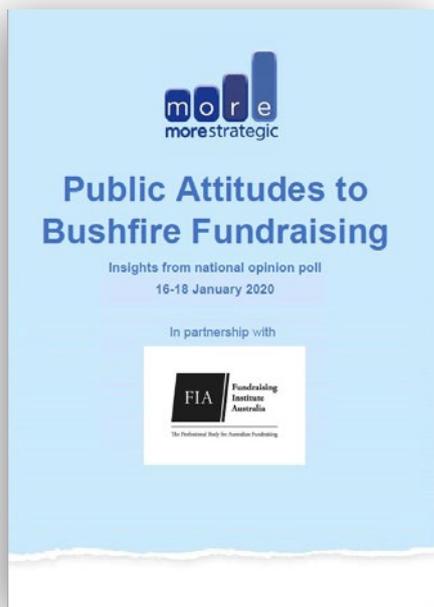
A national study of fundraising trends during Australia's bushfire crisis has highlighted the new power of social media, high profile partnerships, and the desire for a single national organisation to collect money for all charities.

It's useful information for the boards of organisations reviewing their involvement in any bushfire fundraising, and for future fundraising in general.

The joint study by Fundraising Institute Australia and researchers More Strategic, based on a survey of 1000 Australians in mid-January at the

height of donations, showed that:

- 53% had donated to a bushfire appeal
- 43% donated indirectly via collection on behalf of a charity
- 37% were new donors to the organisations they supported
- 36% didn't know how the funds would be used
- 29% of donors expected 100% of their donations to be used for the cause
- 14% gave through Facebook, most for the first time
- \$50 was the median gift size ►



Bushfire fundraising report author Martin Paul.

According to an analysis by fundraising expert Martin Paul, two-thirds of bushfire donors who gave to Facebook appeals – such as **comic Celeste Barber’s massively successful campaign** – had never given through Facebook before, yet 85% of those said they would give in that fashion again.

The study also highlighted the 43% of donors who gave indirectly – that is, through a third party. This was in large part a result of celebrities, banks, supermarkets and other organisations making calls for support. In 30% of cases donors weren’t even sure which charity they had supported.

For 80% of donors, their decision was influenced by the media, friends and social media.

Mr Paul said in the study that this combination of factors was a powerful reminder of the need to form partnerships: “Charities must always remember, it is not about them, but the difference they make.”

In a related finding, about one-quarter of donors gave using multiple fundraising “channels” or to multiple appeals.

In another significant finding, 58% of those surveyed supported the creation of a single entity to collect donations for all charities.

The survey also revealed that donors aged

35–44 years were the biggest givers, whereas traditionally charity donors tend to be older.

Importantly, the survey suggested that donations to non-bushfire causes are not expected to drop, despite the generosity shown towards bushfire victims, and the finding that 48% of people now think there are too many appeals.

According to FIA CEO Katherine Raskob, the 2019–2020 bushfire season had prompted close to \$500 million in donations by the middle of January.

“During crises like these, Australians prove time and again their incredible generosity, going deep in their pockets to give.”

And she said previous studies, such as those into the 2004 Southeast Asian tsunami, the 2011 Queensland floods and the 2009 Victoria bushfires, showed that “people continued to give to their favourite causes while donating to the disaster relief effort at hand”.

“Those studies suggest that rather than replacing their regular donations, Australians tend to give for a compelling and urgent need, in addition to their regular giving.”

More information

[Download the study *Public Attitudes to Bushfire Fundraising*](#) ■

How a surplus goods “matchmaker” is responding to bushfires



Goods matchmaker Good360 is among the many not-for-profits involved in bushfire response, aiming for a “strategic and sustainable” approach to long-term recovery that holds lessons for other community leaders.

The charity, known for its efforts in redistributing goods at Christmas, is ramping up in response to the bushfire emergency by diverting surplus stock from the country’s biggest retailers into the hands of people who need it most.

Already it has redistributed personal care items and cleaning products to shelters and evacuation centres, and it plans to use its connections to distribute furniture, mattresses and other necessities as they are needed.

Good360’s tactics are informed by lessons learned by Good360 US, where up to 60% of goods donated during North American disasters ended up in landfill or were wasted, and where a reduction of giving over time tended to impede long-term recovery.

That’s why the Australian arm’s disaster response framework aims to extend the recovery program well beyond the immediate aftermath.

That framework identifies six phases – preparedness, response, recover, rebuild, refurbish and relive – and involves partners at every phase.

Good360 managing director Alison Covington (pictured above right) said the organisation was expecting an extended assistance campaign. ▶



“This marathon recovery effort has only just begun. Like all marathons, the first step is preparation. Good intentions can result in incredible impact, but it’s important to first understand the need, give wisely and be prepared to stick it out for the long haul.”

Good360 has already started surveying not-for-profits and needy schools to understand what products are urgently needed and what will be needed later. By early February, 170 organisations had outlined the goods they needed for bushfire relief.

Right now, the most-needed items include personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, back-to-school goods, clothing and underwear, camping gear, baby products, pet supplies, tools and safety equipment.

Good360 has recorded the number of organisations that need them, when they are needed by, and how many people within the community will be affected by the supply of the items.

These survey results will inform the organisation’s work in sourcing items from Australian retailers.

Ms Covington said centralised co-ordination and management of the donation process was essential.

“It ensures that the right goods are delivered to the right communities at the right time,” she said.

Good360 is also encouraging community organisations to boost their own impact by signing up to become Good360 members. Membership is free.

More information

Good360’s disaster recovery, and how to seek help: good360.org.au/disaster-recovery/

Goods needed: good360.org.au/disaster-recovery/goods-needed-for-bushfire-relief/

Take the survey about the goods you need: www.getfeedback.com/r/aUZKPPJ2/ ■

Mythbuster: “Bushfire charities spend too much on admin” and other stories

BY KATHY RICHARDSON, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, OUR COMMUNITY

It’s been a rocky ride over recent months not just for people directly affected by Australia’s bushfire emergency, but for the charities, not-for-profit organisations and community groups that have rallied to respond.

The chain of events that comes after such a disaster follows a familiar pattern, and now we’re seeing it play out again. It goes like this:

- Shock, horror, an impulse to help, and an outpouring of donations (both money and goods)
- A request by those receiving donations of goods for people to please stop sending those things
- Indignation from those who want to keep giving second-hand clothes, old furniture etc for the “bushfire victims” ▶



Some donors seem to expect charities to operate without incurring the costs of office space, furniture and computers.

- More money pouring in to the highest-profile charities
- Complaints from grassroots charities that they're doing a lot of the heavy lifting on the ground but missing out on donations
- Complaints from the victims that the money that's been donated is not being distributed quickly enough
- Complaints from donors that the big charities are spending too much on administration
- Complaints from donors that the small charities are not organised enough
- News reports about scammers getting their hands on donations intended for those affected by the bushfires
- Grief and anger. A lot of work. And slowly communities rebuild.

Underpinning much of this reaction is a complete misunderstanding in the public mind about what makes for a “good” charity. To me, the answer is simple: a good charity is an effective charity. You can't be effective if you waste money, so that's a given. But few charities do waste money, in my experience, so that's a red herring.

How do we know if a charity is effective?

Okay, if we accept that a good charity is an effective charity, how do we know whether a charity is effective?

In 2014 I was awarded an Eisenhower Fellowship to study systems for ranking and rating not-for-profits, with a particular emphasis on outcomes. Through 55 meetings in 10 states of the US across seven weeks, I learned a few things.

This summer, the bushfire emergency prompted me to summarise my findings in a Twitter thread. Here's an edited version of that thread.

1. The US has a vibrant not-for-profit information ecosystem, but many agencies are struggling. Two key challenges: a) how to maintain independence when you need to bring in \$\$ for survival; b) how to “rank” when you don't have universal (meaningful) metrics to benchmark against.
2. There's a trade-off between rigour and scale. The bigger the list of ranked orgs (e.g. Charity Navigator, Guidestar), the less detailed and independently verified those listings can be. Perhaps the most rigorous, Givewell, lists only a handful of orgs.
3. Using overhead ratios to measure the effectiveness of a not-for-profit is not smart (we all know this, right?). I care less about how much a not-for-profit pays its CEO than about how good it is at creating the kind of world I want to live in. Can we move on from this already?
4. To get to grips with a not-for-profit's effectiveness we need to understand a) the outcomes it wants to achieve, and b) how it will track progress. Application of metrics is only one way to achieve part b. There must be a place for stories. But also it can't be only about stories.
5. As [@meansandrew](#) says so well, not-for-profits that are in the business of social change need to shift from “selling their success stories” to “selling their impact”. If you don't like the business language, try this instead:
6. Not-for-profits that are truly mission-focused need to stop picking their best results to demonstrate the work they do and start trying to understand the full picture – what works, and why (and what doesn't work and why).
7. Many organisations are actually doing this, and doing it well. But they don't always share that info – because they're scared (rightly) that they'll be punished for telling the truth.
8. So not-for-profits have to get better at telling the truth about what works. And everyone else (the public, funders, the media) has to get more comfortable with mess and nuance and two-steps-forward-one-step-back outcomes – in the interests of progress.
9. We all have to start pushing together. Aggregation offers an opportunity to scale –



Evaluating a bushfire is relatively easy: it's burning, it's extinguished, or it's smouldering somewhere in between. Evaluating a charity's impact is not so easy.

which is a key to accelerating progress. We have to get many, many organisations a) talking the same language and b) sharing their insights in a way that's meaningful and interrogable.

10. At Our Community, we started by introducing a social sector taxonomy:

ourcommunity.com.au/classie

11. Data science provides huge opportunities for accelerating progress but it's not a panacea. Somewhere in the middle of the two extremes – being a “data moderate” (see [@theasnow](#)) – is the space we probably want to be in.

12. Data science is useless without context. In fact, it's worse than useless (leading us down false paths). Subject matter expertise is imperative to understanding what the data is telling us, and working out how to apply those lessons.

13. Many not-for-profits dismiss the notion that we can evaluate or track social outcomes and impact. They point to dumb conclusions arising from dumb metrics. That's true. That happens (a lot).

14. But not-for-profits that dismiss the shift to evidence-based practice entirely are missing a huge opportunity (and may get left behind by institutional funders*). A no-action strategy is not a good option. Critique the methods, but don't opt out. Come up with better methods

15. *I am talking about institutional funders specifically. Individual donors (generally) don't make better decisions about giving to not-for-profits because someone gave them better info about not-for-profits. People donate through their hearts, not their heads.

16. In any case, many funders are growing increasingly impatient with “going by feel” ways of practising. The demands for evidence are getting louder.

17. These shifts are not without pain. Many funders are pushing not-for-profits to provide evidence that their work is effective, but are not willing to fund the work required to assess that properly.

18. They're also not always willing to assess the effectiveness of their own work, but that's another story, and one that's told better by [@carolinefiennes](#). ►

19. There are ways for individual orgs to get to grips with their outcomes (not all requiring a double-blind randomised control trial) and many are doing so. But they are largely individualised, siloed efforts. A major challenge is to help each organisation learn from each other.
20. Some work is being done to draw together the threads (the Campbell Collaboration is an excellent example). But we need to do more.
21. We also need to do more to make it easier for not-for-profits to articulate their outcome goals and track their progress. There are some decent tools around for that, but they're often unaffordable for grassroots orgs (who are punished for spending money on anything beyond essentials).
22. Those tools are also often too complex for groups to implement. We know that "to scale it must be simple" – but tracking cause and effect in relation to social progress is not simple. So instead it needs to *appear* simple.
23. To make the complex seem simple is *really hard*. At Our Community we're grappling with this as we build the Outcomes Engine that will soon be plugged into our grants management system, **@SmartyGrants**. But we're getting there.
24. In the end, we're talking about human beings. None of this works – none of it – without thinking about and allowing for human behaviour (both on the side of those delivering the programs, and those participating in them). This can't be an afterthought.
25. Also, we have to get down and dirty. We can't do this stuff in ivory towers, in theory, or in isolation from the pointy end. Everything we do – everything – must be tested in the real world.



Our Community executive officer Kathy Richardson. Picture: Ellen Smith

26. And we have to bring people along with us – we have to find out what matters to not-for-profits (and their communities) and build tools that will help them do their jobs better, not force them to use tools they find onerous or irrelevant to their work.
27. We must focus on the "so what?" of data. We have to focus on what's useful, as opposed to what's interesting. And we have to keep ethics at the core of this work. That can't be an afterthought either.
28. Gold star if you made it this far. Thanks to **@tompkinsstange** whose tweet prompted me to re-live my 2014 **@EF_Fellows** journey. You can read more about that here: **youcantbelievewhatyouread.wordpress.com/2015/01/**.

*Kathy Richardson is executive officer and chief chaos controller at Our Community. You can **[follow her on Twitter](#)**. ■*



For communities and individuals affected by natural disasters, recovery takes not weeks or months but decades, and requires long-term assistance as well as short-term relief.

Disaster grantmaking: how to maximise your impact after a calamity

BY JOSHUA PRESSER, AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT

As the world grapples with climate change, natural disasters such as bushfires, floods, droughts and cyclones are becoming increasingly common, affecting the health, wellbeing, economy, and built and natural environment of communities. Disaster grantmaking will continue to be an area of interest for grantmakers in the years to come.

In times of crisis such as the Australian bushfires of 2019–20, there is often a rush to get money out the door, but how do grantmakers decide how to proceed in these situations? Do you rush money out to the immediate relief efforts, or do you sit back and take a more strategic and considered approach?

How do grantmakers choose whether to fund urgent relief efforts, medium- or long-term recovery efforts, or mitigation and prevention ►

activities? How do you manage risk while maximising the impact of your grants?

There's no need to wait until the next disaster to formulate your response. Grantmakers who are proactive and establish a disaster grantmaking strategy (including internal guidelines and criteria) will be well placed to make quick, well-informed decisions and maximise their impact.

Why does your disaster response grant program exist?

This is the first question you need to ask when designing any new grants program, and it is equally important in the disaster grantmaking context, if not more so.

- What are the key goals and purposes of your disaster response?
- Are the goals of your proposed grants program consistent with the overall vision and mission of your organisation?

It is good practice to define your desired outcomes up-front, as this will shape your overall response and strategy. It will also set the goalposts for a future evaluation of the impact of your grants.

Short or long term?

- Will your funding consist of one-off grants (e.g. emergency relief payments, short projects), or will you focus on longer term or recurrent grants (e.g. recovery, reconstruction, mitigation, prevention)?

Again, one-off grants suit a fast response, while longer-term funding requires more time to plan and implement. Recovery from a disaster takes a long time, and grantmakers need to be conscious that communities may take some time to be able to articulate what they need. It can take years or decades for communities to recover fully from a disaster.

Projects or organisations?

- Will you fund specific projects, or will you fund organisations that provide services to affected communities?

Specific projects are usually less flexible and

require a thorough knowledge of the needs of the proposed beneficiaries. Depending on your organisation's expertise and networks, it may take time to engage with affected communities and collaboratively design suitable projects. Organisation-based funding is generally more flexible and provides resources to local organisations, allowing them to address identified needs in their communities.

Go it alone or collaborate?

Deciding whether to go it alone or collaborate with others? Your post-disaster grantmaking approach will depend on your answers to a range of questions.

- What is your organisation's expertise in this area?

If your organisation does not have a local presence, or specific knowledge of the sector, or of affected communities, partnering with a local organisation might be a good approach.

Your budget may also influence your decision to partner with others. If you have only a relatively small amount of money to distribute, you may consider partnering with other organisations to maximise your impact.

As always, when considering partnering with others, it's a good idea to ensure that your organisations have compatible approaches and risk appetites, and that your respective objectives and goals are well aligned.

Regardless of your decision on collaboration, you should always be mindful of what other grantmakers are doing in the disaster-affected area. Good communication and coordination ensure maximum impact, reduce the risk of duplication, and ensure that the highest priority needs are addressed first.

What is your niche?

In deciding how to respond to a disaster, it's good practice to ensure that the goals of your proposed grants program are consistent with the overall vision and mission of your organisation.

A great place to start is to look at your organisation's key strengths in the context of

the disaster-affected area. Identify things you know about, things you're good at, things others aren't funding, and things your stakeholders care about). A **SWOT analysis** or an environmental scan (e.g. **PESTLE**) can be useful in identifying where your organisation is best placed to direct its efforts. Having an awareness of what other grantmakers are doing is essential too, to avoid duplication and ensure maximum impact.

Place-based or broad-based approach?

When disasters happen, they tend to happen in specific places, and their impact on communities varies greatly from place to place. Therefore, most disaster grantmaking is necessarily place-based. A place-based approach aims to meet specific local needs by using targeted approaches that are developed in partnership with grantees. When you adopt a place-based approach, it is critical that impacted communities have a say in determining what they need for recovery.

However, depending on your chosen beneficiary and the objectives of your program, you may instead decide to adopt a broad-based

approach. A broad-based program provides standard services across a wide range of locations to address common needs. These are useful in addressing specific needs applicable to all groups impacted by a disaster, regardless of their location. For example, if you are focusing on individual welfare in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, you may target individuals who have lost their homes with an emergency grant to meet their immediate needs.

More information

This article is an edited extract from Disaster Grantmaking, a help sheet produced by the Australian Institute of Grants Management.

[Read the full version here.](#)

*The Australian Institute of Grants Management, an Our Community enterprise, is the best practice network for government, philanthropic and corporate grantmakers. Membership benefits include access to Grants Management Intelligence, exclusive resources, forums, networks and conference discounts. **[Read more about AIGM membership.](#)** ■*



In the same way people in fire-prone areas need to plan – well ahead of time – whether to evacuate or stay and defend, funders need to take a strategic approach to disaster grantmaking.



Bright sparks to light up Communities in Control conference

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

The talent that will illuminate Australia's most important community conference has been locked in, with final speakers confirmed for the event that all community leaders must have in their calendar.

Seventeen of the country's brightest sparks will be speaking at the conference, which takes place on May 18–19 in Melbourne under the banner "Connection, creativity, community: Finding hope in a climate of crisis."

The 2020 annual Joan Kirner Social Justice Oration will be delivered by social justice advocate and veteran political commentator Paul Bongiorno.

He'll take aim at a political climate in which dissent is quelled, and share his insights into what can be done to ensure that social justice prevails.

Others joining the fray are a who's who of outspoken artists, intellectuals, experts, troublemakers, and the simply inspirational.

Highlights of the conference will include:

- Professor Hilary Bambrick, renowned for her work on the health effects of climate change for the groundbreaking Garnaut Review, which predicted the 2020 bushfires
- Katie Noonan, acclaimed singer-songwriter, with an unforgettable musical performance



Journalism legend Paul Bongiorno will deliver the Joan Kirner Social Justice Oration at Communities in Control 2020.

- Jo Dodds, president of Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action, welcomed by Black Saturday bushfires royal commissioner Susan Pascoe
- Danielle Wood, the incoming chief of Australia's top public policy think tank the Grattan Institute, on the economics of equality
- Dr Fiona Kerr of the NeuroTech Institute, on the power of human connection

- Georgina Dent, gender equity and mental health advocate, on bouncing back from crippling anxiety
- Tom Nash, a problem-solving DJ who survived a life-threatening illness but lost his arms and legs in the process
- Professor Kristy Muir, social impact expert, who spells out some new measures of progress
- Peter Colacino of Infrastructure Australia on why building community means more than roads, railways and bridges
- Dr Ranjan Srivastava, a leading oncologist, who reveals what she's learned from the terminally ill about the importance of convictions
- Nicholas Gruen, top economist, who explains why "business as usual" won't do
- Peter Drew, the street artist known for his eye-catching "Aussie" posters depicting the country's diverse culture, in conversation with ex-ABC host and Victorian Law Foundation head Lynne Haultain
- Jessica Christiansen-Franks and Lucinda Hartley, the urban-tech data crunchers from Neighbourlytics, on the communities they've found at the heart of their work.

Our Community managing director Denis Moriarty handpicked speakers for the event, seeking a high proportion of younger thinkers and women who are "mavericks prepared to challenge the status quo".

"All of the talented people at this event are influencers in the true sense of the word. Whether inside institutions or troubling those in power, our guests have their hands on the levers of change," Mr Moriarty said.

He said the conference brochure's cover image of the famous "fearless girl" facing down the Wall St bull calls to mind 16-year-old Greta Thunberg (see page 22).

"I see her as representing community groups, taking on the powerful when they hoped that she would just go away."

"But Australia's 600,000 community organisations are not going away, and more than ever we need new voices to speak up. There's never been a more important time to quit complaining, to step up, and to engage."

"Community groups have to find their voice like they've never found it before. And at this event, you'll be motivated to fight for your cause, alongside 1000 other delegates."

Expect also to be entertained, to develop new ways of thinking about communities, and to rub shoulders with the most influential and progressive people in the not-for-profit world.

More information

Register now: communitiesincontrol.com.au ■



Communities in Control
The conference. The movement.

This is Where We Live:
Using people-centred data
to remake cities & towns

**Lucinda Hartley &
Jessica Christiansen-Franks**

May 19, 2020, 2.10pm

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2020

COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL

**Connection, Creativity, Community:
Finding Hope in a Climate of Crisis**

May 18-19 2020



**BOOK YOUR SEAT
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The Conference. The Movement.



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Where not-for-profits go for help



Not-for-profit “roadmap” tackles sector’s big issues



BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

A landmark study of Australian not-for-profit governance has created the clearest picture yet of an often-misunderstood sector, revealing that organisations are most worried about government relations, funding, demographic changes, workforces, and the difficulties faced by clients.

The 82-page study, *Rethink What You Know about Not-for-profit Governance*, published in December, has analysed the most pressing issues for the country’s 600,000 not-for-profits based on a detailed survey of nearly 1900 sector leaders.

The biggest ever non-government study of not-for-profits conducted in Australia was overseen by the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA), a membership body for not-for-profit directors. ICDA interrogated the findings to create a “roadmap” for action in 2020 and beyond, an interactive data visualisation, and a “cheat sheet” for sector leaders.

Alongside the issues that “keep community leaders awake at night”, the study tackles:

- Diversity
- Performance
- Induction
- Capacity and skills
- The chair’s role
- Impact, data, digital tools
- Fraud and cybercrime
- Finances
- Relations with government and peak bodies.

The analysis also draws on data from other sector bodies, including the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. That body’s inaugural commissioner, Susan Pascoe, who now serves as chair of ICDA’s Community Directors Council, has provided expert commentary as part of the report. ►

“While other regulatory and member-based bodies have written reports on the state of the not-for-profit sector, this is the first time that ICDA and Our Community, with support from the Community Council for Australia, have combined to delve into the circumstances of community-based not-for-profits,” Ms Pascoe said.

“In a sector where many organisations struggle to keep up with the latest technology, the institute and Our Community have used their significant in-house data analytic capability to hold a mirror to the not-for-profit sector.”

ICDA would use the report to target sector deficits, committing to extra support where needed, such as through the Festival of Community Directors 2020 training and events program, Ms Pascoe said.

The study allows for interrogation of the data through an online interactive tool that allows users to explore the sector’s biggest issues, as identified by board members and senior staff. The tool can be filtered by state, sector and organisation size.

Lead author and Our Community executive director Kathy Richardson said the study had an unashamedly practical focus.

“The survey confirmed some of what we knew, but also uncovered some things we didn’t know about governance in the not-for-profit sector – knowledge that we can use to direct our quest to shift the dial towards better governance,” she said. “This is a blueprint for action.”

The data analysis was led by data scientist Paola Oliva-Altamirano, a former astrophysicist who now works in Our Community’s Innovation Lab.

Dr Oliva-Altamirano said the large dataset allowed her to uncover new insights, as well as highlighting the difficult but important work being done by community leaders.

“What shines through is that not-for-profit leaders want their voices heard. Their responses help create a new perspective that reveals their everyday struggles and the immense effort they put in,” she said.

Dr Oliva-Altamirano said she hoped the study would encourage all organisations working

with not-for-profits to take steps to make that job easier.

Survey respondent Andrea Nave, CEO of Forget Me Not Australia – which battles international child trafficking – made one of many stand-out comments about what most worries sector leaders.

“I lie awake at night trying to structure impactful responses to the old chestnut that charities should have extremely low or zero administration/operation costs,” Ms Nave wrote. “Charities are charged with solving some of the greatest social problems, yet social ignorance demands they do it for free.”

The roadmap was released on the same day that ICDA published its 2020 calendar of training and events. The 2020 Festival of Community Directors aims to provide directors with targeted help on their most pressing issues, much of it free of charge.

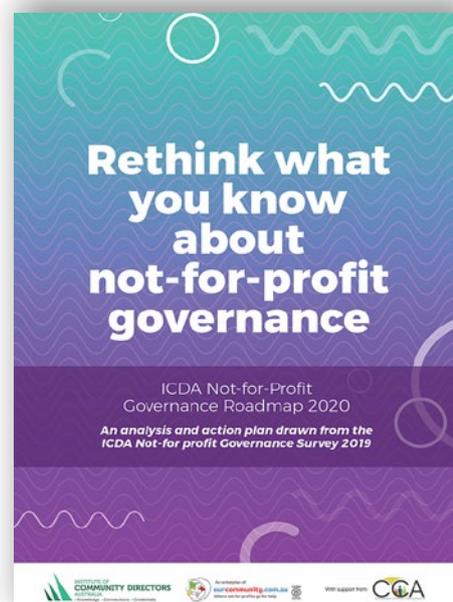
More information

Download the report: [**communitydirectors.com.au/research/home**](https://communitydirectors.com.au/research/home)

Interactive data visualisation: [**communitydirectors.com.au/articles/data-visualisation-governance-roadmap-2020**](https://communitydirectors.com.au/articles/data-visualisation-governance-roadmap-2020)

Festival of Community Directors: [**communitydirectors.com.au/focd**](https://communitydirectors.com.au/focd)

Become an ICDA member: [**communitydirectors.com.au/**](https://communitydirectors.com.au/) ■



New guide offers governance help tailored for Indigenous board members

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

I often talk about the importance of partnerships and the way they enable us to share experiences and information to better help others. This is not a new concept, especially for the not-for-profit sector, which leads the way in highlighting the benefits that flow when organisations work to support one another.

This partnership approach has been very much at the heart of the development of a new guide, ***Now You're a Board Member: A practical guide for Indigenous board members***, which forms part of the Community Smart series produced by Our Community, the Institute of Community Directors Australia and the Commonwealth Bank.

Increasing board participation

Over the past few years we've seen a steady and welcome increase across Australia in the number of Indigenous-owned and -run businesses and organisations.

Now you're a Board Member: A practical guide for Indigenous board members is intended as a starting point to support new or inexperienced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander board members who are navigating the legally complex and at times culturally conflicting world of board membership.

By community, for community

The development of this guide would not have been possible without close consultation with and guidance from those Elders, Indigenous business leaders and community leaders who have all so generously shared their knowledge and insights into the complexities and challenges Indigenous board members can face.

Thanks also to the legal firm Dentons and

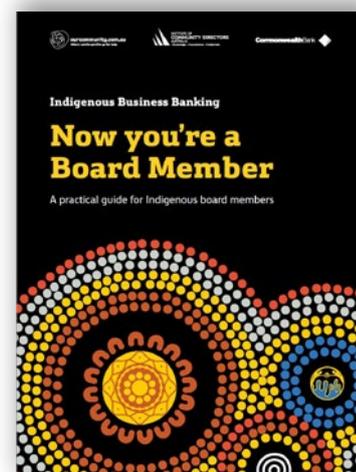


The artwork in *Now You're a Board Member* is based on an original design by artist Daikota Nelson, a proud Dja Dja Wurrung woman from Castlemaine, central Victoria.

its Indigenous legal team for their support, guidance and assistance.

I hope this guide serves as a practical and useful resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples serving on boards across Australia, and encourages more First Nations people to take up board positions.

Until next time. ■



Churchill Fellowship recipient blazes a trail for marginalised hikers and bikers



A Churchill Fellowship study opportunity saw Ben Trewren travel from his home in Lobethal, South Australia, to Whistler, Canada – and beyond – to learn about shared-use trails.

BY LIZ HARFULL

When Adelaide Hills outdoor educator Ben Trewren first heard about Churchill Fellowships, he assumed they were not for people like him.

“I’m just an everyday guy and they sounded too prestigious,” Ben says.

Ben is the experiential learning manager at Youth Inc, an Adelaide-based not-for-profit education organisation that offers alternative learning approaches for people aged 17 to 24.

Ben’s role involves creating real-life and adventure-based learning experiences. A keen mountain biker, paddler and bushwalker, Ben is a qualified mountain bike and bushwalking instructor with a degree in international studies. He also volunteers as a team leader with Operation Flinders, a wilderness adventure program for young offenders and young

people at risk, and sits on the board of Walking SA, a not-for-profit peak body that leads, promotes and supports all forms of walking in South Australia.

It was a board colleague who convinced him to apply for a Churchill Fellowship, even though Ben himself didn’t believe he would be successful.

“I was still in my twenties and had a lot of learning to do, so I decided to apply with the belief that I wouldn’t get it.

“I treated it as a first-time learning exercise that would help me apply again later on.”

In his Fellowship application, he proposed exploring opportunities to develop world-class shared-use trail destinations in South Australia.

“I have a genuine passion for the outdoors and the ways that trails can bring people together and build communities, but we need to improve

them so they allow everyone to enjoy the outdoors,” Ben says.

“For example, there are young people who are marginalised and disadvantaged who have never been into a national park, and there are people with disabilities who don’t have a platform to access them.

“One of the problems in Australia is that shared trails, bringing together different types of users, often cause significant tension. Many of the complaints are unfounded but the way people feel is very valid.

“I was keen to find ways to overcome those tensions, because shared trails create more opportunities to get people into the great outdoors. They are a great way for people to learn how to bushwalk or ride a mountain bike, because they offer support and comfort through the company of others. The quality of the experience and the adventure is improved on a trail where people feel they are not on their own.”

To Ben’s surprise, his Churchill Fellowship application was successful, and the study opportunity saw him visit seven countries in 60 days in 2019, including the US, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and Switzerland. His itinerary took him to iconic locations such as the Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Park in the US, and Whistler in Canada.

Ben met with 72 organisations and people who could offer insights into his topic of interest, and along the way he walked or rode 445 kilometres of trails, experienced temperatures ranging from minus 4 degrees at Taupo in New Zealand to 47 degrees at Hoover Dam in the United States.

“I looked at everything from walking to mountain bike riding and horse riding trails, and various combinations. In Wales, I even visited a trail that offers segways.

“I discovered that we are quite lucky in Australia, because our governments invest a lot of money on trail infrastructure, whereas in the United States and Canada there is not enough funding so they have to be privately built.

“However, I didn’t see as much tension between shared users. We have separate groups for different types of users here, but in the United States they have trail clubs that bring the



Ben Trewren’s Churchill Fellowship journey took him to Utah, USA, where the not-for-profit Zion National Park Forever Project works in partnership with the National Park Service to create experiences, sustain visitation and conserve the natural landscape.

various users together, which facilitates respect and understanding.”

Ben is about to finish writing a report about his experience and insights, which will include recommendations about trail use, and he is hoping to have the opportunity to speak at national and state conferences to share what he’s learned.

“I have never seen myself as a guru who leads change, but I’m very interested in being part of it. Churchill Fellowships offer the opportunity to do that, so if people are passionate about something and making a difference, they should definitely consider applying,” he says.

“I’m still pinching myself that I was given one. I still feel like an imposter, but it’s given me the confidence to contribute and to become more involved.”

A Churchill Fellowship offers Australians a life-changing opportunity to travel overseas for four to eight weeks to learn more about a topic or issue they are passionate about. Applications for the 2020 program are now open. To find out more, visit www.churchillfellowships.com.au.

Journalist and writer Liz Harfull is a Churchill Fellow. ■

Festival of Community Directors 2020 kicks off

BY LACHLAN POLLOCK, 2020 FESTIVAL DIRECTOR, AND MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

The 2020 Festival of Community Directors – a year-long celebration of community governance – has just kicked off with a packed calendar of professional development opportunities for not-for-profit leaders.

The festival, now in its second year, provides dozens of ways for community board members and staff to boost their skills, and this year's events are more accessible, affordable and timely than ever.

Almost every week of the year has a theme reflecting a top priority for not-for-profits.

All the events are aimed at enabling organisations to tackle the biggest challenges identified by the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) in its landmark *Not-for-profit Governance Roadmap* study, which highlights the fact that 97% of organisations say they need training (see page 23).

In a **Facebook Live address** to launch the festival, Our Community group managing director Denis Moriarty said this year's program was a response to high demand, and built on the success of the 2019 festival.

"The community sector needs more education and more help and that's exactly what the Festival of Community Directors is going to provide this year," he said.



WATCH NOW: Denis Moriarty gives a quick overview of the Festival.

The festival program features 38 webinars, many of them free, with others available for the lowest fees possible.

"One thing we learned from the inaugural festival was that people today love learning on the internet. We get it. People are busy, especially those who volunteer their time to be on community boards. Often, getting to the city for a one-day training session isn't seen as a priority with so much to do.

"So this year we've increased the number of webinars we will be running to reach more people with training to improve their organisations and the sector."

Dates for your diary

In the coming quarter, the Festival of Community Directors has a packed calendar of 11 training webinars, most of them free. Paid webinars are \$70 each for ICDA members and \$80 each for non-members.

February

LGBTIQ+ inclusion webinar (free)

Featuring The Equality Project
1–2pm AEDT, Wednesday February 26

[Learn more and register](#)

March

Women as chairs webinar (free)

1–2pm AEDT, Wednesday March 11

[Learn more and register](#)

Not-for-Profit Insurance Week

A series of free webinars and events supported by Aon

Monday–Friday, March 23–27

[Check out the activities on offer here](#)

April

Good governance in regional and rural areas webinar (free)

With the Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal (FRRR)

1–2pm AEST, Wednesday April 8

[Learn more and register](#)

Becoming a better chair webinar

With the Community Directors Council

1–2pm AEST, Tuesday April 21

[Learn more and register](#)

Governance in schools webinar

1–2pm AEST, Wednesday April 29

[Learn more and register](#)

How to get media coverage

With not-for-profit communication specialists Hootville

1–2pm AEST, Wednesday May 6

[Learn more and register](#)

More information

[Festival of Community Directors home page](#)

[Download the full program](#) ■

The 2020

Festival of Community Directors

A year-long celebration
of community governance

Find out more

communitydirectors.com.au/festival



More impact for Australia's Giving Tuesday campaign

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

A study of the recent Giving Tuesday campaign (December 3) has shown that more than half of participating organisations nationally tried new and innovative approaches to boost fundraising and donations – and a striking number recorded a spike in giving from new supporters.

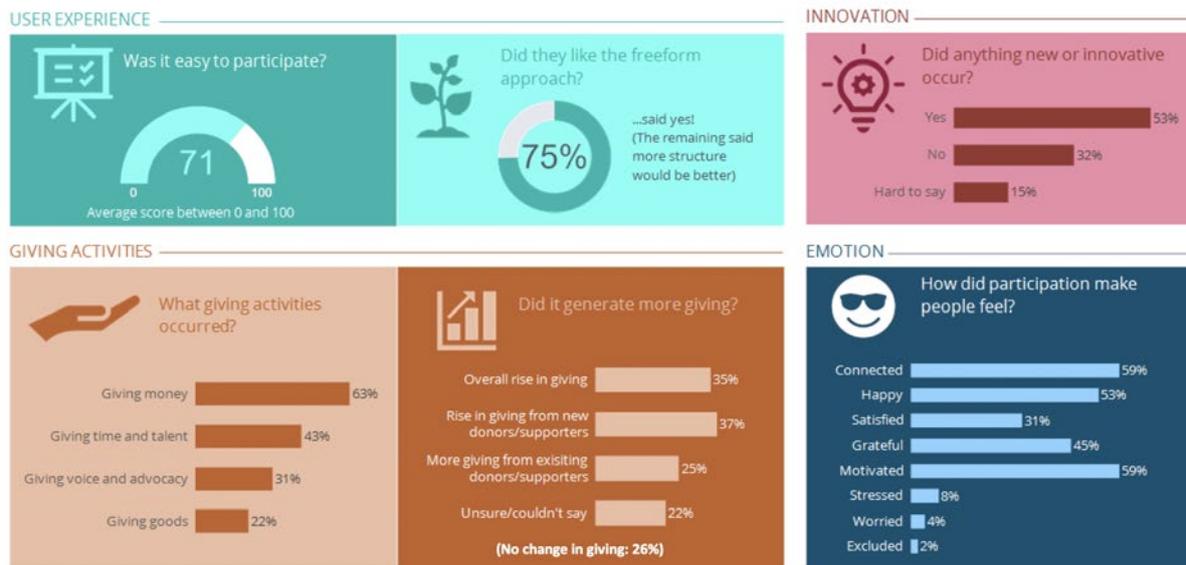
Giving Tuesday, led for the first time in Australia by Our Community's giving arm GiveNow, involved more than 300 charities and not-for-profits in a one-day giving blitz.

GiveNow backed the event pro bono with training, social media support, readymade materials, and a mainstream media campaign to lift the day's Australian profile.

Giving Tuesday is now a fundraising fixture in more than 60 countries, and part of its appeal is that no-one "owns" the global movement, which frees organisations to try new campaign methods. It's hoped that at least some of those same organisations were able to apply those methods to recent bushfire fundraising efforts, which have generated in excess of \$100 million in donations.

GiveNow's aims in directing the campaign were to:

- Make it simple to participate
- Encourage new giving to support social causes, and more giving from existing supporters
- Provide a freeform opportunity for people to create their own actions and initiatives



A summary of the Giving Tuesday impact scorecard. Source: Think Impact; data design by Matthew Gidman.

- Help people feel good through the act of giving.

But did those methods work? Social impact measurement specialists Think Impact donated their time to design and analyse the results of a survey of 51 participants involved in Giving Tuesday.

Think Impact senior consultant and report author Alischa Ross said the report aimed to inform and improve the 2020 campaign.

“We hope this report provides an insight into the impact that taking part in the campaign created for organisations, businesses and individuals,” Ms Ross said.

The study found:

- Most participants (71%) found it simple to get involved
- More than a third counted an overall rise in giving, with most of that coming from new supporters
- While 63% of campaigns involved raising money, many organisations also got involved in giving time or talent (43%), giving voice or advocacy (31%), or giving goods (22%)
- Three quarters of participants liked the “free form” campaign style

- More than half of the participants felt “connected”, “motivated” or “happy” about getting involved.

The study found differences between big and small organisations, with more of the bigger organisations relishing the chance to innovate and deploy the “free form” campaign to suit themselves.

Big organisations also seemed to get more of a bump in overall fundraising, new supporters and giving from existing supporters. Not surprisingly, ►



Kidney Health Australia raised more than \$100,000 on Giving Tuesday using a combination of social, mass media and direct campaigning to supporters. Eli Carter, 10, a recovering transplant recipient, was the face of the [Kidney Kindness](#) campaign.

small organisations had more trouble gathering data on donation amounts but were able to show that during the campaign they enjoyed much higher rates of volunteering than usual.

One of the most interesting aspects of the day was the preparedness of many organisations to try new campaign techniques.

Many noted renewed insights into the power of social media to build community awareness, to engage their networks, and to test the effectiveness of their campaigning.

One survey respondent's comment summed up the experience of many organisations, including Give Now: "First time participating. We will use this learning experience to build a better campaign for next year."

GiveNow will use the results of this study and others to finetune the campaign and give more of the help that's needed by different groups and individuals as it ramps up involvement in Giving Tuesday 2020, this year on December 1.

GivingTuesday Australia's Alex McMillan said the report would allow the Australian team to adapt the campaign to better suit the needs of individuals and organisations wanting to be involved.



Think Impact study leader Alischa Ross gleaned powerful insights about the Giving Tuesday campaign.

"We've already placed GivingTuesday firmly on the Australian community event calendar, but these findings will ensure the 2020 campaign delivers even better results."

More information

Register now for Giving Tuesday 2020, on December 1: givingtuesday.org.au ■

Katie Noonan

Five-time ARIA
award-winning
musician and artist

May 18, 2020, 9.30am

communitiesincontrol.com.au



Free whistleblower policy template eases the burden for NFPs



Free template policies help to free up not-for-profits' time and money so they can focus on what's really important: meeting their goals.

A free whistleblower policy template drafted pro bono for the not-for-profit sector by legal firm Moores is estimated to have saved the sector around \$2.5 million.

In its first six weeks online, the revised policy has been downloaded 1454 times from the website of the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA), an Our Community enterprise, and demand continues to tick over strongly, Our Community partnerships director Sarah Richardson said.

The drafting of this kind of policy would normally cost an organisation \$2,000 to \$4,000.

"We calculate that by distributing this one policy, Moores and Our Community have together contributed \$5.8 million worth of value to the

sector in just six weeks," Ms Richardson said.

"This resource is a great example of our partnership's commitment to building capability in the not-for-profit sector.

"Now, even if the law doesn't insist on it, there's no reason not to have a robust whistleblowing policy in place."

Whistleblowing plays a crucial role in managing risk and cultivating an ethical culture in a not-for-profit organisation.

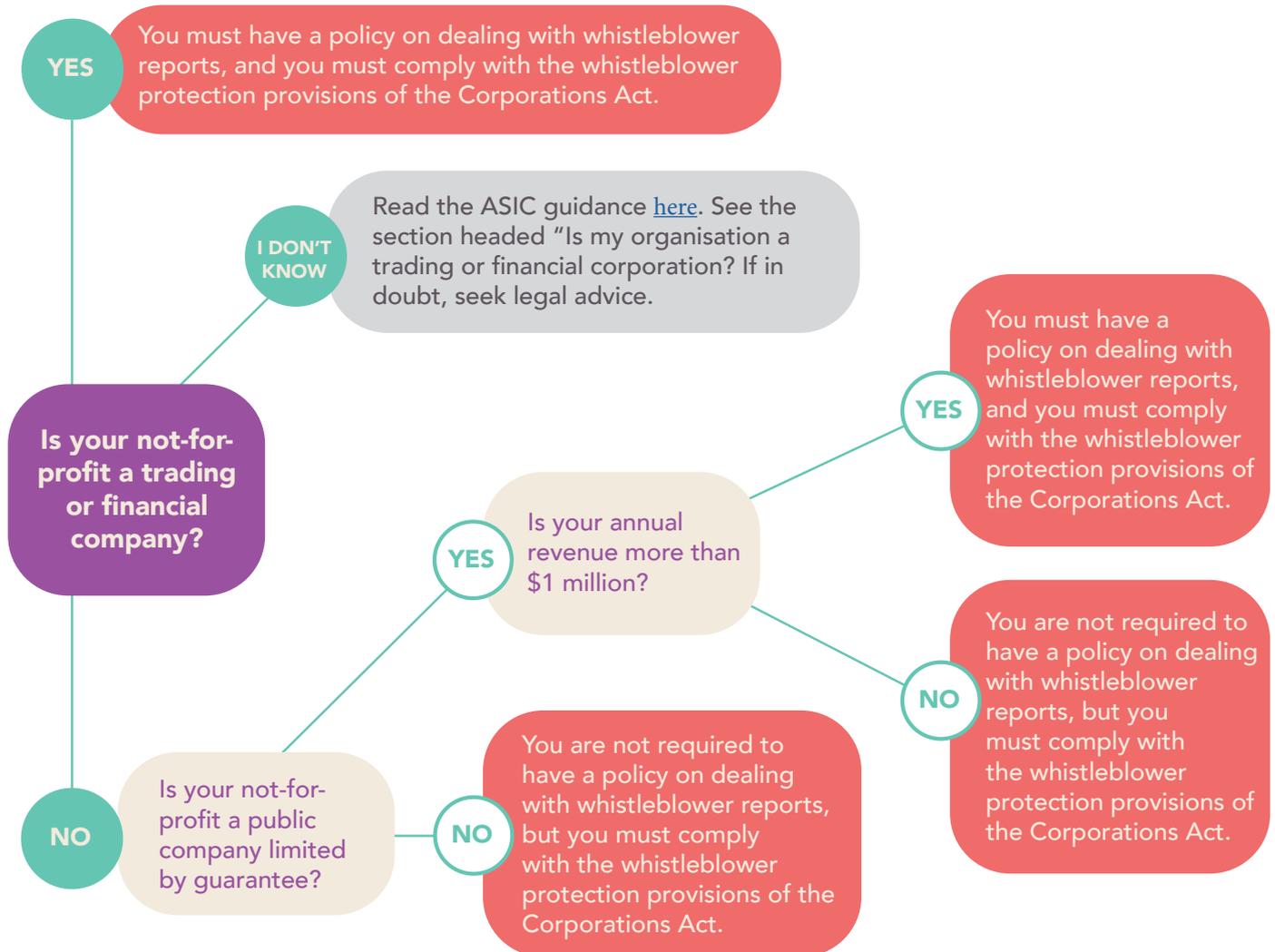
Since January 1, some not-for-profits have been required by law to have a whistleblower policy in place.

You can learn more about these statutory changes on page 33 of the previous edition of ***Our Community Matters*** (December 2019). ►

Who is affected by the changes?

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) recently published guidance

to help not-for-profits to understand which organisations are affected, and how. Our Community has created a flow chart to help:



Is your not-for-profit required to have a whistleblowing policy?

If your organisation has a whistleblower policy already but it was drafted before November 2019, you should review it now to ensure it takes **ASIC's guidance** into account.

We've done the legwork for you

Our Community has worked with trusted partner **Moores** to draft a whistleblower policy that is fit-for-purpose for most not-for-profit organisations.

Please note that this is a template policy for guidance only. For assistance in tailoring this policy to suit your organisation, or for legal advice at a pre-agreed price or training in this

area, please contact Moores. Moores is Our Community's preferred legal supplier and knows this policy inside and out.

More information

[Download your free whistleblower policy here.](#)

[Visit the Policy Bank](#) of the Institute of Community Directors Australia

Become a member of the Institute of Community Directors Australia from only \$65 a year. **[Read about the benefits of membership.](#)**

Contact Moores: Call (03) 9843 2119 or email **NFPassist@moores.com.au**. ■

Your two-minute NFP news digest

Single, senior, female, homeless

“It would be relatively easy for us to overcome [older women’s homelessness] if we had the political will. How can you look a generation of women in the face – particularly as a Christian man, right? – and say, ‘Look, I’ve seen how you’ve put others’ needs in front of your own, including the necessity to earn additional income and accumulate super, but, really, it’s just too bad that you’re living in your car. Silly you!’ I mean, everywhere you looked there was some conservative Christian bloke telling you to stay home and look after the children! It’s appalling!”

– Jane Caro, social commentator and author, interviewed for a *Good Weekend* feature on homelessness among older women. [Read the feature](#)



Pay what you can for shoes and clothing

“I was a single mother – no money, struggling. I would have loved to have a group back then to help me, instead of Centrelink saying no all the time. A group that actually said yes, we can help you.”

– Whitney Page, who founded an op shop where customers pay what they want, on an honesty system, in Kambalda, WA. [Read the ABC’s story](#)

Peak body rejects payments for volunteers

“We need to ensure that national volunteer policy responses do not undermine the culture and the ethos of volunteering by introducing financial considerations that could be considered a wage or salary. Ideally emergency service organisations would have the resources available, including the ability to provide appropriate training, equipment and clothing, and the ability to manage the volunteer workforce so that no volunteer requires financial compensation, beyond ordinary out-of-pocket expenses.”

Peak body Volunteering Australia responds to the federal government’s proposal for a compensation scheme for emergency service volunteers following the bushfire crisis. [Read the full submission.](#)

Seeds of change sprouting for Manoora, Queensland, residents

“Something very good is going to happen for this whole community. And I’m going to make it happen. I’m going to stay here until the day I get sick, until I watch these kids grow up, because I’m not going anywhere until I know it’s safe for these kids.”

– Stacey Ludwick, a mother of eight and a resident of Murray Street, Cairns, reflects on the positive social changes in her community since eight other children died there in tragic circumstances in 2014. [Read the ABC’s feature story.](#)

The Bachelor meets not-for-profits



WATCH: The way human services are funded is a bad romance. In a skit styled on *The Bachelor*, Michael Mancandy presents *The Funder*, in which one funder and a bunch of not-for-profits compete for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to find funding.

ACNC commissioner likens charities to firefighters

“At the height of a crisis, such as with the bushfires, tempers fray, and people make statements and observations that are wild and wrong. The three most pungent criticisms of charities are that they are too slow to distribute, they spend too much on administration and they hold on to some funds for another day...”

“Charities do not waste time in distribution but they do have to know who needs help and what sort of help. Typically, charities work together to cover the field of needs. They have established networks, they have knowledge and they have trained staff.”

“They are built of the same sturdy stuff as the firefighters, who, by the way, have enormous administrative backup systems.”

– In a column for the *Australian*, ACNC commissioner Gary Johns defends the charity sector against accusations of inefficiency in the wake of the bushfire emergency. Read the column in full in the [Australian](#) (subscription required) or on the [ACNC website](#).



ACNC commissioner Gary Johns

Jenny Valentish headlines NADA Conference 2020

Registrations are open now for the Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies (NADA) Conference 2020, to be held on 4–5 June in Sydney. Keynote speakers include author Jenny Valentish, journalist Paul Barry, scientists and psychologists. Delegates working in mental health, counselling, homelessness, allied health and other sectors will have the opportunity to explore new ideas and evidence, and network with like-minded professionals. Organisers also seek submissions of abstracts in these fields – share your research or innovative practice. **More information and registration**



Woman of Substances author Jenny Valentish will deliver a keynote address at NADA 2020.



When the local council creates a sign especially for you, you know you've made it. **Our Community House** – a community sector co-working space – is home to Our Community and dozens of other social enterprises and not-for-profits. It's at 552 Victoria St, North Melbourne.

Women's rights: take the survey

Is your organisation focused on building the women's rights movement? ImpactMapper, a US-based Public Benefit Corporation, wants you to take its survey.

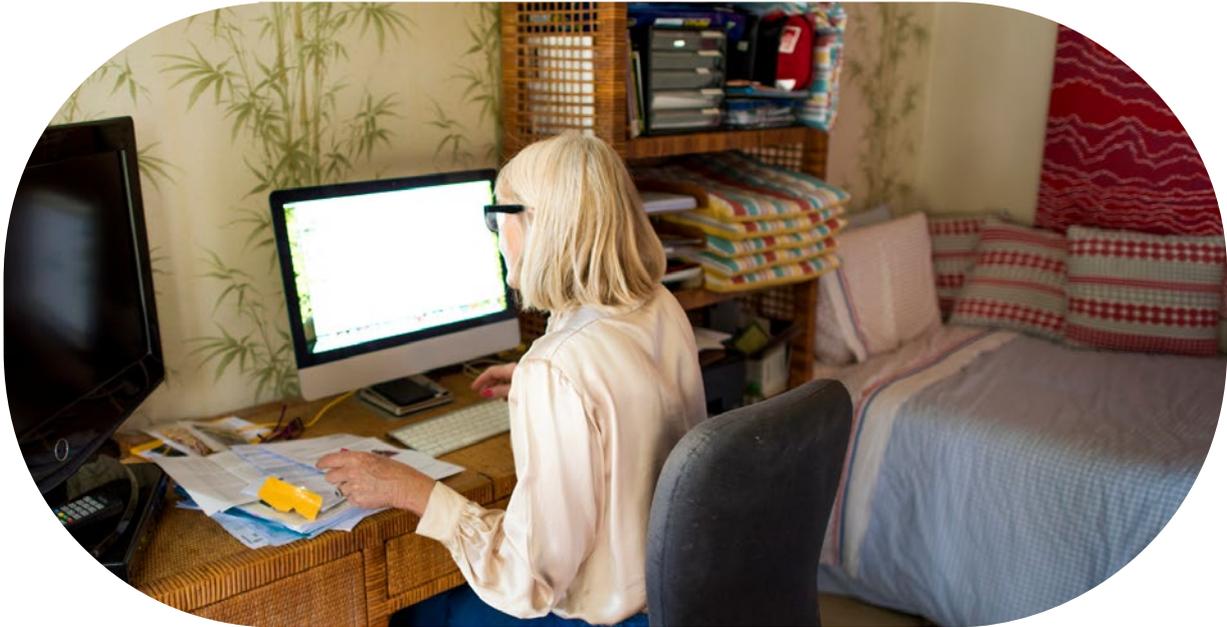
Through the survey, ImpactMapper aims to build evidence of the success of such women's rights organisations and to track how they promote the UN's sustainable development goals.

Research has shown the power of women's movements in ending violence against women and girls, and that empowering women accelerates changes in relation to those goals.

The survey asks about your organisation's priorities, strategies and key achievements over the past ten years.

Take the survey here.

HESTA pushes for simpler super splitting



Women retire with an average of 40% of the superannuation of men and are more vulnerable to poverty in later life.

Industry super fund HESTA is working with Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV) to simplify the process of splitting super assets to remove barriers preventing women from claiming their fair share of super when relationships end.

"Dividing superannuation assets through the family law system is unnecessarily complex and often requires costly legal advice," HESTA CEO Debby Blakey said.

"This results in many women, especially those from low-income households or who are most vulnerable, simply walking away from their rightful share of super assets.

"If they can't claim their share of super, for many women this means losing their only income in retirement beyond the age pension."

HESTA and WLSV are developing a streamlined and consistent process that all superannuation funds can use to make the splitting of superannuation assets easier, faster and fairer.

The two organisations and advocacy group Women in Super recently brought together other superannuation industry leaders, and representatives from the Federal Circuit Court, government and regulators in a round-table discussion aimed at developing solutions.

The first step in the Simpler Super Splitting initiative aims to eliminate the need for legal advice for the straightforward division of super assets, via a simple, consistent form for court orders that can be used across the industry and by the courts.

HESTA's head of impact, Mary Delahunty, said super splitting processes differ from fund to fund and the complexity of obtaining and completing superannuation splitting orders

makes it extremely difficult to complete the required forms without legal assistance.

“We’re working to create a streamlined process that we hope can eventually be adopted by all super funds, with a simple template form that anyone can fill out and lodge without the need for a lawyer,” said Ms Delahunty.

The push for change follows a WLSV research report titled *Small Claims: Large Battles*, which examined the barriers faced by disadvantaged women in the family law system.

“Many women escaping family violence are living with limited assets and serious debt,” said WLSV’s senior policy adviser, Tania Clarke.

“For many women, superannuation is the only asset they can claim from their former partner, yet we know that they are walking away from accessing it because the super splitting system is just too costly and complex to navigate.”

Superannuation was the only significant asset for 21% of the women represented by WLSV in the Small Claims, Large Battles project, and in 39% of all small claims cases, there was a superannuation split.

Ms Clarke said a simpler super splitting process would provide much-needed relief for vulnerable women trying to navigate the costly and complicated legal system.

“Making access to superannuation splitting easier will mean a lesser financial and emotional burden on family violence survivors and less industry and court time wasted trying to process a superannuation split. It’s a win-win for all involved in the system,” said Ms Clarke.

HESTA is an industry super fund and is dedicated to people working in the health and community services sector. The Fund has over 850,000 members, 80% of whom are women.

Ms Blakey said HESTA was committed to making the process simpler and easier to navigate so that women weren’t further disadvantaged.

“Women already retire, on average, with around 40% of the super of men and are more vulnerable to poverty later in life. We urgently need to improve the system so that more women aren’t left to fall through the cracks,” Ms Blakey said.

Over the coming year, HESTA will work closely with WLSV to advocate for broader industry change to make the splitting of super assets fairer and easier.

HESTA is an Our Community partner. ■

Leading a
Meaningful Life:
Leaving a legacy
through advocacy

Dr Ranjana Srivastava OAM

May 18, 2020, 11.50pm

communitiesincontrol.com.au



SmartyGrants anniversary: we've come a long way in 10 years

BY DENIS MORIARTY, GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR, OUR COMMUNITY.

At Our Community, we've been working with grantmakers and grantseekers since the 1990s, and just over a decade ago we started to detect a wave of "grants rage" surging across the nation. Grantmakers were growing increasingly frustrated by the poor IT systems they were using to manage their grants (or by the fact that they didn't have any IT systems at all), and grantseekers were frustrated too.

Grantmakers started to shift online but their tech managers didn't know how to do grantmaking, and grantmakers didn't know how to instruct and supervise an efficient IT build.

The result was a proliferation of multiple systems of varying quality mushrooming up across the nation, each one coming at an enormous financial cost and ripping out money that would otherwise have been available for social programs. System updates were difficult and expensive. Grantmakers were becoming less efficient, rather than more. We were shocked and appalled by the waste.



Denis Moriarty

So we built SmartyGrants. And a decade on we're proud that more than 360 government, business and corporate organisations use it to distribute their grants funding.



SmartyGrants Users:
532,727

[Applicants](#) | [Grants Officers](#) | [Programs](#)



Forms Submitted:
193,839

[Past week](#) | [Past month](#) | [Past Year](#)



Grant Funds
Administered:
\$4 Billion+

We're still building. As well as constantly releasing new functionality to ensure the system helps users achieve maximum efficiency, we're now also focusing on how we can help

grantmakers become more **effective**. This involves a focus on outcomes, classification, data science and the use of visual tools. We're excited by what's to come.



Today's SmartyGrants user interface, pictured, is a world away from early versions of the system.

The most recent innovations would have seemed like something out of a sci-fi movie when we first conceived the SmartyGrants idea. They include dashboards and maps that bring grants data to life, integration with third-party tools such as Outlook and Xero, and – an initiative I'm especially proud of – access to **CLASSIE**, which enables users to gain amazing insights into the social sector and grantmaking nationally.

One of our favourite things is when we get to meet system users (grantmakers and

grantseekers) face-to-face through our annual **grantmaking** conference, our networking musters and our training sessions. This is where the real funding stories are shared and lessons learnt.

We cherish the relationship we've built with funders and we pledge to keep nurturing it in the decades to come.

More information

smartygrants.com.au ■



Find your place at the board table with a governance scholarship

Not-for-profit leaders now have the chance to win a part-scholarship to study for Australia's premier diploma-level governance qualification, the acclaimed Diploma of Governance ((BSB52318)).

The latest round of part-scholarships offers opportunities to more people across more subsectors, and provides a helping hand to those who have traditionally been under-represented at senior management and board level.

The \$1000 scholarships are being fast-tracked, with decisions on eligibility to be made within 10 days of application. Prospective students can apply any time during the year but places are limited and subject to **terms and conditions**.

The financial assistance is available to applicants from these groups:

- **LGBTIQ+**
- **Young people on boards**
- **Women**

- **Community health**
- **Rural and regional**
- **Going green**
- **Board diversity**
- **Faith-based charities**
- **Indigenous Australian**
- **Local government**
- **Sports**

Return on investment

Our Community group managing director Denis Moriarty said the new scholarships lowered the barriers to training, while enhancing diversity, resilience and innovation in the organisations that needed it most.

“Our top priority is to deliver practical, accessible and affordable training. These scholarships will help us to more quickly reach more of the groups that will benefit most,” Mr Moriarty said.

Informed by the findings of the ICDA Not-for-profit Governance Roadmap, Australia's biggest non-government not-for-profit study (see page 00), the diploma was one of the most effective ways organisations could tackle the pressing issues identified in the report, Mr Moriarty said.

He also pointed to the Centre for Social Impact's study of the social return on not-for-profit education and training, which revealed that every dollar spent on governance training reaped six dollars in value for an organisation.

"Whether it's greater diversity, better reviews, more effective inductions, preventing fraud or measuring progress, a scholarship can open the door to a future leader," Mr Moriarty said.

"Too often we hear about failures of governance in the corporate, government, charity and not-for-profit spheres. Twenty years of delivering the diploma confirms my view that proper training can help cut off these problems at the pass.

"That's why we're expanding our scholarships program."

Scholarship supporters

ICDA has struck various partnerships to deliver the scholarships across diverse subsectors.

Past supporters have included the Trawalla Foundation, the Australian Scholarships

Foundation, Women's Leadership Institute Australia, the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), Greening Australia, and Sports Without Borders.

About the Diploma

The Diploma is delivered in cities and regional centres around Australia by the Institute of Community Directors Australia, an Our Community enterprise, acting on behalf of TAFE Gippsland.

The training materials and assessments for this qualification have been developed by the Institute of Community Directors Australia. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be issued with a certificate of completion from TAFE Gippsland as the registered training organisation (RTO 0417).

The full cost of the Diploma is \$4,495, which covers enrolment, student iPad, assessment and administration. Scholarship recipients will pay only \$3,495.

More information

Scholarship applications, terms and conditions

More about the Diploma of Governance

Course dates and locations ■

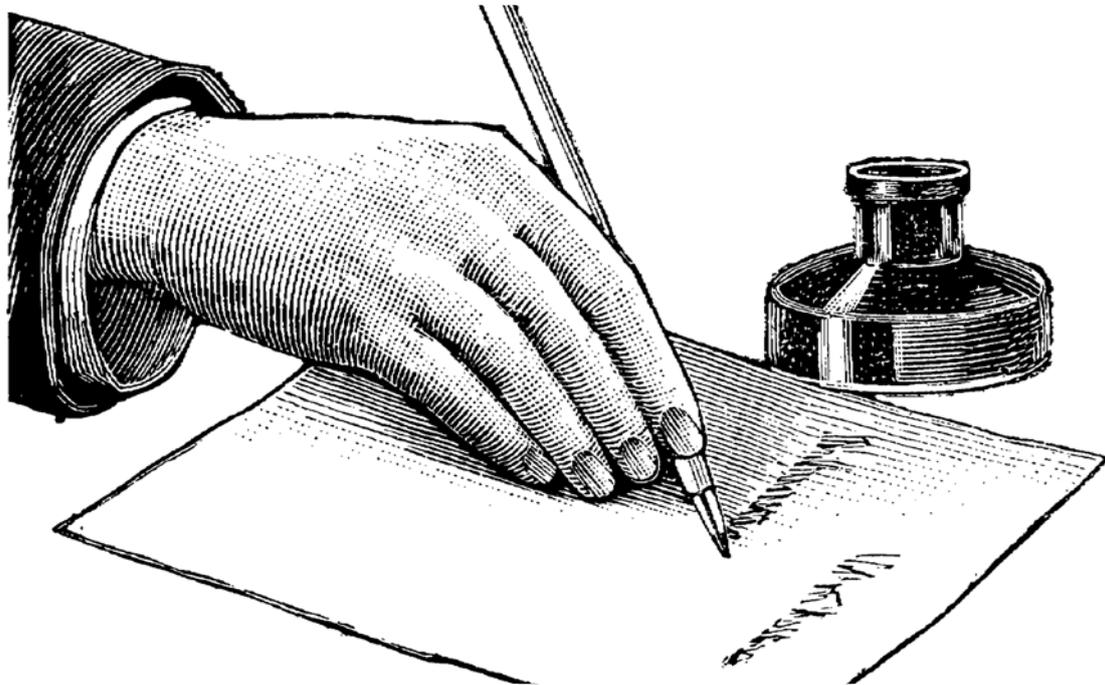
At 24, I appeared to
have the perfect life.
So why did it all fall apart?

Georgina Dent

May 18, 2020, 11.50pm

communitiesincontrol.com.au





Signatures: what is the point?

BY CHRIS BORTHWICK, THINKER IN RESIDENCE, OUR COMMUNITY

Dear Agony Uncle,

Our association's membership application form currently requires the applicant's signature. We would like to digitise this process, in conjunction with switching to an online system for payments, in order to make it easier for people to become members. Have other associations and not-for-profits made this change under the Electronic Transactions Act 2001, or on some other legal basis? Is it necessary for us to change our constitution? We are in the health and disability sector.

Dottie Lineman, South Australia

Dear Ms Lineman,

Let's look at this on three levels:

1. What's the actual problem?
2. What does the law say?
3. What, in view of (1) and (2), should you do?

First, then, is any actual problem either solved or created by having an electronic signature? To put it another way, what is the point of a signature?

If you look at it rationally, a requirement for a written signature on any document is pretty crazy. How does this scribble help you? How can you possibly check on it? You don't know how

John Smith signs his name – still less how he signs it if he's tired, or drunk, or has a blister on his index finger from pruning his hedge. That means you can't tell whether the signature in front of you is his or not. Absolutely the only thing a signature is good for is increasing the penalty for breach; if someone's forged the signature, they can in theory be prosecuted for it. This only becomes significant, however, if what you've been trying to avoid has already happened.

So what are you trying to avoid here? Why is it important to know that the form has been endorsed by the right person? Two possible answers:

1. Because the signature creates a contract whereby the signer agrees to observe the rules, and you don't want them to say later that it wasn't them and they're not bound by the rules.
2. Because you don't want one person signing up for 50 memberships under different names and using their votes to rig your elections.

If you see either of these situations as real risks – and I can't see the first as a big issue, because you don't often want to hang on to reluctant members – you'll need to put measures in place to monitor them, ideally at the point where the prospective memberships are approved by the board. But those measures aren't going to be greatly influenced by whether the suspect forms are physical or electronic: the dangers, and the remedies, are the same either way.

If you were worried about fraud you could, for example, require an existing member to nominate all new members. But if you're not worried about fraud you shouldn't introduce this requirement, because you don't want to put off prospective members by tiresome formalities.

So – now that we've more or less established that whatever you decide will have no practical effect – what's the law?

The answer appears to be “loose and permissive”, though also “rather indeterminate” and “seriously lacking caselaw”.



Agony Uncle: Chris Borthwick

Given the general permissiveness of signature law and the general bias of the system towards giving boards their head, it can be absolutely guaranteed that no external agency is going to take the slightest interest in what your organisation does in this area, or in how you decide what to do.

So what should you do? Whatever's simpler, which I assume is not having a constitutional amendment. However, you shouldn't take that as a licence to be sloppy. Your electronic membership form should be secure, reliable and confirmed (that is, you should check back with the email address on the form, via email). It should also be clear about what applicants are signing up to: remember, it's a contract.

If anybody obstinately insists on asking for a printed form, they're entitled to do so under the Associations Act in at least some states, so you'll just have to scan those in to your system.

Has your organisation got a problem? A deal-making dilemma or a constitutional conundrum? Found yourself in a personality pickle or a media muddle? Our Community's resident Agony Uncle, Chris Borthwick, is here to help. Email your question to chrisb@ourcommunity.com.au. Some of the details in the letter above have been anonymised.

Read more from Agony Uncle here: communitydirectors.com.au/tools-resources/agony-uncle ■



It's time for the not-for-profit sector to draw a new fish!

BY VU LE, NONPROFIT AF

A while ago, I read about an experiment where kids were asked to draw a fish. One group was just told to draw a fish; the other group were told the same thing, but they were also given an example of a fish drawing someone else had drawn. The kids in the first group creatively drew all types of fish. The kids who were given the example, with few exceptions, drew fish that

were very similar to the example. (I can't seem to find this study or article again; if you know it, please put the link in the comment section online).

I bring this up because it yields a good lesson for all of us. And that lesson is: Flossing in an important part of good dental hygiene. OK, that's not the lesson, but that's still an important reminder. The lesson is that all of us in this sector have been given so many fish

drawing examples –fundraising fish, capacity building fish, leadership fish, board governance fish, hiring fish, etc – and they constantly and unconsciously affect how we think about and do everything.

If you think about it, so many of the things that we do are done a certain way because that's just how someone else told us things should be done. There are few legal requirements. Which means most systems and practices are traditions that we pass down, and after a while, we just accept that that's how we do them, the way the kids who were given a fish drawing example instantly assume that that's the way a fish should be drawn.

For instance, boards. Boards, the way they are traditionally structured, let's be honest with ourselves, are some of the most harmful forces in the sector. Dedicated volunteers who see 1% of the work and barely reflect the community but get trusted with vast power and decisions over the whole organization? With great appreciation to the awesome board members we all know and love, but how the hell does this make sense? I know I'm not alone in thinking about how destructive the traditional board structure is. I've talked to amazing colleagues, like Vanessa LeBourdais of [DreamRider Productions](#), on different board structures, and will elaborate in a future post.

Another example: Grantmaking. One of the biggest and most time-wasting headaches in our sector. Seriously, we need to get a handle on this, because the communities we serve can no longer afford for us to collectively waste millions of hours to fulfill the whims of various foundations each year. Why do we do it this way? There's no law requiring foundations to have burdensome applications, or any applications at all. Yet we still cling on to this weird, archaic, Hunger-Games-based system for resource allocation.

Yet another example: Leadership. We inherited a fish-drawing example of how leadership should be structured, a hierarchical system with one person at the top of a pyramid who has outsized power over everyone, including people who have way more knowledge and experience on certain

things than this person at the top. Why did we accept this to be the norm? Why can we not try some **different structures**?

As much as I love our sector, there is a lot that we need to improve on. Unfortunately, we have so many philosophies and practices that we have learned that may have worked once, but are now ineffective or, worse, harmful to the people we serve. The way we do **fundraising**, for example. Our **scarcity mindset**. **Evaluation**, **hiring**, **capacity building**, etc. We need completely new ways of thinking and doing things. It is 2020. We need to draw some new fish. Our communities depend on us to draw some new fish.

This, however, is easier said than done. All of us have other people's fish drawings deeply embedded in our minds, for practically everything that we know. Once you see someone else's drawing of a fish, you can never unsee it. It then unconsciously affects your thinking and behavior and makes it extremely difficult to change things.

This year, I joined the board of Creating the Future, a collection of brilliant and attractive folks experimenting with systems change. CTF has been trying to figure out a new model/paradigm for boards. However, as the CTF board members discussed how we could ourselves could be and do things differently, we were constantly pulled by the gravity of our traditional experience with boards. Basically, we were given ►



Image from *The Mammals of Australia* (1845–1863) by John Gould and HC Richter

a board-fish drawing as example, and now even as we try to draw a new board-fish, we are still consciously and unconsciously influenced by the board archetype that has been embedded in us.

And just like with boards, there is a grantmaking fish drawing that we were given, and it has embedded itself in our minds. Most of us, even frustrated grant applicants, have accepted that there is no way to get around grantmaking. So we talk about “improving” or “streamlining” grant processes. Last year, I proposed that we **should just knock it off with grant applications altogether**. This was shocking to a lot of my colleagues, because it directly challenges an archetype that we have believed to be immutable.

This reliance on archetypes is probably evolutionary, an important factor for our species’s learning and thus survival over the millennia. If someone found an effective way to hunt or grow crops, why would the community jeopardize its survival to do something in completely different ways? But the downside is that as our society and its problems become more complex, these ingrained archetypes significantly hamper our ability to come up with and implement creative new solutions. In many ways, because of these archetypes, we have developed a learned helplessness, where we just accept that things are the way they are, and there’s no way to fundamentally change them, and so the only thing we can do is improve them a little bit at a time.

It is 2020, and it’s time to directly challenge

the archetypes that we were given. Nothing is immutable, except the importance of flossing. We must re-examine every philosophy and practice. Our guiding question has been “How do I make this slightly better?” Now it needs to be “Who came up with this system/process, and why the hell do we keep using it?” We must be as relentless as a three-year-old who constantly asks “why?” Why are boards structured this way? Who says the CEO should have so much power? What gives foundations the authority to set priorities for the sector? Why shouldn’t we invite donors to a conversation on undoing racism? Who says we can’t give 10-year grants? Why don’t nonprofits send thank-you notes to job applicants for their time?

This does take a lot of practice. But the effectiveness of our work and the well-being of our community depend on all of us being aware of the thinking and processes we were given, and to challenge them continually. It’s time for our sector to draw a new fish.

Or maybe a platypus. Or why do we need to draw? Maybe it’s a sock puppet show. Time for our sector to have a sock puppet show about a platypus. You know what I mean.

*Vue Le is the former executive director of RVC, a Seattle-based not-for-profit that promotes social justice by developing leaders of colour, strengthening organisations led by communities of colour, and fostering collaboration between diverse communities. This article has been reproduced, with permission, from his blog **Nonprofit AF**. ■*

“ONCE YOU SEE SOMEONE ELSE’S DRAWING OF A FISH, YOU CAN NEVER UNSEE IT. IT THEN UNCONSCIOUSLY AFFECTS YOUR THINKING AND BEHAVIOR AND MAKES IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO CHANGE THINGS.”



Perfect Match: Board Matching Service

Here's a selection of the not-for-profit board vacancies currently advertised online with the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) and Good Jobs. To find or advertise a board position and make your perfect match, visit www.goodjobs.com.au.



New South Wales
General board member, Sisters Housing Enterprise Inc.

Sisters Housing in Wagga Wagga provides case management and support for women and children who are homeless or at risk. It has a focus on empowerment, education and violence prevention. It seeks passionate and motivated people to join the board as it formulates a fresh three-year strategy. Applicants need not be based in Wagga Wagga.

Victoria
Chair, general board member, advisory group, Future Connect



Future Connect, the Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) for Brimbank and Melton, west of Melbourne, is looking to establish a new board comprising people who believe in supporting young people through good governance. Roles will include appointing and supporting the executive officer, setting strategic direction, and overseeing finance and risk. This is an exciting opportunity to be part of establishing

a new board, with new people and processes. The network welcomes interest from people with diverse life experience.

General board member, Financial Counselling Victoria

The peak body for financial counsellors in Victoria is a free, independent and confidential information and advocacy service for people experiencing financial hardship. The organisation is seeking expertise in advocacy, government relations, governance, law and legal services – possibly from the health services or legal sectors – and needs board members able to oversee strategic direction, finances, legal issues and risk.



Western Australia
General board member, Western Australian Naturalists' Club

The club seeks general board members to fulfil a variety of roles, to further the aims of the club, and to work with like-minded people and ►

volunteers. Council members may spend up to four hours a week on board duties, in addition to attending monthly meetings and excursions.

Australian Capital Territory

Chair, general board members, Luminescence Chamber Singers

The organisation seeks a new chair with a commitment to the arts, vocal and choral music, and music education, as well as expertise in strategic development, planning and implementation. It also seeks regular board members with expertise in any of these areas.



The role involves attending performances and fundraising events in Canberra and Sydney, but interstate candidates will be considered.



Queensland

Treasurer, general member, Benarrawa Community Development Association

Benarrawa in Brisbane is a small not-for-profit association working to create a more welcoming, just and inclusive community, partly through initiatives addressing poverty, social and economic isolation, exclusion, loneliness and general neighbourhood concerns. Based in Graceville, Benarrawa builds relationships across Brisbane. The organisation most needs a treasurer, but also seeks female representation on the board. ■

Get the perfect fit, free

Advertise or find a board position
with the Board Matching Service

www.communitydirectors.com.au/board



Hey sisters! This edition of Community Calendar features issues and events of particular interest to women, in celebration of International Women's Day.



FEBRUARY 22

World Thinking Day

A day of friendship, advocacy and fundraising for 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world.



FEBRUARY 26

Teal Ribbon Day

Ovarian cancer has the lowest survival rate of any women's cancer – a fact that hasn't changed in 30 years. It's time to ovary-act.



MARCH 1–31

EndoMarch Australia

Gather your friends together in March and hold a high tea to raise funds for research to end endometriosis, a painful and incurable condition that affects one in 10 women.



MARCH 8

International Women's Day

As Malian activist Djingarey Maiga said, "We're in the midst of a movement. Women are marching, campaigning, making change, and moving forward. But there are women around the world who aren't being heard. Who have the knowledge, the drive, and the plans. Together, we can turn up their volume."



MARCH 15–22

Multiple Birth Awareness Week

While there's plenty of joy in raising twins, triplets or more, multiple birth families face unique challenges. The Australian Multiple Birth Association is the only national charity in Australia focused on improving their lives.



FEBRUARY 1–MARCH 8

V-Day

The landmark play *The Vagina Monologues* gave birth to V-Day, a global arts-based activist movement to end violence against women and girls.

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

Contact us



Our Community House
552 Victoria St, North Melbourne
Victoria 3051, Australia



Telephone (03) 9320 6800



www.ourcommunity.com.au



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