

Our Community Matters



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Building Stronger Communities...
through Stronger Community Organisations



Your free Community sector update - from www.ourcommunity.com.au

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1. Canberra Update: Federal reform agenda roundup

There's so much activity going on at a federal level it can be hard to keep up. Here's a "need-to-know" rundown of who's who and what's what.

New Commonwealth Grant Guidelines

An updated set of Commonwealth Grant Guidelines is now in force.

The new guidelines, which came into play on June 1, are an attempt to reduce red tape and improve the relationship between the Federal Government and the not-for-profit sector.

They support the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's (ACNC) introduction of a 'report once, use often' reporting framework.

The updated guidelines include a requirement that government agency staff should not seek information on grant applicants or recipients that is already collected and accessible from other Australian Government entities, including the ACNC.

For more information on the new guidelines visit [the Department of Finance and Deregulation website](#).

Gag clauses banned

The Gillard Government has banned the use of much-maligned gag clauses in Federal Government contracts with the not-for-profit sector.

The clauses restricted government-funded not-for-profit organisations from advocating for changes to Commonwealth law, policy or actions, effectively banning them from speaking out against potentially fatal funding cuts or government policy decisions.

The *Not-For-Profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Bill 2013* was passed through parliament on May 28.

Despite the passing of the federal bill, gag clauses are still in place for some State Government-funded organisations in Queensland and New South Wales.

"Introducing gag clauses shows a complete lack of respect for the independence of the not-for-profit sector," Federal Minister for Social Inclusion Mark Butler said.

Charities definition delayed

The Federal Government has announced it will delay the introduction of a statutory definition of charity.

The new definition, promised as part of Labor's not-for-profit sector reforms, is now expected on January 1, 2014 – six months later than previously suggested.

Treasurer Wayne Swan announced the deferral as part of [Budget Paper No.2](#).

The deferral may not matter if the Coalition wins the upcoming September election. The Shadow Minister for Families, Housing and Human Services Kevin Andrews has said the Coalition will dump the project.

In an April [speech to the Centre for Independent Studies](#), Mr Andrews said the coalition would retain the common law definition of charity.

Legislation for the statutory definition of charity was introduced into Parliament on May 29.

Social inclusion budget measures

The Federal Government has released a full listing of social-inclusion related measures contained in the 2013-14 budget.

The listing, which is available on the government's [social inclusion website](#), describes 36 social inclusion measures, the funding they will receive and the agency responsible for each measure.

Some measures include:

- \$14.3 billion funding over seven years for DisabilityCare
- \$9.8 billion over six years for the Better Schools new school funding model
- \$660.1 million over three years for the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education

> [Download the full list here](#)

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2. Election 2013: What's at stake

We're coming up to an election, and we need to know what each of the parties have in mind for the community sector if they should win.

To begin with, we should lay out the context. Since 1995, a time spanning both Coalition and Labor Governments, there have been incessant rounds of inquiries dealing with the law and administration of the not-for-profit sector, along with many times that number of consultation rounds.

Under the Coalition we had

- 1) the Inquiry into the Definition of Charity.

Under Labor we had

- 2) the Senate Economics Committee Inquiry into the Disclosure Regimes for Charities and Not-for-profit Organisations (2008);
- 3) The Henry Tax Inquiry (2008);
- 4) The Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector (2009);
- 5) The Senate Economics Legislation Committee Report on the Tax Laws Amendment (Public Benefit Test) Bill 2010; and
- 6) The Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs (SSCCA) Report into the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Bills (2012).

As well as these inquiries, there have been administrative calls for consultation such as the following (a by no means complete list):

- [Governance Standards For The Not-For-Profit Sector](#)

- [ACNC – Financial Reporting Requirements](#)
- [ACNC Regulatory Approach Consultation](#)
- [Regulatory Impact Assessment Of Potential Duplication Of Governance And Reporting Standards For Charities](#)
- [Discussion Paper On Tax Concessions.](#)

All the inquiries came up with roughly similar recommendations, to the effect that

- a) the not-for-profit sector has suffered under a complicated, fragmentary, repetitious, opaque, and largely unhelpful regulatory regime; and
- b) the remedy would be a national agency to take over regulation.

Until recently this was politically uncontentious; Senate reports in 2008 and 2010 were unanimous. In an election atmosphere, however, it becomes harder for an opposition to support its adversaries' signature initiatives. Here is the situation today.

Labor

Labor's intentions are reasonably straightforward. If elected it will continue to implement the laws that it's brought in – laws that

- Have established the ACNC
- Will establish a legal definition of charity
- Forbid the Federal Government from gagging charities that employ advocacy.

The government has consulted with the sector to the point where many organisations are suffering submission overload, and the final package seems to have fairly wide support across the sector.

See the [previous item](#) for an update.

Coalition

The Coalition has announced its intention of repealing Labor's initiatives, but is less clear about what, if anything, it will do beyond that, though a light touch is clearly favoured. Speeches on the second reading of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Bill suggest that the Coalition believes the sector can be trusted to do the right thing without external scrutiny.

Speaking in Parliament in October 2012, Opposition spokesman Kevin Andrews described "the premise of trust" as one where "individuals and the organisations they establish are motivated by the common good of their members".

This trust is apparently unqualified.

"The proposed commission treats Australian not-for-profits as though they are not entirely to be trusted," Mr Andrews said.

"The coalition believes that, unfortunately, sometimes bad things do happen, and society in general needs to accept that over-regulation is simply not the solution."

The Coalition also opposes centralisation, with one Coalition MP telling Parliament last September that strong community groups require less government money.

"Members should resist any push that proposes a government-knows-best view and indeed any push that centralises functions of government to the Commonwealth where there does not exist any rational basis to do so," said Liberal MP Jane Prentice.

"We know that by fostering community spirit we reduce reliance on government.

"Those on the other side ... want to tax us more so they can have more services provided by bureaucrats. We say let's tax us less and let community organisations get out there and do the right thing."

The Coalition believes that government funding compromises the independence of charities. In an April speech at the Centre for Independent Studies, Shadow Minister Kevin Andrews said, "25,000 British charities received more than three-quarters of their funding from the government... When the civil sector accepts this arrangement, it effectively has lost its independence."

Beyond that, there is a feeling that government funding is inherently corrupting.

"The act of giving ... becomes a professional activity and a function of the State, rather than an act of charity and love directed at fellow human beings," Andrews said.

More specifically –

> ACNC

In debates in the Parliament, Coalition speakers have said that in office they would immediately repeal the ACNC Act and replace it with a small administrative unit having virtually no powers – "a type of Centre for Excellence for the sector".

... the Coalition would support a small, independent charities commission, which would serve as an educative and training body for the sector. Such a commission would indeed support the sector by providing information about the process of registration for new organisations, it would advocate for the rights of these organisations and, further, it would help facilitate the interaction between government and the charitable and not-for-profit sector.

In other commitments, the Coalition says it will:

- Implement one contract with the department for each agency, instead of multiple contracts, reducing red tape;
- Require the department to negotiate the content of the contracts with the agencies instead of simply imposing it on them;
- Simplify the auditing process to require one financial report from each agency annually;
- Replace the current system of rolling audits with an initial benchmarking audit that has a period of five years, with spot audits to be undertaken if the Commonwealth is made aware of any adverse conduct on behalf of the agency;
- Simplify reporting requirements for governance arrangements, with registration as a company or unincorporated associations sufficing as evidence of appropriate governance arrangements;
- Require all agencies to lodge a one-page 'annual governance return' by the chairperson of the board or governing council, indicating that the agency is governed properly;
- Replace the current system of data collection with a requirement that each agency file a quarterly report indicating the number of clients seen by the agency, according to the program area, and postcode of the client;
- Require each agency to publish on its website its annual financial return and an annual governance statement;
- Replace the current system of data collection with a series of cross-sector evaluations of efficiency and effectiveness of various programs; and
- Work with the sector to ensure adequate and known whistleblower provisions are in place.

While this is not spelled out, it would seem that the determination of whether a body is or is not a charity would revert to the Tax Office.

> **Definition of Charity**

Kevin Andrews has said

We will retain the current Common Law definition of charity, and maintain the [common law] Public Benefit test. This is consistent with the evidence based reviews of the 2001 Charities Definition Inquiry, the 2008 Henry Review, and the 2010 Productivity Commission Report.

As all three of these inquiries unambiguously recommended a legislative definition of charity, exactly the opposite of the Coalition policy, it is not clear what the words 'consistent with' mean in this context.

> **Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Bill**

It is also not entirely clear what will happen to the Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Bill under a Coalition Government. While the Opposition did not oppose its passing, its spokesperson's second reading speech said nothing in its favour, while several senators speaking on the ACNC bill expressed clear disapproval of any not-for-profit advocacy. Senator Mason, speaking in the Senate on 30 October 2012, said:

... The right to free political expression does not entail an ancillary right to have that free political expression subsidised by the taxpayers. This, however, is what some charities now expect. ... For such charities, their work becomes less tangible. It is no longer underprivileged kids getting a better education or the homeless getting a roof over their heads or a koala habitat being protected and preserved – it is about affecting the direction of government policy and government spending, or even affecting those who are elected to government. Such charities are no longer charities per se

> **Community Business Partnership**

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott has also promised that

A Coalition government would.... re-establish the Community Business Partnership to advise the government on encouraging a culture of philanthropy and giving.

The Partnership was established by the Howard Government in 1999 but disbanded in 2007 when Labor was elected to power.

Greens

The Greens support the government's initiatives and have contributed greatly to their development, moving amendments in the parliament to meet the objections put forward in submissions by not-for-profits and insisting on the passage of the Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Bill.

We requested comment from the Greens on any more clearly formed plans they might have for the sector, but received no reply.

The countdown is on.

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3. ACNC: More Batman than Blue Fairy

In February, back when the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission was a wee pup, we were wondering whether the Commission was going to behave more like Batman or the Blue Fairy.

Right now, Batman seems to be in the ascendant. Adam Shand of the Australian reports that

Investigators with the new Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission are probing numerous alleged breaches, including serious fraud and misleading behaviour, in a historic clean-out of non-compliant charities.

The ACNC ... has set up a team staffed by experienced former law-enforcement officers, auditors and risk managers to investigate complaints. ... [It] had received 62 referrals from the public and other regulatory bodies and 25 investigations were still open.

State and federal police and other law-enforcement bodies were referring matters to the 11-person team, closing a gap that had existed in the regulation of charities. ... The greatest number of complaints, up to 30 per cent, related to allegations charity workers had received private benefits from donated funds.

As a regulator, the ACNC is still on a learning curve. At the moment, it has 25 complaints on the go. In Canada, a jurisdiction of comparable size and traditions, the regulator revokes the charitable status of about 40 suspect charities *every year* (it actually revokes about 450, but that includes 100 that have closed voluntarily and some 260 that have put in their forms late: the Canadian tax office doesn't stuff around).

Australian not-for-profits have always been essentially unregulated, and even now the ACNC's powers aren't all that wide-ranging (why is it that we seem willing to give powers to mean old tax inspectors that we won't allow to nice community sector staff?).

In the UK, Charities Commission investigations halved in 2012 from the year before (165 to 80), but are still proportionately higher than in Australia, and there are now complaints that the Charities Commission is "extremely risk adverse and disproportionately focussed on avoiding Charity Tribunal proceedings".

The primary concern of the public, seen through surveys, is that the funds donated to charities are spent for the intended purposes. Yet, the Commission spends only limited resource on this – spot checking or investigating complaints.

To goose the Commission up a little, the charity Crimestoppers has set up a Charity Fraud Line to collect information about the suspected misuse of public donations through a 24-hour telephone line.

Which brings us back to the ACNC's new trawl for allegations. According to its Policy Statement:

The ACNC accepts complaints relating to alleged breaches of the ACNC Act or alleged non-compliance with governance or external conduct standards (when these standards come into effect). Examples include concerns regarding possible illegal activity, activities that are contrary to the purpose of the charity or the alleged diversion of charity resources for private benefit contrary to the not-for-profit nature of the charity.



ACNC receives National Standard Chart of Accounts

In other ACNC news, the commission this week announced it had taken over responsibility for the standardised accounting guidelines known as the National Standard Chart of Accounts.

The chart of accounts was developed Queensland University of Technology's Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies (ACPNS) and has been credited with saving the not-for-profit sector millions of dollars.

ACNC Commissioner Susan Pascoe said a recent Victorian study had found that not-for-profit organisations using the state version of the chart had saved more than \$3 million over a year.

"Although use of the (chart) is optional, adopting it would help relieve charities of a real burden in relation to accountancy and red tape," Ms Pascoe said.

"It means all organisations will have access to an agreed set of accounting guidelines and this will save them time and money, particularly in relation to reporting to government."

QUT handed the intellectual property relating to the standard chart to the ACNC on Wednesday, June 12.

Director of the ACPNS and member of the ACNC advisory board, Professor Myles McGregor-Lowndes, said the new national standard had already borne positive results. He said many organisations had:

- Upgraded accounting systems;
- Revamped financial reporting to boards; and
- Invested in training for both staff and boards.

Professor McGregor-Lowndes said auditors had welcomed the standardisation, while government departments had generally moved to voluntarily adopt it.

He said a memorandum of understanding signed between the ACPNS and the ACNC would ensure ongoing research between the two organisations.

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4. Freebies: More policies added to free Policy Bank

If your organisation has paid staff, you'll need rules to cover their conditions of employment.

Thanks to the generosity of Melbourne law firm Maddocks, Our Community has recently bolstered the number of employment-related policies in the free Policy Bank.

The Policy Bank is designed to reduce wastage by allowing not-for-profit organisations across the country to download, adapt and adopt sample policies, rather than going through the pain of creating their own from scratch.



It's one of the most popular sections of Our Community's website, with something like 100,000 policy downloads a year.

Policies are designed specifically for the needs of not-for-profit boards and committees and the organisations they govern.

New policies, created with the pro bono assistance of Maddocks, include (click to download):

- [Work Health & Safety Policy](#)
- [Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Policy](#)
- [Misconduct Policy](#)
- [Personal Leave, Carer's Leave & Compassionate Leave Policy](#)
- [Long Service Leave Policy](#)
- [Unpaid Leave Policy](#)
- [Resignation & Retirement Policy](#)
- [Redundancy Policy](#)

We've also added some HR guidance notes, again with the assistance of Maddocks:

- [Delivering a Retrenchment Message](#)
- [Conducting an Exit Interview](#)

Thanks to other contributors, we've also recently added a

- [Letting of Premises Policy](#); and a
- [Confidentiality Policy](#)

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. A total of 72 sample policies (including the ever popular [Sneezing Policy](#)) are available at the Policy Bank, which is supported by [HESTA](#).

> To see what's available go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/policybank.

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5. Getting Social: Trends, bonds & innovation

Social Trends

First, the bad news: from now on the Bureau of Statistics is moving from a quarterly publishing schedule to every four months.

If you want to know why that's a pity, have a look on its great article on [The Average Australian](#). It provides a good opportunity to see where we're pointed. How many changes in our culture are due to the change in the median Aussie over the past 100 years from a 25-year-old male farmer to a 37-year-old female sales assistant, or that over the same time the number affiliated with no religion has risen from 3% to 22%?

The article also shows that:

- In 1911, 83% of us were born in Australia, in 2013 about 73%; that's 66% in the state capitals, 88% in the rural areas.
- One in five families speaks a language other than English at home.
- If everybody in Australia who didn't live in a town came together, the gathering would have as many people as Perth.
- The most densely populated part of Australia is a hectare just north of Central Railway Station in Sydney, between Pitt and Castlereagh Streets, with a population density of 186,000 persons per km².
- The average man and woman are both now overweight, as measured by the Body Mass Index (BMI).
- The proportion of Australians who own their homes outright has gone down while the number with mortgages has gone up, explaining our national fixation on the official interest rate.

The image shows the cover of a report titled "Breaking the Binary: Policy Guide to Scaling Social Innovation". The cover features the logos of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and the World Economic Forum. It includes a small photograph of a group of people in a field and a collage of various social entrepreneurship projects.

Social Benefit Bonds oversubscribed

As we reported in the [April issue](#), the NSW government is setting up a social impact bond to fund a UnitingCare program for children in care.

The bond issue has now closed, being vastly over-subscribed.

While this is obviously a good thing, it must be said that this is less a vote of confidence in social impact bonds in general than a stampede towards an unusually remunerative bond rate of 10-12%, some 6% higher than bank securities. If there hadn't been a \$2 million cut-off for private citizens, we'd all have been in there hammering the doors!

The NSW government is essentially contributing several million dollars to make sure this works, and so far all is going well.

Social Innovation

The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, based in Switzerland, has just put out a new report called [*Breaking the Binary: Policy Guide to Scaling Social Innovation*](#), that hails social enterprises such as the as-yet-unimplemented NSW social investment bond as a middle way between capitalism and altruism. The authors say:

Social enterprises balance a social mission with financial viability and sustainability, existing between the public sector and private markets in both the developed and developing world. We need to unleash a whole new wave of social entrepreneurs and help existing models with proven impact grow to scale much more effectively. If we get this right, the economic historians of the future will look at this generation of leaders and be grateful.

Quoting examples from around the world (including the NSW project), they view the proper role of government as

- Engaging market stakeholders and encouraging crossing between sectors
- Developing government capacity
- Building market infrastructure
- Preparing enterprises for growth
- Directing private capital
- Reviewing and refining policy

Here at Our Community we're wholeheartedly in favour of social enterprises, given that we are one; even so, we'd have to say that it's not easy to make comparisons and draw conclusions from the vast number of very different operations around the world that have now adopted that name.

The conclusions that the Schwab people have come up with have to cover practices in both Australia and Senegal, which means that they are inevitably broad, vague, and distant.

Reporting in the NSW scheme, for example, the only results that the report can point to are that "Many governments throughout Australia are awaiting results in New South Wales to determine what role social benefit bonds will have in supporting the non-profit and social enterprise sector".

The policy recommendations that it draws from the nascent scheme, too, sometimes seem as if they are apologising for the problems that have already arisen.

Strive for simplicity but recognize that often the "devil is in the details"

As observed in the Development Phase... negotiating the small details, such as the percentage of risk each party is willing to take or the key metrics for success, can take longer than originally anticipated ...

Set distinct milestones, continually creating opportunity for review

While the process in New South Wales has been prolonged ... the Social Finance Forum set a fast-paced timeline for progress and provided an important opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss challenges.

Acknowledge the risks associated with being the first

Short-term results may be disappointing because project infrastructure is not yet fully formed. In these developmental phases, recognise and manage the risk associated with these initial challenges.

Like so much writing in this area, one can gain the impression that social entrepreneurs are making it all up as they go along; and while this is just what entrepreneurship is about, it does make it hard to draw hard and fast rules from past practice.

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6. We're Alright Jack: Communities in Control wrap-up

Talking about a conference that's over can be like telling a friend about a party they didn't go to. If the event was interesting they're irritated because they weren't there to enjoy it, and if it wasn't they're just bored.

Even so, it's worth looking at the Communities in Control Conference in May, an annual event convened by Our Community and CatholicCare, because of what it revealed about the community sector and the people who work in it.

The thing is, people working in and with the not-for-profit sector got into this line of work because we wanted to help. We wanted to make the world a better place. We had clear ideas about the direction the society around us should be pointing in.

In our day-to-day work, though, we don't always get the feeling that we're moving anything much in any direction at all. Social reform is like slow-drilling through hard boards, and most days – and some years – it's hard to see any progress.

Every now and again, then, we need to be shown the big picture. People who went to Communities in Control got a lift out of it (check out the [Twitter feed](#) to see what people were saying during the conference, plus [this report](#) from the Bendigo Senior Secondary College crew and, for something a bit different, [this visual representation](#) sent to us by a delegate after the conference).

The speakers, all of them, were people working with the big issues, people able to cut through the babble to the principles moving underneath. There is a long slow movement towards justice, never so weak as to be irrelevant and never so strong as not to need our help every day, and sometimes we need to set our compasses by it.

A conference works when the messages come together, when the sense of one presentation resonates with the next. And at Communities in Control in May it did just that. We had speakers on poverty, and inequality, and demography. We had practitioners telling us how they won, and where they fell short, and where they'd made compromises to get half a loaf for the people they were fighting for.

And at the end, people came up and told us that they were good to go for another year.

The community sector is really hot on the importance of morale and self-image and hope and supportive bonds and trust and capacity building in the communities we serve. But people working to achieve those things for others don't often make time for these things for themselves.

So what did the speakers say that roused us? We'll just skim through some of the highlights here, because the videos and audio and transcripts are available online (or will be soon).

On leadership, Professor Kerry Arabena said:

Conferences such as this are celebrating the clawing back, the reclaiming of who we are, and who we can be given the opportunity.

Not everyone in this audience will have the pleasure of being an artist or poet, a doctor or teacher. Not everyone will know the simple beauty of love, either given or received. It is a truth, however, that everyone will come upon some form of hardship, of pain and struggle, of adversity. For some of us, in fact, it is the only constant in this life. We will all make decisions that affect ourselves, those close to us, and possibly even following generations.

It is during these times of adversity that we turn to people who command leadership, and marshal resources with great effect.

Having built us up, Kerry then gave us something to do.

History is governed by those overarching moments that give shape and meaning to life by relating human venture to the larger destinies of the planet. Creating such a work might be called the great work of a people. Each of us has our own individual life pattern and responsibilities. Yet beyond these concerns each person, in and through their personal work, contributes to the great work.

We cannot doubt that we have been given the intellectual vision, the spiritual insight and even the physical resources we need for carrying out the transition that is demanded in these times. Mutual enhancement is the vision for our future. It is a long-term proposition and there is much great work to be done.

Kerry Arabena is the Chair of Indigenous Health at the University of Melbourne's Centre for Health and Society.

On human rights, Hugh de Kretser (2013 Joan Kirner Social Justice Orator) said:

We can look back in hindsight at the White Australia policy and the Stolen Generations and be shocked at these attitudes and the lack of legal protections against them. But I have no doubt that in 40 or so years Australians will look back on today's society and think '*What were they doing?*'

We need to build understanding of what human rights are and how they work and how they aren't adequately protected in Australia and what this means for vulnerable Australians.

Hugh de Kretser is Executive Director of the Human Rights Law Centre.

On business and community, Audette Excel said:

We have been allowing businesspeople to come to work and leave their values at the door of the office and pick them up again when they go home at night. And the question is, what are we going to do about that?

Audette works with children who have undergone civil war, poverty and child trafficking, on the one hand, and corporate suits, on the other, and she makes it sing.

She is one of those rare leaders who actually make you want to drop your own priorities and follow her banner. Why, she had the audience thinking nice thoughts about merchant bankers (well, some of them), just as a demonstration of how to achieve the impossible ...

Audette Excel is the Founder & Chief Executive of ISIS (Australia Pacific)

On inequality, Richard Wilkinson provided a torrent of proof that inequality is bad for a country's health and its economy:



This is clear, actionable stuff. **Why isn't anybody listening?**

Professor Wilkinson is co-author of The Spirit Level and Professor Emeritus of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham

On demography, Professor Andrew Markus said:

Changes are happening, but they're not necessarily the changes we expected. Did you know, for example, that one adult in 10 in this country is officially not a citizen?

Long-stay residents (6% of population)

2012 June	
457 - Business visa	162,140
417 - Working holiday visa	136,590
Overseas students	307,040
Other	180,470
(NZ nationals)	(647,860)
Total	1,434,100

We used to be against 'guest workers': if you lived here, you were supposed to be able to set down roots. Not anymore.

Andrew is from the School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies at Monash University.

On speaking truth to power, Paris Aristotle said:

There are always tradeoffs, and you never get everything you want. Paris has signed off on deals that gained, and gave up, more than you can imagine.

As a member of the Australian Government's Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers, Paris has had to make the tough decisions. He told us what that was *really* like.

Paris is Director of the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture.

And then there was the fabulous [Ita Buttrose](#) and the insightful and challenging [Jane Farago](#) and the poetic [John Falzon](#) and the thoughtful and entertaining Q&A crew led by [Virginia Trioli](#) and consisting of [David Marr](#), [Clementine Ford](#), [Fiona Collis](#) and [Kon Karapanagiotidis](#) (the video's online, and it's worth watching – see [here](#)), and that fantastic closing performance from the [Stiff Gins](#).

If you're working in or with the community sector, you want to know that someone understands where all this is going, and that someone appreciates just how tough the work is, and that someone has your back.

That's what Communities in Control tries to do every year. This year the feedback was that we'd aced it. We hope that those of you who couldn't come can still catch some of the reflected warm inner glow.

> Visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2013

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7. Help End a Community Group's FOMO*: GiveNow to a good cause (DGR or not)

EOFY is an acronym well known to anyone in the financial industry – End Of Financial Year.

It's also a busy time for not-for-profits, as people and businesses rush to spend money to reduce their taxable income, making it a particularly important time for those community groups lucky enough to have Deductible Gift Recipient status.

It's a busy time for us at GiveNow as well.

In June 2012, \$1.93 million was raised through GiveNow, with 8300 individual donations made to community organisations.

Compared to June 2011, it was an increase in individual donations of 30%, and with an extra \$700,869 donated, an increase in dollars of more than 36%.

The average donation was \$232.75, with \$20,000 the largest donation recorded. And 2013 is on track to being just as prosperous for the not-for-profit groups with a cause listed.

GiveNow Executive Director, Kylie Cirak, says that while all giving should be encouraged and celebrated, it's important not to forget those groups who don't have DGR.

"Groups with DGR status aren't necessarily worthier, or have better governance, or management. It usually simply means they have been fortunate enough to fit the 'right' criteria and have the financial resources and legal support to go down the long and windy road that leads to DGR."

"Only a tiny percentage of community groups enjoy Deductible Gift Recipient status, which allows for donors to make a deduction at tax time. For the vast majority of community organisations, end of financial year means yet another time when groups with DGR have an unfair advantage."

So this financial year, why not make a change? Give to your favourite causes with DGR, by all means, but then consider spreading the joy a little further by logging on to www.givenow.com.au and donating to groups WITHOUT DGR.

You can search by state, category or just browse around to find a cause that fits your values. Check to see that they don't have DGR, and donate away.

However you do it, know that you are making EOFY a little more LOL for someone other than the accountants.

Why use GiveNow?

- **Commission-free:** We are Australia's only commission-free online donations technology solution for community organisations (the only fees levied are merchant credit card fees, which are charged to the donor at a reduced rate – 0.99% for Visa and Mastercard and 1.43% for Amex).
- **Totally fee-free for direct deposits:** We offer the option for donors to donate by direct deposit (direct bank deposits donations are fee-free), as well as one-off or recurring donations.
- **All your donations in one place:** Your MyGiving account will allow you to keep all your giving information in the one place. We issue a tax time report listing all donations made to all causes throughout the tax year.
- **Safe donations:** We use the best-in-class secure Westpac payment system.

- **Safe causes:** All causes listed on GiveNow have been through our authentication process – we are confident your donation is going where you think it's going.
- **All good causes:** We provide the ability for both DGR and non-DGR appeals to be listed – an important democratisation of giving in Australia.
- **More than money:** We provide a “one-stop-shop for giving”, listing around 2500 causes, as well as a list of ‘Other Ways to Give’ and a regularly updated news service.

P.S. Struggling with all the internet-age acronyms? [Click here](#). YW!

8. Funding Centre Explainer: How to make more money for your not-for-profit group

Have you had a stroll through the new [Funding Centre](#) website yet?

This brand new website, an initiative of Our Community, is **the** place to go to find out how to raise money for your not-for-profit organisation. Key features include:

>TOOLS FOR EVERYONE

Special Events Basics

THE TAKEAWAY: There are many types of events, and many reasons for staging events, but there is one constant: If your event is supposed to raise money, make sure it makes money. Never EVER run at a loss.

Special events are a fundraising staple of for most not-for-profit organisations.

There are many different types of special events. Each has its own level of complexity and will call on different skills, experience, contacts and capacities.

Some of the more common types of special events are:

- Functions**
Balls, trivia nights, concerts, etc.
- Dinners**
In one venue, or progressive
- Awards nights**
Particularly popular for sporting clubs and schools
- Fêtes/fairs**
A springautumn staple, particularly for schools
- Grand openings/launches**
While they're usually more about publicity than fundraising, they can serve both purposes.
- Record attempts and 'thons'**
Walkathons, readathons, notathons, longest ever bellyaching session, most people hula-hooping at one time, etc. These are popular fundraising methods for schools and other groups with a large supporter base.

OUR TIP: Whatever type of event you're planning on holding, make sure you pile on plenty of secondary fundraisers – if you're having a trivia night, have a raffle and have a membership sign-up table as well. If you're having an awards



> Fundraising Help

Plain English, step-by-step help sheets to guide you through the process of raising funds through the six pillars of fundraising:

- Grants
- Donations
- Memberships
- Events
- Sales
- Sponsorship

Silent auction tech: effective but expensive

Silent auctions have long been a useful weapon in the fundraising arsenal of not-for-profit organisations, but with the days of pens and paper almost gone, new technology is beginning to take over.

Many organisations are turning to digital silent auction technology run on tablets and smart phones, which is reportedly helping to increase the frequency and value of bids.

Did, a UK based silent auction technology, did, enjoyed a 114% rise in the number of charities using their service between April 2012 and March 2013.

did, a UK based silent auction technology, did, enjoyed a 114% rise in the number of charities using their service between April 2012 and March 2013.

Partner – Charity Facing

What the price of silent auction technology appears restrictive for smaller groups, for larger fundraisers it could prove cost-effective.

Australian suppliers of silent auction technology include:

- Ezibidz
- Crowdcomm
- BidX

What is a silent auction?

A silent auction is an auction held without an auctioneer.

Items are usually set up on tables with sheets of paper in front of them.

On these sheets of paper there is an item description, how much the item is worth, starting bid (usually less than the retail price), and minimum bid increments. Bidders write their name, phone number and bid under this information.

Silent auctions are popular fundraisers because they are relatively unobtrusive, novel, encourage less-aggressive competition than live auctions, and can be held during other events.

How much does it cost?

Silent auction technology may not be affordable for all groups or appropriate for all fundraising functions.

It's hard to pin down exact costs. Suppliers of the technology contacted by the Funding Centre decided to reveal their pricing structures, suggesting instead that people contact them directly to discuss specifics such as attendee numbers, projected funds raised, equipment needed and payment facilities.



> Fundraising News

No fluff, just the stuff you really need to know if you're raising funds in Australia.

> TOOLS FOR SUBSCRIBERS (Subscriptions from \$85 per year for not-for-profit organisations)

The screenshot shows a search interface for grants. It includes filters for location (Victoria), category (Community Services & Development, Economic Development, Environment & Sustainability, Health & Wellbeing, Infrastructure, Rural & Regional), and amount (\$0 min \$0 max \$1,000). Results for the 2013 Coles Junior Landcare School Garden Grant, Ace Sponsorship Program, AEI Community Grants, and Banksia Category Awards are displayed, each with a brief description, closing date, providers, locations, primary categories, and amounts.

> Grants Database

Fully searchable directory of more than 2500 live grants, updated daily.

The screenshot shows a monthly PDF newsletter titled "Funding Centre Scoop". It includes sections for "Community & Environment", "Health & Wellbeing", "Education", "Arts & Culture", and "Business & Employment". News items include "NEWS: Government to Finalise new deft", "NEWS: QLD to receive liquor permits", "NEWS: Help Street Collection Day", and "INcredible Speakers: Unforgettable Convos". There are also sections for "Employee Volunteer Grant Program" and "Community Services & Development".

> Funding Centre Scoop

Customised monthly PDF (*"The New EasyGrants"*) providing a comprehensive listing of all relevant and currently open grants, as well as a digest of the latest fundraising news and new tools available from the website.

The screenshot shows an email from "Funding Centre ALERT" to "Kathy". The subject is "Hi Kathy, The following grants have recently been updated." The body of the email lists a single grant: "Graffiti Prevention & Removal Grants" with the note "What's changed: Closing date confirmed". Below the email is a snippet of the "OurCommunity.com.au" service interface.

> Grant Alerts

Customised daily or weekly emails alerting users to major changes to grants that fit their profile.

Publicity	
1. Have promotional flyers been sent to as many outlets as possible (paper and electronically)?	
2. Have you announced details on your webpage? On Facebook? On Twitter?	
3. Have all people on your database received a flyer well before the event?	
4. Has your email mailing list been informed of the event?	
5. Have paid advertisements been designed and space booked, with careful attention to publishing deadlines?	
6. Have free advertising possibilities been explored and booked e.g. "What's On" column in the local and daily newspapers?	
7. Has a media release been written and sent?	
8. Have key individuals from the media been sent formal invitations?	
9. Are media kits organised?	
10. Has a media strategy been developed to handle enquiries if an unplanned emergency occurs?	
11. Are posters designed, printed and placed in appropriate venues?	
12. Are event programs designed, approved and printed?	
13. Are all printing costs and schedules closely monitored?	

Invitations

> Fundraising Tools

- Checklists
- Templates
- Policies
- Planning tools

> Find out more at www.fundingcentre.com.au

9. Business and community sectors urged to work together

The Business Council of Australia (BCA) has called for long-term planning and stronger relationships between business and community sectors, as well as the Federal Government.

BCA president Tony Shepherd made the call during a recent speech to the National Press Club, saying it was vital a long-term policy was developed to foster these relationships.

His comments received support from ACOSS CEO Cassandra Goldie, who spoke at the same National Press Club event.

"We need to do more as a country to ensure the benefits of that social progress are felt by all," Ms Goldie said. "With 2.2 million people, including one in six children, living below the poverty line we are particularly pleased to hear the strong statement from Mr Shepherd that that income support allowances need to ensure people without paid work are able to 'live in dignity'.

"We also agree that we need an 'employment services that get them back to work quickly so they don't fall into long-term, entrenched unemployment'.

"It is critical that we ensure the revenue base to support these objectives, and a fair, sustainable tax base must be the first order for this priority."

Dr Goldie said ACOSS was committed to "building a strong relationship with the business community to form a consensus on important issues in the national interest".

The Federal Coalition has pledged to re-instate the Prime Minister's Community-Business Partnership initiative if it is elected in September.

Opposition Families, Housing and Human Services spokesman Kevin Andrews said the partnerships program would be part of its efforts to encourage a culture of philanthropy in Australia.

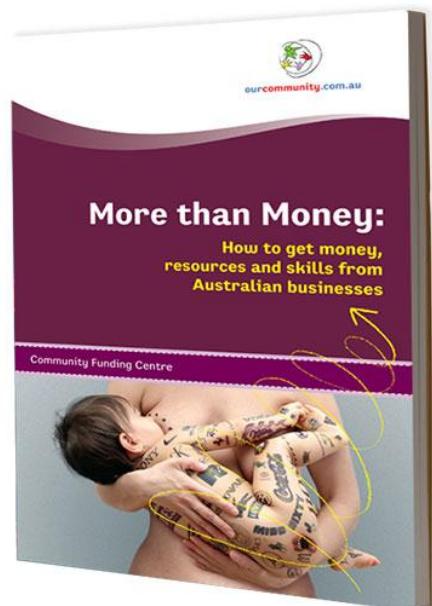
More than Money

If you're interested in learning more about putting in place a mutually-beneficial community-business partnership, check out the Our Community book, *More than Money: How to get money, resources and skills from Australian businesses*.

More than Money provides tips on how to develop a community-business partnership, as well as emphasising the importance of looking beyond just money and towards other partnership models based around:

- Ideas and skills exchanges
- Sharing resources
- Mentoring
- Volunteerism
- Scholarships and awards
- Business as a collection point.

> [Click here](#) to find out more.



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10. God Save Our Gracious Queen's Birthday Holiday (and the honours system)

After Australia Day we drew your attention to the stark difference between the proportion of awards passed out to men and to women.

We pressed those deciding who gets what to reconsider what was important in life, and we pressed women and men to nominate more women.

Another holiday has now come and gone, and another set of honours, and the position of women has now got 0.1% worse.



We seem to have reached some sort of a plateau. Is this really the best we can do? Surely not.

We've said it before and we'll say it again – the poor numbers have nothing to do with the notion that women are doing less for Australia, and everything to do with:

- How we, as a community, place greater value on "the things that men do" (rather than "the things that women do" to create a better Australia; and
- The fact that too few women are being nominated for awards.

Of course, these two factors are related.

The good news is we can change this! It's really not that hard. Just take a look around at who's making a difference in your community, who's going *above and beyond*, who's encouraging us all to aspire to bigger and better things.

Then put pen to paper and start nominating more women. To find out how to do it, download [this guide](#).

Better news on Australia Day we hope?

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11. Stay Green: How to maintain a learning culture in your workplace

A recent article from Zark Consultancy's Ruth Knight reminds us of the need to keep growing and learning.

Ruth quotes the founder of McDonald's, Ray Kroc, as saying, "As long as you're green, you're growing. As soon as you're ripe, you start to rot."

Ruth asks us to reflect:

- Do you feel as if you are growing each week in your knowledge, skills and practice?
- Do you have mentors around you that support you to learn and stretch yourself?
- Do you have a workplace culture that encourages you to learn, innovate and review your progress?

"Learning at work is vital because it helps you to get better at your job and allows you to keep up to date with research and best practice," she writes.

"It even helps to motivate you and can improve your job satisfaction. Learning should therefore not be seen as an additional burden on top of your normal workload, but rather something to be welcomed as a means of improving and dealing effectively with your workload."

Ruth provides the following tips for people who feel there is no learning culture at their workplace:

1. Make learning a daily event and part of everything you do. At the end of the week write a learning journal to document what you've learnt that week.
2. Read interesting blogs written by industry experts.
3. Ask your colleagues and clients for feedback regularly.
4. Make evaluation a continuous and honest dialogue, not just a formal process.
5. Use team meetings to encourage people to share experiences about their achievements and challenges that week.
6. Organise a special meeting to discuss customer (stakeholder) feedback and complaints. As a team, discuss the feedback and brainstorm solutions to any negative feedback.
7. Ask for a performance appraisal and tell your manager your learning goals and interests.
8. Give people time (e.g. three hours) per month where they are allowed to study, read or attend professional development.
9. Find a supportive coach or mentor to meet with you every month to discuss your work.
10. Once every three months, shadow a person in a different part of the organisation so you can learn more about each person's work and responsibilities.

> [Click here](#) to download one of Ruth's free Practice Guides.

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12. New Tricks: Technology, social media and the not-for-profit sector

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Flickr and Instagram are now common tools for bringing together like-minded people to socialise, learn and work towards a common cause.

The possibilities are endless, if you know where to look and what to use. Here are three examples:

The power of petitions

Petitions have long been an outlet for community groups to drive change and demonstrate significant public support for (or opposition to) a particular issue.

The [change.org](#) website has become an important tool for grassroots activists around the world who can, in a matter of minutes, create a petition on a topic they wish to advocate around and put it online for people to sign.

From there, your community group can promote the petition through media or marketing (or perhaps online via Facebook or Twitter) and provide people with a link so they can show their support.

Petitions are ultimately a game of numbers. The greater the number of supporters, the more clout you have when presenting your case. Sites like [change.org](#) can be a great way to either start a movement for change, or to show support for one.

* Note that some petitions need to adhere to specific layouts and wording if being formally presented to state or federal parliament. Check with your local MP to ensure your petition will comply with these standards.

Annual reports – online

Online distribution of annual reports has become more widely used and accepted. It is a great way to get your message out to a bigger audience, without the high printing and postage costs.

In the past, Canada's Calgary Zoo has used unorthodox reporting methods – its 2011 annual report was printed on one (rather large) piece of paper to highlight the importance the zoo placed on resource conservation.

The Zoo has gone one better in 2012, compiling its annual report via online photo-sharing site Instagram.

The report documents a year in the life of the zoo and its 1.46 million visitors by capturing each day of the year in a photo. The report can be viewed [here](#).

The decision is a gutsy one – especially given there is no "proper" printed report available anywhere.

The only text in the report are the captions to each photo, each of which can be read by clicking on individual photos in the report.

It's not for everyone, but it does help to remind us not to just carry on doing the same thing year in year out without thinking about the options. What can you do differently this year?

SMS not dead yet

Mark Twain once said that reports of his death were "greatly exaggerated" . A similar thing could be said of the humble SMS text message.

For many years the SMS (short message service, sometimes known as a text message) was a staple mobile phone function. That was until the smart phone and social media era started introducing new ways of getting short messages around.

But a report out of the UK reminds us not to write off the SMS just yet. The *Guardian* newspaper recently took a look at the ways a number of community sector groups have used SMS to inform, fundraise and attract support.

"Every day tens of thousands of texts will be sent from personal and work mobiles to organise events, check on progress and send reminders about meetings," the report points out.

"Texting is the Cinderella technology of social change: Twitter and Facebook get the media attention, but texting and email do all the work."

The report is well worth a read – check it out [here](#).

"Texting is the Cinderella technology of social change: Twitter and Facebook get the media attention, but texting and email do all the work."

Psssst If you want to learn more about which new technologies to use to fundraise and raise awareness (and which ones you can safely ignore), book some training with Brett de Hoedt at [Hootville](#). You won't be sorry.

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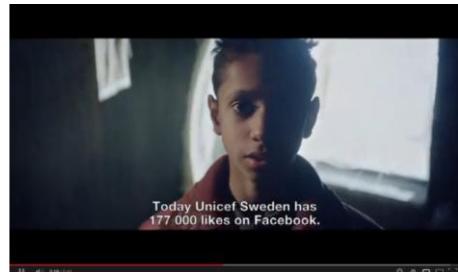
13. Our Picks: Keeping it real on Facebook, income in Australia, Q&A and data

There's so much information to pick through these days it can make your head spin. To save you some sifting, here are our top three picks from the past month:

- **Likes Don't Save Lives**

There's a lot of focus these days on Klout scores, Twitter feeds, how many Facebook "likes" you have, how good you're doing at social media. In a new ad, Unicef Sweden has cut through the bulldust to bring the focus back to where it should be – real action.

► [Watch the Video](#)

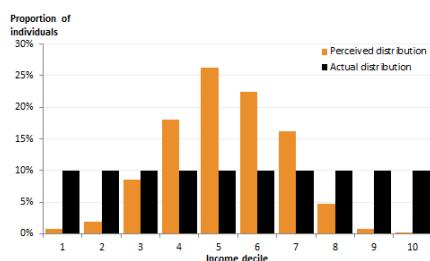


- **The real story about income in Australia?**

There's been a lot of talk lately about middle class welfare and questions around how much you need to earn before you can no longer call yourself a "battler". If you're confused about the typical Australian's wage, check out this plain-English explanation.

► [Read the Blog](#)

The Australian income distribution: perception and reality



- **Q&A: I'm Alright Jack**

OK, this is one of ours, but we still think it's worth a mention. Attendees at the 2013 Communities in Control Conference have dubbed it the best yet, and the Q&A session, featuring Virginia Trioli, David Marr, Clementine Ford, Fiona Collis and Kon Karapanagiotidis was a particular highlight. If you missed it, you're in luck – the video and audio are now available.

► [Watch the Communities in Control Q&A](#)



- **A Dollar Earned**

We are big fans of data visualisation – in an era where information is everywhere, visual cues are imperative. Here's a great example of a great data representation, showing the relative earnings of a white woman, a black woman and a Latina woman in America, as measured against the earnings of a white man.

► [View the graphic](#)



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14. Deep Involvement: Building trust and inclusion

'Social inclusion' has been a government priority for five years now, and a lot of good work has been done – in research, if not yet so much in practice.

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), for example, has just produced the final report in its [Housing in Social Inclusion](#) project, exploring in fine detail the links between homelessness and exclusion and “the ways in which housing-related policies and programs can promote social inclusion”.

The report asks the big questions:

1. How do housing processes affect the ways in which low-income households experience disadvantages?
2. How effective are current housing-related programs in promoting social inclusion?
3. What lessons can be learnt from international good practice?

The basic question they're trying to ask is “does living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods make people poor, or do poor neighbourhoods just attract disadvantaged people?”

Poor people go where rents are low, which means they tend to cluster; does that make matters worse?

Ideally, you'd like to place disadvantaged people where resources are good – meaning rich areas where, unfortunately, housing is dear. Ideally, too, you'd like property prices to be low so that disadvantaged people could afford it – in a country where most wealth is invested in housing, how popular can you expect this to be?

And what does this mean for community trust? [Another point of view](#) on this comes from survey firm [Mext Consulting's](#) latest community trust study, where in 2012 more than 1300 respondents rated their trust in their local community.

There's a lot of variability. Only 30% of us, on average, claim to know our neighbours – but where community trust is high, that goes up to 60%. Which is cause, which effect? A quarter of us help our neighbours, but when trust is high that goes up to half. A quarter of us are strong on volunteering – high trust, half. 69% shop locally – high trust, 71%. A total of 38% recommend their suburb to others – high trust, 73%.

“The more residents trust their local community, the more they do to make it successful.” Or vice versa.

"The more residents trust their local community, the more they make it successful." Or vice versa.

As one would expect in this country, social factors are overlaid by immigration. Trust is strongest in more cohesive suburbs, and is stressed by change .

The AHURI report covers initiatives in SA, Victoria, Tasmania, and the UK. And the upshot?

In Australia, a social inclusion approach to homelessness is relatively new and there is little evidence about the effectiveness of new approaches to homelessness, despite the obvious enthusiasm of many of those involved.

In the UK, though, which has been at it for longer, the figures do seem to be improving.

There does seem to be agreement that these things take time. Whole-of-government approaches are called for, and these take longer and progress more patchily than originally anticipated. The timescale for reform is set in decades, not years.

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15. Make a Date With Our Community: New training dates just released

Advanced Grants Writing Seminar

Melbourne	<u>23 August</u>
Sydney	<u>30 August</u>
Brisbane	<u>21 June & 6 September</u>
Perth	<u>21 June & 20 September</u>

Certificate IV in Governance - for Community Boards (BSB40907)

Brisbane	<u>2-5 September</u>
Melbourne	<u>19-22 August & 11-14 November</u>
Sydney	<u>26-29 August</u>

Introduction to Writing Winning Grant Applications

Melbourne	<u>22 July</u>
Sydney	<u>24 July</u>
Brisbane	<u>25 July</u>
Adelaide	<u>29 July</u>
Perth	<u>30 July</u>

Secrets of Successful Boards Seminar

Melbourne	<u>23 July</u>
Brisbane	<u>26 July</u>
Perth	<u>31 July</u>

Strategies for Sustainable Funding Seminar

Melbourne	<u>22 July</u>
Sydney	<u>24 July</u>
Brisbane	<u>25 July</u>
Adelaide	<u>29 July</u>
Perth	<u>30 July</u>

Click the links above to book a spot or go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/scheduledtraining to find out more.

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

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



Refugee Week: 16-22 June

Refugee Week is used to inform the public about refugees and celebrate positive contributions made by refugees to Australian society.



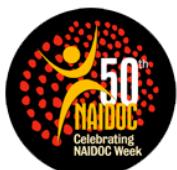
Drug Action Week: 16-22 June

Drug Action Week aims to highlight the issues that accompany drug and alcohol use. It is also an opportunity to recognise the achievements of the workers who work hardest to reduce drug-related harm.



Red Nose Day: 28 June

Red Nose Day is the national fundraising event day for SIDS and Kids held throughout the month of June, providing funding for a 24-hour bereavement support service, community education to reduce incidents of SIDS and fatal sleeping accidents, and research into areas such as SIDS and stillbirth.



NAIDOC Week: 7-14 July

NAIDOC celebrations are held around Australia in the first full week in July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The week is celebrated not just in the Indigenous community, but also in government agencies, schools, local councils and workplaces.



Diabetes Awareness Week: 14-20 July

National Diabetes Week is designed to raise awareness about diabetes in Australia. The campaign aims to educate Australia of the risk factors for type 2 diabetes and how the disease can be prevented.

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17. Community Sector Briefs

Privacy law changes on their way

The Federal Government has urged the not-for-profit sector to start preparing for the changes to Australia's privacy laws, which are scheduled to come into force next March.

The reforms, brought about by the Privacy Amendment Act, which was passed in 2012, are a result of a six-year law reform process. They will see the introduction of 13 Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).

Other reforms include enhanced powers for the Australian Information Commissioner and a number of changes to credit reporting laws.

Not-for-profits are expected to be particularly impacted by rules relating to:

- Collection of solicited personal information;
- Notifying the public about that collection;
- The use and disclosure of personal information, and;
- Direct marketing.

More information on the changes is available [here](#).

Queensland cuts liquor licensing red tape

The Queensland Government passed new laws in late May to make it easier for community groups to hold events without the hassle of obtaining liquor permits.

The *Liquor and Gaming (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013* made more than 20 changes to existing legislation to cut both liquor and gaming red tape.

Queensland Attorney General Jarrod Bleijie said they were "common sense amendments".

"Many of the previous regulations and requirements were unnecessary and only created extra hassles for groups planning events," Mr Bleijie said.

"We trust Queenslanders to do the right thing and if they don't, laws are in place to penalise them and remove the exemption," he said.

For more information on fundraising legislation and regulations in all states and territories visit Our Community's [Funding Centre website](#).

Computing in the cloud

The Federal Government will embark on an effort to promote cloud computing to not-for-profits under its recently released National Cloud Computing Strategy.

The strategy – available [here](#) – details the potential of cloud computing and the steps the government will be taking to encourage its use.

Cloud computing, in essence, describes the process of accessing, sharing and storing files and applications over the internet, rather than installing and storing them on your hard drive. See [here](#) for a more detailed explanation.

Under the new strategy, the government says it will improve the amount of information on cloud computing available to not-for-profits, and will build on a number of existing cloud-computing and technology-based initiatives.

The policy can be read [here](#).

Victorian Court Fund reopened

Legislation to reintroduce the long-standing practice of court-ordered charitable donations has been put to the Victorian Parliament following a Supreme Court ruling ended the custom.

Attorney General Robert Clark said the new legislation would once more allow courts to direct offenders to donate money to not-for-profits and community organisations.

“This practice dates back many years, to when contributions were ordered to the court ‘poor box’,” Mr Clark said.

“These donations have supported the vital work of the Salvation Army, the St Vincent de Paul Society and the Melbourne City Mission, among many others,” he said.

Court-ordered donations were dumped following a successful Melbourne City Council appeal against an August 2011 Magistrates’ sentencing decision.

Awards season

Three major awards are now open for nominations:

- **Resilient Australia Awards** – Six national awards designed to recognise the innovative practices and achievements which make communities stronger, more resilient and more prepared to manage emergency situations. Applications close July 5. More information is available [here](#).
- **Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll** – The Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll formally acknowledges and celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians. Applications close June 28. More information is available [here](#).
- **The Melbourne Awards** – The Melbourne Awards celebrate and reward inspirational individuals and organisations who have made significant contributions to “Melbourne life” in the areas of sustainability, community and profile. Applications close June 17. More information is available [here](#).

PilchConnect launches Victorian Rules Review Project

Not-for-profit specialist legal service PilchConnect has begun a Rules Review Project for Victorian incorporated associations.

The Project is designed to help incorporated associations review and update their rules (a set of guiding rules every incorporated association must have) following changes to Victorian laws arising from the introduction of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

Not-for-profit groups using the model rules will automatically transition to a new set of model rules on November 26. You can [view the new model rules here](#). For more information, [visit the Rules Review Project website](#).

Advocacy group launches "decarceration" poster

The Centre for Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRP) has launched a new campaign aimed at reducing the number of people going to, and returning to, prison.

CHRP is a project of Flat Out, a Victorian organisation advocating on behalf of women in prison, and pushing for changes to the broader structural and societal issues that contribute to incarceration and re-imprisonment.

The *An End to Prisons* campaign poster – available [here](#) – outlines the case for "decarceration", and for reducing the numbers of people going to and returning to prison.

"The overall rate of imprisonment in Victoria has risen by almost 43% since 1999, with the rate of women's imprisonment growing faster than that of men," the poster says.

"Imprisonment disproportionately affects communities that experience systemic racism, as reflected by overrepresentation in prisons. In Australia, Indigenous people are 14.8 times more likely than non-indigenous people to be in prison."

The CHRP campaign also points to the violence that occurs in prisons, arguing that prisons "don't create community safety".

"Real community safety (everyone having access to housing, food, employment, education and freedom from violence) is not created by increasing prison numbers," the poster says. "We need to consider transformative changes, and investing resources in communities, not prisons."

CHRP suggests a number of ways community organisations can support the effort, including:

- To ensure they (and/or organisations they work with and make referrals to) do not pose any barriers or discrimination against people who have been imprisoned, or people who are at risk of imprisonment; and
- Using their organisational voice, knowledge and resources to educate and advocate for decarceration and social change. Community organisations can publicly challenge proposals for prison expansion and raise awareness about the harmful effects of punitive law and order policies, CHRP says.

More information can be found [here](#).

School ethics class providers might win DGR status

Groups providing ethics classes in government schools as an alternative to religious education classes could soon be able to receive tax deductible donations after Federal Parliament's Lower House last month voted to amend tax laws.

The changes see an expansion to Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) categories in order to encompass ethics class providers approved by state and territory governments.

The Federal Government put forward the legislation in a bid to establish a "level playing field" between those who provide ethics classes and those who provide religious education sessions.

Organisations providing religious education classes are automatically classed as DGRs. Assistant Treasurer David Bradbury said no such special status was afforded to ethics class providers.

"If providers of ethics classes want DGR status, an organisation must make a request to be specifically named in the tax laws, which requires an amendment to be passed by the Parliament in the case of each organisation. This is a time-consuming and uncertain process," he said.

The Federal Coalition opposed the changes. The Federal Senate will now consider the legislation.

Human Rights workshops during June and July (Victoria)

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission is running training sessions throughout June and July to ensure employers and service providers comply with the state's equal opportunity laws, and are aware of their obligations under the Victorian human rights charter.

The workshops will be held in Carlton and Horsham, and will include:

- Equal opportunity obligations for community organisations
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010: an overview
- Equal opportunity contact officer: practice update
- Equal opportunity contact officer: new to the role
- Using the Commission's free dispute resolution service
- Preventing and managing bullying in the workplace.

To register, visit www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/training. For more information, phone (03) 9032 3415 or email education@veohrc.vic.gov.au.

Registrations open for Volunteering Australia Conference

Volunteering Australia's 15th National Conference on Volunteering will be staged in September.

The conference, to be held from September 4-6 in Adelaide, will feature notable speakers from Australia and overseas, including:

- The UK's Debra Allcock Tyler – CEO, Directory of Social Change.
- Graham Allcott, also from the UK – Director and "Productivity Ninja", Think Productive.
- Professor Robert Costanza – Professor of Public Policy, Australian National University.
- Amanda Gore – bestselling author of *The Joy Project*.

For more information, and to register, [click here](#).

Free ageing and Alzheimer's symposium

A free symposium on the topic of ageing, dementia and Alzheimer's will be held in Melbourne on August 2.

The Wicking Symposium: ageing and Alzheimer's funding outcomes in research and practice will invite various JO and JR Wicking Trust recipients to share their experiences, lessons and expertise in the areas of Alzheimer's and ageing.

The Wicking Trust aims to achieve enduring, positive impact in the areas of vision impairment, care of the aged, problems associated with ageing and Alzheimer's disease.

Admission to the symposium is free. To register, and for more information, including a list of speakers, visit www.wickingsymposium.eventbrite.com.au.

SA leadership program now open

For more than 14 years the Leaders Institute of South Australia's flagship program, the Governor's Leadership Foundation (GLF) has seen an array of prominent graduates from across government, business and the not-for-profit sector. And this year they want you, if you fit the bill of course.

"The program is at the cutting edge of leadership development in Australia," says CEO of the Leaders Institute Niki Vincent. "It is focused on building strategic foresight capacity, enhancing knowledge of complex issues in society, developing self-awareness and wisdom, broadening networks and strengthening leadership capacity."

GLF participants are competitively selected and must be prepared to commit to a challenging, exciting and action-packed 10 months in this structured program of monthly experiential seminar sessions designed to stretch their hearts and minds.

Participants also undertake community work and intense personal development and individual coaching. On completion, successful participants are awarded a Fellowship by the Governor of South Australia and become part of an active alumni of more than 450 people.

"We are now seeking applications from dynamic, enthusiastic and committed South Australians from a wide range of backgrounds, occupations and sectors to participate in the GLF in 2014," Niki said.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Shergold report on Victorian community services sector reform released

A new report examining the Victorian community services sector has identified more than 20 key points aimed at improving the sector's efforts and ensure its sustainability.

The independent report – *Service Sector Reform: Reflections on the Consultations* – was compiled by Professor Peter Shergold after a series of discussions, interviews and submissions involving a wide range of sector representatives.

Feedback informed the report's 22 main themes, or talking points. They include:

- The need for a clear, system-wide vision of the outcomes sought from services delivered to vulnerable and disadvantaged people, including the development of better performance indicators and impact measures.
- Improved collaboration across the system, supported by effective partnership arrangements.
- A more holistic approach to addressing disadvantage.
- A greater focus on addressing the underlying causes of disadvantage, vulnerability and social exclusion.
- The need to encourage a culture of innovation. Risk should be managed prudently by a willingness to pilot, demonstrate and evaluate new approaches.
- Wherever possible, vulnerable people – and not just those with a disability – should have the opportunity to have greater control over the choice and management of the services they need.
- Better use of technology and social media in order to improve the quality of service for people accessing the community services system. In addition, better use of technology is important to promote effective collaboration and information-sharing about services, users and outcomes achieved.
- The design and delivery of community services should be "evidence based".

The document will be subject to further consultations before being compiled into a final report. It is available from the [Victorian Council of Social Services \(VCOSS\) website](#).

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18. Good Moves: Community Sector Jobs & Board Vacancies

JOB VACANCY LISTINGS (Paid Positions)

New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
Manager Community Services	Wagga Wagga City Council	Details
Program Manager Outreach Services	Youth Off The Streets	Details
OOSH Coordinator	Southlake Community Services Inc	Details

Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
SUPPORT WORKER	INCLUSIVE SUPPORT SERVICE	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
Administration and Receptionist (Maternity Leave)	Brotherhood of St Laurence	Details
Manager Highett Neighbourhood Community House	High Neighbourhood Community House	Details
Centre Manager - Derrimut Community Centre	YMCA Victoria	Details
Centre Manager - Derrimut Community Centre	YMCA Victoria	Details
Scholarship Coordinator	Kids Under Cover	Details
Team Leader	Brotherhood of St Laurence	Details

BOARD/COMMITTEE VACANCY LISTINGS (Volunteer Positions)

New South Wales

Chair	Playgroup NSW Inc	Details
Secretary, General Board Member	Australian Dance Vision Company Limited	Details
Treasurer, General Board Member	Liverpool Youth Refuge	Details

Queensland

Treasurer, General Board Member	SBH Queensland Inc	Details
Treasurer; General Board Member	Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc	Details
General Board Member	Inala Wangarra Incorporated	Details

South Australia

General Board Member	Alwyndor Aged Care	Details
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Victoria

General Board Member + 2 sub-committee positions	YMCA Victoria	Details
General Board Member	Williamstown Community and Education Centre Inc	Details
General Board Member	Manningham Community Health Services Ltd	Details
Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, General Board Member	Pink Cross Foundation Australia	Details

Western Australia

Treasurer, General Board Member	Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association	Details
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19. Fast Forward

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

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20. About Our Community

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

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

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

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