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Where not-for-profits go for help



Our Community Matters



Edition 6, 2017 • December



BY DENIS MORIARTY, MANAGING DIRECTOR, OUR COMMUNITY GROUP

It was a very good day. It was a good day not just because a good cause had prevailed and Australians had passed up the chance to be utter bastards, but because we laid down markers.

Next time someone's looking around for a scapegoat, next time someone's trying to distract attention from the men behind the curtain by calling on our toxic prejudices, maybe they'll look back on this and think twice.

Next time we're thrown into a hectic campaign where we're arguing with our friends about tactics and sparring with the gatekeepers about whether our tone is sufficiently bland and trying to persuade politicians that they won't be called on to be courageous, maybe we can look back on that morning and remember that it can all come together triumphantly.

Next time we're wondering whether we're asking for too much or reaching too high we'll ►

remember that big changes, piercing visions, can be transmuted into ordinary everyday reality if we work together.

Now, to be sure, it's back into the parliamentary tar pit to thrash out the details, but we shouldn't let the tactical manoeuvring and the inevitable compromises dim our recollection of that first fine careless rapture.

Because it was a very good day, and when we have one of them we should take the time to enjoy it. When, every now and again, a great wrong is lifted, and a people is set free from the snarling viciousness of ancient hatreds, and we can lift up our eyes to the hills – well, Siegfried Sassoon said it best, a century ago, in 'Everyone sang':

*Everyone suddenly burst out singing:
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields: on – on – and
out of sight.*

*Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted;
And beauty came like the setting sun;
My heart was shaken with tears: and horror
Drifted away... O, but everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing
will never be done. ■*



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Great Grant: Pole Foundation Ludic Resourcing Small Grants Program

It's like a wish come true! The Pole Foundation's Ludic Resourcing Small Grants Program provides open-ended resources to household-focused child-centred recipients who can demonstrate whole-year interpersonal excellence.

Overview

Entry is open to family trusts and household entities (and individuals under legally recognised guardianship). Each grant consists of a package or packages of individually targeted and wrapped ludic resources nominated by or on behalf of the recipient to a maximum value calculated on the basis of the socioeconomic and sociocultural positioning of the recipient in their geographic matrix, contingent on workshop availability and stocking size.

Criteria

Applicants must be entities focused on

- Household-scale interventions
- Preschool and school-age populations

Preference will be given to applications that can show how they plan to enhance the lives of the target population. Impact will be assessed through short- and medium-term hedonic goal satisfaction measured by individual kinaesthetic responses.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate close adherence to officially sanctioned codes of conduct throughout the financial year (December 24, 2016 to December 24, 2017). Any breach may result in participants' packages

being confined to carbon credits. Applicants' information will be held in a peer-reviewed database of positive and negative indicators based on past performance. This information will not be shared with state or federal authorities.

While other agencies are encouraged to supplement Foundation provision with their own package transfers, the Foundation and its agents must be given sole credit for the provision of any Foundation-funded grants packages. All packages must be clearly labelled.

Previous grant recipients are not discouraged from applying for grants in succeeding years provided they remain within the target population for the entire financial year.

All applicants born after December 25, 2009 must be prepared to endorse on request their commitment to the **Pole Foundation Mission Statement**.

Deadline

Applications must be postmarked on or before December 10, 2017. All applicants will be informed of the success or otherwise of their applications before December 26, 2017.

Applications must be made in writing to

S. Nicholas
Santa Claus Main Post Office
FI-96930 Arctic Circle
FINLAND

More information

Visit the Funding Centre (Yule log-in required): www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/G07909. ■



Traditional fundraisers such as sausage sizzles are still the bread and butter of many not-for-profits. Picture: Wikimedia Commons.

Fundraising? Stick with your mates

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

The latest figures on giving reveal how important it is to nurture the loyalty of your supporters, whether they're volunteers, donors or future benefactors.

And that's even truer for smaller organisations, according to data from a **Giving Australia 2016** study, just released, that focuses on giving and volunteering from the not-for-profit perspective.

The latest report from the ongoing study – which draws on 2016 figures – shows that while not-for-profits have been slow to embrace new technology, traditional fundraising methods still have strong support.

Giving Australia 2016 project director Wendy Scaife – from QUT's **Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies (ACPNS)** – said the study's figures on fundraising methods show that despite the growth of technology-based appeals (used by 35% of organisations), events are still the most popular fundraising

method for not-for-profits, with nearly 60% relying on them to generate funds.

“Events are still top of the pops, including the humble school fete,” Associate Professor Scaife said.

Groups still backed events for many reasons, not least “because it takes the organisation out to a new group of people, such as friends of friends.”

“People say the day of the sausage sizzle is dead, but it's not.”

“That those core support activities are still the backbone of our smaller organisations is very important to know”.

Her analysis suggests that to be successful, fundraising must have strong links to the local community.

That's perhaps why for smaller groups, memberships remain “terribly important,” Associate Professor Scaife said. ►



Associate Professor Wendy Scaife says not-for-profits are a “Cinderella sector” when it comes to new technology.

“People are putting money where their beliefs are. That mark of loyalty came through strongly.”

For larger groups, regular giving has become more significant, assisted by the advent of technology that allows regular automatic deductions.

But Associate Professor Scaife believes smaller groups should take heed of the one in 10 groups, mostly larger ones, that are increasingly seeking gifts in wills from supporters.

The study’s focus groups highlighted how important those final donations, along with major gifts, had been for organisations, but they were not being pursued by smaller groups.

“Those who are using it are saying how significant it is for their organisations. But you need to be able to scale (that request) by the size of the organisation. A major gift for some might be \$100, \$1000 or \$1 million. The important aspect is to enable people to give these kinds of donations rather than just sticking with smaller support alone.”

Loyal supporters, such as those who had been volunteering for years, may be “so happy to give ... but what we’re hearing is that people are not asking the question of the true believers ... to leave their personal legacy.”

The study also found not-for-profits were still lagging in technology, as the Institute of

Community Directors outlined in its recent series on **digital capabilities in the sector**.

“We really are a Cinderella sector in that regard,” Associate Professor Scaife said.

For example, just 76% of not-for-profits had a website, and less than half had one that was optimised for mobiles. What’s more, only 36% had the ability to receive donations on their site, even though services such as Our Community’s **GiveNow** allow groups to collect donations easily and commission-free.

Other top findings in the report:

- Most not-for-profits (94%) had volunteers, but only half had a dedicated volunteer manager
- The average number of volunteers per organisation was 71 and the median was 15
- 59% of respondents used social media, with Facebook the most common platform, followed by Twitter and YouTube
- Community–business partnerships were seen as elusive unless organisations increased their knowledge, their profile and their resources to staff such partnerships.

More information

[Read the full report here.](#) ■



Hackathon volunteers have 48 hours to come up with tech solutions to community sector problems.

Random Hacks of Kindness

Random Hacks of Kindness is a conglomeration of technologists and community-sector professionals whose mission is to design tech for good. Alex McMillan attended their “hackathon” in Melbourne last month to find out what they’re all about.

The first thing I notice on walking into the Random Hacks of Kindness (RHoK) lair is the level of concentration in the room. Around 50 volunteers who have given up their weekend to be here are fixated on their computer screens.

This is my first “hackathon”, and I really have no idea what I’m seeing. Cal Foulner, the group’s community manager, ushers me over with a big smile and explains.

“A hackathon is pretty simple, really. If you take someone who knows tech, put them in a room with a problem, and throw in some pizza, then they naturally come up with a tech solution.”

What makes RHoK’s approach unique is that participants do it all “for good”, rather than to make money from their solutions. “At RHoK, the volunteers are motivated to solve problems presented to them by those working in the community sector,” Cal explains.

As the day progresses, the tension in the room ebbs and flows. Occasionally there’s a loud cheer, or a group gathers together over one screen, chatting in hushed tones.

They’re working on problems brought to them by eight “changemakers” – people who work or volunteer in the community sector and have found a gap that needs filling. The committee looks for “Goldilocks” problems: not too big, but big enough to be inspiring, and not too small, but small enough to solve in 48 hours (or so).

The issues in the room today affect children in protection, women who have recently migrated to Australia, and those looking to fulfil their life goals, among others. The changemakers are alight with enthusiasm, switching from furrowed ►



brow to beaming grins every time a programmer solves another problem.

Martina Clark is a changemaker whose team is building a unique support platform for carers of cancer patients, an idea that came to her after she'd struggled through her own experience of supporting a friend. She says the technologists are the best part of RHoK. "They're so enthusiastic, and we're all on the same page. They have some experience among them with cancer care, which makes it really special for me."

Here on her fourth hack, Jen McConachy from Berry Street, a Victorian child and family services organisation, has learned this lesson. "As someone who isn't very tech-savvy, you'll need to sit with a little bit of discomfort, but just go with it. They're incredibly experienced people."

Jen joined the RHoK fold seeking a way to record information on relatives and friends of children in the child protection system. "For me, the big lesson was learning to define what I wanted, and put that out to the hackers and asking them what they could offer."

Cal emphasises, "It's important that changemakers stay the expert of the problem and don't try and provide the solution – that's the hacker's job."

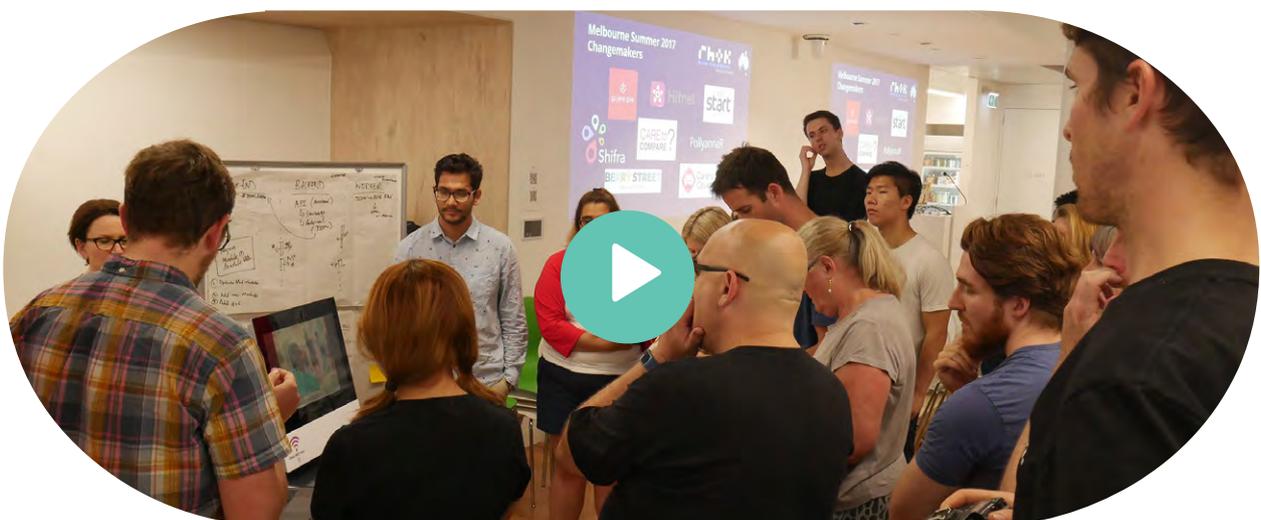
As the day draws to a close, each group shows off their end product to a panel of judges, as well as to the tired volunteers who are eager to see what others have been working on. Each group has achieved a huge amount in such a small time – I'm simply inspired.

Committee member Eddie Chapman says, "We used to make it more competitive, like a traditional hackathon. Now we try to recognise that everyone's created something amazing."

I ask Cal how community organisations can get involved and he perks up – the committee is always hunting for new changemakers, he says. "A lot of charities come to us with a myriad of problems to solve. We work closely with them to make sure they develop a really clear problem statement so they're ready for the hackathon and we can get to work on it straight away."

RHoK runs hackathons each year in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Bendigo and Ipswich. If your organisation has got a "Goldilocks" problem, or if you want to talk to the RHoK team about how you can work with them, take a look at their [FAQs](#) or [get in touch](#).

VIDEO: Meet some of the RHoK changemakers from the Melbourne 2017 hackathon ■



For changemakers, defining the problem is one of the first steps towards enabling hackers to find a solution.



Hikers who take a trip with Emu Trekkers know the money they pay goes towards supporting disadvantaged kids and youth. Picture: Emu Trekkers

Prepare for impact: Airbnb turns to community groups

A new Airbnb feature aims to connect travellers with community-based organisations in areas they're passing through. Our Community's Alex McMillan spoke to Airbnb's trips market manager, Alex Constantinides, about social impact experiences and the opportunity they present to Australian community organisations.

So, what's a social impact experience?

Experiences are part of the “**Trips**” feature within Airbnb. Experiences are handcrafted activities designed and led by local experts, offering unprecedented access and deep insights into communities and places that you wouldn't otherwise come across.

Social impact experiences have the added bonus of enabling guests (both locals and travellers) to give something back to communities through ►



not-for-profit organisations by paying for unique insights into a local area or activity.

Do you take a cut of the profits?

No. Airbnb waives its fees for social impact experiences so that 100% of the proceeds go directly to the not-for-profit.

What kind of social impact experiences are already on offer in Australia?

Tristan, a trained Australian historian and lawyer, and co-founder of the charity **Emu Trekkers**, takes guests on a hike in one of Sydney's most beautiful national parks. All proceeds go towards supporting the education, health and welfare of disadvantaged kids and youth.

What makes a good social impact experience?

It includes all these elements:

- Perspective: Guests learn about your unique point of view and leave with a fresh outlook
- Credibility: You're passionate and deeply knowledgeable about the experience's theme
- Access: You can provide behind-the-scenes access to people, places or activities that a guest couldn't find on their own.

If a not-for-profit is already offering an activity that meets the above criteria we can explore it being offered on Airbnb to grow their impact, but we also encourage creativity.

What's the best way for not-for-profits to get started with their social impact experience?

Airbnb's social impact experiences web page has lots of information to help a not-for-profit get started. We also recommend browsing experiences in different cities by selecting 'social impact' under the categories tab to get inspired by other hosts.

It's important to identify who will host the experience and check that your chosen organisation meets the **eligibility requirements**.

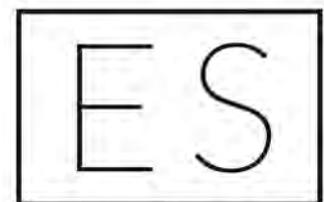
The next step is to **create an experience** and submit it. A member of Airbnb's Experiences team will then arrange a phone call to discuss the ideas and provide advice on how to deliver a successful experience so that the not-for-profit can expand their impact.

Where are organisations able to host social impact experiences?

At the moment, Airbnb offers social impact experiences in **Sydney** and **Melbourne**, but we will be opening in other locations in the future, so keep an eye on our site for news.

More information

Airbnb's **[social impact experiences page](#)**. ■



PHOTOS

Tel: 0418 335 935

www.esphotos.com.au

Ellen Smith: official photographer,
Communities in Control 2017

We're still sticking together, but it's getting harder

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

A landmark report into Australia's social cohesion shows that while Aussies are still a tolerant and welcoming bunch overall, they're increasingly turning their backs on politicians, asylum seekers, minority groups and the looming environmental threat.

The Scanlon Foundation's **Mapping Social Cohesion** report, now in its 10th year, aims to add well-researched facts to the public debate to counter some of the more outlandish claims being spread about what we all really think.

In the 10 years of the survey, some findings have remained consistent; for instance, that:

- The majority of Australians (currently 56%) think immigration levels are “about right” or “too low”
- Between 84.4% and 86% of us think multiculturalism has been good for the country
- The vast majority (now 92%) have a sense of belonging here
- More of us are happy than not (86%).

On the other side of the equation, opinion on what is the most important issue facing the country has shifted dramatically over time:

- In 2011, nearly 18% of us nominated climate change as the top priority, but only 7% say so now
- Concern over asylum seekers and boat arrivals has dropped from 12% in 2012–13 to just 2% in 2017

- Concern about terrorism and national security was first measured at 0.6% in 2012, peaked at 9.9% in 2015, and now sits at 7.3%. It has remained in the top five issues of most concern throughout the 10 years of the survey.

While defining social cohesion is a tricky business, the foundation says a shared vision of Australia's future, people ready to cooperate and a commitment to seeking harmony are critical factors.

Unfortunately, the Scanlon Monash Index, which measures that overall cohesion, has shown a drop from the original 100-point reference to an equal all-time low in 2017 of 88.5 points.

That's a result partly of:

- 19% of Aussies saying they expect their life will be worse in the next three or four years
- Discrimination on the grounds of religion, skin colour or ethnic origin doubling in the past decade to 20%
- Trust in the Federal Government continuing to dive, down from 39% to 29% since 2007
- An increased fear of local-area crime, up from 25% to 35%.

The foundation's study suggests the country's resilience – including its political stability – has diminished as a result, and warns this could put us at risk of being unable to respond to economic and other crises that could threaten us.

[Read the full report.](#) ■

Pulse Poll: All I want for Christmas

Last edition, we asked:

If your organisation could ask Santa for one thing, what would it be? That's the question we put to you in the October issue of Our Community Matters. And you told us:



The governance and management of most organisations seems to be going swimmingly, with only 3% of respondents requesting a new CEO or Chair. Technology featured heavily on wishlists, with nearly a third of respondents saying they need a data scientist or a new website. Unsurprisingly, almost half of readers said a \$4,000 grant would be the most welcome Christmas gift of all, although 8% would prefer a \$2,000 untied donation.

A shout-out to everyone who called for a great end-of-year party. We hope your wish comes true.

Take the poll: International Year of What?

The United Nations proclaimed 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, and 2019 will be the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Mysteriously, the global body has failed to proclaim 2018 the international year of anything.

One group has suggested we call it the Year of the Clean and Healthy Planet. But we want to know what you think.

What's your nomination? **2018: International Year of...? [Tell us here](#)**

The most creative responses will get a special mention in the next issue and potentially a post on our social media accounts! ■



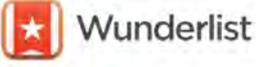
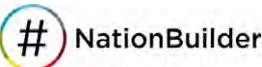
Eighteen tech tools for the 2018 not-for-profit

BY ALEX MCMILLAN, OUR COMMUNITY

Do you wince every time you get caught in the pincer movement of “reply all” emails? Are you still using Excel to manage your mailing lists? If you’re running behind 21st-century tech, make 2018 the year you catch up and get on top. There’s a truckload of useful apps and platforms to help your community group work more smoothly and efficiently.

| Category | Good | Better | Best |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| Social media management |  <p>If you’re after a simple social media tool, Every Post will deliver. While it has fewer reporting capabilities than its counterparts, it’s easily navigable.</p> <p>Advanced plans start at US\$10/month, minus a 50% discount for not-for-profits</p> |  <p>More advanced than Every Post, Hootsuite is widely used across the corporate and NFP sectors.</p> <p>It’s the most expensive of the bunch, even with a 50% discount, but Hootsuite has a number of unique features. It supports users with online training in the Hootsuite platform and social media marketing.</p> |  <p>Buffer is a great all-rounder, and the organisation actively listens to its clients when making new developments on the site. The blog is full of useful information on social media, digital marketing, content creation, and myriad other topics. And customer service here is exquisite.</p> <p>Cheaper than Hootsuite, and NPFs get 50% off.</p> |



| Category | Good | Better | Best |
|--|--|--|--|
| Email management and marketing |  <p>It might seem too simple, but Google can cater to most small organisations needing a simple email solution. It has a lot of features for a free service.</p> <p>“Undo send”, for example, is handy when you accidentally attach a picture of your cat to your event invitation.</p> |  <p>If you want to build beautiful emails quickly, and manage client lists easily, Campaign Monitor is right for you. The site is fairly intuitive, and only takes a little bit of time to master.</p> <p>They offer a 15% discount to NFPs, so plans start at US\$4.50/month.</p> |  <p>MailChimp provides marketing rookies with fantastic support, and the website is super simple to use, with lots of adaptability for those who want to create killer campaigns.</p> <p>For smaller organisations, the free account will suffice. After that, plans start at US\$8.50/month with the 15% NFP discount.</p> |
| Task and project management |  <p>A simple but effective “To Do List” tool, Wunderlist can be used across devices, has handy alerts and calendar functions, and works well as a collaborative tool.</p> <p>The free account has pretty big limits, but if you need to upgrade, plans start at US\$5/month.</p> |  <p>If you’re looking for a heavy-hitting task management and planning tool, Wrike delivers.</p> <p>Unfortunately, for teams of more than five, the plan pricing gets pretty steep, starting at US\$9.90/user per month. But for small teams, it’s great.</p> |  <p>Trello wins this round given how amazing its free account is. Unless you use Trello to hook into multiple other tools, the free account enables your organisation to plot out everything from customer support to social media and campaign plans.</p> |
| Website builder (See also Website Builders Compared) |  <p>Wordpress.com is great for organisations looking for an inexpensive, basic website builder. There’s enough flexibility to build a site to match your organisation, and Wordpress is so widely used that the support network is extensive.</p> <p>Pricing starts at US\$5/month.</p> |  <p>Nation Builder is small on flexibility but big on functionality. Incorporating donor–client relationship management, donation financial tools, and communication tools, Nation Builder is great for organisations that only want to talk to one support team.</p> <p>The “pay as you grow” payment structure starts at US\$24/month.</p> |  <p>If you’re happy to leave the full functionality of Nation Builder, then Wix is definitely the easiest website builder to use, and offers a huge number of templates and hosting for free. If you need more features, you can upgrade to a premium plan.</p> |





| Category | Good | Better | Best |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| Internal Comms |  <p>Google Hangouts</p> <p>If your organisation is already using Gmail, Google Drive and Google Docs, Hangouts is the easiest way to link all these together for team discussions.</p> <p>You can host calls with up to 10 users without needing to pay, and paid plans don't cost much. Google Hangouts doesn't boast some of the functionalities of other communication tools, but it's a great place to start.</p> |  <p>slack</p> <p>Slack is a handy tool for organising and sorting conversations and idea development. Small teams can access it at no cost. The free account supports most of the functions necessary for communicating within a team.</p> <p>Slack doesn't have a video-conference feature on its free accounts, but it easily plugs in to conference platforms like Join.me.</p> |  <p>Bitrix24</p> <p>Bitrix one-ups most communication tools by including task and workflow document storage, and announcement features. It packages these up well to make for a great team experience.</p> <p>Up to 12 team members can use Bitrix24 for free, and if your organisation is growing, you can have whole teams collaborating on their own Bitrix channel.</p> |
| Miscellaneous |  <p>TweetDeck</p> <p>Tweet Deck could be considered a social media management tool, but it's far more useful for keeping track of conversations on various topics. You can create a column to keep track of any #hashtag, follow a particular list of people, or see what's "trending". It'll help you keep your finger on the pulse, and ahead of the game.</p> <p>Tweet deck is free!</p> |  <p>Hemingway <i>Editor</i></p> <p>For any organisation that needs to write to supporters, sponsors, volunteers etc but doesn't have a communications guru on board, Hemingway App will save you a lot of stress. And if you can't bear the thought of wrapping your head around grammar and sentence structure, Hemingway App will do it for you, alerting you to excessive use of adverbs, or overly complicated sentences. It's free!</p> |  <p>Canva</p> <p>Inevitably, your organisation will need images for Facebook, Instagram, or emails. Canva is a simple design tool that hosts a multitude of templates and images, and has some great tips for making your images sparkle. Like all these "miscellaneous" tools, it's free!</p> |

Tell us about your favourite tech tool that isn't on this list – email media@ourcommunity.com.au or visit our [Facebook Group](#) to join the conversation.



The Vital Signs framework has been adopted by community foundations across the globe.

How are your community's Vital Signs?

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

Understanding what's really going on in your community is perhaps the most important thing you can do before you step in to help.

Gaining an objective understanding means collecting and managing data effectively, building compelling and readable reports based on that data, and communicating effectively.

It's not easy, as the Australian Bureau of Statistics can attest, but community foundations – 36 locally based philanthropic groups distributing \$21 million in grants each year – are taking big strides with a reporting method called **Vital Signs**.

The Vital Signs system was first developed in Toronto, Canada, in 2001, but has since spread across that nation, and more recently to Europe and now Australia and New Zealand.

The concept sells itself as “taking the pulse” of a community via credible data generated with local knowledge and skills, which is then used to generate reader-friendly reports.

And the reports become catalysts for “Vital Conversations”, town hall-style gatherings to identify where priorities should lie in health, welfare, sports, gender, education, housing or the arts.

The reports drive funding decisions for foundations, but the information is also freely shared with local government and other authorities, further increasing the influence of those foundations.

Foundations also have the option to link to the **UN's 17 sustainable development goals** – from ending poverty and hunger, to creating jobs and a better environment. ►



The Fremantle Foundation’s Vital Signs report showed a need for better inclusion, diversion and engagement for youth, and the result is a \$100,000 grant for its Night Hoops program and its Saturday night basketball tournaments.

Any community can access Vital Signs through **Australian Community Philanthropy** or **Community Foundations of Canada** (which developed the tool).

Melbourne, Ballarat and Fremantle are three cities that have used Vital Signs as a community health check, but now many more are looking carefully at the model.

Australian Community Philanthropy licenses Vital Signs for \$500–\$1000 per foundation, and uses the money to help develop an Australian-focused program. Many other Vital Signs tools, such as webinars, are free for anyone to use.

Its executive officer Kate Buxton says Vital Signs “connects the dots of data” for “understanding, engagement and response” to create insights for foundations and the rest of the community.

Does size matter with Vital Signs?

The president of Community Foundations of Canada (CFC), Ian Bird, who was in Melbourne recently for the **National Community Foundations Forum**, says Vital Signs has often worked better in smaller communities because of high levels of engagement with such a landmark project.

Communities have gotten involved for as little as

\$2000, scaling the size of their study to match their budgets, he says.

“Vital Signs provides your community with the opportunity to take the pulse, and to see together what’s really going on. What’s working, what’s not working. It breaks it down into specific issues. You can look at arts and culture, you can look at health and wellbeing, you can look at economic equality,” Mr Bird says. ▶



Community Foundations of Canada president Ian Bird says foundations can make an impact with a relatively small outlay.

Picture: Andrea Dicks



A \$100,000 grant from the Fremantle Foundation helped Jess (left) to break the poverty cycle by learning new skills. Jess’s story is part of the Fremantle’s Vital Signs report. Picture: [Jean-Paul Horré](#)

Fremantle: How the West’s report sparked change

Fremantle Foundation’s Vital Signs report cost \$30,000 and drew on the resources of the **Centre for Social Impact at the University of WA** and the **University of Notre Dame**.

“There’s no document that better demonstrates our role in the community,” says Fremantle Foundation CEO Dylan Smith.

The report was distributed through the local newspaper and promoted with a \$150 Facebook advertisement. The foundation focused on making the report simple, or as Mr Smith put it, “something you could read on the bus”.

Yet for its simplicity, it combined hard data with compelling stories – images and stories about cooking classes, a homework club, and mates supporting mates – to illustrate the work being done in “Freo” on disadvantage, education and mental health.

Among the report’s unexpected findings was that within Freo’s wealth, there were significant “pockets of real disadvantage”. This came as a shock to some, but the foundation refused to whitewash the issues.

As a result, the report served as a starting point for conversations that drew the mayor, donors, supporters and the community into asking the

question: “If Fremantle could speak, what would it say?”

As Mr Smith put it, “You’re building the social infrastructure that’s needed for change.”

More information

[Video: Ian Bird and Dylan Smith talk Vital Signs](#)

[Vital signs info: Australia roll-out backgrounder](#)

Vital signs reports: **[Melbourne](#)** | **[Fremantle](#)** | **[Ballarat \(2011\)](#)** | **[Vital Signs Canada](#)** ■



In small towns, people keep an eye out for trouble and step in to help when needed. Vital Signs works the same way, says Fremantle Foundation CEO Dylan Smith.

News you can use: evidence on social factors and health



Even groups that don't explicitly have a health-focused mission – such as social housing organisations – are helping people to become and remain healthy. Picture: John Gollings/[Unison Housing](#)

A new report by leading UK health equity researchers points the way for Australian organisations wishing to better understand and use evidence about the social factors that affect people's health and well-being.

Keeping Us Well, by the UK's Institute of Health Equity in partnership with New Philanthropy Capital and the Health Foundation, highlights the links between health and well-being and other factors: family; friends and communities; housing; education and skills; good works; money and resources; and surroundings.

Despite drawing on UK data, it has many potential applications for Australian organisations, including providing evidence for grant applications.

The report is designed specifically to support non-health organisations.

In 2016, the report's author, Sir Michael Marmot, visited Australia to deliver the ABC's Boyer Lectures, saying, 'The link between deprivation of social conditions, ill health and crime is all too obvious in Australia.'

More information

Report: **[Keeping Us Well](#)**

#KeepUsWell on **[Twitter](#)**

2016 Boyer Lectures: **[Fair Australia: Social Justice and the Health Gap](#)** ■

Community groups the frontline in global battle against inequality

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

Leading US philanthropist Mae Hong says the world's political turmoil is a wake-up call for the community sector.

The vice president of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA) says “guardians of good” such as not-for-profits groups and volunteers face a battle like no other to hold the line against powerful forces eroding civil society.

Ms Hong says Donald Trump’s election blindsided progressives who assumed it couldn’t actually happen, but since then has electrified many of them into action.

Since his election we’ve seen more racial protests, the effect of environmental calamities, a nuclear threat, polarised views, and instability in domestic and global politics that’s been typified by a drift from democracy and the rise of authoritarianism, populism and malcontent.

“The biggest surprise was that we were so surprised ... this has been in the making for thirty years,” Ms Hong told a Melbourne audience of philanthropists.

When the richest eight people in the world boast the wealth of 3.6 billion others, it’s no wonder Ms Hong fingers inequality as the new global threat. In Australia, the richest 1% own the same wealth as the bottom 70%.

“Plutocrats” with power and cash are pushing policies that have won them tax breaks, concessions and favourable laws. One of the world’s richest men, Warren Buffett, admits he pays a less tax than all of his employees.

On the other side of the coin, the poor continue to lose influence and power, and face “a rigged system” of negative policies and less access to goods and services, Ms Hong says.



Philanthropist Mae Hong says the biggest surprise was that we were all so surprised by Trump’s US election win.

“The market is broken, the government cannot do its job; all that is left is civil society and the voluntary sector, where many of you are doing your good work.

“Civil society is now the guardian of the public good, but this is also the new battleground.”

That battle includes taking stock of billionaires such as Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Michael Bloomberg and the Eli and Edy Broad foundations, which are pursuing their own social change agendas.

Big money is already coming into the field from China, India and Russia, yet while there’s good being done, “Who elected them?”

Ms Hong says giving is no longer “neutral”, and seeking money also means asking, “What am I saying by accepting that gift?”

But like other realms of society, giving is facing disruption, with crowdfunding, direct donations and other forms of support democratising philanthropy. ►



Billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates – pictured meeting US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis – has given away \$US29.5 billion of his fortune. Picture: US Dept of Defense, CC licence.

For example, donors have contributed \$US700 million in “rage giving” against what many see as Trump’s most objectionable policies.

Ms Hong says those with a conscience need to be unafraid of stepping away from a “neutral” position and to find ways to support civil society by increasing the “voice, agency and power” of individuals.

This means getting “close to the front lines” of neighbourhood associations, civic groups, and other places where people could connect.

And for philanthropists such as herself, it also means getting back to the spirit of philanthropy and the love of humanity, and away from an overemphasis on strategies and programs.

Ms Hong ended her Melbourne address by quoting US poet and activist Maya Angelou, who says:

“I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. The giver is as enriched as the recipient, and more important, that intangible but very real psychic force of good in the world is increased ... the gift is upholding the foundation of the universe ... each boon we give strengthens the pillars of the world.”

Ms Hong recently visited Australia as a guest of Australian Executor Trustees (AET).

More information

[Extended version of this article online](#)

[Video: Mae Hong on “holding the line”](#)

[Guardian opinion: Why is Donald Trump launching a withering attack on nonprofits?](#)

[New York Times: Giving away billions as fast as they can](#)

Our Community Matters, April 2017: [The Trump effect on not-for-profits](#) ■



Mae Hong has drawn on the inspiration of activist Maya Angelou to urge changemakers to stick with the spirit of giving. Picture: Reynaldo Leal/Panamericanonline.com/CC licence.



Communities in Control 2018: conference program revealed

Melbourne, May 29–30

The late, great community campaigner Joan Kirner taught us to look towards children to learn what equality looks like. “That’s not fair!” children exclaim when they see something that doesn’t make sense, she told us. “Well, what are

you going to do about it?” was always her reply. “Get together, get angry and get organised.”

That’s what we’re going to be doing at Communities in Control 2018.

Here’s a snapshot of just a few of the speakers guaranteed to inspire, provoke, recharge and change you:



Stan Grant, journalist and presenter

Questions how, ten years on from Kevin Rudd’s apology in parliament for the profound grief, suffering and loss inflicted on this country’s Aboriginal and Islander people, we can Close the Gap and end the inequality.



Annabel Crabb, writer, TV personality, ABC political journalist

One of Australia’s most beloved writers, broadcasters, podcasters and pollie-watchers turns her eye to what it means to have communities in control.



Philip Wollen, philanthropist, animal rights advocate

Believes that “in their capacity to suffer, a dog is a pig is a bear is a boy.” Has donated millions to improving the environment and helping society’s most vulnerable.



Kathy Kelly, motivational speaker

Has a story to tell about loss and immense grief. And about resilience and courage and the determination to stand up and change a broken system.



Hugh Mackay, psychologist, social researcher, award-winning author

Believes the health of the nation depends on the health of our local neighbourhoods and communities, and suggests we need to add a missing ingredient – compassion – to the national conversation about Australia’s future.



Kutcha Edwards, musician, NAIDOC Indigenous Person of the Year 2001

Fuses a beautiful voice and a soulful blues style in singing songs that explore a range of issues, including the stolen generation, family, love, racism, and beating alcoholism.

To see the full program and to register, go to www.communitiesincontrol.com.au.



The ethics of the holiday season

Dr Simon Longstaff's latest book considers the ethical issues we encounter in our daily lives – from illegal downloading, mobile phone etiquette, Internet dating and dress codes, to weightier things such as abortion, global warming and approaching death.

*In this extract from **Everyday Ethics: The Daily Decisions You Make and How They Shape the World**, Dr Longstaff looks at the notion of the 'examined life' and considers questions many of us will encounter during the holiday season.*

For many people the prospect of living an 'examined life' will inspire neither interest nor joy. The idea can sound sanctimonious, an invitation to make life more difficult than it needs to be.

Some who find refuge in religious faith might think it arrogant of humans to think we have the capacity to second-guess god's (or the gods') will. For my part, I cannot accommodate a theology that entertains the idea that a divine being would create a genuinely independent individual endowed with free will only then to have this creature turn off its brain, silence its conscience, and unthinkingly conform to the dictates of a priestly caste or the words written by men in scripture. I know this is a caricature of some theologies, which are usually far more sophisticated for those who penetrate their mysteries, but my account represents the standard experience of religion by the majority of believers.

I know, too, that every totalitarian – religious, political, cultural, whatever – will be dismayed by a philosopher's appeal to people to think about the life they choose to lead. Totalitarians are the enemy of the best in humanity. They sell

us a sense of belonging by scapegoating 'the other'; they quell our opposition by labelling dissent as treason; they assuage our desire for certainty by prescribing what suits their agenda, while proscribing anything original that might emanate from a free mind.

A few people might think they are too old to take on the challenge of an examined life – too set in their ways. Why bother? Why take on another burden when it is enough to make it through each day? I understand this reluctance, especially when I have painted such a mixed picture of what it means to live such a life.

Yet, if this book demonstrates anything, it is the way in which the ethical dimension intersects with every aspect of our lives and shapes the world we make – together. Humanity's role in climate change is not a mere fact. It is a matter of choice.

The same is true of how we respond to the plight of the most disadvantaged in our immediate communities and abroad. We can look the other way or we can render assistance. It is a matter of choice. The same is true of our relationships – whether it be in connection with the very young or the very old. Along the way, we will encounter people whose lives seem to be in accordance with our personal ideals. Others will confront us with ways of living that, at first glance, seem to be strange and confronting. My counsel is to be slow to judge and aware of any unfounded prejudices that could be clouding your perceptions. This does not imply that you should abandon your values and principles or become a relativist. Instead, it is simply a matter of being genuinely open to the possibility that other ways of living might be instructive – if only to reinforce your own outlook. That, too, is a matter of choice.

For the most part our choices are reflected in the 'things' we make – not just tangible objects ►



but also relationships, institutions and all the rest. Save for the limitations imposed by the laws of physics, these things are and become what we choose. We are therefore responsible for what we make. This is not necessarily in terms of their effect in the world, for this may be in the hands of others. Rather, we are responsible for our intentions in relation to the things we make – in particular, for whether they are fit for purposes that we reasonably believe to be good.

Every new product or organisational design, every new policy or procedure, every new system – all of it should be examined for its ethical status, with adjustments made in the design process. This approach can be applied, without great cost, in both the public and private sectors, as well as in the lives of individuals, families and communities. It is hoped that forethought will lead to more sustainable and just outcomes that serve the interests of all – including the other creatures with whom we exist.

Work colleagues' social behaviour

Occasionally work colleagues can find themselves in a social setting that leads to a revelation of personal characteristics that are surprising or even unnerving. Alcohol need not be involved, but it often is. For example, a person who is quiet and restrained at work might reveal themselves to be larger than life when let loose with a karaoke machine. Of course, the changes can be more startling than that, especially when social and professional inhibitions become relaxed at events such as the office Christmas party.

But you don't need to attend special workplace functions to be affected by the social habits of colleagues. Some people like to hum or sing while working, oblivious to the effect on people nearby; some like to eat pungent foods at their desk, filling the office with odours that others might find unpleasant. Others treat their piece of office space as a private preserve in which mess can run riot. And then there are those keen exercisers who return to the office fitter, hotter and happier but also a bit smellier than their colleagues might enjoy.

For the person concerned, these attributes can be perfectly natural. The garlic eaters and the joggers do not intend to disturb others or cause offence. They are being themselves. Equally, they might object to other types of behaviour – slurping rather than sipping tea, for example.

As in life generally, everyone has to compromise in a workplace. Ideally, the compromise is a matter of choice rather than necessity: it is far better if people anticipate the needs of others and voluntarily adjust their behaviour. This is not possible, however, when people are blind to the effects of their own choices: then it might be necessary to intervene – if not for your own sake, then for the sake of others.

Intervention can be tricky. The person concerned might have no idea that they are

TOTALITARIANS ARE THE ENEMY OF THE BEST IN HUMANITY. THEY SELL US A SENSE OF BELONGING BY SCAPEGOATING 'THE OTHER'

a noisy eater, for example, or that they could use some deodorant after exercising, or that their habit of humming the same tune over and over is driving other people nuts. In each of these cases the cause of others' disturbance is a personal attribute, which means that the person concerned might be embarrassed, possibly even offended, to be told that their behaviour is troubling for others. On the other hand, they might be equally embarrassed and upset if they are not told and find out some other way. So, one needs to decide if the disturbance is sufficiently serious to justify intervention. If it is, tact, good humour, sensitivity and an eye for a possible solution are essential.

There is something powerful about coming forward with a problem and then offering a potential solution. A good solution will allow ►



the person to be themselves without having an adverse effect on others. In the examples just mentioned possible solutions could be the provision of a lunch room (with a good exhaust fan), an office shower and bathroom, headphones for staff needing quiet, and a sound baffle next to the hummer's desk.

The questions

How do you create and preserve a harmonious workplace in which people can be themselves without disturbing or otherwise adversely affecting their colleagues?

In particular:

- Are you aware of social boundaries in your workplace? Does your behaviour breach those boundaries by affecting your colleagues' senses?
- Is your colleague unaware of their effect on others?
- Is the source of difficulty an aspect of the individual's person or culture? Is it part of who they are?
- Have you thought about possible solutions to the problem?
- Are there tactful and sensitive measures that can be taken to let the person know there is a problem? Who would be the best person to alert them?
- What is your back-up plan if the person refuses to change their behaviour?

Ethical purchasing

Every purchasing decision we make helps shape a market and, in turn, aspects of the world. We can base our decisions solely on factors such as price, practical utility and status, or we can adopt a broader set of criteria. The reality is that the market is indifferent to our reasons. From a market perspective it is no more rational to choose something because it is red than it is to choose something because it will help reduce global poverty. In that sense the market is amoral and pays no regard to ethics, reason or any notion of intrinsic value.

It is up to us to determine what is important. One thing to take into account is the conditions under which people produce the goods and services we consume. For the most part, we are ignorant of this; it usually takes a disaster of some kind or a campaign of exposure by the media or a non-government organisation to come face to face with those who form the supply chain. And the revelations can be shocking – people working in unsanitary places, paid a pittance, working cruelly long hours, with little hope of education or advancement. Stories and images can prick the conscience of consumers, with the result that some products are boycotted and others favoured.

Ethical consumption can be slightly more expensive at the start, and not everybody can afford the additional cost. But the more people favour an ethical market, the greater is its volume of sales and the lower the unit cost of production becomes. In the end, if everybody demands ethically produced goods and services the market will move to an affordable price point.

The trouble is it is not always easy to determine what is ethical in supply chains and production. For example, some producers use child labour in circumstances where the alternatives facing the children are far worse than working in a factory; similarly, some adults work in difficult and dangerous conditions, often separated from family and friends, but they do so because that is their 'least bad' option. The challenge is to distinguish between situations that are genuinely in transition – from bad to better to good – and those that are stuck with bad practices that you might inadvertently be ►

**SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL
INHIBITIONS BECOME RELAXED
AT EVENTS SUCH AS THE
OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY**



supporting. Care needs to be taken to avoid taking so trenchant a position as to deny opportunities for improvement among those who are making a genuine effort, albeit from a low base. Instead, we should try to structure our purchasing in such a way as to ensure that nothing is obtained from the laggards who make no effort to improve.

Working out who to trust and who to buy from can be difficult because manufacturers and retailers know it is in their interests to appear to be ethical. There are, however, some clues an ethical consumer can be reasonably confident about. The Fairtrade movement and logo can be relied on, along with the marks of other non-profit certifiers who provide assurances that goods and services have been produced in accordance with proper standards for human rights, environmental sustainability, and so on.

Most importantly, look for certifiers that support high levels of transparency – that can show you evidence of progress for people and practices and that claim to be improving conditions, as opposed to having achieved perfection.

The questions

Our purchasing decisions make a difference. The more people support ethical buying the cheaper the products become. But how do we ensure that our good intentions don't end up producing bad outcomes, especially for the most vulnerable in this world?

In particular:

- Do you know about the conditions under which the things you are buying were produced? Can you find out?
- If children are involved in production, are their conditions improving over time? For example, is work combined with education?
- Would children involved in the production of goods or the provision of services – for example, girls sold into prostitution – be worse off if they were not working in these jobs?
- Do you pay attention to reliable guides to

ethical procurement, such as the Fairtrade movement?

- Do you tell retailers you want to buy goods and services that have been ethically produced and obtained?

Difficult relatives

Each year I hear stories of people anxiously preparing for family gatherings, often associated with a religious or cultural festival. There is a common pattern to their stories – relatives who are obnoxious, relatives who overstep the mark and try to discipline others' children, relatives spoiling for a fight over an ancient grievance that everyone else has let go but that defines their sense of identity. Alcohol can add fuel to the embers of family resentments and tensions, but even the most sober can self-combust in the hothouse of a family gathering. In some cases, the pressure to consume at a particular time and in a particular way is awful. Just one spark can ignite a fireball that scorches at least a few people who are otherwise enjoying their favourite festive fare. For the most part, though, people with 'difficult' relatives grit their teeth, smile, hug and hope for the best.

Of course, there are also families for whom seeing relatives is a delight and who come together with effortless pleasure. They might be the lucky few because, as the saying goes, we don't get to choose our relatives (or their spouses and children) – only our friends.

So what should we do when a relative behaves odiously? Should we make special allowances for them for the sake of blood or family harmony or should we call them to account? ►

**EVEN THE MOST SOBER
CAN SELF-COMBUST IN THE
HOTHOUSE OF A FAMILY
GATHERING**



The questions

Families, however they might be constituted, are an essential institution in all societies. Yet they are often made up of individuals you might never choose to associate with if given a choice. How do we manage difficult relatives while being true to our own values and principles?

In particular:

- Do you and your immediate family derive advantage from being part of your larger, extended family?
- Is your relative's behaviour merely annoying or does it violate your central values and principles?
- Is it possible to manage your relative's behaviour without causing a scene? For example, can the person be placed in the company of a family 'peace maker' who can prevent or limit the potential damage?
- Is your relative even aware of the effect he or she is having on others?
- Is your relative's behaviour harming others who cannot defend themselves?
- Will intervention be futile? Is the person unable or unwilling to change?
- If the person is the spouse of one of your blood relatives, would your blood relative be offended if you called either of them to account?

Unwanted gifts

Occasionally someone gives you a gift that you genuinely do not want. The example I have in mind is when someone's grandmother knits a truly awful jumper that will only cause embarrassment if worn. She presents it with love and pride and asks the recipient to try it on. This is one of those no-win situations that can arise in life. What do you do?

Then there can be business situations when gifts and hospitality exceed what is reasonable. In business, the context is always one of 'mutual self-interest'. Knowing this, how do you respond to offers that are well in

excess of normal practice or are potentially compromising? I often hear from people who have been at a business function where the hospitality has included access to sex workers. What if this is outside the bounds of your personal moral code?

Giving and receiving gifts can involve complex behaviours. Refusal of a gift can cause embarrassment and sometimes offence. The giver might be embarrassed at not having accurately gauged your preferences or ethical framework. Offence can also be caused, if your refusal to accept a gift is thought to be a repudiation of the individual or if it causes a loss of face. Yet there could be further personal dishonour if you accept a gift that compromises you or you pretend to like something you actually loathe.

The questions

Do you understand the cultural context of gift-giving and, in particular, the underlying values and principles that are being expressed in this context? Have you taken account of the symbolic and emotional aspects of what it means to offer, receive or refuse a gift in this context?

In particular:

- Is your moral compass well calibrated? Or do you place your personal preference (or the convenience of avoiding a 'difficult moment') ahead of ethical considerations?
- Would acceptance of the gift compromise your values and principles?
- Does your relationship with the gift giver (a relative, for example) create special obligations?
- Is the relationship strong enough to survive a candid response to the gift? For example, could you tell your grandmother you love her and you love the thought behind her gift while giving reasons why you cannot use it?
- Are there rules or guidelines that let you off the hook, enabling you to say, 'The rules that prevent me from accepting ...'? ►

- Can the gift be accepted but not be used by you – perhaps if you register it as being available for use by others who do not risk being compromised?

Disposing of surplus gadgets

Until quite recently our local council used to collect e-waste (things such as old phones and computers) as part of household rubbish, but now the e-waste is excluded. So our small pile of old gadgets is beginning to grow. At some stage I will take the waste to a collection point, but for now it sits there gathering dust. This is despite the fact that it would be easy to slip the odd obsolete or broken phone into the food waste and send it off to landfill. Nobody would notice one old phone in the vast expanse of waste, and I would be free of a minor irritation.

The questions

Why should we act responsibly when it would be more convenient to pursue the selfish option – with little risk of being exposed?

Given that there is considerable value in an old phone – gold, rare earths, embedded energy, and so on, that could be recycled and put to further use – are we obliged to ensure that these resources are not squandered? One person's waste is another person's opportunity.

In particular:

- The earth has finite resources: wouldn't it be better to make do with less?
- Someone will have to pay the price for the lost opportunity or the cost of preventable pollution. What if it is one of your children who ends up paying that price?
- Is the burden of recycling really so hard to shoulder?
- Are there ways to share the responsibility – for example, a community or street collection that you and your neighbours arrange?

Final words

There is nothing heroic about living an examined life. It is more difficult than a life of habit – even 'virtuous habits'. And few will stop

you in the street and say, 'Well done. It's great the way you think about things.' Most people won't even notice. But it is a life fit for a human being – possibly the only life worth living for one of our kind.

I finish with a poem I wrote decades ago, when I was setting out on the adventure that has been my life thus far. Perhaps you will think of this when you come to reflect, with a calm spirit and subtle mind, on how you will respond to the questions explored in this book.

HEROISM

Some think that heroes are forged in the white heat of the dangerous moment.

But there is another kind of hero –

The person of quiet decency

Whose achievement is built only over an entire career.

We are struck by the intensity of lightning,

Yet fail to mention the thunder that rolls into the distance

Long after the lightning's moment has passed.

We are captured by the tumultuous descent of the waterfall

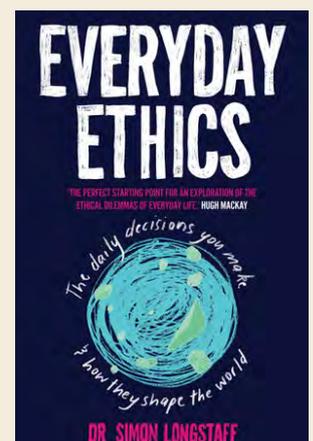
While forgetting the steady progress of the river.

And we marvel at the ocean's power,

Unaware that we stand on ground

Claimed for us by the silent witness of the ancient cliff. ■

Dr Simon Longstaff is the director of The Ethics Centre. His book *Everyday Ethics: The Daily Decisions You Make and How They Shape the World* is published by Ventura Press, \$32.99.



Innovation proves its staying power



BY VANESSA NOLAN-WOODS,
GENERAL MANAGER OF SOCIAL IMPACT BANKING, COMMONWEALTH BANK

Looking back over the past 12 months, we see the impact that innovation and design thinking continue to have across the broad social impact sector. More than a buzzword, innovation has proven not only its worth but also its staying power.

For many people, though, “innovation” is still a confusing and abstract concept. What does it mean to innovate, how do you do it, and how do you embed a culture of innovation across your organisation?

Accessible innovation

CommBank’s mobile Pop-Up Innovation Lab has just completed its tour of Australia, demystifying innovation for thousands of people and organisations. Two stories I wanted to share with you were from Orange Sky Laundry in Brisbane and Cara in Adelaide.

Innovation in action

Orange Sky Laundry

Best mates Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett wanted to find a way of improving the health and hygiene of homeless people in Brisbane. Their vision resulted in the creation of Orange Sky Laundry in September 2014 – a free mobile laundry service built into an old van.

This world-first idea of how “being clean” can effectively restore self-esteem and confidence has now expanded to 20 services across the country, doing over 6.2 tonnes of laundry every

week. And Marchesi’s and Patchett’s vision continues to evolve with their expansion in 2016 to include free access to hot showers for Brisbane’s homeless.

Cara

The team at disability services organisation Cara have been transforming to better serve their customers under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

One example is the utilisation of their accessible cars, which can spend 80% of their time sitting in driveways. Cara is trialing an Uber type system to enable other people and organisations to access their fleet of vehicles.

Cara also came up with the Quiet Hour concept. The team negotiated with The Good Guys Mile End and Freville Foodland to have store music turned off, lighting dimmed, and other modifications made so that people with sensory overload issues could enjoy an hour of quiet shopping.

Anything is possible

Change requires commitment, constant reinforcement, support from all involved, and a deep belief that when we work together, anything is possible.

On behalf of the Social Impact Banking team here at CommBank, I wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas and a very happy new year. ■

CommBank is an Our Community partner.

Season's Greetings

Our Community's partners – Moores, CommBank, YourCall and HESTA – wish all our readers a happy festive season and a relaxing summer holiday. You deserve it!



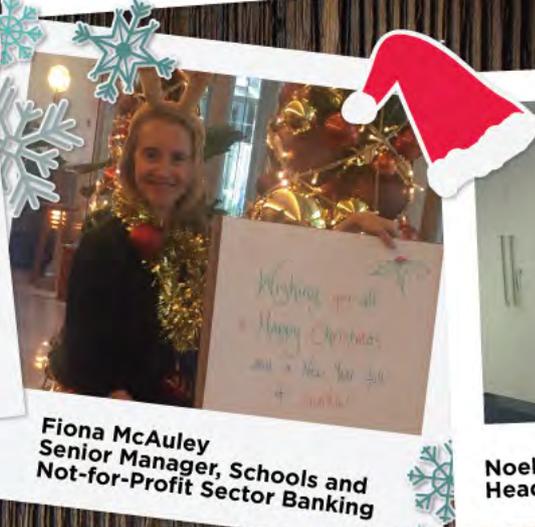
Poppy Rouse
Innovation Manager, Schools and Not-for-Profit Sector Banking



Yolanda Butler
Senior Manager, Schools and Not-for-Profit Sector Banking



Angela Bennett
Senior Manager, Schools and Not-For-Profit Sector Banking



Fiona McAuley
Senior Manager, Schools and Not-for-Profit Sector Banking



Noel Prakash
Head of Indigenous Business Banking

moores



Catherine Burkhalter, Associate; Skye Rose, Principal; Andrew Brooks, Lawyer



Kate Jordan, Not-For-Profit Assist Coordinator; Catherine Brooks, Principal

yourcall

whistleblowing solutions



Nathan Luker, General Manager

HESTA



Kylie Whicher, General Manager, Client Relations; Ruby Ruby, Client Relationship Manager (Vic).

Give family violence survivors early access to super

BY HESTA, AN OUR COMMUNITY PARTNER

Every year in Australia, on average at least one woman a week is killed by a partner or former partner, according to Australian Institute of Criminology figures.

Super could be a much needed lifeline to support women to escape abusive relationships.

HESTA has been talking with the Federal Government about changing super rules to allow family violence survivors, as a last resort, to access some of their super.

“We need to take action now,” HESTA CEO Debby Blakey says. “Accessing super should be an interim measure and another tool that we can use to stem this tragic loss of life.”

“Finances are too often a barrier for women trying to leave a violent relationship, and unfortunately, financial support for survivors of family violence is grossly inadequate.”

What needs to change?

There are very few ways for members to access super early: in financial hardship (defined as

having been receiving Centrelink payments for 26 continuous weeks) or on “compassionate grounds” (such as to stop the bank selling their home, pay for a dependant’s funeral or get medical treatment).

But early access to super is denied in instances of family violence.

“We think it’s entirely appropriate that super regulations extend compassion to survivors of family violence to empower women with the financial means to escape abusive relationships,” Ms Blakey says.

How do we make change happen?

We know reaching out to our partners in community services is essential to making this happen.

We’ve been talking with a range of specialist family violence support service providers and experts in financial counselling, receiving their widespread support.

Now we need to convince the Government to change the super rules. ■



Your two-minute NFP news digest

BY ALEX MCMILLAN

Technology for the people – and how to make it pay

“Building financially sustainable business models is ultimately what will take civic tech from a collection of activity and initiatives to a cohort of organizations advancing greater and more long-lasting impact.”

Civic tech: “Technology used to inform, engage and connect residents with government and one another to advance civic outcomes.” That’s the definition used in a new report from the US-based Knight Foundation. *Scaling Civic Tech: Paths to a Sustainable Future* examines why so few civic tech companies have achieved sustainability, and outlines ways they can overcome this challenge: think incubators focused on civic tech organisations, shared-service models, and greater government procurement transparency. [Read the report](#)

DATA (big data)

“For nonprofits, data is simple: it’s your people. Your data represents the people that support you, the actions they’ve taken for your mission, and the impact your organization is making on the world.” – Jeff Gordy, CEO and co-founder, NeonCRM

The latest report from Idealware says there’s a place for data in every organization, no matter the size. *Becoming a Data-Informed Organization* says data should play a role in decision-making for every not-for-profit, and helps organisations identify their own areas for improvement when it comes to using it. [Read it here](#)
ICDA special report: Develop your tech strategy

How to go viral – and have fun doing it

“If you want more, more, more – then jump!”

The CEO of a US community group boldly took to the limelight to raise awareness for her organisation’s upcoming lip sync competition fundraiser. In a one-take video, Betsy Andrews Parker dances around her local town of Dover, New Hampshire, while lip syncing to the Pointer Sisters song ‘Jump’. The video has been shared 132,000 times and had close to 10 million views, which we can confidently say is “viral”. [Watch it here](#)

Leading with intent

“Boards are no more diverse than they were two years ago and current recruitment priorities indicate this is unlikely to change.”

The latest National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices (USA) finds US boards are not prioritising demographics in their recruitment practices, despite reporting dissatisfaction with their current composition. “While board composition is not one-size-fits all, a board that is homogeneous in any way risks having blind spots that negatively impact its ability to make the best decisions and plans for the organization,” the report says. [Read the report](#)

Show me the money

“In the next 20 years, an estimated [US]\$30 trillion will be inherited in the United States as the large and prosperous Baby Boomer generation passes its wealth on to the next generation. This is the largest wealth transfer in human history, and may be the single greatest opportunity for philanthropy in the modern era.”

Two students at Stanford’s Graduate School of Business, Jennifer Xia and Patrick Schmitt, find that planned giving is hampered by systemic structural issues in the philanthropic sector. In *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, they say foundations need to lift their game if they are to benefit from the wealth transfer. [Read the article](#)

Giving circles: altruistic, not vicious

“I think women are very collaborative and women have, I won’t say more than men, but a great sense of community, and I think it often starts with your family.” – Gillian Hund, co-founder, Melbourne Women’s Fund

The co-founder of the Melbourne Women’s Fund explains the concept of the Giving Circle to the ABC’s *Lateline* program, describing it as a particularly democratic form of philanthropy. [Listen](#)

A match made in heaven

“Not all pitches about matching funds are equal. The ones that make potential donors feel that their gift is a key part of what it will take to unlock that extra money work best.” – Laura Gee, Assistant Professor of Economics, Tufts University

Do matching funds really make people more likely to donate? The short answer is yes, if donors believe their contribution is pivotal, and researchers Laura Gee and Michael Schreck found that the more conditions attached, the higher the donation rate.

Read a summary of their research in [The Conversation](#) or purchase the full report [here](#).

Who do you trust?

“I’ve been giving to Fred Hollows and the RSPCA... I have had a monthly donation going out for 10 years then I saw the big story on the APPCO group who are running most of the charities and taking most of the money for themselves... so I pulled both of my donations, contacted the companies and have now gone direct through the companies....”

– Anonymous Ballarat donor

A report on public trust in charities commissioned by the ACNC finds only 20% of Australians agree that charities are trustworthy, down from 29% two years ago. [Full report](#)

Don’t count your chickens

“In an age where there is much less money around to achieve social impact, we have to find a better way of measuring success. Identifying how much money a charity has raised or how many people they have reached will no longer suffice.”

– Matt Stevenson-Dodd

Charities should measure their success by transparently presenting what they do and allowing the public to decide, says the CEO of UK charity Street League. Full report in the [Guardian](#)

Dear Agony Uncle

Our Community's thinker-in-residence, Chris Borthwick, answers a reader's question about establishing a church.

Q. *I have been asked to research how to become a legally recognised church, one that can perform marriages etc. However, after going through a number of government departments, still no luck. Can you assist?*

A. You are, I presume, asking how an existing body of believers regarding themselves as a church can become legally recognised, rather than how you can develop or establish a church *de novo* for which you would then seek legal recognition, and I shall proceed on that basis.

I can say with some confidence that in Australia the relevant legal authority is *CHURCH OF THE NEW FAITH v. COMMISSIONER OF PAY-ROLL TAX (VIC)* [1983] HCA 40; 1983 154 CLR 120. This has laid down that "for the purposes of the law, the criteria of religion are twofold: first, belief in a supernatural Being, Thing or Principle; and second, the acceptance of canons of conduct in order to give effect to that belief, though canons of conduct which offend against the ordinary laws are outside the area of any immunity, privilege or right conferred on the grounds of religion ." (I would, however, strongly recommend that you read the whole thing. It will give you some confidence in your dealings with bureaucracy.)

Mr Justice Murphy's even more generous test was "Any body which claims to be religious, and offers a way to find meaning and purpose in life, is religious."

If the church that seeks your assistance has the characteristics of a religion under that judgement, it is entitled to any and all privileges that law allows any other religion in Australia.



Chris Borthwick

There is, however, no single form of legal recognition – no certifying body, no stamp of approval. The state does not have the power to set limits on what Australians may choose to believe; it can neither forbid nor approve your establishment as a church. In the absence of this certification, you simply represent yourself as a church to the relevant agencies (to the Tax Office, say), demand your concessions, and await their response.

When it comes to performing marriages, the rules are mainly directed at ensuring that your church is large enough and stable enough to be worth bothering with: <https://www.ag.gov.au/FamiliesAndMarriage/Marriage/Pages/Recognisedreligiousdenominations.aspx>.

Oddly, the list of **recognised denominations** doesn't include Jedi, despite that calling making up about half of a percent of our census declarations. Anybody out there want to act for them?

Got a question for our thinker-in-residence? Email chrisb@ourcommunity.com.au. ■



Students of the Diploma of Business (Governance) test their abilities in a board simulation exercise in Melbourne last month. Picture: Richard Edge.

Scholarship opportunity: Women on boards

In a move to help Australian women to break through the barriers of unconscious bias and cultural and structural issues that often preclude them from leadership positions, the Women's Leadership Institute Australia (WLIA) is offering a second round of 25 scholarships worth \$1000 each for women wishing to enrol in the Diploma of Business (Governance).

The acclaimed **Diploma of Business (Governance)**, presented by the Institute of **Community Directors Australia (ICDA)** is Australia's only accredited qualification for not-for-profit governance, and continues to impress, upskill and enrich its participants.

Mandy Gadsdon, who started the course earlier this year, is the community engagement and funding manager at the Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service in Perth.

"My expectations have been far exceeded," she said. "I've also been able to really learn from other participants in the program. The group of us represent a really broad cross-section of



Mandy Gadsdon

community sector and Aboriginal community organisations."

Organisations represented in Ms Gadsdon's class include the Gumala Aboriginal Corporation, Nardine Wimmin's Refuge, and the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research.

Another Perth-based Diploma graduate, **Holly Ransom**, said the course was an opportunity to build her capacity to have an impact, and to deepen her understanding of "the mission". ►

At the age of 27, Ms Ransom has already chaired the G20 Youth Summit, been elected as the world's youngest Rotary president, delivered a peace charter to the Dalai Lama, and sat on the board of the Port Adelaide AFL team as its youngest ever director, in addition to her other board roles.

"The amazing thing about being a community director is the opportunity to have an enormous level of impact and support for an issue that you really passionately care about," she said.

"They have the opportunity to think about creative ways of leveraging resources and being able to garner support, and deliver services or advocacy – whatever the role of a particular community organisation – to be able to drive impact, and lift the standards of living in our community."

She credits the diploma course with providing excellent networking opportunities.

"You'll get the opportunity to build a network of community directors," she said.

"You'll have the ability to have some focussed time under the guidance of a really experienced facilitator; going through the nature of different challenges and responsibilities you need to be alive to, and need to be able to handle and think through."

Women awarded WLIA scholarships will study alongside winners of the recent round of conservation and environment scholarships supported by Greening Australia, which



Holly Ransom

attracted stellar applicants involved in a gamut of green activities.

"There are so many people doing amazing work in the conservation arena," said Greening Australia CEO Brendan Foran. "We are really pleased to be able to support the continued education of the scholarship winners." Twenty "green" scholarship winners will begin the Diploma of Business (Governance) in 2018.

WLIA scholarships will be awarded on the basis of merit and likely impact for the communities served by each recipient.

To learn more about the WLIA, this scholarship opportunity and the application process, visit www.communitydirectors.com.au/scholarships.

Get in quick before scholarship applications close at 3pm AEST on 20 December. ■

**You can change
the world**

This course will help you do it
**Diploma of Business
(Governance)**



Upskill

Expand your network – and gain a diploma while you're at it

Enrol here

Make 2018 the year you upgrade your qualifications and expand your network by studying for a Diploma of Business (Governance). Australia's only diploma-level governance qualification is designed specifically for existing and prospective not-for-profit board or committee members and the CEOs and senior staff who work alongside them. Check out the course start dates below and then **enrol now**.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Adelaide | March 19 |
| Brisbane | February 12, May 7, August 1, October 15 |
| Canberra | March 19 |
| Hobart | May 21 |
| Melbourne | January 22, March 26, May 28, July 16, September 3, November 12 |
| Perth | February 12, May 7, August 1, October 15 |
| Sydney | January 22, March 26, June 18, September 3 |

P.S. Women readers, on page 35 you'll find details of a scholarship designed to make the **Diploma of Business (Governance)** even more accessible.

NFP finance for managers and board Members (half-day seminar)

Melbourne March 14; Sydney March 21

Enrol here

Whether you work for or serve on the board of a not-for-profit, understanding your organisation's finances is critical. But who has time to cut through all the jargon and the numbers to get to the information you really need? The good news is we've done it for you. We've put together a half-day seminar, delivered in plain English, that'll give you just the information you need in a way that won't put you to sleep. It's finance essentials for the non-financially minded. All that you need (and nothing you don't) to conquer your organisation's finances, take away the confusion and leave you confident and in control.

This workshop is for:

- Staff and board members of not-for-profits who want to understand their organisation's finances.
- People who know they should know about finances, but have never actually got around to doing anything about it.
- People who want to know about finances, but don't want to be bored or made to feel stupid.

Learn how to:

- Read and understand your organisation's key financial reports
- Use financial ratios to decipher financial reports and obtain useful insights
- Cut through financial terminology
- Analyse a budget and understand cash flow
- Ask the key questions when looking at your organisation's finances.

Our seminar **Not-for-profit Finance for Managers and Board Members** runs in Melbourne and Sydney. **Enrol now**. ▶



Workshop: Grow your community with podcasting

Melbourne, February 8

[Sign up here](#)

Why podcasting?

Australians are the third most voracious consumers of podcasts on the planet. We love listening to podcasts, whether commuting, at work, on the move, in the car, at home, doing housework or at the gym.

In a world of busyness, distraction and ever shortening attention spans, podcasts have the ability to captivate listeners for up to 45 minutes per week. This makes them a key emerging content medium and community building tool for not-for-profits.

Podcasting is a great way to spread your message and grow your community of supporters, partners and donors. It can also be a key element in developing an integrated marketing strategy that will engage, captivate and grow your community.

In this two-hour session, Mike Davis and Drew Corby, the creators and hosts of the Humans of Purpose and Pathways podcasts, will walk you through a workshop that will empower you to create a powerful and engaging podcast series, drawing on case studies and emerging trends from around the world.

If you want to take your marketing to the next level and engage in new and emerging ways, this workshop is for you. [Sign up now.](#) ■

Books give-away



At last year's **Communities in Control** conference, we practised mindfulness with **Professor Amanda Sinclair**, heard **Dr Cordelia Fine** take on the scientific patriarchy, and considered the matter of our death with **Andrew Denton**.

If you enjoyed their work at Communities in Control, now read their books. We've got 20 book packs to give away, each comprising Amanda Sinclair's **Leading Mindfully**, Cordelia Fine's **Testosterone Rex**, and **The Damage Done** by Go Gentle and Andrew Denton.

To enter, email comps@ourcommunity.com.au with your name, your postal address, and your answer to this question: Which speaker are you most looking forward to hearing at Communities in Control 2018 and why?

Entries close at 5pm on December 20, 2017. We'll select our 20 favourite responses and dispatch the books in time for you to add them to your summer reading pile. Ho ho ho!



Meet the trainer: Patrick Moriarty

What courses and webinars do you teach for Our Community?

Everything from the Diploma of Business (Governance) to the webinars on fundraising, meetings and planning. I also deliver tailored training specific to any organisation's requirements, work on board reviews, and facilitate strategic planning sessions. I think if it's been delivered, I've delivered it.

What's your own involvement in the community sector?

Historically I've been involved in things my kids have been involved with, whether they've been at childcare, pre-school or schools, or playing sports. I've also supported issues I'm concerned about, including mental health, inclusion and rural issues. The travel I do for work means I haven't sat actively on a board for a few years, but I still provide voluntary support to several subcommittees.

What's your teaching style?

Structured flexibility. By that I mean I have a basic framework based on what I expect attendees want and need from the workshop, but I can divert to other issues as they arise, within reason, if they fit the topic. I find that if trainers "park" those issues, people tend to forget the original context in which they've arisen.

How do you like to be taught?

I'm a visual learner, so I like to see things in action or in practice.

What's the most memorable thing anyone's ever said in one of your training sessions?

A couple of months ago I ran arts governance training in Mandurah with Country Arts WA. As part of the training I asked two questions: "Who would miss you if you didn't exist?" and "What ►



Sustainability requires a mix of old and new growth, and this is true of both forests and boards.

would be lost if you didn't exist?" These are two questions boards should ask themselves.

One of the participants, Fiona Sinclair from Southern Forest Arts, remarked that it would be interesting to move away from the deficit view and to ask instead, "What would be gained if you didn't exist?"

She explained, "I live in a forest. When a large tree falls over, it creates an opening in the canopy for light to shine through upon the seedlings and saplings waiting underneath for their moment to grow. There is a time for all things. Sometimes it's healthier for the whole ecosystem to let go of the old to make way for the new."

It's a profoundly different perspective, one that I'm now using in training too.

You've run Our Community training sessions in Kununurra, Canberra, Darwin, Cairns and Alice Springs, among other places. Where else would you most like to run a course, and why?

Broome – for two reasons.

First, I've never been there, although our other trainers have.

Second, it's a part of Australia that faces problems related to boom-and-bust cycles and a transient population. The Northern Territory and far north Queensland face similar issues, and it would be great to transfer what we know from running training in those parts of the world to Broome to see whether it would work up there. We've recently completed some work in Karratha, too, and I'd like to see how the work we did there might be relevant. [Ed's note: Broome organisations, get in touch with Pat at patrickm@ourcommunity.com.au and he'll cut you a deal.]

If you couldn't be a trainer, what would you like to be?

A Collingwood premiership coach. I reckon I'm a chance.

Anything else you'd like to tell us?

My favourite quote was passed on to me by Hayden Brown, a social researcher at the City of Greater Dandenong, many years ago: "If you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything."

MORE Scheduled and tailored training ■



Good Jobs

At GoodJobs.com.au, our mission is to connect purpose-driven people with organisations in the not-for-profit and community sectors. We want to help energetic, idealistic, and passionate people overcome obstacles and achieve their career ambitions and dreams.

Selected current vacancies

Hepatitis Victoria Brunswick, Victoria

Stigma response coordinator

Hepatitis Victoria is the peak not-for-profit community organisation committed to better liver health for Victorians, free from hepatitis and stigma. Hepatitis Victoria provides information, support, referral, education, and advocacy for people living with viral hepatitis and training for those who work with them.

Hepatitis Victoria is looking for a stigma response coordinator, who will establish mechanisms for people living with viral hepatitis to respond to instances of stigma and discrimination, and will provide tools to empower and support individuals.

More information:

www.goodjobs.com.au/job/apply-form?jobId=381

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Send us your employee manual!

Does your not-for-profit or community group have an unusually good staff induction manual or employee manual?

No, we're not looking for holiday reading. We're developing a free best-practice employee manual for the sector, and we'd love to draw on your example to help shape our new product. For more information, or to send us your manual, please contact Eden Rose on **edenr@ourcommunity.com.au**.



Board Matching Service

The board vacancies below are just a small sample of what's currently listed at both the Institute of Community Directors Australia website and Good Jobs.

New South Wales

General board member, Meals on Wheels Central Coast, Wyong

The board seeks applicants with expertise in change management, strategy, development, and information and communications technology.

Northern Territory

Treasurer, 8CCC Community Radio, Alice Springs

We are a community radio station that has been operating since 1981. We have a healthy organisational culture and stable funding secured over the next few years. We are moving into an exciting period of growth and are looking for a new treasurer with good governance and finance experience. Our treasurer has completed a number of major projects and is stepping down, leaving us with a solid budget and a constitution ready for DGR status.

Queensland

Secretary & general board member, North Townsville Community Hub Inc

Expertise in the community sector, legal services and public policy would serve the successful candidate for this role well.

Victoria

Treasurer, Attitude Books Foundation Inc, Mornington

Our organisation aims to equip Australian children with proven strategies to boost their

resilience — for life. We distribute the personal development resource A for Attitude to Grade 3 students. We seek a treasurer with expertise or experience in bookkeeping and accounting (preferably Xero) who can manage our accounts and deliver monthly reports.

Victoria

General board member, Cultivating Community, Richmond

We work in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services to manage community gardens on public housing estates. We deliver school food garden programs, we work with local NFPs, health centres and community networks, and we support micro and social enterprise food businesses. We are seeking a senior professional to join our board in 2018. Skills and experience in fundraising, governance and social justice programs are desired.

Western Australia

General board members, Western Australian Speedway Commission, Perth

The WA Speedway Commission is a not-for-profit sporting association appointed as the governing body for speedway in WA. We are seeking candidates who can contribute to our strategic direction and ensure that the growth of WA speedway continues to develop within a coordinated safety framework. Candidates with the following skills and attributes will be highly regarded: commercial and business management, marketing, understanding of legal issues and government processes, and strong written and verbal communication skills. ■

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Some of our favourite festive events and awareness-raisers this December.



DECEMBER 1–31

DecemBeard

Follow Santa's example and grow a beard. This month, unlike Santa, you can raise funds to help beat bowel cancer.



DECEMBER 1–25

No Gender December

Buying Christmas gifts for kids? It's time to bring gender equality to the world of toys and children. We're raising awareness of individuals, not gender stereotypes.



DECEMBER 5/6/19

Saint Nicholas's Day

Saint Nicholas was a historic Christian saint and Greek bishop of Myra, in modern-day Turkey. His habit of secret gift-giving gave rise to the traditional model of Santa Claus ("Saint Nick") through Sinterklaas.



DECEMBER 18

International Migrants Day

Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of the individual's will to overcome adversity and to live a better life.



NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 24

DineSmart

DineSmart unites restaurants and their diners to take action against homelessness. Eat out to help out during the festive season.



1–31 DECEMBER

The 12 Do's of Christmas

From giving rechargeable batteries to mulching your Christmas tree, here are 12 ways to reduce your environmental impact this December.

LAST DAY THURSDAY
21 DECEMBER

OUR COMMUNITY
HOLIDAY CLOSURE

REOPENING TUESDAY
2 JANUARY

*Happy
Holidays!*



ourcommunity.com.au

Where not-for-profits go for help



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