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Our Community Matters



Edition 2, 2019 • April

Get angry. Then get organised.



Young students, unlike aged politicians, have a strong incentive to take the long view on issues. Photo: Julian Meehan

BY DENIS MORIARTY, GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR, OUR COMMUNITY

Any Australian child born after the turn of the millennium has a good chance of living into the next century, which gives them a time horizon about 25 times as long as that of most politicians.

This gives them an incentive to take the long view, and a corresponding distaste for business as usual.

The school students of Australia foamed around the parliaments of Australia last month as they ►

called for action on climate change, completely ignoring the faded parliamentarians grumbling: “The only time I was let out of class was to go and watch the Queen drive by, and it made me the man I am today.”

The children were calling time on 20 years of unmitigated policy failure. And what could the students have learned in the classroom that could compare with the lessons they were taking in on the streets — the lived experience of the power of protest?

It all started with Greta Thunberg in Sweden, a year nine student, herself inspired by the anti-gun protests of the Parkland students in Florida.

Greta had reacted to wildfires inside the Arctic circle by calling a new political generation into being, to redress the failures of their parents.

As one sign said at the protests in my area: “Children wouldn’t have to act like politicians if politicians didn’t act like children.”

Any politician of any stamp who wants to postpone their inevitable rendezvous with the dustbin of history should hesitate before dismissing the voice of young people.

It’s remarkable, looking back, how often the marchers in the street have tended to be vindicated.

We marched against the Vietnam War, and today the president of the US holds up communist Vietnam to the North Koreans as a shining example of commercial enterprise.

We marched unavailingly against the Iraq War, and even prominent liberal statesmen are sometimes now heard to concede that with the wisdom of hindsight those half-a-million Iraqi dead may have been an overreaction. ►

“Children wouldn’t have to act like politicians if politicians didn’t act like children.”

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Sixteen-year-old Greta Thunberg catalysed a wave of student protests against climate inaction that swept from Sweden to Australia and around the world.

Photo: Wikimedia / Creative Commons licence

Before the Mardi Gras march was a tourist attraction, it was people being beaten up in Darlinghurst police station.

Australia's historic heritage has survived to be expensively gentrified because unionists wielding black bans fought the developers' bulldozers. (And because of campaigns like those of Our City, Our Square, and Chris Borthwick – read their stories on page 8 and page 20.)

We marched, some of us, for reconciliation. Okay, that one's a work in progress.

Where we went wrong as a society, too, was in those parts where we didn't protest, where we assumed our elders and betters knew best and didn't rock the boat.

The removal of the White Australia policy was forced on us from outside, not by protestors blocking the streets.

There were virtually no public demonstrations against child abuse in the churches until the Royal Commission blew away all rationalisations and excuses.

We need to remember our agitators, to give perspective to the struggles of today and to remind the kids that a place in a law degree isn't everything in life.

In this edition of *Our Community Matters*, we celebrate the victories of groups like Australian Marriage Equality and share the lessons they've learned along the way (see page 17).

Our Community has just moved into a new building which we'll share with other community groups, and I've taken the opportunity to name our meeting rooms after people who threw their lives into a cause.

Stella Young, Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Anne McDonald, Zelda D'Aprano, Glen Tomasetti, Joan Kirner, Vida Goldstein – women who looked around them and said: "No, it doesn't have to be this way."

If that's what the law says, then change the law.

If that's what the constitution says, change the constitution.

If that's what society believes, change society.

Somebody has to be first. A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step over the line.

"Get angry. Then get organised" is the theme of next month's Communities in Control conference in Melbourne. This annual gathering of the community sector offers an invigorating, inspiring opportunity to look up from the coalface, look around and see what might be possible. Join us in Melbourne on May 20–21. ■

2019

COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL

Renewing and remaking communities



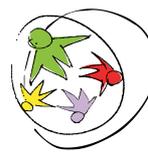
Get Angry. Then Get Organised

CONFERENCE: MELBOURNE, 20-21 May 2019

www.communitiesincontrol.com.au



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Forget silent prayers: this outspoken priest is a sign of the times

BY KERRY BURGESS, EDITOR, OUR COMMUNITY MATTERS

If you're registered for the Communities in Control conference, you've seen Father Rod Bower's famous billboards on the cover of the program.

His signs outside Gosford Anglican Church have become, collectively, a digest of social justice issues and a social media phenomenon.

The activist priest is now making a run for Canberra, standing for the Senate on a platform of climate change action and human rights issues.

Our Community Matters asked Father Rod about his unique methodology when it comes to getting angry and getting organised.

Our Community Matters: You put up your first sign in 2013. What prompted it, and what did it say?

Father Rod Bower: The first really controversial sign was the result of being invited to administer the last rites to a man dying of cancer. The family were understandably concerned that I might be judgemental that he was in a same-sex relationship. I was able to allay their fears, but I wanted the whole community to know that I did not make those judgements, so I put up a sign: "Dear Christians, Some people are gay. Get over it. Love God." As it turned out, the message went a bit further than the local community.

How much power do you think your signs have to change people's minds on social justice issues, or at least to make them think?

When Tiernan Brady came out from Ireland to run the marriage equality campaign, he contacted me along with other clergy. His ►



“If we are to create a more just society, the system has to change”: Father Rod Bower.

experience in Ireland was that while clergy don't carry a lot of weight in public opinion in the modern world, on certain issues they can be unexpectedly influential. So when someone who wears my uniform speaks out on so called “progressive issues” people tend to take notice.

You and your congregation have been threatened by extremists as a result of your stance on some issues. How do you cope with that?

We do have to be sensible about security. But in some way these threats are an affirmation that we are heading in the right direction. Ultimately these threats come because there is a perception that the prevailing system is under pressure. Those who feel they benefit from that system will have strong reactions to it being challenged, and the strongest reactions, even violent reactions, come from those on the edge of that system, who, ironically benefit the least.

If we are to create a more just society, the system has to change.

You're standing as a candidate for the Senate in the next federal election. If

you're elected, can we expect to see a new billboard spring up overnight on Parliament Hill?

Perhaps my first piece of legislation could be a private member's bill to amend the Parliamentary Precincts Act to allow for a sign. I am sure my parliamentary colleagues would be sympathetic.

What would it say?

Under new management!

More information

[Follow Rod Bower on Facebook](#) | [And on Twitter](#) | [Gosford Anglican Church Sign Appreciation Society](#) (Facebook) | [Gosford Anglican Church](#) (Facebook)

*Father Rod Bower will speak at Communities in Control in Melbourne on Monday May 20. He's part of an incredible – and outspoken – line-up that will see media superstar Tracy Spicer, human rights lawyer David Manne, and broadcaster Lee Lin Chin, among others, take to the stage during the two-day conference. **Register now.** ■*

Mobilising your community into action: the basics

When they hear about plans to mobilise the community, most people automatically think of protest marches down the main street or demonstrations outside government offices. The reality is that many of the efforts to unite the community behind a certain cause, action or idea are less spectacular – but no less important.

For millennia, community leaders and coalitions have been mobilising others to lobby to change attitudes, to change policies, to change legislation, and sometimes to change votes.

Sometimes these campaigns have been on major national issues, but more often they've been about people uniting to make a difference in their own local areas – opposing an inappropriate development, ensuring a park remains public space, fighting for extra funding for a local health service or employment project. There are as many potential causes as there are lumps of coal in a coal mine.

One of the most powerful tools any community group can have in its arsenal is the ability to inspire and mobilise support for the benefit or development of the greater community. This isn't just about recruiting individual volunteers – it's also about rallying support within the community from institutions, other not-for-profit groups, government agencies and media outlets.

Many campaigns of community mobilisation start from a little seed and just grow and grow. Here are nine pointers to help nourish it.

Planning a campaign: nine pointers

- Identify the need within the community, and be clear about exactly what needs to be done to address it.
- Contact other key individuals and groups and gather support around the need to take action. Aim for a broad and representative coalition.
- Be clear about your aims for the community mobilisation, the key messages you are trying to sell, and the action you want to take to achieve those objectives.
- Establish an action plan setting out how you can best achieve your goals and listing what needs to be done.
- Advocate your position far and wide. Seek support from government, business, other non-government organisations or funding bodies, and media outlets.
- Plan a range of activities to get the message out – a public event, say, a function, a photo opportunity, a protest, a website, an email campaign, a lobbying campaign (federal, state and local government), a petition, a letter-drop, or a combination of any or all of these methods.
- Keep up communications with your coalition partners and supporters, the general public, and those you want to influence.
- Keep up the momentum by always striving to mobilise more people in support.
- Continue to review, refine, and implement your plan. Be flexible, and seek community input and support for any changes. ■

How to take on a trillion-dollar corporation – and win

BY BRETT DE HOEDT, HOOTVILLE COMMUNICATIONS



Precious public space given over to a private company?
No way, said supporters of Our City, Our Square.

My buttons are easy to find, and the **December 20, 2017 announcement** that Apple would build a superstore in Melbourne's Federation Square pushed all of them – quiz show style. Precious public space being gifted to a private megacorporation, without consultation, in a secret deal presented to the public as a win for the city? I was angry and it was time to get organised. (Spoiler alert: we won.)

It started with a Change.org petition.

I'd signed and shared my share of petitions but always thought of them as a tactic of last resort. I went to Change.org to sign the inevitable Federation Square petition but I couldn't find one so I reluctantly **started my own** – and it grew like topsy. It was exciting. I used my databases and a little money to accelerate it. **[Here's a blog post about growing your petition.](#)** ►



So far so good. I would ride this wave to success and receive an Order of Australia.

Then I made some big mistakes, and a few small ones. Here's what I learned from them.

Campaigns take chutzpah

I *should* have announced a short-notice public gathering at Federation Square to tap into public anger, secure media coverage and start the job of getting people's email addresses and donations. The petition would have been upgraded into a true campaign. But a gathering takes chutzpah, a PA system, public liability insurance and a willingness to cross swords with Federation Square security – all of which I lacked.

Instead I nursed the petition, and connected up with some like-minded souls and people who'd started their own similar petition. In January 2018, six strangers gathered at my home to map out a campaign. I quickly realised what a smart, connected, serious bunch they were and took a dislike to them accordingly. Our City, Our Square was born.

Unless you're a striking elf, don't count on support at Christmas

I'd thought that the 30,000 combined signatories would get onboard the campaign, sign our submissions, donate their cash and give us their email addresses, but by the time we launched in February 2018 many had lost interest. Anger is a fruitful emotion for campaigners to tap into, but it is fleeting – especially over Christmas. Our conversion rate from petition signer to ongoing supporter was low.

These things can take over your life

Dozens of meetings, hundreds of phone calls and thousands of emails later, we were still fighting. We'd garnered media coverage all over, from *Sunrise* to the **Guardian**, facilitated record-breaking numbers of submissions to City of Melbourne and Heritage Victoria, funded a street poster campaign, **launched an audacious \$40 million crowdfunding campaign**, participated in debates, **staged rallies**, assessed political candidates, run tours of Federation Square, raised thousands of dollars and whispered in every possible sympathetic ear.



WATCH: Brett de Hoedt calls on supporters to donate time, money or expertise to the Our Square, Our City campaign.

We'd made major submissions to authorities, launched a line of merchandise, gained a grip on planning and heritage issues, and tried to stoke the fires burning in our supporters' bellies.

Our band of volunteers, most of them self-employed, committed 20 hours or more to the project each week. And then there were the weeks of 100 hours plus.

Don't overestimate the hipsters

Federation Square belongs to everybody... and nobody. Melbourne CBD residents are overwhelmingly recent and transient. Few got involved in the campaign. The support of the arts community, architects and hipster brigade left me... underwhelmed. If the Apple store had been the brainchild of a conservative government, I daresay we'd have enjoyed more support. Major business and retail groups that should have been furious with the government's blatant favouritism also refused to take up the issue. (Cowards!)

I tried but failed to enlist the support of the owner of the biggest petition – a young chap who amassed 50,000 signatures.

Software: keep it simple

We selected Nation Builder as our campaign software. This was surplus to requirements. We now use a **SquareSpace website** and MailChimp. Simple, effective, attractive. ►



Energy expenditure: keep it proportional

We devoted a LOT of time and energy to some initiatives with low return. Did we really need to **create a cool online shop** or issue how-to-vote information? Oh well – that’s showbiz.

Teamwork: it’s vital

As a not-for-profit communications professional I thought I had all the answers. Second spoiler alert: I didn’t.

I’ve realised that a varied team is vital. I could have moved more quickly alone, especially in the early stages, but there’s no chance I could have brought the range of skills, energy and connections of my colleagues. People skills are paramount. At one low point in the campaign I called our president, Tania Davidge, to resign – and 20 minutes later I was still volunteering and had taken on additional responsibilities. How did that happen?

Spoon-feed. Thank. Repeat.

This campaign was long and complicated – multiple submissions, petitions and heritage hearings need a lot of explanation and participation. Along the way, some people thought we’d already won, and others assumed we’d already lost. One needs to guide people through the process, step by step.

Campaigns need depth and breadth

The campaign went far beyond the digital and media world, which was a surprise to me. My colleagues spent hours with experts in planning, heritage, politics and the law. This broadened our influence and knowledge but it was slower, less rewarding work and sometimes gave the impression of a dormant campaign. However, it was vital in reversing a major government initiative.

But I had a dream

In the end, we successfully thwarted the wishes of a trillion-dollar behemoth and a popular state government. That’s the sort of win I used to daydream about. Read more at www.ourcityyoursquare.org.

*Brett de Hoedt promises to teach you how to use communications for good not evil via his agency Hootville Communications. His free eBook **Media Savvy** shows you how to grab your share of the media spotlight – Our Community is launching it on May 6. In the same week, join Brett for a free webinar (May 8) that will show you how to create a harder working, more effective website. All these events and more are happening as part of Communicating with Clout Week, an initiative of the Festival of Community Directors. Download the festival program here (PDF). ■*



WEBINAR

Better Websites

With Brett de Hoedt,
Hootville Communications

Wed 8 May 2019

[Find out more](#)

Tactics for mobilising and developing grassroots action

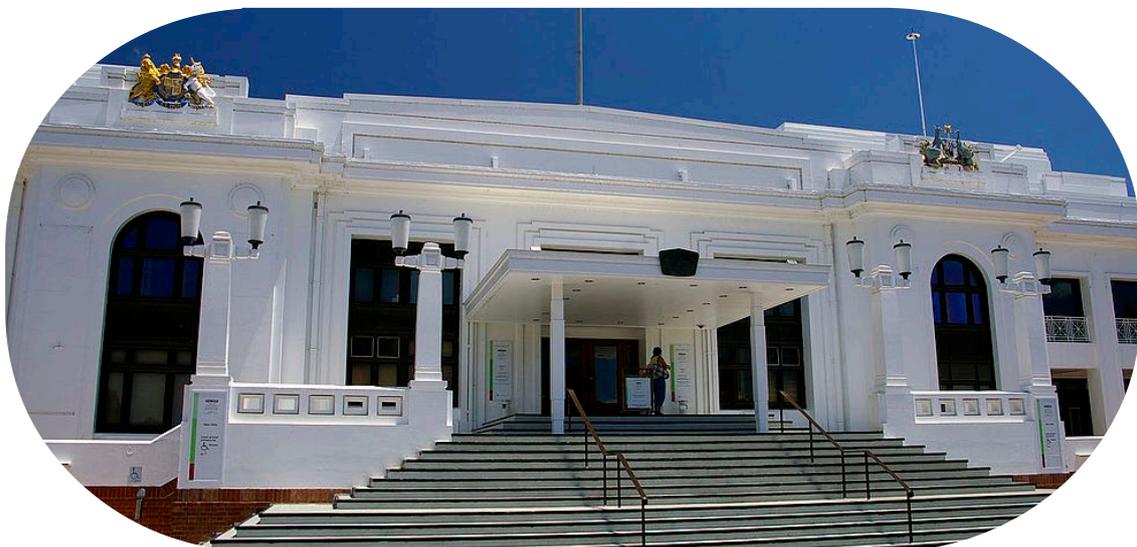
An advocacy campaign is nothing without broad based support. For most campaigns this means support from the ground up – community support – so you'll need to provide opportunities for people to get involved. This will raise awareness of your issue and generate debate that you hope will influence decision-makers.

Sometimes you need only a small handful of people to do the actual advocacy work, as with lobbying, for example. But even then, you still need the backing of large numbers to give your cause legitimacy. In grassroots campaigns, sheer numbers are powerful. (For a rare exception, see the Clarendon House case study on page 20.)

Following is a list of the most common tactics employed by advocacy groups. You will probably employ different tactics at different stages of your campaign depending on your needs. It is rare that one tactic on its own will be effective.

Lobbying

Lobbying is an attempt to influence the policy of an organisation or policymaker. This can be a parliamentarian, a local councillor, a business, or even another community group. In the end you'll have to be able to show why your point of view should take primacy over the point of view of other stakeholders. See our helpsheet **Advocacy for Legislation and Regulation** for more information. ►



Cramped conditions in Canberra's Old Parliament House made it relatively easy for lobbyists to rub shoulders with politicians.



Fun tactics

Mobilisation methods that fall under this category can be highly creative. They include street performances, art shows, flash mobs and workshops (these are often used at rallies to lift the mood and create enthusiasm). Humour plays a big part.

Direct action

Direct action means somebody puts their body on the line to stop something from happening, typically stopping someone from bulldozing a tree or stopping the functioning of a workplace through a strike or an occupation. This approach is confrontational; it often attracts media attention, but involves legal (and sometimes physical) risks. For that reason, direct action tactics are usually a last resort (i.e. when the bulldozers are moving in). Actions employing these sorts of tactics will only ever be successful if they enjoy popular support from enough people.

Petitioning and letter-writing

Petitioning is a great non-confrontational method of engaging people. It doesn't take a huge amount of work, which increases your chances of getting people involved. It also engages people and gets them thinking about the issue. You can use a petition later in your lobbying exercises, or arrange for a sympathetic local member to present it to parliament. Protest meetings are an ideal place to get signatures for a petition, but so is the local shopping centre or anywhere else where a large number of local residents congregate. Perhaps the hardest part of petitions is actually using them.

Remember, you need to be able to identify the signatories to a petition – and this means having at least an email address but preferably a physical address as well. Entirely too many petitions simply do not get enough details from the signatories and are rendered useless. Anyone can make up 200 names from random suburbs and write them down. You need to be able to prove that these people exist.

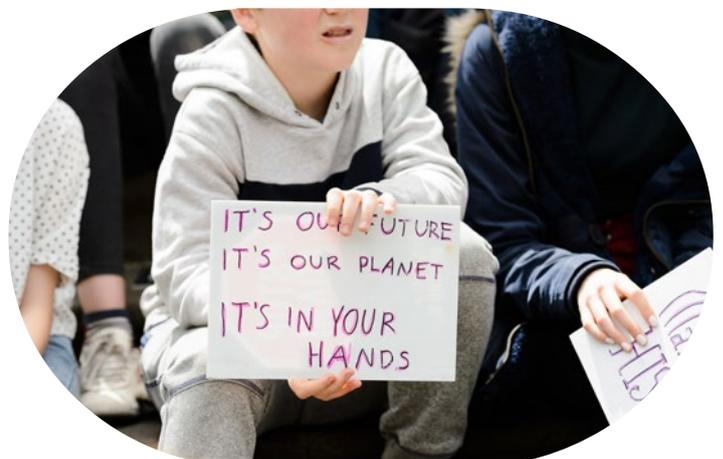
Letter-writing requires a little more effort than petitioning, but these campaigns tend to carry

more weight than petitions. One way to get people involved in letter-writing is to write a standard letter (and even pay the postage, if your organisation can afford it), and get people to sign it. However, a standard letter is never as effective as a letter someone has written for themselves. One personal letter is probably worth 100 names on a petition. A good compromise – combining the potential for critical mass afforded by the standard letter with the impact of a personalised letter – is to provide some suggested points people can use in their own letters. The lazy writers can cut and paste, and the more creative ones can add personal touches. For tips on how to host a letter-writing party, see page 22.

Rallies and marches

A rally or march never occurs spontaneously. When the biggest protests in history occurred in opposition to the move to war in Iraq early in 2003, they happened because of months of intensive groundwork by countless community groups around the world. These sorts of events create a public display of sentiment and can show policymakers and members of the public that there is a high level of grassroots support for your issue (it's worth noting, though, that they didn't prevent the war in Iraq).

A lot of publicity and planning needs to go into staging a rally. As well as creating enough public awareness to spur people to turn up, you need to inform police, organise speakers, organise ►



The recent School Strike 4 Climate marches took months of planning. Photo: Julian Meehan



sound systems and so on. Rallies and marches are a central part of modern advocacy, but are not something to be entered into lightly. Having families and a wide cross-section of the community involved can help lend legitimacy to your event. **The School Strike 4 Climate marches last month** attracted a lot of media attention partly because of the age of the participants. See the helpsheet **Holding a March or Rally: The Step-by-step Guide** for more information

Website and social media

You must have a website. This will be your first point of contact for many supporters, as well as for opponents and the media.

The social media age has brought with it a huge variety of different mobilisation tactics, all with the potential to reach a huge audience at the tap of a screen and at a very low cost. Being active on Facebook and Twitter, at a minimum, will increase your reach tremendously.

Ballot box

No matter how undemocratic or how horrible a policy or action of a government or member of parliament might be, the ballot box provides the ultimate accountability mechanism. Never underestimate the effect of a forthcoming election on a government's policies and actions.

As Community Council for Australia CEO David Crosbie **told Pro Bono News** recently, "Now is the time for all charities to be finalising their election strategy, because if your issue is not on the agenda in the next eight weeks, then it probably will not be on the agenda for the next three years. Almost every charity in Australia should have some form of election strategy."

Public meetings

Public meetings are a good way to table ideas, to encourage discussion, and to promote exposure to a diversity of opinions. Public meetings can

involve an open microphone, where anyone can come up and talk, or you can have a panel of people (usually "experts") discussing the issue, or a speaker presenting. Other options include "learn-ins", where you occupy a room or building and provide a discussion on the issue that you're protesting about.

The biggest hurdle to a campaign will often be lack of public awareness, and public meetings can stimulate people to think about the issue. (Often, of course, most of the people who'll attend your meetings are already in favour of your opinion and will have a reasonable awareness of the issue.) The main aim of a public meeting should be to work towards a solution or offer some alternatives on the issue you are debating.

Non-participation

It might seem like a paradox, but non-participation can be a very powerful advocacy tool. Non-participation can take many forms. The most common form of non-participation is the boycott, but other forms include not voting, and not paying tax (or not paying the proportion of tax that goes towards the thing you are objecting to). Passive resistance also falls into this category.

Piggybacking

Seize upon any public event to promote your campaign or publicise future events by distributing leaflets, selling merchandise, and collecting donations and signatures.

Use the media

Finally, remember, too, that you want to deliver your message loudly. If no one hears it, what's the point? Media coverage is essential. For more information on how to use the media to sell your message, see our helpsheet collection **Media – Preparing a Winning Strategy**. And for a case study from a master of the art of media strategy, see Brett de Hoedt's article on page 8. ■



Never under-estimate the determination of a group of motivated parents: Sunshine College mums and dads meet with Labor's Katie Hall (fourth from left) to try to extract promises on school infrastructure.

Why people power is worth millions

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

People power pays dividends – especially at election time.

I know this because I've seen it in play at my local high school.

Sunshine College – a four-campus secondary school in Melbourne's west – was literally falling apart, in a story familiar to many parents with kids at schools that have seen better days.

Locals in one of the most ethnically diverse and disadvantaged suburbs in the city were thrilled – and equally sceptical – when they first heard \$28 million would finally be spent to rebuild it.

And then the asbestos was found. It was in the walls, the floors, the ceiling and even the fire-retardant paint at the junior west campus.

The Education Department said there was no more money, and that the cash needed for

remediation – up to \$7 million – would have to come out of the existing budget. That meant no gym, no performing arts centre, no years 7–8 learning centre, and a stack of other missing upgrades. All of that was put on hold.

The school community was shocked at first. But then we started organising.

After front pages in the local newspaper, the campaign took on a life of its own, fuelled by the “Shine High” Facebook group, a letter-writing campaign, and meetings with local, state and federal politicians of all persuasions. Never under-estimate the determination of a group of motivated parents.

My kids were at the tail end of primary school, so for my part, I headed to some of the meetings, and penned a letter to the Labor candidate for Footscray, Katie Hall. Many others did too. ►



Community effort was the key to finding government cash to fix asbestos problems and rebuild Sunshine College in Melbourne's west.

As parents continued to ratchet up the pressure, students joined the fray too, with aspiring journalist Claudia Forsberg writing a series of **withering blog posts** before heading to Ms Hall's office to put the hard questions.

All this happened as the November 2018 Victorian state election loomed closer.

Then, in the heat of the campaign, after months of dogged effort and frustration by the community, Education Minister James Merlino cracked, finding not just the missing \$7 million, but a total of \$12.75 million to tackle the asbestos and get all the promised works done.

Shine High campaigner and parent Vin Ryan said the victory was one for the whole community, but he singled out Katie Hall and then Greens campaigner Huong Truong as crucial to the result.

"Community effort was the key. So many people worked to get this to happen. And the results will benefit the west for years to come," Mr Ryan said.

"One of the things I'm really pleased about is to see how so many different people from across the community came together for a common purpose."

And Ms Hall was in no doubt that she was swayed by the community.

"I absolutely believe in the power of constructive community activism. In a previous role I worked as a campaigns coordinator and I think community organising can be very effective.

"By constructive, I mean by community members working with their representatives to highlight an issue and champion a solution. By working together on a problem and a potential solution you can achieve great things."

She said the best campaigns, in her experience, involve a range of elements, including "a good cause and committed residents working together to secure a common goal".

Some cynics around the Sunshine think the money was always going to be there, with nearly \$1 billion pledged in school infrastructure by Labor and Liberals in Victoria in the month before the state election.

But I'm not so certain it was a sure thing. What's that they say about squeaky wheels? ■

Keeping your advocacy network alive over time

Issues come and go, and their importance or urgency will wax and wane too.

As an issue falls off the radar, it's not uncommon for its associated networks to fade away as well. So it's important to keep your networks alive for the long haul so you can mobilise them when they're needed. Without them, campaigning will be a lot harder.

Show that you're still active

Your issue might not be on the front page of the local paper any more, but that doesn't mean you're not still busy behind the scenes. It's very easy to remain unnoticed by those around you even though you're still working away. So be sure to keep up the communication – and the momentum – with the people and organisations on your contact lists, via newsletters, meetings and social media posts. Networks are always about cross-collaboration, so make sure your networks know how their issue fits in with yours. Keep up a range of actions to remind people that your issue hasn't gone away.

Call people

It might sound silly, but it can be that simple. If you haven't heard from someone for a few months, give them a call and see how they're getting on. (Or send them a text message, if you know that's their preference.) You don't need a reason to call them: just ring to check in. Set aside some time to do a ring-around every so often. Networks are often as much about personal relationships as they are about professional relationships, so don't be shy.

Help others with their work

The importance of supporting the campaigns of others cannot be overstated. Networks are a two-way street, so when someone turns to you for help, it's important to give them as much support as possible. Endorse their rallies, sign their petitions, promote their events and so on. It's a great way to keep in contact with these people and it means that when you call on them, you're much more likely to receive their support.

Being an activist for life

Some campaigns are won, some are lost, and some become irrelevant. In any case, if your issue becomes a non-issue, odds are you'll remain an activist. Activists are usually activists for life. You'll get involved in other campaigns, and when you do, you'll be glad you've kept in touch with your networks over time. ■



Activists are usually activists for life. Enlisting multiple generations in your campaign team is one way to help to keep it vibrant. Photo: Takver via Flickr / Creative Commons

How we're changing the world, by people who are doing it

BY KERRY N BURGESS, EDITOR, OUR COMMUNITY MATTERS

The campaign for marriage equality, the movement to stop the Adani mine from getting the green light, and efforts towards voluntary assisted dying legislation have captured Australia's attention in recent times. We asked some of the most passionate organisers of those movements for their tips on getting results: what methods did they use? What did they do that no one else had done? And what would they tell others? Here's what they said.



Kiki Paul, CEO, Go Gentle Australia

Our Community Matters: How would you describe your method of campaigning in relation to voluntary assisted dying?

Kiki Paul: Go Gentle Australia is an expert advisory and health promotion charity working to relieve the suffering of Australians at the end of life. We do this through information, education and support and by encouraging better conversations about end-of-life-choices, including voluntary assisted dying (VAD).

We provide expert advice and peer reviewed analysis of the issues around end-of-life and

VAD, to ensure that facts and evidence – not opinions or feelings – are at the centre of any debate or law reform process.

What are you doing that nobody else has done before?

We are not doing anything revolutionary – although in this era of “fake news” and opinion-as-fact, perhaps we are!

We believe it's important that public policy decisions are made on the basis of careful analysis, peer-reviewed evidence and established facts, not on who shouts the loudest or has the deepest pockets.

Basically, we believe there are established ways to evaluate evidence, including for voluntary assisted dying. If an opinion claims to be influenced by facts, it is critical that these ►



facts are accurate and informed by empirical evidence. If no evidence can be provided, it should be ignored. And if evidence is provided, how reliable is it? Who provided it and are there perhaps undeclared allegiances that could influence the evidence?

We also listen closely to the people these issues affect directly – terminally ill and elderly Australians and their families.

It's a sign of the times that this approach sounds radical. But we believe the vast majority of Australians still believe in evidence-based policy. For example, in October 2018, a joint report from the Institute of Public Affairs and Per Capita – representing opposite ends of the political spectrum – ranked the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2017 in Victoria as an outstanding example of evidence-based policy making.

What would you tell other campaigners/advocates based on what you've learned from the experience so far?

Worthwhile change takes time and a lot of hard work. Stick with it. Listen to the other side and always be open to having a reasonable, respectful conversation.



Dr Shirleene Robinson, director, Australian Marriage Equality

Our Community Matters: How would you describe your method in campaigning for marriage equality?

Dr Shirleen Robinson: Australian Marriage Equality had been campaigning for marriage equality since 2004. The campaign built on these efforts – and those of LGBTIQ people and allies who had been working for equality decades earlier. We tried to empower people across the country to have conversations in their community about why marriage equality mattered to them. Sharing personal stories was incredibly important. Apart from LGBTIQ people and their allies, we drew on many coalitions and alliances over time, including with trade unions

and other campaigners, but also with corporate supporters, people of faith and so many others.

What did you do that nobody else had done?

It's difficult to say that any one group of campaigners did something unique as there were many ways we benefited from each other's efforts. During the postal survey but also before, our social media networks were incredibly important in providing information to community campaigners quickly on a very large scale. We had a wonderful team who were able to produce a wide range of content very quickly and we received a lot of positive feedback about the reach of that social media. We managed to bring together an incredible and diverse group of people all across the country and that's something we can all feel proud of.

What would you tell other campaigners/advocates based on what you've learned from the experience?

Always remember self-care and be mindful of the toll this very personal campaign took on so many Australians. We know that trans and gender diverse people – as well as the children of rainbow families – were targeted by the “no” campaign. Also, it's important to know that change is possible, even if at times it feels like it's not. It could be one voice or one conversation that helps change someone's opinion and makes social change possible. ▶



WATCH: Re-live the moment when the Australian Parliament voted yes to marriage equality.



Don't underestimate the energising and empowering effect of taking part in collaborative actions, says Stop Adani campaigner Jodi Magi, appearing here as Frydosaurus.



Jodi Magi, campaigner, Stop Adani Melbourne

Our Community Matters: How would you describe your method in campaigning to Stop Adani?

Jo di Magi: I am a member of one of the first Stop Adani community groups – Stop Adani Melbourne – which formed in early 2017. Two of the pillars of the campaign strategy are stopping the money and shifting politics. All four big banks committed to not funding the mine in 2017, and the sitting federal MP for Melbourne CBD is Greens MP Adam Bandt. We have focused on raising the public profile of the campaign at street level by hosting and co-hosting large #StopAdani events such as a Federation Square screening of Guarding the Galilee, painting highly visible concrete bollards in Bourke Street Mall and opposite Flinders Street Station with 1 metre x 1 metre #StopAdani icons, and supporting other groups with MP-focused actions, especially Frydenberg and Shorten actions.

What are you doing that nobody else has done before?

In a way, I don't want to be original, because I see this movement to stop Adani as a giant flock of birds all flying in the same direction. We just have different coloured feathers.

What would you tell other campaigners/advocates based on what you've learned from the experience so far?

This is a marathon, not a sprint, so take time out for yourself in between all the activism. Don't underestimate the energising and empowering effect of taking part in collaborative actions and the importance of spending time with others who care as deeply about climate action as you do. There are so many opportunities for learning new skills in the #StopAdani movement, whether it be through webinars, one-on-one mentorship, volunteering or training days. Make the most of these because you may not realise what hidden and valuable talents you have, plus it's fun to challenge yourself and grow and a great way to develop lasting friendships with people who share similar values. ■

Tips from an old-time activist: saving Clarendon Terrace

BY CHRIS BORTHWICK, THINKER IN RESIDENCE, OUR COMMUNITY

Some forty years ago I was involved in a small but successful conservation protest. Almost everything about campaigning has changed since then, what with this new-fangled “social media” and all, but some principles still stand and some tips are timeless.

It was the 1970s, and a beautiful old building was about to be demolished in East Melbourne. This was seen as a pity, but that was a time when beautiful buildings were falling like ninepins – when, indeed, they were often seen as annoying fossils standing in the way of progress. Even so, Clarendon Terrace was pretty distinctive. Here’s how we saved it from the wrecking ball.

Move fast and preserve things

Small groups, or even single people, can get off the mark straight away. Don’t wait to get everything in place; you can do it very much on the run.

I checked around, and the bodies that might have acted – the local council, the National Trust, the unions – didn’t think there was much that could be done. The National Trust had already lost a bruising battle in East Melbourne over the demolition of St Patrick’s College by the Catholic Church to build diocesan offices. Demolition would start in a couple of weeks.

Puff up your fur and look big

There’s no law against making people think you have a team of expensive lawyers.

I set up the Clarendon Terrace Preservation Group, consisting initially of me and my girlfriend, and later us and an architecture student and several of my sisters. We created a letterhead and sent out press releases.

Pick your media

The wrong camera angle can kill you.

Given that we had about ten members, we weren’t going to be doing any mass ►



“There’s no law against making people think you have a team of expensive lawyers”:

Chris Borthwick.



In the 1970s, buildings such as Clarendon Terrace in East Melbourne were seen as fossils standing in the way of progress.

demonstrations – but the TV news reporter did sound very sympathetic, and if you shoot ten people in extreme close-up you can't tell it apart from the moratorium march that filled Bourke Street over Vietnam.

Have a hook

Think in pictures.

Our demonstration wasn't going to do it by pure mass, so we needed a story. We make a Clarendon Terrace cake – luckily, they make Greek columns to put on wedding cakes – and smashed it with a sledgehammer for the camera.

Pass the parcel

You don't have to do it all. You just have to get the big players interested.

We'd done what we had to do. We'd got media interest, and we'd pushed up the public salience of the issue, and we'd got reporters going around asking people what they intended to do about it. The National Trust could see that there was

actually a chance to bring this off, and the unions could see that they'd get brownie points for banning the demolition.

Everybody (except the developer) wanted to save the terrace – it just hadn't been very high up their priority list. We'd changed the weightings. People thought it was worth calling in favours. In August 1977, the government announced that it would provide the National Trust with an interest-free loan to buy and restore the property.

We had an extremely sympathetic cause, and we were lucky. It could easily have gone the other way. But Clarendon Terrace is still there, and without us it wouldn't be.

More information

Compare techniques from campaigns some 40 years apart: go to page 8 to read about the successful 2018–19 campaign to save Federation Square from redevelopment by Apple. ■

How to host a letter writing party

BY ALEX MCMILLAN, OUR COMMUNITY



Letters have long been used to stir romance and call foes into battle, to send birthday congratulations and share holiday greetings. But I use them to channel my righteous indignation.

Letter writing is a great way to get started in community activism, particularly for people short on time but long on passion. Writing that first letter, though, can seem like a daunting task. I started out lacking confidence in my ability to clearly articulate what I wanted from those in power.

Luckily for me, letter writing is far more fun and effective when done with others. This is where the letter writing party (LWP) comes into its own. Organisations like Amnesty International have seen huge success running LWPs, and offer handy **[tools and templates](#)** for planning your own. I've now participated in and run several LWPs, on issues ranging from climate action and the dignified processing of asylum seekers at the federal level to community gardens and unwanted property development at the local level.

The first step in organising a letter writing party is to gather your supporters and brainstorm answers to the following questions:

1. What is the problem you're trying to address?
2. What is your proposed solution to this problem? If this solution seems beyond the power of your target recipient to achieve, what are some smaller actions they can take which may help others to achieve the same solution?
3. Who will you be sending letters to? Is there just one person you can influence, or are there many?

The more articulate your answers, the better, but always encourage participants to write out the problem and solution from their own perspective. Blasting someone with 1000 copies of the same letter will make them madder than Mr W Dursley of Privet Drive, Barnstaple. Letter writing should contain individual examples and personal accounts – you never know which one will compel the recipient into action. ■

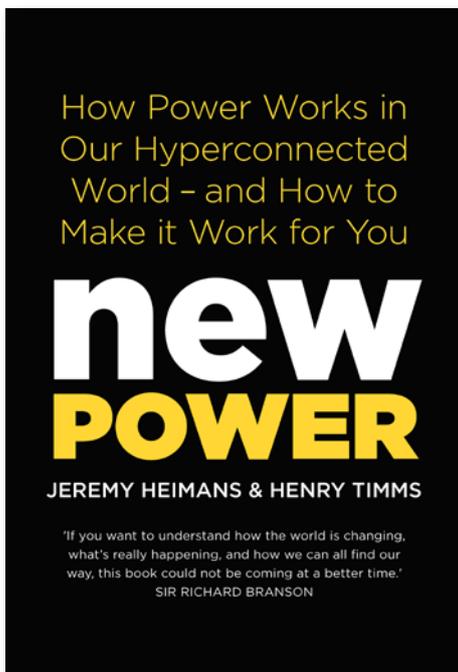


New Power: How power works in our hyperconnected world – and how to make it work for you

In New Power, two visionary thinkers take you on a whirlwind tour of the 21st century, revealing how “new power” is reshaping politics, business and society.

This book by Jeremy Heimans, co-founder of GetUp, and Henry Timms is essential reading for all not-for-profits and community groups engaged in advocacy, campaigning, and working to make the world a better place.

In this excerpt, Heimans and Timms explain how old and new power work.



The ingredients of new power

People have always wanted to take part in the world. Throughout history, movements have surged, people have organised collectively, communities have built collaborative structures to create culture and conduct commerce. There has always been a dialectic between bottom-up and top-down, between hierarchies and networks.

But until recently, our everyday opportunities to participate and agitate were much more constrained. Thanks to today's ubiquitous connectivity, we can come together and organise ourselves in ways that are geographically boundless and highly distributed and with unprecedented velocity and reach. This hyperconnectedness has given birth to new models and mindsets that are shaping our age, as we'll see in the pages ahead. That's the “new” in new power.

A popular thread on Reddit, the link-sharing platform, crowd-sourced memories of growing up in the 1990s, when life felt very different. For those who were there, the posts offered warm nostalgia. For those who weren't yet born, it told stories of an alien world: The anxiety of waiting for your yearbook photo to arrive, which was “the only time you saw a picture of you and your friends at school.” You only got one shot to get that right, and you never knew how it would turn out. The tension of calling the local radio station, requesting your favorite song, and then waiting, fingers poised on the ►



record button of your tape cassette player, to capture it when it came on. The excitement of stopping by the Blockbuster Video store to rent a movie on the way home. The frustration of going to the library and finding the one book you need has already been taken out or “should be in the stacks but can’t be found.” The tedium of doing math without a calculator because they were banned, the sturdy reasoning being “you won’t have a calculator in your pocket all the time when you grow up.”

Of course, we now have much more than a calculator in our pocket. In today’s world, we all have our hands (quite literally) on what we can think of as a new means of participation. And this isn’t just changing what we can do, but how we expect to engage.

These new means of participation – and the heightened sense of agency that has come with them – are a key ingredient in some of the most impactful models of our time: big businesses like Airbnb and Uber, China’s WeChat or Facebook; protest movements like Black Lives Matter, open software systems like GitHub; and terrorist networks like ISIS. They are all channeling new power.

Think of these as new power models. New power models are enabled by the activity of the crowd – without whom these models are just empty vessels. In contrast, old power models are enabled by what people or organisations own, know, or control that nobody else does – once old power models lose that, they lose their advantage. Old power models ask of us only that we comply (pay your taxes, do your homework) or consume. New power models demand and allow for more: that we share ideas, create new content (as on YouTube) or assets (as on Etsy), even shape a community (think of the sprawling digital movements resisting the Trump presidency).

To grasp the essential difference between old and new power models, think of the difference between the two biggest computer games of all time, Tetris and Minecraft.

You will likely remember the block-based game Tetris, which exploded with the Gameboy craze of the 1990s. The way it worked was simple. Blocks fell down from the top of the screen and the player’s job was to make them fit into neat regular lines. They came down faster and faster until the player was eventually overwhelmed. In old power fashion, the player had a limited role, and you could never beat the system.

New power models work more like Minecraft, now the second biggest game of all time. Like Tetris, it is a clunky block-based game. But it operates very differently. Instead of a model built on top-down compliance, it is a game built from the bottom-up, with players around the world co-creating worlds together, block by block. It relies entirely on participatory energy. In the world of Minecraft, you will find houses, temples, and Walmarts; dragons, caves, boats, farms, and roller coasters; working computers made by engineers; forest fires, dungeons, cinemas, chickens, and stadiums. The players set their rules and create their own tasks. There is no “manual”; players learn from the example – and often the homemade videos – of others. Some players (known as “modders”) are even entrusted with the capacity to alter the game itself. Without the actions of the players, Minecraft is a wasteland. A key dynamic in the world today is the mutual incomprehension between those raised in the Tetris tradition and those with a Minecraft mindset.

The mission of this book

The future will be a battle over mobilisation. The everyday people, leaders, and organisations who flourish will be those best able to channel the participatory energy of those around them – for the good, for the bad, and for the trivial.

This matters in the daily lives of all of us

Whether you are a historian yearning to share your knowledge in a post-truth world, a determined parent running for your local ►



school board, or a creator wanting to get a new produce off the ground, there are a range of distinctive new capabilities that people and businesses need to discover.

The skills in question are often misunderstood as the ability to self-promote on Facebook or as Snapchat for Dummies. But new power is about much more than just new tools and technologies. As the State Department showed us in their failed online sparring with the Islamic State, many are still deploying these new means of participation in profoundly old power ways. This book is about a different approach to the exercise of power, and a different mind-set, which can be deployed even as particular tools and platforms go in and out of fashion. How do

you create ideas that the crowd grabs on to, makes stronger, and helps spread? How do you operate effectively within an organisation in which your (perhaps younger) peers have internalised new power values like radical transparency or constant feedback? How do you create an institution that inspires an enduring, mass following in an era of much looser, more transitory affiliation? How do you switch between old and new power? When should you blend them together? And when will old power actually produce better outcomes?

*This is an extract from **New Power** by Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms. Available now, Macmillan Australia, RRP \$34.99.*

About the authors



Jeremy Heimans

Sydney-born Jeremy Heimans co-founded GetUp and is the co-founder and CEO of Purpose, a New York-based company that builds and supports social movements.



Henry Timms

Henry Timms is executive director of the 92nd Street Y in New York City and co-founder of #GivingTuesday, an international day of philanthropy. Our Community is the Australia–New Zealand lead partner for #GivingTuesday.

More information

Jeremy Heimans profiled by Malcolm Knox in [The Monthly](#) | “What new power looks like”: [TED Talk](#) by Jeremy Heimans (video) | Follow Henry Timms on [Twitter](#) | Follow Jeremy Heimans on [Twitter](#) ■

Great Grant: Sport4Everyone



VIDEO: The Perth Pythons hockey club was granted \$7000 through Sport4Everyone to fund the 2017 Pride Cup, an event to encourage LGBTQI inclusion.

Sport4Everyone is a grants program of the Australian Sports Foundation, funding projects and activities that increase participation in grassroots and community sport through small grants.

Focus areas

The program provides grants of up to \$10,000 for projects and activities that will have a positive impact in one or more of these focus areas:

- Increasing the number of women and girls in sport
- Physical activity – getting more kids more active
- Improving leadership and decision making through sport
- Diversity and inclusion – increasing participation among minority groups.

The foundation wants to fund projects that:

- Provide positive and inclusive sporting experiences
- Increase the inclusivity of sporting environments
- Allow greater opportunity for long term sport participation and connections
- Increase the number of participants (including players, volunteers or family members involved in sport activity)
- Create greater awareness of the value of diversity and inclusion in sport.

Minority groups may include, but are not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people ▶

- Elderly people
- Economically disadvantaged people
- LGBTIQ+ community
- People with disabilities
- People living remotely.

Eligible projects

Here are some examples of the types of projects that are eligible for funding. This list is not exhaustive – the foundation is open to creative options.

- Events to increase interest and engagement in physical activity or sport among focus groups
- Funds to cover registration and playing costs, enabling more people to participate
- Specific competitions focused on eligible groups under the inclusive and diverse category
- Clinics and training programs that teach leadership or promote physical and healthy lifestyles

- Buses and transport to enable rural, remote or non-driving groups to participate and become more physically active
- Accessible facilities and equipment (wheelchairs, modified equipment, accessibility ramps)
- Babysitters, carers or translators to allow all members of the community including parents, people who require a carer or non-English speakers to participate
- Community events to encourage family involvement.

Hurry: closing very soon

This round closes at noon on Monday 22 April.

Australian grassroots organisations and public schools are eligible and encouraged to apply. (For ineligible organisations and projects, see online.)

For more information and to apply, go to <https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/G06655/apply> (Funding Centre log-in required). ■



“I’m proof that you can get metaphorically smashed to pieces from every angle and still not lose hope #LoveTrumpsHate eventually.”

Mariam Veiszadeh
May 21, 2019, 11.30am
communitiesincontrol.com.au



Jam power delivers sweet results for aged care residents

BY JULIENNE PRICE, HEAD OF SOCIAL IMPACT SECTOR BANKING, COMMONWEALTH BANK



Residents and staff at Perth's Maurice Zeffert aged care home celebrate Australia Day earlier this year.

“Design jams” are building the creative confidence of people across the social impact sector – and empowering attendees to tackle some of their organisation’s biggest challenges, writes Julienne Price, Head of Social Impact Sector Banking at Commonwealth Bank.

Staff at the Maurice Zeffert residential aged care and retirement village in Perth were looking at how they could best implement an enabling model of care throughout their facility. Cue the Comm Bank design jam: a one-day workshop that sets out to inspire, excite and challenge participants, and results in real change.

Using a range of “design thinking” tools such as the “funnel of focus” and “empathy mapping”, the Maurice Zeffert team reframed their initial challenge to focus on the question of how they might provide support and consultation opportunities to workplace personal carers who genuinely care and want to make a contribution.

The team then undertook a range of activities including “crazy 8s”, “free brainstorming” and “parallel worlds” to develop dozens of ideas on how they could best solve their challenge. They selected their top idea, prototyped it, tested it, developed a business model canvas for it, and pitched it to fellow team members at the end of the day. ▶



This resulted in the formation of a care committee comprising elected residents, family representatives and staff who work together on issues and actions across the Maurice Zeffert facility.

The director of corporate services at Maurice Zeffert, Amanda Macnamara, said the team had enjoyed the process as well as the results.

“We walked in as a team with a big idea that was overwhelmed by the challenge ahead of us and walked out with a clearer sense of how to chunk the challenge down – and the enthusiasm that the challenge is definitely achievable,” she said.

“Even the preparation work in the empathy interviews has helped improve our performance appraisal processes and validated our recruitment and staff commitment to our mission. We definitely recommend the design jam workshop – we were challenged and learned so much, and still had some fun along the way.”

Change doesn't need to cost the earth

There's a perception that “design thinking” and innovation are costly exercises requiring large budgets. In fact they're available to everybody,

from grassroots groups to large organisations. What we're seeing from our national program of NFP design jams and from the Maurice Zeffert example is that positive change can be achieved and implemented with very little expenditure.

Design jams are a journey of discovery, and you never really know what the result is going to be. They provide us here at CommBank with the opportunity to share the tools for creativity, while helping to support and strengthen the organisations who form the backbone of Australian society.

If you'd like to learn more about, or perhaps take part in, one of our NFP design jams, get in touch by emailing NotforProfitSectorBanking@CBA.com.au.

Until next time. ■

CommBank is an Our Community partner.



CommonwealthBank

The Apology:
To the refugees,
we say sorry

David Manne

May 21, 2019, 1.15pm

communitiesincontrol.com.au



Philanthropist's investment secures social sector's new headquarters

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY



Our Community's group managing director, Denis Moriarty, and chair and lead investor, Carol Schwartz.

The lead investor and chair of Our Community, Carol Schwartz, says the \$15.3 million purchase of the landmark property where Our Community House now stands was an easy investment decision for her and her husband, Alan, to make.

"This investment makes sense on many levels," said one of Australia's most prominent business and social investment figures of the two-storey 2765-square-metre office a stone's throw from North Melbourne's Town Hall.

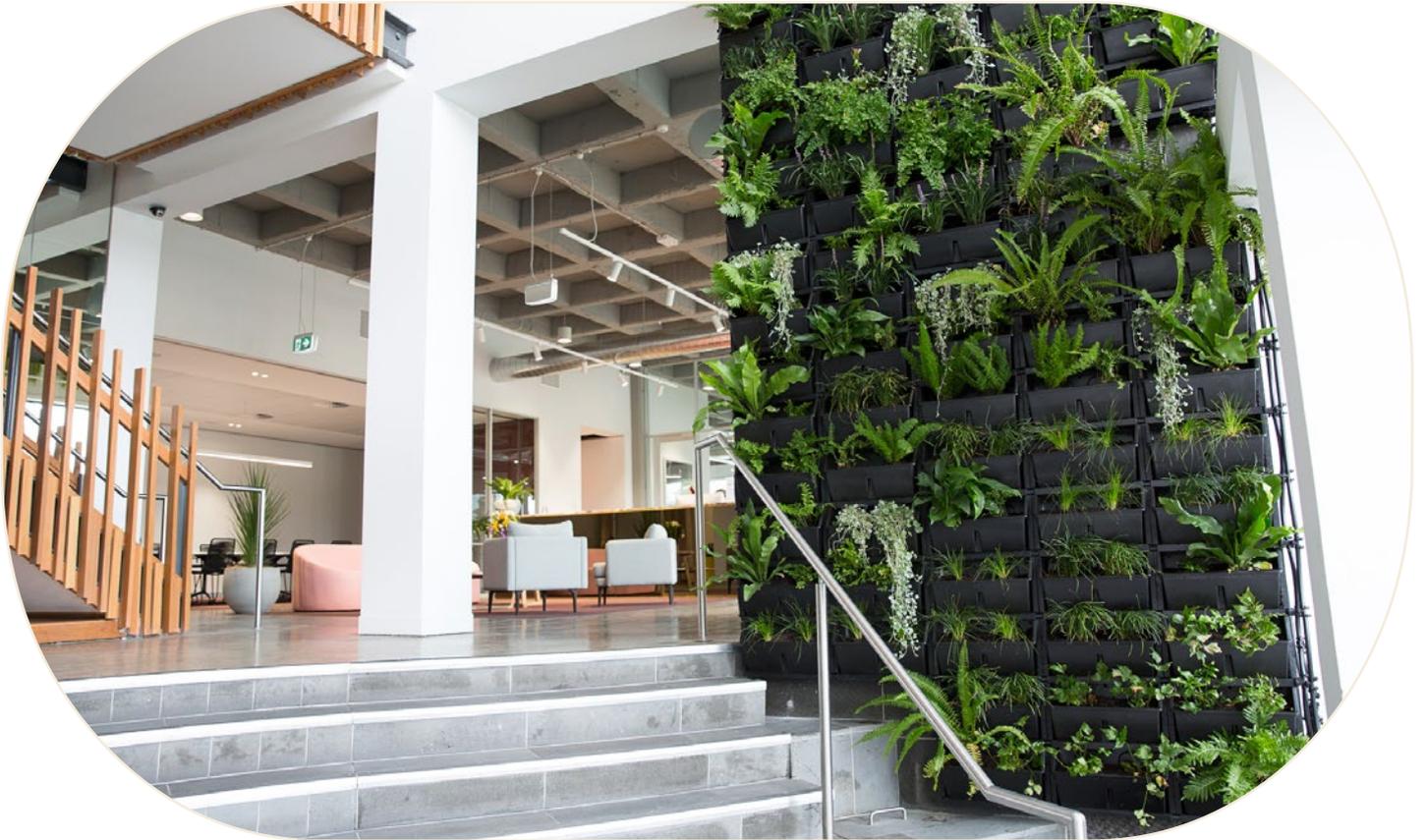
The Schwartz family also contributed millions

for a quality fit-out of the premises, raising the standards for third-sector organisations, which are often forced into second-rate spaces.

"As the chair of Our Community since its inception in 2000, I've watched the evolution of its many social enterprises, which have led the formation of new and better ways of doing things in this sector," Ms Schwartz said.

"Supporting this new venture brings together so many of the things I believe in: social justice, gender equity, socially responsible business, and the promise of new technology.

"I've really enjoyed being part of the Our ►



Our Community House is filled with plants, including a wall of greenery at the entrance.

Community family and part of its journey for nearly 20 years. It has been an important part of our lives, so it's exciting seeing the Our Community model being taken to the next level."

Ms Schwartz said it was clear to anyone who visited the space that it was somewhere users enjoyed working in and felt inspired by, and that it encouraged collaboration. Occupancy fees are within the budgets of most not-for-profit organisations.

The building, which is filled with artworks and plants, offers a dedicated room for parents, and all its meeting rooms have been named after prominent female social justice advocates, including poet Oodgeroo Noonuccal and former Victorian Premier Joan Kirner. The fit-out was overseen by an all-female design team.

Our Community's group managing director, Denis Moriarty, welcomed Ms Schwartz's contribution as one of "a rare social investor, one with vision who saw 19 years ago the great potential of our social enterprise and took a leap of faith to support its untried model".

He said opening the doors of such a high-quality base for Victoria's for-purpose organisations had been an emotional moment.

"We don't know exactly where this new venture will take us, but this is an extremely exciting time for the Our Community family."

Our Community House in North Melbourne provides a range of coworking options, including hot desks, dedicated desks, private offices and virtual offices. To book a free tour, visit <https://ochouse.com.au>. We'd love to show you around. ■



Aussie Farmers Foundation executive officer Jane Thomas says Our Community House takes co-working spaces to a whole new level.

Aussie Farmers find fresh fields at Our Community House

BY ALEX MCMILLAN, OUR COMMUNITY

One of the first tenants to join Our Community at the co-working space Our Community House is Aussie Farmers Foundation. We asked executive officer Jane Thomas about her impressions of the organisation's new Melbourne home.

Tell us a little bit about Aussie Farmers Foundation.

Aussie Farmers Foundation helps rural and regional Australians to thrive by funding vital projects in communities facing tough times. These projects are run by eligible charities working on the ground to address some of the key challenges facing country communities including food relief, natural disaster relief and

recovery, farm sustainability, mental health and wellbeing support, and kids' health and healthy eating. Since the foundation was set up in 2010, we have granted over \$1.7 million to projects right across Australia.

What attracted you to register for a desk at Our Community House?

I was based in a different co-working space, which I enjoyed, but OC House has taken it to a whole new level. Now I have access to a workplace specifically designed to support the sector, featuring "best practice" services and facilities. Plus, it has space for everyone – no matter the organisation's size – and it is incredibly cost effective. ►



Our Community House is full of “brand-new everything” and filled with natural light.

What involvement did you have with the Our Community Group before you joined Our Community House?

Aussie Farmers Foundation is a big supporter of Our Community and its services and programs and I’ve benefitted from their professional development opportunities.

GiveNow is our primary donation portal and we also use SmartyGrants as our grants management program. Our directors are members of the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) and I’ve recently completed the ICDA Diploma of Business (Governance).

What do you most like about being part of a social sector-focused co-working space?

I like that it’s specially designed for the social sector, and that social organisations are at the forefront of thinking about and designing the space.

I’m excited about other organisations joining and engaging with the growing community here, as well as the fantastic staff at Our Community and Our Community House.

Have you enjoyed your time working here so far?

I love it! The people are friendly, welcoming and helpful, it is a lovely light-filled space and it is full of brand-new everything.

Do you have plans to use Our Community House as more than just a work area? Any events coming up?

I’m currently using it for board and external meetings. I’d be very happy to use OC House for our organisation’s event as there are multiple, flexible spaces and I know the OC House staff will go out of their way to make things happen.

It’s worth dropping in and having a look. I reckon you’ll love the space too and you’ll meet some awesome people.

To book a free tour of Our Community House, 552 Victoria St, North Melbourne, visit <https://ochouse.com.au>. We’d love to show you around. ■





Our Community House celebrates rabble-rousing women

The Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) invited a number of inspirational female community sector leaders to celebrate International Women’s Day last month at Our Community House – the first event held at Our Community’s new North Melbourne headquarters, where all the meeting rooms are named after rabble-rousing women.

Our Community executive director Kathy Richardson spoke about what International Women’s Day means to her and the Our Community team, while celebrating achievements of women over the past year, both big and small. Here’s an extract from Kathy’s speech.

International Women’s Day celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. It also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

Often at events like these you’ll hear a reel of numbers.

You might hear that while women make up a bit more than 50% of the population in Australia, our numbers are lacking in the halls of power, with only 31% of federal parliamentarians identifying as a woman.

They’re pitiful on the Australian honours lists, with only 37% of all honours going to women).

We make up just 30% of the seats of top boards in Australia, and just 5% of board chairs. We’ve all heard the line by now that there are more men named John and Peter chairing corporate boards than women; more “Andrews” leading ASX200 organisations as CEOs than women. ▶



But there's one area where I'm not sad to see women over-represented, and that's in the not-for-profit sector. Around 75% of the not-for-profit sector workforce are women. We comprise 51% of board memberships

There are some issues here, too, though. It's been found that the proportion of women on NFP boards goes down as you go up organisational scale – large organisations with a turnover of more than a million dollars have fewer women on their boards than small ones. The more responsibility, glory, perks and pay, the more men you're likely to find on the board.

While we comprise 51% of board memberships, given our numbers in the NFP sector, that figure should proportionately be far higher. And – here is that power imbalance shining through again – women comprise only 44% of the chairs or presidencies on those boards.

Of course, it's no coincidence that women dominate in a sector where the pay is notoriously bad. That's another issue that needs to be addressed urgently. In many ways, our society is upside down – often we reward the things that are least useful to society and throw crumbs to the people doing the really important work.

It's good to be reminded of all of these numbers because it reminds us that despite what we might like to believe, things are not equal in this country. There's a lot more work to do.

But I want you to go away uplifted, not depressed. It's time for some good news.

It's worth noting that we now have near-parity in some areas of politics – notably in the ALP both federally and here in Victoria. That's thanks in large part to the late, great Joan Kirner and her pioneering work with Emily's List.

But let's also look at some lesser-noted achievements of the past year.

- Ethiopia gained its first female President (Sahle-Work Zewde)
- General Motors became the largest corporation in the world to have both a female CEO and a female CFO

- Toyota appointed its first female board member
- Canada appointed its first permanent female Mountie Chief
- And – here's my favourite – a woman, Michelle "Darlzy" Gearin, last year entered and won the Kurri Kurri Hotel's iconic "best mullet" competition.

We might joke about achievements like the mullet competition but let's listen to Darlzy. She said after her win that she hoped it would inspire other young women to dress how they want. Here's how they quoted her in the paper: "Do whatever you want with your hair, girls."

That phrase reminded me of the words of Glenys Tomasetti, one of eight women we have named meeting rooms after at Our Community House in recognition of the fact that women have too often been blotted out of the history books, despite their enormous contribution to our progress.

Glenys was an Australian singer-songwriter. In 1967 she became a household name when she was prosecuted for refusing to pay one sixth of her taxes on the grounds that one sixth of the federal budget was funding Australia's military presence in Vietnam.

Many of Glenys' songs dealt with feminism and the situation of Australian women. Perhaps the best-known of her songs is called, and contains the immortal line, "Don't be too polite, girls". It was a call for equal pay and a feminist call to arms.

So who are the other pioneering, rabble-rousing women that we have named our rooms after here at Our Community House?

The large meeting room is named after our beloved Joan Kirner, who we all know as a political, education and environmental trailblazer.

Another room is named after Stella Young – comedian, writer, disability rights activist. Here's a quote from Stella: "No amount of smiling at a flight of stairs has ever made it turn into a ramp. No amount of standing in the middle of a bookshelf and radiating a positive attitude is going to turn all those books into braille." ►



We have another room named in honour of Oodgeroo Noonuccal – the poet, political activist, artist and educator, who was also known as Kath Walker. “Let no-one say the past is dead,” Kath told us, “The past is all about us and within.”

We have a room named after the women’s suffrage pioneer Vida Goldstein. Here’s a quote from Vida: “Women have never argued that women’s suffrage would reform the world. They claim that the ballot is a powerful weapon with which to combat social and industrial wrongs.”

We also have a room named after Zelda D’Aprano, the fearless women’s liberationist, reformer and truth-teller. She taught us to be brave in speaking our truths: “Until women write truthfully of their personal experiences and involvement in the outside world,” she told us, “we will continue to make the same mistakes.”

Finally, we have a room named after the pioneering disability activist, and the author and subject of the seminal Australian film *Annie’s Coming Out*, Anne McDonald. “The worst thing about being an inspiration is that you have to be perfect,” Anne wrote. “I am a normal person with only normal courage.” Like all of us, I guess.

We’re really proud to have these names and these people embedded it into this building because it reminds us every day of the contribution so many women have made to the social development of this country.

Because the NFP workforce is so skewed towards women, we thought carefully about how we could make this the greatest space in Melbourne for women to work in.

We engaged an all-female design architecture firm, and throughout the design process we tried to think about how the building might cater to the particular needs of women - taking into account the fact that we menstruate, can be pregnant or breastfeeding, experience menopause, and on average are smaller and have a lower metabolic rate. We thought about how women experience the world differently: women are more likely to juggle work with a caring role; more likely to feel unsafe, especially after dark; more likely to have been marginalised professionally; more likely to be judged on our appearance.

These are some of the things we tried to accommodate as we drew up plans for the building. In fact, we think all building projects should do this, but we knew it was going to be particularly important for us.

Our Community House in North Melbourne provides a range of coworking options, including hot desks, dedicated desks, private offices and virtual offices. To book a free tour, and see its women-friendly features for yourself, visit <https://ochouse.com.au>. We’d love to show you around. ■

Your two-minute NFP news digest

Keeping kids at school: It takes a village

Charities, sporting clubs, other community groups, extended family members and informal mentors all have a role to play in helping young Australians to become educated.

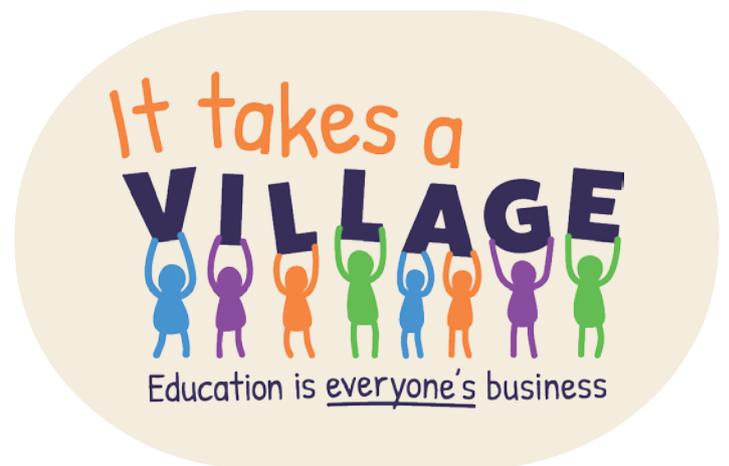
That's the message of "It takes a village", a new campaign launched last month by the Community Council for Australia (CCA).

"Australians understand that we as a community all have a role to play in keeping our young people engaged in education, yet 35 per cent of people claim they don't have a relationship with any young person of school age," said CCA CEO David Crosbie.

"There's a clear desire to play a role in helping our next generation achieve their dreams, but it seems we just don't know what practical steps we can actually take to do that

"Helping our kids get a good education isn't the sole responsibility of teachers, parents and governments. This campaign is the community sector's way of taking ownership of the issue, and showing that we all have a role to play."

The CCA is building a library of stories about people "in the village" who've encouraged kids to dream big and to stick with education, and encourages contributions. It's also calling for community partners to join its campaign: go to <https://ittakesavillage.org.au/>.



Fundraising: Seed capital for charities

"There are some fantastic bulls that aren't always on offer and some older semen as well so there are great opportunities for buyers." – Anastasia Fanning, Australian Brahman Breeders' Association

More than 90 lots of semen have been donated for a charity auction being held to benefit North West Queensland flood victims, reports Queensland Country Life. Funds raised will go to the Queensland Country Women's Association, Sisters of the North and BlazeAid. [Full story](#)

Drought takes its toll on kids

"You start to get into the mindset where all you think about is the money. Every time you see a cow, it's just, that's money. It's no longer a cow, it's just money. That's all it is. Seed is money. The farm needs money. That's the part that stresses you out. It's your whole outlook on life." – Boy, Year 10

Children and young people in eastern inland Australia are struggling under significant pressures as a result of drought and are not receiving the support they need, according to a new report from Unicef Australia. *In Their Own Words: The Hidden Impact of Prolonged Drought on Children and Young People* makes nine recommendations to governments. [Read the report](#) ►

Counting the cost of social and affordable housing

Some regions of Australia need to increase the supply of social housing by more than 100% if unmet need is to be met by 2036, according to new research. The Northern Territory outside Darwin faces the biggest demand, with regional South Australia in second spot, and regional New South Wales in third. *Estimating Need and Costs of Social and Affordable Housing Delivery*, published last month by the City Futures Research Centre, models the likely cost to governments of meeting those needs.

[Read the report](#)

Good news for issues-based advocacy

“You don’t make our democracy stronger by penalising a grassroots organisation for talking to voters.”

– Paul Oosting, GetUp

In what GetUp has dubbed a win for community organisations that advocate on issues, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has found there was “insufficient evidence” that the group operated for the benefit of one or more political parties. This means GetUp was not obliged to lodge “associated entity” annual returns with the AEC, as Senators Eric Abetz and Peter Dutton and others had alleged. **[Read the AEC’s conclusion](#)** ■

Community groups, start your democracy sausage

The federal election on May 18 means an opportunity for your group to jump on the ballot box bandwagon and raise some funds with a sausage sizzle, cake stall or raffle at your local polling booth. We’ve got 15 tips to help you make sure your fundraiser is a success.

[Read the helpsheet](#)



Funding squeeze behind data crunch

BY MATTHEW SCHULZ, JOURNALIST, OUR COMMUNITY

Not-for-profits and charities are struggling to measure the results of their work, even as funders expect better outcomes measurement – but without paying for it.

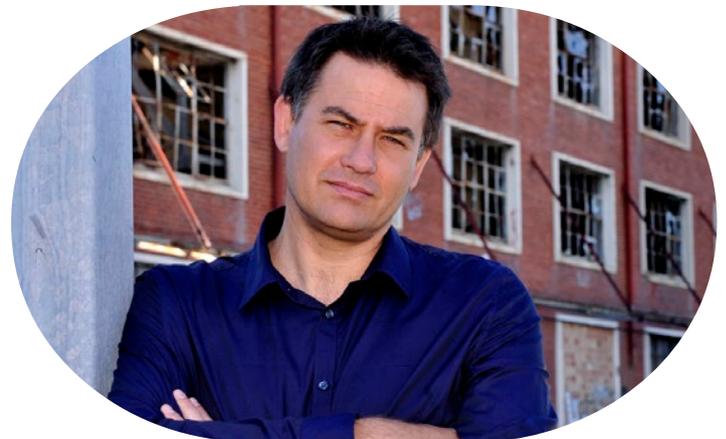
Outcomes Measurement in the Australian Community Sector: A National Report Card follows a survey of about 350 charities, and urges funders – especially in government – to pay for results to be measured.

The research by the Centre for Social Impact at the University of Western Australia found the number of organisations measuring outcomes had dipped five per cent to 70% in the past year amid the funding squeeze, with smaller organisations less likely to conduct analysis. The remaining organisations continuing the work were investing more effort than ever.

“A key finding is charities face significant constraints to resource outcomes measurement activities,” lead researcher Professor Paul Flatau said.

“Around 60% spend less than three per cent on outcomes measurement, which is far lower than recommended levels. A primary cause lies in the lack of funding to measure outcomes effectively with funds mainly sourced internally.”

The study backs similar findings by Our Community’s 2017 *Grants in Australia* study (see page 34 of that study), which noted that just 12% of nearly 1300 organisations won specific funding for outcomes measurement, with 15% taking it upon themselves to set aside money to fund measurement or evaluation.

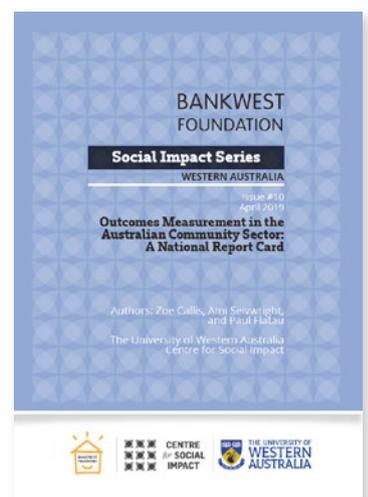


Professor Paul Flatau, lead researcher

The widely shared view that outcomes measurement was a good thing must be backed by resources to be effective, say sector leaders, including the Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS).

“Not only do organisations need to invest in developing internal capacity for measurement, funders need to come to the table and recognise the cost and effort associated with outcomes measurement and fund accordingly,” said WACOSS president Debra Zanella, also CEO of RUAH Community Services.

[Read the report in full.](#) ■





Numbers prove funding falls short for rainbow communities

A new report on grants funding shows how much money is being distributed to LGBTIQ+ communities across Australia, providing the first snapshot of the flow of dollars from government, philanthropy and direct donations to this cohort.

The findings, published this month in the form of an **[interactive data graphic](#)** by Our Community and the LGBTIQ+ collective giving group **[The Channel](#)**, paint a bleak picture of the state of funding for rainbow communities.

Using data collected by Our Community's SmartyGrants platform, the report reveals that only 0.07 percent of federal government grants are going towards LGBTIQ+ causes. This number

is similarly low for local and state governments – 0.37 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively.

This problem of underfunding persists across the philanthropy sector too, with only 0.4 percent of philanthropic dollars going to LGBTIQ+ community groups.

As a result, these groups are working with tiny budgets and inadequate resources to address the needs of LGBTIQ+ people in Australia.

The general manager of community and social investments at Perpetual Limited and director at The Channel, Caitriona Fay, explained why this is an issue:

“LGBTIQ+ communities experience homelessness at almost double the rate of ►



the general population, they are more likely to endure bullying and exclusion at school, where discrimination against LGBTIQ+ students and teachers on the basis of religion is still sanctioned, and harmful practices like gay conversion therapy are still occurring legally in many states,” she said.

“All of these things can have a significant impact on educational and ultimately life outcomes of people who are LGBTIQ+.

“With LGBTIQ+ communities making up an estimated 11 per cent of our population, our failure to support better outcomes for them means we miss an opportunity to have real impact in fighting homelessness, improving education outcomes, supporting human rights and building healthy and thriving communities.”

The Channel is now calling on funding institutions and the general public to step up and participate in giveOUTday – Australia’s

first-ever national day of giving to LGBTIQ+ communities. With \$35,000+ set aside for donation matching, The Channel and partners Reichstein Foundation and Masto Foundation will be matching donations dollar for dollar. Head to giveoutday.org.au to donate now or register your LGBTIQ+ community group or project.

The report *Funding to LGBTIQ+ Causes in Australia* was produced as a result of the inaugural collaboration between OurCommunity’s Innovation Lab and its community partner The Channel. OurCommunity recognised the community sector’s lack of capacity to use big data to pursue its mission, and more great projects like this are on the horizon for its data science team.

Read the report here: [Funding to LGBTIQ+ Causes in Australia](#). ■



**Ethics at work:
Unlocking energy
& engagement**

Professor Lea Waters

May 20, 2019, 10.40am

communitiesincontrol.com.au



“Piecemeal” approach to DGR status raises questions



Donations to men’s sheds such as this one in Minyip, Victoria, will be tax deductible under new laws announced last month. Photo: Wikimedia/Creative Commons.

BY KATHY RICHARDSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OUR COMMUNITY

Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg **announced** last month that the government would introduce a new law to give deductible gift recipient (DGR) status to men’s and women’s sheds.

“What this means is that from 1 July 2020 anyone who donates \$2 or more to a Shed can claim an income tax deduction for that donation,” he said in a joint statement with Finance Minister Mathias Cormann.

The *Herald Sun* **reported** that donations were expected to “skyrocket” as a result of the plan,

but the move raised eyebrows among some in the not-for-profit sector.

Some questioned whether there was such a thing as a “women’s shed”; others highlighted the seemingly random system for conferring DGR status in Australia.

Sector commentator Krystian Seibert tweeted that while the sheds were certainly worthy, “the piecemeal and ad hoc approach to the DGR framework continues”. ►



Krystian Seibert @KSeibertAu · Apr 2

The Govt has announced in Budget that donations to men’s and women’s sheds will be tax deductible, will create a new category of deductible gift recipient for them in tax laws. They are certainly worthy - but the piecemeal and ad hoc approach to the DGR framework continues...

Philanthropy — extending deductible gift recipient status to Men’s Sheds and Women’s Sheds

Revenue (\$m)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Australian Taxation Office	-	-	-	-3.0	-5.0

The Government will establish a deductible gift recipient (DGR) general category to enable Men’s Sheds and Women’s Sheds to access DGR status from 1 July 2020. The measure is estimated to reduce revenue by \$8.0 million over the forward estimates period.

Taxpayers may claim an income tax deduction for gifts of money or property of \$2 or more to DGRs. Ensuring that Men’s Sheds and Women’s Sheds can become DGRs will further encourage philanthropy and support for the not-for-profit sector.

5 5 17

What’s your experience? Has your organisation been unsuccessful in getting deductible gift recipient (DGR) status? Let us know so we can paint a picture of who are the winners and losers when it comes to getting tax deductibility status in Australia. Email kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au.

For more information about getting and maintaining DGR status, see the Funding Centre helpsheet [DGR status](#). ■

Change the Game:
Craft a culture
fit for the future

Dr Jason Fox

May 21, 2019, 9.30am

communitiesincontrol.com.au





Raise \$50,000 for your organisation by June 30 with an Our Community Social Fundraising Fellowship

BY CATHY TRUONG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GIVENOW

Our Community has just announced a Social Fundraising Fellowship to help not-for-profit organisations bring in \$50,000 before the end of the financial year through social fundraising.

What is social fundraising?

Social fundraising – also known as peer-to-peer fundraising, crowdfunding or (as we know it) CrowdRaising – allows not-for-profit organisations to leverage the power of their membership and supporter databases to raise a large amount of money in a short amount of time.

Social fundraising campaigns are usually:

- Managed online (e.g. through GiveNow's Crowdraiser functionality)
- Connected to a specific project (e.g. "Help us buy a new car!")
- Anchored by a set fundraising target ("We need to raise \$50,000...")
- Time-limited (... by June 30")

- Highly visual and highly social – successful social fundraisers reach their target through small donations contributed by a lot of people, leveraged by social sharing and lots of pictures and videos.

Social fundraising is a fresh, fun way to raise funds. Financially, it's virtually risk free, although it does require a significant time commitment.

The Social Fundraising Fellowship

We're offering up to 10 Social Fundraising Fellowships to representatives of community organisations that are ready to embark on a social fundraising campaign.

The Our Community Fellowship, funded by Our Community, will be offered to not-for-profit organisations that have the drive and determination – but maybe not the skills and experience – to run a successful **CrowdRaiser** campaign in June 2019.

What the Fellowship includes

We will support Fellows through every step of the social fundraising process during May 2019. This will include a mix of on-site workshops (in ►



North Melbourne, Victoria), webinars and online support group chats. The Fellowship is valued at about \$10,000 per participant – and that's without factoring in the funds you'll raise for your organisation!

Who can apply

To be eligible for a Fellowship, you need to be registered with GiveNow to receive donations. This will allow us to bypass all the checks we need to ensure your organisation is eligible to fundraise using this method.

You will also need to demonstrate that you have in place all the essential ingredients for a successful social fundraising campaign:

- A strong list of community supporters (a minimum of 200 active supporters)
- At least five supporters who are active and committed enough to help spearhead your social fundraising campaign (this can include including group members, staff, volunteers, board members, high-profile supporters)

- Some experience with fundraising and social media
- The willingness and ability to devote at least eight hours per week to the program from May 6 to June 30, 2019.

We'll help you with the rest.

While we don't guarantee you'll achieve your fundraising goals, we do guarantee we'll give you the information and tools you'll need to succeed.

Timeline

The program is open for applications now. Applications will close at 5pm on April 26.

Successful applicants will be informed by April 30, and must be ready to commence the fellowship on May 6. Your involvement in the intensive fellowship will result in a social fundraising campaign in June that is expected to conclude on June 30, 2019.

[Find more information and apply here.](#) ■



Joan Kirner
Social Justice Oration
Professor Helen Milroy
May 21, 2019, 3.15pm
communitiesincontrol.com.au



Practical Impact Conference preview: if something's worth doing, it's worth evaluating

This year's Practical Impact Conference, to be held at Our Community House in Melbourne on June 3, will answer all of your burning questions on program evaluation.

Why should you do it? How do you do it? Are you doing it right? What should you be doing differently?

With an election looming, the Australian Labor Party has pledged a new evaluator-general to help foster a collaborative relationship between program experts and evaluation experts if it wins.

This year's Practical Impact keynote speaker, Nicholas Gruen, is the man who envisioned and proposed the idea of the evaluator-general, and at the conference he'll tell you everything you need to know about what this new proposal means for your organisation.

International speakers to share their wisdom

Two international speakers will be joining Nicholas at Our Community House in June.

We'll be flying internationally renowned data expert Andrew Means over from the USA to pass on his wisdom on integrating data into your organisation's strategy.

Laura Black, the director of Methodist Mission

Southern in New Zealand, will explain how her organisation overcame its "allergy to data" and is now reaping the benefits of a data-driven approach to evaluation.

We've also got Sonja Hood, the CEO of Community Hubs, passing on her organisation's lessons from the frontline of the data battlefield.

The executive director of the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, Robyn Mildon, will demystify evaluation for those baffled by a world of data and evaluation.

Jen Riley will also be dropping by to facilitate discussion from a panel of community representatives who have made data work for them.

Here's why it's called Practical Impact

This year's program is designed to help you understand both the importance of data in evaluating your programs, and the best way to make it work for you.

We're offering you access to the skills and knowledge to improve your program implementation and demonstrate the impact you're having.

Lock in your spot at this year's conference, Monday June 3, at Our Community House in North Melbourne.

Register online: www.communitydirectors.com.au/practicalimpact ■



Upskill

Here's a snapshot of training and professional development opportunities presented by Our Community in April and May. To see all the webinars, courses, workshops and conferences we've got coming up in 2019, visit our [online training calendar](#).

Communities in Control

Monday May 20–Tuesday May 21, Melbourne

The countdown is on: the community sector event of the year is only a month away! Don't miss the stellar line-up of speakers, including (but not limited to) Tracey Spicer, Lee Lin Chin, Father Rod Bower, Professor Lea Waters and Professor Helen Milroy. Communities in Control also features musical performances, networking opportunities, a showcase of community innovators, great coffee, exhibitor stalls and more. Read the full program and register [here](#).

Free webinar: Better websites

1–2pm AEST, Wednesday May 8, online

In the social media era, many of us have forgotten how important a great website is. Websites are the foundation of your digital marketing and will be visited by prospective clients, supporters, funders and employees.

Does that sentence make you anxious? If so, Brett de Hoedt's live, interactive webinar Better Websites will help you turn your website into your employee of the month. Brett promises it will be non-nerdy and full of practical ways to dramatically improve your website or build a new one. What's more, it's free! [Details](#) ▶

The 2019

Festival of Community Directors

A year-long celebration of community governance



Free workshop: Better governance for schools

Thursday May 16, Brisbane

The Institute of Community Directors Australia brings its half-day school councillor training course, Better Governance for Schools, to Brisbane. It's free, thanks to CommBank. [Details](#)

Diploma of Business (Governance)

Ongoing

New intakes of students each month. Study in Melbourne, Perth, Canberra, Sydney, Exmouth, Brisbane, Townsville, Adelaide, Darwin or Alice Springs. [Details](#) ■

Festival of Community Directors 2019

The Festival of Community Directors calendar is packed with a year's worth of webinars, face-to-face training sessions, networking opportunities and more. Fill your diary now: go to the festival web page [here](#).

New scholarships create opportunities for women community leaders

Women from across Australia have the opportunity to win a part-scholarship to study for the Diploma of Business (Governance) thanks to the Women's Leadership Institute Australia (WLIA) and Our Community's Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA).

This new round of scholarships is part of the Future 500 Leaders Governance Program, which was created to increase opportunities for the most under-represented groups in the community.

Our Community's group managing director, Denis Moriarty, said, "The Future 500 Governance Scholarships have been created to encourage applicants from the demographics which have consistently been ignored or shunned. This round is focused on women, one of our largest demographics, and shamefully one of our most overlooked in terms of leadership opportunities and development."

WLIA exists to catalyse and inspire innovative partnerships, action and system-changing solutions to address the imbalance of women in leadership positions in Australia.

"WLIA has been an ongoing partner in our annual governance scholarships aimed at women. We are pleased to have them on board for our Future 500 program," Denis said.

Applications close at 3pm AEST on Friday May 4. [Apply now](#).

The Diploma of Business (Governance) is offered in cities and towns across Australia. For more information, visit the Institute of Community Directors Australia [website](#).



Board Matching Service

Here's a selection of the board vacancies currently advertised online at Good Jobs and the Institute of Community Directors Australia Board Matching Service.

To advertise your board vacancy (it's free!), go to www.goodjobs.com.au/job/board/advertise.form.

Victoria

Chair, Birth for Humankind

Birth for Humankind exists to ensure that every mother, regardless of her socioeconomic circumstances, has access to support, education and care during pregnancy, birth and early parenting. Birth for Humankind aspires to bring a culture of celebration, inclusion, equity and kindness to birth culture and works to fill the current gaps in the Australian maternal health system.

The women we support are primarily from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds, young women, women experiencing homelessness and women with a history of family violence and trauma. We provide support to women through a number of tailored birth support and education programs, including Doula Support, Education, Research and Advocacy programs.

We are seeking a strong, experienced chair with expertise in strategy, growth and sustainability within the community services or NFP sector, with a proven track record in engaging and building diverse stakeholder relationships, and who has a passion for maternal and/or women's health outcomes.

Applications close on May 7.

Western Australia

General board member, Blue Gum Montessori School

Blue Gum Montessori School (BGMS) in the City of Cockburn is a rapidly growing, modern, innovative pre-primary to primary school,

offering a Montessori educational program with a strong focus on community and environmental sustainability. BGMS is implementing an exciting growth program – expanded grounds, additional classrooms, playspace and support facilities – that will allow for an expanded curriculum.

BGMS is looking for a skills-based director to join its board for a term of two years. Of particular focus for the board is building its capability in relation to risk assessment, risk management and Financial Oversight.

If you believe you have these skills to offer, and would like to join us on this rewarding and exciting journey, please contact us.

Tasmania

General board member, Just Cats Inc

Want to make a significant contribution to your community? Just Cats Tasmania is looking for you. We are seeking a legal representative with a big lap and a warm heart who is ready to join our board, share cat stories, offer salient advice and enjoy the wonderful and challenging world of responsible and humane cat adoption and sheltering.

This is a role that requires not just your legal skills, but your passion for marketing, fundraising and animal welfare and a genuine desire to make grass roots change to statewide environmental issues. ■

Community Calendar

The next two months see three of the world's most important religious festivals and holidays: Passover, Easter and Ramadan. Click on the recipe links to see how Jews, Christians and Muslims celebrate with food and feasting at these times.



Gefilte fish is virtually an inevitable part of Passover. Photo: Edsel Little via Flickr / Creative Commons licence

APRIL 19–27

Passover

Probably the best-known Jewish holiday, Passover commemorates the story of the exodus, where the Israelites were freed from Egyptian slavery.

[Recipes for Passover](#)



The Christian tradition of eating lamb at Easter has Jewish origins.

APRIL 21

Easter Sunday

On Easter Sunday, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ after his crucifixion.

[Recipes for Easter](#)



During Ramadan, it's customary to break the fast with dates.

MAY 5–JUNE 4

Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Every day during this month, Muslims around the world spend the daylight hours in a complete fast.

[Recipes for Suhoor and Iftar](#)

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

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