

# Our Community **MATTERS**

Your community knowledge bank helping groups survive, improve, grow and innovate



## Resources, News, Innovations and Tips on:

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- ✓ Leadership & Advocacy
- ✓ Management & Training
- ✓ Marketing & Media
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[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

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Welcome to the latest edition of **Our Community Matters**, your regular free community sector update. It is yet another benefit of membership of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) – the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and not-for-profit groups. Our Community provides community groups with the latest funding and fundraising news as well as practical management, board, marketing and community business partnership information. Our Community also operates the [Australian Giving Centre](#), the free online donations service that has so far raised \$6 million for Australian community appeals. A summary of our services is listed at the end of this newsletter. If you have trouble reading this newsletter or have any comments please let us know by emailing [kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au).

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## 1. Community View ... By Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

### Celebrating Community Workers

I am excited to tell you about a new award to honour a group who is often overlooked – the community group workers.

These are the people who keep our great community groups running on the smell of an oily rag – often earning far less than they would in other jobs, or even in larger community organisations.

They often work in isolation; often work part time – although that is usually a misnomer as part time usually means many thousands of hours beyond what is paid for.

And there is little opportunity for promotion – especially when there is only one part time worker on staff.

So here is your chance to acknowledge the community group workers we have all come to rely on and who sadly we are all a bit inclined to take for granted.

These are the workers who never (or hardly ever) complain; who do what they do because they believe in the cause; who inspire others with their dedication and their commitment.

As the award nomination form puts it:

Community workers throw their hearts, minds, and souls into their jobs unflinchingly, work harder than they have to, and observe the most exacting ethical standards. They're clever, innovative, unbiased, flexible, dedicated, determined, client-centred, and socially responsible. They risk misunderstanding, prejudice, frustration, and burnout.

And their work is largely unsung and unrecognised.

The new **Alcoa Foundation Outstanding Community Worker Award**, which we are so proud to be a partner in, is an attempt to thank individual workers for what they do, but also provides the opportunity to shine a spotlight on community workers in general – to let others in the community know about the amazing work that is being done by some amazing people.

The winner of the award – the person chosen as exemplifying the sector's ideals of dedication, excellence and service – will receive \$5000 from the Alcoa Foundation to be spent on their own choice of professional capacity-building, in the form they think will best fit them for their job.

Along the way to the finish line, we will be highlighting some of the great stories of community workers across Australia in this newsletter, so you will all get to read about your colleagues and others doing work like you all over Australia.

The nomination process is really very easy – all you need to do to nominate a worker is to give us 300 words on why you think they should be eligible, and get another person to back up your nomination with another 300 words to provide a different perspective.

This is your chance to say thanks to your colleagues and friends and those you admire in the community sector – the people who are working to make our world a better place.

The closing date for nominations is October 19.

All the information you need can be found at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/communityworkeraward](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/communityworkeraward) or click below:



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## 2. Pulling the levers & delivering the message

Into our inbox this week popped a message from the Animals Asia Foundation asking us to sign up to join the campaign to end bear bile farming in China:

*Spearheading the campaign to end bear bile farming in China by August 2008, Animals Asia is asking members of the public to sign their names on a number of large banners travelling around capital cities and delivered to the Chinese Embassy in Canberra on 8 August – exactly one year to the start of the Beijing Olympics. Every signature gathered will symbolise one of the 7,000 Moon Bears trapped on brutal farms throughout China.*

As interesting as this campaign may be in and of itself, what really caught our interest was the idea of using the Beijing Olympics as a way of generating greater attention for an ongoing issue.

That got us thinking about leverage, and how smaller groups with softer voices can hitch their wagons to a bigger issues passing by in order to make their voices carry a little further.

Here's another recent example.

When comedian Peter Hellier made a joke on *Rove* earlier this month about giving Pamela Anderson hepatitis C for her birthday, Hepatitis Australia chief executive Helen Tyrrell was quick to hit the media, labelling the joke irresponsible, cruel and discriminatory.

The result was many centimetres of coverage in national newspapers – advocacy gold in anyone's language.

"Many of the 260,000 Australians affected by hepatitis C already experience stigma and discrimination on a regular basis, and ignorant 'comedy' like this only adds to the pain," Ms Tyrrell said in a neat, one-line quote that managed to contain both the message of her group and the issue of interest to the media.

One of Our Community's favourite sources of PR advice, the [Hootville Lowdown](#) e-newsletter, has also been on the trail of the leveraging trend, offering five examples of upcoming events community groups should consider hijacking to deliver their own messages:

- The federal election
- Daylight saving
- School holidays
- School results
- Father's Day

Leveraging can be useful for fundraising as well as advocacy, as Our Community's regular *Raising Funds* newsletter demonstrates. Each month, the newsletter provides a calendar of upcoming events community groups might be able to use to create more interest and currency for their own fundraising events.

The upcoming August edition, for example, talks about how St Andrew's Day on November 30 could be used as a springboard for a Scottish-themed fundraiser.

If you're interested in improving your leveraging skills, here are some simple things you can do to get started:

- Check the papers every day (and online several times during the day) to find out what's making headlines. If you find an opening, pounce.
- Sign up for [Google news alerts](#), entering a range of keywords of relevance to your group and area of interest. Again, be ready to pounce if you find an opening.
- Check Our Community's [Calendar of Events](#) (a summary is in [Part 11](#)) to see what future events are coming up that you can link into. Add them to your own diary.
- Sign up to receive the [Raising Funds](#) newsletter (\$45 per year for community groups or cheaper if purchased with EasyGrants) for fundraising ideas that will link in with upcoming events.
- Read through Our Community's new [Advocacy Centre](#) to learn how to influence the agenda and get your voice heard.
- Use the resources in the [Media, Marketing and Post Centre](#) (an initiative of Our Community with the support of Australia Post) to get your message into the media.
- Sign up to receive the [Hootville Lowdown](#) to stay on top of emerging opportunities and keep honing your PR skills.

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### 3. Marketing day highlights good stories and great relationships

While we're on the topic of getting your message out, all the papers from the 2007 Communities in Control pre-conference skills day on marketing, media and advocacy have now been finalised.

This was the day designed to help community groups get on top of the marketing skills they need in order to attract more members, more money and more support.

Keynote speaker, Hootville Communications Mayor Brett de Hoedt, told delegates that being successful at communicating your stories and your messages could deliver serious dividends for community groups.

Groups that had got on top of their communications – connecting with the media, growing and segmenting their databases, speaking publicly about the group and its work, issuing effective newsletters, having a well-used website, holding great events and campaigns – could “make things happen,” he said.

“You don't have to feel powerless. You can fill the event, you can encourage people to write the letters ... to their MPs, you can encourage people to part with some cash,” he said.

“Another symptom is that potential partners – government, sponsors – know you before you walk in the door. That makes a big difference.

“You'll have a small coterie of media contacts who know you, *get* you, know what you can talk about, and are willing to take your call and respect you when you say, ‘We've got something to talk about’.”

Brett said groups needed to keep on top of their marketing efforts in order to maintain the benefits.

“It's ongoing and you have to continuously push because there are factors working against you,” he said.

“There are competitors and these competitors don't just come from the not-for-profit sector, they come from everything from natural disasters to bush fires to Shane Warne texting to Nathan Buckley's hamstring to whatever else.

“So you must keep pushing. Like on a bike, you can keep moving for a while even if you're not pedalling, but eventually you'll come to a halt.”

Brett told delegates that in order to be successful, groups needed to accept some key truths:

- (1) It's not accidental – good marketing outcomes will only happen if you deliberately seek them.
- (2) It's a competitive world – you do have to compete for hearts and minds and wallets.
- (3) You don't have to be “sexy” – if pitched properly, “interesting,” “relevant,” “pertinent” and “provocative” are just as effective as “sexy” at grabbing attention.
- (4) Marketing needs support from the top down – unless the board, the president and the CEO think that marketing is worthwhile, you are going to struggle to get results.
- (5) It is possible – accept that the media and the broader outside world are in fact interested in what you have to say, so long as you present yourself professionally.

Our Community CEO Rhonda Galbally told delegates that relationships were the key to good marketing for community groups.

“I believe it's wrong to hit on people and it's wrong to target people,” she said. “But it's right to have a relationship with people that's really legitimate, where you show them that you do value them, and of course that means it's good for everyone – they feel and are valued, and in return they'll support your group in a number of ways as well as really listening to you when it comes to changing government policy.

“So it's important to put relationships right at the top of the list, because if you're not in a relationship with the wider world, then you are treating them a bit like objects that you're hitting on.

“And for community, that's not a good idea. For community to think ‘relationships’ instead of ‘targeting’ is a good idea.”

The final keynote speaker, management consultant Jan Parkes, also emphasised the need for ethical and sustainable marketing.

“I believe that it is quite OK to go out there in the world and inform the world what's going on in your organisation, what you stand for ethically, what you're hoping to achieve, and what you're hoping to do,” she said.

"I also think it is OK when you've achieved a few goals, when you've surpassed targets, when you're doing things again, it's good to say loudly and clearly to the community, 'This is what we are doing and this is where we are going'."

Jan said marketing was also a good tool to use within an organisation to reflect on performance and directions.

"It can help you decide when maybe it's time to do a bit of a stocktake before you continue in your marketing process," she said.

The Pre-Conference session also included a lively 'Marketing Doctor' session, plus concurrent sessions on using marketing to change minds and shape policy; to gain community support and get members; and to attract business partnerships.

For more tips on marketing, media and advocacy, visit the Marketing, Media & Post Centre, an initiative of Our Community and Australia Post, at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/mmp](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/mmp), and the new Advocacy Centre at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/advocacy](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/advocacy).

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## 4. Surfing the Changes: Eight trends that are changing the world (Part 3)

The world is changing rapidly and those working in the community sector are not exempt from the need to keep up.

In this third instalment in a four-part series on the trends affecting the community sector, we look at what changes in involvement and increasing technologisation mean for community groups.

### (5) INVOLVEMENT

#### The change

Australians are less and less involved in the kind of activities that come with group membership – going to church, belonging to unions, voting the party ticket – and more and more involved in activities that they themselves choose to be involved in as individuals, such as cycling or book clubs.

#### The upshot

Australians are giving to fewer organisations (10 years ago they gave to eight or nine groups, now they give to two or three), and expect a higher degree of accountability and involvement from the organisations they do support. They expect their good works, too, to be personalised.

#### Changing to fit

Any organisation that seeks support must try to personalise its appeal, to engage with the supporter on an individual level rather than trading on authority or tradition, and to meet the supporter's needs rather than asking for their contribution as a matter of duty.

#### To do today

- Put a suggestion box in the waiting room.
- Put a comments page on your website.
- Invite the public to write in.

### (6) TECHNOLOGISATION

#### The change

Australians are committing their lives to technology – ordering online, making virtual friends, bringing into existence an entire new realm of human wants with the ring-tone-fitted custom-jacketed SMS-friendly video-ready mobile phone.

Australians watch more television and spend less time in the playground, send more email and write fewer letters, use ATMs and online check-ins and see fewer counter clerks.

## The upshot

Australians are moving an increasing fraction of their lives on to hands-off media that enable them to choose and regulate their personal environment. Anyone who wants a favour from them will be obliged to follow them there and observe the local rules.

## Changing to fit

Going online is the easy part (comparatively). The difficult part is learning how to be interactive without being intrusive –

“The question is: ‘How does Apple keep people coming back?’” said a market research analyst. “Music customers and listeners want to be active participants. Otherwise, you’re just a store.”

An Apple spokesman said the company was adding features to Apple’s site to allow users to become more engaged and to communicate more actively with one another.

## To do today

- Put a field in your database for your donor’s mobile phone number.
- Call the mobile to get their email, or vice versa.
- Sign up your group with Myspace.com
- Get an [online giving facility](#).

**NEXT MONTH: How changes in managerialism and diversity are affecting the community sector.**

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## 5. Talking Numbers: New stats on voluntary work, social networks released

The amount of time committed to voluntary work in Australia has increased, but the number of hours each volunteer contributes has plummeted, according to the latest Voluntary Work Australia report released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics earlier this month.

The report is the third in a series of studies the ABS has conducted (after 1995 and 2000), and draws on the responses to questions asked in the bureau’s Voluntary Work Survey in early to mid-2006.

The survey found that 34% of Australian adults – 5.2 million people – had volunteered during 2006, an increase on the 32% of the population who said they’d volunteered in 2000.

The 2006 figure was significantly different to the Census’ findings, reported in *Our Community Matters* last month, which found that 18% of those aged 15 and over – 2.8 million people – had volunteered in the 12 months to August 2006.

The ABS believes the differences have come about due to the different methods used in the Volunteer Work Survey (face-to-face questioning) and the Census (self-completed form), as well as the higher level of detail and questions asked in the survey compared to the single question on volunteering the Census contained.

The Voluntary Work Australia study found that Australians contributed 713 million hours to volunteering in 2006, up from 708 million hours in 2000. But much of this increase can be attributed to Australia’s population growth, with the survey finding the annual number of volunteer hours contributed per person has dropped dramatically from 72 in 1995 to just 56 in 2006.

Around 36% of women and 32% of men volunteered in 2006, with people aged between 35 and 44 most likely to volunteer. This age group included a large number of parents with dependent and school-aged children.

People holding either part-time (44%) or full-time jobs (34%) had higher volunteering rates than the unemployed (26%) or those not in the labour force (30%).

Men who had full-time jobs were just as likely to volunteer as women employed on the same basis, but more than half of the women surveyed worked part-time, and of them, 47% were doing voluntary work.

When it came to measuring hours spent volunteering each week, retired men (5.9 hours) and women (3.5 hours) recorded the highest figures.

The survey also found that white collar workers were more likely to volunteer than their blue collar counterparts – possibly because they had a greater ability to arrange flexible working hours to fit in with their volunteering efforts.

Finally, three-quarters of volunteers gave their time to one of four types of organisations – sporting and physical recreation groups, education and training organisations, community/welfare groups, or religious bodies.

The report can be downloaded from the ABS site – [www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4441.0Main+Features12006?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4441.0Main+Features12006?OpenDocument)

**A more comprehensive look at the Census data and what it might mean for community groups' volunteering and fundraising efforts will feature in the August edition of Raising Funds. Visit [www.ourcommunity.com.au/raisingfunds](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/raisingfunds) to find out more.**

### **State-based General Social Survey results now available**

The extent of social and personal networks, education and employment opportunities, health and feelings of personal security are among the issues explored in the state-by-state findings of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' General Social Survey released earlier this month.

The survey, conducted in 2006, looked at the many, often inter-related, aspects of life that are important to human wellbeing.

It was the second such survey from the ABS, and aimed to provide information that would allow analysis of these inter-relationships in social circumstances and outcomes, including the exploration of multiple advantage and disadvantage.

The survey examined personal and household characteristics, as well as levels of community involvement, voluntary work and social participation.

It also examined the access people had to service providers, the types of and access to support they had during crises or other difficult times, and personal stressors.

The release of the results for each state and territory in Australia allows community groups to examine in more detail the survey's findings, as well as find the most relevant figures for your state or territory.

Both the individual state and territory figures, as well as the nation figures, can be downloaded for free from the ABS website – [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au).

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## **6. Study zeroes in on management and leadership in the community sector**

Community group members, workers and volunteers are being invited to take part in a new study on leadership and management in the community sector in Australia.

The study, which is being undertaken by the Social Economy Executive Education Network (SEEEN) and Perpetual, is designed to "make explicit, and then to reconcile and/or legitimise" the different views held by community sector stakeholders on issues central to the leadership and management of the sector.

"By doing so we enable more effective communication, leading to greater understanding and more effective partnerships," lead researcher Professor Hugh Morrow says.

An online survey created for the study asks respondents to identify the five top issues facing the community sector (referred to in the study as "the social economy"), choosing from a general list of 12 topics.

Results to date have indicated the most pressing issues to be funding and resources; cooperation and collaboration across sectors; capacity-building in organisations; and government policy and regulation.

"At one level this outcome is not surprising at all," says Prof. Morrow, "But when we probe deeper we find that the meaning and sub-issues raised by respondents are highly varied.

“Further, patterns of responses are beginning to emerge, shedding light on some of the misunderstandings that occur between stakeholders.”

The survey also questions respondents about their views of leadership and management capabilities in the sector, the use of cooperation and collaboration, the application of business skills in the sector, and funding preferences.

The initial phase of the study is designed to ensure that the issues list includes the full breadth of views from community sector participants, rather than drawing conclusions about the sector.

The research team has already collected more than 680 survey responses, and conducted the first focus group. However, the sample is not yet broad enough to be considered representative of the sector, with a large number of respondents to date being drawn from academia and larger organisations. For-profit and government sector workers are also included in the study.

Organisers are hoping to collect around 1000 survey responses before moving on to the next phase of the study, which will include more focus groups, more surveys, and an action learning style described as “more reflective than interrogative”.

“We aim to expose participants’ understandings (their subjectivities) for them to see; and to make these understandings the basis for contesting more poignant issues at a later phase of the research,” Prof. Morrow says.

People involved in community groups, particularly small ones, are encouraged to take part in the survey by going to <http://seen.org.au/survey/index.php?sid=81373>.

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## 7. Our Community Heroes: Lloyd & Julie-Anne Blows

**Each month we honour and celebrate a Community Hero – someone who is working to make a real difference to the health and vibrancy of their local community.**

This month we have a team of heroes, husband and wife duo Lloyd and Julie-Anne Blows from Ubobo near Gladstone in Queensland.

Lloyd and Julie-Anne are helping to keep their small community afloat through their work to organise the Ubobo Mountain Challenge – a fundraiser that helps provide funds to maintain community facilities.

Fellow community member Lyn Stiller writes:

“Lloyd and Julie-Anne Blows are a hard-working rural couple who are self-employed on the land. They are community heroes because every year they dedicate many of their resources (time, energy, property, personal funds) to the community to facilitate the Ubobo Mountain Challenge.

“The Ubobo Mountain Challenge is an event during the Labour Day weekend that attracts individuals and families from across the state. All attend to enjoy a family orientated atmosphere with the focus being running/walking the gruelling track maintained on the slopes of Mt Robert.

“Julie-Anne and Lloyd, together with their band of willing supporters, orchestrate three feel-good days with their generosity of spirit and good wholesome country hospitality in a beautiful bush setting despite the rural decline and lowered morale in areas such as Ubobo because of the current water shortage and other negative influencing factors.

“The funds raised from competition entry and camping fees, together with catering and bar profits, contribute to maintaining the community’s facilities including public toilets and the town hall.

“Without Lloyd and Julie-Anne and their good work with and for the community the outlook in and around Ubobo would not be as optimistic!”

**Lloyd and Julie-Anne will receive a Community Heroes certificate, plus a selection of Our Community books and a 12-month subscription to a range of Our Community newsletters. They will also be featured on the Our Community website. If you would like to read about past Community Heroes, or find out how to nominate a Community Hero, visit [www.ourcommunity.com.au/heroes](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/heroes).**

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## 8. Australian of the Year nominations open, as the UK steps up support for community

While their names might not be as well known as some high-profile scientists, sportspeople and business figures, those who do great work in their local community deserve just as much – some would argue more – recognition for their efforts.

And with Australian of the Year nominations now open, now's your chance to make sure that recognition is forthcoming.

As well as Australian of the Year, there are awards for Young Australian of the Year (for nominees aged 16 to 25); Senior Australian of the Year (for those aged 60 and over); and Australia's Local Hero.

The first person to be nominated for 2008 Australian of the Year is Peter Langmack, a 35-year-old teacher at Shalvey Public School in western Sydney. He has been nominated for his efforts in helping disadvantaged children achieve their dreams through softball.

Nomination forms are available by phoning 1300 655 193 or by going online at [www.australianoftheyear.gov.au](http://www.australianoftheyear.gov.au).

### UK 'everyday heroes' saluted, advocacy embraced

Meanwhile, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown says a "significant majority" of official honours should go to the unsung heroes of daily life.

Announcing a new special day for these unsung heroes on July 24, Mr Brown said his government would reform the honours system to "recognise far more widely the great contribution to civic society of so many of our citizens".

"Currently only 40% of honours are for services to the local community," he said. "I believe that this figure should be substantially higher. Indeed, the significant majority of honours should, in my view, go to people who serve their community in our community organisations, schools, hospitals and voluntary sector."

Mr Brown said the Honours Committees would be instructed to give a significantly higher proportion of honours to the community heroes of the Britain's villages, towns and cities.

"For future years the aim will be for a significant majority of honours to go to local community champions who are making a difference in schools, youth clubs, hospitals, charities, and faith groups throughout Britain."

He said he would also ensure that more awards were available "not only to the individuals who are community leaders, but to the organisations which are making a difference.

"So alongside what we do to encourage the MBE and other awards for individuals, we will do more to recognise local organisations making a difference with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service."

Mr Brown also outlined the Government's plans to:

- Back thousands of small community-led projects with greater access to small grants;
- Examine how a new social investment bank might help support community groups with limited access to mainstream finance;
- Champion social action and innovation through a new Council on Social Action;
- Establish a new annual forum on social leadership to bring together changemakers and people with ideas from all over the world;
- Embrace the new multimedia for community action and encourage it as a forum for social action by creating Awards for Technology;
- Scale up youth volunteering into a national youth community service for Britain; and
- Invest in social capacity in voluntary and community organisations and in social enterprises.

Mr Brown also announced plans for July 24 to become a day for Government and the rest of the country to celebrate community work, in recognition of their "24/7" commitment to community work.

And he announced plans to make advocacy easier for community organisations.

“Because we are committed to creating an environment where innovative individuals and organisations feel able to speak up and speak out, the Government will work with the Charity Commission and others to explore ways of enabling voluntary organisations to campaign without compromising their charitable status,” he said.

Cabinet Office Minister Ed Miliband, meanwhile, said on Wednesday that social change came from the demands of people.

“After a year talking to hundreds of third sector organisations as part of our review, I am more convinced than ever of the sector’s essential role in helping to make social change happen,” he said.

“This starts with campaigning and advocacy. Over the last decade, we have seen changing attitudes and policy on disability, gay rights, debt relief – and, in all cases, the changes were driven by third sector organisations.”

(Contrast this with the advocacy environment in Australia, where just this week the Tax Office issued a statement warning: “The Tax Office reminds all endorsed charities that certain activities, such as political, lobbying and advocacy activities, may affect their charity status.”)

The full text of Mr Brown’s speech is at <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page12600.asp>.

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## 9. Good practices in mentoring

Mentoring is increasing in popularity in Australia, but what is the best way of putting in place a successful program? Well, according to the Youth Mentoring Network Australia, there are six “core practice areas” that need to be covered to ensure solid mentoring program operation.

Delivering the keynote address at a recent New Zealand Conference, the network’s Lesley Tobin said the core practice areas were:

- **Recruitment** – including a planned and targeted recruitment strategy to attract and retain appropriate participants.
- **Selecting and screening** – with a comprehensive and well-documented process incorporating police checks, references, extended training and “gut feel”.
- **Training and development** – to ensure every prospective mentor has the skills and knowledge before taking on the responsibility of mentoring.
- **Matching** – with a comfortable process to match mentor and mentee.
- **Monitoring and supporting the match** – to guide the mentoring relationship, monitor it for problems, reduce risk and to keep the pair motivated through feedback.
- **Closing the match** – which can see a formal end to the relationship, or an annual review to see if the relationship will continue.

Ms Tobin said societal and workplace changes – including the challenges of home and school life and a decline in informal mentoring in workplaces – had increased the value of good mentoring programs to young people.

“Personal attributes have become ever more important and frequently constitute the defining difference in labour markets where many people possess the formal qualifications employers are seeking,” she said.

“The breakdown of marriage and the growth of divorce, the prevalence of narcotic drugs and alcohol, the phenomenon of self-harm and suicide, and the imbalance of work and family life all contribute to why some young people view the world darkly.

“How do our children learn about the importance and value of going to work on a daily basis if no one in their family is modeling this?”

Ms Tobin emphasised the importance of mentoring as an adjunct to – rather than a substitute for – stronger bonds among families, friends, students and teachers and workmates, adding it was vital that standards were set to grow and develop healthy mentoring programs. Some of these benchmarks included:

- **Program design and planning** – with enough time (between three and 12 months) to properly design and plan a mentoring program and allow for extensive consultation with stakeholders.
- **Evaluation** – including the vital point of building aspects of evaluation into the structure of the mentoring program; setting evaluation benchmarks before the program is implemented.
- **Program governance and management** – ensuring there is a clear program structure backed by policies and practices and overseen by a proper, qualified co-ordinator.

Ms Tobin’s full speech can be downloaded via [www.dsf.org.au/papers/196.htm](http://www.dsf.org.au/papers/196.htm) (free registration required).

## 10. Treasury calls for submissions

The Federal Government has decreed that gifts of shares to groups with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status will, under some circumstances, now be tax deductible.

This leaves us with three questions:

1. Why is it that you can only make donations of artworks valued at **over** \$5000, and you can only make donations of shares valued at **under** \$5000? Not that it matters all that much, because you're allowed to make a donation of \$4999 worth of BHP shares and a donation of \$4999 of Coles shares (and so on through every company in the stock exchange) without going over the limit, if you felt like it, which brings us to the next question;
2. Why would anybody really want to give shares rather than just sell them and donate the money? In some countries there is an actual tax advantage in doing this, because over there gift shares aren't subject to capital gains tax (here they are) or the rules allow you to carry forward a tax loss (here you can't). All of which brings us to the next question;
3. Why is the ATO going into such detail about what can and can't be donated rather than just saying you can give anything at all to a DGR and have a deduction for its market value? Wouldn't that be simpler all round?

In other news, the Australian Treasury has recently sent out a discussion paper on the absolutely vital issue of whether not-for-profit companies limited by guarantee – of which there are 11,000 in Australia, out of 700,000 community groups – should have their reporting requirements made less onerous.

It's a perfectly sensible suggestion, and Our Community recommends that you flip to <http://www.treasury.gov.au/contentitem.asp?NavId=002&ContentID=1269> and pop in a quick response, if only to encourage Treasury to keep talking.

In the longer term, we'd like to see the whole area of not-for-profit governance overhauled; as it is right now, we're all choking in a policy vacuum.

Some years ago the Treasury, you may recollect, set up an inquiry on the definition of charity. The inquiry's report had the potential to spark major reforms in the way the not-for-profit sector is taxed and governed, however the whole thing was dropped with no major initiative taken up since.

So when you send in your submission to the Treasury on not-for-profit companies, take a few minutes more to email the Treasurer asking him to set up a top-to-bottom root-and-branch review of the governance and taxation of the community sector along the lines of the recent UK initiative.

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## 11. What's on in the community sector – dates for your diary

Our Community's online [Community Calendar](#) features all of the nationally significant events focussed around a major community or advocacy/awareness issues in Australia.

Some of the events taking place over the next month include:

- **National Tree Day** (Planet Ark)  
July 29
- **Anxiety Disorder Week** (Anxiety Recovery Centre Victoria)  
July 29-August 4
-  **Certificate IV in Business (Governance) – Townsville** (Our Community/BSI Learning)  
July 30-August 2  
([Click here](#) for more info)
- **Jeans 4 Genes Day** (Children's Medical Research Institute)  
August 3



### Our Community August Newsletter Schedule

- **Raising Funds:** August 3
- **Business Community Intelligence:** August 14
- **EasyGrants:** August 17
- **Board Builder:** August 21
- **BusiGrants:** August 24

Updates: [www.ourcommunity.com.au/schedule](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/schedule)

- **National Homeless Persons' Week** (Mission Australia)  
August 6-12
- **Cerebral Palsy Awareness Week** (Cerebral Palsy Association of Western Australia)  
August 6-13
- **Continance Awareness Week** (Continance Foundation of Australia)  
August 6-13
- **National Healthy Bones Week** (Dairy Australia and Osteoporosis Australia)  
August 5-11
- **International Day of the World's Indigenous People** (United Nations)  
August 9
- **Eye Health Week** (Lions Eye Institute)  
August 12-19
- **International Youth Day** (United Nations)  
August 12
-  **Intensive Community Fundraising Workshop - Perth** (Our Community)  
August 14  
([Click here](#) for more info)
- **40 Hour Famine** (World Vision Australia)  
August 17-19
- **National Science Week** (Department of Education)  
August 18-26
- **Children's Book Week** (Children's Book Council of Australia)  
August 18-24
- **Hearing Awareness Week** (Deafness Forum of Australia)  
August 19-25
-  **Business Community Intelligence Masterclass 2007: The Practical Masterclass for business** (Our Community)  
August 20  
([Click here](#) for more info)
- **Daffodil Day** (The Cancer Council)  
August 24
- **Keep Australia Beautiful Week** (Keep Australia Beautiful National Association)  
August 27-September 2

**FEATURED EVENT:  
National Stepfamily Awareness Day  
Sunday, July 29, 2007**

National Stepfamily Awareness Day provides the opportunity to honour stepfamilies and all the effort it takes to make a stepfamily work.

According to the Stepfamily Association of SA, one in every five families is a stepfamily, but half of these with non-resident children are hidden – not counted in the Census.

You can join in this event by:

- Organising your own get-together and inviting other stepfamilies;
- Asking your local media to do a story;
- Telling your state's Stepfamily Association about your event;
- Entering the 'Living in a Stepfamily' writing and drawing competitions.

For more information visit  
[www.stepfamily.asn.au/stepfamilyday](http://www.stepfamily.asn.au/stepfamilyday)

More events, plus the full listing for each event (including organisational contact details and websites) can be found in the online Community Calendar at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/calendar](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/calendar).

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## 12. Community Briefs

### Meetings, crisis response and transparency policies added to PolicyBank

Three new policies have been added to the PolicyBank – the free, online resource designed to help community groups improve their governance and operations.

The PolicyBank now contains almost 60 policies listed under the headings of Human Resources; Values; Board Operations; Governance; Financial Management; Financial Control; Communications; Other (includes a dispute resolution policy, a risk management register, an anaphylaxis policy, and more).

New policies added to the Bank this month cover the topics of:

- Meetings (including sample standing orders);
- Crisis Response; and
- Transparency.

You can download the policies in Word format (to aid adaptation to your own circumstances) at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/policybank](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/policybank).

If you have any policies of your own you would like to contribute, please email them to [service@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:service@ourcommunity.com.au).

### **Technology help and savings for community groups**

Recent visitors to the Community Technology Centre on the Our Community website may have noticed some changes thanks to a recent make-over.

The centre still features lots of great information to help your community group make the most of IT, as well as information about great hardware deals and software downloads.

But there's also a great new addition to the centre that can save your group money on its IT costs.

Thanks to a new partnership with IT company SmartyHost, visitors to the Community Technology Centre can save money when buying a domain name or website name – or when purchasing a website hosting package.

For example, Australian domain names (.id.au, net.au, asn.au, .com.au and .org.au) can be purchased for \$13.95 to \$39.95 for two years, while global domain names can be purchased for \$19 a year.

These prices represent big savings compared to normal costs, meaning your community group can stretch its budget just that little bit further.

For more information visit the Community Technology Centre at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/tech](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/tech) or go to the home page at [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) and click on the pink 'Technology' tab at the top of the page.

### **A sacrifice that pays dividends to community workers (and groups)**

Another recent addition to our website is a new help sheet on salary sacrifice and how it can be of benefit to not-for-profit organisations and community groups.

As the help sheet explains, salary sacrifice is a deliberate government subsidy designed to allow not-for-profit organisations to offer wages packages more competitive with private industry.

The scheme should be called 'salary exchange', because what happens is that you swap money in the salary envelope for fringe benefits money in another envelope and come out no worse or even ahead.

How does it work? Well, instead of paying out all your organisation's money in the form of wages, you pay out part in wages and part in the form of fringe benefits.

And why does that help? Because if you're a not-for-profit then fringe benefits are taxed at a lower rate than wages.

Common fringe benefits come in the form of a car or a computer or a rural living allowance, but almost anything you can think of can be made into an FBT – school fees, mortgage payments, even grocery bills, whatever your employees spend their money on.

While only PBIs get the full exemption, a very wide range of not-for-profits are eligible for a partial rebate.

The full help sheet, including explanatory tables showing how the scheme works, is at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/salariesacrifice](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/salariesacrifice).

## Online giving surges – 2006-07 figures eclipse previous records

As foreshadowed in last month's edition of *Our Community Matters*, online giving is booming in Australia, as evidenced by the huge surge recorded at the [Australian Giving Centre](#) during June.

The Giving Centre clocked up \$384,590 in donations to community causes during the June end-of-financial-year giving season, more than \$146,000 more than in June 2006.

The 2006-07 financial year saw a total of almost \$1.2 million donated through the Giving Centre, an increase of almost \$600,000 on the previous financial year's figures.

And it's not just donations that are on the increase – traffic is up as well, with the number of people visiting the Giving Centre and making a donation doubling in 2006-07 from the previous year's figures.

The average dollar amount given per donor was \$104, with the highest one-off donation in June being \$10,000.

The year's second giving season – Christmas – is really just around the corner, so if you haven't signed up to get your own free online donations facility yet, what's stopping you?

The service is provided by Our Community with the support of Westpac and is fee-free (except for the credit card processing fee levied by the credit card companies).

Find out more at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/receivedonations](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/receivedonations) or email [donations@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:donations@ourcommunity.com.au).

While we're on the topic of fundraising, Our Community and Australia Post have just launched a new Giving Card initiative designed to help Australian primary schools raise funds in the lead-up to Father's Day.

To find out more, download the PDF at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/fathersday](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/fathersday).



## Showcasing community grantseeking success

Thanks to Di Sutherland from Betty's Place for taking up our invitation to share their grantseeking success story with us and our members.

Di tell us that in the past 12 months, the Betty's Place – an organisation that provides services and support to women and children who have experienced domestic violence – has received

- \$4000 in CDSE clubs' funding for domestic violence counselling services for women and children,
- \$10,231 from the Honda Foundation for playground equipment for children living at the refuge,
- \$3000 from the Danks Trust for a domestic violence information card for women,
- \$61,000 from the Office for Women for the Reach Out project in rural areas,
- \$144,000 from FaCSIA for an Aboriginal domestic violence project worker, and
- \$22,000 from the Regional Partnerships program to employ a young Indigenous woman to deliver educational programs on relationship violence to young women in Albury and surrounds.

Phew!

The Betty's Place example shows just what's possible when community groups get serious about grantseeking.

Some of the great opportunities coming up in the next month include the **Australia Post Community Development Grants** program, which provides up to \$3300 for local community Landcare projects across Australia; the **Telstra Assistance Fund**, which provides up to \$5000 for sports equipment; and the Country Women's Association's **Emergency Family and Community Grants** program, which provides up to \$3000 for community groups, schools and not-for-profit organisations to help meet the costs of holding events and providing support to drought-affected communities.

All the details of these and dozens of other upcoming grants opportunities can be found in Our Community's EasyGrants newsletter – the most up-to-date and comprehensive grants information service in Australia. Visit [www.ourcommunity.com.au/easygrants](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/easygrants) to find out more.

## New website raises the temperature for employers

A new website aims to encourage better Australian workplaces by canvassing and publishing the opinions of those who really count – employees.

The HOT (honest, open and transparent) Employer's Directory of Good Employers allows employers to conduct an employee survey, completed anonymously online, rating the organisation's performance on key employment issues such as work/life balance, opportunities for training, equal opportunity etc.

The organisation has the option to publish the results, which then become a resource for jobseekers, investors, consumers and partners.

HOT Employers says consumers prefer to deal with organisations whose employees are engaged and motivated as they provide better services and products. This is also important for the investors as good employers generate greater productivity and profits. Plus, good employers get the pick of the best employees – an important outcome in a tightening labour market.

To find out more, visit [www.hotemployers.com.au](http://www.hotemployers.com.au).

## Bartering makes an online comeback

Community groups with goods to trade might be interested in the launch of a Sydney-based online marketplace.

SwapAce operates in a similar way to other online auction and classifieds sites but with a twist – it also allows users to look for and offer free items and services, and to swap and barter items and services.

"If you don't use something anymore, you could certainly give it away and recycle. But you don't have to; you can also swap it for something you might want to use," the site says.

"Bartering worked long before the introduction of currency, and it works today. Swapping or trading stuff is a great way to recycle."

For more information, telephone (02) 8509 5848, email to [notforprofit@swapace.com](mailto:notforprofit@swapace.com) or visit the website at [www.swapace.com](http://www.swapace.com)

## New dates for Certificate IV in governance

New dates have been announced for delivery of the Certificate IV in Business (Governance) – a new qualification for Australian community group board and committee members delivered by Our Community with our training partner BSI Learning.

This program is tailored to meet the needs of large and small organisations from across the community sector, and is specially priced at \$1100 (many thousands of dollars cheaper than similar courses) to ensure accessibility.

The training is being delivered through sessions of four consecutive days in the following locations:

- **Melbourne**  
August 27-30  
December 3-6
- **Brisbane**  
July 16-19
- **Townsville**  
July 30-August 2
- **Perth**  
September 3-6
- **Adelaide**  
September 18-21
- **Tasmania**  
October 29-November 1
- **Sydney**  
October 16-19

For full details and venues or to book a place, visit [www.ourcommunity.com.au/certificateiv](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/certificateiv).



## 13. Good Moves: Community Jobs & Board/Committee vacancies



# Good Moves :: Jobs Bulletin

[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

### JOB VACANCY LISTINGS (Paid Positions)

#### New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">Volunteer Position on Research Ethics Committee</a>	The Benevolent Society	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Manager/Community Worker</a>	Werrington Community Project	<a href="#">Details</a>

#### Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">Senior Project Officer in Consumer Participation</a>	Health Issues Centre	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Residential Worker</a>	Orana Family Services	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Port Phillip Housing Association	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Executive Officer</a>	South Port Day Links	<a href="#">Details</a>

### BOARD/COMMITTEE VACANCY LISTINGS (Volunteer Positions)

The following is a list of the most recent Board/ Committee vacancies listed at Our Community. To view other board or Committee vacancies [please click here](#) (This matching service is free)

#### New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">Secretary, General Board Member</a>	The Junction Works Inc	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">General Board Member, Publicity Officer</a>	Belmont Neighbourhood Centre	<a href="#">Details</a>

#### Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Playgroup Queensland	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Treasurer, Secretary, General Board Member</a>	Schizophrenia Fellowship of Queensland Inc	<a href="#">Details</a>

#### South Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">Treasurer</a>	Cirkidz Inc	<a href="#">Details</a>

#### Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Hampton Community Centre	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Treasurer, Secretary</a>	Eating Disorders Foundation of Victoria	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, General Board Member</a>	Mount Alexander Bicycle User Group	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Able Australia	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Port Phillip Housing Association	<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Melbourne Rainbow Band	<a href="#">Details</a>

#### Western Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
<a href="#">General Board Member</a>	Kids Camps Inc	<a href="#">Details</a>

[www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs)

## 14. Fast Forward

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

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

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email [service@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:service@ourcommunity.com.au) and put "Unsubscribe-OCM" in the subject line.

## 15. About Our Community

Our Community is a world-leading social enterprise that provides advice and tools for Australia's 700,000 community groups and schools, and practical linkages between the community sector and the general public, business and government.

Our major offerings include:

1. [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) - Australia's most useful website and publishing house, encompassing the nation's largest and most diverse membership base and 12 Knowledge Centres – accelerating the impact of Australia's 700,000 community organisations
2. [Australia's Giving Centre](#) - Helping individuals and businesses give in every way
3. [Australian Institute for Community Practice and Governance](#) - practical and accessible certificated training delivered locally through our training Institute
4. [Institute for Best Practice in Grants Management](#) - the unique suite of grants management services for government
5. [Australian Institute for Corporate Responsibility](#) - cutting edge corporate responsibility resources for large, medium and small business and community organisations