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Our Community Matters is your free community sector update, brought to you by Our Community – the premier destination for Australia's 600,000 community groups and schools. [Click here](#) to receive your free copy.



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1. Johnny Farnham Eat Your Heart Out: Communities in Control is back!

Last year we announced that after a decade of staging one of the community sector's most inspiring, popular and successful events, it was time we moved on.

We figured that we'd go out on a high and wrap up Communities in Control to make way for something different.

We asked you to tell us how you'd like us to reinvent the concept for the technological era.

Well, you told us, and we got the message loud and clear.

- You said you didn't want to miss the chance to see some of Australia's best speakers on community
- You said you wanted to do it face to face – you didn't want to have to read or watch or listen to the speeches from afar
- You said that you wanted to rub shoulders and network with your peers – again, face to face.

In short, you said leave it just as it is.

And so we're back.

Communities in Control 2013 will again be held at Moonee Valley Racing Club (yes, we heard that too – you also like the venue, especially the free coffee and free car parking) on **Monday and Tuesday, May 27 and 28**, with a social media skills day on Sunday, May 26.

A range of top-dass speakers will tackle this year's theme, '**I'm alright, Jack: Reclaiming community in a selfish world**'. They include:



Professor Kerry Arabena,
Chair of Indigenous Health, Centre for Health and Society,
University of Melbourne



Hugh de Kretser,
Executive Director, Human Rights Law Centre



Dr John Falzon,
Chief Executive, St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of
Australia



Emeritus Professor Richard Wilkinson,
Co-Founder, Equality Trust (United Kingdom); Professor
Emeritus of Social Epidemiology at the University of
Nottingham Medical School



Professor Andrew Markus,
School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies,
Monash University



Tony Jones,
Presenter of Q&A, ABCTV

(Plus Guests – **announcement coming soon!**)



Jane Farago,
General Manager, Net Balance Foundation at Net Balance



Ita Buttrose AO OBE,
2013 Australian of the Year

Entertainment will again feature prominently at this year's conference – details coming soon!

> **Book your spot:** www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2013

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2. What's in a Name? Lots

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, says Shakespeare. Really? If I passed you a white flower and said "Isn't this Slugsnot particularly fragrant?" I think you'd back away before you'd had the opportunity to find out.

One of the words that has definite negative connotations is 'disease', which is a problem when so much of the not-for-profit sector is working in exactly that area.

Some words are just downers, which is why in the UK the Macular Disease Society is dropping the word 'Disease'. From now on it's just the Macular Society.

Commenting on the rebrand, chief executive Helen Jackman said: "Many members have been telling us for years that they disliked the word 'disease'. Our research suggested that some people felt it was so negative it may even put them off using our services or joining us.

If people are really prepared to go blind rather than say the word, yes, that's certainly a reason to play down that aspect of the picture.

"Members already often left it out when talking about the Society, suggesting that they didn't even like saying the word. The research also indicated that we needed to modernise a little to make sure we serve the needs of people over the next 25 years."

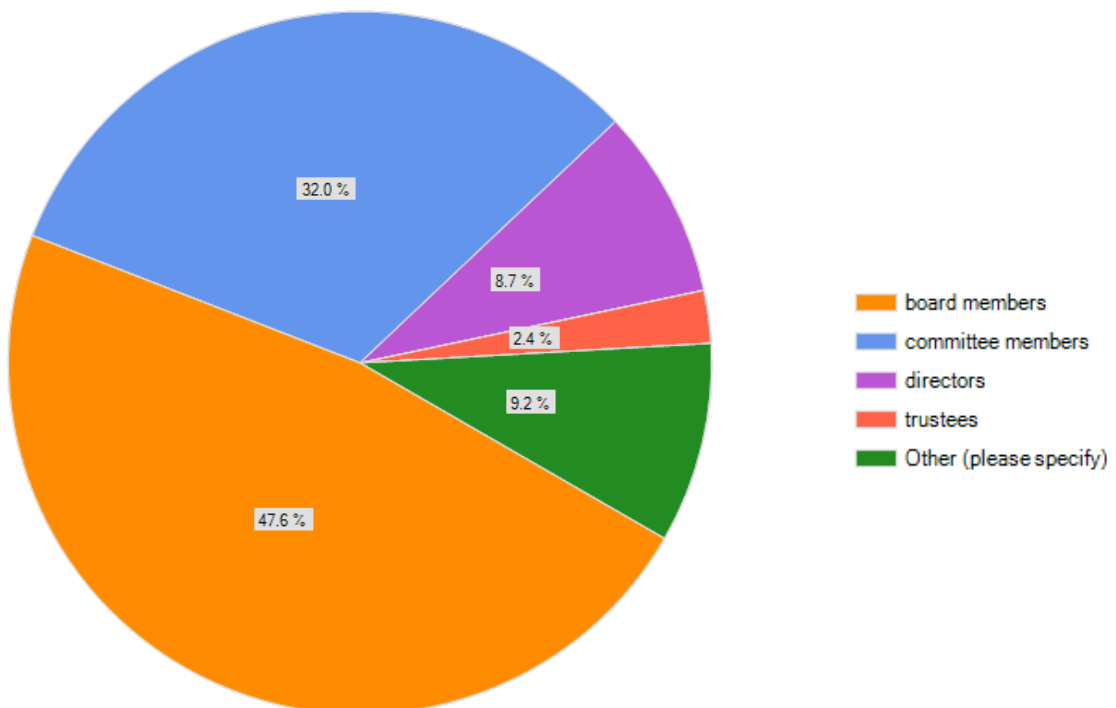
In Australia the society that covers Coeliac Disease is the Coeliac Society, not the Coeliac Disease Society, and the Heart Foundation isn't the Heart Disease Foundation. Only a few organisations are prepared to cope with this nominal distaste. There's the Motor Neurone Disease Association, the Australian Mitochondrial Disease Foundation, and not many others.

So many organisations have voted with their logos, in fact, that there's probably something in it. Add this extra maxim to the advice we gave on changing your name in the November 2011 edition of *Our Community Matters*; emphasise the positive!

What's in a Name #2

Still on the topic of names, what do you call the people who sit on your governing body? We asked you, and this is what you said.

What do you call the members of your organisation's governance group?

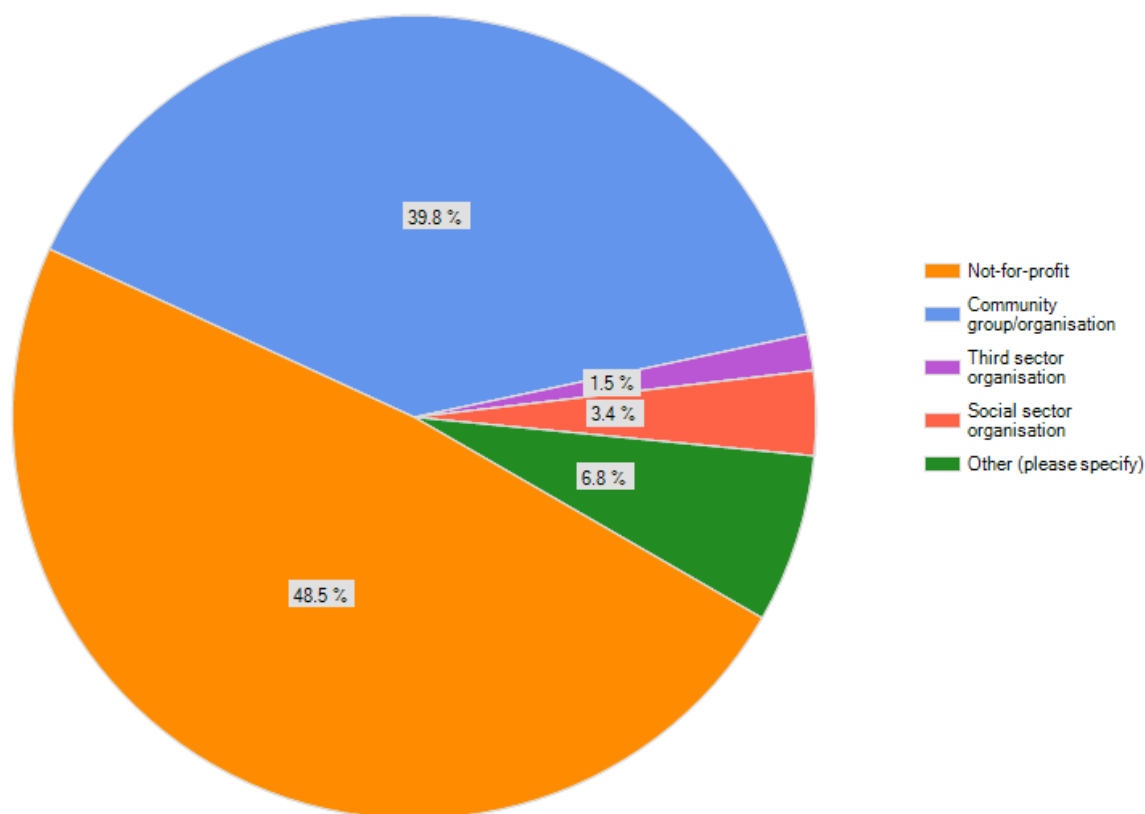


'Board member' is the most popular term, by a considerable margin – which is interesting, because Model Rules generally use the term 'Committee of Management' and you'd think that would tilt the scales. 'Trustees' is largely an English usage, while Americans seem to favour 'Director'.

Here at Our Community we have in the past favoured the term 'Board Member', though we're quickly moving in the American direction. Not only is 'Director' shorter, it has the effect of raising the standing not-for-profit governance to an equality with commercial titans, and we think that's the right place for it.

Our poll, which was answered by 206 community group members, also sought to identify what words people used to describe the sector.

What word do you prefer to describe your organisation and others in your sector?



At Our Community, we've tended to use 'community sector', though we have shifted to 'not-for-profit sector' in recent times.

We've done this as part of the general move in that direction, and the survey results seem to back that movement, as has the creation and naming of the new Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (though we would argue that as all charities are not-for-profits, the use of that word in the ACNC's title is redundant).

In any case, our big wish is that we could all decide on one term and stick to it – then we might all be able to do a better job of explaining to the public, business and government who we are, what we do, and what they could do to make our work easier.

For more information about Our Community polls, go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/poll

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3. Austerity Australia: Be glad for the good times; prepare for the bad times

The trouble with nostalgia is that you only get to enjoy it in retrospect. Well, we here at Our Community are going to try and cut down the waiting time.

Look around you. Smile. This is a golden age for the not-for-profit sector.

Yes, you're under pressure.

Yes, you're having to work harder on your fundraising every year.

Yes, you're looking at cutting back on photocopying.

But things could be worse. A lot worse.

The United Kingdom has had a glimpse of the future. The UK's Coalition Government came to power with a new vision of the relationship between government and civil society – the Big Society, where responsibility for care and such things was to be devolved into the hands of the citizens, cutting out the bureaucrats and empowering volunteers and grassroots groups.

How, you ask, has that worked out?

Well, the *Guardian* newspaper reports that one UK charity in six says they may have to close in 2013.

Admittedly, that's not just because of government cutbacks – a becalmed economy has also meant less in donations.

(Mind you, many economists blame the economy's trouble on the Conservative's ideological insistence on fiscal austerity, so this may just be the cuts coming the other way round the house.)

As a result, [the Guardian says] more than eight out of 10 charities believe their sector is facing a crisis, with two in five (40%) fearing they face closure if the economic situation does not improve. Nearly three-quarters (73%) believe that they are unable to fulfil their goals, while one in four have axed staff.

Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (Acevo) chief executive Sir Stephen Bubb caused a stir when he wrote to Prime Minister David Cameron to let him know that not-for-profit leaders felt “frustrated and demoralised” by their inability to play a bigger role in providing public services, declaring the Big Society concept “effectively dead”.

“The reality many charities now face is crippling spending cuts: half of local councils admit making disproportionate cuts to charities in spite of government guidance to the contrary,” Sir Stephen was reported as saying in his letter to the PM.

“Most Acevo members whose funding is being cut have had to respond by reducing the services they provide.”

Back home, as we reported last year, many state governments have started taking the knife to the not-for-profit sector (and the public sector as well). The Northern Territory Government is the latest to signal cuts.

The Federal Government is also moving to make savings wherever it can as it tries to work out how to pay for its big-ticket promises.

So, what do YOU do?

Sit back and wait for the axe to drop? Jump up and down and issue media releases saying your grants have been cut and your donations are down? Curse them all, crawl in a corner and sob, pretending it isn't happening?

None of those is likely to help you much. Here are some practical things you can do to prepare for Austerity Australia:

- (1) Get your priorities straight:** Decide on three things (services, functions, activities) your organisation cannot live without, the things whose loss would be diabolical for your members or clients. Put them at the top of a list then draw a big black line under them. Add all of the other things you do, in order of importance. If and when things start to tighten, you'll know where to start your cutting.



- (2) **Get your treasurer and finance person involved:** The people who set your organisation's financial parameters need to know what could be around the corner. They need to start planning now. You need to know the true costs of each service you provide so you're in the best possible position to make a calm decision if the proverbial hits the fan.
- (3) **Increase, diversify and review your fundraising:** We've said it before and we'll say it again: if you don't ask, you don't get. Establish a Fundraising Review Committee to take a serious look at your fundraising income measured against the costs. Take into account all of the six pillars of fundraising that you should be drawing from:
- Grants
 - Donations
 - Memberships/Alumni
 - Earned Income – sales
 - Events
 - Sponsorships/ Partnerships
- (4) **Get your board on board:** It's no use the volunteers and staff worrying and planning in isolation. Your board needs to be briefed about the current climate and help set a course for a bright but realistic future. Your board needs to work on and own your fundraising plans – more than likely, they have heaps of contacts that they can call on to give your organisation a boost.
- (5) **Get in touch with your local politicians:** It doesn't always help, but it will definitely do no harm to get to know your local MPs (and for them to get to know you). Ask them about their policy on supporting organisations like yours. Ask the opposition candidate as well. Take notes and hold them to account.
- (6) **Review your term deposits:** Interest rates for term deposits are fluctuating madly. Make sure you're getting a good rate of return. Again, if you don't ask, you don't get.
- (7) **Review your costs:** Can you get cheaper rent? Can you sell your property and invest the funds? Can you get a better photocopier or mobile phone plan? Review, review, review. For a third time: if you don't ask, you don't get.
- (8) **Get listed on GiveNow:** GiveNow.com.au is the free service that allows any not-for-profit in Australia to collect online donations without going to the trouble of setting up their own secure site. If you aren't already listed, check it out. More than 2500 groups are already on board. If you're paying fees to access another service, make sure you know what you're getting for your money and that it's worth the cost.
- (9) **Take time out:** Yes, we know how busy everyone is, but this is important. Take two days off, go sit somewhere peaceful and work out what is really important in your organisation, what you want to protect, and what are your options for weathering any future storm.
- (10) **Let us help you:** We're putting a bomb under our Funding Centre, our much loved *EasyGrants* newsletter, and our *Raising Funds* newsletter. Everything is about to change radically – and it's going to make your life much, much easier. Stay tuned.

If the worst doesn't happen then great – you know your priorities, your house is in order, and you'll be in the best possible position to make hay while the sun shines.

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4. New Dates: Upcoming training for not-for-profits

Our Community's latest training dates have just been released. Our sessions will provide you with all the practical knowledge you need to raise more funds, get more grants, and be a better board member. Here's what's on offer:

▶ **Advanced Grants Writing Seminar** [Click here for details...](#)

- Melbourne: 8 March
- Sydney: 8 March
- Brisbane: 15 March
- Melbourne: 14 June
- Sydney: 14 June
- Brisbane: 21 June
- Perth: 21 June

▶ **Certificate IV in Governance - for Community Boards (BSB40907)** [Click here for details...](#)

- Melbourne: 4-7 March & 4-7 June
- Sydney: 4-7 June
- Perth: 17-20 June
- Brisbane: 17-20 June

▶ **Introduction to Writing Winning Grant Applications** [Click here for details...](#)

- Sydney: 22 February
- Perth: 25 February
- Brisbane: 25 February
- Sydney: 29 April
- Perth: 29 April
- Melbourne: 20 May
- Brisbane: 20 May

▶ **Secrets of Successful Boards Seminar** [Click here for details...](#)

- Brisbane: 26 February
- Sydney: 30 April
- Perth: 30 April
- Melbourne: 21 May
- Brisbane: 21 May

▶ **Strategies for Sustainable Funding Seminar** [Click here for details...](#)

- Sydney: 22 February
- Perth: 25 February
- Brisbane: 25 February
- Sydney: 29 April
- Perth: 29 April
- Melbourne: 20 May
- Brisbane: 20 May

Find out more about Our Community training at www.ourcommunity.com.au/training

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5. But Wait, There's More! Upcoming events for grantmakers and sports groups

Join the tribe, be a smarty & connect: Grantmaking in Australia 2013

Speakers and presenters from across the grantmaking spectrum will share their wisdom at the eighth annual **Grantmaking in Australia Conference**, organised by the Australian Institute of Grants Management (AIGM), a division of Our Community.

The conference, which will be held in Melbourne on March 14 and 15, will celebrate Australian grantmaking's growing maturity by bringing together grantmakers of all sizes and types for a Festival of Grantmaking Ideas.

The two-day event will be split into three parts:

- **SmartyClass:** Thursday, March 14, 9.30am until noon – a learning event for **SmartyGrants** users
- **Local Government Grantmaking Tribal Gathering:** Thursday, March 14, 1pm to 4.30pm – peer learning and exchange for local government grantmakers
- **Grantmaking in Australia Conference:** Friday, March 15, 9am-4.30pm – presentations by some of Australia's most progressive and successful grantmakers, plus trends and best practices and practical strategies for managing common grantmaking challenges.

The conference is being held at the Jasper Hotel in Elizabeth St, Melbourne. To book, visit www.grantsmanagement.com.au/conference2013



Innovation in Community Sport: Learn how, now!

With Australian sport in the news for all the wrong reasons, it's more important than ever that grassroots sports clubs provide a positive example of everything that can be good about sport in this country.

The annual Sports Without Borders Conference – to be held in Melbourne on May 3 – will emphasise the need for sporting groups to innovate, be inclusive, and guard against old-fashioned myths and prejudices.

The conference will look at:

- Recruiting and retaining volunteers;
- Marketing;
- Innovation;
- Partnerships;
- Engaging members;
- Ensuring groups are relevant to, and inclusive of, all sectors of the community.

Speakers include:

- **Senator Kate Lundy** – Federal Sports and Multicultural Affairs Minister
- **Kristina Keneally** – Former NSW Premier, now CEO of Basketball Australia
- **Steve Horvat** – Former Socceroo and decorated international footballer
- **Paul Kennedy** – Experienced television journalist, with a history of covering sports-related issues (including in the area of drugs in sport)
- **Francis Leach** – Respected broadcaster and presenter of ABC Radio's Grandstand Sport



- **Rita Panahi** – Social commentator, writer and co-host of SEN radio’s Casual Friday program

The conference will be staged at Moonee Valley Racecourse. For more information, or to book, visit: www.ourcommunity.com.au/swb2013.

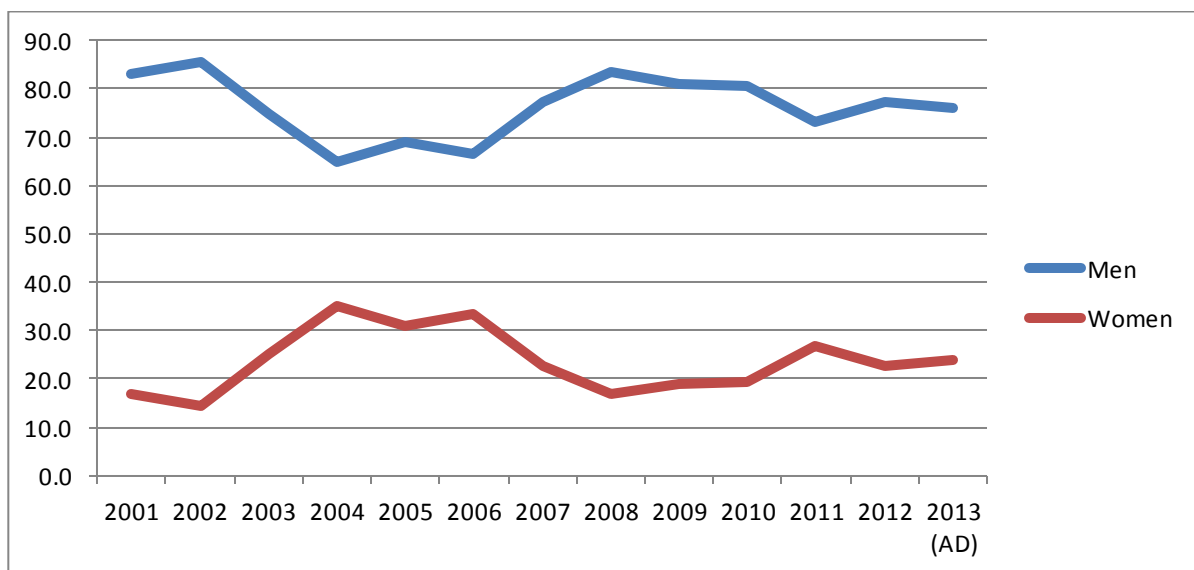
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6. The Gender Agenda: Honours & speakers in the headlines

Every day, in every way, Australia is getting more progressive, less prejudiced, and more aware of the value of diversity.

Only not.

The figures don’t lie. Here’s the proportion of Australian awards going to men and women.



Do you remember the years 2003-2006 as having exceptionally many wonderful Australian women? Something like 10% more prominent women than were around this last Australia day? Us neither.

The only thing that’s changed is that the people on the relevant committees seem to be giving even more awards to the prominent and prestigious – people like executives, surgeons, professors, and politicians, who, we’d say, could get along perfectly well without them – rather than to dedicated local volunteers.

As veteran journalist and social justice campaigner Anne Summers says,

It seems to me that the Order of Australia Awards reflect the country faithfully in at least one respect. They mirror the existing power structure with all its inherent sexism and racism.

That’s the bad news.

The good news is we can boost the numbers of women getting awards simply by increasing the number of women being nominated. More female nominees get awards than male nominees (of the women who are nominated, 65% of them get an award), but there are so many more male nominees that this effect is lost.

Any not-for-profit organisation that hasn’t put up a woman for an award this year – a donor, a stakeholder, a volunteer – is simply leaving money on the table. Marketing gold!

Mind you, that doesn’t address the other problem – that women not only get fewer awards overall but also get smaller and smaller proportions as you go higher up the award grades, getting 33.5% of the OAMs but only 15.4% of the ACs. For that we might need bigger guns.

Why don't the sector's peak bodies each adopt a women's nominations target for their area, and prod their members till they pay attention?

The Surf LifeSaving Association has an Honours Committee that "initiates nominations to the appropriate authorities on behalf of SLSA members considered eligible for civil, sporting, community and other awards". This works, big time; in the 2013 awards they got a staggering 10 awards (all men, unfortunately; they're going to have to work on that).

Why don't you write to your group's own peak body and prod them to up their game?

If you want a hand with your own award nomination, bing! it's already done – you can download the Our Community-Women's Leadership Institute Australia nomination guide [here](#).

Yes, we want to eliminate racism and sexism – but if we hold off reforming awards until that's been done, we could be waiting for a generation or so yet.

Think globally, act locally, fix what can be fixed, issue by issue. See you in the June honours.

Gender Agenda II: Get your speaker balance right

While we're on the topic of gender, an interesting initiative out of the US caught our eye, and is something we think should be taken on here.

In an attempt to discourage the all-too-common occurrence of male-dominated panels at conferences and other events, editor Rebecca Rosen suggested that men refuse to speak on all-male panels.

"Dear Men," she wrote:

Have you noticed that a lot of the time it just seems like, gosh, there are a lot of dudes speaking at this conference?

... I love that this has bothered you. And I am happy to tell you about a simple step you can take to help change this: Refuse to speak on all male-panels. Just say no.

You can read more about the pledge [here](#).

Our Community has been holding conferences for more than a decade, and we give close attention to the gender balance of our speaker lists. We think it makes for better conferences.

What's the worst that can happen if you don't pay this any mind? Well, perhaps this:



The conference in question featured a panel with nine men and one woman (who happened to be one of the organisers' partner). Concerns were raised. A Twitter debate kicked off. Organiser Giles Pegram's [explanations](#) only made things worse:

Pegram explained the Summit programme was based on market research and academic research, and the people that have done that research happen to be mostly men...

And worse:

He said: "Women are not under-represented in fundraising nor indeed in management positions in fundraising, but they are not yet adequately engaged in the thinking that goes on within fundraising."

The message that came across was clearly "Don't you bother your pretty little head about it," and the message that came back was clearly, "Take your conference and stuff it," resulting in the conference being cancelled.

Take it as a friendly warning.

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7. Innovation for Dummies: the key ingredients

If your group isn't open to innovation it's dying already, and you're just waiting till everybody notices.

Sometimes you just need to keep on evolving through continuous small changes, sometimes you're involved in something that's going to bring about a new world. Whatever you're faced with, you have to move the rubbish out of the corridors so that innovation can get past the obstacles. How do you do that?

For most of its modern history Mexico was ruled by an oxymoron – the Institutional Revolutionary Party. For most of that time, the Institutional side dominated the Revolutionary. Not-for-profit organisations are now being told to develop their own oxymoron – institutionalised innovation.

Back in 2004 American not-for-profit thinktank nfpSynergy wrote a manual on Innovation. They got it out again last year and looked at it and what do you know, they'd had new ideas in the meantime – and so they've produced a remade report, **Innovation (Still) Rules! An innovation and creativity guide for not-for-profit organisations.**



Organisationally, the report pushes you to look at 10 areas:



1. Involving senior leadership.

Is innovation in your group led, demonstrated and supported from the top?



2. Acknowledging strategic importance

Is innovation the first thing to be cut when budgets are being reviewed, or do people see where it fits?



3. Genuine commitment to change

Many groups are all in favour of innovation. They just don't like change. Sorry – doesn't work like that.



4. Willingness to invest resources

Is innovation the last thing to be funded when the budget's being drawn up? When everyone's working on the smell of an oily rag, there's an understandable reluctance to blow that delectable odour to new contenders.



5. Ability to invest time

When you have to run as fast as you can to stay in the same place, where do you find the time to step off the treadmill to think? Too bad. You just have to find the time.



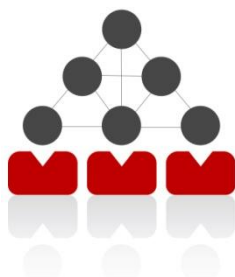
6. Understanding and insight

You can't do breakout work unless you understand the situation you're in now and what needs to change. Is 'understanding things' on your job description?



7. Acceptance of risk

Many people are willing to take way-out crazy chances provided that they can be guaranteed that there are no possible risks involved. Again; sorry – doesn't work like that.



8. Workable processes

Everybody in the group gets a voice, everybody chips in, everybody in the group gets to hear the outcomes.



9. Clarity on what's next

You need communication across the organisation so that people can follow, lead, or get out of the way.



10. Taking the long view

Not a fad, not a whim, not a phase you're going through – it's a heading in the strategic plan, a permanent orientation.

If you're not overtaking the field with new improvements, ask yourself why.

If you decide you need to change, look at the [nfpSynergy report](#), which goes into a lot more detail, as well as putting forward examples from the field. It should be on your download list.

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8. Elections Make For Strange Bedfellows (but here's cheers to cooperation)

"Today dogs, cats and mice announced that they'd come together to support a common initiative!"

We would have thought it was easier to get cats and dogs and mice to live together happily than it was for unions, employers, and the community sector to find common ground. But that's now been done.

Today the Business Council of Australia, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) released a [joint statement](#) outlining how the three organisations will cooperate on initiatives to tackle entrenched disadvantage.

Now that's cooperation!

The three groups have come to an agreement on what's needed –

- a strong economy with competitive businesses and enterprises
- robust public institutions that engender confidence
- healthy, safe, productive and fair workplaces
- greater access to employment for those currently missing out
- access to lifelong education and training opportunities
- a social safety net that provides adequate income support without impeding transition to work
- effective and efficient support services targeted to those in most need.

And there's agreement on the next few (small) steps:

1. convene an expert roundtable to discuss best practice policies that support 'demand-led' employment assistance for disadvantaged jobseekers
2. investigate options for better linking of pre-employment training initiatives with demand-led approaches
3. host a forum to explore the importance of reducing inequality and entrenched disadvantage for Australia's future economic growth and prosperity.

It's the eternal hope – to find a way for people of good will to set their prejudices aside and co-operate for the common good. And with an election year to endure we have to applaud any bipartisan initiative going.

In the same vein, then, let's have a cheer for the cooperation between the federal and Victorian governments on the NDIS, where there's a trial run starting up in Barwon. Community Services Minister Mary Wooldridge says:

... Around 4,000 people in the Barwon area will be supported under the NDIS in the first year, increasing to about 5,000 people by 2015-16.

Victoria remains committed to working towards a sustainable full NDIS and considers the launch of the scheme in the Barwon area an important step towards improving support for people with disability, their families and carers.

With an election year to endure we have to applaud any bipartisan initiative going (while we also hope that Liberal support helps the NDIS make it across the election barrier).

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9. Stop the Rot: Using mediation to control conflict in your organisation

By the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria

Disputes can arise in many areas of life, whether it's a disagreement with a neighbour over tree roots or fences, workplace disagreements, noise pollution from animals, machinery or cars, or disputes between members of a club.

In community organisations, where crucial decisions have to be made, and everyone relies on each other's goodwill to get things happening, a little bit of conflict can have a major impact.

In Victoria, there is a free dispute resolution service funded by the Victorian Government called the **Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria** (DSCV). The DSCV provides mediation services, as well as training and accreditation of mediators to national standards.

DSCV can help you resolve common disputes within committees, clubs or incorporated associations, particularly where the problem relates to personal differences or challenges in relation to purpose and direction of an organisation. To use the service the club has to have some aspects of its operations within Victoria, however similar services exist in other states.

Any member of an eligible club can contact the DSCV to obtain advice about whether the centre's services would be suitable, and this contact is treated with absolute confidentiality. Trained and experienced DSCV staff will assess whether the conflict would benefit from mediation, and contact the other people involved to see if they also wished to use the centre's services. If everyone is agreeable, DSCV would arrange for a mediation to take place in a neutral venue.

Mediations are very successful in resolving disputes, with 85% of mediations at DSCV ending in agreements. Mediators remain neutral and do not take sides. The mediator's task is to:

- create an environment where parties have a chance to be heard equally;
- help keep emotions in check;
- guide parties through discussions about the issues;
- make sure all relevant issues are covered;
- help parties explore a variety of options; and

DSCV's top tips for effective communication:

- Make sure you both have enough time to talk through the issues
- Communicate your needs and concerns
- Keep your emotions in check, stay relaxed
- Attack the problem, not the person
- Listen to the other side and acknowledge their needs and feelings
- If this fails, agree to take a break and set a time to try again later

- help parties write down details of any agreement reached.

Mediation is a voluntary process and no one can be forced to attend. Interpreters are supplied by the centre as required.

DSCV has offices throughout Victoria. To contact your local office, call 1800 658 528.

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10. The Fundraising Oracles: How to stay ahead of the pack in 2013

2013 is already close to two months old – is your fundraising under way?

If not, you'd better hop to it. Those big bucks are not going to raise themselves.

Our Community has a publication available that could help you make a start.

The ***Raising Funds Sealed Edition*** is your 2013 fundraising planner, drawing together secrets, wisdom and best practice guides for community groups and schools.

In one section, we asked a group of “Fundraising Oracles” what they saw coming up for fundraisers. Predictions from beyondblue’s Kate Carnell and Oxfam’s Gregg Vines included:

- Greater donor demands for clear outcomes
- A need for better one-to-one engagement with donors, including smarter use of social media and better storytelling
- Mirroring of the retail trend towards online transactions
- Better data management and use of data mining to aid creation and tailoring of personalised fundraising ‘products’



Gregg told *Raising Funds* that one thing that *isn't* going to change in fundraising is that there will always be thousands of good causes, “all driven with passion and needing to be funded”.

He said not-for-profits should keep to their mission to ensure they stayed focused and successful.

You can read more of what Gregg and Kate had to say, and help kickstart your own fundraising efforts for 2013, by getting a copy of the *Raising Funds Sealed Edition*. It includes your next fundraiser on the house – everything you need to run a successful trivia night (yes, including questions and scoresheets).

> Find out more: www.ourcommunity.com.au/raisingfundssealed

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11. Accountability Matters: Ramifications of the Victorian Court Fund decision

Back in the nineteenth century, magistrates in the state of Victoria could do rough justice directly in their own courts.

If they didn't think that someone needed a blot on their permanent record they could order them to pay a sum of money into the poorbox instead of recording a conviction. They could then turn around and toss the money back out where they thought it would do the most good.

Typically, money collected in this manner was given to deserted wives and children during the initial stages of maintenance proceedings or drawn on for people who didn't have the money for a tram home. As we became more bureaucratic, that sort of compulsory donation was turned to funding established charities like the Salvation Army.

In more recent times, the state set up the Victorian Magistrates Court Fund and decisions about where the money went were taken out of the hands of individual magistrates.

Old ways die hard, apparently. Some magistrates paid some money into the Fund, others kept on passing it along to charity themselves. *The Australian* reports that

The Melbourne Magistrates' Court 2010-11 annual report said more than \$880,000 was paid to charities and local community projects through court orders. Of this, \$120,000 was paid to the court fund, commonly known as "the poor box".

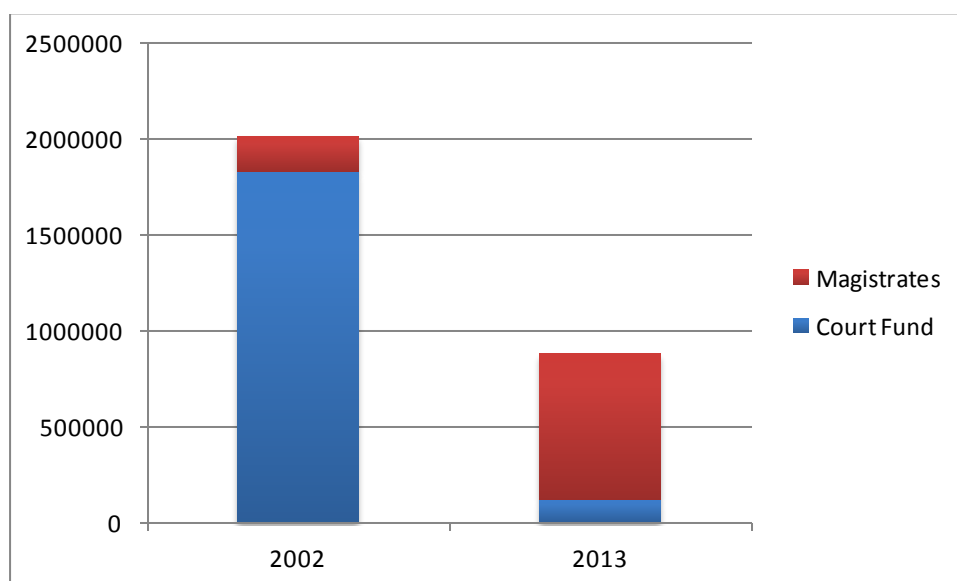
Slightly confusing, perhaps, and, it turns out, not legal.

In August 2011 somebody pleaded guilty in the Magistrate's Court to a breach of the Food Act. Instead of a fine, the magistrate ordered the defendant to pay \$2500 to the St Vinnie's food van service.

The problem was that while St Vincent de Paul is a wonderful organisation, that \$2500 wasn't a victimless donation. If that had been a fine, the Melbourne City Council would have got the money. And the council went to court to get it.

In the Supreme Court, the judge said that the council was right – magistrates did not have the power to order an offender to pay a fine directly to a charity, however important its work and however much it would suffer from a sudden funding cut.

No charity is going to go under because court grants have been stopped. For one thing, the magistrates can just stop doing their own thing and order the malefactors to pay into the official Court Fund. For another, the amount involved has been spiralling downward for years – in 2002, for comparison, the Court Fund handed out \$1,827,725 and magistrates another \$186,000.



While Melbourne City Council has been rather a dog in the manger over this, the Court Fund was set up to ensure that magistrates' decisions on allocating funds were properly accounted for, and if we go back to the practices of 2002 this would bring more money into the sector, not less.

The first question has to be why the total fund has gone down; after that we can discuss how it's distributed.

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12. Still Don't Have a Website? Beware the fourbetwo



By **Chris Borthwick**, Technophile

My new year's resolution for 2013 was "Whenever you meet someone who has a cause but hasn't created a website for it, hit them upside the head" and I'm glad to say that nearly two months in I've had no trouble keeping it.

It's for their own good, mind. And following my investments in kinaesthetic education I've set up two websites in the last month.

It took one evening for each. It's that easy. Proof, if proof was needed, that we are not living in the twentieth century.

This isn't top-of-the-line stuff. But you don't need top-of-the-line. The basic fact about websites is that they're an extreme example of the law of diminishing returns. The Microsoft website, to take a prominent example, has all the bells and whistles there are, at the cost of at least \$100 million. You can get 95% of that functionality for about \$500,000. You can get 90% for \$3000. And you can get about 75% of the functionality for free, without chipping in a brass razoo.

Once you've got a website, you can use it for as much or as little as you want. You can put up pictures, or files, or scans, or chatrooms. You can direct your website to the public, or the members, or the board. Anything that involves one other person, or tens or thousands or millions of them, can be made to go quicker online. Hey, do you want me to give you some personal incentive upside the head?

Here's a list of [10 free website builders](#).

Myself, I would have ranked Google Sites higher, if only because people trust it more, but I can't say I've tried all the others. Put in the work to become fluent in at least one. It's a cost of doing business.

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13. Free Legal Help: The good news about pro bono law

Our Community provides a wide range of [helpsheets](#) designed to steer you away from the rocks and reefs of the law.

There are times, though, when you need more than a helpsheet can offer. If your group wants to set up as a company under the Corporations Act, for example, or if you want to get your donations declared tax deductible, you probably need an actual framed-degree-scroll-on-the-wall lawyer.

Luckily, a [recent survey](#) of pro bono (free) lawyering has just found that

- Most pro bono lawyering goes to not-for-profit groups like you, rather than individuals – tough for them, but good for you;
- Most pro bono lawyering is directed to the things that groups want – setting up as a company under the Corporations Act, for example, or getting your donations declared tax deductible.

The survey was conducted last year by the National Pro Bono Resource Centre, an independent not-for-profit that aims to support, encourage and facilitate the provision of pro bono legal services in Australia. The Centre had responses from all Australia's largest law firms, and a majority of those in the second and third rank, although it



didn't search out suburban solicitors – but if you're looking for not-for-profit pro bono you want an not-for-profit specialist, and it's mainly the large firms that can afford one or more of these on staff.

The average number of pro bono hours per lawyer was 29.9. The Centre is pushing for 35 hours to be the standard, and while the present level is well short of that it's still up by nearly an hour from the last survey in 2010, so we'll get there eventually.

Those nearly 30 hours represents something like 3% of the total legal workload, concentrated in the areas of governance, deductible gift recipient (DGR) applications, employment law, commercial agreements and incorporations.

If you need legal help and you have anyone in your inner circle who's a lawyer or working with lawyers, give them a bell.

If you haven't, ask around. At worst, look up one of the large law firms and give them a cold call – either directly or through the referral service of a community law centre or your state's Law Institute.

Make your case for a few of those 30 hours.

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14. Federal Reform Agenda: ACNC starts work, consultations roll on

Ta-da! We have entered a new era. The Australian Not-for-Profits and Charities Commission is now formally in existence.

That's wonderful. However, in practice it's just the ACC: if you're a not-for-profit but not a charity, it's nothing to go with you yet.

In these early days the ACNC is occupied with getting its systems working and ensuring charities know how it all works.

It's currently in the midst of a range of free information and education sessions where it's fielding questions and consulting over its approach to consultation and the government's consultation on governance standards and reporting. The January-February program is to be followed by further briefings across Australia in the first half of 2013.

The ACNC has now confirmed the makeup of its advisory board, and some more information is also starting to emerge about how it is going to work once it's found its feet. In discussing its regulatory approach, for example, the ACNC gives some examples of its enforcement mechanisms that contain some hints as to whether it's thinking along the lines of comparisons with (a) Batman, or (b) the Blue Fairy, or perhaps a combination of both ...



Not-for-profits, don't fib to the Batfairy!

The issue is how the ACNC proposes to right wrongs; and the preliminary issue is how it's going to find them out.

At the lowest level of concern, the Commission receives governance complaints from members, and tells them to go away and settle them somewhere else:

We would ... refer them to relevant resources on our website and suggest that they consider a mediation service ... We would also ask if they are a member of a peak body, which may be able to assist.

The Commission may also receive complaints from members of the public about the quality of charity provision – a whistleblower might reveal, say, that a homelessness charity is feeding its clients date-expired meat – in which case the Commission once again tells them to go away and complain somewhere else:

We should not take further action, as we do not have power to regulate service quality. We would, however, give the person who made the complaint details of the regulatory authority monitoring food quality and health standards.

In these cases, the Commission is dealing with people who come to it. Obviously, this has its limitations, and sometimes the Commission is going to have to look for problems on its own account. If, for example,

Through **media monitoring**, the ACNC becomes aware that ... charities are fundraising for [an overseas] disaster although the purposes of these charities are established to address disadvantage in Australia ... we should talk to the charities and give them advice ...

The highest level of concern is “Misuse of charity for serious criminal purposes or significant private benefit”, and here the ACNC is clear how it would act (though again its action must involve others).

The ACNC receives a complaint that a charity registered for the purposes of research has conducted no research. After an investigation, the ACNC learns that the main expenses are for luxury items for the personal use of the staff ... This organisation is not and was never intended to be a charity, so there is no reason to use our powers to ‘get them back on track’. We would revoke their ACNC charity registration retrospectively and refer the matter to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

While the ACNC beavers away, it's going to be a busy year for the sector, with many reforms on the agenda:

- Draft Consultation Code under the National Compact – March 2013
- Anti-gag legislation – early 2013
- Tax concessions to the sector – early 2013
- Statutory definition of ‘charity’ – mid 2013
- Fundraising reform – options paper expected early 2013
- Work with states to reduce regulatory burden on NFPs – ongoing

And there may even be time for a new government to repeal everything before Christmas.

Strap yourselves in.

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15. Are You Prepared? Report paints a bleak picture of climate change effects

In the wake of yet another summer of floods and bushfires, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) has released *Climate Change and the Community Sector – Risks and Adaptations*, a warning that the effects of climate change are going to hit the not-for-profit sector particularly hard.

This is the sector that has to look after Australia's most vulnerable – the elderly, the homeless, people with disabilities. All these groups are hit harder by heatwaves, find it harder to get out of the way of calamities, and are harder to reach through normal media channels.

“Our initial findings indicate that community service organisations are highly vulnerable and not well prepared to manage extreme weather and climate change risks,” the ACOSS report says.

“Additional findings include that the vulnerability of people experiencing poverty and inequality will likely be increased by the extreme weather-driven failure of the organisations on which they rely to meet basic needs but that, if well prepared, these organisations can make a significant positive contribution to the preparedness and resilience of their clients and the community through the use of their specialist skills, assets and facilities.”

Is your organisation weatherproofed? What would happen if you were burned or flooded out – what backups can you count on? What are you going to do when burning hot days come along more often? How will your clients cope? What do you have to do to mitigate the risks?

To begin with, read the report.

> [Download the ACOSS report](#)

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

Our Community’s online [Community Calendar](#) features all of the nationally significant events focussed around a major community or advocacy/awareness issue in Australia. Some events taking place over the next couple of months include:



[Clean up Australia Day: 3 March](#)

Clean Up Australia Day encourages all Australians to take to their local park, beach, bushland or streets and help collect rubbish. Individuals and local groups can either organise a clean-up site or volunteer to join an existing site.



[World’s Greatest Shave: 14-17 March](#)

Every hour somebody in Australia is diagnosed with lymphoma, myeloma or leukaemia. Every second hour, somebody dies from one of these diseases. The World's Greatest Shave has raised in excess of \$120 million since 1998, and uses the raised funds to support patients and families living with these blood disorders. Funds are also used to support blood cancer research to help find better treatments and cures.

[Harmony Day: 21 March](#)



Harmony Day is when all Australians celebrate our cultural diversity. The day is also the United Nation's International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Harmony Day is managed by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and gives people the opportunity to celebrate what makes each Australian unique and share what we have in common.

[Close the Gap Day: 21 March](#)



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are still dying 10 to 17 years younger than other Australians. For that reason, more than 40 national organisations came together in 2006 to form Close the Gap – Australia’s largest ever campaign to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Earth Hour: March 23

Earth Hour is an international sustainability movement, where individuals and businesses are encouraged to turn off all lights for an hour. Earth Hour aims to increase awareness of the impact we have on our world through the use of fossil fuels and electricity.



Neighbour Day: March 31

Neighbour Day is Australia's annual celebration of community held on the last Sunday in March every year. Its aim is to encourage closer, friendlier relationships between neighbours and to strengthen communities.



National Youth Week: 5-14 April

National Youth Week is an annual, weeklong celebration of young people (12 to 25 – yep, you missed the cut) throughout Australia. National Youth Week encourages youths to share ideas, attend events, discuss youth issues, showcase their talents and even have a bit of fun.

> View more events: www.ourcommunity.com.au/calendar

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17. Community Sector Briefs

COMMUNITY CLASSIFIEDS: Free advertising boards (Melbourne)

Large sign boards that can be used for not-for-profit advertising are available free from Advantage Property Consulting.

The boards can be used to advertise not-for-profit events such as fetes and festivals.

Email the details of your organisation (what you do, where you are, what you want to advertise) to Michelle Valentic: mvalentic@advantageproperty.com.au. You should plan at least two months ahead to allow for permit applications and installation.

The business operates all over Melbourne but locations in Bayside and south-eastern suburbs would suit best.

COMMUNITY CLASSIFIEDS: Free folders (Melbourne)

A corporate office has dozens of white folders, large and small, to give away to a not-for-profit organisation or school.

The giveaway would suit organisations in Melbourne.

To express an interest, email kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au; let us know who you are, where you're located and how many folders you could use.

Media contacts listing

Many thanks to all the kind folk who let us know about additions and errors in our online media listings – we've amended the listings in line with your feedback and suggestions.

The media listings are provided free by Our Community as a way of helping small to medium not-for-profit organisations improve their media relations.

Listings, which are provided in a downloadable Excel format, provide the basic contact details for all the newspapers, radio and television stations operating in each state.

> [Download the listings at www.ourcommunity.com.au/mediacontacts](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/mediacontacts)

Defining what you do and why you do it

In a previous edition of *Our Community Matters*, we provided some advice from consultant Ruth Zark about how to design a logic model.

Logic models are designed to help you simplify the complexity of your program, as well as show linkages and identify indicators to measure your outcomes and success.

If you missed Ruth's article, you can download it [here](#) (clicking the link will download a PDF).

For those ready to move on to the nitty-gritty, Ruth has now released an e-book, 'How To Create A Logic Model If You Follow This Simple Plan'.

The guide includes information on designing a logic model, writing a problem statement, developing your goals, and identifying your program inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

> [Find out more here: http://www.the-logic-model-center.com/](http://www.the-logic-model-center.com/)

Human rights training (Victoria)

With the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* now in force, it's time to update your equal opportunity practice.

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission has a range of workshops available in 2013 to help you understand your equal opportunity and human rights obligations and move towards best practice.

Free and cost-effective workshops are scheduled in Carlton, metropolitan areas and regional Victoria. The Commission also provides targeted workshops for employers, union delegates, government employees and advocates, and can customise training to deliver at your workplace.

To view the 2013 training directory, visit humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/training or phone 03 9032 3415 for more information.

Financial literacy workshops

MoneyMinded is a free financial education program that helps people develop better financial skills and capabilities.

The program offers community workers and volunteers training on issues relating specifically to the financial needs of their clients, including planning and budgeting, dealing with debt, and rights and responsibilities.

MoneyMinded is offering a series of three-day facilitator training workshops around Melbourne from February to December this year in Frankston, Craigieburn and Fitzroy. All workshops operate from 9.30am to 4.30pm.

To register, email moneyminded@bsl.org.au. For more information about MoneyMinded, visit: www.moneyminded.com.au.

Community leaders urged to take part in national survey

Community leaders across Australia are invited to contribute to a national conversation on the challenges and opportunities for them to help create positive social change.

The *Synergistiq Leadership Survey: Leading for the Common Good* will explore practical questions of operational and technical leadership, as well as the harder to define questions of relational and social leadership.

Community as well as corporate and public leaders have been invited to take part.

It is hoped that an Australia-wide collection of data will provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities leaders face in an increasingly complex environment.

“We know that around 40% of an organisation’s effectiveness is down to the quality and style of its leadership,” said Dr Stephen Duns, Partner at Synergistiq, a Melbourne-based social justice and human rights consulting firm.

“The importance of leadership in contributing to the common good is therefore very great indeed”.

The survey closes at the end of April, with results to be published later in the year.

> **Take part in the survey:** <http://www.synergistiq.com/synergistiq-leadership-survey/>

Victorian not-for-profits surveyed on strategic and business planning

Social Traders wants to hear from Victorian not-for-profits about what strategic and business planning tools they use and where are the gaps.

They’re conducting a survey on behalf of the Victorian Government’s Office for the Community Sector to gauge the business planning needs of not-for-profits in the state.

The results will be used to lead the development of useful, practical support to improve these areas of not-for-profit capacity.

The survey closes on Friday, March 15.

> **Complete the survey:** <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BYX9396>

Community development course

Introductory and advanced community development courses are being offered by the Institute of Community Development in Hawthorn, Melbourne.

The two-day introductory course is taking place on March 4 and 7, and the advanced course on April 5 and 8.

Courses, which are limited to 25 places each, are based on practical examples of supporting communities to creatively follow their passion for social justice, peace, sustainability and human rights.

> **Find out more:** <http://cd.borderlands.org.au/>

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18. Good Moves: Community Sector Jobs & Board Vacancies

JOB VACANCY LISTINGS (Paid Positions)

Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
Multicultural Services Coordinator	Carers Queensland Inc	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
Care Manager	Brotherhood of St Laurence	Details
Director	Warrandyte Neighbourhood House	Details
Centre Coordinator	Bulleen and Templestowe Community House	Details
Navigating a New Path Mentoring Program Coordinator	Whitelion Inc.	Details
Custodial Lead Mentor	Whitelion Inc.	Details
Chief Executive	South Port Uniting Care	Details

Western Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
Ramp Mentoring Program Coordinator	Whitelion Inc	Details
Outreach Financial Counsellor	Broome CIRCLE Inc.	Details
Financial Counsellor (Broome Based)	Broome CIRCLE Inc.	Details

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	
Foundation Committee Member	The Buttery	Details
General Board Member	Southern Sydney Youth Refuge	Details
General Board Member	CUFA Credit Union Foundation Australia	Details

Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
Treasurer, General Board Member	M-YES Inc	Details

South Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
Secretary, General Board Member	MOSH Australia	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
Treasurer, General Board Member	Synergy Gallery Inc	Details
Treasurer, Membership Development Coordinator and Membership Engagement Coordinator	Young Australians Best Book Awards (YABBA)	Details

General Board Member	The Warwick Foundation	Details
General Board Member	Thornbury Women's Neighbourhood House Inc	Details
Chair, General Board Member	ME/CFS Australia (VicTasNT) Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome	Details
General Board Member, 2 vacancies	UnitingCare ReGen	Details
General Board Member	Melbourne East Disability Advocacy	Details
Western Australia		
Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member	Noble Friends United	Details

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19. Fast Forward

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

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" and a direct link to the www.ourcommunity.com.au site if on a webpage.

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20. About Our Community

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

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

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

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