



Enabling Sustainable Regional Community Philanthropy

Building the capacity of Australian Community Foundations



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Australian Community Philanthropy

Australian Community Philanthropy (ACP) is the peak membership organisation for community foundations in Australia. Founded by a group of community foundation practitioners to provide support to the voluntary boards and professional staff of new and established community foundations, ACP was incorporated and endorsed as a Charitable Organisation in 2008 and exists to connect, support, represent and guide the community foundation movement and to strengthen its resources and impact.



**Australian
Community
Philanthropy**

Project Overview

Enabling Sustainable Regional Community Philanthropy will build the capacity of Australia's 26 active rural and regional community foundations and provide them with tools and resources to raise awareness of their organisations, engage with donors, grant seekers and the broader community and assist them to identify and meet the unique needs of their communities.

Community Foundations are place-based, independent, philanthropic vehicles. They work with a range of donors to build endowment funds as long-term community assets. Through grant making, investments, research, community development and collaborations, Community Foundations bring people and organisations together to build social capital, catalyse development and strengthen their communities. Community Foundations engage with their constituents as donors, advisors and volunteers, generating strong community ownership and accountability. They take a multi-faceted approach to the challenges facing their communities and leverage their deep community knowledge to respond to the specific needs of their catchment.

Community foundations are hard-working grass roots organisations, operating with limited resources. Less than 50% of community foundations have 1-member staff (EFT), some have no staff at all.

All community foundation boards are voluntary. **This project will:**

- **Build greater awareness and understanding of community foundations at a local and national level**
- **Build the capacity of community foundations in new and emerging areas (e.g. collaborative giving, collective impact)**
- **Improve the capacity of community foundations to identify, meet the needs of and engage with their communities**
- **Improve the capacity of community foundations around partnership building.**

Vital Signs Component

Vital Signs is a program conducted by community foundations around the world. It provides a comprehensive and accessible look at how our communities are faring in key quality-of-life areas. Because Vital Signs utilises credible and reliable data, it is used by foundations to shape their grant giving activities and drive policy and change at a local, national and global level. Vital Signs is founded upon collaboration and provides community foundations with a range of community engagement tools.

The initiative was established by the Toronto Community Foundation in 2001. In 2006, Vital Signs became a national program in Canada under the auspices of Community Foundations of Canada (CFC). ACP, as a result of its strong and mutually supportive relationship with CFC, is the 'parent' of Vital Signs within Australia and is committed to encouraging and supporting Australian community foundations to undertake the program here. A Vital Signs Working Group has been established to support ACP in developing a national Vital Signs program and ensure a collaborative, cohesive approach.

This component of the project will involve:

- Identifying appropriate Australian Vital Signs key quality of life issue areas and their associated indicators (data sets)
- Establishing relationships with key partners (research organisations and other philanthropic organisations)
- Developing new and adapting existing (Canadian) Vital Signs resource guides and training webinars (Getting Started, Collaboration, Community Impact, Community Engagement, Research)
- Assisting community foundations as they navigate the program
- Resourcing the Vital Signs Working Group.

Core Capacity Component

In 2013 ACP, with grant support from FRRR and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, 'mapped' Australian community foundations. The report identified, for the first time, the size and reach and resources underpinning community foundations in our region and has made a significant contribution to raising awareness and understanding of the community foundation sector in Australia. In addition to updating this critical knowledge base ACP intends to leverage the learnings and recommendations from this report to:

- Further measuring the impact of community foundations at a community and collective level in Australia
- Assess the potential for community foundations to utilise emerging philanthropic models including collaborative giving, collective impact, flow-through versus endowment structures
- Identify the current challenges facing community foundations and how these can be overcome
- Develop tools and resources to enable community foundations to raise awareness of their foundations, engage with donors, leverage emerging philanthropic models.

Target population

26 of Australia's 38 Community Foundations are in rural and regional communities located across Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia representing a combined population of more than 1.6 million.

The project will also provide benefits to foundations not located in rural and regional areas.

Timeframe

Three years commencing March 2016

Support for the Project

Enabling Sustainable Regional Community Philanthropy is an approved project of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR).

Donations, grant funding and other financial contributions to this project will be accepted into the FRRR Public Fund and used solely for the purposes of this project. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible

Staffing, structure and governance

The project will be managed by Australian Community philanthropy

The roles of the **Project Manager** will be to:

- meet the outcomes, objectives and deliverables identified in the detailed project plan
- build and maintain an effective partnership
- administer funds for the project
- secure additional funds to ensure the long term sustainability of the project
- provide strategic leadership insuring appropriate evolution of the project
- ensure the effective, ethical and accountable operation of the project.

We need your help

Australian Community Philanthropy needs your support to undertake this important project.

Enabling Sustainable Regional Community Philanthropy is an approved project of FRRR. Donations to the project are tax deductible and will be accepted into the specially established FRRR Donation account and used for the purposes of this project.

Download the Donation Form from our website:
www.australiancommunityphilanthropy.org.au

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