



**Successful Strategies for Securing Bequests, 11am Thursday 10th March 2016
Workshop Notes**

Presenters:

Shelley Boyce, Southern Highlands Foundation NSW

Andrew Lawson, Geelong Community Foundation VIC

Nicky Wilkins, Acorn Foundation NZ

The Australian Context demonstrates potential for bequests

- 90% of adult Australians make some form of monetary charitable gift each year
- Over 60% of Australians have a will (93% for people over 70)
- Establishing a bequest is straightforward
- Only 7.5% of Australians include a bequest in their will

Factors Influencing whether to make a bequest include:

- Concern about leaving family adequately provided for (estates with no surviving children are more likely to make a bequest)
- *A belief in the cause or in the organisation, and the desire to help those in need into the future*

Successful bequest programs:

- Target professional advisers (lawyers, accountants, financial planners) AND individual donors
- Leverage relationship building
 - Personal ongoing contact (e.g. host a regular morning tea and deliver a short presentation for local professional advisers)
 - If you have trustees/Directors who have established bequests with your foundation, use them to tell their story to potential donors
 - Face to face meetings
 - Respond to the interests and needs of the donor and aren't a scripted sales-pitch
- Leverage relatable stories that demonstrate the value of your bequest fund/s and/or your community foundation more broadly in delivering ongoing benefits to the community or cause (how bequests have been used in the past, projects/causes supported and results) and the value of the endowment in perpetuity model.



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- Leverage the perception of the community foundation as a trusted, transparent and accountable body that is not in competition with other community causes/groups but supportive of them
- Use strategies that address common barriers to bequests such as not leaving one's family adequately provided for (e.g. leaving 10% of an estate still leaves 90% available)
- Are developed over the long term and can start small (managing a large bequest can be very challenging especially for a small organisation)

Other Take-Aways

- Dedicated brochures are great but your Annual Report is a **really** important document as it provides an overview of your foundation including your people, resources and support for community
- Electronic newsletters/emails may not get to right person. Hard copies posted may actually be a better option.
- Bequests often come without any forewarning, as a result of a donor coming into contact or becoming aware of the work of the foundation. Weave bequests into your donor and other awareness raising information
- Raising bequests or discussing wills can sometimes be uncomfortable but don't let it deter you. Questions such as 'Would you be comfortable leaving money to your community?' are a good way to start a conversation
- Anyone can leave a bequest – you don't have to be rich!

For more information on our Workshop Program:

Kate Buxton

Australian Community Philanthropy Ltd

GPO Box 1851

Melbourne, Victoria, 3001

0419 350 240

Kate.buxton@australiancommunityphilanthropy.org.au

www.australiancommunityphilanthropy.org.au